



New Name! PROGRAMMING & CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT GRANTS

Formerly Small Organizations & Groups Project Grants

FY21 GRANT GUIDELINES

SUBMISSION DETAILS

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, February 7, 2020 – 11:59 p.m.

Applications will be accepted for activities occurring from
July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

The grant award announcement will be in June 2020.

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

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

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 (AHCRC), in partnership with the community, cultivates and supports excellence in the arts and the humanities, expands access to cultural expression, and contributes to economic vitality in the region.

Equity and Inclusion

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

ADA Compliance

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

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Introduction

Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants support the work of Montgomery County based arts and humanities organizations and groups that may or may not be incorporated as nonprofit organizations. Grants support organizations and groups that work in a wide array of arts disciplines including performing arts, folk and traditional arts, media arts, visual arts, literary arts, as well as humanities disciplines including history, literature, and philosophy. Funded projects must take place in Montgomery County.

Grant Award

- Applicants that provide proof of 501(c)(3) status may request and may be awarded one grant for \$1,000 to \$10,000.
- Applicants that **do not** have 501(c)(3) status may request and may be awarded one grant for \$1,000 to \$5,000.
- Grants will be awarded for activities occurring from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

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 between the organization/group and the community in the planning, participation, and evaluation of public activity/activities, which include intentional strategies for diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.
- Promote stability 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.
- Stimulate local support and involvement in the arts and humanities, including volunteer participation, audience development, and financial contributions.
- Strengthen the scholarly and artistic capabilities of arts and humanities organizations.
- Improve and/or stabilize the management infrastructure and effectiveness of arts and humanities organizations/groups.

FY21 *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants* Estimated Timeline

Webinars & Workshops	January 2020
Application Deadline	February 2020
Panel Review	March 2020
Award Announcement	June 2020
Final Report	July 2021

Organization/Group Eligibility Requirements

An organization or group is eligible to apply for an award if the applicant meets all the following requirements:

- Has had its primary mission or objective the exhibition, presentation, production or performance of, and/or education in, an arts and/or humanities discipline;
- Has had its primary location and/or a verifiable mailing address in Montgomery County for at least 12-consecutive months immediately prior to the grant deadline; and
- Operates as a not-for-profit.
 - The organization or group may or may not be incorporated and may or may not be formally recognized by the IRS as a public charity or otherwise officially established as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) institution. Regardless, the applicant must operate in the manner of a not-for-profit organization. The group's net earnings cannot be distributed to those who control it.

IMPORTANT

- An organization or group operating as a for-profit corporation is not eligible.
- **Organizations that apply for an FY21 *General Operating Support Grant* and/or an FY21 *Advancement Grant* or *CIP Grant* are not eligible to apply for an FY21 *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant*.**
 - **In addition, organizations that receive an FY21 *General Operating Support II Grant* are not eligible to apply for an FY22 *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant*.**
- An individual who applies for the FY21 *Artists & Scholars Project Grant* may not be the lead applicant for the submittal of an FY21 *Programming & Capacity Building Grants*.
- Applicants that apply for an FY21 *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grant* may apply for a **different** project for the FY21 *Wheaton Cultural Project Grant* opportunity.
- Applicants cannot request funding for the same project in more than one grant category.

Project Eligibility Requirements

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

- Performances, presentations, or exhibitions of a visual, performing, media art or folk and traditional arts
- Festivals or events that include folk and traditional arts, performing arts, literary arts, visual arts or multidisciplinary activities incorporating more than one art form
- 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/organizational capacity building projects
- Technological upgrades needed to bolster organizational capacity

Grant Limitations

Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants will not fund:

- Overhead expenses and utilities;
- Fundraising activities;
- Public, private or charter schools;
- Activities for the exclusive benefit of an organization's members;
- Costs of receptions, refreshments or food;
- Cost of merchandise such as T-shirts;
- Debt retirement;
- Indirect costs: costs not directly related to carrying out the funded project;
- Miscellaneous or contingency costs;
- Scholarships, awards, or tuition assistance;
- Political advocacy, or activities that support or promote the interests of any one political party or candidate; and
- Travel outside the United States.

