



2026 Project Grant Guidelines

The Project Grant is a competitive program offering financial support to artists to create or complete original works of art that demonstrate artistic growth and/or creative experimentation. The Project Grant is open to artists across all mediums. Mid-career and Established artists are encouraged to apply and grant requests may not exceed \$3,000.

HOW TO APPLY

Submit your completed applications via the Good Grants platform by the **deadline at 11:59 pm (EST) on Sunday, April 12, 2026**. Visit <https://theartscommission.org/artists/project-grants> for FAQs, a full **example** copy of the application (with all the questions), important deadlines and updates, and a link to the online application—<https://artscommission.grantplatform.com/>

DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

Artist resume or curriculum vitae (two pages maximum)

Artist statement (150 words minimum, 300 words maximum)

Bio (50 words minimum, 150 words maximum)

Work Samples and Work Sample Descriptions (Title, medium, year created, dimensions, or duration)

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Project Title

Short Project Description (75 words maximum)

Budget (there is a separate budget for in-kind support and other funding)

Timeline (including plans/dates/secured venues for display, etc., of your completed project)

Grant Narrative Questions (3 questions)

Plans or Works-in-progress—Upload one PDF (limit 10 pages)

In order to be considered eligible for review by the Grant Panel, the application **must be filled out completely and appropriately**.





WHO CAN APPLY

Artists are limited to one Project Grant every **three calendar years**, i.e., artists who received funding in 2026 will not be eligible to reapply until 2029.

- 2025 Project Grant recipients must wait until 2028 to apply for an Accelerator Grant.
- 2025 Accelerator Grant recipients are eligible to apply for a 2026 Project Grant.
- 2025 Merit Grant recipients must wait until 2027 to apply for a Project Grant.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Individual artists and artist collectives across all creative mediums with a current residence or a creative studio **within 30 miles of downtown Toledo** may be eligible to apply.

Applicants who identify as Established or Mid-Career Artists are eligible to apply.

For the purposes of this program, applicants may identify as an **Established artist if one of the following applies:**

1. Artist is widely recognized (regionally, nationally, or internationally) in the art world regardless of age or years of experience.
2. Artist has created an extensive body of independent work.
3. Artist has 20+ years of experience as a working artist regardless of age or education.

For the purposes of this program, applicants may identify as a **Mid-career artist if one of the following applies:**

1. Artist has already established a sizable audience, a consistent body of work, and defining style over a period of a number of years
2. Artist has an ongoing record that could include: Solo and group exhibitions, performances, gallery representation, honors/awards, residencies and fellowships, reviews by art critics, grants, or publications, etc.
3. Artist has 10-20 years of experience as a working artist regardless of age or education.

Competitive applicants will be artists with a prior body of work who are creating or completing ***their own original works of art*** to build their portfolio, or who have an upcoming exhibition, performance, or other public opportunity to share their work in the next 12 months.





Applications will be accepted from university or college-level **adjunct** teachers.

If you are uncertain if you are eligible to apply, please read through the [full application and our FAQ on our website](#) to determine if this opportunity is right for you.

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Artists enrolled in a degree or certificate-granting program of any kind at the time of application are NOT eligible for a Project Grant. Applications will not be accepted before the graduation date.

Artists **teaching full-time** at a college or university (as a tenure track or full-time salaried employee) at the time of application are NOT eligible for Project Grants at this time.

Producers, commercial artists, creative directors, art organizers, or those providing logistical support to other artists are NOT eligible for this opportunity. For the purposes of this program, a **commercial artist** is someone who creates visual artworks for commercial purposes, primarily to promote and sell products, services, or ideas.

Artists currently employed by The Arts Commission or serving as members of The Arts Commission's Board of Trustees are NOT eligible.

Applicants self-identifying as Hobbyists or Emerging Artists are not eligible to apply for a Project Grant. We encourage those artists to apply for the Accelerator Grant that opens in late May.

Nonprofit organizations are NOT eligible for this opportunity.

ELIGIBLE CATEGORIES OF SUPPORT ARE LIMITED TO

At least **50% of the funding** must be utilized to **create the artwork itself** (supply costs, paying other artists for their support, publication printing, studio recording time, etc).

1. MATERIALS + SUPPLIES RELATED TO YOUR CREATIVE PRACTICE.

For example: film + photo chemicals, raw materials, paper, canvases, paint, paintbrushes, clay, printmaking supplies, glass blowing supplies, etc.





2. EQUIPMENT/TOOLS

For example: presses, camera lenses, instruments, welders, audio equipment, etc.

3. PROJECT SUPPORT & FRAMING*

For example: paying other artists to help you with your project such as illustrators, musicians, copywriters, copy editors, fabricators, etc., and/or professional framing or presentation costs.

