CITYARTS PROGRAM

2025 Program Guidelines

Please direct all inquiries to:
CulturalGrantMaking@cityofchicago.org

DCASE
Department of Cultural Affairs
and Special Events

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) supports artists and cultural organizations, invests in the creative economy, and expands access and participation in the arts throughout Chicago's 77 neighborhoods. Chicago arts and culture nonprofits of all sizes and artistic disciplines can apply for CityArts general operating grants.

In 2025, the CityArts Program will offer two types of grants:

General Operating Grants for Large Arts & Culture Organizations
For organizations with an average annual revenue over $2M

General Operating Grants for Small Arts & Culture Organizations
For organizations with an average annual revenue under $2M

There will be separate review processes for each grant type. Refer to **Page 10** for instructions on calculating average annual revenue.

There is one intake opportunity for the 2025 CityArts Program. The application deadline for the 2025 CityArts program is **April 4, 2025 at 12:00 noon CT**.

KEY POINTS

Grant Period: If awarded, all 2025 grant funds must be expended by the grantee between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025. Grantees are likely to receive payment by year-end in 2025, but can use the funds to reimburse the organization for expenses incurred earlier in 2025.

Grant Payment: CityArts grantees will receive a single initial payment following the completion of their grant agreement. Upon completion of a 2025 final report, grantees will be eligible for a second renewal payment at the same amount in 2026.

Number of Grants: An estimated 95 - 115 organizations are to be selected through 2025 CityArts.

Consecutive Funding Update: Starting in 2026, an organization can receive CityArts funding for up to two **consecutive** years before it is required to take one year off from applying for or receiving CityArts support.

Please refer to Page 9 for more information.

2025 CITYARTS CALENDAR

All dates are subject to change.

Please visit <u>ChicagoCulturalGrants.org</u> for the most up to date information.

Event	Dates	Description
Application opens	March 2025	Application opens on CyberGrants.
Application assistance	March 2025 -April 4, 2025	CityArts info sessions will be hosted on Zoom. Advance registration is required. Register at <u>ChicagoCulturalGrants.org</u>.
Application deadline	April 4, 2025 at 12:00 noon CT	<u>**No Extensions will be Granted.**</u> Applications should be submitted at least one week before the deadline to avoid technical issues. Any technical issues reported within the week prior to the deadline might not be resolved in time for you to successfully submit your application.
Notification of Results	July 2025	All applicants will be notified via e-mail sent to the address on file in the CyberGrants system.
Contracting period	July - October 2025	Grant agreements and necessary forms to be completed by grantees and processed by the Cultural Grants team and Finance Department.
Payments disbursed	By Year-End 2025	Timeframe is subject to change.
Reports due	January 31, 2026	Reports to be completed electronically.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to apply for a CityArts general operating grant in 2025, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have a primary mission to create, produce, present, provide, or support arts and culture activities or services for the public.

- Offer programs in an artistic discipline, operate as a museum, or serve as an arts service organization.

- Be a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

- Be incorporated in the state of Illinois for at least 12 months prior to applying (must have been incorporated as of January 2024).

- Be a resident company in the city of Chicago with a valid street address (P.O. Boxes will not be accepted).

- Primarily serve the residents of the city of Chicago (demonstrate that, on average, at least half of all programming occurs within city of Chicago limits).

- Not have already received a CityArts general operating award in 2024 that is up for renewal in 2025.

- Not be receiving other significant support (cash or in-kind) from the City of Chicago or a City of Chicago delegate agency. Significant support is defined as more than $2M within the calendar year towards an organization's annual budget.

- Be up to date on DCASE Cultural Grants reports. Past grantees that have not completed required reports for the most recently awarded grant cycle are not eligible.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

NOTE: DCASE can only accept one application per 501(c)(3) through this program.

If your organization is affiliated with a university or similar institution and does not have its own 501(c)(3), either your affiliate organization OR the university can apply.

If the affiliate organization is applying, the grant amount will be determined using the affiliate organization's budget. Please include a statement of commitment from the university or institution with your application.

The following entities cannot be listed as lead applicant on a proposal:

- Organizations with primary office addresses located outside of the city of Chicago.

- Organizations applying using a fiscal agent.

- Organizations applying on behalf of an organization/program for which they serve as a fiscal agent or fiscal sponsor.

- For-profit organizations.

- Public or governmental agencies.

- Schools or school districts.

- Athletic teams, social organizations, fraternal organizations.

