



ARTISTS & SCHOLARS PROJECT GRANTS

FY22 GRANT GUIDELINES

SUBMISSION DETAILS

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, February 5, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

Applications will be accepted for activities that take place from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Grant award announcements will occur in June 2021.

First-time applicants are highly encouraged to contact AHCMC grants staff.

All applications and relevant materials must be submitted online through AHCMC's grants portal.

Late 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 & 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, Black, Indigenous, Native American, Latinx, Chicax, Arab, MENASA (Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian), Asian, Pacific Islander, and other communities of color, socio-economically disadvantaged communities, differently abled individuals and/or people with disabilities, and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual constituents.

ADA Compliance

Funded projects should be accessible to differently abled individuals and/or 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. [Click here for tips for how to implement accessibility.](#)

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Introduction

Artists & Scholars Project Grants (ASPG) are available to individual artists and scholars who reside in Montgomery County, MD. Grant awards support projects for artists and scholars who work in a wide array of arts and humanities disciplines including performing arts, folk and traditional arts, media arts, visual arts, literary arts, history, and philosophy.

Purpose

By awarding *Artists & Scholars Project Grants*, the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC) seeks to:

- Support the creation and production of new work;
- Provide artists and scholars with opportunities that strengthen their business, managerial, and artistic and/or scholarly skills;
- Nurture artists and scholars who represent the diverse, multicultural character of Montgomery County, MD;
- Support innovative and distinctive artistic and scholarly work by the County's resident artists and scholars; and
- Encourage the use of intentional strategies for achieving Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) in the field.

Grant Award

Grants will be awarded for activities taking place from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

- Applicants may request and may be awarded one grant of at least \$1,000 up to \$5,000.

FY22 *Artists & Scholars Project Grants* Estimated Timeline

Webinars	January 2021
Application Deadline	February 2021
Panel Review	March 2021
Award Announcement	June 2021
Final Report	July 2022

Important Notes

- More than one submission per applicant for an *Artists & Scholars Project Grant* per fiscal year **will not be accepted**.
- Funds can only cover project expenses incurred between **July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022**.
- Grant requests for less than \$1,000 will not be accepted.
- Grant requests for more than \$5,000 will not be accepted.
- For all projects except those involving professional development, the applicant will be required to retain a portion of the project budget to compensate themselves for their work, which must be added to the cash expenses section of the budget.
- **This funding opportunity is designed to benefit individual artists and scholars, not groups;** projects that involve collaborations with groups of artists may be eligible for a *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant* (PCBPG). Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact AHCMC grants staff to receive additional eligibility guidance when choosing the most appropriate grant category for an applicant's project.

- Projects may include payment to essential collaborators with specific skills who will help the applicant execute their creative work as an artist/scholar¹ (i.e., payment to a marketing/publicity expert, payment to a curator, a research assistant...etc.) **Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact staff to ensure that a budget line item that includes a collaborator is allowable.**
- **Recipients of consecutive FY20 and FY21 Artists & Scholars Project Grants are not eligible to apply in FY22 but may apply in FY23.**
- Grant requests for the same project in more than one grant category within the same fiscal year **will not be accepted.**
 - Example: an individual may not apply for the same project under both FY22 *Artists & Scholars Project Grants* and FY22 *Wheaton Cultural Project Grants*.
- An artist/scholar who is an employee of an organization that is an AHCMC grantee/applicant will be considered an eligible applicant for this grant category, provided that the project is not directly related to the work they do for the organization.
 - Example: the applicant may apply to develop a new piece of work unrelated to the work of their employer.
- **AHCMC will not make payment to fiscal sponsors.**

Applicant Eligibility Requirements

Individuals eligible to apply must meet all the following eligibility requirements **by the published application deadline:**

- Has resided in Montgomery County, MD for **at least 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the application deadline** (P.O. Boxes not accepted as proof of residency);
- Is at least 21 years old;
- Is not a full-time student;
- Is a practicing artist or scholar with demonstrated ability in the arts or humanities discipline of the project;
- Is able to provide AHCMC with a Social Security Number (SSN) prior to undertaking the grant activities; and
- Has met all outstanding requirements for any grant(s) received from the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County in prior years.

