



GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS Level I

Formerly General Operating Support Grants for Mid-Size Arts & Humanities Organizations

FY22 GRANT GUIDELINES

SUBMISSION DETAILS

LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE: Friday, February 12, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, March 15, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

Applications will be accepted for activities occurring 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 Letters of Intent, applications, and relevant materials must be submitted
online through AHCMC's grants portal.**

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

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

801 Ellsworth Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 565-3805

www.creativemoco.com

The Mission of the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County

The Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHC MC), 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, AHC MC 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. AHC MC 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

General Operating Support I Grants (GOS I) are available to non-profit arts and/or humanities organizations located in Montgomery County, MD that have had both allowable annual cash operating revenue and expenses of at least \$50,000 up to \$150,000 for the last three completed fiscal years. Grants are also available to an arts and/or humanities division within an umbrella non-profit organization, provided that the division has had both allowable annual cash operating revenue and expenses of at least \$50,000 for the last three completed fiscal years. Organizations that have had allowable annual cash operating revenue and expenses of more than \$150,000 are eligible if the organization is not a recipient of an FY21-22 *General Operating Support II Grant* (GOS II). Grant awards support organizations that work in a wide array of arts and humanities disciplines including performing arts, media arts, visual arts, literary arts, and folk and traditional arts, history, and philosophy.

General operating support is defined as support for day-to-day operating costs to further the general mission or work of an organization rather than for a specific project.

Purpose

By awarding *General Operating Support I Grants*, the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC) seeks to:

- Encourage organizations to maintain an active, two-way, ongoing relationship with the community in the planning, participation, and evaluation of public activities, which include intentional strategies for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA);
- 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, MD;
- 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; and
- Improve and/or stabilize the management infrastructure and effectiveness of arts and humanities organizations.

Grant Award

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

- Applicants may request and may be awarded a grant of at least \$10,000 up to \$50,000.
 - **Request may not exceed 35% of the applicant's most recently completed fiscal year's allowable cash operating revenue, expenses, or \$50,000, whichever is lower.**
 - Requests for over \$25,000 **require** an FY20 audit or financial review.
 - *Submitting an audit or financial review does not guarantee an award of more than \$25,000.*

Refer to the "Audit/Financial Review Requirements" section on pages 5-6 for more information.

FY22 GOS I Grants Estimated Timeline

Webinars	January 2021
Letter of Intent Deadline	February 2021
Application Deadline	March 2021
Panel Review	April 2021
Award Announcement	June 2021
Mid-Year Report	January 2022
Final Report	July 2022

Important Notes

- All organizations planning to apply for FY22 GOS I Grants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) through AHCMC's online grant application system **no later than 11:59 p.m. on Friday, February 12, 2020.**
 - If the LOI is approved, the applicant will be invited to complete a full application.
 - **Failure to submit an LOI through AHCMC's grant portal will result in the applicant being deemed ineligible to apply for an FY22 GOS I Grant.**
- More than one submission per applicant for a GOS I Grant per fiscal year **will not be accepted.**
- Funds can only cover expenses incurred between **July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.**
- Grant requests below \$10,000 will not be accepted.
- Grant requests above \$50,000 will not be accepted.
- Applicants must provide a cash match for the GOS I Grant request of one dollar for every dollar of grant funds awarded.
- **Applicants may not apply for a *General Operating Support II* or *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant* within the same fiscal year.**
- Applicants may apply for a *General Operating Support Grant* and either an *Advancement Grant* or *Capital Grant*¹ within the same fiscal year.
- Applicants may apply for a *Wheaton Cultural Project Grant* within the same fiscal year, provided that the proposed project is not part of the applicant's regular programming.
- Due to the large volume of requests and limited funding, applications from national, statewide, or regional arts and/or humanities organizations are not accepted at this time.

Applicant Eligibility Requirements

Organizations eligible to apply must have met all the criteria below **by the published Letter of Intent (LOI) deadline and for the last three completed fiscal years:**

- Has its primary mission as the exhibition, presentation, production and/or performance of, and/or education in, an arts and/or humanities discipline, and/or provides support services to artists and/or scholars and/or arts and/or humanities organizations;
- Has its primary office in Montgomery County, MD, as demonstrated by the address included in the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Letter of Determination;
- Has a balanced budget and documented allowable annual cash operating revenue and expenses of no less than \$50,000 (see the definition of operating expenses within the Budget Eligibility Requirement section on page 5);

¹ Capital Grants may be applied for through the Montgomery County Grants Office.

