



RURAL ARTS ACCESS FUND

FRESNO ARTS COUNCIL

PROJECT SPECIFIC GRANT GUIDELINES, 2024-2025

This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts

[Apply Now](#)

Important Dates (Subject to Change)

Applications Open	Monday, August 12, 2024
Application Deadline	Friday, November 1, 2024, 11:59pm
Grant Panel Review	November, 2024
Notice of Intent to Award	Monday, December 2, 2024
Grant Activity Period	January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025
Midterm Report Due	June 30, 2025
Final Report Due	January 31, 2026

For a copy of the guidelines in Spanish, contact the Fresno Arts Council at 559-237-9734
Para obtener una copia de las pautas en español, llame a Fresno Arts Council (el Consejo de las Artes de Fresno) al 559.237.9734.

For a copy of the guidelines in Hmong, contact the Fresno Arts Council at 559-237-9734.
Hu rau lub Fresno Art Council ntawn 559-237-9734 yog tias koj xav tau ib daim ntawv luam u alus Hmoob txog peb cov lus koj qhia.

For a copy of guidelines in Punjabi contact the Fresno Arts Council at 559-237-9734
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਸ਼ਾ-ਨਿਰਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਲਈ ਫਰਿਜ਼ਨੇ ਆਰਟਸ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਨੂੰ 559-237-9734 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

Overview

Purpose

The purpose of the Rural Arts Access Fund Project Specific Grants is to increase access to the arts in rural Fresno County communities by supporting arts nonprofit programming and projects in Fresno County for the following disciplines and locations:

Disciplines: Visual, performing, literary, folk/traditional, media, and musical arts



Locations: 14 incorporated cities and unincorporated communities in Fresno County, including:

Cities: Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Huron, Kingsburg, Kerman, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger, Selma **AND** unincorporated communities in Fresno County

This funding opportunity aims to 1) increase access to the arts in rural communities in Fresno County, and 2) strengthen the skills and capacity of small to mid-sized arts organizations to apply for other grants in the future.

Please note: This grant is a pilot program and funded in part with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. This grant may or may not be offered in future Fresno Arts Council grant cycles.

*An organization may submit only one (1) application for this funding opportunity.

Who is encouraged to apply?

Designated 501(c)(3) arts organizations, and City and Town governments working with artists, serving diverse communities in rural Fresno County.

Arts Organization: A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with a primary purpose of providing arts or creative programming/services. The organization's purpose is assessed and verified by staff using the organization's website, mission, core activities, and [IRS National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities \(NTEE\) codes](#) (how your nonprofit is classified).

Eligibility: Who can apply?

- Applicant is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) arts organization with its official business address in the Fresno County locations listed above. Applicant organization's primary purpose is providing arts or creative programming/services
- City or town government departments or units in partnership with local artists

Eligibility: Who can't apply?

- Individual Artists without a 501(c)(3) partner
- Organizations located outside of Fresno County
- Public or private schools and school districts; county offices of education; universities and colleges
- Non-arts nonprofit organizations
- For-profit businesses or sole proprietorships



- Organizations disbarred, suspended, or which have any other exclusions or disqualifications from receiving federal funds
- Fiscally sponsored organizations, collectives, and individuals

Grant Amount

All applicants may request up to \$3,000 for eligible project-related expenses

Matching Funds

Matching Funds are not required, but may assist in demonstrating the viability of a project.

Funding Use: You can use the grant money for these things:

A program budget is required for this application. Examples of eligible expenses for this funding include, but are not limited to:

- Administrative costs related to the project
- Artist and performer stipends
- Equipment rentals
- Production or technical staff contractors
- Supplies and materials needed for the project
- Venue and permit fees
- Up to 10% of award for indirect costs
- Mural projects with letter of consent from property owner including square footage, location, and maintenance plan.

Funding Use Restrictions: You can't use the grant money for these things

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Activities occurring outside of Fresno County or within the city of Fresno
- Administrative or other organizational costs unrelated to the project
- Capital improvement projects/expenditures
- Fundraising
- Hospitality costs
- Political Advocacy or lobbying
- Projects in schools during school hours
- Projects on university campuses that are primarily for enrolled students
- Projects with religious or evangelical purposes
- Costs of goods for resale
- All other costs that are unallowable per [2 CFR 200](#) and other federal laws

Project Requirements:

- Project must take place in Fresno County



- Project must take place within the grant activity period
- Project must be arts-focused
- Project must follow the National Endowment for the Arts [sub-awardee regulations](https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/GTC-ORG-FY21-rev-10.21.22.pdf) (<https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/GTC-ORG-FY21-rev-10.21.22.pdf>)
- The organization must operate and offer its programs in a non-discriminatory manner and in compliance with all applicable laws, including, without limitation, laws protecting persons with disabilities

Fiscal Sponsors:

The use of fiscal sponsors is not permitted for this grant opportunity.

