



2025 Grant Guidelines

For questions, contact Mary Burruss, Advancement
and Grants Program Strategist, at
mburruss@richmondcultureworks.org
or 804-340-5280, ext. #1.

Please Note:

There are colors denoting requirements for certain grants.

LIGHT BLUE denotes information that is relevant to Building Capabilities Applicants only.

RED denotes information that is relevant to Cultural Equity Applicants only.

PURPLE denotes information that is relevant only to Individual Artist Applicants.

DARK BLUE denotes information that is relevant only to Applying Organizations.

Let's begin...

Notice of Funding Opportunity:

CultureWorks strengthens artists and arts organizations to increase their impact in our region while fostering diversity and inclusivity, ensuring everyone in the community can access and express culture through the arts. One of the ways this mission is achieved is by funding artists and arts and culture organizations through an annual grants program.

Process Overview:

There are three steps in the 2025 grant application process.

1. The first is submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) accepted February 1st through 28th. After the LOI has been reviewed by a volunteer panel you will be notified if you are invited to apply or not.
 - a. If invited to apply to will go to step 2 and fill out a full application.
 - b. If not, you will be invited to attend the grants presentation as a spectator and encouraged to mingle with potential funders, artists and CultureWorks board members and make potentially beneficial connections.
2. If you are invited to apply for a grant, the second step is submission of a full proposal. The application will be open only to those invited via SMAApply from March 1 through March 31.
3. A Grants Presentation The presentation of a 2-minute live, visual or audio recording describing:
 - a. your project,
 - b. the audience for your project (population your project will serve);
 - c. how, if awarded, the funding will impact you as an individual artist/your organization, and/or how the community served will be impacted - basically, why you or your organization should get this money.

This presentation will be a part of a live "Shark Tank" like event where you may be asked for more details about your project. The specific date and time will be announced and is anticipated to fall sometime in the second half of May.

Funding Scope:

The Annual Grant Program supports organizations and initiatives benefiting Richmond, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg, and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, and the Town of Ashland.

Application Resources:

- **Grant Application Overview Webinar:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 12:00–1:00 PM (Webinar will be recorded and made available on the CultureWorks website)
- **Chat with Grants Program Strategist.** Sign up for a specific time slot via [SignUp Genius](#). 2025 times are scheduled in 15-minute intervals between the following times:
 - Thursday, January 16, 1:30–3:15 PM;
 - Tuesday, January 21, 2:00–4:00 PM;
 - Wednesday, January 22, 1:00–2:30 PM;
 - Thursday, January 23, 1:30–3:00 PM.

Key Dates:

- **Letter of Intent Opens:** Saturday, February 1, 2025, at 6:00am EST
- **Letter of Intent Closes:** Friday, February 28, 2025 at 5:00pm EST (No exceptions)
- **If invited to apply, the Application Opens:** Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 6:00AM EST
- **Application Closes:** Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 5:00pm EST
- **Live Grants Presentation:** TBD – sometime in the second half of May

Applications must be submitted through the online portal:

<https://richmondcultureworks.smapply.io/>. Early submission is strongly encouraged.

A diverse panel of volunteers will review the LOIs and Applications.

Awards will be announced at the Grant Competition.

Timeline

- **Grant Period:** July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026
- **Mid-Year Report Due:** Halfway through your project or by December 31, 2025
- **Final Report Due:** 30 days after your project is completed or by July 31, 2026

Funding Focus Areas

Building Capabilities: Supports initiatives to enhance organizational effectiveness, growth, and sustainability. Funding is for specific projects, not general operations. Examples include:

- Infrastructure development
- Strengthening collaborations in arts and culture
- Strategic planning
- Health and safety improvements
- Technology upgrades

Cultural Equity: Supports projects or programs engaging underrepresented populations (e.g., based on race, age, ability, gender, geography, etc.). Examples include:

- Staff salaries for innovative engagement initiatives
- Artist stipends for events showcasing underrepresented cultures
- Facility costs for inclusive programming

Eligibility Requirements for Individual Artists:

To qualify, applicants must:

