

# Arts Pathways for Youth Success

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## Support for arts learning programs preparing underserved and underrepresented youth for success.

Funding will depend upon an organization's rating in the review process and upon the total amount of funds available to the Commission for grant allocation. This grant program is competitive, and most grant requests are not fully funded.

### Arts Pathways for Youth Success Fiscal Year 2025 Guidelines

Arts Pathways for Youth Success grants provide funds for **out-of-school time** projects serving youth from communities and groups that have been traditionally underserved and underrepresented, meeting the following objective and one or more strategies:

**Objective:** Prepare students for success in school, career and life through the arts.

- **Strategy 1:** Advance arts education and arts integration initiatives that develop 21st century learning and literacy skills.
- **Strategy 2:** Nurture initiatives that build skills to prepare students for jobs in the creative sector.
- **Strategy 3:** Encourage positive youth development through the arts.

#### Description

This category provides funds **up to \$25,000** to support **out-of-school time**, arts learning programs designed for underserved and underrepresented youth in grades PK-12, which may include ethnic groups\*, youth with disabilities, and youth from low-income backgrounds. To discuss other possible groups of underserved and underrepresented youth, please contact Director of Arts Education Chris Sweatt at [chris.sweatt@tn.gov](mailto:chris.sweatt@tn.gov) or 615-253-8914.

*\*Ethnic groups are defined as Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander or other groups that constitute less than the state's current majority population.*

Eligible projects must provide hands-on, experiential arts learning activities. Professional artists must be integral to the project and provide primary instruction in one or more of the following artistic disciplines: performing, visual, literary, and/or folk arts.

Projects using **Strategy 1** are encouraged to:

- demonstrate a commitment to the artistic advancement of skills and knowledge for students.
- link content to arts and non-arts (if applicable) state and/or national curriculum standards and explain how the standards will be incorporated as part of instruction.
- explain how standards relate to the project outcomes being evaluated.

Do not simply list the standards. To view the state curriculum standards, visit the [TN Department of Education's website](#).

Projects using **Strategy 2** are encouraged to:

- offer work-based learning opportunities to shadow professionals in the creative sector.

- incorporate portfolios for students to demonstrate skills development.

For more information on work-based learning, visit the [Tennessee Department of Education's website on Career & Technical Education](#).

Projects using **Strategy 3** are encouraged to:

- create a safe and affirming environment conducive to positive youth development through the arts.
- foster relationship-building and social skill development through small-group interaction, collaboration with professional and student artists, and community engagement.
- promote student ownership by involving participants in planning, leadership roles, and developing student voice.

For more information on arts-based positive youth development, visit the [Creative Youth Development National Partnership's website](#).

A project may not begin until **July 1, 2024** and must conclude by **June 15, 2025**.

Eligibility

First-time applicants should contact Chris Sweatt at [chris.sweatt@tn.gov](mailto:chris.sweatt@tn.gov) or 615-253-8914 prior to submitting an application to verify eligibility.

Applicants may not apply for funds for the same project in another Commission grant category in the same fiscal year.

Applicants must be one of the following:

- nonprofit organizations or government agencies with a primary mission to serve youth
- libraries
- nonprofit arts organizations ([See Glossary to define arts organizations](#))
- PK-12 schools or school systems (public or schools with nonprofit 501(c)3 status)

Debarment and Suspension. Grantees are required to sign contracts certifying to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it, its current and future principals, its current and future subcontractors and their principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal or state department or agency.

Arts organizations that receive revenue directly from a "New Specialty Earmarked Plate" under T.C.A 55-4-301 (a)(1) are ineligible for Commission grant funding.

**Unique Entity ID (UEI):** All applicants are required to have a Unique Entity ID. [UEI information and application instructions can be found here.](#)

### **Affirmative Duty to Report Major Organizational Change**

Any grantee shall promptly notify the State in writing of any significant changes in the organization's structure, leadership or financial circumstances that could affect services provided under the grant contract resulting from this application.

Accessibility

All Tennessee Arts Commission sponsored programs, services, and facilities are fully accessible to all Tennessee artists and citizens. Artists representing Tennessee's diverse artistic and cultural heritage are urged to apply and participate in programs and activities. No person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, religion or sex shall be excluded from participation in, or be denied benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination of services, programs and employment provided by the Commission and its contracting agencies. If an individual believes they have been subjected to discrimination, they should contact the Commission's Director of Arts Access, [Kim Johnson](#), (615) 532-9797.

Appropriate Funding

column in the budget. However, applicants are encouraged to request to spend the grant funding in as few expense categories as possible. Eligible expenses include:

- **NEW:** Permanent education staff salaries including administrators or teaching artists (Based on the percentage of time spent on the project. This is particularly important for applicants that also receive an Operating Support grant covering permanent staff salaries.)
- Professional contracted artist fees
- In-state travel and/or lodging for artists
- Space rental (for locations in which the applicant must pay to use and is not currently renting)
- Marketing
- Consumable supplies related to the project

The Tennessee Arts Commission reserves the right to deny any application, if the proposed activity is outside of the scope of spirit of the agency's mission, purpose, or this grant program.

