



LOCAL ARTS GRANT 2026 GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

FUNDING PERIOD: January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: Friday, September 19, 2025 at 5:00 pm

Morris Arts, a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1973, is the official Arts Agency of Morris County, receiving annual funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State to re-grant locally. In spirit of the Morris Arts mission to *build community through the arts*, we offer Local Arts Grants to provide access to quality arts experiences in Morris County communities. Each year, the program supports more than 1,500 arts activities and programs that serve over 100,000 children and adults.

Types of grants include General Operating Support (GOS) for arts organizations and Special Project Support (SPS) for other types of non-profit organizations that have significant arts programs.

Applicants must show the ability to complete all reporting necessary in accepting public funds by the specified deadlines, including a Grant Application for funding, a Commitment Letter, and a Final Report. Organizations already receiving funding from NJSCA are not eligible for a Local Arts Grant. Applicants must have sufficient cash flow to support their organization, program project or event as grant funds are allocated over two payments of 75% and 25% (*Note: payments are subject to and sent out by Morris Arts upon receipt of funding from NJSCA. The dates for receiving payments are subject to change). **PLEASE NOTE: ALL PAYMENTS WILL BE DONE ELECTRONICALLY THROUGH BILL.COM**

IMPORTANT DATES

Activity	Dates
FY 2026 Applications Due	September 19, 2025 at 5:00 PM
Notification of Award	November 2025
Grant Period	January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026
1 st 75% payment sent*	February 2026
Final Reports Due	January 6, 2027
2 nd and final 25% payment sent*	February 2027

*Note: the payment schedule is subject to changes in NJSCA funding

Please read the guidelines carefully as some portions of the guidelines and application have changed for FY 2026. Note that all FY 2026 applications and materials will be submitted online via Foundant. In addition, funding decisions and payments may be delayed pending funding decisions by NJSCA.

Questions regarding your application should be directed to Sarai Warsoff, Interim Grant Manager, at swarsoff@morrisarts.org or Cyndall Brice at cbrice@morrisarts.org

**All applications and support materials must submitted via Foundant
by 5:00 PM on Friday, September 19, 2025.**

Late, incomplete or handwritten applications will not be considered.

This application is available in Large Print upon request.



Made possible by funds from the
New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner
agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

LOCAL ARTS GRANT 2026 GUIDELINES

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS:

All applicants must be:

- A. **Incorporated in the state of New Jersey as a 501(c)(3)**
- B. Located in Morris County and primarily serving the constituency of Morris County
- C. Conducting an active program in the arts for at least two years prior to application. An applicant with less than two (2) years' history will be considered on a case-by-case basis
- D. In compliance with all pertinent state and federal regulations including, but not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Civil Rights Act of 1964 which bars discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex and disability
 - 2. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires all providers of public programs and services to ensure that those programs and services can be enjoyed by all citizens, including those with disabilities

TYPES OF GRANTS:

Organizations are encouraged to note that (i) there is no set limit on the amount of funding that may be requested by an applicant, and (ii) awards are in the minimum amount of \$1,000. Applicants may apply in only one category of grants. Funding is available for activities conducted between January 1, 2026 and December 31, 2026 in the following categories:

- A. **General Operating Support (GOS) Grants** are available to support the overall operations of organizations whose mission is exclusively devoted to the arts. Requests can be up to 20% of the organization's annual expense budget. There are no matching requirements for GOS grants.
- B. **Special Project Support (SPS) Grants** are available to support the costs of an arts-related special project of the applicant, which need not be an arts organization. The special project, however, must be wholly dedicated to the arts and be a project or program open to the general public. Note that projects or activities which are normally part of the curriculum or extra-curricular activities of an educational organization are not eligible. **SPS Grants are required to have a 50% match.**
- C. **Mini Grants (\$1,000)** for art projects at new and emerging organizations. Organizations can apply for one Mini Grant per funding period. Mini Grants are intended as an introduction to the Local Arts Grant Program. A grant received in one year is no guarantee of subsequent funding.

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS FOR MULTI-YEAR FUNDING:

Applicants who meet the criteria set forth above are encouraged to apply for multi-year funding. Multi-year grant applicants are approved for a two (2) calendar year cycle. **The dollar amount requested in this application is only for the first calendar year.** Receipt of multi-year funding is not automatic. Applicants that are unsuccessful in receiving a multi-year grant may be recommended to receive funding for a single-year grant period and, if recommended, may reapply for multi-year funding the following year.

