



New Name! GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS Level II

Formerly General Operating Support Grants for Large Arts & Humanities Organizations

FY21 – FY22 GUIDELINES

SUBMISSION DETAILS

Letter of Intent (LOI) DEADLINE: Friday, February 14, 2020 – 11:59 p.m.

Application DEADLINE: Friday, March 13, 2020 – 11:59 p.m.

Applications will be accepted for activities occurring from
July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.

The grant award announcement will occur in June 2020.

First-time applicants are highly encouraged to contact Grants Program staff.

**Letters of Intent, Applications, and all relevant materials must be submitted
online at <http://artsandhumanities.fluidreview.com>**

Late Letters of Intent, Applications, and materials will not be accepted.

*All grant funding is subject to fiscal appropriation, reduction or termination
by the Montgomery County Government.*

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The Mission of the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County

The Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC), in partnership with the community, cultivates and supports excellence in the arts and the humanities, expands access to cultural expression, and contributes to economic vitality in the region.

Equity and Inclusion

With the acknowledgement and understanding that access to resources has been historically limited for certain groups of people, AHCMC is committed to cultural equity within all funding activities and to serving communities that have been traditionally underrepresented in mainstream funding, discourse, leadership, and resource allocation including, but not limited to, African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American (ALAANA) constituents, socio-economically disadvantaged communities, differently abled individuals, and LGBTQ+ communities.

ADA Compliance

Funded projects should be accessible to people with disabilities. AHCMC encourages applicants to consider physical and programmatic accessibility as an integral part of the project planning and budgeting process. Applicants may include the cost of access accommodations as part of their project’s budget, for example, sign interpreters, audio describers, etc. Tips for how to implement project accessibility can be found [here](#).

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Introduction

General Operating Support II Grants (GOS II) are available to nonprofit arts and humanities organizations that had both cash operating expenses and cash operating income of more than \$150,000 during its most recently completed fiscal year. Grants are also available for an arts and/or humanities division within an umbrella nonprofit organization, provided that the division's cash operating expenses and cash operating income were more than \$150,000 during the most recently completed fiscal year.

Purpose

By awarding *GOS II Grants*, the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCRC) seeks to:

- Encourage organizations to maintain an active, two-way, ongoing relationship between the organization and the community in the planning, participation, and evaluation of public activity/activities, which include intentional strategies for diversity, equity, access, and inclusion;
- Promote stability in arts and humanities organizations by providing a base of funding to support operating budgets;
- Help ensure diverse arts and humanities experiences for constituents of Montgomery County;
- Stimulate local support and involvement in the arts and humanities, including volunteer participation, audience development, and financial contributions;
- Strengthen the scholarly and artistic capabilities of arts and humanities organizations;
- Improve and/or stabilize the management infrastructure and effectiveness of arts and humanities organizations.

NEW in FY21: Multi-Year (2-Year) Grants

Grants for FY21-FY22 will be awarded for activities occurring from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.

Grant Award Determination

The grant awards for successful *GOS II* applicants are based on a percentage of the organization's average total allowable cash expenses and/or allowable cash income during the past three consecutive completed fiscal years, the panel's ratings, total number of eligible applicants, and the public dollars available. **No grant award will exceed \$600,000.**

Letter of Intent (LOI)

All organizations planning to apply for an FY21 *GOS II Grant* must submit a *Letter of Intent* through AHCRC's online grant application system at <http://artsandhumanities.fluidreview.com> **no later than 11:59 p.m. on Friday, February 14, 2020.**

- Failure to submit a *Letter of Intent* through AHCRC's online grant application system will result in the applicant being deemed ineligible to apply for a FY21 *GOS II Grant*.