Application and Panel Process

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

AHCMC staff members provide the applications and support materials to panelists approximately four weeks prior to the panel review meeting in order to allow panelists sufficient time for their evaluation. During the panel review meeting, the panel evaluates all eligible applications based on AHCMC Evaluation Criteria: Quality of Proposed Project, Programming Quality, Audience and Community Impact, and Administrative Capability (described in detail below).

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

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

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.

The panel scores and comments are available to the applicant upon request after the award notifications have been publicly announced. Applicants may contact Karen Judson, Grants Program Manager, at (301) 565-3805 ext. 28, or Karen.Judson@creativemoco.com.

Evaluation Criteria

Panelists use the Evaluation Criteria to score the application. Your organization's/group's commitment to each Evaluation Criteria should thread through your 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.

Quality of Proposed Project (25 points)

- ✓ Strength of overall project and potential to positively impact the organization/group
- ✓ Appropriate steps taken to plan and design the project
- ✓ Realistic implementation timeline
- ✓ Clear and logical project evaluation plan
- ✓ Achievable outcomes and detailed description of how progress will be tracked and measured
- ✓ Clear alignment between project and organization/group's mission

Programming Quality (20 points)

- ✓ Develops programs that are aligned with the organization's mission
- ✓ Engages a diverse team of artists, 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
- ✓ Conducts program evaluation involving all stakeholders to measure impact and demonstrates that feedback is utilized in planning

Audience and Community Impact (35 points)

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

Administrative Capability (20 points)

- ✓ Realistic, accurate, and complete budget
- ✓ Demonstrated effort to seek other sources of support
- ✓ Evidence of qualified staff (paid or volunteer) with project management experience
- ✓ Administrative structure that is appropriate to organization/group's size
- ✓ Quality of application reflects necessary skills to meet proposal objectives
- ✓ Completeness and clarity of the application

Grant Disbursement

Payment will be made to the grantee following AHCMC's receipt of:

- The required Grant Agreement
- A W-9 Form including a Social Security number or Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- ACH Direct Deposit Authorization Form allowing direct deposit to the grantee's bank account
- A voided check or bank statement with grantees name, account number and routing number. The information must match what is written on the ACH form
- Payment from Montgomery County to AHCMC for the total of the grants awarded
- Fulfillment of any outstanding grant requirements from AHCMC, such as FY20 Final Reports

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

Changes in Project Implementation

The grantee must alert AHCMC if significant project changes are required. Any change to the implementation of the project, such as scope of work, date of activity, or personnel, must be approved by AHCMC **before** the change occurs. In case 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.

- All requests for project changes must be submitted in writing on a form supplied by AHCMC
- Requests for project changes will not be considered **after May 31, 2021**

Return of Grant Funds

- Please note that AHCMC can decline significant project changes. The grantee may have to return the grant funds if the project change is a major diversion from the project described within the application and grant agreement.
- If AHCMC determines that grant funds were not spent in compliance with AHCMC guidelines and/or were spent in a manner that does not align with the approved grant proposal, the grantee must return the amount spent on non-eligible expenses.
- Grant funds received but not spent by **June 30, 2021 must be returned to AHCMC by July 31, 2021** with the grantee's final report.
- **Please contact AHCMC grants staff before grant funds are returned.**

Grant Agreement and Reporting

Following the award of a grant, the grantee must sign a Grant Agreement with AHCMC stating that the grantee agrees to comply with all regulations set forth in these guidelines:

- To use the grant funds only for the purposes described in the grant proposal;
- To submit a final report no later than **July 31, 2021** on forms provided by AHCMC, presenting information about the implementation of the activity funded by this grant, including documentation of how grant funds were spent. The deadline to submit the FY21 final report is July 31, 2021;
- Include work products resulting from the grant with their final reports, such as photos, gallery announcements, video samples or audio samples;
- Alert AHCMC about significant changes in project implementation, and request approval from AHCMC before the change occurs; and
- To return grant funds not spent, or not spent in compliance with published grant guidelines, grant agreement, and/or the approved grant proposal.