- Individuals.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Organization Types: All general operating applicants must choose their organization type from the following list:

- Producing and Presenting Organization
- Arts Education Organization
- Museum/Archive
- Cultural Heritage Center/Group
- Arts Service Organization
- Neighborhood Arts Group

Think about the primary purpose of your organization's current programs, work, strategic plan recommendations and/or goals and the results your organization expects to achieve during 2025. Applicants will be reviewed with evaluation criteria designed specifically for the kind of work they do. If your work falls into multiple categories, you will be able to identify additional organization types.

Average Annual Revenue: **Grant amounts will be based on the organization's average annual revenue over the past three years.** To calculate your organization's annual revenue, subtract all government contributions received (includes federal, state, and municipal/city contributions) and in-kind contributions from your organization's total revenue for that year.

Eligible Expenses: General operating support funds may be used for artistic, administrative and/or program activities including expenses such as salaries, marketing, insurance, supplies, professional services, fees and training.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

About CityArts Grant Renewals

2025 CityArts general operating grants will be renewable for one year. Grantees will be eligible to receive an additional general operating grant in 2026 at the same award amount upon completion of their final report for 2025. Organizations not selected for funding in 2025 will have the opportunity to apply again in 2026.

2024 CityArts general operating grantees should not re-apply in 2025. These grantees are already eligible to receive an additional general operating grant in 2025 upon completion of their 2024 final report. *CityArts general operating grantees awarded in 2023 must re-apply to be considered for 2025 CityArts funding.*

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Consecutive Funding Policy

Starting in 2026, an organization can receive CityArts funding for up to two **consecutive** years before it is required to take one year off from applying for or receiving CityArts support.

Recipients of CityArts 2024-25 funding will not be eligible to apply for funds in 2026. If awarded a CityArts Program grant in this 2025-26 funding cycle, your organization cannot apply in 2027.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Grant Amounts

General Operating grant amounts for selected grantees will be determined as outlined below, based on the organization's average annual revenue over the past three years.

To calculate your organization's **annual revenue**, use this formula:

> **Annual Revenue = Total Revenue – (Government Contributions + In-Kind Contributions)**

To calculate **average annual revenue**, add together annual revenues for the three most recently completed fiscal years of your organization and divide by three.

Grant amounts for organizations that have been in existence for less than three years will be based on their most recently completed fiscal year(s)' annual adjusted income.

Average Annual Revenue of <$10,000
Grant amount will be approximately equal to the organization's average annual revenue

Average Annual Revenue of $10,000 - $100,000
Grant amount will be up to $10,000

Average Annual Revenue of $100,000 - $500,000
Grant amount will be up to 10% of the organization's average annual revenue and no more than $25,000

Average Annual Revenue of $500,000+
Grant amount will be up to 5% of the organization's average annual revenue and no more than $50,000

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

<u>Recipients of Other DCASE Support:</u> DCASE supports local arts and culture organizations in a variety of ways including residencies, performance opportunities, exhibitions, subsidized space/venue rental, etc. Organizations receiving other forms of DCASE support remain eligible to apply; however, priority will be given to those not receiving other DCASE support. You will be asked to identify what and when DCASE support was received in 2024 or will be received in 2025 within the online application.

<u>Demographics and Geographic Dispersion of CityArts Grantees</u>: DCASE's Cultural Grants Program strives for an equitable distribution of artistic services across the city. Grant reviewers will be instructed to take geographic access into account during the review process, taking note of organizations specifically serving residents of Wards which have been historically under-resourced.

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

DCASE CityArts funds cannot be used to support:

- Capital improvements.

- The purchase of permanent, depreciable equipment valued at more than $5,000.

- Fundraising events, religious ceremonies or events, lobbying or campaigning for a candidate or a ballot issue.

- Investment management costs.

- Fines, penalties or settlements.

- Food and beverages.

- Vehicle rental of any kind.

- Travel expenses.

Past grantees that have outstanding required reports for any DCASE Cultural Grants program may not receive additional funds until reports are completed.

NOTE: DCASE is unable to pay grant funds to any organization with outstanding, existing debt with the City of Chicago.

Please set up payment plans or pay off any existing debt (parking tickets, utility bills, etc.) with the Department of Finance: www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/fin.html

HOW TO APPLY

The link to apply to the 2025 CityArts Program is posted on our website at <u>ChicagoCulturalGrants.org</u>.

All applicants must apply using our online CyberGrants application platform by April 4, 2025 at 12:00 noon CT.

Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted or reviewed.

Within the application, you will have the opportunity to identify your organization size, that determines in which applicant pool and what review criteria will be considered for your application.

General Operating Grants for Large Arts & Culture Organizations
For organizations with an average annual revenue over $2M

General Operating Grants for Small Arts & Culture Organizations
For organizations with an average annual revenue under $2M

- Previous applicants can log in using their previously created login information. If you do not remember your login/password, please contact CyberGrants by clicking on the "Have a technical support question for the CyberGrants Team?" link at the bottom of the login page.