Two-Year Reporting Requirements

All FY21 – FY22 *GOS II Grant* recipients will submit four online reports throughout the cycle: two mid-year and two year-end reports in both 2021 and 2022. These reports allow AHCRC staff understand progress made against goals, offer support where necessary, and provide an opportunity for organizations to reflect on their activities during the year. Reports consist of a narrative portion, updated financial documentation, and other required support material. Organizations must submit their FY20 990 and audit and sign an FY22 grant agreement in order to receive FY22 funding. Instructions will be posted online in advance of deadlines. **Late reports may incur a 5% grant reduction and/or final grant disbursements may be revoked.**

FY21 GOS II Grants Estimated Timeline

Webinars and Workshops	January 2020
Letter of Intent Deadline	February 2020
Full Application Deadline	March 2020
Panel Review	April/May 2020
Award Announcement	June 2020
FY21 Mid-Year Report	January 2021
FY21 Final Report	July 2021
FY22 Mid-Year Report	January 2022
FY22 Final Report	July 2022

Organization Eligibility Requirements

An organization is eligible to apply for FY20 *GOS II Grant* if it is not applying in any other AHCMC grant category within the same fiscal year, with the exception of the *Advancement Grants* or *Capital Improvement Project Grants*, and if the applicant qualifies as (A) Core Arts or Humanities Organization; (B) Affiliate Arts or Humanities Organization; or (C) Associate Arts or Humanities Organization, as defined below.

An organization is a **Core Arts or Humanities Organization** if it meets all the following criteria for at least the previous three consecutive fiscal years immediately prior to the application deadline **and continues to meet these criteria in both FY21 and FY22:**

- Has as its primary mission the exhibition, presentation, production or performance of, and/or education in, an arts and/or humanities discipline, and/or provides support services for artists and/or scholars and/or for arts and/or humanities organizations;
- Had both cash operating expenses and cash operating income of more than \$150,000 (see definition of cash operating expenses/income in the Eligible Budget Requirement section on page 6);
- Demonstrates 501(c)(3) status through one of the following ways:
 - The applicant has 501 (c)(3) status, as evidenced by their IRS Letter of Determination;
 - It operates as a specific arts and/or humanities entity or division within a larger 501 (c)(3) organization whose primary mission is not arts or humanities based; or
- Has its primary office in Montgomery County;
- Is governed by an independent, legally liable Board of Directors operating under a mission statement for the organization and an operating budget specific to the organization;
- A minimum of 40% of the applicant organization’s Board members reside and/or work in Montgomery County at the application deadline;
- Has a full-time (35-hours or more) paid executive director, CEO, managing director, or comparable position, who reports directly to the organization’s Board of Directors and has had that position filled for no fewer than six of the 12-months prior to submitting the application;
- Must be able to provide audits for the past three completed fiscal years;
- Offers no less than 51% of its programs and services in Montgomery County and these programs and services are open to the public, with or without an admission fee; and
- Has fulfilled all outstanding requirements for any grant(s) received from the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County in prior years.

An organization is an **Affiliate Arts or Humanities Organization** if it has met all the following criteria for at least the previous three consecutive fiscal years immediately prior to the application deadline **and continues to meet these criteria in both FY21 and FY22**:

- Has as its primary mission the exhibition, presentation, production or performance of, and/or education in, an arts and/or humanities discipline, and/or provides support services to artists and/or scholars and to arts and/or humanities organizations;
- Had both cash operating expenses and cash operating income for its Montgomery County programming during the previous consecutive three fiscal years of more than \$150,000 (as defined in Additional Requirements for Affiliate Organizations) and
- Demonstrates 501(c)(3) status through one of the following ways:
 - The applicant has 501 (c)(3) status, as evidenced by their IRS Letter of Determination;
 - It operates as a specific arts and/or humanities entity or division within a larger 501(c)(3) organization whose primary mission is not arts or humanities based; or
- Has its primary office outside of Montgomery County, but:
 - Has a local (such as 301 or 240 exchange) telephone number; and
 - Has staff present on the premises of a Core Arts or Humanities Organization at least 1,000 hours a year distributed over no fewer than 40-weeks during the year;
- Is governed by an independent legally liable Board of Directors operating under a mission statement for the organization and an operating budget specific to the organization;
- Has a minimum of 15% of the applicant organization's Board members reside and/or work in Montgomery County at the application deadline;
- Has a full-time (35-hours or more) paid executive director, CEO, managing director, or comparable position, who reports directly to the organization's Board of Directors and has had that position filled for no fewer than six of the 12-months prior to submitting the application;
- Must be able to provide audits for the past three completed fiscal years;
- Has an agreement with a Core Arts or Humanities Organization to provide a regular season of programming and/or educational services at the facility of the Core Arts or Humanities Organization; and
- Has fulfilled all outstanding requirements for any grant(s) received from the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County in prior years.

