



Community Cultural Connections Grant Guidelines FY 27

The Community Cultural Connections (CCC) grant program expands access to arts and cultural experiences for underserved communities throughout Hamilton County, Tennessee. The program encourages projects that increase arts access for people who have historically faced barriers based on geography, race and ethnicity, age, or disability.

ArtsBuild is grateful to be supported by: Individual Donors, City of Chattanooga, Local Foundations, National Endowment for the Arts, and Tennessee Arts Commission.

For Community Cultural Connections grant questions, information, and consultation, contact: Melissa Astin, Director of Grants & Community Engagement (melissa@artsbuild.com / 423.777.4214.).

The goals of the program are to:

- Provide arts and cultural experiences to new and diverse audiences.
- Broaden the types of arts and cultural offerings supported by the community, including established and emerging artists and arts organizations.
- Use arts and culture to strengthen community unity.
- Demonstrate the positive economic impact of arts and culture.

Funding Requests

- Grants will be funded up to \$2,000. Acceptance of funds gives permission for ArtsBuild and our financial auditors to access your records and financial statements, as necessary, to ensure compliance with award requirements.
- Grant funding is paid out in two installments. A payment schedule is outlined in the grant contract with 75% of project funding provided up front and the remaining 25% provided at the completion of the project and submission of a final report and complete use of funds.

Application Deadlines

Applications are accepted starting July 23, 2026 or until funds are exhausted.

Granting Period

The granting period runs from **October 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026.**

Who is eligible to apply?

- Nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, unit of local government, institution of higher education, or a federally recognized tribal government within Hamilton County, Tennessee or a county bordering Hamilton County, Tennessee. Please note: ALL projects must be facilitated within Hamilton County, Tennessee.
- Individuals (artists or individuals committed to furthering arts & culture).

- Neighborhood Associations.
- Community Organizations.
- Ethnic/Cultural Organizations and Clubs.
- Arts Organizations and Groups (FY27 ArtsBuild mission support grant recipients not eligible to apply.).
- Faith-Based Organizations (ones supporting underserved populations + secular in nature and project is open to the public).

Who is not eligible to apply?

- ArtsBuild's Mission Support grant recipients.
- Schools (public, private, and home school groups) and PTA/PTO groups.

Accessibility

ArtsBuild is committed to providing equitable and accessible grant programs and processes. Applicants may request a paper copy of the application or upload a video or audio recording of the main narrative of their application into the grant portal. Draft reviews can be requested. Email Melissa Astin to request a draft review. Email: melissa@artsbuild.com

Offerings must be within the disciplines of:

- Visual Art: 2D, 3D, Projection, Installation.
- Fine Craft: Excellence working with a particular traditional material or medium.
- Media: Film or Photography.
- Performance: Dance, Music/Instrumental, Theatre or Vocal.
- Literary Arts.

Fashion arts are eligible for consideration and may be classified under multiple artistic disciplines, depending on the nature of the work.

What types of projects are eligible?

Types of arts and cultural offerings funded may include, but are not limited to:

- Festival performances and exhibits.
- Special performances and exhibits by residents.
- Special performances and exhibits by performing arts and visual arts groups.
- One day workshops.
- Art/Cultural classes.

What types of project expenses are eligible?

- Local artist/arts organization fees.
- Supplies/small equipment.
- Local transportation.
- Rental fees (equipment and/or venue).
- Marketing.
- Documentation.

- Assessment tools.
- Project director fees.

What type of projects expenses are not eligible?

- Permanent staff positions of an organization.
- Capital improvements (buildings or construction).
- Major equipment purchases.
- “Seed money” for starting new organizations.
- In-school projects.
- Fundraisers and event sponsorships.
- Food/drinks (parties/celebrations).
- Monetary prizes.

Grant Evaluation Criteria

Artistic Quality and Cultural Experience (25 points)

- The project offers high-quality arts and culture experiences for participants, especially new and diverse audiences. It demonstrates clear artistic merit and excellence in its vision, execution, and potential impact on audiences or communities.

Project Implementation (25 points)

- The applicant demonstrates strong capacity to implement the project effectively, including a well-defined planning process, realistic timeline for implementation, and qualified project personnel and/or partnerships.

Budget (25 points)

- The proposed budget is realistic and aligned with the project's scope. It demonstrates thoughtful allocation of resources and financial viability. Art and cultural workers are compensated.

Goals and Outcomes (25 points)

- Project goals and expected outcomes are clearly articulated, along with an appropriate method for determining whether they have been achieved.

****Scores averaging below 70% are not eligible for funding.***

Nondiscrimination Policies

As a condition of receipt of grant funding, which may have federal funds attached, grantee and entities associated with grant project acknowledge and agree to ensure that the funded project is implemented in full accordance with the U.S. Constitution, federal law, and public policy requirements: including, but not limited to, those protecting free speech, religious liberty, public welfare, the environment, and prohibiting discrimination (2 CFR 200.300).

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972;
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975;

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969;
- The National Historical Preservation Act of 1966;
- Debarment and Suspension;
- Drug Free Workplace Act;
- Lobbying;
- Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA), as amended;
- The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990;
- U.S. Constitution Education Program;
- And Prohibition on use of funds to ACORN or its subsidiaries.

ArtsBuild warrants and assures that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the programs and services or in the employment practices on the grounds of disability, age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or any other classification protected by Federal, Tennessee State constitutional or statutory law.

Applicants are required to notify Artsbuild if they need clarification of any of the above.