



Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District

# SPECIAL PROJECTS GRANT

2021 Program Guidelines



Administered by Culture Works

## **Key Dates to Remember**

Grant Info Session via Zoom (Required for First-Time Applicants):  
**Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 12:00pm EST**

Intent to Apply Deadline:  
**Friday, February 26, 2021 by 11:59pm EST**

Final Application Deadline:  
**Friday, April 23, 2021 by 4:00pm EST**

Intent to apply forms and grant applications must be submitted to  
Culture Works online at [cultureworks.org](http://cultureworks.org).

No late submissions  
will be accepted.



## Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District 2021 Special Projects Grant Program Guidelines

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## Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District 2021 Special Projects Grant Program Guidelines

Welcome to the Montgomery County Arts & Cultural District (MCACD) Special Projects Grant program. The MCACD is a special purpose unit of Montgomery County government. Montgomery County believes the arts play a valuable role in our quality of life, education, workplace creativity, and more. The arts can also build community and break down barriers by bringing people together for common experiences and to share in each other's culture.

Special Projects Grants provide an opportunity for small and mid-sized arts, cultural, and other non-profit organizations to produce or present an arts or cultural project that will benefit the neighborhood and/or community it serves and the community at large. The MCACD is providing **\$166,000** to support the 2021 Special Projects Grant program. The program is administered by Culture Works, the Dayton Region's united arts fund and local arts agency.

The steps to applying for a Special Projects Grant are simple:

- 1) Attend a free grant info session (required for first-time applicants). Culture Works will host a **free, virtual session via Zoom on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 from 12:00-1:15pm EST**. Visit [cultureworks.org](https://cultureworks.org) to register.
- 2) Create a login account on the application portal at [cultureworks.org](https://cultureworks.org).
- 3) Read the guidelines and application and contact the Culture Works staff with questions or to schedule a free consultation. **While the Culture Works staff works remotely due to COVID-19, email will be the best method of contact: Karen Maner, Culture Works Grants Manager, [kmaner@cultureworks.org](mailto:kmaner@cultureworks.org).**
- 4) Complete the online Intent to Apply Form by Friday, February 26, 2021 at 11:59pm EST
- 5) Complete the application by Friday, April 23, 2021 at 4:00pm EST

### PROGRAM GOAL

Special Projects Grants provide support for one or a series of high-quality arts and cultural activities that reflect the diversity of our community. The grants support performing, visual, media, literary, and folk arts; festivals; artists' series; arts and cultural programs of schools, colleges, and universities; cultural traditions; public art programs; and other community and neighborhood arts and cultural partnerships. **The 2021 grant program will fund projects taking place from July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.**

#### ELIGIBILITY

All applicants must document the following in order to be eligible:

- Organization is located in Montgomery County.
- One application per organization, school, college, university, municipality, or government agency.
- Non-profit and tax-exempt status (Collectives and other unincorporated organizations may apply in partnership with a non-profit, tax-exempt fiscal agent).
- Compliance with previous Special Projects Grant conditions and final reporting (applies only to repeat applicants).
- Fiscal accountability and management.
- Project must take place between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

#### RESTRICTIONS

Special Projects Grants will not fund:

- Organizations/events located outside Montgomery County, Ohio.
- Multiple applications from an organization.
- Activities before July 1, 2021 and after June 30, 2022.
- General operating expenses (e.g., office supplies, rent, and other overhead).
- Capital expenditures for facilities or equipment.
- Fundraising events.
- Hospitality expenses (e.g., food and beverages).
- Multi-year grants (e.g. requests for two-year projects).
- Arts and cultural organizations (and their auxiliary groups) that receive general operating support from MCACD.

- Grant amount requested meets the requirements outlined for new and repeat projects and appropriate matching funding (see p. 6).
- Applications with no evidence of a true collaboration between an applicant and fiscal agent, if applicable.

## DEADLINES AND KEY DATES

Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 12:00-1:15pm: First-time applicants must attend the free, virtual Special Projects Grant Info Session via Zoom. Repeat applicants are also encouraged to attend. Visit [cultureworks.org](http://cultureworks.org) to register.

