



PROGRAMMING & CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT GRANTS

****Formerly Small Organizations & Groups Project Grants****

FY22 GRANT GUIDELINES

SUBMISSION DETAILS

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, February 12, 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.*

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.](#)

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Grant Award.....	3
FY22 Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants Estimated Timeline	3
Applicant Eligibility Requirements	4
Project Eligibility Requirements	4
Eligible Project Examples	5
Grant Limitations	5
Review Panel Process	5
Evaluation Criteria	6
The Online Application Process	7
Required Application Materials	7
GROUPS.....	7
ORGANIZATIONS	8
Grant Preparation Assistance	9
Post-Award Information	10
Grant Agreement	10
Grant Disbursement.....	11
Changes in Project Implementation.....	11
Reporting	11
Return of Grant Funds	11
Important Reminders & Tips	12

Introduction

Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants (PCBPG) are available to arts and/or humanities organizations and groups located in Montgomery County, MD that may or may not be incorporated as non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) status. Grant awards support projects for organizations and groups that 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 *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants*, the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC) seeks to:

- Encourage organizations/groups 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 and healthy growth for arts and humanities organizations/groups by supporting enhanced capacity needs;
- 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/groups; and
- Improve and/or stabilize the management infrastructure and effectiveness of arts and humanities organizations/groups.

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 \$1,000 and no more than \$10,000.
 - **Requests for over 5,000 require that the applicant provide proof of 501(c)(3) status.**

FY22 *Programming & Capacity Building 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 a *Programming & Capacity Building 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 \$10,000 will not be accepted.

- Applicants may not apply for a *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant* and a *General Operating Support Grant, Advancement Grant, or Capital Grant* within the same fiscal year.
 - In addition, recipients of an *FY21-22 General Operating Support II Grant* are not eligible to apply for an *FY22 Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant*.
- Grant requests for the same project in more than one grant category within the same fiscal year **will not be accepted**.
 - Example: an applicant may not apply for the same project under both *FY22 Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant* and *FY22 Wheaton Cultural Project Grant*.

Applicant Eligibility Requirements

Organizations/groups eligible to apply must meet all the following requirements **by the published application deadline**:

- Has its primary mission or objective as 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/or arts and/or humanities organizations;
- Has had its primary location and/or a verifiable mailing address in Montgomery County, MD for **at least 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the application deadline**;
- Operates as a non-profit:
 - The organization or group¹ may or may not be incorporated and may or may not be formally recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a public charity or otherwise officially established as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) institution. However, the applicant **must** operate in the manner of a non-profit (the organization's/group's net earnings cannot be distributed to those who control it); and
- Has met all outstanding requirements for any grant(s) received from the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County in prior years.

Project Eligibility Requirements

Eligible project-types include any of the following:

- The creation of new work
- A public event or program
- Capacity building

Eligible activities must:

- Take place between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.
- Take place in Montgomery County, MD.
 - **Activities that include 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.](#))**
- Include the creation of new work, a public event/program, and/or capacity building.

¹ For the purposes of this grant, organizations, as opposed to groups, are recognized by the IRS as a public charity or otherwise officially established as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) institution.

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.

- Performances, presentations, and/or exhibitions of visual, performing, media, and/or folk and traditional arts
- Festivals or events that include one or more eligible disciplines
- Historical presentations, archeological programs, or historical reenactments
- Poetry readings, author lectures, or script workshops
- Public art, including community mural projects
- Professional development activities for staff and/or Board
- Strategic planning and/or capacity building projects
- Technological upgrades needed to bolster the applicant's capacity

Grant Limitations

Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants will not fund:

- General operating expenses²;
- Indirect costs (costs not directly related to carrying out the funded project);
- Miscellaneous or contingency costs;
- 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 merchandise such as T-shirts;
- Debt retirement;
- Re-granting³;
- 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

² General operating expenses are defined as day-to-day operating costs, such as office rent and utilities, to further the general mission or work of an organization/group rather than for a specific project.

