



## Statewide Community Regrants (SCR)

### **COMPLETE GUIDELINES:**

### **Arts Education Grant**

**(2026)**

#### **Statewide Community Regrants**

Auburn Public Theater

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**Council on  
the Arts**

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## OVERVIEW

Founded in 1977, the Decentralization Program (DEC) was developed by the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to ensure that its cultural funding reaches every part of the state. As of FY2026, this program is called the Statewide Community Regrants Program (SCR). SCR has become one of the council's most effective means of making arts support available to geographically, economically and ethnically diverse segments of the state's population. The program serves each of the state's 62 counties and funds volunteer community organizations as well as established non-profit corporations with paid professional staff.

The SCR program in Cayuga, Seneca, Yates, Wayne and Ontario counties is administered by Auburn Public Theater in downtown Auburn, New York.

Statewide Community Regrants have three distinct funding categories: Community Arts, Arts Education and Individual Artist.

### Goals of the SCR Program

The Statewide Community Regrants program makes arts support available to geographically, economically, and ethnically diverse segments of our 5-county service area. We provide funding to nonprofit community arts organizations, individual artists, and arts educators within Cayuga, Seneca, Wayne, Ontario and Yates counties that are not currently funded directly by NYSCA. SCR through Auburn Public Theater is committed to supporting diverse cultural expression. The focus of our program includes:

- Support for regional artists by providing them with the resources to create new works, while increasing their visibility
- Helping regional nonprofit organizations grow sustainably as they serve the cultural, artistic and educational needs of their respective communities
- Provide support for a wide variety of artistic disciplines including diverse multi-cultural projects
- To be an advocate for arts support in the region we serve by educating community and government leaders about the NYSCA grant process and all it entails
- To help foster partnerships between arts and non-arts organizations with the goal of bringing the arts to areas with limited access to arts programming
- To encourage new artists and organizations to apply for SCR funding. These include the rural, minority and underserved populations of our region.

### What is an underserved community?

Underserved communities represent individuals who may have limited access to arts programs, services or resources and may be marginalized due to geography, race, economic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, or other factors.

## Program Updates for 2026

The applicant of record for the Arts Education program must be an individual teaching artist, collective, or a nonprofit cultural organization. Artists from outside the county may use a local nonprofit conduit in the project county to apply as fiscal sponsor. Funding decisions are based on the criteria and funding priorities as they are outlined in these application materials. Schools may NOT apply directly for Arts Education funding.

### Awards Range \$500 - \$5000

### Application Seminars (Registration is REQUIRED)

NEW applicants **must** attend an informational seminar. We also *strongly suggest* RETURNING applicants attend to increase chances of a competitive proposal and keep current with new guidelines. The 2026 Seminars and any subsequent updates are available at [www.auburnpublictheater.org](http://www.auburnpublictheater.org) under 'Grants'.

### Funding Categories

The Arts Education category is offered in two funding strands: **Pre-K-12 In-School or After-School Projects** and **Community-based Learning**. Funds support arts education projects for closed groups of learners. All AE projects must be carried out in partnership with a public school or in partnership with an existing closed group of learners including but not limited to a club, residents of a senior living facility, individuals receiving social services, or a camp.

In all AE projects, emphasis is placed on the depth and quality of the creative process by which participants learn through or about the arts. Projects must focus on the exploration of art and the artistic process.

### All AE projects must provide:

- Sequential, skills-based study that incorporates one or more art forms and includes a minimum of 3 sequential hands-on learning sessions.
- In-depth, age and skills appropriate learning opportunities.
- Hands-on, participatory creation and/or learning opportunities in one or more art forms that may culminate in exhibitions, productions, or demonstrations.
- Stated learning goals, methodologies and outcomes and a means for evaluation.
- It is recommended that support materials include lesson plans, evaluation plans, video/photo work samples of past Arts Education work, participant evaluation forms, and letters of recommendation.

### Pre-K-12 In-School or After-School Projects and Community-Based Learning REQUIRED LETTER

- A letter of commitment from the partner school to the arts organization or teaching artist must be included with the application to be eligible for funding. The letter of commitment must outline in detail the partner(s) support of the project (monetarily and/or otherwise) and anticipated roles and responsibilities for each partner involved. The partnership letter should be on the partner(s) letterhead and signed by the principal.

- Nonprofits applying directly are not required to submit a letter of agreement/ commitment.
- Applications submitted by a Fiscal Sponsor must include a Letter of Agreement with the sponsored group/artist that clearly outlines the administration of the grant and defines mutual responsibilities.
- Applications submitted with a Community Partner must include a Letter of Commitment which details the partner's support of the project and anticipated roles and responsibilities for each partner involved. The partnership letter should be on the partner(s) letterhead and signed by the director of the partner organization.