LOCAL ARTS GRANT RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS:

All recipients of a Local Arts Grant must comply with the following:

- A. Upon notification of funding, execute a Letter of Commitment prepared by Morris Arts.
- B. Submit a Final Report to Morris Arts no later than the first week of **January 2027*** on a form supplied during the funding year by Morris Arts. **Exact date TBD in November 2025.*
- C. Notify Morris Arts of any personnel changes in Board or staff (either volunteer or paid) that directly affect the administration of the Local Arts Grant during the funding year.
- D. Include the following statement and Morris Arts logo in all publicity and public information (including all advertising, posters, programs, press releases, newsletters, flyers):
- E. Make available to Morris Arts two (2) complimentary tickets in order to allow Staff and Local Arts Grant Evaluation Panel members the opportunity to attend the recipient's performances/events. It is the recipient's responsibility to inform Morris Arts at least five (5) weeks in advance of all performances/events.

INELIGIBLE REQUESTS:

Local Arts Grant awards can not be awarded:

- A. To individual artists
- B. To those organizations funded by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts or any other County Arts Agency
- C. To pay administrative salaries
- D. For capital improvements, projects or acquisitions, including the purchase of permanent equipment
- E. For hospitality costs and travel
- F. To replace deficits or funds normally budgeted for the requested program or project
- G. For the purpose of sub-granting to another organization
- H. For fundraising projects or events, or for scholarship funds or fellowships

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Applicants are evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- A. Artistic merit of the applicant, its program and/or special project;
- B. Ability of the applicant's staff (volunteer or professional) and Board to responsibly administer the organization and/or special project;
- C. Demonstration of the applicant's sound financial planning and management of financial resources;
- D. Responsiveness to the needs of the community;
- E. Outreach efforts to the culturally diverse, special constituency, and young (18 and under) audiences in Morris County, particularly in the past calendar year; and
- F. Efforts to comply with ADA standards (see ADA Compliance section below).

ADA COMPLIANCE:

Ensuring that the programming supported by Morris Arts is available to the widest possible audience is a high priority. This includes access for people with disabilities. Accessibility includes the physical performance/exhibition space (whether owned, rented or free), programming, audience and audience development, marketing, sensitivity training for staff, and printed materials.

Need help with ADA planning?

Visit the New Jersey Theatre Alliance's Cultural Access Network Project for resources and the recommended self-assessment survey tool.

All grant applications must include an ADA Accessibility Checklist and related ADA narrative for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (form available from the Morris Arts website).

**All applications and support materials must submitted via Foundant
by 5:00 PM on Friday, September 19, 2025.
Late, incomplete or handwritten applications will not be considered.**

Questions regarding your application should be directed to
Sarai Warsoff at swarsoff@morrisarts.org or Cyndall Brice at cbrice@morrisarts.org

EVALUATION PROCESS:

- A. All Local Arts Grant applications are reviewed by the Morris Arts staff for completeness and then forwarded to Morris Arts' Local Arts Grant Evaluation Panel for review based upon the criteria stated in these Guidelines. The Evaluation Panel is comprised of independent arts panelists selected for their experience with various artistic modalities and their solid knowledge of the workings of non-profit arts organizations. Morris Arts strives to select panelists with backgrounds that reflect the arts disciplines of the organizations whose applications they are going to review. The Morris Arts staff does not evaluate applications.
- B. The Evaluation Panel meets to review and assign a score to each application based upon how well the applicant meets the criteria stated in these Guidelines. The Evaluation Panel forwards its assigned scores to the Local Arts Grant Funding Panel (Funding Panel) which meets to discuss funding ranges and to determine specific award recommendations based upon the funds awarded to Morris Arts by NJSCA.
- C. The Funding Panel's recommendations are subsequently reviewed by the Morris Arts' Board of Trustees, which makes a final decision on all funding requests.
- D. All applicants are notified of funding decisions no later than November 2025. Successful applicants receive a Letter of Commitment, which they must promptly execute and return to the Morris Arts in order to receive their first award installment.
- E. Funding will be disbursed in two (2) payments:

Note: payments are subject to and sent out by Morris Arts upon receipt of funding from NJSCA. The dates for receiving payments are subject to change. All payments will be done electronically through Bill.com

- 1. **The first payment** (75% of grant award) will be forwarded to the recipient after the recipient's signed Letter of Commitment and voucher have been received by Morris Arts.
 - 2. **The second and final payment** (remaining 25% of grant award) will be made upon receipt and approval of the final report due in January 2027 and may be withheld or reduced if grant funds are not expended based on the Letter of Commitment. The Final Report includes a financial statement, attendance figures, and a narrative. Morris Arts and NJSCA must be credited in accordance with the credit/publicity guidelines.
- F. Funding to recipients is based on NJSCA's funding of Morris Arts. If the actual amount provided to Morris Arts by NJSCA is less than originally awarded, an across the board formula established by the Funding Panel and approved by the Morris Arts Board will be implemented.
 - G. Local Arts Grants are highly competitive. An award for the current year does not guarantee that an organization will continue to be funded in subsequent years, nor does it guarantee that the amount awarded will remain unchanged in subsequent years. Each year, new organizations apply for funding and the amount received from NJSCA changes.



"Funding has been made possible in part by Morris Arts through the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts."