

Statewide Service Organization SSO FY26-27

Montana Arts Council

Montana Arts Council Statewide Service Organization Guidelines

Who We Are

The Montana Arts Council is a state agency dedicated to developing the creative potential of all Montanans and Montana communities through grants, programs, professional development, and other kinds of support.

About the SSO Program

Statewide Service Organization (SSO) grants help nourish creative work across the state by providing operating support for Montana non-profit arts organizations with statewide service impact. These grants support organizations that demonstrate strong operations, stable management, ongoing engagement, and high-quality services statewide.

Successful applicants show how they expand opportunities for all Montanans to create, participate in, and appreciate Montana's wide range of cultural resources.

Application Deadline

The application deadline is March 27, 2025 at 11:59 pm. Applications must be submitted online at <https://art.mt.gov/application>

Review Criteria

Each application is scored against the following criteria:

- Appropriate and sufficient governance, management, and staffing.
- Mission and focus strengthen the artistic community statewide.
- Programs and services advance the artistic and administrative functions of targeted membership.

Award Amounts

Awards will range from \$2,000 to \$24,000 annually.

Award amounts are based on alignment with the criteria, agency budget and priorities, and an average of the previous two years' cash expenses. MAC may give a funding priority to organizations that provide service to an exceptionally underserved population. Grants must be matched 1:1 with eligible cash.

Grant Period

The grant supports activities between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2027.

Eligible Applicants

- A statewide arts service organization (SSO) is defined as an organization with a statewide membership and statewide board of directors. Its primary function is to provide member organizations and artists with programs and services more efficiently and cost-effectively than if those members had to acquire them individually.
- Nonprofit arts organization with an IRS 501(c)(3) ruling, incorporated in Montana and registered and in good standing with the Montana Secretary of State.

Requirements

- Formally organized and continuously operating in Montana for a minimum of two years by the beginning of the grant period. Organization compliance will be verified by information on submitted 501(c)(3).
- A SAM number - System for Award Management is the U.S. government system that helps manage the federal awards process. The Montana Arts Council receives federal funding that requires all grant recipients to have a SAM number. Go to <https://sam.gov> for more information and to apply for a SAM. A SAM number is not required for application but is required before funds can be distributed to your organization. There is never a charge to receive a SAM number. SAM numbers take time. Plan ahead.
- A current web presence.
- Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Organizations may not receive both Statewide Service Organization and Public Value Partnership funding in the same fiscal year.

Questions and Accessibility

For questions or concerns about the application process or technical assistance, or to request large-print or alternate format guidelines, contact Kristin Han Burgoyne at kburgoyne@mt.gov or 406-444-6449.

If you do not have reasonable access to a computer or high speed internet connection or have other technology challenges, contact staff for alternatives.

Review Process

MAC funding is highly competitive with more worthy requests than funding available. Take time to develop clear, complete, and compelling materials. Assume the reviewer has no prior knowledge of the organization or program. A past funding record will not assure future funding.

If additional information is required, we will contact you at the email address you provide. Do not submit additional information unless requested.

Applications will be reviewed in the spring of 2025 and recommendations will be made to the full body of the Montana Arts Council for approval. The decisions of the Council are final.

All MAC review meetings are open to the public. Applicants will be identified by name and all information submitted is public information.

Applicants must refrain from contacting panel or council members, individually or as a group, before or during the review process. Applicants may attend the panel meeting as observers but will not be allowed to discuss their application.

A summary of comments is available to applicants upon request. Applicants are encouraged to contact MAC staff after the review to receive comments, regardless of the outcome of their review. Panel comments can provide insights about effective grant writing and how applications are perceived and understood.

Notification

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions in late June 2025.

Grantee Responsibilities

- Awardees will be asked to acknowledge the governor, local legislators, and congressional representatives in writing.
- All current and prior MAC reporting must be in compliance to receive funding.
- Organizations must maintain eligibility and continued compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- MAC must be notified in writing within 30 days of changes in leadership or programming.
- Grantees must appropriately credit the Montana Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts in materials and announcements related to the supported programming throughout the award period.

Reporting Requirements

Annual reports are submitted online in September of each year.

Report forms ask for information that helps us advocate for future funding and other kinds of support, including:

- Statistical data about audiences and artists participating.
- A narrative summary of programming and accomplishments.
- Images of activities in progress, including the appropriate photo credits and permission to reprint.

Copy Previous Application

The option to copy a previous application is available. Instructions were sent by email to applicants with an existing FY24-25 award. You must carefully update the application.

Eligibility

Active 501(c)3 Status*

Is your 501(C)(3) status active in Montana?

Choices

Yes

No

Narrative Responses

Application Title*

Brief Working Title

Character Limit: 100

Mission*

Provide the current mission.

Character Limit: 500

Organizational History*

Supply a brief history of the organization, noting key development stages.

Either a narrative response or an upload is acceptable.