Eligible Disciplines

Applicants may work in any of, or combination of, the disciplines listed below. [The disciplines can also be found on AHCMC's website by clicking here.](#)

- **Dance** includes choreography or performance, whether in a historically recognized or a contemporary style.
- **Folk and Traditional Arts** includes artistic expressions grounded in a common ethnic heritage, shared language, religion or occupation. These are artistic traditions passed on from generation to generation often within families and communities through observation, oral transmission, practice, and from master to apprentice.
- **Historical, Critical or Theoretical Approaches to the Arts** includes work that reflects upon and analyzes creative processes and/or specific works, such as a performance, exhibit or piece of art.
- **History or Social Sciences** includes research, study and writing in the areas of human social,

political or cultural development, civics, and work that shares historical or social sciences information or activities with the community.

- **Languages, Linguistics, and/or Literary Analysis** includes the study or analysis of how we communicate and how our ideas and thoughts are expressed and interpreted, and the analysis or study of a specific aspect or work of literature.
- **Media Arts** includes electronic, technology-based work suited to mass media communication and presentation used within an artistic medium. Any genre in film, video, audio, or computer-based art production and/or distribution is included, and a selected component of a long-term project will be considered if it meets the other requirements of the grant guidelines.
- **Music** includes the performance, creation, recording, and distribution of original music from any genre, or of historically recognized musical compositions and/or styles.
- **Philosophy, Ethics, and/or Comparative Religion** includes research or study of theories about the purpose of life, how moral and ethical standards arise in society, and the reasons for our thoughts and actions.
- **Storytelling** includes spoken word performances, in particular the interactive style of using words and actions and other effects to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination.
- **Theater** includes the creation, production, and/or performance of original contemporary or historically recognized theater and musical theater works.
- **Writing** includes the creation, presentation, and distribution of materials that are literary in nature; and publications, readings and compilations of original poetry, fiction, non-fiction, creative non-fiction, screenplays and play scripts.
- **Visual Art** includes the creation, production, and/or exhibition of visual art as the primary focus. Objects, installations, site-specific or gallery-oriented works of art within any area of the visual arts are also included, as are curatorial projects and/or projects that expand the context of traditional or contemporary works of art.
- **Design** encompasses many disciplines including, but not limited to, architecture, communications and graphic design, fashion design, historic preservation, industrial and product design, interior design, landscape architecture, social impact design, rural design, and urban design (not including capital campaigns, construction costs, the purchase or leasing of sites).
- **Presenting and/or Multidisciplinary** works incorporate, combine, and/or integrate multiple disciplines. Works may explore boundaries between disciplines, fuse or transcend disciplines, and look to new forms of expression. Projects can be multi- or cross-disciplinary in nature and may include work from the performing, visual, media, design, literary arts, and/or humanities disciplines.

Project Eligibility Requirements

Eligible project-types include any of the following:

- The creation of new work
- A phase of a larger project
- A public event or program
- Professional Development

Eligible activities must:

- Take place between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.
- Take place in Montgomery County, MD.
 - Professional development activities may take place outside of Montgomery County, MD.
 - **Events or programs must be open to the public with or without an admission fee, in person or virtually. If in person, activities should follow current COVID-19 guidelines for in-person events as required by the Montgomery County Health Department. ([Click here for additional information.](#))**
- Effectively advance the applicant’s artistic or scholarly work and/or advance the applicant’s business and management skills.
- **Be focused on one project;** however, multiple stages of the same project are permitted.
 - Example: An eligible project may include participation in a professional development opportunity that leads to the creation of new work, or the creation of new work followed a public event or program presenting that new work.
 - If the project is a phase of a larger project, it must be clear in both the narrative and the budget which phase the applicant is requesting funds for.

Eligible Project Examples

The following are examples of activities that are eligible for funding. This list is not exhaustive; applicants are encouraged to think creatively about the activities proposed in their grant application.

- Creating choreography
- Composing a musical piece
- Creating paintings, photographs, sculpture, and/or prints
- Conducting research in preparation for writing a book or scholarly article
- Creating work products based on variations or new arrangements of traditional or historical works
- Writing poetry, a novel, nonfiction work, or a screenplay
- Working with a mentor, artist, or teacher in the applicant’s field
- Creating a business or marketing plan
- Travel, hotel, meals and/or registration expenses for workshops or a training program
- Attending a residency for the purpose of learning a new artistic/scholarly skill or technique and/or creating new work

Grant Limitations

Artists & Scholars Project Grants will not fund:

- Indirect costs (costs not directly related to carrying out the funded project);
- Miscellaneous or contingency costs;
- Capital improvements, construction, or renovation projects;
- Purchase of real property, including land, buildings, warehouses, offices, and anything affixed to the land;
- Fundraising activities;
- Cost of receptions, refreshments, or food;
- Debt retirement;
- Re-granting¹;
- Political advocacy or activities that support or promote the interests of any one political party or candidate; and
- Travel outside the United States.

¹ For the purposes of this grant, scholarships, awards, or tuition assistance are considered forms of re-granting

Review Panel Process

All eligible applications are evaluated by a panel of arts, humanities, and/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 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. Panelists are provided with the eligible applications and support materials approximately four weeks prior to the panel review meeting to allow sufficient time for their evaluation. All eligible applications are evaluated based on the following AHCMC Evaluation Criteria: Quality of Work, Proposal & Project Merit, Community Impact, and Administrative Capability (described in detail below).

The panel convenes 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 application review. Once the application deadline has passed and the panel has received the application for review, AHCMC staff will not forward updates from the applicant to the panel.

AHCMC staff use the applicant's panel score to calculate and recommend grant award amounts to AHCMC's Grants Committee. 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.

Panel scores and comments are available to all applicants upon request after the award notifications have been publicly announced. Applicants are **highly encouraged** to schedule a feedback appointment to review panel scores and comments by contacting Karen Judson, Grants Program Manager, at (301) 565-3804, or Karen.Judson@creativemoco.com.

Evaluation Criteria

Panelists evaluate and score each FY22 ASPG application based on the extent to which the application addresses the following Evaluation Criteria. An applicant's commitment to each of the Evaluation Criteria should thread through the entire application, including the narrative, work samples, and support materials.

***Applications that receive an averaged panel score of 60 points or higher will be eligible for an FY22 Artists & Scholars Project Grant. Applicants that score below 60 points will not be eligible for an FY22 Artists & Scholars Project Grant. ***

Quality of Work (25 points)

- ✓ Demonstrates ongoing commitment to the artistic/scholarly discipline;
- ✓ Innovation and creativity in performing, presenting, and/or producing the artistic/scholarly discipline; and
- ✓ Artistic/scholarly quality of work sample(s) submitted with the application.

Proposal & Project Merit (30 points)

- ✓ Appropriateness of the applicant's objective for the project;
- ✓ Likelihood that the applicant will meet the stated objective(s) of the project; and
- ✓ Potential impact of the project on the applicant's artistic/scholarly work and career.

Community Impact (30 points)

- ✓ Clear community/intended audience outreach strategy;
- ✓ Potential impact of the project on the intended audience;
- ✓ Potential to reach underserved populations such as those whose opportunities to experience the arts/humanities are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, and/or disability; and
- ✓ For applicants requesting funding for professional development: Clear indication that the professional development opportunity will enhance the applicant's future community impact after the professional development has concluded.

Administrative Capability (15 points)

- ✓ Evidence of administrative skills needed to meet project objectives, including completeness and clarity of the proposal and timeline;
- ✓ Well-researched, clear, realistic, and complete budget and budget notes;
 - **Applicants will be expected to retain a portion of the project budget to compensate themselves for their work, except for professional development projects;** and
- ✓ Efforts to generate other sources of income.

