

2016-2017

# Artist Opportunity Grants

Administered by Culture Works



## ARTIST OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

Welcome to the Montgomery County Artist Opportunity Grant Program. This program is made possible by funding from the Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District (MCACD) and is administered by Culture Works.

## PROGRAM GOAL

The Artist Opportunity Grant Program is intended to provide financial assistance to Montgomery County artists to further their careers through professional development opportunities and through opportunities associated with new works.

Artist Opportunity Grants help advance the careers of individual artists by supporting expenses related to specific, unique opportunities that have the potential to significantly impact an artist's work and professional development. The purpose of these grants is to empower artists at critical stages in their creative lives. The goal is to assist artists in Montgomery County in furthering and innovating their work, to elevate the quality and raise the profile of individual artistic work in the region, and to help artists achieve their artistic and career goals through the pursuit of new works or professional/career development opportunities in the field, thereby making them competitive in the creative marketplace. Grants are intended to fund an artist's vision or voice, regardless of the level of his or her artistic career point (emerging, mid-career, mature) or genre. Grants typically range from \$500 to \$3,000.

## WHAT IS AN OPPORTUNITY?

An opportunity may be one of many things—an invitation to exhibit at a prestigious gallery, to audition for a major dance company, to study with a mentor or renowned teacher. It may also be an opportunity to create/complete a new work that advances an artists' career, develops an experimental/risk-taking project, or exposes an artist to new audiences. In any case, it should not

duplicate experiences the artist has had in the course of his or her ongoing work, and it must lead to professional growth in the artist's career in a clear and meaningful way. This program does not fund general supplies utilized in the course of normal business. Eligible costs do include the finishing/completion of new works of art for an imminent opportunity.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for the Artist Opportunity Grant Program, applicants must:

- Be a resident of Montgomery County, Ohio with a valid street address (no P.O. boxes) demonstrated by a driver's license, utility bill, bank statement, voter registration document, etc.; and
- Be a United States citizen or a permanent legal resident; and
- Be at least 18 years old; and
- Be a professional artist or creative entrepreneur. This is defined as someone who:
  - Has specialized training in the field (not limited to academic training; may be self taught);
  - Is recognized as a "professional" by peers (artists working in the same discipline); and
  - Has at least a one-year history of public presentation or publication.
  - *It should be noted that the word "professional" refers to the nature of the artist's commitment, particularly as it is conveyed on the artist's resume.*

## ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

As an opportunity-based grant, applicants are required to request a specific dollar amount and also articulate how the difference will be made up in the event the grant doesn't cover the entire expense. Appropriate requests would typically fall in the range of \$500-\$3,000 and grants will not exceed \$3,000. Funds can be used for the following:

**ALLOWABLE EXPENSES** (including but not limited to):

**PRESENTATION/DOCUMENTATION/PORTFOLIO**

**DEVELOPMENT:** costs related to producing materials such as slides, catalogs, portfolios, audio/visual recordings, manuscripts, brochures, etc. that is part of an imminent, concrete opportunity or are part of a clear marketing/outreach plan to make materials available for distribution and self-promotion.

**SERVICES:** use of other professional services for the presentation or production of new work. Can include professional consultants who help with websites, business plans, marketing plans, etc.

**MATERIALS/SUPPLIES:** Project-specific expenses for materials or for equipment rental needed to complete work (as described in the application) for an exhibition, performance, publication, etc. in which the artist has been invited to participate.

**EQUIPMENT/FACILITIES:** Expenses for materials or equipment rental or purchase needed to prepare new work for an exhibition, performance, publication, etc. in which the artist has been invited to participate. Specifications regarding product description, supplier and cost must be included in the application (be specific and comprehensive).

**FEES/TRAVEL:** Travel associated with an imminent, concrete opportunity to perform, exhibit or audition, or for a unique opportunity to study with a significant mentor. Registration fees/attendance at workshops and/or seminars directly related to advancing the applicant's discipline skills or business expertise, i.e. training in marketing, finance or development of marketing materials; research or advanced study/coaching that will enhance the artist's abilities. Lowest available fares and current IRS mileage rate apply. Reasonably-priced accommodations are permitted if opportunity is more than 100 miles from home. Fees related to artist residencies related to the development of an artist's career are permitted.

**INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND INDIVIDUALS**

- Students pursuing ANY degree
- Artists who have received an Artist Opportunity Grant in the immediate prior year
- Artists who have received two (2) Artist Opportunity Grants over the life of the program
- Non-residents of Montgomery County
- Applicants seeking funding for projects considered to be hobbies or of a therapeutic or recreational nature
- Activities of a commercial nature (e.g. works by creative workers to be used by employers, commissioned artwork, etc.)
- Curatorial projects of other people's work
- Activities that have already taken place
- Ongoing work (this fund exists to help artists take advantage of *unique* opportunities in their careers)
- Arts-in-Education programs or teaching opportunities
- Applicant's own artistic fees (fees or commissions that should be paid by others)
- Personal medical, legal, accounting or administrative expenses
- Purchase of equipment costing more than \$500 or equipment not related to a specific, imminent opportunity
- Banking fees, PayPal fees, or service fees from crowd funding projects.
- Food or beverage expenses
- Fundraising events, religious activities or events, or advocacy of specific political causes or candidates.

**CRITERIA**

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

**Artistic Merit:** The professional capabilities of the applicant; the artistic strength, quality, vision, originality of the applicant's work as demonstrated in the application, previous, work, and artist's statement.

- Work is of compelling artistic vision and singular voice
- Work is inventive, imaginative, substantive in form and content
- Work is self-reflective/critical, demonstrating internal development and willingness to take risks, as appropriate

**Potential Impact** of the proposed project to advance/further the applicant’s work/career.

- Opportunity is unique and not a repeat of past experiences (i.e. is it juried selectively, time-sensitive, prestigious for the artist’s field, a “first” for the artist?)
- Potential for the opportunity to facilitate subsequent creative work
- Potential impact of the proposed opportunity on the professional development of the applicant, i.e. clearly defined, realistic, attainable goals based on the artist's level of achievement.

**Quality of Proposed Project:** The artistic strength, quality, vision and originality of the proposed project.

- Artist demonstrates an understanding and awareness of professional practice and standards in his/her field
- Artist has demonstrated capacity to be self-directed and is well positioned to take full advantage of the opportunity the grant affords
- Work is well-executed and well-produced, demonstrating control of craft/materials/production values and technique, as appropriate and clear intentionality of purpose
- Work reflects awareness of the history and contemporary practice of its field and its relationship to both

**Administrative Capability:** The feasibility of the proposed project as determined by the applicant preparing and clearly articulating a logical, well-conceived project plan that can be reasonably executed, clear goals, and an accurate budget.

- Professional resume, including education, artistic training, and level of achievement and/or evidence of commitment to personal artistic development as demonstrated through efforts to attain performances, exhibits, etc.
- Artist has a history of active engagement in creating artwork and presenting it to the public, with a record of professional accomplishment appropriate to career stage
- Completeness and clarity of the application. The reasonable likelihood that the project can be completed based on the itemized budget and proposed timeline. The grant cannot be the sole source of funding for the project. Other funds, regardless of the amount, may come from personal savings or income, other grants, gifts, etc. No specific dollar amount or percentage is required. However, personal investment by the artist demonstrates his/her commitment.

**Public Benefit:** The applicant seeks to increase access to and direct participation in high-quality arts and cultural resources that celebrate diversity and foster creativity within Montgomery County.

- The applicant is actively involved in the arts and cultural community.
- The applicant has experience sharing his/her work through public exhibition/performances and plans to do the same with this project.
- Applicant has capacity or is actively seeking to share through exhibits, performances, readings, marketing, local artist organizations, personal website, newsletter or advocacy.
- Applicant has identified ways to share about this opportunity with the public.

### COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Applicants should answer the questions on the application as if you are writing about yourself for someone who has never met you and/or someone who may not be familiar with the opportunity you wish to pursue. Consider the following when

answering the questions in the application and when writing your artist statement:

**HOW** the opportunity is unique and what it offers that isn't otherwise available to you

**WHY** the opportunity is appropriate at this time in your career

**WHAT** the impact will be on your career and work and why this is the best way to get you there

**WHO** you will be working with and why they are the best one(s) to learn from right now

#### **OTHER SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR A COMPLETE APPLICATION:**

- A detailed **project description** including timeline, goals and potential outcomes, and intended audience.
- A clear and concise **artist statement** and an overview of your history as an artist.
- **Proof of residency:** On the application, the applicant address must be current and may not be a PO box.
- A current chronological **artistic resume** focused on artistic achievements, activity, exhibitions, performances, awards, and publications, etc.
- **Timeline:** This project or opportunity must take place between January 1, 2017 and December 30, 2017.
- **Project Budget:** Applicants will be required to submit a complete project **budget for the entire project** (not just the amount of the grant requested) using the template in the application.
  - As your project budget is reviewed in conjunction with the narrative portion of your application, please be sure they align. Account for all the project components listed in your project description.

- Please list all sources of revenue/funding, even if they are only anticipated, and not yet secured.

- A recent artistic **work sample** and a description of this work and how it relates to the proposed project. You will be asked to provide your work sample in electronic form or by sharing URLs/web links to images, videos, audio files, etc. The work sample is essential to your application and plays a critical role in helping panelists to evaluate the artistic merit of your work and gain a better understanding of the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to select their support materials carefully and submit items that are as current as possible and relevant to the proposed project. Work samples do not need to be professionally produced to demonstrate vibrant programming or artistic excellence.

**Access to your Project:** Applicants must make their work available/accessible to the general public of Montgomery County in some way (e.g., a performance, exhibition, presentation, publication, workshop, or class, a website documenting the project). Each applicant must clearly identify one public presentation of the project in his or her application, with clear marketing/outreach plans to ensure attendance/participation. Applications that clearly identify the way in which the public can access the project are most competitive. Those pursuing professional development opportunities should think of a way to share their experience through lectures, blogs, videos, websites, or sharing works that evolve from the opportunity.

## THE REVIEW PROCESS

All applications will be reviewed by staff for completeness and eligibility before advancing to the review panel.

### Panel Review

Culture Works and MCACD will identify an independent review panel consisting of artists, arts administrators, educators, and community leaders who understand and have an appreciation for the careers and professional development of artists. Every effort is made to avoid conflicts of interest.

Panelists are provided online access to the applications, supporting materials, and artistic samples in advance of panel discussions. It is their responsibility to review materials in advance.

Panelists will score applications in advance based on the criteria identified in these guidelines. Each of the five categories is worth five points for a total possible score of 25.

### Proposal Discussion and Scoring

During a public discussion, applicant scores will be shared with panelists. Panel members will discuss the scores and resulting ranking of the applicants. When desired, panel members will be given the opportunity to review an artist's application and/or documentation. This is done for clarification purposes. As a result of the panel discussion or further review of an applicant's application or documentation, panelists may change their scores. Because materials will have been previously reviewed by panelists, they may or may not ask to review the same materials for every applicant.

### Ranking and Funding Recommendations

After scoring, a master list of all applicants will be ranked from highest to lowest regardless of program category and artistic focus. Funding recommendations will be made based on these ratings and the funding that is available.

## FUNDING AWARD AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRANTEE

Upon panel recommendations being approved:

All award recipients will enter into a contract/grant agreement with Culture Works.

Grants will be made in a single, one-time payment **following successful completion of the Grant Agreement**. Grant funding may only support expenses incurred during the relevant grant period for the cycle within which you apply. Ensure that you request grant funds to cover project expenses that will be incurred during the grant period. Plan for personal cash flow to cover expenses up front. A grantee may request funds in January for the projects or programs in the first half of the year and June for projects or programs in the second half of the year. For projects or programs in the second half of the year that require advance payment, grantees may ask for the January distribution.

Grantees are responsible for submitting a final report (financial, narrative and evaluation, including examples of the results of the grant project) within 30 days of the completion of the project/opportunity. Receipts for purchases or services must accompany your final report. If the project is not complete within the grant period you will be required to identify the delay and state an expected completion date.

In all publicity, websites, printed or production materials related to the grant project, the recipient must use the Montgomery County logo and credit Montgomery County for support in the same font size, or larger, as any other sponsors or supporters. Text credit should appear as: *This project is made possible by funding from Montgomery County.*

Grant income is taxable. All grant recipients will receive a 1099 and are responsible for any tax obligations under federal, state or local laws.

#### HOW TO APPLY (use this as a checklist)

- Review these Guidelines
- Complete the online application
- Provide a link to or submit your resume as evidence of your artistic accomplishments and professional achievements.
- Submit one (1) copy of proof of the imminent opportunity (acceptance letters, etc. NOT simply a brochure, but proof of invitation or registration). Include documentation of any fees, prices, quotes, etc. for registrations, travel, lodging, materials, supplies, equipment purchases or rental, etc.
- Provide a link to work sample(s) outlined in these guidelines. Work must have been created within the last year.

#### ARTISTIC SAMPLES

- In the application, please provide a link/URL to materials that can be found online. These may be online galleries, Vimeo videos, YouTube videos, websites, blogs where samples of your work appear or are archived.



This program is made possible through a public-private partnership between Montgomery County and Culture Works.