- New applicants will be required to register and create an account prior to accessing the applications.

WHAT YOU NEED TO APPLY

- **Responses to Narrative Questions** – Provide details about your organization's work and the ways in which it relates to the goals and priorities of the Cultural Grants program. Please be aware of the character limits listed for each narrative response.

- **Proof of 501(c)(3) Status** – Submit a copy of the most recent first page of the official letter from the Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, designating the organization as tax-exempt.

- **Board of Directors List** – A one-page list including professional affiliations (i.e., place of employment and job title).

- **Key Personnel Biographies** – A one- to two-page document containing brief paragraph descriptions of the key people who lead your organization both artistically and administratively. For the purposes of this requirement, "personnel" should be defined broadly to include full and part-time staff persons, volunteers, contracted artists and/or consultants, including personnel from collaborating organizations.

- **Board and Staff Demographics** – Using the template in the attachments section of the CyberGrants application, outline the demographics of your senior staff and board of directors. You may optionally also include information on other leadership significant to the organization.

WHAT YOU NEED TO APPLY

- **A Recent Work Sample** – A recent and relevant work sample and a description of this work and how it relates to your organization's current work. Applicants may upload JPG images or PDFs OR provide URLs or web links to video or audio recordings or images. **Please note that links to account-based file sharing websites like Dropbox or Google Drive cannot be accepted.**

The work sample plays a critical role in helping grant reviewers to understand and experience your organization's work. Work samples do not need to be professionally produced to demonstrate vibrant programming or artistic excellence. Below are guidelines as to the size/length and number of samples that are appropriate given your discipline:

- Dance/Theater/Music/Performance/Film: Up to 5 minutes of video or sound recordings
- Literary: 10 pages
- Visual Arts: 6-8 images
- Architecture, Art Service Organizations, Design, Interdisciplinary, Media, Curatorial Arts: Any combination of the above, as appropriate

IMPORTANT: Work Sample File Type Updates

Due to changes in the CyberGrants platform, fewer types of files are allowed to be directly uploaded your online application. Refer to the below list of files that are allowable for the CityArts program.
- jpeg/jpg/png/tif/tiff
- pdf
- mp3

Please note some questions will also specify a required file format for that section of the application. Any video files submitted for review must be provided as a link.

WHAT YOU NEED TO APPLY

Financial Information:

- An approved projected budget for the current fiscal year (FY25).
- Financial Statements from the most recently completed fiscal year FY24. FY23 financials can be accepted if your fiscal year end date is between June 30 to December 31.
    – Organizational budget of less than $300,000: Please submit a copy of your Federal Form 990, 990EZ, or 990N e-Postcard.
    – Organizational Budget over $300,000: Please submit Federal Form 990 or your audited financial statements.
    – If your financial statements are from FY23, or if you are submitting your 990N e-Postcard, please also submit a year-end actuals statement for FY24 or a copy of State Form AG990-IL from 2024.

- **Data** about your staff, artists, finances and programming in 2024.

- **Support Documentation** (Optional) – Materials that contribute to the overall narrative of the application or are appropriate to your organization and discipline. These may include critical reviews, letters of support, resumes of artists involved with your organization, promotional materials, public relations materials, research reports, etc. Please do not submit more than three supplemental materials.

- **DataArts DCASE Funder Report** (Optional) – The DataArts Funder Report is an optional component of the CityArts application in 2025. Please visit <u>SMU DataArts</u> for detailed information about how to create a Cultural Data Profile and submit your Funder Report to DCASE.

TIPS FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

- Please read and follow all directions and guidelines to ensure that your application is complete and accurate before submitting.

- You may save your work and return to complete the application at any time before **April 4, 2025 at 12:00 noon CT**.

- Although you may type your responses to application questions directly into the online application, it is a good idea to draft your answers in a separate document, then cut and paste to complete the application. This will prevent any loss of work due to internet connectivity or other technical issues. <u>When pasting from a separate document into the CyberGrants application, be sure to "paste as plain text" to avoid errors</u>.

- Begin your application well before the due date to familiarize yourself with the CyberGrants software system and to allow time to address questions.

- We also strongly recommend beginning by uploading required attachments as this is the most time-consuming portion of the application for many applicants.

- **To avoid errors,** please do not use formatted text (such as italics or bold print) or special characters, such as quotation marks (") or asterisks (*) in your narrative. Please note that all character limits listed are for characters with spaces, and paragraph breaks will also count as characters.