**Pre-K-12 In-School or After-School Projects & Community-Based Learning: Who are the Students?**

- Students in a Pre-K-12 public school.
- Projects are provided to a closed group of learners, meaning they are not open to the general public. AE projects should be done in partnership with an existing closed group of learners such as a club, residents of a senior living facility, individuals receiving social services, or a camp.
- These groups may be composed of a particular age group (including adult learners), or for participants of all ages.

**Project Criteria**

- Artists, or a governmental or quasi-governmental entity, a tribal organization, or New York State non-profit with an active board of trustees incorporated in Cayuga, Seneca, Yates, Wayne or Ontario counties may apply. Schools may **not** directly apply for funding.
- Minimum of three (3) sequential, skill based learning sessions incorporating one or more art forms
- In-depth, age and skills appropriate learning opportunities.
- Hands-on, participatory creation and/or learning, which may culminate into exhibitions, productions or demonstrations.
- Funds should primarily be directed toward artist fees, but may include scholarship support, administrative support and cost of materials.
- Stated learning goals, methodologies and outcomes.
- Applicants must have a means of programmatic evaluation.
- Individual artists, groups or collectives, and unincorporated entities who are working with an eligible partner school (for in-school programs) or eligible fiscal sponsor or community based partner if accepted by your SCR site (for out-of-school programs).
  - \*Lead applicants must be 18 years of age at the time of submission and may not be enrolled in a full-time undergraduate degree program.
- Project must be completed during the funding cycle.
- Project must occur in the same county as the applying artist, fiscal sponsor or organization's legal residence.
- with an eligible fiscal sponsor or community partner, if accepted by your SCR site.

## **Pre-K-12 In-School or After-School Projects and Community-Based Learning LOCATION Criteria**

- These projects must take place in a Pre-K- 12 public school building during the school day or After-School. In-School and After-School projects must be done in partnership with a public school.
- AE regrant funds must not replace, or appear to replace, the role of certified arts teachers in schools.
- Inter-curricular collaboration for in- school projects is encouraged but not required. These projects take place in a community- based setting such as a library, community center, care facilities, or arts organization.
- If a nonprofit is applying directly, the project must take place in the same county as the nonprofit.
- If an Individual, collective, or unincorporated entity is applying with a Fiscal Sponsor, the project must take place in the same county as the Fiscal Sponsor.
  - If an Individual, collective, or unincorporated entity is applying with a Community Partner, the project must take place in the same county as the Individual or established contact person for the collective or unincorporated group. The community partner must also be in that same county.

## **Eligible Applicants**

- A 501(c)(3) or New York State non-profit organization with an active board of trustees either incorporated in NY State or registered to do business in NY State
- A government or quasi-governmental entity, or Tribal Nation present within NY State.
- Individual artists, groups or collectives, and unincorporated entities who are working with an eligible partner school (for in-school programs) or eligible fiscal sponsor or community partner if accepted by your SCR site (for out-of-school programs).
  - Lead applicants must be 18 years of age at the time of submission and may not be enrolled in a full- time undergraduate degree program.
  - Projects must take place in the same county as the fiscal sponsor or community partner.
    - If an individual artist or unincorporated group is working with a public school that is out of their county of residence, the applicant must have a nonprofit fiscal sponsor in the county of the public school where the project is to take place.

## **Ineligible Applicants**

- Private and parochial schools are **ineligible** for partnerships.
- **School partners involved in any AE projects currently receiving direct NYSCA funding are not eligible for a SCR Arts Education regrant.**
- NYS Agencies and departments (including SUNY schools)
- Public universities, colleges; and public, private or parochial secondary and elementary schools
- SCR site Staff or board members (see Conflict of Interest section)
- Unincorporated applicants without an eligible sponsor or partner organization (exception: Individual Artist category)
- NYSCA applicants, including fiscally sponsored applicants that have applied to NYSCA in the most

recent cycle.

- Past re-grantees that have failed to submit final reports
- Non-incorporated chapters of organizations whose “parent” is incorporated outside the SCR area
- A group that is formed/incorporated as a limited liability company (LLC), business corporation, or limited liability partnership (LLP) in New York State
- A group that is formed/incorporated as a limited liability company (LLC), business corporation, or limited liability partnership (LLP) in another state and registered to do business in New York State
- A group in either of the two types above that is seeking to apply with a eligible fiscal sponsor
- A group that is seeking to apply as an individual or group of individuals but the project also publicly functions in a limited liability company (LLC), business corporation, or limited liability partnership (LLP).

