AISC Experiences FY26, Round 1

Montana Arts Council

Guidelines

Montana Arts Council

The Montana Arts Council is the agency of state government established to develop the creative potential of all Montanans, advance education, spur economic vibrancy, and revitalize communities through involvement in the arts. Fifteen individuals appointed by the Governor oversee the Montana Arts Council.

Artists in Schools and Communities Grant Program

The Montana Arts Council strives to foster access to robust arts learning experiences that engage students of all ages and abilities. To that end, the Artists in Schools and Communities (AISC) grant program provides funds in support of a wide range of arts learning projects.

AISC Experiences

The AISC Experiences grant opportunity offers financial support of arts learning activities in three categories:

- Direct engagement with guest artists for a virtual or in-person session that may or may not include hands-on learning
- Purchase of tools, supplies or small equipment to support experimentation with new arts media and methods
- Transportation to support first-hand experiences with art or artists

AISC Experiences is designed to engage learners as audience members, viewers and artists through activities that plant a seed of inspiration, often proving both foundational and transformative.

AISC Experiences FY26 grant applications are due as follows:

- **April 17, 2025 at 11:59 PM** for projects taking place between July 1 and November 30, 2025
- **August 14, 2025 at 11:59 PM** for projects taking place between November 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026
- **December 11, 2025 at 11:59 PM** for projects taking place between February 1 and June 30, 2026

Submit applications online at **https://art.mt.gov/application**

Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed and scored against the following criteria:

- The project exhibits artistic and educational merit
- Project plans indicate a high degree of engagement for learners
- Preliminary planning will ensure equitable access to project activities
- Project management and budget appear sound

Applications may be prioritized to equalize arts learning opportunities across geographic area, arts disciplines, and core learning groups.

Review Process

Requests submitted to the AISC Experiences category will be reviewed by the council's Arts Education Committee. The process is competitive in that there may not be funding available to award grants to all eligible requests; applicants should carefully consider the review criteria.

The Arts Education Committee will discuss requests in a virtual public meeting to be held approximately five to six weeks after each due date; applicants will be invited to attend as observers. Applicants will be notified of the committee's funding determination soon thereafter.

A summary of reviewers' comments is made available to applicants upon request. Applicants are encouraged to contact MAC staff following the review to receive comments--regardless of the outcome--as they provide useful insight for the project and/or future grant requests.

Grant Period

AISC Experiences FY26 grant awards will support activities during the 5-month project period for each round/deadline. Please note that funds cannot be awarded in support of project activities that have already occurred.

Award Amounts

Requests submitted to AISC Experiences must fall within the range of $250 to $2500. An applicant cash match is NOT required in this category.

Notification

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions 6 -7 weeks after each deadline, following the meeting of the council's Arts Education Committee.

Eligible Applicants
All applicants must be one of the following:

- Nonprofit organization with an IRS 501(c)(3) ruling, incorporated in Montana and registered and in good standing with the Montana Secretary of State. Organizations organized and operating in an alternate structure for the past year (for example, under the umbrella of another organization) need to contact MAC staff to determine eligibility.

- University or Tribal College arts program with ongoing outreach programs that significantly extend services beyond the campus; Tribal or university arts programs must submit a letter with the date the program seeking support was established, signed by the authorizing official.

- K-12 school

- Unit of government

- Public educational institution

- Local chapter of a tax-exempt national organization registered and operating within the state of Montana

Restrictions

- AISC Grants may not be awarded to individuals.

- Projects may not be funded retroactively and must not begin until July 1, 2025 or later.

- Organizations may receive <u>only one</u> AISC Experiences award inside of the same fiscal year

- Repeat projects will not be funded unless a significant change in the project can be demonstrated.

- Organizations are <u>not</u> prevented from submitting to more than one AISC category during the grant cycle, and therefore are eligible to receive one AISC Residencies and one AISC Experiences grant award inside of the same fiscal year.

Requirements

- Organizations must be formally organized and continuously operating in Montana for a minimum of one year prior to project start date

- Grantee organizations must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Grantees will be required to obtain a SAM number as a UEI (Unique Entity Identifier). Applicants may obtain this number from https://sam.gov using the "Get the Unique Entity ID" button. There is never a charge to receive a SAM number.

Contacts and Accessibility

For questions or assistance with the application process or to discuss development of your project, contact Monica Grable, Arts Education Director, at (406) 444-6522 or Monica.Grable@mt.gov. It is highly recommended that new applicants schedule a meeting with MAC's Arts Education Director prior to applying.

MAC staff is available to provide technical assistance—including a final review of your application draft—or to provide an alternate format of the guidelines or application as needed. For other ADA accommodation needs, please contact Kristin Han Burgoyne, Accessibility Coordinator, at kburgoyne@mt.gov or 406-444-6449.

Grantee Responsibilities

- All current and prior MAC reporting must be in compliance and a SAM UEI # obtained in order to receive funding.

- Organizations must maintain eligibility and continued compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- Grantees must appropriately credit the Montana Arts Council in materials and announcements related to the supported project during the award period.