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 or other activities resulting from this grant and to participate in [CultureSpotMC.com](https://www.culturespotmc.com), AHCMC's online calendar.

The Online Application Process

All applications and materials for *Programming & Capacity Building Project Grants* must be submitted online on the AHCMC [FluidReview](#) portal.

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

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

Required Application Materials

A completed, online FluidReview application includes:

1. Completed narrative

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

2. Organization or Group Support Materials

- The organization's IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable);
- List of Board of Directors;
- If the applicant is a group: Provide a list of group members with residency and work address (city and zip code accepted);
- List of key staff/volunteers with bios; and
- Current Strategic Plan, if available.

3. Financial Support Materials

- The organization's FY19 990/990EZ, or if the FY19 990/990EZ is not yet available, the letter of extension. An exempt organization (other than a private foundation) that normally has annual gross receipts of \$50,000 or less may submit a [Form 990-N](#);
- The organization/group financial statements (Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet) for the most recently completed fiscal year; and
- Current fiscal year operating budget with actuals year-to-date.

4. Programming Support Materials – One PDF

- Include materials that will assist the panel in evaluating the organization's programming, presenting, and /or producing activities, i.e., newspaper clippings, program booklet, photos, brochures, or flyers.
- Materials must illustrate the quality of the work you do, and/or provide more information about the people or institutions that will be paid through the grant funds, such as a recording studio, workshop or other training program or vendor.

6. Work Sample(s)

- Upload work sample(s) that demonstrate the applicant’s abilities and achievements. Provide information that explains to the reviewer what the work sample is, and how it relates to your proposed project. Applicants should submit their strongest work samples. Quality work samples are critical to the evaluation of your application. **Performing arts organizations and groups are highly encouraged to submit audio or video samples, instead of stills or photos.** If your work includes audience interaction, a live performance recording is helpful. Submit your work sample(s) in the format specified below:
 - Video: Maximum 2 videos, up to 100 MB per file, no more than five minutes combined.
 - Audio: Maximum 2 files, up to 10 MB per file, no more than five minutes combined.
 - Live video or audio hyperlinks can also be placed within PDF that is uploaded to FluidReview (i.e., an applicant can submit a live hyperlink to YouTube within a PDF)
 - Images: Maximum 15 images, up to 4 MB per file, which can be uploaded individually or formatted as one PDF.
 - Upload written work as follows:
 - For prose, submit no more than 10 pages plus a chapter outline/synopsis;
 - For poetry, scripts, or screenplays, submit no more than 10 pages
- Applicants are encouraged to submit samples reflecting recently completed work. Samples must adhere to the following guidelines for the discipline of the work in which you are engaged.
 - Multidisciplinary projects / cross-disciplinary projects may include work from performing, visual, media, design, and literary arts. Applicants must submit work sample(s) that convey more than one artistic/scholarly discipline.
 - For Performing Arts (Dance/ Music/ Festivals /Presenting / Folk and Traditional Arts/ Storytelling/ Theater/ Media Arts): Applicants are encouraged to submit video or audio work samples, instead of stills or photos. Upload no more than five minutes of video. You may split the video into two files if necessary, but the total time of the video may not exceed five minutes.
 - For History or Social Sciences, Historical, Critical or Theoretical Approaches to the Arts, Linguistics, Literary Analysis, Philosophy, Ethics or Comparative Religion: Upload no more than 10 pages of research, or published material. If the work submitted is a portion of a larger work, include a synopsis of the chapters and an outline of the complete work. Clearly explain how and where the piece submitted fits into the whole.
 - For Visual Arts: Upload no more than five minutes of video, or no more than 15 images. The images may depict individual works or a selection of works.

Grant Preparation Assistance

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

Grant Preparation Workshops and Webinars

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

Personal Appointments

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

Personal appointments must be held **at least two weeks prior to the application deadline**. To schedule an appointment, contact Takenya LaViscount, Senior Grants Program Manager, at (301) 565-3805 ext. 26, or Takenya.LaViscount@creativemoco.com.

Important Reminders:

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

TIPS

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

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Questions?

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