- Demonstrates 501(c)(3) status as described below:
 - Has 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the IRS; or
 - Operates as a specific, arts and/or humanities entity or division within a larger 501(c)(3) organization whose primary mission is not arts and/or humanities-based;
- 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;
- At least 40% of its board members reside and/or work in Montgomery County, MD;
- At least one paid employee (not contracted staff) works a minimum of 5 hours a week to support the organization’s board, comply with the grant requirements, and maintain ongoing programming;
 - **Requests for over \$25,000 require at least one paid employee (not contracted staff) who works a minimum of 20 hours a week** to support the organization’s board, comply with the grant requirements, and maintain ongoing programming.
- Offers at least 51% of its programs and services in Montgomery County, MD, as demonstrated by previous, current, and projected activities and programming. **Activities may 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](#));** and
- Has met all outstanding requirements for any grant(s) received from the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County in prior years.

Budget Eligibility Requirements

An eligible applicant has had allowable annual cash operating revenue and expenses of no less than \$50,000 for the last three completed fiscal years.

Non-allowable cash operating revenue includes, but is not limited to:

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

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

- Investment Fees
- Interest Expenses
- Re-granting²
- Capital improvement expenses/other related costs³
- Depreciation
- Loan principal payments
- In-kind donations
- Bad debt

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

Audit/Financial Review Requirements

Grant awards are given to applicants that are fiscally stable and have a demonstrated history of fiscal responsibility. If an audit or financial review expresses substantial doubt regarding an entity’s ability to

² For the purpose of this grant, scholarships, awards, and tuition assistance are considered forms of re-granting.

³ For the purpose of this grant, costs related to improving or expanding the organization’s physical structure must be counted as capital improvement expenses, not as operating expenses.

continue as a Going Concern, that entity may be deemed ineligible.

***Organizations applying for \$25,000 or less do not need to submit an audit or financial review. ***

Audit or Financial Review:

- **Requests for over \$25,000 require an FY20 audit or financial review.**
- The financial review must be conducted by an independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services. The CPA's report should describe the scope of the review and a statement of findings. Additional information about financial reviews can be found on the AHCMC website.
- If submitting an audit, the audit must be prepared by an independent CPA and must include the independent auditor's report and the notes. The management letter should also be included if the applicant consents to its inclusion.

If the audit or financial review is not available by the application deadline, the applicant must include financial statements for FY20, signed by the applicant's treasurer with a letter stating the estimated date for when the FY20 audit or financial review will be submitted to AHCMC.

- The FY20 audit or financial review must be submitted to AHCMC **no later than June 1, 2021. If the audit or financial review is not received by June 1, 2021, the applicant will be disqualified.**

***Submitting an audit/financial review does not guarantee an award of more than \$25,000. ***

Match Requirements

Grantees must provide a match for the GOS I Grant request of one dollar for every dollar of grant funds awarded. **At least 50% of the match must be cash, however the match may be entirely cash.**

If funded, grantees must submit documentation substantiating the entire match, and a confirmation that at least 50% of the matching funds are cash. Documentation may be provided in the form of ticket sale data, copies of acknowledgement letters to donors, award letters from grantors, etc.

- No more than 50% of the match may consist of in-kind contributions, as follows:
 - In-kind contributions may consist of donated goods, donated services, and volunteers, as described in further detail below.
 - The value of all in-kind contributions shown as income must be offset by in-kind expenses in the total budget.
 - The value of in-kind goods and services must be documented with invoices, billing statements, and/or donation letters provided with the final report at the end of the grant period.
 - The appropriate value of volunteer time must be calculated. ([Click here for the current value of volunteer service.](#))
 - Professionals, such as attorneys, accountants, sound engineers, and lighting designers who are providing services without charge will not be considered volunteers. These individuals will be counted as having donated services, provided that the applicant supplies documentation about the usual hourly rate charged by the professional.
 - The value of staff time paid by the organization as an in-kind expense must be documented in the budget notes.
- Except as restricted below, the cash match may be from any source, including but not limited to reserves, ticket sales, tuition, and/or state and federal grants.