- Please submit your application earlier than the stated deadline. **Applications must be submitted at least one week before the deadline to avoid technical issues.** Any technical issues reported within the week prior to the deadline might not be resolved in time for you to successfully submit your application.

- <u>**Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted or reviewed.**</u>

REVIEW PROCESS

Eligibility Screening

The DCASE Cultural Grants team will review all submitted applications to ensure they have met the minimal eligibility criteria. Those which do not meet the minimal eligibility criteria will not move forward in the review process.

Peer Panel Grant Review

Discipline-specific panels of grant reviewers comprised of artists, arts administrators, arts advocates, arts stakeholders, arts funders, and other experts will be selected.

Consideration is given to creating teams with demographics appropriate for each discipline and reflective of the city as a whole, including artistic expertise, race, gender, geographic knowledge of the city, and cultural understanding. A majority of the grant review panel will be BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color).

Grant reviewers are charged with reviewing eligible proposals, providing extensive comments on each application, and assigning numerical scores using the program review criteria. Each grant reviewer will consider applications in relation to DCASE and Cultural Grants Program goals, CityArts criteria, and compared to other applications from organizations of a similar size and stage of development. Grant reviewers make final funding recommendations to DCASE.

The role of the DCASE staff is to facilitate grant panel review and to aid grant reviewers in finding consensus.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to evaluate general operating proposals:

- **Benefit to the Public and the Sector:** Organization clearly benefits or impacts artists, the arts sector and the public. Organization demonstrates uniqueness within the broader cultural landscape and within its discipline, neighborhood and community. Organization works to attract and sustain audiences for the arts, build community, support Chicago artists and Chicago's arts sector, expand access to arts and culture, enhance the economic impact of the arts and culture in Chicago, increase access to arts programming, or meet the needs of audiences such as youth, senior citizens or people with disabilities.

- **Equity:** Demonstrates clear equity values and goals across race, ethnicity, class, ability, gender and sexual orientation that are evidenced in its strategic planning, policies, artists, staff, board, audience, and artistic work, including programming that fills gaps in Chicago's cultural landscape or highlights underrepresented art forms.

  The City of Chicago defines equity as both an outcome and a process that results in fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive. Please visit the City of Chicago's Office of Equity and Racial Justice for more information about the City of Chicago's Equity Statement of Principles.

- **High-Quality Programs:** Develops high-quality, unique programs aligned with a stated mission. This quality will be determined using all submitted application materials.

- **Organizational Capacity** (relative to organization's size, stage of development and structure): Clear mission and vision, strong and effective leadership, active board, appropriate planning, financial management, goal-setting and assessment of work.

- **Clarity of Application Materials**

REVIEW CRITERIA

All applicants will also be evaluated based on specific criteria associated with their organization type. Please note that the quality of work for Arts Education Organizations will also be evaluated on evidence of a well-thought-out curriculum that is appropriate for the target audience or participants, and on evidence that the work leads to learning or social-emotional development.

Large organizations will need to demonstrate exceptional work across <u>the following three criteria</u> in order to be funded**:**

- **Benefit to the Public and the Sector**
- **Equity**
- **High-Quality Programs**

<u>**HELPFUL LINKS**</u>

DCASE Cultural Grants Website
<u>ChicagoCulturalGrants.org</u>

DCASE Opportunities for Artists & Arts Organizations
<u>https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/dcase_opportunities.html</u>

Ward & Alderman Finder
<u>https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/iframe/lookup_ward_and_alderman.html</u>

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- Applicants will be notified via email about funding decisions. All applicants will be notified, regardless if selected for funding. We anticipate notifications will go out in July 2025.

- If you are selected to receive a grant, you will receive a second email with your contracting materials. You will be required to return a signed grant agreement, a W9 form, an economic disclosure statement, a certificate of insurance with endorsement form, an invoice, and an indebtedness form. Detailed instructions about how to complete these forms will be supplied to you.

- ***Awarded grantees that do not complete grant contracting paperwork within the allowable timeline may be considered as declining their grant award.***

- The contracting process takes an average of 12 weeks after your paperwork is returned to DCASE.

- Once this process is completed, your single one-time payment will be issued.

CONTACT US

Please direct all inquiries to:

CulturalGrantMaking@cityofchicago.org

Cultural Grants Staff

- **Melanie Wang**, Program Director

- **Julie Partynski**, Grants Administrator

- **Carol Crosby**, Grants Coordinator

Division Staff

- **Meida McNeal**, Deputy Commissioner

- **Ebony Johnson**, Staff Assistant

The Cultural Grants staff are always available to answer questions regarding any part of the grant process. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at the contact information above.

Due to the high volume of inquiries, please allow 48 hours for a response.

ChicagoCulturalGrants.org

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