Application Process

Grant Application Materials

All application materials must be submitted electronically before the deadline. The Rural Arts Access Fund grant application consists of the following components:

- Narrative questions (see Appendix)
- Program budget form and budget notes
- Work samples and support materials
- Applicant's most recent year-end financial statement
- Most recently submitted IRS 990
- Copy of IRS Determination Letter
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) (required before payment can be issued; not required at time of application, but may be included)
- Additional Materials as required by applicant's project (eg. letter of consent from property owner for mural projects)
- Accessibility Questions (see Appendix)
- Following application submission, applicant will be required to complete a [NHPA/NEPA Questionnaire](#) via Submittable for review by the NEA. Only applicants who are approved by the NEA based on this questionnaire will receive funding.

Grants Management System

All application materials must be submitted electronically using Fresno Arts Council's grants management system, [Submittable](#). Paper or physical applications are not accepted at this time. Technical assistance for creating a Submittable account is available through [Submittable's Customer Support](https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter/) (<https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter/>).

***Note: all communications regarding Rural Arts Access Fund grants will come through Submittable ONLY to the email address of the person who submitted the application.**



Notifications will be sent from email addresses ending in @fresnoartscouncil.org or @email.submittable.com—please make sure to add these domain addresses to your safe senders list to avoid notifications being sent to your spam or junk folder.

For questions, please contact Fresno Arts Council at 559-237-9734 or lilia@fresnoartscouncil.org.

Fresno Arts Council encourages you to attend webinars, office hours, and make use of instructional resources early in your application process. FAC strongly recommends submitting the application and required supporting materials at least five (5) business days before the deadline to provide time to troubleshoot any technical issues. The deadline to submit the online grant applications will be on November 1, 2024 at 11:59pm.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for grant program-specific inquiries is available from Fresno Arts Council staff by email, phone, or virtual appointment. Technical assistance can provide guidance around eligibility, application requirements, or review criteria.

Application resources will be available on Fresno Arts Council’s website at <https://www.fresnoartscouncil.org/ruralartsaccessfund>

Email support: for technical assistance and grant guidelines questions, please call 559-237-9734 Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm. You may also email Executive Director, Lilia Gonzáles Chávez at lilia@fresnoartscouncil.org. Please allow 24-48 hours for staff response.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations to apply should make their requests to Fresno Arts Council staff at least 72 hours in advance of deadlines or meetings. Please email lilia@fresnoartscouncil.org or call 559-237-9734 for accommodations requests.

Translation Services

Grant guidelines are available in English, Hmong, Spanish, and Punjabi. Requests can be emailed to lilia@fresnoartscouncil.org. If the application is submitted in a language other than English, a third-party translation service will be used to translate application answers into English for Grant Review Panelists.



Evaluation and Scoring

Review Criteria

Artistic Excellence and Artistic Merit: A review criterion required for grant awards using National Endowment for the Arts funds. For this grant opportunity, this can mean the organization's use of the arts in any discipline as a core component of consistently engaging its community. It may also include demonstration of artistic skills, vision, and partnerships, as described in the review criteria below. Artistic Excellence and Artistic Merit is considered within the context of the arts program and any community identities associated with the program.

Applications will be evaluated by Grant Review Panelists using the following criteria:

Project Proposal

- Clearly defined goals and/or proposed outcomes and an appropriate plan to determine if those goals and/or outcomes are met
- Ability to carry out the project in a realistic timeline based on such factors as the appropriateness of the budget, clarity of the project activities, resources involved, and the qualifications of the project's personnel or partnerships with artists

Artistic Excellence and Artistic Merit

- Quality of the artists and other key individuals, creative process, works of art, organizations, arts education providers, artistic partners, and/or services involved in the project and their relevance to the audience/communities the project aims to serve.
- Value and appropriateness of the project to the organization's mission, artistic field, artists, audience, community, and/or constituency

Community Engagement and Impact

- Extent to which the project increases rural communities' access and exposure to, and participation within, arts and culture
- Extent to which project activities are free/affordable
- Extent to which project activities are accessible to people with physical disabilities

Cultural Equity

- Extent to which the project supports diverse personnel, artists, and/or cultural workers
- Extent to which the project engages institutionally and/or geographically underserved communities, neighborhoods, and individuals in Fresno County



- Extent to which the project engages economically-disadvantaged individuals

Scoring Scale

Grant review panelists use the following scale to assess how well the application meets the review criteria.