The Online Application Process

All applications and relevant materials must be submitted online through the AHCMC SurveyMonkey Apply (SM Apply) grants portal. For specific questions about SM Apply, please contact Ana-Alicia Feng, Grants Program Assistant Manager, at (301) 565-3805 ext. 21, or AnaAlicia.Feng@creativemoco.com.

Required Application Materials

All documents except for work samples must be submitted as PDFs. See work samples for acceptable file formats. Contact AHCMC grants staff for assistance in converting documents to PDFs.

A completed, online application includes:

1. A Completed Narrative

- [Download a template of the application under the "Application" tab on AHCMC's website by clicking here](#). Please note that templates are for the applicant's reference only; all applications and materials must be submitted through SM Apply.

2. Resume or CV of applicant

3. Bios of Key Collaborators and/or Volunteers, if applicable

- Provide a list with bios of all peoples involved with the project. Refer to page 4 of the guidelines for a definition of a collaborator.

4. Programming Support Materials

- Include materials that will assist the panel in evaluating the applicant's programming, presenting, and/or producing activities (i.e., newspaper clippings, program booklet, photos, brochures, or flyers).
- **One PDF no more than 5 pages.**

5. Work Sample(s)

- Upload work sample(s) that demonstrate the applicant’s abilities and achievements as an artist or scholar. (The sample(s) should focus on the applicant’s own work, not work created by others.)
 - Applicants should submit their strongest work samples – quality work samples are critical to the evaluation of an application.
- Applicants will be asked to provide a brief description of the work sample(s) in the application and an explanation for how the sample(s) relates to the proposed project.
- Work samples can be submitted as image, video, and audio files, as well as PDFs.
 - Images: Maximum 10 images, up to 4 MB per file, which can be uploaded individually or formatted as one PDF.
 - Video: Maximum 2 videos, up to 100 MB per file, no more than 5 minutes combined.
 - Audio: Maximum 2 files, up to 10 MB per file, no more than 5 minutes combined.
 - Live video or audio hyperlinks can also be placed within a PDF (i.e., a live hyperlink to YouTube within a PDF).
 - If the submitted video and/or audio is more than 5 minutes combined, applicants will be provided with a space to include instructions for which segments the panel should pay attention to. (Ex: Please click on the YouTube hyperlink to watch the video from 0:47 to 4:10)
 - Written Work:
 - Maximum 10 pages, double-spaced with at least 11-point font and 1-inch margins.
 - 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.
- 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 the applicant is engaged.
 - For Presenting and/or Multidisciplinary: Work sample(s) must convey more than one artistic/scholarly discipline.
 - For Performing Arts: **Applicants are highly encouraged to submit video or audio work samples, instead of stills or photos.**
 - For History or Social Sciences, Historical, Critical, or Theoretical Approaches to the Arts, Linguistics, Literary Analysis, Philosophy, Writing, Ethics or Comparative Religion: Follow the format for written work.
 - For Media, Design, and Visual Arts: Follow the format for video and image files.

Grant Preparation Assistance

First-time applicants are highly encouraged to contact AHCMC grants staff.

Grant Preparation Webinars

AHCMC will conduct free grant preparation webinars 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 will not be a factor in evaluating the application. Please go to

<https://www.creativemoco.com/find-opportunities/newsletters/> to join the AHCMC Grants Program email list and receive notifications about grant opportunities, deadlines, and webinars.

Personal Appointments

Personal appointments are available for those who are unable to attend a webinar or who need additional assistance. Assistance for both the content of the application and the online grants portal is available. 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) 565-3804, or Karen.Judson@creativemoco.com.

Post-Award Information

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read this section carefully before submitting an application.