## What the Grant Can Cover

- Activities/Projects of local arts organizations including both live and virtual
- Teaching artist fees
- Direct administrative expenses and/or planning and preparation expenses for a proposed event
- Supplies and materials needed to execute the proposed project. Individual items may not exceed \$1,000. Examples: art supplies, sheet music, hardware, memory cards, and other consumable equipment.
- Equipment, software, subscriptions, and training needed to execute the proposed project. Individual items may not exceed \$1,000. Examples: cameras, lighting equipment, subscriptions associated with virtual programming, and training to utilize these tools.

## What the Grant Cannot Cover

- Projects involving partners that apply directly to NYSCA  
**NOTE-SCR applicants may hire or “book” a NYSCA-grantee for a service with a paid fee**
- Start-up or seed funding for the establishment of a new organization
- General operating expenses
- Requests greater than applicant’s project expenses minus total project income
- Operating expenses of privately owned facilities (e.g. homes or studios)
- Events that take place in private homes
- Non-arts activity including:
  - Galas, benefits or fundraising events including entertainment costs for receptions, food or fundraising events.
  - Entertainment such as balloons, clowns, magicians

- Projects that are recreational, therapeutic, rehabilitative or religious in nature including at risk/social service programs when the purpose is primarily for rehabilitative, therapeutic or worship
- Acquisitions of works of art
- Contingency funds
- The purchase of permanent equipment that exceeds \$1,000 **or** capital improvements
- Creation of textbooks or classroom materials
- Lobbying expenses
- Programs in which children are used as professional artists (paid a fee)
- Regrants by applicants to fund other activities
- Cash prizes, juried shows, fellowships, scholarships and other awards to students
- Stand-alone assembly programs, single performances, or one-time visits to cultural institutions
- Programs for which selected students are taken out of regular classes or are self-selected for participation.
- College-level courses, contests or performing groups.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **If I have received funding in the past, may I apply again?**

Of course! However, prior funding **does not** guarantee continued support. Each application is reviewed in the context of the current program guidelines, funding priorities, and evaluative criteria.

When reviewing applicants that have received funding in the past, priority will be given to projects that are able to successfully demonstrate growth, artistic expansion, community support and/or continued community need.

### **How much of the total project is the grant intended to cover?**

Grants are not intended to cover the complete cost of the proposed project. In recent years, grants for Arts Education projects have ranged from \$500 to \$5,000. Historically, the average grant has been approximately \$2250.

Arts Education Regrants may fund up to 75% of the total costs of your proposed project. Your project budget must demonstrate that a minimum of 25% of the proposed project income comes from other funding sources. This can include in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions must be noted on the budget page.

### **Who is an eligible community partner?**

A Community Partner may be a nonprofit or community-based entity, such as a library, bookstore, coffee house. The partner must be an active member of the local community



and contribute to the vibrancy, improvement, and/or quality of life of its community. The SCR site and peer panels can determine the impact and engagement of the community partner. Note: The Community Partner may not benefit directly from the SCR award. See below to learn more about your required school or community based partner/fiscal sponsor

### **May I apply for funding for more than one project?**

A single applicant is able to submit up to three (3) project requests for Community Arts, Arts Education and Individual Artist categories. The maximum total request amount cannot exceed \$5,000.

Sponsored applications are exempt from the three-request limit; however, any artist also applying for an Individual Artist Grant cannot request more than \$2,500 in Community Arts and/or Arts Education Grants. There is no match required.

## **Fiscal Sponsorship and School or Community Based Learning Partners**

A fiscal sponsor must be a nonprofit organization in the county where the arts activity is taking place, which meets the same eligibility requirement as an applicant organization and provide the required documents. The fiscal sponsor will receive the grant funds and distribute them to the artist(s) or non-incorporated entity. An organization may serve as a fiscal sponsor for an unlimited number of applicants.

A letter of agreement between the two parties must be submitted with the application stating the willingness of the supporting organization to fulfill the obligations and duties of serving as fiscal and administrative agent for a grant award. In addition, the letter of agreement should specify the roles of each party.

A direct SCR applicant may serve as a fiscal sponsor and may sponsor more than one applicant, as the sponsored requests do not count towards the 3-request limit or \$5,000 maximum. Direct NYSCA applicants, however, may not serve as a fiscal sponsor for SCR applications.

**NOTE:** Sponsoring organizations must check with their accountants/financial personnel regarding tax liabilities and IRS reporting relative to sponsoring projects that are not directly related to the sponsoring organization's mission. Sponsoring organizations are responsible for all IRS required reporting including the creation and distribution of 1099 forms where applicable.

Fiscal Sponsors must issue W-9s to grantees that are individuals, or unincorporated groups of individuals, with grants greater than \$600 prior to issuing the grant award check and a 1099 tax form must be issued for grantee's tax purposes.