#### Inappropriate Activities

- Projects in which the artist is to serve as the arts teacher in the absence of any ongoing arts education programs
- Incentives for participation
- Cash awards
- Performances, demonstrations, or exhibits with only minimal impact and limited hands-on participation
- Field trips
- Competitions and/or tours in which students are presenting, performing, and/or exhibiting
- Out-of-state travel
- Individual private lesson instruction
- Payment for apprentices or interns
- Capital outlay for permanent or non-consumable materials or equipment purchases (such as musical instruments, books, cameras, easels, etc.)
- Planned fundraising activities
- After-school clubs
- Scholarships or competitions
- Food
- Grant writing fees
- Non-classical art forms including, but not limited to culinary arts, martial arts, healing arts, exercise programs, acrobatics or gymnastics (exceptions exist – contact the Commission for details)
- Payments to an employee or official of the State of Tennessee (exceptions exist – contact the Commission for details)
- Guest artists to exhibit, direct, choreograph or conduct productions or performances who are not engaged in active instruction with participants. for example, funds are not eligible to support a guest conductor who travels in to conduct a final showcase, but who has not been active in the learning and rehearsal process; or for a choreographer who supplies their work via video recording for another instructor to translate to students.

#### Matching Funds & In-Kind Contributions

Arts Pathways for Youth Success grants do not require a dollar-for-dollar match; however, however, applicants are asked to show a match in the application as part of the Entire Project Budget, if applicable. In-kind contributions cannot be used for cash match purposes but may strengthen the application. In the space provided for in-kind contributions, show the monetary value of services and supplies donated to the program free of charge.

#### Program Requirements

Application must:

- have a single project focus. Organizations with expansive arts education programs should narrow their focus to one project.
- align with with one or more of the three strategies listed in these guidelines. The application narrative should include an indication which strategy or strategies align with the project.

- include an instructional component that clearly defines the goals and objectives of the project, provides learners with historical and/or social context, and demonstrates and/or reinforces the skill sets needed for the artistic medium being used. The instructional component details the content of the project – how subject matter will be taught and reinforced, the goals of the project, hands-on activities, and any problem-solving or critical thinking components. A sample lesson plan or content outline from one class session must be submitted in the Documents section of the application.
- include an evaluation component that measures the planning, implementation, and successes of the program and addresses plans for improvements or expansion of future projects. Evaluations should effectively measure the goals and objectives (outcomes) of the project and reflect whether or not those outcomes were sufficiently met.
- involve at least one supplemental activity to share with the broader community, demonstrate learning, or deepen instruction such as:
  - “End-of-project” sharing event, such as a performance, exhibition, reading, or presentation that demonstrates what the students learned for parents, school personnel, and the community.
  - Participatory family night that involves adults and students in joint hands-on arts activities as they relate to the project.
  - Related arts field trip to a museum gallery, concert, or performance for the participants which includes a guided lesson. (NOTE: Grant funds may not be used to pay for field trips but admission costs and transportation can be used as part of the applicant’s match.)

#### Evaluation Criteria

Advisory panels reviewing grant applications for this program use the following evaluation criteria citing evidence that the:

- proposed project demonstrates artistic, cultural and/or educational value to the community being served (10 points)
- proposed project advances the organization’s mission to the community being served (10 points)
- organization understands and is responsive to the diverse interests and needs of the community it serves (10 points)
- proposed project supports the work of artists through payment of fees, services or appropriate benefits (10 points)
- organization understands and acts as an advocate for the public value of the arts in the community (10 points)
- planning procedures are comprehensive, inclusive and communicated (10 points)
- organization understands principles of documentation and evaluation and results are used to guide future planning and programming (10 points)
- organization understands and demonstrates the value of public and private partnerships (5 points)
- organization demonstrates financial stability and a broad base of financial support (5 points)
- organization’s ability to carry out proposed project based on history of Commission funding (10 points)
- the organization’s application is well planned, addresses all questions, and is correct and
- complete in all information provided (10 points)

#### Deadline & How to Apply

1. For new applicants, contact Director of Arts Education Chris Sweatt at [chris.sweatt@tn.gov](mailto:chris.sweatt@tn.gov) or 615-253-8914 to discuss eligibility.
2. Register in the Online Grants System ([a link of the Online Grants System may be found here](#)) to use the Online Grants System. You are strongly advised to register well in advance to the application deadline. Anyone registering close to the deadline date can expect delays in the processing of their grant application.
3. Log in to the Online Grants System to complete your “Organization” profile and begin an application.
4. Use the “Organizations” link to the left in your Online Grants System portal to ensure that the record is complete and accurate. This information is as important as the application itself, and incomplete or erroneous data will impact your chances for funding. To open the record for completing/editing, click the “Edit” button at the top of the Organizations screen.
5. Use the “People” link to ensure that the record is complete and accurate. This information will also be used in the review of the application. To open the record for editing, click the edit button at the top of the screen.
6. When both your “Organization” and “People” profiles are complete and accurate, select the “Apply for Grants” tab again and click the “Apply for an Annual Grant” link listed on the page.

