Program Overview

What is AOS: Arts Organization Support (AOS) grants provide stable and consistent funding to arts organizations across varied geographies and budget sizes. *The program is open every odd calendar year, and applicants funded in this program will be funded for two fiscal years (FY26 & FY27).*

Who Can Apply: Arts organizations based in Indiana who have been an active 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity or public entity for the past three consecutive years, with annual cash revenue of $20,000 or more.

Key Dates: The FY26-27 Application Cycle deadline is 3/4/2025 for the grant period of 7/1/25-6/30/27 (two years).

Who to Contact: For information about the program and how to apply, contact your Regional Arts Partner.

Program Details

Program Goal
A wide range of the state's arts organizations can make high-quality artistic experiences available to both residents and visitors through equitably distributed and meaningful grant awards.

Program Outcomes

- In every Indiana county, people and communities have access to arts experiences. §
- Indiana's arts providers have expanded opportunities to enhance the quality of life in their communities. §
  § IAC 2024 – 2028 Long-Term Strategic Framework Impact

About Us
The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) is an agency of state government, and its funding comes from the Indiana General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

A core component to the Indiana Arts Commission's commitment to investing in the state's vibrant and rich arts and culture sector are grants, which support people and communities through arts organizations and arts projects.

Program Contacts
This program is jointly conducted by the Indiana Arts Commission and its Regional Arts Partner Network. Your Regional Arts Partner is your contact for the Arts Organization Support program.

Regional Arts Partners (RAPs) work alongside the Indiana Arts Commission to promote and expand participation in the arts in Indiana. They work directly with the Arts Organization Support grant program and can be a source of information on other programs and services offered by the Indiana Arts Commission. Find your Regional Arts Partner contact.

- **For questions about application, eligibility, and guidelines:** Contact the Regional Arts Partner for your region.
- **For help or technical assistance with the Online Grant System:** Contact IAC grants and operations team at grantsadmin@iac.in.gov.
- **For accessibility accommodations or questions about accessibility at an organization or for a project:** Contact Stephanie Haines at shaines@iac.in.gov.
- **To apply:** Access the eligibility tool and application. Only applications submitted online will be accepted, except in the case of ADA accessibility accommodations.

Grant Award Amounts, Matching Funds and Grant Payment
Applicants do not request an award amount as part of the application process. Grant awards for funded applicants are based on the organization's budget tier, reviewer score, number of applicants and funding available for the program. Award sizes may range between $4,000 and $25,000.

Applicants with a total budget of $50,000 or more are required to match IAC funds 1:1. The match must equal the total award ($1,000 grant award would mean a $1,000 match). Half of the match can be goods and services donated in-kind.

Arts Organization Support (AOS) grantees are eligible to be paid in full at the beginning of the grant period provided grantees are in good standing and supply required information in a timely manner.

Arts Organization Support (AOS) Funding Priorities
Applicants will be divided into five budget tiers for both panel review and funding consideration. The approximate breakdown for each budget tier is as follows:

Tier A:	$20,000 - $75,000
Tier B:	>$75,000 - $207,000
Tier C:	>$207,000 - $641,000
Tier D:	>$641,000 - $1,490,000
Tier E:	>$1,490,00

To ensure geographic access to arts opportunities across the state, the **IAC will continue to prioritize arts organizations at the smaller budget tiers. The larger the organizational budget tier, the more competitive the process. Not all eligible applications are funded.**

Dates to Know

Program Opens for Applications	January 7, 2025
Informational Webinar 1	January 21, 2025, 10:00 a.m. ET (Register to attend.)
Informational Webinar 2	January 22, 2025, 6:00 p.m. ET (Register to attend.)
Draft Application Review Deadline for New Applicants	February 24, 2025
Application Due	March 4, 2025 by 11:59 p.m. ET* *Late applications are not accepted. All applications are final following the submission deadline.
Panel Review	April 21 – May 2, 2025
Funding Notification	By July 1, 2025
FY26 Final Grant Report Due	July 17, 2026
FY27 Final Grant Report Due	July 15, 2027

Eligibility

Arts Organization Support (AOS) Eligibility Requirements
Applicants must be able to meet all of the following to be designated as an arts organization for the purposes of applying to this program:*

1. **Be an arts organization.**
   Defined by the following:
   - Arts as the core purpose, mission, and focus as reflected in both legal documents and operational budget;

   AND
   - Evidence that it is viewed as an arts organization by its community
2. **Be based in Indiana.**
   Defined by the following:
   - Incorporated in Indiana at the time of application;
   - Physically operating in Indiana throughout the duration of the grant period;

   AND
   - Indiana serving with the majority of its programming, services, or activities taking place in Indiana, and primarily serving and engaging Indiana audiences and participants

3. **Be an active 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity or public entity for the past three consecutive years (as of March 3, 2025).**
   Defined by either of the following:
   o As a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity as designated by Internal Revenue Service (IRS); OR
   o As an Indiana public entity (part of City or County government)
4. **Have annual cash revenue of $20,000 or more as supported by the most recent board-approved, fiscal year Statement of Activities.**
5. **Be in Good Standing with all of the following:**
   o The State of Indiana
   o Indiana Arts Commission
   o The organization's Regional Arts Partner
   o The National Endowment for the Arts

IAC staff may follow up to request documentation or additional information and will make the final determination on eligibility.