- Be a practicing artist. (The CultureWorks Grant Program defines a practicing artist as an individual recognized by their peers, critics, or other professionals as committed to producing art on a regular basis. Artists meeting this criterion are typically paid for their work, earning a portion of their living from their creative work. Artists of all disciplines - performing, visual, literary, media, etc. - are encouraged to apply.)
- Maintain a residence in the Richmond and Tri-Cities region of Virginia (Richmond, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg, and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, and the Town of Ashland) and expect to do so through the grant period.
- Be 18 years old or older.
- Students pursuing any degree are NOT eligible.
- Applicant has at least a two-year history of public engagement, presentation, or publication.
- Be the lead artist in every aspect of their project.
- Applicant (individual) cannot be disbarred, suspended, or have any other exclusions or disqualifications from receiving Federal funding.
- Produce arts and/or culture that benefits and focuses primarily on the Richmond and Tri-Cities region.
- Be a U.S. Citizen with a Social Security number that will be provided upon notification of a grant award. Non-citizen permanent residents with SSNs may apply.
- Use funding within the fiscal year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026.

Eligibility Requirements for Organizations:

To qualify, applicants must:

- Be based in or serve the Richmond and Tri-Cities Region (Virginia (Richmond, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg, and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, and the Town of Ashland).
- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with an annual budget under \$750,000.
- Focus on arts and culture in their mission or strategic plan.
- Ensure inclusivity in hiring, programming, and governance.
- Submit applications directly, not as a pass-through entity.
- Be eligible for Federal funding (not suspended or disbarred).
- Use funding within the fiscal year (July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026).

For further details, consult Appendix A for allowable costs, Appendix B for reporting requirements, and Appendix C for compliance standards.

Additional Eligibility Considerations for ALL applicants:

- In line with the CultureWorks' commitment to mitigate systemic inequities, the grants program will prioritize applications submitted by artists or organizations belonging to identified groups who have historically been underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or socioeconomic status.
- Separate applications for the two focus areas (e.g., Building Capabilities, Cultural Equity) in the same cycle are NOT permitted.
- Applications for multi-year grants will NOT be considered. Additionally, grants will not be awarded for similar activities for more than two consecutive years.
- For the 2025 Annual Grants Program cycle, CultureWorks will permit applicants that have been awarded Annual Grants for two or more consecutive years to apply for another year of Annual Grant funding. Qualified applicants that have not received CultureWorks Annual Grants in the past two consecutive cycles will receive priority consideration.
- Applicants with incomplete or outstanding grant obligations or past-due reports due from previous CultureWorks grants are not eligible to apply.
- Collaborative projects must designate a single eligible lead applicant responsible for the application, fund distribution, and reporting.

ELEMENTS OF THE LETTER OF INTENT FOR ARTISTS:

- Artist Eligibility – as described in Eligibility Requirements for Individual Artists
- Artist Information
 - Name, address, and contact information
 - Geographic area served
 - Artist Statement
 - Do you have a set annual budget?
 - Disclosure Statement- are you related to anyone at CultureWorks or other applicants
 - Demographics
- Application Summary Information
 - Project title
 - Purpose of Grant
 - Project Start and End Dates
 - Request Amount – you may choose one of 3 amounts: \$5,000, \$10,000, or \$20,000. If awarded a grant you will receive the full amount requested – no partial funding this year.
 - Total Project Budget
 - Past CultureWorks Grant Awards
- Grant Focus Area – where you declare your application for either Building Capabilities or Cultural Equity
- Attachments:
 - Preliminary project budget – Include the requested amount from CultureWorks and other financial resources, pending or committed, to the proposed project.
 - Short bio or resume of project leader.
 - Examples of previous work

ELEMENTS OF THE LOI FOR ORGANIZATIONS

- Organization Eligibility – as described in Eligibility Requirements for Organizations
- Information
 - Organization Name and Address
 - Organization Website
 - Individual Contact Information
 - Year Organization was Established
 - Geographic area served
 - Mission Statement
 - Organization Overview
 - Annual budget
 - Past CultureWorks Grant Awards
 - Disclosure Statement- are you related to anyone at CultureWorks or other applicants
- Demographic Information – general demographics of leadership, staff, and Board
- Application Summary Information
 - Project title
 - Purpose of Grant
 - Project Start and End Dates
 - Request Amount – you may choose one of 3 amounts: \$5,000, \$10,000, or \$20,000. If awarded a grant you will receive the full amount requested – no partial funding this year.
 - Total Project Budget
- Grant Focus Area – where you declare your application for either Building Capabilities or Cultural Equity
- Attachments
 - Preliminary project budget – Include requested amount from CultureWorks and other financial resources, pending or committed, to the proposed project.
 - Board List
 - Examples of previous work

LOI REVIEW CRITERIA

LOI's and Applications are reviewed and evaluated by a panel comprised of community volunteers with diverse backgrounds, experience and relevant expertise, but may not have direct knowledge of every applicant.