The match may not include:

- Any earned revenue from the Montgomery County Government; or
- Grants or appropriations from Montgomery County Government sources.

Grant Limitations

GOS I Grants will not fund:

- Public, private, or charter schools;
- Capital improvements, construction, or renovation projects;
- Purchase of real property, including land, buildings, warehouses, offices, and anything affixed to the land;
- Activities for the exclusive benefit of the grantee's members;
- Fundraising activities;
- Cost of receptions, refreshments, or food;
- Cost of souvenirs such as T-shirts;
- Debt retirement;
- Re-granting;
- Political advocacy or activities that support or promote the interests of any one political party or candidate; and
- Travel outside the United States.

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: Organizational Capacity, Programming Quality, Community Impact, and Financial Stability (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 **high 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 GOS I Grant 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 narratives, financials, and support materials. By demonstrating this commitment, organizations of any size and discipline can achieve an exceptional score in each of the four priority areas.

***Applications that receive an averaged panel score of 60 points or higher will be recommended for an FY22 GOS I Grant. Applicants that score below 60 points will not be eligible for an FY22 GOS I Grant. ***

Organizational Capacity (25 points)

- ✓ Sustains an organizational structure appropriate for the size and scope of the organization;
- ✓ Retains qualified, experienced artistic/scholarly staff and managerial staff;
- ✓ Has achieved or is making demonstrated, intentional progress towards recruiting staff that is diverse and reflective of the community;
- ✓ Has an effective governing board that provides active and appropriate leadership, operates in accordance with acknowledged best practices in the non-profit sector, and has achieved or is making demonstrated, intentional progress towards board diversity reflective of the community;
- ✓ Encourages the involvement of volunteers (non-board) who can help the organization achieve its mission; and
- ✓ Demonstrates evidence of both short- and long-term planning, with board and staff setting strategic goals for the organization and measuring progress 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; and
- ✓ 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 and 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; and
- ✓ Achieves results indicating that programs are relevant and inspiring to the people, organizations, and communities for whom they are intended.

Financial Stability (25 points)

- ✓ Utilizes sound financial controls and reporting procedures;
- ✓ Has a clear plan for addressing any deficits or other financial challenges and operates with transparency;
- ✓ 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; and
- ✓ Operates with ratio of current assets to current liabilities and liquid net assets appropriate for achieving organizational goals.

The Online Application Process

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

Required Letter of Intent (LOI) Materials

[Download a template of the LOI under the "Application" tab on the AHCMC website by clicking here.](#)

Please note that templates are for the applicant's reference only; all Letters of Intent, applications, and relevant materials must be submitted through SMAApply.

The LOI will ask applicants to confirm and/or upload the following:

- 1. Arts and/or humanities mission statement as approved by the applicant's board;**
- 2. At least \$50,000 of allowable annual cash operating revenue and expenses for the last three completed fiscal years;**
 - Upload the completed AHCMC Budget Worksheet for the last three completed fiscal years. ([Download a template of the application under the "Application" tab on the AHCMC website by clicking here.](#))
 - When exporting to PDF from Excel, make sure that all three tabs are exported.
- 3. Proof of non-profit status;**
 - Upload the organization's IRS Letter of Determination.
- 4. Montgomery County, MD primary office address;**
- 5. Proof that at least 40% of board members reside and/or work in Montgomery County, MD;**
 - Upload a list of the organization's Board of Directors and their affiliation.
 - Include work and residency addresses (city and ZIP Code accepted).
 - Members who reside and/or work in Montgomery County should be highlighted.
- 6. Proof of at least one paid employee (not contracted staff);**
 - Applicants will be asked to provide the title, contact information, and hours for at least one paid employee. Refer to the applicant eligibility requirements on pages 4-5 for the minimum number of hours per week required.
- 7. Proof that at least 51% of programs and services are offered in Montgomery County, MD;**
 - Applicants will complete a chart in SMAApply detailing which percentage of activities occur in Montgomery County, MD.
- 8. Ability to meet the June 1, 2021 deadline for the FY20 990; and**
- 9. Ability to meet the June 1, 2021 deadline for the FY20 audit or financial review, if applicable.**

Required Full Application Materials

Applicants with approved LOIs will be invited to complete a full FY22 GOS I application.

