

Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) 2024 Neighborhood Access Program Full Proposal Guidelines

FULL PROPOSAL DEADLINE: Friday, September 6, 2024 at 5pm Central Time

Application link will be emailed to invited finalists.

BY INVITATION ONLY: The City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is currently accepting full proposals for its Neighborhood Access Program. The goal of this program is to support the cultural vitality of every neighborhood via grant programs and partnerships designed to be responsive to the complex needs of individual communities. This program offers direct grants for all types of community-based arts and culture activities.

Mayor Brandon Johnson and DCASE are committed to directing significant funding to Chicago's neighborhoods, and prioritizing areas that have suffered from a history of disinvestment. We know that these neighborhoods are vibrant and densely populated with artists, yet they remain under-resourced by our grant programs.

This program was created to support arts and culture activities in all neighborhoods with a focus on those that have traditionally not received significant funding through DCASE's Cultural Grants Program, and to collaborate with other City departments to make a collective impact on neighborhoods identified through other City initiatives.

This program seeks to increase access to DCASE funding with expanded eligibility criteria and a two-part application process. The full proposal phase includes the submission of supporting documents and responses to narrative questions.

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DCASE Contact Information

Please direct all inquiries to:

CulturalGrantMaking@cityofchicago.org

The City of Chicago is located on land that is and has long been a center for Native peoples. The area is the traditional homelands of the Anishinaabe, or the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations. Many other Nations consider this area their traditional homeland, including the Myaamia, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Wea, Kickapoo, and Mascouten. The City specifically acknowledges the contributions of Kitihawa of the Potawatomi in fostering the community that has become Chicago. We acknowledge all Native peoples who came before us and who continue to contribute to our City. We are committed to promoting Native cultural heritage.

Priority Neighborhoods

This is a citywide program, open to applicants located in any Chicago neighborhood.

We will prioritize funding applicants and projects located in the following neighborhoods:

Archer Heights, Armour Square, Auburn Gresham, Austin, Avalon Park, Belmont Cragin, Bronzeville (Douglas, Oakland, Kenwood, Grand Boulevard), Burnside, Chatham, Chicago Lawn, East and West Garfield Park, Fuller Park, Gage Park, Greater Englewood (Englewood, West Englewood), Greater Grand Crossing, Greater Roseland (Roseland, Pullman, West Pullman), Hegewisch, Humboldt Park, Montclare, Morgan Park, New City, North Lawndale, Riverdale, South Chicago, South Deering, South Lawndale, South Shore, Washington Park, West Elsdon.

These include:

- Community areas identified through the [People's Plan for Community Safety](#) and [My Chi My Future](#) initiatives.
- Additional LMI (Low and Moderate Income) areas that received the lowest number of grant awards in the prior two years of DCASE Cultural Grants programs.
- Past priority neighborhoods to benefit from sustained support to historically under-resourced communities.

Overview of Project Ideas

Project ideas can be anything from a physical artwork to a series of workshops/classes to a performance, happening or cultural event, focused on any artistic discipline including architecture, culinary arts, curatorial arts, dance, design, film, literary arts, media arts, music, performance art, photography, public art, social practice, theater, or visual arts.

Projects can be ongoing or new.

Projects must have these elements:

- Projects must have a primary goal to serve residents of a specific neighborhood or community.
- Projects must engage neighborhood residents as participants or audiences between October 1, 2024 and December 31, 2025.
- Lead applicant's primary residence/address must be in the neighborhood where this engagement will take place. This lead applicant can be an organization leading the project, or the lead artist, producer or curator for the project.

We welcome projects that:

- Are first-time collaborations between individuals or organizations.
- Are one-time activations or events – projects do not need to be permanent installations or art works.

We strongly encourage:

- Projects that are broadly accessible.
- Cross-industry collaborations.
- Artist-led projects that activate Chicago communities and institutions to address broader social issues, opportunities, and challenges.
- Projects that use art to inspire community organizing, civic engagement and participation.
- Projects that activate vacant or underutilized spaces.
- Projects that seek to celebrate and preserve the cultural traditions of underrepresented or historically marginalized groups.
- Projects that connect youth to arts programming.
- Projects that address public safety, equity, and access through art.
- Projects that recognize and illuminate the character defining attributes of Chicago's neighborhoods.
- Projects that increase dialogue, civic discourse, and exchange around Chicago's unique social issues.

Eligibility Criteria for Applicants

DCASE can only accept one idea submission per applicant.

To be eligible to apply for a Neighborhood Access Program grant, the lead applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Must reside/be located in the city of Chicago with a valid street address.
- Must reside/be located in the neighborhood/community area where the arts project or cultural activity will take place.
- Individual applicants must be at least 18 years of age.

Organizations and individuals located outside of the neighborhood where their project will take place are welcome to apply as a partner with an eligible individual or organization.

The following entities may apply for a Neighborhood Access Program grant:

- Any nonprofit organization, Special Service Area (SSAs) or Chamber of Commerce with 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) status, including religious institutions that provide significant services to the community that are non-religious in nature.
- National nonprofit organizations with a Chicago branch.
- Individual artists, cultural producers, or curators.
- Individuals/collectives applying with a nonprofit fiscal sponsor with 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) status.
- Low-profit limited liability companies (L3Cs).

The following entities cannot be listed as the lead applicant on a proposal. However, collaborations with these entities are welcome.

- For-profit businesses that are not incorporated as an L3C.
- Municipal departments and their affiliate 501c3s, including libraries, parks, transit, and family services agencies.
- City of Chicago employees.
- Recipients of CityArts Project, Together We Heal Creative Place Program, Millennium Park Residency Program, Chicago Presents, or Chicago Arts Recovery Program grants that are currently in effect with the City of Chicago. CityArts general operating grantees remain eligible for funding.
- Organizations and individuals receiving other forms of DCASE support remain eligible to apply; however, priority will be given to those not receiving other DCASE support.
- Artists and organizations can receive funding through the Neighborhood Access program for up to **two consecutive** years before being required to take one year off from applying. If you received a grant in 2022 **and** 2023, you may not apply for the 2024 cycle.

Funds cannot be used to support:

- Capital improvements or the purchase of a single, permanent, depreciable equipment item valued at more than \$5,000.
- Fundraising events, religious ceremonies or events, or campaigning for a candidate or a ballot issue.
- Vehicle rental of any kind.
- Travel expenses.
- Artists or organizations with outstanding, existing debt with the City of Chicago. Debt does not need to be resolved prior to submitting an idea but will need to be in order to receive a payment from the City. 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

For Individual Applicants:

- All NAP grant recipients will be taxed on the amount awarded. The percentage will be based on your taxable income bracket. The City of Chicago Comptroller's office will send a 1099 Form to the lead applicant/artist on each project. Estimated taxes may be incorporated into the project budget.
- Up to 25% of the grant funds may be used to pay oneself for their work.
- If the grant amount awarded is \$15,000 or more, a non-profit [501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6)] fiscal sponsor must be used. DCASE can assist in finding a sponsor if needed.

Grant Details

- Grant requests can range from \$5,000 - \$50,000.
- Applicants can request up to \$50,000 regardless of their budget size.
- We anticipate making 10 – 40 grants through this program.

Review Process and Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by an external grant review panel including residents of priority neighborhoods and multi-disciplinary arts experts. Consideration is given to creating review panels 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). This panel will select finalists to interview, participate in interviews, review full proposals and make final funding recommendations to DCASE.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Strength of proposed project:** The proposed project possesses artistic merit and vision alongside quality, meaningful opportunities to engage neighborhood residents in arts and culture activities. Project seems feasible based on applicant experience and description, supported by project details provided in full proposal (e.g., reasonable timeline, budget, and methods to measure success).
- **Increasing Access:** Project takes place within a priority neighborhood, activating vacant or underutilized spaces, and/or supporting historically disinvested neighborhoods and populations. Project includes clearly outlined plans for promoting the project throughout the community with significant thought to inclusion and accessibility.
- **Benefit to communities:** The project's potential to benefit Chicago residents and impact communities through cultural programming. Project has a wide and expansive reach or provides deep, enriching experiences for participants. Project demonstrates an understanding of the community that builds upon relationships with residents and/or shows a lasting interest or intention to continue the work.
- **Community experience:** The applicant demonstrates a depth of experience, relationships and engagement with artists and partners in identified communities/neighborhoods. Applicant materials show their commitment to involving members of the community to ensure the project is informed by their input.

Timeline *All dates are subject to change**

Event	Dates
Idea Submission Portal opens	April 22, 2024
Idea Submission deadline	Friday, May 17, 2024 5:00 PM CST – No Extensions will be granted
Notifications	July 31, 2024 – All applicants will be notified if they have been selected as a finalist or not.
Finalists Proposals Deadline	September 6, 2024 – Finalists have 5 weeks to gather supporting documents
Final Notifications	October 31, 2024 – All finalists will be notified if they have been selected for a grant or not.
Payments Disbursed	December 2024 or February 2025 – Grants will be made in a single, one-time payment.
Grant Period	October 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025. This is the time during which grant funds must be spent.

How to Apply

Application link will be emailed to finalists separately. Once logged in, click on “Revise” to begin the full proposal. You will need the items listed below. Examples and templates will be available for use as needed, but not required – EXCEPT for the Excel templates for demographics embedded in the application online.

FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Several required sections will automatically populate from your Idea Submission and cannot be edited. Below summarizes additional information to provide for your Full Proposal.

Project Budget – A budget for the proposed project identifying all expenses as well as any other sources of income/support, whether secured or potential.

Timeline – a bulleted list of key dates and activities.

Marketing and Promotion Plan – a brief description of how you will promote, advertise, and market this program.

Key Personnel Biographies – A one-to-two page document containing brief paragraph descriptions of the key people who will lead this project/programming. Biographical information should be brief but may include achievements, activities, awards, publications, education, etc. 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 directly involved with the project.

Personnel Demographics – Using the template in the attachments section of the CyberGrants application, outline the demographics of all leadership, support staff, and volunteers working on the project.

Work Sample – A recent and relevant work sample and a description of this work and how it relates to the proposed project. The work sample should showcase the lead applicant’s experience completing or executing a similar project as outlined in the NAP application.

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 work. Work samples do not need to be professionally produced to demonstrate vibrant programming or artistic merit. Below are guidelines as to the size/length and number of samples that are appropriate by artistic discipline:

- Film & Media Arts, Performing Arts (Theater/Dance), Music: Up to 5 minutes of video or sound recordings
- Literary Arts: No more than 10 pages
- Visual Arts/Design: 8-10 images
- Culinary Arts, Multi-Disciplinary, Other: Any combination of the above, as appropriate

Narrative Questions – you have the option of responding with a written narrative, via a video or audio recording, or in an online interview.

- If writing your answers, please note the character limits in each field.
- Video or audio recordings must be no longer than 20 minutes total.
- Interviews will take place during the week of August 26. The deadline to sign up for an interview slot is Friday, August 16. The interview will be no longer than 25 minutes.

If you do not request an interview by Friday, August 16, you must provide responses as written narrative or via video or audio recording for your proposal to be considered complete.

The questions are:

1. **Proposed Project** Describe this project in as much detail as possible. Be sure to include the "nuts and bolts" of the program: who (leadership), what (activities), where (location), when (dates), and how (process and/or management).
2. **Increasing Access** Describe the community you will serve with this project. How will the project increase access to arts and culture in your neighborhood? How will you ensure Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility for your participants and audiences –

including the needs of people with disabilities and BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, or other diverse populations?

3. **Benefit to Communities** How will the project benefit your community? Outline the purpose and goals of the project and how you will measure success. What do you hope the long-term impact will be for you and your neighbors?
4. **Community Experience** What is your relationship to the community, and why is this project important to you? What past or future input have you sought from community members that will shape the project?

ADDITIONAL, FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

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

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.

Financial Information

- An approved projected budget for the current fiscal year.
- Financial Statements from the most recently completed fiscal year.
 - Organizational budget of less than \$300,000: Please submit a copy of your Federal Form 990, 990EZ, or 990N e-Postcard. If your organization filed a 990N e-postcard, please also submit State Form AG990/AG990-IL OR a board approved year-end financial statement.
 - Organizational Budget over \$300,000: Please submit Federal Form 990 or your audited financial statements.

ADDITIONAL, FOR INDIVIDUALS

Resume, List of Experience, or Bio – Upload ONE of these three options that outlines all relevant experience.

Demographic Information – DCASE strives to track demographic data on our applicants and grantees. We request applicants to self-identify their demographics. If there is any demographic information you would prefer not to share, please select the "Prefer Not to Answer" option.

ADDITIONAL, FOR LOW-PROFIT LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANIES (L3Cs)

Financial Information

- The final income statement and balance sheet for your business from the most recently completed fiscal year.
- Actual year-end expenses for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- Your business's projected income statement for the current fiscal year. Please do NOT include in-kind contributions in this budget.
- Proposed total expenses for the current fiscal year.

AS APPROPRIATE

Partner(s) Statement of Commitment – Required if the project includes working with another organization, or a specific artist, consultant, contractor, etc. Please submit letters of commitment from these project partners as an indication of their awareness of and commitment to this proposal.

Fiscal Agent Statement of Commitment – If you are an artist or collective applying with a fiscal agent or sponsor, please include a statement from the fiscal agent documenting their awareness of the use of their proof of nonprofit status for this application.