** Framing can account for no more than 50% of the total project budget*

INELIGIBLE CATEGORIES OF SUPPORT

1. REGULAR OVERHEAD EXPENSES

For example: studio rent, utilities, insurance, accountant, bookkeeping, or costs associated with a commercial photography or graphic design business.

2. TRAVEL-RELATED EXPENSES

For example: plane tickets, parking, gas, mileage, lodging, food, etc.

3. LAPTOP/TECHNOLOGY EXPENSES

Unless it relates directly to your artmaking practice, you may not request funding for a laptop or other technology.

4. EXPENSES COVERED BY OTHER FUNDING THROUGH THE ARTS COMMISSION

For Example: expenses covered by a Toledo Lucas County ARPA Individual Artist Grant, an Accelerator Grant, or a Merit Award are not eligible for inclusion in a Project Grant budget.

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be **reviewed by a Grant Panel** composed of The Arts Commission's Board of trustee members and representatives from the performing, literary, and visual arts communities (both from Toledo and the Midwest). The Arts Commission's Chief Executive and Operating Officers serve as ex-officio members on the Grant Panel (the ex-officio members **do not** score or make funding recommendations).





REVIEW TIMELINE

Mid-April: Review Round 1 by the Grant Panel

Late April–early May: Review Round 2 by the Grant Panel

Early-May: Panelists will meet for a Zoom Panel Review where they will make funding recommendations based on application scores.

!! Mid to late May: The recommendations from the panel will be reviewed and approved by The Arts Commission. Applicants can expect to receive an email from The Arts Commission about the funding decisions.

REVIEW ROUND 1

Due to the high volume of applications, **this competitive grant program has a two-round review process**. Artists will not receive scores and comments on their applications if they do not pass Review Round 1.

In Review Round 1, the Grant Panel will review the following sections of the application:

- Project Title
- Project Description
- Work Samples
- Plans/Works-in-progress
- Question 7—How will your proposed project or new work act as a catalyst for your artistic and professional growth?

Applications in Review Round 1 are evaluated based on:

- The applicant's demonstrated **Creative Merit** (the applicant's submitted Work Samples provide context into the artist's creative practice and demonstrate a high quality for their medium).
- The award's **Impact on the Artist's Career** (the applicant's proposed project is creatively unique and has a clear plan for how the project will be catalytic to their creative growth).

Applications who excel in these two scoring criteria will advance to Review Round 2 and all portions of the application will be taken into consideration by panelists before making funding recommendations.

Panelists may also make funding recommendations that prioritize a variety of artistic mediums.





REVIEW ROUND 2

In Review Round 2, applications will be scored and commented on by the Grant Panel based on the following criteria:

Scale of 0-3: 0. Incomplete, 1. Needs Improvement, 2. Acceptable, or 3. Exemplary.

- Dedication to Artistic Practice
- Impact on Artist's Career
- Public Presence
- Creative Merit
- Project Feasibility

Please be aware that applying for this grant does not guarantee funding. All artists who make it to Round 2 of the Review Process will have access to the scores and comments from the Grant Panelists in Good Grants after notifications have gone out through email.

GRANT DISBURSEMENT

Recipients of Project Grants will receive approved grant funding no later than one month following the receipt of their signed grant agreement.

MIDWAY UPDATE

Artists will meet with a staff member, virtually or in person, for a brief progress report midway through the granting period.

SPENDING PERIOD

Artists have **12 months from notification of funding** to use the grant funds. The funds are not reimbursable, meaning they may not be used on expenses incurred prior to receiving the grant. Original receipts will be required as proof that materials were purchased **after funds were awarded**. Grants received through this program are considered taxable to the extent that is allowable by law. Please consult a tax professional for additional advice.

- **Spending Period: May 1, 2026 — May 1, 2027**

FINAL REPORTING

Final reports are due 30 days after the funding period unless otherwise requested and approved in writing. The final report due date is **June 1, 2027**.





Artists will be **required to submit documentation** of:

- In-progress work
- Completed final project
- How the work was publicly shared (recording of a live performance, exhibition/reception photos, recording of a live reading, photos of an artist's book in a shop, etc.)

Final report details can be found at <https://theartscommission.org/artists/project-grants>

Failure to submit a final report may result in an applicant becoming **noncompliant and may be prohibited from receiving future grants and be required to return the award in its entirety** to The Arts Commission.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

If selected by the Grant Panel to receive funding, the grant recipient will be required to sign a release providing The Arts Commission unrestricted permission to use materials provided in the final reporting process, including but not limited to videos, images, and publicity materials, to promote the Project Grant Program.

QUESTIONS?

For questions, please reach out to **Liz Bayan, Artist Services & Subgranting Manager**

Email: LBayan@theartscommission.org

Phone: 419.254.2787 Ext. 1018

