



OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE
CITY OF SEATTLE

Youth Arts 2026 Guidelines

APPLICATION OPENS: Jan. 27, 2026

APPLICATION CLOSES: MARCH 10, 2026

Grant Overview

The Youth Arts grant is a 2-year program that helps middle and high school students in Seattle get more access to arts and cultural opportunities. These programs happen outside of school hours and are led by skilled artists and teaching artists. The goal is to create more opportunities for young people from a variety of racial and socioeconomic backgrounds to connect with the arts.

Studies show that not everyone has the same access to arts education. Race, income, language spoken at home, and special education needs can make a big difference. That's why the Youth Arts grant focuses on programs that support youth in these groups. It's part of the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture's commitment to equity.

If you have questions or need help with things like applying, checking if you're eligible, or using the online grant system, send an email to: YouthArts@seattle.gov.

We have interpreters who can speak to you in your language, including American Sign Language (via video). If email is challenging or inaccessible to you, please call us at (206) 684-7171 and tell us what language you speak. Expect a short pause while we find an interpreter to join the call. You can also email us to schedule a meeting at YouthArts@seattle.gov.

Grant Purpose

The purpose of the Youth Arts grant is to support individual artists, arts organizations, and social service agencies in providing middle and high school-aged young people with arts and cultural learning opportunities outside of the school day.

Application

[Apply online](#) through the City of Seattle's grant website.

If you don't have computer or internet access, contact staff as soon as possible.

Due Date

Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 5 p.m. Pacific.

Please allow ample time to complete your application. Applications submitted after the 5 p.m. Pacific deadline will not be accepted.

Eligibility/Requirements

You are eligible to apply for this grant if you meet the following criteria:

- You are an individual, organization, or community group that regularly supports arts education for middle and/or high school-aged young people in Seattle.
- You reside in King County or unincorporated King County within Washington state.
 - Organizations and individual artists representing Seattle's diverse communities are encouraged to apply.
- You have a Federal Tax ID number (Social Security Number, ITIN, or Employer Identification Number).
 - Groups applying are not required to be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nor are they required to use a fiscal sponsor or fiscal agent.

Your project is eligible to be funded by this grant if it meets the following criteria:

- Projects must take place between September 2026 – August 2027 and September 2027 – August 2028.
- Eligible applicants include individual artists, teaching artists, arts and cultural organizations, youth-service agencies, and degree-granting institutions.
- Programs must be available to middle and/or high school-aged young people and take place within Seattle city limits. Talk with the project manager if you have questions.
- Your physical address may be outside Seattle city limits.
- All artists and teaching artists hired by awardees must have at least one (1) year of experience working with the project age group and art and/or cultural forms.
- Projects must reflect the Youth Arts grant priorities and demographics as described above in **Grant Overview**.

Funding

Selected awardees will receive a total of **\$12,000** in Youth Arts funding support distributed over two (2) years of programs: \$6,000 in 2026-2027 and \$6,000 in 2027-2028.

- You will only receive funding after the program has started. Once you submit an invoice, you will receive the funds within 4 – 6 weeks. A check will be mailed directly to the address indicated on the invoice and matching the W-9.

This funding may be used for:

- Artist fees
- Youth stipends
- Program snacks for youth
- Marketing and promotional costs
- Project management and personnel costs
- Supplies
- Space
- Program-related costs
- Rental of equipment or software
- Additional expenses may be allowed with prior approval by the grant project manager

This funding may *not* be used for:

- Activities occurring during the school day
- Any elements of the proposed project that are completed before funds are awarded
- Purchase of equipment or software
- Culminating events or gifts
- Fundraising, benefit events, or religious services

Information Sessions

Step 1: Learn more about this grant and how to submit your best application by viewing the recorded virtual information session on the Youth Arts webpage.

Step 2: Attend one of the *Question and Answer Sessions*, to answer specific questions about your project.

Question and Answer Session 1

Thursday, Feb. 12, 2026, 12 – 1 p.m.

Virtual: Microsoft Teams

[RSVP to February 12](#)

Question and Answer Session 2

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026, 5 – 6 p.m.

Virtual: Microsoft Teams

[RSVP to February 17](#)

Draft Review Session 1

Wednesday, Feb. 25, 5 – 6 p.m.

Virtual: Microsoft Teams

[RSVP to February 25](#)

Draft Review Session 2

Tuesday, March 3, 12 – 1 p.m.