6	Exceptional	Meets review criteria to the highest degree
5	Strong	Strongly meets review criteria
4	Good	Adequately meets review criteria; average
3	Fair	Moderately meets some of the review criteria; needs some improvement
2	Marginal	Minimally meets the review criteria; greatly needs improvement
1	Weak	Does not meet the elements of the review criteria

Review Process

Eligibility Screening

Fresno Arts Council staff reviews each application submitted for eligibility. Eligible applications are evaluated by a Grant Review Panel in accordance with the review criteria.

Grant Review Panel

The Grant Review Panel is comprised of individuals located in Fresno County with diverse backgrounds in arts and culture.

Any panelist who has a conflict of interest with an application(s) must recuse themselves from reviewing that application(s). **A “conflict of interest” is defined as a situation in which a Panelist has a competing professional, financial, or personal interest that could impair their ability to perform their evaluation responsibilities objectively.** Panelists may not be on the board or staff of any applicant for this grant opportunity, nor related by blood or marriage to any applicant in this opportunity.

Applicants may request their panel comments after they receive official notice of intent to award.

Approval Process

After the Grant Review Panel meets to review all applications, Fresno Arts Council will develop funding recommendations. FAC ensures proposed grant awards are aligned with granting policies and guidelines before publishing an intent to award notice.



Note: This is a competitive program. An application may or may not be funded depending on the number of applications, the amount of award money available, and the application's score based on the evaluation criteria. The eligibility of an application does not imply that it will be automatically funded. All applicants will be notified prior to the beginning of the funding cycle about the results of the application.

Appeal Process

Any applicant not recommended to receive an award may submit a written appeal no later than 5:00pm on the tenth business day following the Notice of Intent to Award. Appeals must be based on the following:

- Clerical or technical error; and/or
- Incorrect processing of application materials, negatively influencing the panel's assessment of an applicant's request for funding

Note: Dissatisfaction with a final score or award amount is not grounds for appeal. Ineligibility is not grounds for appeal. All applications must be properly submitted and include all required elements prior to the deadline.

Fresno Arts Council's Board will review appeals, and if a technical, clerical, or processing error is found, an adjustment will be made. The Board's decision is final.

Grantee requirements and Policies

Federal Requirement for Unique Entity Identify (UEI)

All grantees must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Grantees can request a UEI in SAM.gov. Grantees are NOT required to have a full registration in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov). A UEI must be provided to Fresno Arts Council before payment can be issued. Obtaining your UEI will take some time; all applicants are encouraged to begin this process early to ensure that you obtain it in time to receive your award.

Grantee Orientation and Award Disbursement

All grantees are required to attend a Rural Arts Access Fund grantee orientation, submit a revised budget if required, and complete a Rural Arts Access Fund grant agreement before receiving award.

Midterm Report

All grantees must submit a Midterm Report via Submittable by June 30, 2025.

Final Report

All grantees must submit a Final Report via Submittable by January 31, 2026.



Data

At a minimum, data collection shall include:

- a. Attendance data:
 - i. Number of youth participants served. Youth shall be defined as age seventeen (17) and younger
 - ii. Number of adult participants served. Adult shall be defined as ages eighteen (18) through sixty-one (61)
 - iii. Number of senior participants served. Senior shall be defined as age sixty-two (62) and older
- b. Participant zip code data to identify the number and percentage of Fresno County residents served
- c. Race, ethnicity, household income and gender identity
- d. For murals only: total square feet installed and location/address
- e. Photos and/or videos highlighting grant funded projects, events, programs, etc.

Acknowledging Fresno Arts Council Support

Grant recipients must acknowledge Fresno Arts Council's financial support by using the phrase "Supported in part by Fresno Arts Council's Rural Arts Access Fund." Grantees must display Fresno Arts Council's logo in all promotional materials and media.

Acknowledging National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Support

For print and online program materials, the basic requirement is a phrase acknowledging support from the National Endowment for the Arts using the following language: "This program is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts."

- We encourage you to include "To find out more about how National Endowment for the Arts grants impact individuals and communities, visit www.arts.gov."
- In addition, we encourage you to use the [National Endowment for the Arts current logo](#) whenever possible to accurately indicate that your program has been supported by the National Endowment for the Arts
- You may also use social media to indicate National Endowment for the Arts support of your program, such as "This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts." It is also acceptable to include the agency in a list among other project supporters. (On Twitter and Instagram, you may use @NEAarts instead of spelling out the full name of the agency.)

Permits and Permissions

It is the responsibility of the grantee to secure venues, appropriate permits, and insurance for public presentations. The grantee is solely responsible for securing the necessary City, County, or community permits or approvals for project elements such as publicly installed



art, street closures, sound amplification in public space, or murals. Planning for this should be reflected in the application narrative.

Incomplete Projects

Failure to complete the grant-funded project will result in a forfeiture of grant funds, Grantees with incomplete projects must return their awarded funds to Fresno Arts Council.