Character Limit: 3000 | File Size Limit: 5 MB

Governance, Management, and Staffing*

Describe the structure and management of the organization including the interaction of the board, staff, and community.

Character Limit: 2500

Programs and Services*

Identify the community, discipline, and/or membership that the organization serves.

Character Limit: 1000

Provide an overview of primary program activities. *

Character Limit: 1000

Summarize recent adaptations to remove barriers and increase accessibility. *

Character Limit: 1000

State the current programmatic goals. *

Character Limit: 1000

Relationships, Relevance, Return on Investment*

Beyond describing what the organization does, please describe specifically what needs are met. How do you know programs are meeting the current needs and goals?

Character Limit: 2500

Accessibility*

Describe your accessibility goals, strengths and weaknesses. It is more important to be honest in your assessment than to try to impress us.

Character Limit: 2500

Financials

Use of Funds*

Indicate how the funds will be spent.

Character Limit: 1000

The following are **unallowable** costs.

- Entertainment, including amusement and social activities such as receptions, parties, galas, dinners, community gatherings, etc., and any associated costs including food, catering, alcoholic beverages, as well as costs for the planning, staffing, and supplies.
- Funding cash reserve or endowment accounts.
- Home Office Workspace costs.
- Prohibited telecommunications and video surveillance services and equipment. (This does NOT include internet.)
- Purchase of vehicles.
- Regranting.
- Goods for resale, including concessions, promotional merchandise.
- Compensation to foreign nationals, including travel to or from foreign countries (some exceptions).

Review [this list](#) for additional information on costs.

Contact staff if you have questions about allowable and unallowable costs.

All applicants will provide 990's for the TWO previously completed fiscal years.

Please submit only the first 5-10 pages of lengthy 990's.

Universities and organizations that are a sub-set of a larger organization: Please provide information only for your organization.

Upload your previous TWO years of 990's as two separate pdf files in the upload fields below. Then indicate the expenses from each year in the appropriate text fields below.

If you are not required to submit an IRS Form 990, please contact the MAC office for alternatives.

Awards must be matched 1:1 with an eligible cash match.

IRS Form 990 Most Recent Fiscal Year*

Upload the 990 for the most recently completed fiscal year. For example: Fiscal Year 2023.

File Size Limit: 8 MB

What date is at the top of the attached (most recent) 990?*

Choices

2022

2023

Other

Total Cash Expenses Most Recent Fiscal Year*

Total Cash Expenses as reported on the attached 990.

Character Limit: 20

Total Cash Income Most Recent Fiscal Year*

Total Cash Income as reported on the attached 990.

Character Limit: 20

Total In Kind Most Recent Fiscal Year*

Character Limit: 20

IRS Form 990 Older Fiscal Year*

Upload the 990 for the older (of the two years submitted) fiscal years. For example: Fiscal Year 2022.

File Size Limit: 7 MB

What date is at the top of the attached (older) 990?*

Choices

2021

2022

Other

Total Cash Expenses Older Fiscal Year*

Total Cash Expenses as reported on the attached 990.

Character Limit: 20

Total Cash Income Older Fiscal Year*

Total Cash Income as reported on the attached 990.

Character Limit: 20

Total In Kind Older Fiscal Year*

Character Limit: 20

Financial Explanation

Explain any features of your financials that would benefit from more information. (IE outside accounts or funds, sale of assets, deficits, profits, rainy day funds, capital or endowment campaigns, operating budget increases of over 10% per year etc.)

Character Limit: 1500

Additional Information Uploads

Board List*

Upload a list of the current board members with name, city, and professional affiliation. Identify board officers by title and specify their term of service.

File Size Limit: 1 MB

Key Personnel*

Upload a one- or two-page list of key personnel with their qualifications and contributions. Please include name, title, paid or volunteer, hourly rate or salary, average hours per week.

File Size Limit: 1 MB

Membership List*

Upload a current list of members or clients with cities.

File Size Limit: 8 MB

Supplemental Materials

Provide web links to images, audio, video, or press that are specific to the proposal. For example: YouTube, Vimeo, Flickr, or media websites that are not password protected.

Character Limit: 2000

Character Limit: 2000

Character Limit: 2000

Character Limit: 2000

Other Social Media

Please update your social media in your organization profile. Include any additional social media information here.

Character Limit: 1000

Assurances

Did you use "copy previous application"??*

Choices

Yes

No

I dont know

Accessibility*

We understand we are to be in compliance with ADA regulations or risk elimination from the Montana Arts Council funding.

Choices

I agree

Assurances*

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

Review of Application*

I have clicked on the print application link and looked at the pdf file of my application. I know this is how it will appear to the review committee and all required items appear in the pdf file. I have reviewed the guidelines and understand that my application will be reviewed based on this criteria. I understand that how my application appears when converted to pdf is my responsibility.

Choices

I have reviewed my application

Grant Contact Information*

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

Choices

Yes

Please type your name in the box below.*

Character Limit: 100

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