

Emerging Organizations Grant

General Operating Support for the 2025 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025)

Application Closes February 27, 2024

[Apply Here](#)

In partnership with Shunpike, ArtsWA is offering support to emerging arts organizations in the form of grants that support day-to-day operating costs. Groups wishing to start new organizations, strengthen organizations created within the last four years (2019 – 2023) and whose programming is open to the public are eligible to apply.

- Funding provided by ArtsWA and National Endowment for the Arts
- Fiscal Sponsorship and administrative support provided by Shunpike

Of special interest are new organizations that focus on the work of communities not fully or authentically represented in their region. We encourage new organizations that focus on communities impacted by historic and structural inequity to apply.

Funding amounts: Applicants can request between \$2,000-\$5,000 for general operating expenses. If awarded, grant amounts may vary depending on panel recommendations.

Partnership with Shunpike:

ArtsWA is pleased to partner with [Shunpike](#) to offer fiscal sponsorship to new groups wishing to apply to the Emerging grant program. Groups can apply for fiscal sponsorship within the grant application.

- **Groups that apply for fiscal sponsorship within the Emerging grant application must attend a fiscal sponsorship info session with Shunpike on Wednesday, February 15, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. online. [Register here.](#)**
- Groups that are awarded an Emerging grant and gain fiscal sponsorship under Shunpike must attend a 90-minute on-boarding session on April 1, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
- **Please read Shunpike's [Applying for Fiscal Sponsorship](#) document if you are seeking fiscal sponsorship.** This document includes important information about fiscal sponsorship, including how you will get paid. As a reminder, you must have either 501c3 status or fiscal sponsorship to be eligible for the Emerging grant; we are not able to grant funds to unincorporated groups.



Eligibility Requirements

Applying organizations must be one of the following:

- 501(c)(3) Nonprofit
- Group fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
- Unincorporated groups may apply if they gain fiscal sponsorship with a 501(c)(3) arts nonprofit by July 1, 2024. Unincorporated applicants must be a group of 3 or more people with roles and assigned duties (such as Executive Director, Programs Director, Administrator, etc.)

Applicants must:

- Have a mission that primarily includes art.
- Have publicly accessible programming.
- Have produced at least one project or program.
- Have four or less years of programming history.
- Be based in Washington State.
- Have an annual operating budget under \$350,000.

Who is not eligible?

- Individuals
- For-profit organizations
- [Full list of what ArtsWA can and cannot fund](#) as a state agency.

Before you apply:

1. Read the entire guidelines to make sure your group is eligible and a good fit for the grant.

2. Get your all your information ready! You will need:

- Your budget for the 2025 fiscal year (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025.) This will include an estimation of your in-kind and volunteer support. Use the Word version of the application to prepare (linked below.)
- One to three work samples ([View Work Sample Guidelines](#))
- For 501(c)(3)s, you'll need your [Unique Entity Identifier](#) from SAM.gov, your [Statewide Vendor Number](#) if you already have one, your Federal Tax ID (EIN), and your IRS Letter of Determination. *If you are fiscally sponsored*, you'll need this information from your fiscal sponsor.

3. Draft your application in a Word document before filling out the form in Submittable. There are 4 short narrative questions that you can write or submit a video/audio file for. **Make sure to click "download" after you follow the below links so that you don't lose your work!**

- [Download the application for 501\(c\)3 nonprofits](#)

- [Download the application for fiscally sponsored groups](#)
 - [Download the application for groups that are seeking fiscal sponsorship with Shunpike](#)
4. If you are an unincorporated group seeking fiscal sponsorship with Shunpike, make sure you read their [brief overview of fiscal sponsorship](#) before you apply!

What's in the application?

- **Eligibility Form:** Before you begin, you will answer a few questions to verify that your organization is eligible.
- **Pre-Application: Organization Information.** Enter your contact information, legal status, and organization identifiers.
- **Application Section 1: Programming.** Tell us your mission, select your art practices and audiences, describe your programming in a narrative response, and submit your work samples.
- **Application Section 2: People.** Answer two narrative questions about your community and your staff/volunteers.
- **Application Section 3: Budget.** Tell us how much funding you are requesting, fill out a budget worksheet, and answer one narrative question about your funding strategy.
- **Application Section 4: Supporting Documents.** Upload additional documents required by Washington State to ensure public funds are allocated correctly.

For groups seeking fiscal sponsorship with Shunpike, Section 4 will be your opportunity to complete Shunpike-specific questions. Download the word document version of the application above to see those questions.

Narrative Questions

Narrative responses can be submitted as **either** written responses or in an audio and/or video format. You can answer some questions with a video upload and others with a written response. For each question you will choose:

- **"Write a response":** Enter your written responses in the text boxes below each question. There is a 250-word limit for each question, but your responses do not need to meet this limit.
- **"Upload a video or audio response":** Upload your files in the sections below each question. Video and audio responses should be no more than 1 minute in length.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Programming (25 points)

Well scoring applications will have programs that:

- Reflect the organization's mission,
- Are responsive to the communities served, and
- Reflect strong artistic merit through programs that uplift/center/encourage robust participation in creativity and art.

2. Community Access and Responsiveness (25 points)

Well scoring applications:

- Have engaging and accessible ways for the community to experience their programming.
- Describe direct actions that increase access to programs for one or more of the following communities negatively impacted by structural inequity (i.e. rural communities, BIPOC community members, mental or physical disability, LGBTQIA2S+, immigrant or refugee communities)
- Include and consider community input in program planning.

3. Personnel (25 points)

Well scoring applications:

- Have staff / contractors / volunteers that are qualified (whether through lived experience, training, etc.) to *work with the community* the organization serves.
- Have staff / contractors / volunteers that are qualified (whether through lived experience, training, etc.) to *provide the arts services* your organization offers.

4. Budget (25 points)

Well scoring application's budgets:

- Reflect financial support for organization personnel/staff and contracted professionals.
- If the applicant organization is currently operating as a volunteer organization, tracking volunteer hours in the in-kind section of the budget ensures that the applicant organization is fully aware of what it costs to do what you do.
- Have a clear, feasible strategy for funding programs.

Tips for making a strong grant application

- Be specific! Paint a clear picture in the panelists' minds by giving solid details about what you do and how you do it, especially if you provide services to vulnerable communities (children, youth, elders, veterans, trauma survivors, etc.)
- Review the evaluation criteria to strengthen your responses to narrative questions.
- For work samples, photos or videos of your work-in-practice help tell your story better than posters or PDFs.
- Balance your budget! Make sure your income total and your expense total match when you are filling out the budget table in the application.

Important Dates

- Application open: January 16, 2024 – February 27, 2024 at 5pm
- Application workshops: January 23 & February 20, 2024 at 12pm
 - [Register for the January 23 Workshop](#)
 - [Register for the February 20 Workshop](#)
- Office Hours with Program Manager Miguel Guillén: Every Friday at 10am between 1/16-2/27. [Register for office hours here.](#)
- Shunpike Fiscal Sponsorship Info Session: February 15, 2024 at 5pm. [Register for Fiscal Sponsorship 101 here.](#)
- Notification of application results: by May 10, 2024
- Funds can cover expenses that incur between July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
 - This is a **reimbursement grant**, meaning that payments will be made after the grant recipient expends funds, and after expense documentation and invoice forms have been submitted to and approved by ArtsWA.
- Final report due July 31, 2025

Can organizations apply for multiple ArtsWA grants?

Allowable: Applicants for Grants to Organizations programs can apply for and receive grants from *other* ArtsWA programs if they support different expenses and services. Other ArtsWA program grants include:

- [Creative Start](#) - ArtsWA encourages projects focused on arts integration for Pre-K to grade 2 to apply for the Creative Start Grant.
- [Wellness, Arts, and the Military \(WAM\)](#) - Ongoing grants

Not allowable: Applying to different grants *within* the Grants to Organizations Program. Emerging Grant applicants will be *ineligible* for the Grants to Organizations FY25 application for the Project Grant (opening March 2024.) If you are eligible for both, we recommend applying to the Emerging Grant rather than the Project Grant.

What happens after you apply?

Screening for Eligibility: Staff will screen your application to make sure your application meets eligibility requirements.

Panel: All applications are reviewed and scored by a panel. Panelists ensure that people from across Washington State are an integral part of distributing public money. After the application window closes, panelists representing a variety of creative fields and backgrounds will review applications and make recommendations for funding to ArtsWA's [Board of Commissioners](#).

Board Approval: Recommendations will go to the ArtsWA Board for approval on May 7, 2024.

Notification: Notification of award or decline will go out by May 10, 2024. Awarded applicants can expect their contract and instructions on how to receive funds in the next weeks after notification. Learn more about [managing a grant here](#).

What are my chances of receiving a grant?

This changes from year to year depending on number of applications received. ArtsWA sets aside approximately \$40,000 per year for emerging organizations. We average 10 groups funded in this category annually with an average of 20 applications from new groups per year. We are predicting an increase in applications from new groups in this current funding cycle (FY25).

The best thing you can do to increase your chances of receiving a grant is to submit a strong application. Although we can never guarantee you will get a grant, we encourage you to reach out to us to discuss your application, especially if this is your first time applying. We love hearing from you, learning about your goals, and providing helpful tips based on your goals. Hopefully, we will make you feel more confident pressing the submit button for this highly competitive program.

Additional Information

Accessibility

Federally funded projects must be accessible to people with disabilities. You can use [this accessibility checklist](#) when planning your programs. You do not need to check all boxes to be eligible for funding; this is simply a worksheet and resource for your organization.

ArtsWA accepts grant applications via an online form. If you require an alternate format or assistance to access the application, please reach out to us at the contact information below or Alexis Sarah, ArtsWA Accessibility Coordinator, alexis.sarah@arts.wa.gov or at 360-228-6359.

Civil Rights

All applicants for funding from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) are required to certify that they are following the civil rights statutes that govern nondiscrimination in Federally assisted programs. For a FAQ on Civil Rights for applicants and to ensure your organization complies, [click here](#).

Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants can appeal in accordance with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 30.12.036, [found here](#).

About ArtsWA

ArtsWA is the [Washington State Arts Commission](#). The Washington State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts fund our programs. Grants are contingent on available state and federal funding. ArtsWA complies with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations concerning civil and human rights. For more information regarding Washington State Arts Commission's policies on Accessibility, Diversity, and Nondiscrimination, [click here](#).

Contact Us

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