Terms and Conditions

Fresno Arts Council is a designated Local Arts Agency and recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Grant for Arts Projects for sub granting. These funds require Fresno Arts Council and its sub-grant recipients to comply with all Federal Requirements. Grant awardees will be required to review and sign additional documents regarding [sub-grantee compliance](#) upon award contract and additional reporting will be required.

Appendix: Narrative Questions/Application Materials

Please visit <https://fresnoartscouncil.submittable.com> to complete your application.

***Note: all communications regarding Rural Arts Access Fund grants will come through Submittable ONLY to the email address of the person who submitted the application.**

Notifications will be sent from email addresses ending in @fresnoartscouncil.org or @email.submittable.com—please make sure to add these domain addresses to your safe senders list to avoid notifications being sent to your spam or junk folder.

Narrative Questions

1. Project Statement:

Prepare a Project Statement with 150 words or fewer that describes what you will do with funds if awarded. Must include project title, activity, location(s) where activity will take place, age of population to be served, projected number of people to be served, and desired impact.

Begin Project Statement by saying: *“With support from a Rural Arts Access Fund grant, [your organization] will...”*

These statements may be used to report to the NEA and/or be included in public documents and press information.



2. Organization Mission and Description (max 250 words)

What is your organization's mission? Please provide a brief description of your organization's core programming, services, and/or work you do in the community.

3. Project Details (max 750 words)

- a. Describe the project's activities
- b. Who is/are your target audience(s), and how will you engage them? How will you capture who participates (age, ethnicity, income level, geography, etc.)?
- c. Describe key project staff, exhibitors/presenters, artists, and other collaborators. In what ways will you support diverse personnel, artists, and/or cultural workers?
- d. What are the goals and outcomes of this project? How will you measure and evaluate outcomes and impact? In what ways will your project engage institutionally and/or geographically underserved communities, neighborhoods, and individuals in Fresno County? In what ways will your project increase rural communities' access and exposure to, and participation within, arts and culture?
- e. Provide a timeline for your project. The grant funding period is January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025

Application Materials

4. Budget

Please upload a project budget using the template provided in the application portal at <https://fresnoartscouncil.submittable.com>

5. Work Samples

Please upload two work samples demonstrating your organization's recent arts and culture programming.

6. **Supporting Material:** Please upload your organization's most recent year-end financial statement.

7. **Supporting Material:** Please upload your IRS designation letter demonstrating proof of nonprofit designation.

8. **Supporting Material:** Please upload your most recently submitted IRS 990



9. **Additional Materials** as required by applicant's project (eg. letter of consent from property owner for mural projects)

Accessibility Questions:

1. Physical Accessibility

Buildings and facilities (including projects held in historic facilities) are required to be physically accessible for the general public and employees. How are all the facilities where program activities taking place physically accessible to people with disabilities? (Individuals with disabilities may be staff, volunteers, artists, performers, teaching artists, students, participants, audiences and visitors with disabilities.) Physical accessibility may include, but is not limited to: ground-level/no-step entry, ramped access, and/or elevators to project facilities and outdoor spaces; wheelchair-accessible box office, stage/backstage, meeting, and dressing rooms; wheelchair-accessible restrooms and water fountains; directional signage for accessible entrances, restrooms, and other facilities; and accessible workspaces for employees.

Please describe how your program activities are physically accessible.

2. Program Accessibility

The programmatic aspects of the project are required to be accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may be audiences, visitors, artists, performers, teaching artists, students, staff, and volunteers, as either part of the planned activity or upon request, where relevant. How are all aspects of your program accessible to members with disabilities? Program accessibility can include, but is not limited to:

- Accommodations for performances, tours, virtual streamed events, conferences, and lectures, such as sign language interpretation, real-time captioning, and audio description;
- Print materials in alternative formats, such as large-print brochures/labels/programs, braille, and electronic/digital formats;
- Accessible and screen reader-compatible electronic materials, documents, websites, and virtual platforms, and inclusion of alternative text for images;
- Closed/open captioning and audio/visual description for video, film, television broadcasts, and virtual events;



- Auxiliary aids and devices, such as assistive listening devices.

Describe how your program is accessible to people with disabilities as part of your planned activities or as provided upon request.

Additional Form upon application submission:

[NHPA/NEPA Questionnaire](#)

If you received an offer for a grant, your project may be subject to the **National Historic Preservation Act** (NHPA) and/or the **National Environmental Policy Act** (NEPA). The Arts Endowment will conduct a review of your project to ensure that it is in compliance with NHPA/NEPA.

All applicants will complete the NHPA/NEPA questions via Submittable after submitting their application. Only applicants who are approved by the NEA based on this questionnaire will receive funding.