



SmART Ventures Guidelines

APPLICATION OPENS: Rolling Deadline

APPLICATION CLOSES: Last Friday of the month at 5 PM Pacific

Grant Overview

SmART Ventures (SV) provides \$500 to \$1,500 in support for projects, opportunities, or events that make an arts or cultural impact in Seattle. Individuals, organizations, and community groups can request this funding when they need start-up money or final investment to make the work happen. Your events must be open to the public and take place in Seattle.

For information and assistance with the application, eligibility, or technical support, please refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions document on our webpage](#), or contact SmARTVentures@seattle.gov.

We have interpreters who can speak to you in your language, including American Sign Language (via video). Just call us at 206-684-7171 (voice) or 800-833-6388 (TDD Relay) and tell us what language you speak. Expect a short pause while we find an interpreter to join the call.

Grant Purpose

SV is our flexible starter grant. We use it to support innovative ideas, strengthen community impact, and create new opportunities for people and groups that our other funding programs don't reach. Through SV, we hope to widen arts and culture participation, particularly by diverse or underserved communities. Planting small seeds can yield big outcomes.

Application

You must attend a SV Information Session before applying:

1. [Go to our web calendar](#).
2. Search for "SmART Ventures Information Session" and register for the date and time that works for you.
3. **You will be sent the SV application after attending.**
4. Fill out your application and submit one completed, signed copy to SmartVentures@seattle.gov.

Due Date

This grant is open year-round and accepts applications every month. The application is **due at 5 PM on the last Friday of the month**. You will hear of our funding decisions during the **third week of the following month**.

Please allow ample time to complete your application. Applications submitted after the 5 PM Pacific Time deadline on the last Friday of each month will be considered in the following month's cycle.

We recommend you submit your application **at least six weeks before your event or project launch date**.

Eligibility/Requirements

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

- You are an individual or a group of people – including youth and older adults – seeking support for a unique project, opportunity, or event involving arts and culture that is **not** currently funded by OAC;
- Your project, opportunity, or event is at least six (6) weeks out from the application submission deadline (the last Friday of the month).

You are *not* eligible for this grant if:

- You are a practicing artist currently funded by us and/or you've received a CityArtist grant in the last 4 years.

Funding

If you are selected, you will receive **up to \$1,500**. You can use this funding for:

- Renting equipment
- Paying artists, staff, and yourself
- Running ads
- Photographers/videographers/media Coverage
- Venue costs

You *cannot* use this funding for:

- Food and drink
- Equipment purchases
- Religious services
- Fundraising
- Activities or costs that take place before you receive your grant

Each individual or organization can be funded **a maximum of two times** through this grant, **once per year**.

If you are funded, you can apply again for SV funding 12 months from the project end date of your previous award.

You may **not** receive funding for the same project from more than one of our grant programs.

Information Sessions

We host live virtual information sessions to help you learn more about this grant and how to submit your best application. [Go to our calendar](#) and search for "smART Ventures Information Session" to RSVP.

Once you've started your application, we recommend attending one of the *Draft Review Sessions*, to answer specific questions about your application/project.

Information Sessions

First and Third Thursdays, Monthly

Virtual: Microsoft Teams, 11:30 AM-12:15 PM

[RSVP to an information session](#) using the instructions above

Draft Review Sessions

First and Third Thursdays, Monthly

Virtual: Microsoft Teams, 12:30 PM-1:15 PM

[RSVP to a draft review session](#)

Evaluation Criteria

Successful SV projects address one or more of the following:

- **Audience Expansion:** Does your project support underserved artists, communities or a distinct audience? Does it expand or diversify the participating audience for arts/culture?
- **Innovation:** Does your project provide a new or unique perspective on arts/culture? Is it something that is creative and out of the ordinary, and uses the arts in a distinct way?
- **Community Impact:** Does your project address a community need or build community through arts and culture?
- **Public Access:** Your project must have a broad public appeal, be accessible to various segments of the population and have effective outreach strategy to reach your intended audience.

- **Artistic Potential:** Provide at least one work sample—written, image or video—that demonstrates the potential for artistic quality or development for the artists and/or organizations involved. Supporting material can include but is not limited to: pictures, videos, excerpts of previous works or works in progress, letters of recommendation, etc.
- **Feasibility:** Your ability to carry out the project, a well-thought-out plan, realistic budget, and timeline.

Timeline

- **Rolling deadline:** Application is open year-round.
- **First and Third Thursdays:** Information and Draft Review Sessions in progress.
- **Last Friday of the month, 5 PM Pacific:** Monthly application submission deadline.
- **Third week of the following month:** Award Notifications Sent.

Application To-Do

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

- **Read the guidelines** and check your eligibility.
- **Sign up to attend a virtual Information Session.**
- **Explore the online application sample early** so you can plan ahead. Consider drafting your responses in a document outside of the online application form itself.
- **Be clear and concise in your application**, as panelists read and evaluate many applications. They 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.
- **Save 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 budget 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.
- **For additional information** about SV, please refer to our [SmART Ventures webpage](#).

Obligation of Award Recipients

If selected for funding, you must meet the requirements listed below. You will be asked to:

- Submit a W-9 that asks for a social security number or federal tax identification number issued by the Internal Revenue Service.
- Have a City of Seattle business license. (Not needed to apply, only if you are funded.)
- For events only: Insurance may be required.
- Give credit to the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture.
- Submit a signed invoice and brief Final Project Report for payment. **Important Note: payment is made at the end of your project, not in advance.**

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 digital 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 (such as free admission) 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. 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 and providing proof of 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: SmARTVentures@seattle.gov or 206-684-7171.
- 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 Seattle 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.

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