All documents except for work samples must be submitted as PDFs. 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 the AHCMC website by clicking here](#). Please note that templates are for the applicant’s reference only; all letters of intent, applications, and relevant materials must be submitted through SMaply.

2. Organizational Support Materials

- Bios of key staff indicating paid full-time staff, paid part-time staff, and unpaid volunteers;
- Current Strategic Plan, if available; and
- Organizational Chart, if available.

3. Financial Support Materials

- FY20 990, or if the FY20 990 is not yet available, the letter of extension;
 - **If the FY20 990 is not received by June 1, 2021, the organization will be disqualified.**
- FY20 audit or financial review, or if not yet available, the letter of extension, if applicable;
 - **If the FY20 audit or financial review is not submitted by June 1, 2021, the applicant will be considered ineligible.** Refer to pages 5-6 of these guidelines for more information about audit/financial review requirements.
- Profit & Loss Statement for the most recently completed fiscal year;
- Balance Sheet for the most recently completed fiscal year;
- Current fiscal year operating budget with actuals year-to-date; and
- Projected FY22 operating budget, if available.

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 10 pages.**

5. Work Sample(s)

- Upload work sample(s) that demonstrate the applicant’s abilities and achievements.
 - 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 samples.
- Submit work sample(s) in the format specified below:
 - 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 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 a PDF (i.e., a live hyperlink to YouTube within a PDF).
 - If the submitted video and/or audio is more than five minutes combined, applicants will be provided with a space to include instructions for which segments the panel should pay attention to.
- 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 arts and/or humanities discipline.
 - For Performing Arts: **Applicants are highly encouraged to submit video or audio work samples instead of stills or photos.** If the applicant's work includes audience interaction, a live performance recording is helpful.
 - 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 Design, Media, 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, an authorized representative of each grantee must sign a Grant Agreement with AHCMC stating that the grantee agrees:

- To comply with all FY22 *General Operating Support I Grants* eligibility and other guideline requirements;
- 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 operating expenses during the period of **July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022**;
- Not to use the grant funds the activities listed under “Grant Limitations” on page 7 of the FY22 GOS I Grant guidelines;
- To use funds only for administrative or programmatic costs incurred in Montgomery County, MD. Award funds cannot be used for administrative costs incurred due to activities that took place outside of Montgomery County, MD (i.e., other counties in Maryland, Washington D.C., or Virginia);
- 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 mid-year report to AHCMC no later than **January 31, 2022** through AHCMC’s online grants system;
- To submit a completed final report through AHCMC’s online grants system no later than **July 31, 2022**. Final reports received after July 31, 2022 could have an adverse impact on the likelihood of receiving a future award;
- 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 organization;
- To acknowledge the support of 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, 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](https://www.culturespotmc.com), AHCMC’s online calendar.

Grant Disbursement

Grant awards will be disbursed to each grantee in two installments.

- 75% of the grant award will be disbursed following AHCMC's receipt of:
 - The required Grant Agreement;
 - The required Bill.com contact form and the creation of a Bill.com account, allowing direct deposit of funds to the grantee's bank account⁴;
 - 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.
- The remaining 25% of the grant award will be disbursed following AHCMC's receipt of:
 - The grantee's mid-year report due **no later than January 31, 2022**.

Reporting

All grantees are required to submit a mid-year report due **no later than January 31, 2022** and 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

- The grantee must return the grant funds if it is not possible to implement the grant as described in the grant agreement. **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 not aligned with 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.**

Important Reminders & Tips

- Applications must be submitted online through SMAApply **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 SMAApply 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.**

⁴ AHCMC uses a paperless payment process to disburse grant awards. Bill.com is an online system that allows AHCMC to send secure E-payments.

SUBMISSION DETAILS

LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE: Friday, February 12, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, March 15, 2021, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

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

Grant awards will be announced in June 2021.

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

Questions?

Takenya LaViscount, Grants Director
(240) 839-4519, or Takenya.LaViscount@creativemoco.com

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/>.