³ For the purposes of this grant, scholarships, awards, and/or tuition assistance are considered forms of re-granting.

Evaluation Criteria: Quality of Proposed Project, Programming Quality, 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 PCBPG 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/groups of any size and discipline can achieve an exceptional rating in each of the four priority areas.

Applicants that receive an averaged panel score of 60 points or higher will be eligible for a Grant. Applicants that score below 60 points will not be eligible for an FY22 Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant.

Quality of Proposed Project (25 points)

- ✓ Strength of overall project and potential to positively impact the applicant;
- ✓ Clear alignment between project and the applicant's mission;
- ✓ Appropriate steps taken to plan and design the project;
- ✓ Clear and logical project evaluation plan; and
- ✓ Achievable outcomes and detailed description of how progress will be tracked and measured.

Programming Quality (20 points)

- ✓ Develops programs that are aligned with the applicant's mission;
- ✓ Engages a diverse team of arts, humanities, and/or cultural professionals qualified to achieve the applicant's mission;
- ✓ Provides programs that are relevant and inspiring to communities for whom they are intended; and
- ✓ Demonstrates innovation and creativity in performing, presenting, and/or producing the arts and/or humanities discipline.

Community Impact (35 points)

- ✓ Clear commitment to being accessible to, collaborating with, and engaging under-resourced and marginalized communities;
- ✓ Uses data and demographics to clearly define audience and demonstrates an understanding of the community to be served;
- ✓ Includes the community in project planning and evaluation, and is responsive to community feedback; and
- ✓ Provides evidence of strong outreach and marketing strategies.

Administrative Capability (20 points)

- ✓ Administrative structure is appropriate for the organization's/group's size;
- ✓ Evidence of qualified staff (paid or volunteer) with project management experience;
- ✓ Realistic implementation timeline;
- ✓ Well-researched, clear, realistic, and complete budget and budget notes;
- ✓ Efforts to seek other sources of support; and
- ✓ Completeness and clarity of the application.

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:

GROUPS

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 applications and relevant materials must be submitted through SM Apply.

2. Group Support Materials

- List of group members;
 - Include residency and work addresses (city and ZIP Code accepted)
- Bios of key group members and/or volunteers;
- Current Strategic Plan, if available; and
- Organizational Chart, if available.

3. Financial Support Materials

- Operating budget with actuals for the most recently completed fiscal year;
- Current fiscal year's operating budget with actuals year-to-date; and
- Current Balance Sheet, 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, and/or flyers).
- **One PDF no more than 10 pages.**

5. Work Sample(s)

- Refer below to bullet number 5 under Organizations, labeled “Work Sample(s).”

ORGANIZATIONS

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 applications and relevant materials must be submitted through SM Apply.**

2. Organization Support Materials

- IRS Letter of Determination;
- List of Board of Directors with affiliation;
 - Include work and residency addresses (city and ZIP Code accepted)
 - Members who reside and/or work in Montgomery County should be highlighted
- Bios of key staff and/or volunteers;
- Current Strategic Plan, if available; and
- Organizational Chart, if available.

3. Financial Support Materials

- FY20 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N, or if not yet available, the letter of extension;
 - **If the FY20 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N is not received by AHCMC by June 1, 2021, the applicant will be disqualified**
- Profit & Loss Statement for the most recently completed fiscal year;
- Balance Sheet for the most recently completed fiscal year; and
- Current fiscal year operating budget with actuals year-to-date.

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, and/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 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 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. (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 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 *Programming & Capacity Building 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 5 of these guidelines under “Grant Limitations”;
- 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 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 grant funds. 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 project;
- 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 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](https://www.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;
- **For group grantees only:** A W-9 form including the applicant's Social Security Number (SSN) or Employer Identification Number (EIN);
- 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 account⁴;
- 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.

Fiscal Sponsorship

- AHCMC will make payment to a fiscal sponsor provided that the fiscal sponsor is a non-arts and humanities organization based in Montgomery County, MD.

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.**

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.

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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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/>.