Friday, February 26, 2021, 11:59pm: Intent to apply form deadline. All organizations must submit an online intent to apply form indicating the proposed activities, the amount requested, and the organization's nonprofit status. Culture Works and the MCACD will review all intent to apply forms for eligibility, and approved organizations will then be invited to complete the full grant application in March. An organization may subsequently choose to not apply. However, organizations that do not submit the intent to apply form will not be able to complete an application for funding.

Friday, April 23, 2021, 4:00pm: Deadline for eligible organizations to submit the completed Special Projects Grant application. No late applications will be accepted. The Special Projects Grant intent to apply form and grant application **must be submitted online at [cultureworks.org](http://cultureworks.org)**.

Funding decisions will be made at a virtual public meeting in late June, and award payments will begin in July (see p. 10).

## PROJECT CATEGORIES

Special Projects Grants are awarded for one year. After one year of Special Project support, if an organization decides to repeat the project, they may apply again but will have to fulfill additional requirements. The following definitions represent the four program categories applicable to Special Project support.

- **Cultural/Multi-Arts:** Projects involving more than one art/cultural discipline (e.g., festivals, neighborhood events, etc.) or the humanities.
- **Education:** In-school arts and cultural residencies or education-based community projects. Applicants may use this category to integrate the arts and culture into the basic curriculum.
- **Literary Arts/Performing Arts:** Projects involving creative writers—including poets, fiction and nonfiction writers—or the performing arts (e.g., theater, dance, and music) presented or produced by the applicant organization.
- **Visual Arts:** The visual arts include painting, film, photography and digital media, crafts, sculpture, and design arts.

## NEW AND REPEAT PROJECT DEFINITIONS

**New Project:** Any project that has not received funding from the MCACD is a new project (regardless of whether the organization has been previously funded for other projects).

**Repeat Project:** A project may be considered a repeat project if

- 1) The same project received MCACD funding the previous year.
- 2) The project is part of an ongoing program/series of the organization that has been funded by MCACD in the past.
- 3) The scope/style of the project is the same as the previous year but with a different theme/focus.

Applicants are encouraged to [contact Culture Works](#) if they are considering applying for a repeat project or if they are unsure if their project/program is a repeat project. During the eligibility audit, Culture Works staff will review the intent to apply form and approve or deny your categorization of new or repeat project. If denied, the grant amount requested would be lowered, per the guidelines below.

## FUNDING AND APPLICANT MATCH

For **new projects** (i.e. projects that have not previously received Special Project support), the maximum grant request cannot exceed \$10,000. For **proposals from colleges and government**, the maximum grant request cannot exceed \$10,000 or 50% of the total project budget (i.e. to receive a full \$10,000 award, the project expenses must be \$20,000 or greater). For **repeat projects** (i.e. projects that have received Special Project support in a prior year), applicants must leverage additional resources (cash and/or in-kind) for the proposed project to meet the match requirements.

Please refer to the table below for grant request maximums, percentage of expenses, and match requirements.

Project	Maximum \$\$	Grant Request	Applicant Match	Match Requirement
New Project	\$10,000	100%	--	-
Repeat Project Second and Third Year	\$7,500	50%	50%	Cash/in-kind or cash
Repeat Project Fourth Year and Beyond (Ongoing Project Support)	\$5,000	50%	50%	Cash/in-kind or cash
New Colleges & Governments Project	\$10,000	50%	50%	All Cash
Colleges & Governments Second and Third Year	\$7,500	50%	50%	All Cash
Colleges & Governments Fourth Year and Beyond (Ongoing Project Support)	\$5,000	50%	50%	All Cash

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES, MUNICIPALITIES, AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Applications from colleges/universities, municipalities, and government agencies must:

1. Show how the applicant will involve the community outside the college, university, or agency in planning or scheduling committees and in implementing the project.
2. Show how the project will be marketed to the general community beyond college or university students, faculty and staff, or the agency.
3. Demonstrate a broad financial base of support and contain a cash match; that is, a match beyond staff time and overhead provided by the college, university, or agency. Indirect costs\* may not be used to match MCACD funds; they should not be shown in the cash section of the application. Indirect costs, if listed, should be shown in the in-kind section of the application.