For Building Capabilities Focus:

- **JUSTIFICATION OF NEED:** Degree to which the grant funding would further the artist's or organization's vision and assist with accomplishment of stated goals.
- **USE OF FUNDS:** Evidence that the grant will assist artistic growth or overall development of the artist or organization.
- **LIKELIHOOD OF PROJECT COMPLETION:** Capacity to successfully accomplish the stated goals.
- **OVERALL IMPACT:**
 - Efforts to further the appreciation of the applicant's art form.
 - Community involvement and plans to promote the project to the intended audience.
 - Extent to which the proposed project meets the needs of the community.

For Cultural Equity:

- **JUSTIFICATION OF NEED:** Degree to which the project or program is authentically engaged to accomplish the goal of increasing access to arts and culture for an underrepresented population.
 - Demonstration that the audience identified is currently underrepresented in the Richmond and Tri-Cities region.
 - Extent to which the proposed project meets the needs of the community.
- **USE OF FUNDS:** Evidence that the grant will assist the organization in meeting the needs of the identified community.
- **LIKELIHOOD OF PROJECT COMPLETION:** Capacity to successfully accomplish the stated goals.
- **OVERALL IMPACT ON POPULATION SERVED:** Extent to which the proposed project or program meets identified needs of the community.

Tips for Success

- **Be concise:** Limit your LOI - minimize word counts as much as possible while conveying your message fully within the maximum word count.
- **Be focused:** Keep the grant review criteria and eligibility requirements in mind
- **Focus on impact:** Emphasize the tangible outcomes of your project.
- **Use clear, persuasive language:** Avoid jargon, slang or overly technical terms.
- **Show passion:** Let your enthusiasm for the project shine through without being over-the-top..
- **Tailor to the funder:** Reflect the language and values of CultrueWorks.
- **AI:** You might use AI to clean up your writing but resist relying on AI to write your narratives- they will sound fake and probably too generalized to make a convincing argument for your project.

APPLICATION CONTENT FOR THOSE INVITED TO APPLY WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE WITH FUTURE INVITATIONS TO APPLY and will build on information already provided in the LOI.

Accepting an Award

If you are awarded funding, all Awardees will be asked to provide an IRS Form W-9 and to complete a document assuring agreement and compliance with the terms and conditions of the Annual Grants Program as stated in these Guidelines.

Awardees must:

- Submit an IRS Form W-9 and sign an agreement to comply with program terms.
- Cultural Equity Grant recipients in years which Federal Funds are allotted:
- Provide a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).
- Attend a post-award webinar for federal funding compliance.

Grantee Activities & Engagement

- **Use of Funds:** Funds must be used within the fiscal year (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026) as described in the proposal. Any changes to the project purpose must be reported to CultureWorks in advance to avoid forfeiting funds.
- **Reporting:**
 - A mid-year progress report is due when you are halfway done with your project OR by December 31, 2025, through the online application system.
 - Final reports must be submitted within 30 days of completing the project or by July 31, 2026, through the online application system.
 - Late or missing reports may impact future funding opportunities.
 - Maintain accounting records and source documents (e.g., receipts, payroll records) for four years after the final report submission. Provide copies upon request.
- **Marketing & Acknowledgment:**
 - Include CultureWorks' acknowledgment on all project materials (e.g., newsletters, programs, press releases). Use the CultureWorks logo where possible.
 - Cultural Equity grant recipients must also acknowledge the National Endowment for the Arts in all related materials and announcements.

Questions?

For assistance, contact Mary Burruss, Advancement and Grants Program Strategist, at 804.340.5280 ext. 1 or mburruss@richmondcultureworks.org.

