

National Endowment of the Arts

Grants for Arts Projects FAQs

What is the source of the funding used to provide National Endowment of the Arts Grants for Arts Projects?

The source of funding for these grants is money raised through Culture Works' advocacy efforts. The National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) provides grant funds to arts advocacy organizations across the country, and Culture Works is one of two Ohio organizations to receive the grant for the 2025-2026 grant cycle.

Culture Works is also providing matching funds in support of the grant, along with additional support offered by The Charles F. Kettering Foundation's Democracy and the Arts.

How is eligibility established?

Culture Works is administering the NEA GAP through a two-step process:

1. Applicant organizations must file an Intent to Apply by May 16, at the latest, in order to determine their eligibility for NEA GAP. Eligibility requirements are provided on the Culture Works' website and include both Culture Works and the NEA's requirements for funding.
2. Once Culture Works receives an Intent to Apply, they will establish an organization's eligibility within five business days. If eligible, the organization will be invited to submit a full application due by June 16.

How are funding decisions made?

As the arts advocacy organization serving the Miami Valley region, Culture Works appreciates the arts as a system of enrichment and an ecosystem of community members passionate about creative and artistic expression. The role Culture Works sees for itself is that of a facilitator of a dynamic exchange between artists and their work, their community, and each other. As such, Culture Works turns to the local and regional community when offering feedback on grant applications whether for operational or project support.

Community members serve as panelists who review and score applications independently, then discuss the applications as a group and make final scoring decisions at a Public Grant Panel Meeting. The panel's decisions are then presented to Culture Works President and CEO, Lisa Hanson, and the Culture Works Board for final confirmation.

Why does Culture Works use an outcomes-based grantmaking process?

Culture Works is increasing its transparency, support offerings, and accessibility throughout the application process to provide a more just and fluid conversation between the artists and arts organizations in our region and their community. This conversation is also one of accountability – in which the arts organizations and artists are held accountable to their community and the community is asked to assess their work with an eye toward creative innovation, sustainability of projects and organizations, as well as an applicant’s basic need.

Culture Works also wants to improve the precision of a project’s outcomes so that the community is able to appreciate the work that takes place “behind the scenes.” Culture Works understands the weight of its responsibility – to be good stewards of the funding entrusted to us while honoring the creative vibrancy offered by our artists and arts organizations at every level.

Is there a precedent for this kind of grantmaking process?

Absolutely! An outcomes-based process with a panel, scoring mechanism, and public grant process is used by the Ohio Arts Council to make funding decisions, and by other state arts councils. The same process is also used by the National Endowment for the Arts and a majority of local area arts agencies across the country. Culture Works is now much more aligned with national standards for best practices through the changes that we have made to our grant making process.

Who serves on the panel?

Culture Works recruits an independent panel of arts administrators, artists, business leaders, and passionate community volunteers to serve on our grant panels.