\*Indirect costs are real costs that the institution incurs but which cannot be directly charged to a specific grant or contract. General categories of indirect costs include general administration (accounting, payroll, purchasing, etc.), sponsored project administration, plant operation and maintenance, library expenses, departmental administration expenses, depreciation or use allowance for buildings and equipment, and student administration and services. Indirect costs also are sometimes called Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs or institutional overhead.

## REVIEW CRITERIA - SCORING CATEGORIES

Panelists evaluate each application—and provide comments on its strengths and weaknesses—based on the criteria in the scoring categories below.

This is a competitive grants process and projects are recommended for funding based on the applicant’s ability to respond effectively to the published criteria. The following scoring ranges are approximations and are meant to give applicants a sense of what qualifies as a “weak” application, a “good” application, or a “strong” application.

<b>Project Quality and Artistic Vibrancy</b>		<b>Maximum of 30 points</b>
Criteria	Evidence (can support any criteria)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quality of the production, exhibit, festival/community event, works of art, and other project activities.</li> <li>▪ Qualifications of the individuals responsible for shaping and executing the creative vision of the project (i.e., artists, artistic directors, jurors, curators, creative consultants, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant narrative.</li> <li>▪ Resumes or bios of artists, jurors, consultants, and other artistic personnel.</li> <li>▪ Evidence of commitment from participating artists/artistic personnel.</li> <li>▪ Artistic documentation.</li> <li>▪ Printed materials (programs, catalogs, and newsletters).</li> <li>▪ Press clippings.</li> <li>▪ Previous MCACD final report (if applicable).</li> </ul>	

Score of 1 – 10: Project is not a meaningful arts/cultural project.  
 Project activities are loosely defined and/or quality is low or difficult to determine.  
 Artists/artistic personnel are not identified and/or qualifications are limited/difficult to discern.  
 Roles of artistic personnel are undefined or unclear.

Score of 11 – 20: Project is artistic/cultural in nature but not necessarily compelling.  
 Project activities are defined and meet professional standards.  
 Artists/artistic personnel are qualified but not exemplary.  
 Roles of artistic personnel are mostly defined.

Score of 21 – 30: Project is compelling, imaginative, and/or innovative.  
 Project activities are described in detail and demonstrate high professional standards.  
 Artists/artistic personnel are highly qualified, and all have been confirmed.  
 Roles of artistic personnel are clearly defined.

<b>Community Impact and Engagement</b>		<b>Maximum of 40 points</b>
Criteria	Evidence (can support any criteria)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organization’s understanding of, and responsiveness to, the needs and interests of its community/constituents.</li> <li>▪ Clarity of the project goals and target audience</li> <li>▪ Potential impact of the project on the target audience.</li> <li>▪ Quality of the evaluation plan to measure project impact and success.</li> <li>▪ Accessibility of the project to diverse audiences.</li> <li>▪ Compliance with federal ADA requirements.</li> <li>▪ Quality of the promotional plan to reach the project’s target audience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant narrative, particularly sections describing goals, planning, impact, evaluation, promotion, and projected attendance.</li> <li>▪ Grant narrative, particularly areas describing audience diversity and project accessibility.</li> <li>▪ Sample evaluation tools.</li> <li>▪ Sample promotional materials detailing range of admission prices, performance times, and venue accessibility.</li> <li>▪ MCACD final report (if applicable), particularly past attendance figures and diversity of participants.</li> </ul>	