Appendix A: Allowable and Unallowable Costs for Cultural Equity Grants

Allowable Costs

All CultureWorks' grants must adhere to and can cover:

- **Salaries:** Full or partial support for staff positions, including new or restored jobs.
- **Fees/Stipends:** For artists or contractors supporting daily operations.
- **Facilities Costs:** Rent, mortgage principal, and utilities.
- **Health and Safety:** Supplies such as PPE, cleaning materials, and hand sanitizers.
- **Marketing and Promotion:** Costs related to outreach and promotion.
- **Indirect Costs:** Up to 10% of the project budget or a pre-negotiated rate.

Unallowable Costs

Grant funds cannot be used for:

- Relief programs providing financial hardship assistance without work requirements.
- Alcoholic beverages, commercial enterprises, or fundraising activities.
- Construction, renovations, or land purchases (Building Capabilities grants could include capital projects or elements of such projects).
- Lobbying, mortgage interest, penalties, or deficit reduction.
- Social events like receptions or galas.
- Subawards replacing lost revenue or travel costs.
- Visa costs, vehicles, or activities funded by other federal grants.
- Payments to foreign nationals not compliant with U.S. Treasury regulations.

Accounting records for all costs must be kept for four years after the final report submission and made available upon request to CultureWorks.

Appendix B: Reporting Requirements

Reports are submitted via the CultureWorks online platform and include:

Awardee Information:

- Name, address, city, state, zip code.
- Grant amount awarded.
- Institution type and primary artistic discipline.
- Organizational budget from the most recent fiscal year.

Project-Specific Information:

- Number of compensated individuals (artists and others).
- Number of individuals hired (artists and others).
- Participation metrics:
 - Adults and children engaged in person.
 - Individuals engaged virtually (unique online visitors).

Maintain detailed records to ensure compliance with reporting standards.

APPENDIX C: Legal Requirements for years in which Federal Funds are available

CultureWorks Cultural Equity Grant Awards

Funded projects must comply with the U.S. Constitution, federal laws, and public policies, including those protecting free speech, religious liberty, public welfare, the environment, and prohibiting discrimination (2 CFR 200.300).

Key Policies

- **Nondiscrimination:** Projects must adhere to laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability:
 - Title VI: No exclusion or discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (42 USC 2000d).
 - Executive Order 13166: Ensure meaningful access for individuals with limited English proficiency.
 - Title IX: No discrimination based on sex in educational programs (20 USC 1681).
 - Age Discrimination Act: Prohibits age-based exclusion (42 USC 6101).
 - ADA & Section 504: Ensure accessibility and prohibit discrimination based on disability. Organizations must maintain a 504 self-evaluation and designate a coordinator.
- **Debarment and Suspension:** Comply with regulations to prevent fraud, embezzlement, or other misconduct. Funding may be suspended if issues arise (2 CFR 3254.10).
- **Drug-Free Workplace:** Maintain a drug-free policy, provide employees with statements about it, and notify CultureWorks of workplace violations (41 USC 701).

- **Environmental and Historic Preservation***

- **NEPA:** Ensure no significant environmental impact from funded activities (42 USC 4332).
- **National Historic Preservation Act:** Protect structures or areas with historical significance (16 USC 470).

*If Federal funds are not a part of your award, awardees are expected to ensure environment and historic preservation are appropriately addressed but will not require Federal review of the application.

- **Lobbying Restrictions:** Federal funds cannot be used for lobbying. Non-federal funds used for lobbying must be disclosed (31 USC 1352).
- **Davis-Bacon Act** (Does not apply in 2025 applications): Contracts over \$2,000 involving construction or repair must pay workers prevailing wages (29 CFR Part 1, Part 3, Part 5).
- **Native American Graves Protection:** Organizations handling Native American human remains or objects must comply with this Act (25 USC 3001).
- **U.S. Constitution Education Program** (Does not apply in 2025 applications): Educational institutions must provide a program on the U.S. Constitution each September 17 (P.L. 108-447).
- **ACORN Funding Prohibition:** Federal or matching funds may not go to ACORN or its subsidiaries (P.L. 111-88 Sec. 427).

Recordkeeping

Maintain records and compliance documents for audits or investigations. Access to these documents must be available upon request by CultureWorks or the National Endowment for the Arts.