An organization is an **Associate Arts or Humanities Organization** if it meets all the following criteria for at least the previous three consecutive fiscal years immediately prior to the application deadline **and continues to meet these criteria in both FY21 and FY22**:

- Has as its primary mission the exhibition, presentation, production or performance of, and/or education in, an arts and/or humanities discipline, and/or provides support services for artists and/or scholars and for arts and/or humanities organizations;
- Had both cash operating expenses and cash operating income for its Montgomery County programming of more than \$150,000 (as defined in Additional Requirements for Associate Organizations);
- Demonstrates 501(c)(3) status through one of the following ways:
 - The applicant has 501 (c)(3) status, as evidenced by their IRS Letter of Determination;
 - It operates as a specific arts and/or humanities entity or division within a larger 501(c)(3) organization whose primary mission is not arts or humanities based; or

- Has had its primary office in Montgomery County;
- Is governed by an independent legally liable Board of Directors operating under a mission statement for the organization and an operating budget specific to the organization;
- Has a minimum of 40% of the applicant organization’s Board members reside and/or work in Montgomery County at the application deadline;
- Has a full-time (35-hours or more) paid executive director, CEO, managing director, or comparable position, who reports directly to the organization’s Board of Directors and has had that position filled for no fewer than six months prior to submitting the application;
- Must be able to provide audits for the past three completed fiscal years;
- Offers 25% to 51% of its programs and services to audiences in Montgomery County, open to the public with or without a fee; and
- Has fulfilled all outstanding requirements for any grant(s) received from the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County in prior years.

Budget Eligibility Requirements

Non-allowable cash operating expenses include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| • Investment Fees | • Depreciation |
| • Interest Expenses | • Loan principal payments |
| • Re-granting | • In-kind donations |
| • Capital improvements/other related costs | • Bad debt |

Non-allowable cash operating income include, but not limited to:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| • Unrealized gains or losses | • In-kind donations |
| • Investment revenues (interest and dividends) | • Revenue raised for capital |
| | • Funds intended for re-granting |

This list is not exhaustive—there may be additional non-allowable income. Grants staff will review all financial data and may contact applicants for additional information.

Please note: Costs related to improving or expanding the organization’s physical structure or purchasing equipment that would be covered by *Capital Improvement Project Grants* must be counted as capital expenses, **not** as operating expenses.

Audit Eligibility Requirements

- **Every applicant must submit a full audit** prepared by an independent certified public accountant for their fiscal year 2019 as the fiscal year is defined by the organization, e.g., July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019 or January 1 – December 31, 2019.
 - **You must be able to provide audits for the past three completed fiscal years.**
- The audit submitted to AHCMC must include the independent auditor’s report, including the notes. The management letter should also be included if the organization consents to its inclusion.
- If this audit is not completed by the due date of this application, the application must include a financial statement for FY19 signed by the organization’s treasurer with a letter stating the estimated date when the audit will be submitted to AHCMC.

- The audit must be submitted to AHCMC **no later than June 1, 2020. If the audit is not received by June 1, 2020, the organization will be deemed ineligible.** Grants awards are given to organizations that are fiscally stable and have a demonstrated history of fiscal responsibility. If the audit expresses substantial doubt regarding an entity's ability to continue as a Going Concern, that entity may be deemed ineligible.
- **Organizations will be required to submit their FY20 audit as part of their FY22 Mid-Year report.**

Matching Requirements

- The applicant must provide a cash match for the *GOS II Grant* of one dollar for every dollar of grant funds awarded, for each year of the grant.
- Except as restricted below, the match may be from any source, including reserves, ticket sales, tuition, or state and federal grants.
- The match may not include:
 - In-kind contributions or donated services;
 - Earned revenue from the Montgomery County Government;
 - Grants or appropriations from Montgomery County Government sources.

Grant Limitations

This list of Grant Limitations is effective once the grant has been awarded. Please note, this is not the list used to calculate the applicant's grant award. For that information, please refer to **Budget Eligibility Requirements** above.