Grant Agreement

Following the award of a grant, each grantee must sign a Grant Agreement with AHCMC stating that the grantee agrees:

- To comply with all FY22 *Artists & Scholars Project Grants* eligibility and other guideline requirements throughout the duration of the grant period;
- To fill out and submit the Bill.com contact form on SurveyMonkey Apply and create an account on Bill.com for direct deposit of grant funds;
- To use the grant funds only for the purposes described in the grant proposal during the period of **July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022**;
- Not to use the grant funds for the activities listed on page 6 of these guidelines under “Grant Limitations”;
- To use funds only for administrative or programmatic costs incurred in Montgomery County, unless the grantee received an award for professional development. Award funds can be used for professional development administrative costs incurred outside of Montgomery County;
- To request, by use of a grant change request form provided by AHCMC, permission for any change, cancellation, or postponement to the project as described in the grant application no later than **May 31, 2022** (change requests submitted after May 31, 2022 may result in grant forfeiture);
- To return any grant funds not spent, or spent not in compliance with published grant guidelines, grant agreement, and/or the approved grant proposal no later than **July 31, 2022**;
- To submit a completed final report no later than **July 31, 2022** through AHCMC’s online grants system, providing information about the implementation of the funded project and the use of the grant funds;
- 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;
- To comply with all ADA requirements germane to the project;
- To acknowledge the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County and the Montgomery County Government on all materials distributed to the public, including use of the AHCMC logo when possible; and
- To provide complimentary access to any public activities upon request of AHCMC staff.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in grant cancellation and ineligibility to apply for future grants.

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

Grant Disbursement

Grant awards will be disbursed to each grantee following AHCMC's receipt of:

- The required Grant Agreement;
- A W-9 form with the grantee's Social Security Number (SSN);
- The required Bill.com contact form and the creation of a Bill.com account, allowing direct deposit of grant funds to the grantee's bank account²;
- The grantee's final report from the previous year, if applicable;
- The grantee's payment for outstanding constituent service fees (i.e., MarketPower and CultureSpot), if applicable; and
- Payment from the Montgomery County Government to AHCMC for the grants awarded.

Changes in Project Implementation

The grantee must alert AHCMC if significant project changes are required. The grantee must submit a change request form and receive AHCMC's approval—a meeting may be required. Any change in the implementation of the project must be approved by AHCMC **before** the change occurs.

- All requests for project changes must be submitted in writing on a form supplied by AHCMC.
- Please note that AHCMC can decline significant project changes if the proposed change is a major diversion from the project described within the application and grant agreement.
- **Requests for a project change will not be considered after May 31, 2022.**

Reporting

All grantees are required to submit a final report due **no later than July 31, 2022**. Submitting a late report may have a detrimental impact on an applicant's eligibility for future funding.

Return of Grant Funds

- In case the change request is not approved and/or the grantee is not able to implement its programs and/or conduct business as described in the grant agreement, the grantee must return the grant funds. **Please contact AHCMC grants staff before grant funds are returned.**
- If AHCMC determines that grant funds were spent for activities not in compliance with these guidelines and/or for activities that were not described within the approved grant proposal, the grantee must return the amount spent on non-allowable expenses.
- **Grant funds received but not spent by June 30, 2022 must be returned to AHCMC by July 31, 2022 with the grantee's final report.**

² AHCMC uses a paperless payment process to disburse grant awards. Bill.com is an online system that allows AHCMC to send secure E-payments.

Important Reminders & Tips

- Applications must be submitted online through SM Apply **by 11:59 p.m. on the posted deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.**
- Applications that are emailed, delivered in person, faxed, or submitted in any fashion other than the online grants system will not be accepted.
- **Follow the instructions in SM Apply carefully.**
- Write clearly and concisely—do not use jargon. Remember that the panelists who are reading the application may be unfamiliar with the applicant’s work.
- 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 when preparing and writing the application.
- Before submitting, proofread the application for readability and content.
- **To avoid unanticipated technical glitches, do not wait until the deadline to submit.**

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All applications and relevant materials must be submitted online through AHCMC’s grants portal.

Questions?

Karen Judson, Grants Program Manager
(301) 565-3804, or Karen.Judson@creativemoco.com

Ana-Alicia Feng, Grants Program Assistant Manager
(301) 565-3805 ext. 21, or AnaAlicia.Feng@creativemoco.com

Applicants are encouraged to learn more about energy-efficient opportunities to reduce energy costs at <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/green/>.