- Score of 1 – 15: Project goals are undefined, unrealistic, and/or do not address community needs or interests. The public participation component is undefined or unclear. The target audience is undefined or unclear. Project activities will not be accessible to diverse audiences, or limited consideration has been given to making the project activities accessible to diverse audiences. Evaluation plan is non-existent or does not clearly measure project impact. Promotional plan is unrealistic and/or undefined.
- Score of 16 – 29: Project goals are explained and reasonably realistic, but response to community needs/interests is limited or requires additional explanation. The public participation component and the target audience are defined. Project activities are affordably priced and scheduled at times and locations to enable participation among diverse audiences. Evaluation plan is evident and designed to measure project impact but could be strengthened by incorporating additional/a greater variety of metrics. Promotional plan is realistic and defined but mostly “business as usual.”
- Score of 30 – 40: Project goals are specific, realistic, and developed in direct response to a community need/interest. The public participation component is clearly defined and reaches a significant number of people, impacts the target audience in a deep and meaningful way, and/or takes place in a community or setting with limited cultural resources. The organization has a proactive plan to encourage participation among diverse audiences, and/or project activities are fundamentally inclusive (e.g., incorporate translators, feature sensory-friendly experiences). Evaluation plan is thorough and incorporates both qualitative and quantitative metrics. Promotional plan is thorough, creative, and will strongly engage the target audience.

Ability to Complete and Manage the Project		Maximum of 30 points
Criteria	Evidence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quality of the plan for project implementation and success, <b>including evidence of anticipating potential COVID-19-related challenges (2021 application only).</b></li> <li>▪ Organization’s history of successful project implementation.</li> <li>▪ Thoroughness, clarity, and feasibility of the project budget and budget breakout.</li> <li>▪ Thoughtfulness of the responses to funding reduction.</li> <li>▪ Qualifications of the project manager.</li> <li>▪ Commitments from key project personnel.</li> <li>▪ Evidence of organizational support (involvement of appropriate staff, board, and committee members).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant narrative, particularly responses to project implementation, organizational history, <b>and COVID-19 (2021 application only)</b> sections.</li> <li>▪ Brochures and press clippings from previous projects.</li> <li>▪ Budget spreadsheet and breakout document showing some or all-matching funds are confirmed.</li> <li>▪ Grant narrative, particularly response to funding reduction.</li> <li>▪ Artist resumes; project manager resume, letters of agreement from artists.</li> <li>▪ Planning committee information.</li> <li>▪ Timeline that clarifies activities and relates directly to the project.</li> <li>▪ MCACD final report (if applicable), particularly history of handling funds.</li> </ul>	

- Score of 1 – 10: Project implementation plan is unclear/the project is still mostly in the ideation/conceptual phase. History of successful project implementation is not evident. Project budget does not balance/is unrealistic.



Budget breakout is not included, does not align with the budget, or is difficult to interpret.  
No matching funds are secured (where applicable).  
It is unclear who will manage the project or the project manager's qualifications are limited or unclear.  
Key project personnel roles are undefined or unclear.

Score of 11 – 20: Project implementation plan is evident but could benefit from greater detail.  
Project budget is balanced and realistic.  
Budget breakout is aligned to the budget but not as detailed as would have been helpful.  
No matching funds are secured (where applicable).  
Project manager is identified and qualified.  
Key project personnel roles are mostly defined.

Score of 21 – 30: Project implementation plan includes a realistic timeline and thoughtful responses to COVID-19 and funding reduction questions.  
Organization has a history of successful project implementation.  
Project budget is balanced, realistic, and supported by a thorough budget breakout document.  
Some or all matching funds are secured (where applicable).  
Project manager is highly qualified, with experience relevant to this project.  
All key project personnel are confirmed, and appropriate staff, board, and committee members will be involved.

## GRANT REVIEW PROCESS

### PHASE 1 – ELIGIBILITY

All applications will undergo an eligibility audit by Culture Works and Montgomery County staff. The staff will make no assessment of the review criteria, only eligibility. If an organization fails to meet the eligibility requirements, the application will not be forwarded to the panel. All applicants will receive notification of their eligibility status.

### PHASE 2 – PANEL REVIEW

The MCACD relies on arts, cultural, and community experts within and beyond Montgomery County to review Special Projects Grant applications. Panelists can be selected based on their knowledge of the discipline, non-profit sector, and community. Every effort is made to avoid conflicts of interest.

Panelists review and evaluate each application independently using the scoring criteria outlined on pages 7-9. Panelists assign points in three major scoring categories:

1. Project Quality and Artistic Vibrancy (up to 30 points)
2. Community Impact and Engagement (up to 40 points)
3. Ability to Complete and Manage the Project (up to 30 points)

The maximum number of points is 100. Panelists will discuss scores and provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of each application at a public panel meeting (date TBA at [cultureworks.org](http://cultureworks.org)). Once all applications have been discussed, staff will average panelists' scores to compute an aggregate rating for each application. Staff will post the application rankings from highest to lowest score. The panel will make funding recommendations based on these rankings and the amount of funding available. This is a competitive process. Not all applications will receive funding, and not all applications selected for funding will receive their requested amount.

### PHASE 3 – GRANTS COMMITTEE

The MCACD Grants Committee will review a summary of all Special Projects Grant panel deliberations. By considering the panel's funding recommendations, the Committee ensures an equitable distribution of funds. The Committee has the discretion to consider applications that have 'development potential' for funding or technical assistance. The Committee approves the panel's funding models and recommends the distribution of funds based on the available allocation.

### PHASE 4 – MCACD BOARD APPROVAL

The MCACD board considers the Grants Committee's recommendations. Following the MCACD board's approval, applicants receive written notification of the results of their grant applications along with panel comments.

## REQUIREMENTS AFTER BEING SELECTED FOR FUNDING

1. Grantees must sign the grant agreement and complete a project revision form (if applicable) in its entirety.
2. If there are significant changes to your project at any point during the grant period, you must submit the proposed changes to Culture Works, in writing, for approval prior to implementing the changes.
3. Recipients will be expected to participate in promotional activities (e.g., a press conference announcing the awards, sharing social media announcements, etc.).
4. Grantees must acknowledge **Montgomery County** as the funding source for the project and include the **MCACD logo** in programs, publications, and media releases associated with the project.
5. All projects should take place in facilities that are ADA compliant.
6. Grant funds will be issued approximately 30 days prior to the Project Start Date. Grantees may request an earlier payment based on proof of expenditure such as needing to place a deposit on a venue, etc. Payments will be issued as follows:
  - a. For projects receiving less than \$2,000 in funding, the grant will be paid in one lump sum upon completion of the grant agreement and project revision form (if applicable).
  - b. For projects receiving \$2,000 or more in funding, 75% of the award will be paid upon completion of the grant agreement and project revision form (if applicable), and the remaining 25% will be paid after the final report has been completed and approved.
7. Special Projects Grant activities must be completed by June 30, 2022.
8. A final report and support materials are due 30 days after the completion of the funded project. Extensions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may be granted if a written request is submitted before the final report due date.
  - If the final report is not submitted on time, 10 points will be automatically deducted from the score of the next application.
  - If no extension was granted, the close-out date for final reports to be submitted will be sixty days after the due date. If an acceptable report is not filed within this time, any remaining grant payments will be cancelled. Determination will be made if previously distributed funds need to be returned to Montgomery County.

## ON-SITE EVALUATIONS

Montgomery County and Culture Works representatives may attend, at random, funded activities to monitor compliance with the terms of the grant agreement.

## Contact Information

### Montgomery County Arts & Cultural District

**New address:** 117 S. Main Street, Suite 5100

Dayton, OH 45422

<http://www.mcoho.org/arts>

**Matt Dunn**

Executive Director

937-225-4573

[dunnm@mcoho.org](mailto:dunnm@mcoho.org)

### Culture Works

**We're moving!** As Culture Works prepares to move into our new home at the Dayton Arcade in 2021, we've gone fully remote. Please contact us by phone or email and use our temporary address for mailing purposes.

PO Box 706

Dayton, OH 45409

937-222-2787

<http://www.cultureworks.org>

**Karen Maner**

Grants Manager

[kmaner@cultureworks.org](mailto:kmaner@cultureworks.org)