Frequently Asked Questions

These questions are drawn from live Q&A sessions at hour-long informational webinars held on August 14 and August 20, 2020. Panelists responded to more than 100 questions in those sessions, and this FAQ does not include every question asked.

Eligibility

1. Our organization is based outside the geography listed in the call for applications (DC, Montgomery and Prince George’s counties in Maryland; Fairfax and Arlington counties and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church in Virginia), but we serve the entire region. Are we eligible to apply? No.

2. Our fiscal sponsor is located outside the DC region, but our organization is located here and all our work is here. Are we eligible to apply? Yes.


4. We are a national organization located in the region, but we also have a local arts program. Are we eligible to apply? Arts Forward Fund is seeking to support arts and culture organizations located in the DC region and primarily serving the DC region.

5. Can the eligibility requirement for annual revenue (less than $10 million, most recently completed fiscal year) apply to a department or program within a larger organization rather than the entire organization? No.

6. Do we need to have been funded in the past by one of the Arts Forward Fund contributors, and are grantees of those foundations given priority consideration? No.

7. What types of revenue count towards the $10 million annual revenue limit? Total annual revenue, both earned and contributed.

8. We are a multi-disciplinary arts center with a theater, dance studios, multiple art galleries, exhibits, and art education classes. Can we apply under each of our program departments or just as one organization? Just as one organization.
Application Process

9. When specifically is the deadline on August 27? **Any time before midnight.**

10. When will the awards be announced? **Our goal is to make grant decisions by Tuesday, September 21. Notifications and an announcement should come shortly after that. We will notify applicants if that timetable changes.**

Amount Requested

11. Can we request less than $10,000? **Yes.**

12. Will funding decisions be all or nothing? Is there a chance that a grant will be partially funded? **We may award partial funding.**

13. Does the total amount requested impact the competitiveness of the request? **No.**

Type of Support Requested

14. It seems like there could be overlap among the three categories of support — capacity-building, training, and innovation. Do we need to pick one? **No. We recognize the overlap, and you do not need to pick a single category.**

15. Can our capacity-building request address the impact of anti-black violence rather than COVID-19? **Yes.**

16. The call for applications says to avoid “wish list” projects and programs. However, adjusting planned in-person programs to virtual ones is on our wish list. Would this be eligible, even if we haven’t already budgeted for it? **We were hoping to discourage applicants from creating brand new programs or projects. You should apply for the most urgent thing you need to do to adapt and recover.**

17. If our project is for capacity-building, training, and innovation but not necessarily related to adapting to Covid-19, does this qualify for your funding? **The intent of the fund is to provide resources to organizations impacted by COVID-19. We will also consider requests related to the impact of anti-black racism within the context of COVID-19.**

Grant Requirements

18. Is there a matching requirement for the grants? **No.**

19. What are the reporting requirements for the grants? **Reporting requirements have not been determined yet. Our commitment is to keep reporting as simple as possible, and limited to one final report.**
20. How long do we have to spend the grant? While we anticipated that many of the requests would be short-term (4-6 months), applicants can request a grant period that meets their needs.

21. Can the project or budget be modified after the award? Yes. We recognize that the environment is uncertain and plans may need to change.

22. We have already started our project. Can we request a grant period that begins before the grant is awarded? Yes, so long as the start date is no earlier than July 1, 2020 and no more than half the funds would have been expended prior to late September 2020.

Eligible Expenses

23. The instructors for our program are independent contractors. Would their time for training on new platforms and software be fundable? Provided the work met the other criteria in the call for applications, yes.

24. Is there a cap on overhead or indirect costs? No, although a very high overhead rate may make the application less competitive.

25. Would reopening costs such as PPE and cleaning supplies be eligible? Perhaps, but the application may not be competitive unless those costs are part of a broader strategy for reopening.

26. Can the grant replace lost registration income? The intent of the fund is to support organizations as they make shifts so they can have registration income again in the future. Arts Forward Fund is not a revenue replacement or budget relief funding opportunity.

27. Can funds be applied towards DEI training for our staff? Yes.

28. Would innovative capital improvements to facilities be eligible? Yes, if those improvements are necessary to adapt to the reality of COVID-19.

29. Is fundraising capacity-building eligible for support? Yes.

Attachments

30. Can we attach video to the grant application? No. The application doesn’t support video attachments.

31. Are work samples being sought? If so, how should we send them? What about photos? Web links? We are not requesting work samples or encouraging applicants to link to videos or other collateral. The reviewers will be focused on the application narrative.

32. We are a new organization with a fiscal sponsor, but we haven’t had formal financials. What financial documents should we send? We are committed to being flexible. Send what documents you have, but note that you will need to upload a PDF for each required attachment.
33. Our fiscal year ends on August 31, just a few days before the application deadline. Which year’s financials and budget should we include? **You should include the budget for the year that begins September 1, 2020 and financial statements for the year that ended August 31, 2019 (most recently completed). The statement of financial position (balance sheet) should be as recent as possible, preferably July 31, 2020.**

34. For organizations with fiscal sponsors, can we submit the financial documents of the fiscal sponsor? **You will need to submit budget and financial information for your specific program. The fiscal sponsor’s financial documents will not give reviewers insight into your organization’s financial situation.**

**Partnerships and Collaborations**

35. We are partnering with another organization? How should we submit our request? **One organization should apply for the grant, and describe the partnership in the narrative.**

36. Can multiple organizations apply for $50,000 toward a single project? **In theory, yes. However, given the limited resources available, we are unlikely to make multiple large grants to support a single project.**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

37. Given the focus on diversity, equity and inclusion and the direct questions around leadership, will organizations that lack racial diversity in leadership be considered? **Yes. These questions are being asked in part to help the steering committee learn more about the composition of the arts and culture sector. Responses to these questions will be one of many factors we consider.**

**General Questions**

38. Who will review the application? **Reviewers will include members of the steering committee, members of the advisory committee, and additional community members who will bring further knowledge and perspectives to the review process.**

39. Do you anticipate more than one round of funding? **We are hopeful that there will be another round but have no specific plans and have not yet secured the resources for a second round.**