Virtual: Microsoft Teams

[RSVP to March 3](#)

Evaluation Criteria

Applications and proposed projects are evaluated by a community peer review panel. The panel prioritizes proposals that have a clear approach, applicants with a depth of experience teaching art and creative habits to young people, and experience working with communities across Seattle impacted by structural racism, classism, and/or social disenfranchisement due to gender identity, sexual orientation, or ability.

When the panel reviews your application, you will have the opportunity to earn a total of 100 points. The points will determine your final score. The breakdown of points is listed under the **Application Outline & Components** section below.

Timeline

- **Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2026:** Application Opens
- **January – March, 2026:** Information and Draft Review Sessions in Progress
- **Tuesday, March 10, 2026:** Application Closes
- **March – May, 2026:** Panel Review Process
- **July 2026:** Award Notifications Sent
- **July – August, 2026:** Contracting Process

Application Components

The City of Seattle uses the [grant application system, Fluxx](#). If you have not done so already, you will need to create a new profile before you are able to access the application.

Below are the components of the Youth Arts grant.

Organizational Qualifications/Artists and Teaching Artist Experience (30 Points)

The purpose of this section is to gain information about lead artist(s), organization mission, and teaching philosophy.

You will be asked to include:

- **Current Resume(s) or Biography(ies):** The purpose of these attachments is to tell us about lead and supporting artist(s) or teaching artist(s) that includes relevant artistic education and teaching experience.
- **Work Samples:** The purpose of the work samples is to demonstrate a past project with youth, reflecting the age range, art, and cultural form(s) your project will focus on.
 - Video work samples – a maximum 1-minute video. Provide **link(s) only** using YouTube, Vimeo, and Google Drive). Links must be publicly accessible. Be sure to include any passwords so panelists can review the link.
 - Image work sample – Up to three (3) (.jpeg/.jpg or .png)

(Please note that if work sample submissions go beyond the specified limits, panelists will be instructed to only view the allowed amount indicated above.)

Outreach and Access (30 points)

The purpose of this section is to describe communities and constituent groups that will benefit from your project, thoughtful recruitment and outreach details, mindful intention around accessibility based on in-person meetings (transportation, location), online meetings (supplies, internet, device availability), cost, partnerships, and creative collaborations in and with the community where the project is taking place.

Project Plan (40 Points)

The purpose of this section is to describe the art project and specific discipline(s) being proposed, youth development goals and strategies, arts skills, and creative habits to be fostered.

You will be asked to attach:

- **Lesson Plan:** The purpose of this attachment is to list clear objectives and show progression of learning within the project timeline.
 - A template is provided (do not use your own)
- **Project Budget:** The purpose is to show that the project can happen with the estimated funds available. Please note the Youth Arts grant will provide \$6,000 toward your budget for 2026 - 2027 and \$6,000 for 2027 -2028 if awarded (pending Mayor and City Council budget approval).
 - A template is provided (do not use your own)

After completion of your application, you will be asked to complete a demographic survey. Panelists will not have access to this information and this will not impact your chance at getting funding.

Application To-Do

All of our funding programs are highly competitive. We encourage you to:

- **Read the guidelines**, check your eligibility.
- **View the recorded virtual information session, attend a *Question and Answer Session* and *Draft Review*.** This is strongly encouraged, *especially if you are a first-time applicant.*
- **Explore the online application early** so you can plan ahead. Consider drafting your responses in a document outside of the online application form itself. This can prevent you from losing any of your work and allows you to keep a record for yourself.
- **Be clear and concise in your application**, as panelists read and evaluate many applications. Panelists may or may not be familiar with you or your work, so be sure to provide essential information on who you are, your areas of expertise, or key accomplishments.
- **Describe the project plans and goals clearly.** A good application tells the reader the *Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How of your project.* Panelists are experienced arts educators or young people themselves looking for specific details.
- **Prepare and check work samples. It's a key element of the application.** Think about your work samples early. You will be asked to submit a 1-minute video and up to three (3) images. You will also be asked to describe to the panel why you selected your work samples. Consider how you can tell the panel about the work you will be doing with youth, or to show work you have done before with the specified age group. Allow the panel to hear, see, or read the work of the youth.
- **Click on "Save" or "Update" often, and always before moving to a new section.** Be sure to re-read your work *before* you submit. Preview your application, spell-check, re-check, and save.
- **Check resume and work sample links** before submitting your application to ensure they are *properly uploaded and that links are accessible.*
- **Talk with the project manager** about any questions, or to review your draft application as early as possible before the deadline. We are happy to assist, however last-minute help is limited due to timing and volume of requests.
- **Submit your application before the deadline** so you have time to deal with any potential technical issues.