- Modifications to the planned grant-supported project need to be submitted in writing to the Montana Arts Council and approved by MAC staff.

- Grantees are encouraged to share news of their awarded project with their local legislators to help demonstrate the impact of the grant program.

Grant Reporting

A final report will be required, due 30 days after the project's completion. The report, assigned as a 'follow up' in the grants management system, will include:

- A finalized project budget with accompanying explanation of budget changes

- A narrative summary of your grant project activities and outcomes, together with assessments if used

- A minimum of one of the following as supporting documentation: photograph(s) of the project in action, project work sample, audio or video file of a guest artist working with participants, digital media, newspaper articles or social media pieces about the project, and formal or informal survey results

- Copies of letters or other communications shared with legislators, if applicable

Other Grant Program Considerations

In addition to the AISC Experiences grant category, you may wish to consider applying to this other MAC grant program:

o AISC Residencies is a grant program that connects learners of all ages and abilities with professional teaching artists through a diversity of learning formats and settings. Grants are awarded in the range of $2500 - $10,000 and require a 1:1 match, though first time awardees and Class C or smaller schools are granted funds with a 2:1 (2/3 or the project) match. Residencies range from a couple of hours to months-long experiences and may engage one or several guest artists working with a single group of learners or with multiple groups. Projects in this AISC subcategory put an emphasis on the process of art creation and therefore must include hands-on learning.

Project Information

Project Name*
Character Limit: 100

Project Description*
Please provide a brief one-sentence description of your grant project that may be used to announce your grant if awarded.

Character Limit: 250

Project Start Date*
Character Limit: 10

Project End Date*
Character Limit: 10

Primary age group(s) and the approximate number of participants to be served:*
Character Limit: 250

Project Lead Contact Name*
Character Limit: 50

Project Lead Email Address*
Character Limit: 100

Is the applicant organization itself serving as the arts learning provider?*
Choices
Yes
No

Arts Learning Provider Name*
If your project involves a guest artist(s), name the artist(s) or arts organization providing the experience. If the applicant is providing the arts learning experience, enter the applicant organization name here.

Character Limit: 250

Arts Learning Provider Primary Discipline*

From the drop-down menu, choose the primary artistic discipline of the organization or artist providing the arts learning experience.

Choices
Arts Integration
Dance
Film
Folk/Traditional
Literary Arts
Media Arts
Multidisciplinary
Music
Performance Art
Theatre
Visual Art
Other Arts
Non-Arts

Arts Learning Provider Phone Number*

Character Limit: 15

Arts Learning Provider Web Link (Artist or Organization)

Provide a URL to the lead artist's and/or organization's website or primary public interface. If none, leave blank.

Character Limit: 2000

2nd Arts Learning Provider Web Link (Artist or Organization)

Provide a second URL to the arts learning provider's website or primary public interface as needed.

Character Limit: 2000

Financial Information

Request Amount (between $250 and $2500)*

Character Limit: 20

Project Expenses

Use the table below to enter your expenses for this project. Expenses must match or exceed the amount of the request.
Please contact Monica Grable (Monica.Grable@mt.gov) with any questions.

	Cost Category	Enter a Description of the Expense Item	Amount
Total Expenses (must be equal or greater than MAC grant)			

Expense Details

Please use the space below to further clarify the amounts entered above or to add additional information you wish to share with the review committee.

Character Limit: 1000

Project Funding Sources

Use the table below to indicate where ALL funding for the project will come from. On the first row, enter the funds requested from MAC for this project. Anticipated funds, such as other grant applications submitted but not yet awarded, should be included here. The total of all funds should equal the total expenses for the project as entered above. Please contact Monica Grable (Monica.Grable@mt.gov) with any questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is "applicant cash"?

Applicant cash is the portion of the project budget, if any, the organization intends to pay out of their own funds.

Other Funding. What does this mean?

These are other sources of funding. This might include other grants, cash donations, or expected sales, registrations or admissions you anticipate collecting.

	Funding Source	Amount
Montana Arts Council Grant Requested Amount		

Funding Details

Please use the space below to further clarify the amounts entered above or to add additional information you wish to share with the review committee. Include explanations of any donated cash, goods or services that contribute to the outcome of this project.

Character Limit: 1000

Narrative

Which of the following describes the primary focus of your grant request?*

Choices

First-hand experience with art or artists

Tools, supplies or equipment

Transportation

Core Learners*

Describe the core group(s) of learners participating in the project.

Who are the learners who will gain experience through the project and what is the age range and/or ability level of those involved? Why was this particular group chosen?

Character Limit: 1000

Arts Learning Objectives*

Define <u>up to 3</u> succinct arts learning objectives.

What arts-related knowledge, skills or experience do you hope the learners will have gained from the project activities?

Character Limit: 1000

Project Overview*

Please describe the project in detail.

What art discipline, media or methods will the learners explore? Or, how will students engage with art or artists? How is the project structured and who is involved?

Character Limit: 5000

Need Addressed*

Briefly, what is the particular arts learning need being addressed by this project?

Character Limit: 1500

Planning Process*

Provide details on the steps taken, to date, in planning for the proposed activities. If partnering with other educators, artists, organizations or administrators, please identify their role(s) in planning.

Character Limit: 2500

Access to Project Activities*

Please share the steps taken to ensure equal access to the project activities by the designated arts learners.

Character Limit: 2500

Project Activity Location*

Please list the primary site(s) where the learning will take place, together with the county name.

Character Limit: 1000

Assessment of Learners*

How will you assess participant learning and understanding during the project? *Simple tools or activities may be used to assess that learners have met the objectives, such as recorded "interview" questions or index card takeaway responses.*

Character Limit: 1500

Assessment Upload

If using a formal assessment tool(s), such as a survey, please upload that sample below.

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Project Schedule*

Briefly describe the timeline of the project activities.

If the project involves multiple sessions, core groups of learners, or more than one teaching artist, upload a detailed schedule or timetable below. If the project involves tools, supplies or equipment, share your timeline for purchase and use. Highly detailed schedules or charts may be uploaded below.

Character Limit: 1500

Schedule Upload

Use this upload space as needed for complex schedules or charts. Please upload as a Word doc or PDF.

File Size Limit: 4 MB

For the following items provide narrative answers, and uploads where needed, only if they apply to your project. (Not all questions need to be answered.)

Montana Arts Standards and Indian Education for All

Please list any specific <u>Montana Standards for Arts</u> the proposed project will meet and connect the standard(s) to the activities of the project. If your project involves the study of Native American artwork or culture, share in one or two sentences how the proposed project meets <u>Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians</u> and with whom you are consulting on your project.

Character Limit: 5000

Curriculum Integration

If your project takes place with K-12 learners, will the project activities involve integration with other subject areas? If yes, please briefly describe.

Character Limit: 2500

Arts Learning Provider (Artist or Organization) Selection

If activities involve first-hand experience with an artist or arts organization, please provide details on the artist selection process and why they are the best fit for the planned activities.

Character Limit: 2500

Artist Resume, Brochure or Promotional Piece

Provide documentation for each arts learning provider (artist or organization) involved in the project activities. *Only one upload is allowed, therefore multiple items must be combined into a single PDF. Please contact MAC staff for assistance in combining files if needed.*

File Size Limit: 8 MB

Site Information for Transportation Requests

If you are requesting support for transportation-related needs, provide information about the destination(s) chosen and how the experience of visiting the site(s) will lead to arts learning. *Related information may be additionally shared as a work sample upload, below.*

Character Limit: 2500

Information on purchase of tools, supplies and small equipment

Please share details of the purchases being planned,

Character Limit: 2500

Project Work Samples

Provide any relevant documentation (image gallery, lesson plans, destination brochure, production information, other) here. Only one upload is allowed, therefore multiple items must be combined into a single pdf. *Please contact MAC staff for clarification or assistance in combining files if needed.*

File Size Limit: 8 MB

Additional Support Materials

Upload additional items, if any, that would help inform your request; use the space provided to identify the uploaded item(s).

Character Limit: 500 | File Size Limit: 8 MB

Assurances and Signatures

Assurances Statement*

Click **here** to read the assurances. Check the box below to certify that you have read and understand the assurances.

Choices
I have read and understand the assurances.

Guidelines Acknowledgement*

The guidelines available at the top of this application form include information on eligibility, evaluation criteria, important project dates and more. Please indicate below that you have read and understand the guidelines.

Choices
I have read and understand the guidelines

Terms of Payment*

Grant funds are initiated upon return of the grant award contract. It is the grantee's responsibility to pay the total amount due to any contracted guest or teaching artist(s), based on mutually agreed upon terms, no later than the final day of the project.

Choices
I understand that the teaching artist(s) must be paid no later than the conclusion of the activity.

Review of Application*
Click on the print application link in the top right of this form and review a pdf file of the application; check that all items required appear in the pdf file. Using the button below please indicate your understanding that this is how it will appear to the review committee and acknowledge that the way the application appears is the applicant's responsibility.

Choices
I have reviewed my application.

Application Signature Page*
Click **here** to access the application signature page and complete signatures according to the policies and procedures of your organization. The signature page must be signed by someone who is authorized to commit funds for the school/organization. This person is almost always a principal or superintendent for a school, an executive director or the president of the board for an organization. The signature of the teaching artist, or representative of artist organization or guest artist/company as they apply, signifies commitment to the project.

Please print the signature page, have the appropriate authorizing officials complete and sign, then upload using the button below.

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Grant Contact*
I have added **administrator@grantinterface.com** to my contact list.

Choices
Yes

Please type your name in the box below.*
Character Limit: 50

Date*
Character Limit: 10

Signature Verification*
By clicking "I Agree" below and typing my name in the box above, I am authorized to make application on behalf of this individual or organization and the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Choices
I agree