8. Create and upload required attachments.
9. Submit by **Tuesday, January 16, 2024, by 11:59 p.m. (CST).**

**NOTE:** The forms in this portal do not auto-save. Always click the “Save” button before navigating away from the form you are editing to save your work.

Beware that clicking the back navigation button on your web browser will exit you from the system and you will lose your work.

Association or Connection to Multiple Organizations: If you are associated with more than one organization, the organization that you were originally associated with will pre-populate in the organization name field on any newly opened application. To change to another associated organization, simply delete the pre-populated name and type in the correct organization.

#### Required Documents

You will be prompted to create and upload the following documents in the **Required Documents** section of your Annual Application in the Online Grants System.

1. **Proof of Arts Advocacy.** Advocacy is educating and communicating to the public, including public officials, the importance of the arts and how public support of the arts can and has impacted your community. Examples of arts advocacy proof may include membership in Tennesseans for the Arts, copies of **recent** letters or emails (within the last 12 months) to state legislators and other state/local elected officials, photos of state/local elected officials at the applicant’s arts events, newspaper articles or social media posts that create awareness about public support for the arts through the organization’s activities (news articles that primarily market events are not acceptable), promoting the Specialty License Plate program and other pertinent print materials. **Proof of advocacy must be demonstrated by the applicant organization.** Applicants may **not** submit advocacy efforts conducted by contracted personnel. Multiple examples of arts advocacy will strengthen the application, but only one example that proves advocacy is required.
2. **Evaluation Tools:** Upload one sample of each type of evaluation tool that will be used during the project as one uploaded document. Do NOT include several completed evaluation instruments as part of the application.
3. **Lesson Plan or Content Outline:** Insert one sample lesson plan for one lesson that will be taught as part of the proposed project (limit 5 pages). Do **NOT** send lesson samples for the entire project or for more than one lesson. Samples should include instructional objectives and method of assessment. A content outline is a less formal version of a lesson plan but should still include instructional objectives and method of assessment.
4. **Schedule:** Outline the schedule of activities with as much detail as possible, such as the daily and/or weekly schedule for both students and staff.
5. **Board of Directors List: Only nonprofit organizations with 501(c)3 status upload this document. Entities of government and PK-12 public schools do not provide a Board of Directors List.** Note that Commission staff may request that grantees provide additional information about the board including but not limited to contact information and occupation during the grant period.

The board list (at the time of application) must include only the following:

- Full Name
- Email address
- Number of years on the board
- Length of term(s)

- **NOTE:** Double check your board list to make sure it has all 4 pieces of the required information. If your organization’s bylaws do not require term limits, include a statement on the Board List indicating this. **Legal requirements state that Commission funds granted to an organization may not be used as a payment of any kind, for any purpose, to members of an organization’s board.**

6. **Corporation Annual Report: Only nonprofit organizations with 501(c)3 status upload this document.** In lieu of the report required to be filed annually with the Secretary of State’s Office, you may also submit a copy of the email verification issued by the Secretary of State’s Office or a copy of the online verification sheet maintained by the **Secretary of State’s Office found here.**

section) of your Annual Application in the Online Grants System. Please note that you will **NOT** be prompted to upload these documents in the system, but these documents may be required based on your application type.

1. **Evaluation Summary: Only required for continuing projects** funded in the last fiscal year. Provide qualitative and quantitative data collected from evaluations from the previous year's funded project.
2. **Optional Support Material(s):** It is strongly encouraged that the applicant uploads support materials that showcase the project.
  - Support materials can include but are not limited to: artist resumes, reviews, clippings, photos, brochures, artistic samples, monitoring plans, and links to videos directly related to the application proposal.
  - Accepted file types include .pdf, .jpg, or .png. For video and audio samples, provide links to projects in the section labeled "Optional Material Link(s)" below the "Documents" section.

If applicable, create and upload the following document in the **Organization** profile in your portal of the Online Grants System.

1. **Bylaws: Only nonprofit organizations with 501(c)3 status upload this document.** Upload the most recent copy of the Bylaws of the organization in the Organization profile.

### For Projects Occurring

FY2025: July 1, 2024-June 15, 2025

### Application Dates & Deadlines

Application Open as of 11/1/2023

Application Deadline 1/16/2024

[Apply Now](#)

### Eligible Applicants

501(c)3 nonprofit organizations or government agencies with a primary mission to serve youth libraries

501(c)3 nonprofit arts organizations

PK-12 schools or school systems

### Funding Requests

Up to \$25,000

This grant does not require a match.



**Address:** 401 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Nashville, TN 37243  
**Phone:** 615-741-1701  
 For accessibility accommodation requests including alternate digital formats, captioning, ASL, and assistive technologies please contact Kim Johnson, Director of Arts Access, 615-532-9797.



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