Obligation of Award Recipients

If selected for funding, you must meet the requirements listed below.

Acknowledgement

When you receive funding from the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, you must acknowledge our support in printed materials, signage visible to the public, via social media, or in other ways appropriate to the project. We will supply preferred wording and logos in electronic format.

Public Benefit

State law authorizes the purchase of services on behalf of the public, but not the donation of public money to organizations or individuals. If you are funded, you must provide public benefits to residents of Seattle as a condition of your funding.

Seattle Business License and Washington State UBI Number Are Required for Payment

If you are awarded funds from us, you must have a Seattle business license and a Washington state Unified Business Identification (UBI) number prior to receiving final payment. (The business license and UBI numbers are *not* needed to apply for funds.)

Reporting

After funding recommendations are approved, our staff will work with you to go over the required reporting documents for you to receive funding. You will need to sign a contract prior to starting engagement, events, and/or creative opportunities. Grantees are paid on a reimbursement basis after projects or services are completed and a final report with promotional materials is submitted (Approximately 4-6 weeks after paperwork is received).

Insurance

You will be responsible for securing Event Liability Insurance for your project, collaborators, and listing the City of Seattle as additionally insured.

Taxes

You are responsible for paying all applicable taxes. At the time of notification, you will need to complete appropriate paperwork and submit an updated W-9.

Our Funding Policies

Commitment to Racial Equity

The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture commits to an anti-racist work practice that centers the creativity and leadership of people of color - those most impacted by structural racism - to move toward systems that benefit us all. We also acknowledge that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples.

We envision a city of people whose success, safety and health are not pre-determined by their race. A city where all artists, performers, writers and creative workers have the freedom, agency, and platform to share and amplify their stories, art, cultures, and experiences. At the same time, we acknowledge that our actions - both conscious and unconscious, past and present - have benefited some communities while limiting opportunities and outcomes for communities of color. We work toward our vision by addressing and working to eliminate institutional racism in our programs, policies, and practices.

In alignment with the [City's Race and Social Justice Initiative](#), we seek new solutions that use arts as a strategy to drive not only our office, but the City as a whole toward racial equity and social justice. We will continue to break barriers and build arts-integrated tools that challenge the status quo and push us toward the inclusive society we envision.

If you have any questions about our commitment or would like to know more about the work we are doing, please call us at (206) 684-7171 or email at Arts.Culture@Seattle.gov.

Grant Appeal Process

You may appeal the recommendations of the independent peer review panel. Appeals must be based solely on the information included in your original application.

Procedure:

- You must first contact the staff member responsible for the program to review the decision and hear a summary of the peer panel feedback: **Kristi Woo** at YouthArts@seattle.gov
- Your appeal must be sent in writing to the Director of the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture within 30 days of formal notice of the decision.
- Our director consults with staff and/or members of the peer panel for input in making the final decision.
- If our director agrees that the award should have been given based on the merit of your original application, you will be awarded a grant.
- A rejection by our director is final and ends the appeal process.
- Our director will notify you of their final decision in writing.

Application materials are public information

Application materials submitted to the Office of Arts & Culture are governed by the Washington Public Records Act and may be subject to disclosure to a third-party requester. To learn more please see [Chapter 42.56 RCW](#) and the City's [Privacy Statement](#).

Discrimination is not allowed on City-funded projects

Applicants receiving funds from the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture must comply with Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 20.44, pertaining to prevention of discrimination in City contracts, and Chapter 5.44, pertaining to license requirements. The complete text of these City codes is available at the City Clerk's office and the Seattle Public Library.

Americans with Disabilities Act applies to City-funded projects

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law ensuring access to services and facilities for people with disabilities. The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture respects the needs of people with disabilities and seeks to make available to applicants, participants and, all

interested persons information regarding the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and its applicability to the activities of our agency. For information about public meetings, accessibility, and auxiliary aids, please contact us at (206) 684-7171 (voice), or (800) 833-6388 (TDD Relay). We comply with all federal, state, and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment and services.

Supports freedom of expression

The City believes a community that fosters freedom of speech and thought will advance as a society. Artists play an important role in reflecting and challenging the social concerns of the day. The strength of the United States as a nation, rests in its tolerance of divergent opinions and ideas. Government support of the arts must similarly tolerate a spectrum of ideas and encourage freedom of thought.

For additional information about funding opportunities and the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, visit our website at seattle.gov/arts and [subscribe to our email newsletter](#).