GOS II grants will not fund:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital improvements, construction or renovation projects; • Research; • Purchase of real property, including land, building, warehouses, offices and anything affixed to the land; • Scholarships or tuition assistance awarded by the organization for its own activities; • Costs of receptions, refreshments or food; • Cost of merchandise such as T-shirts; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debt retirement; • Political advocacy, or activities that support or promote the interests of any one political party; • Activities for the exclusive benefit of an organization's members; • Travel outside the country; and • Purchase of physical assets, such as a computer or an artifact for a museum. |
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Application and Panel Process

All eligible applications are evaluated by a panel of arts, humanities, or cultural professionals in an open panel review process. Panelists are chosen to represent a cross-section of professionals qualified to provide expert knowledge of specific arts, humanities, and/or cultural disciplines, as well as for their management experience, professional knowledge of the sector, and prior panel experience. AHCMC staff make every effort to ensure that the panel is diverse in all respects.

AHCMC staff members provide the applications and support materials to panelists approximately four weeks prior to the panel review meeting in order to allow panelists sufficient time for their evaluation. Panelists will have an opportunity to submit written questions to each grant applicant via AHCMC staff two weeks before the panel meeting. Applicants will then have one week to provide written responses to these questions. Applicant responses to questions will be distributed to all panelists prior to the panel

review.

During the panel review meeting, the panel evaluates all eligible applications based on AHCMC Evaluation Criteria: Organizational Capacity, Programming Quality, Community Impact, and Financial Stability (described in detail below).

AHCMC staff review applications for eligibility and completeness but do not score. Staff manage all administrative and logistical tasks necessary to conduct a successful panel review; provide panelists all documentation necessary to evaluate applications effectively; inform the panel in matters of AHCMC policy and procedures; and facilitate panel meetings.

Prior to the panel meeting, panelists will have an opportunity to submit written questions for each grant applicant via AHCMC staff. Applicants will have the opportunity to provide written responses to these questions. Applicant responses to questions will be distributed to all panelists prior to the panel review.

The panel meets in person to discuss and provide scores for each application. Panel meetings are open to applicants who wish to observe; however, applicants are not permitted to make any comments or participate in any way at the panel meeting. Applicants may not contact panelists before or after the panel meeting regarding their grant review.

The grant awards for successful FY21 *GOS II* applicants are based on a percentage of the organization's average total allowable cash expenses and/or allowable cash income during the past three completed fiscal years, the panel scores, total number of eligible applicants, and the public dollars available. The Grants Committee reviews and revises the grant awards as necessary and forwards their recommendations to the AHCMC Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has final authority to approve or decline all grant awards. Scores awarded in FY21 will be used for funding allocations in both FY21 and FY22.

Evaluation Criteria

Panelists use the Evaluation Criteria to score the application. Your organization's commitment to each Evaluation Criteria should thread through your entire application, including the narratives, financials and support materials. By demonstrating this commitment, organizations of any size and discipline can achieve an exceptional rating in each of the four priority areas.

Applications receiving an averaged panel score of 60 or higher will be recommended for a *GOS II Grant*. Organizations scoring below a 60 will not be eligible for a *GOS II Grant*.

Organizational Capacity (25 points)

- ✓ Sustains an organizational structure appropriate for the size and scope of the organization.
- ✓ Has achieved or is making intentional, deliberate progress towards recruiting management and support staff that is diverse and reflects the community.
- ✓ Retains qualified, experienced artistic/scholarly staff and managerial staff.
- ✓ Has an effective governing Board that provides active and appropriate leadership. The Board operates in accordance with acknowledged best practices in the non-profit sector and has achieved or is making intentional and deliberate progress towards Board diversity reflective of the community.
- ✓ Encourages the involvement of volunteers (non-Board) who can help the organization achieve its mission.
- ✓ Demonstrates evidence of both short- and long-term planning, with Board and staff setting strategic goals for the organization and progress measured against clearly established benchmarks.

Programming Quality (15 points)

- ✓ Develops programs that are aligned with the organization's mission.
- ✓ Demonstrates a commitment to quality and creativity, including a willingness to experiment and innovate within the stated mission, as well as a willingness to expand and diversify programming to build participation/audiences.
- ✓ Conducts program evaluation involving all stakeholders to measure impact and demonstrates that feedback is utilized in planning.
- ✓ Demonstrates success of prior programming (i.e. internal evaluation data and external community recognition.)

Community Impact (35 points)

- ✓ Uses data and demographics to clearly define audience, and demonstrates an understanding of the community to be served.
- ✓ Conducts outreach to engage diverse communities, including underserved and marginalized populations.
- ✓ Includes the community in program planning, program evaluation, and is responsive to community feedback.
- ✓ Collaborates and forms meaningful partnerships with other stakeholders to achieve the organization's mission.
- ✓ Ensures that programs, services, facilities, and online media are accessible to the public by identifying and removing barriers to participation.
- ✓ Achieves results indicating that programs are relevant and inspiring to the people, organizations, and communities for whom they are intended.

Financial Stability (25 points)

- ✓ Maintains diversity of funding sources, including earned and contributed income.
- ✓ Employs fundraising strategies appropriate for the size of the organization and the community served to ensure sustainability.
- ✓ Operates with ratio of current assets to current liabilities and liquid net assets appropriate for achieving organizational goals.
- ✓ Has a clear plan for addressing any deficits or other financial challenges and operates with transparency.
- ✓ Utilizes sound financial controls and reporting procedures.

Grant Award Calculations

FY21 and FY22 *GOS II* **base awards** consist of a percentage of the organization's average total allowable cash expenses and/or allowable cash income, whichever is lower, during the past three completed fiscal years. The allowable cash expenses and allowable cash income calculation will be based on audits provided for the past three fiscal years.

- For each of the past three fiscal years, AHCMC will calculate the allowable financial figure. This figure will be the applicant's allowable cash expenses unless an organization has allowable cash income lower than the allowable cash expenses, in which case the allowable financial figure for that fiscal year will be allowable cash income.
- The allowable figure for each of the past three fiscal years will be totaled and averaged. Grant

awards will be a percentage of this figure.¹

In the event that funds available for *GOS II* are sufficient to award each organization 5% of their allowable financial figure, as outlined above, this will trigger the **competitive excellence awards** system:

- All organizations will receive a **minimum 5% base award** calculated as outlined above.
- Additional funds available will be used to award competitive organizational excellence awards.
- Competitive organizational excellence awards will be determined using the average score given by the panel, based on the criteria published in these guidelines.
- Organizations that score above the average score with the panel for which they are evaluated will be eligible for a competitive organizational excellence award. The amount of the award will be determined by the degree to which the organization exceeds the average score.
- **Not all organizations will receive competitive organizational excellence awards.**
- Competitive organizational excellence awards will be added to the base award to determine the total award.
- The base amount will be recalculated in year two based on updated financials submitted by the grantee and the County allocation. Organizations that receive an excellence award in FY21 will receive an excellence award in FY22 based on the panel score received in FY21.

Grant Disbursement

Grant payments for FY21 *GOS II Grants* will be made in two installments each fiscal year. The first payment of 50% of the grant award is expected in the third quarter of 2020 and the second payment in the first quarter of 2021. The first payment will be made to the grantee following AHCMC's receipt of the FY20 final report, FY21 signed grant agreement, ACH Direct Deposit Authorization Form allowing direct deposit to the grantee's bank account, the organization's annual meeting with AHCMC staff, and county funding.

For the second year of the grant, the first payment will be in the third quarter of 2021 and the second payment in the first quarter of 2022. Payment in year two will be made following the organization's FY22 signed grant agreement, the organization's annual meeting with AHCMC staff, receipt of the required interim report with updated financials, and county funding.

- In case of Organizational Competitive Bonus Award: The first payment of 50% of base award is expected in the third quarter of 2020. The second payment with the remaining balance and the competitive bonus award amount is expected in the first quarter of 2021. The same schedule will be followed in year two.

AHCMC will not release an organization's grant payments until the organization has fulfilled all outstanding grant requirements such as submitting required reports. Also, grant payments cannot be released unless applicant is in good standing with AHCMC, and has paid all constituent service fees (i.e. MarketPower and CultureSpot payments).

¹ *Exact percentages and calculations will not be available until after the final FY21 County budget has been determined, the panel has reviewed and evaluated applications, and final FY19 audits and Allowable Budget Forms have been submitted by all FY21 General Operating Support applicants. Base awards are expected to be announced in June; competitive bonus awards, if available, will be announced approximately 30 days after the last grantee one-on-one meeting with AHCMC, and in accordance with the appeal process timeline as described on page 12 of the guidelines. FY22 will follow the same process.*

Grant Agreement and Reporting

Following the awarding of a *GOS II* grant, an authorized representative of the grantee organization must sign a Grant Agreement in FY21, and again in FY22, stating that the organization agrees:

To use the grant funds for operating expenses of the organization and in consistency with the requirements of this grant;

- To repay any grant funds not used for the stated purpose of the grant;
- Not to use the grant funds for capital improvements, purchase of real property, scholarships or tuition assistance for program participants, travel outside the country, political advocacy, or debt retirement;
- Not to discriminate against any person on the basis of any characteristic described in Section 27-1(a) of Chapter 27 of the Montgomery County Code or on the basis of political opinion or affiliation in any of its policies, procedures or practices;
- To acknowledge the support of the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County and the Montgomery County Government on materials distributed to the public;
- To send copies to AHCMC of all materials that are distributed to the public, e.g., flyers, brochures, program booklets;
- To submit an **FY21 Mid-Year Report** no later than **January 31, 2021** through AHCMC's online grants system and a **FY21 Final Report** through AHCMC's online grants system no later than **July 31, 2022**, presenting information about the organization's achievements, progress and financial information during each fiscal year. AHCMC will reduce the grant award for the following year by 5% for any organization that submits its final report after the deadline.
- To submit an **FY22 Mid-Year Report** no later than **January 31, 2022** through AHCMC's online grants system and a **FY22 Final Report** through AHCMC's online grants system no later than **July 31, 2023**, presenting information about the organization's achievements, progress and financial information during each fiscal year. AHCMC will reduce the grant award for the following year by 5% for any organization that submits its final report after the deadline.

If the organization is a **Core Arts and/or Humanities Organization**, it must further agree:

- To continue to operate with its principal office in Montgomery County, MD; and
- To offer no less than 51% of its programs and services in Montgomery County open to the public with or without an admission fee during FY21 and FY22.

If the organization is an **Affiliate Arts and/or Humanities Organization**, it must further agree:

- To maintain its agreement with a Core Arts or Humanities Organization; and
- To continue to operate in a manner consistent with the requirements to qualify as an Affiliate Organization during FY21 and FY22.

If the organization is an **Associate Arts and/or Humanities Organization**, it must further agree:

- To continue to operate with its principal office in Montgomery County, MD; and
- To offer at least 25% of its programs and services in Montgomery County open to the public with or without an admission fee during FY21 and FY22.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in grant cancellation, forfeiture of remaining funding, return of disbursed grant amount, and ineligibility to apply for future grants.

Grantees are encouraged to notify AHCMC about exhibitions, performances or other activities resulting from this grant and to participate in CultureSpotMC.com, AHCMC's online calendar.

Appeals Process for Competitive Excellence Awards

The Arts & Humanities Council takes great care during the grant review process to ensure fair and equitable distribution of grant monies based on the criteria stated in the guidelines. Therefore, dissatisfaction with the amount of the award is not sufficient reason for an appeal. However, a grant request may be reconsidered if a procedural impropriety or error has affected the review of the application.

Grounds for reconsideration are:

- A decision based on review criteria other than those stated in these guidelines; or
- A decision based on material provided to panelists, Grants Committee and/or Board members that was substantially incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete, despite the applicant having provided AHCMC with correct, accurate, and complete application information.

Based on the above, if an applicant believes that there is a legitimate reason to appeal, the following steps must be taken:

- The applicant must discuss the problem with the staff member who handled the application.
- If the applicant wishes to pursue an appeal, the applicant must send a letter to the AHCMC Chief Executive Officer **within 30 days following receipt of the panel comments and estimated competitive organizational excellence award**, requesting a reconsideration of the decision and stating the grounds for the request.
- Appeals will be reviewed by both AHCMC Staff and the AHCMC Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has final authority to approve all grant awards.
- The applicant will receive written notification on the determination of the appeal within 45-days of the receipt of the written request for reconsideration.

The Online Application Process

Letters of Intent, Applications, and Support Materials for *GOS II* grants must be submitted online on the AHCMC [FluidReview](#) portal.

1. Log on to your FluidReview account using your username and password. If you don't have an online grant account, go to <http://artsandhumanities.fluidreview.com> to create an account.
2. Once you have created your online account, you will be able to access the application portal. Select "View Grants" to see open grant applications and Letter of Intent form.
3. Select "Create Submissions" on the right for "FY21 for GOS II Grant Application."
4. On the main application form, before moving on to the next page, be sure to click "Save & Continue" at the bottom of each page.

If you have any questions, please contact Ana-Alicia Feng, Grants Program Coordinator, at (301) 565-3805 ext. 21, or AnaAlicia.Feng@creativemoco.com.

All applicants for FY21 *GOS II Grants* must submit a Letter of Intent for approval by AHCMC grants staff. If the Letter of Intent is approved, the applicant will receive an email notification inviting the applicant to fill out the grant application.

Required Application Materials

A completed, online FluidReview application includes:

1. Completed Narrative

- Download a Word template of the application under the “Application” tab on our website [here](#). Please note that you will have to fill out this form on FluidReview.

2. Organizational Support Materials

- The organization’s IRS Letter of Determination (if the applicant organization did not apply for a grant from AHCMC in FY20 or if there have been changes to the applicant’s non-profit status);
- List of Board of Directors with residency and work address (city and zip code are accepted);
- List of key staff with bios; and
- The organization’s current Strategic Plan, if available.

3. Financial Support Materials

- The organization’s FY19 990, or if the FY19 990 is not yet available, the letter of extension. If the FY19 990 is not received by June 1, 2020, the organization will be disqualified.
- The organization’s FY19 audit or if the FY19 audit is not yet available, the letter of extension. If the audit is not received by June 1, 2020, the organization will be disqualified.
- Budget Worksheet provided by AHCMC
- The organization’s financial statements (Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet) for the most recently completed fiscal year;
- Current fiscal year operating budget with actuals year-to-date; and
- Projected FY21 budget, if available (applicants can submit a draft).

4. Programming Support Materials

- Include materials that will assist the panel in evaluating the organization’s programming, presenting, and /or producing activities, i.e., newspaper clippings, program booklet, photos, brochures, or fliers.
- Submit as **one** combined PDF

5. Work Sample

- Upload work sample(s) that demonstrate your organization’s programming. The quality of the work sample is critical to the evaluation of your application. Applicants should submit their strongest work samples. **Performing arts organizations are highly encouraged to submit audio or video samples.** If your work includes audience interaction, a live performance recording is helpful. Applicants should submit recent samples. Submit your Work Sample in the format specified below.
 - Video: Maximum 2 videos, up to 100 MB per file, no more than five minutes combined.
 - Audio: Maximum 2 files, up to 10 MB per file, no more than five minutes combined.
 - Live video or audio hyperlinks can also be placed within PDF that is uploaded to FluidReview (i.e., an applicant can submit a live hyperlink to YouTube within a PDF)
 - Images: Maximum 15 images, up to 4 MB per file, which can be uploaded individually or formatted as one PDF.
 - Upload written work as follows:
 - For prose, submit no more 10 pages plus a chapter outline/synopsis;
 - For poetry, scripts, or screenplays, submit no more than 10 pages;
- Applicants are encouraged to submit samples reflecting recently completed work. Samples must adhere to the following guidelines for the discipline of the work in which you are engaged.

- Multidisciplinary projects / cross-disciplinary projects may include work from performing, visual, media, design, literary arts Folk and Traditional Arts. Applicants must submit work sample(s) that convey more than one artistic/scholarly discipline.
- For Performing Arts (Dance/ Music/ Festivals /Presenting / Folk and Traditional Arts/ Storytelling/ Theater/ Media Arts): Applicants are encouraged to submit video or audio work samples, instead of stills or photos. Upload no more than five minutes of video. You may split the video into two files if necessary, but the total time of the video may not exceed five minutes.
- For History or Social Sciences, Historical, Critical or Theoretical Approaches to the Arts, Linguistics, Literary Analysis, Philosophy, Ethics or Comparative Religion: Upload no more than 10 pages of research, or published material. If the work submitted is a portion of a larger work, include a synopsis of the chapters and an outline of the complete work. Clearly explain how and where the piece submitted fits into the whole.
- For Visual Arts: Upload no more than five minutes of video, or no more than 15 images. The images may depict individual works or a selection of works.

6. For organizations with offices outside of Montgomery County, that also provide public programs and services outside the county:

- A List of **FY19 Eligible Expenses and Income** that reflect only the income and expenses that directly support eligible programs. An eligible program is defined as a performance, a production, a class, a lesson, a presentation, a lecture, or other activity that is attended by the public and takes place in Montgomery County.

Eligible expenses are limited to:

- Salaries and benefits of staff based in the County for time spent working on eligible programs;
- Payments to contractors for time spent working on eligible programs;
- Promotion and marketing expenses for eligible programs;
- Lease expenses for space located in the County and used for eligible programs;
- Rental of office or production equipment located in the County and used for eligible programs;
- Non-capital equipment or instruments located in the County and leased or acquired for eligible programs;
- Maintenance of space and equipment located in the County and used for eligible programs;
- A portion of promotion and marketing expenses for a program that takes place both inside and outside the County, such as a performance that is repeated in more than one jurisdiction;
- A portion of the expenses of rehearsing and producing programs that take place both inside and outside the County, such as a performance that is rehearsed outside the County and performed in the County.

Do not include the following expenses:

- A percentage of the whole organization’s overhead expenses;
- A percentage of staff salaries for staff not based in Montgomery County.

When expenses are divided between eligible (county) and non-eligible (non-county) programs, the amount included as an expense in this application must be based on a ratio of measurable units, such as

number of rehearsals or tickets sold. This ratio is computed as the number of units for the eligible program divided by the total number of the same units for the entire program. For example, expenses could include one-third of total expenses for rehearsing a show that is presented six times – twice in the County and four times outside of the County; the ratio of 2 to 6 is one-third.

Grant Preparation Assistance

First-time applicants are highly encouraged to contact Grants Program staff.

Grant Preparation Workshops and Webinars

AHCMC will conduct free grant preparation webinars and workshops to instruct prospective applicants on how to complete grant applications. While attendance is not required, AHCMC strongly encourages all potential applicants to attend grant preparation events, even if the applicant has applied previously. Whether or not an applicant attends a webinar or a workshop will not be a factor in evaluating the application. Please click [here](#) or go to <http://creativemoco.com/grants/> to join our email list and receive notifications about grant deadlines, webinars, and workshops.

Personal Appointments

Personal appointments are available for those who are unable to attend a webinar or a workshop or who need additional assistance. These appointments are available for assistance with both the content of the application and/or assistance with the online grant application system. Consultation services in languages other than English are available by appointment.

Personal appointments must be held at least two weeks prior to the application deadline. To schedule an appointment, contact Karen Judson, Grants Program Manager, at (301) 565-3805 ext. 28, or Karen.Judson@creativemoco.com.

Important Reminders:

1. Applications must be submitted online at <http://artsandhumanities.fluidreview.com> by **11:59 p.m. on the posted deadline.**
2. All required materials must be submitted online by the deadline or the application will not be accepted.
3. Applications that are emailed, delivered in person, faxed or submitted in any fashion other than the online grants system will not be accepted
4. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

TIPS

- Write clearly and concisely—do not use jargon. Remember that the people who are reading your application may be unfamiliar with your organization, and/or organizations in Montgomery County and/or current events in Montgomery County.
- Keep in mind that the AHCMC staff does not participate in panel discussions. The application must stand on its own.
- Be sure to reference the evaluation criteria as you are developing and writing your application.
- Applicants are encouraged to learn more about energy-efficient opportunities to reduce energy costs at <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/green/>

SUBMISSION DETAILS

LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) DEADLINE: Friday, February 14, 2020 – 11:59 p.m.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, March 13, 2020 – 11:59 p.m.

Applications will be accepted for activities occurring from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.

Grant awards will be announced in June 2020.

First-time applicants are highly encouraged to contact Grants Program staff.

**All applications and materials must be submitted online at
<http://artsandhumanities.fluidreview.com>.**

Questions?

Takenya LaViscount, Senior Grants Program Manager
(301) 565-3805 ext. 26, or Takenya.LaViscount@creativemoco.com.

Karen Judson, Grants Program Manager
(301) 565-3805 ext. 28, or Karen.Judson@creativemoco.com