NOTE: An organization may apply for **either** the **Arts Organizational Support (AOS) program** or the **Arts Project Support (APS) program** in the current grant cycle. An organization cannot apply for both programs simultaneously.

Applicants Not Eligible for the Arts Organization Support (AOS) Grant Program*
- Organizations who do not have an active Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) at the time of application submission. Learn more about a UEI.
- Organizations whose primary purpose is educational or instructional (e.g., schools, universities, colleges, etc.)
- Organizations whose sole or primary purpose is to fundraise (e.g., "friends of" groups, foundations, etc.)
- Organizations that receive direct state-level operating support (cash or in-kind) from the Indiana General Assembly
- More than one organization operating under the same 501(c)(3) entity
- Fiscally sponsored organizations

*For organizations not eligible for the Arts Organization Support Program, the Arts Project Support Program (APS) is also available. Learn more about APS.

AOS Eligibility Tool
All new and returning AOS applicants are required to first answer some simple questions to find out if they can apply for the AOS program before beginning an application. These questions are solely intended to help applicants determine whether they may be eligible to apply for AOS. If an applicant's responses indicate eligibility, they will be able to access the application.

Access to the application does not guarantee final eligibility for the program. The IAC reserves the authority to deem an applicant ineligible at any point in the application process.

Use of Grant Funds

Eligible Uses of IAC Funds
Arts Organization Support (AOS) Program grants are for organizational operating support and are awarded for two years. Funds may be used for a wide variety of expenses in the general operation of an organization. Many grantees use funds to support general artistic or administrative expenses (salaries, hourly compensation, etc.), and other allowable expenses including marketing, program planning, education, and evaluation.

Ineligible Uses of IAC Funds
IAC funds may not be used on food and beverage (including alcoholic beverages); cash awards or prizes (including gift cards); and fundraising costs and events. **This is not an exhaustive list of ineligible expenses. [Consult Requirements and Policies for Indiana Arts Commission Grantees for additional information on eligible and ineligible uses of IAC funds.](#)**

Evaluation Criteria and Review Process

Evaluation Criteria
Applications will be evaluated by how well they meet the criteria below, considering factors that impact applicant capacity such as the applicant's budget tier and staffing.

- **Artistic Quality (40%) –** The extent to which quality artistic, educational, and/or cultural activities are offered; artists, educators, and leadership staff/contractors are qualified; and applicant demonstrates a commitment to artistic growth.
- **Community Benefit, Inclusion and Accessibility (30%) –** The extent to which the applicant can describe the community it serves and how the community will benefit from the artistic, educational, and/or cultural activities the applicant provides; intentional efforts are made to directly engage underserved populations; and the applicant's programming is accessible.
- **Organizational Planning, Impact and Management (30%) -** The extent to which applicant goals are defined; plans are in place to measure impact; and the applicant demonstrates sound management and fiscal practices.

[Access the Evaluation Criteria.](#)

[Access the scoring rubric that will be used by application reviewers.](#)

After all applications are reviewed, the IAC will establish a minimum score for funding eligibility.

Draft Review for New Applicants - Notify by February 24, 2025
Draft reviews by Regional Arts Partners are available to **first-time applicants to the program** and **organizations who are not currently receiving funds from the IAC**. Draft reviews consist of general feedback and suggestions around application completeness and clarity. To request a draft review, notify your **Regional Arts Partner via email** by the 2/24/25 deadline, and they will review your still in-draft application. Do not submit your application if you'd like a draft review – leave it in draft for the review.

Final Eligibility Review
Post application deadline, applications receive a final eligibility review to ensure the applicant is eligible to apply for the program and all required information was submitted. Incomplete or missing information may deem the application ineligible to advance through the review process.

Application Review*
A qualified panel of arts and cultural professionals, educators, artists, and other community members will review and evaluate grant applications. They will then gather to discuss applications in a live, virtual panel meeting. These meetings are generally organized by region and applicant size, with large, mid-sized, and small-budget tier organizations reviewed separately. Panel meetings are open to the public. Details on panel meeting dates, times, and instructions for participating will be available on the IAC website in the weeks following the application deadline. Applicants will also be notified directly of all panel information.

During panel meetings, reviewers discuss how well each application satisfies the program's evaluation criteria. Panelists highlight strengths and weaknesses, discussing all aspects of the application and its support materials. Following the public discussion, each reviewer provides a final score for each application. Later, IAC staff use reviewer scores and other factors such as underserved geographies and organizational budget tier in the determination of funding award recommendations, which are presented to IAC Commissioners for approval.

The process is highly competitive and not all eligible applications are funded.

***NEW for FY26-27:** Panel meetings will be available to watch live via Zoom but will **NOT** be recorded. Applicants will have access to reviewers' comments in the online grant system after award notifications have been made.

Grant Recipient Requirements

Final Report Requirements
Grantees will be required to report on their activities at the end of each grant period. This reporting includes qualitative and quantitative information and an accounting of how IAC funds were used. Collected information is shared with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to determine trends and funding impact. Grantees should be engaged in participant tracking throughout both years of the grant period.

Final grant reports submitted after the due date may be subject to penalty. Read the [Not in Good Standing policy](#).

Additional Requirements
IAC grants come with additional requirements such as acknowledgement of public funding. [Consult Requirements and Policies for Indiana Arts Commission Grantees for additional information.](#)

To Apply

Access the eligibility tool and application at
https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=indianaarts

Application Submission Deadline: March 4, 2025 by 11:59 p.m. ET

Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by no later than July 1, 2025.