# The Application Process

## Arts Education Grant Application Form

All applications must be submitted through the online submissions platform Submittable. Applicants must visit [www.auburnpublictheater.org](http://www.auburnpublictheater.org) and will be directed from there to register for Submittable. If you are not able to submit online for some reason, please contact us directly to see what other arrangements can be made.

### Project Budget

The budget form, included on the application, should be completed in full. Please indicate other secured and anticipated funding sources. Please list in-kind as well as cash contributions. Total costs should equal total expenses.

### Narrative Responses (Project and Budget Narratives)

The project and budget narrative questions are included in the application form. The combined length of the narratives should not exceed 3 pages (single spaced, 12 pt. font). Be clear and concise.

### Proof of Nonprofit Status for Applicant Organization or Fiscal Sponsor

Your organization must submit ONE of the following documents to prove nonprofit status:

- Letter of Determination from the IRS indicating tax exempt status under section 501c(3)
- Documentation of Charter by New York State Board of Regents under Section 216 of the New York State Education Law
- Current New York State Bureau of Charities (Office of the Attorney General) filing receipt
- Official authorization as an arm of local government (i.e. a formal letter on official stationery signed by the appropriate county, city, town or village executive)

The address on the document **must** be an address within one of the five designated counties.

NOTE: A New York State Tax Exemption Certificate from the Dept. of Taxation and Finance is not considered proof of nonprofit status and should not be submitted.

## **Letter of Agreement between Fiscal Sponsor and Applicant**

(See Fiscal Sponsorship and School or Community Based Learning Partners section above)

## **Organization's or Fiscal Sponsor's Board of Directors List**

Please include complete list with affiliations and addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

## **Organization's or Fiscal Sponsor's most current Audited Financial Statement or Budget**

## **Teaching Artist's Resume and/or Bio Work**

### **Samples**

Work samples of the teaching artist's previous work assist the panel to determine artistic merit of the project. These are not required, but they are *highly encouraged*. Work samples should represent work from the last 3 years. Returning applicants are recommended, but not required, to share samples of previously funded events. Samples should be submitted in *one of the following forms*:

- 1) Audio Work Samples: Please upload directly into the application one MP3 file that includes up to 10 minutes of original composition. The file may include as many songs as you want, but the total length must not exceed ten minutes.
- 2) Video Work Samples:  
Upload one 10-minute video except or two 5-minute excerpts from previously completed work. Two 5-minute clips may be from two different works. Files should be .mov, .mp4 or .wmv. You may also include a link to a website with one 10-minute excerpt or two 5-minute excerpts.
- 3) Image Work Samples:  
Upload up to 10 digital images using the following specifications:
  - a. File type: JPEG
  - b. Dimensions: No larger than 1240 pixels x 1240 pixels
  - c. File size: Each image must be under 4MG
  - d. Resolution: 72dpi
- 4) Written Work Samples:  
Upload a writing sample.
  - a. File size: No larger than 4MB
  - b. File format: PDF or Microsoft Word

Evaluators will read the first 10 pages of the work AND any additional 10-page section that you indicate.

### **Letter(s) of Support**

You may include letters of support from community members expressing the need for the project and/or showing support.

### **Application Review in Draft Form**

The SCR Coordinator is happy to review application drafts. Reviewing an applicant's draft proposal is for providing technical assistance and does not guarantee that it will receive funding.

### **Application Deadline**

**Applications must be uploaded to Submittable by 11:59 pm on March 8th, 2026.**

Early submissions are encouraged. Incomplete, late applications as well as applications from ineligible organizations will not be considered. All applications must be submitted through the online submissions platform Submittable. Applicants must register for Submittable through [www.auburnpublictheater.org](http://www.auburnpublictheater.org).

## **After the Deadline**

### **Grant Review Process**

Applications are reviewed for eligibility, completeness, and accuracy by the SCR staff. It is your responsibility to submit a complete and accurate application. As part of the review process, the SCR Coordinator may contact you to clarify and review information.

A panel of artists, arts administrators, educators, community leaders and businesspeople, coordinated by Auburn Public Theater, will then evaluate each application and recommend a level of funding based on evaluation criteria, funding priorities, and grant guidelines. Upon request, panelists will be furnished with final and interim reports as well as audit information, prior panel comments, and correspondence when considering organizations/individuals who have applied or have been funded in prior years. The panel's recommendations are submitted to and reviewed by the Auburn Public Theater Board of Directors, which has the final authority for all decisions.

### **Panel Criteria**

Awards are based on a competitive review process. Due to strict guidelines and the competitive nature of the process, not all applicants are guaranteed to receive funding. Each application is reviewed based on its own merits and against others in the application pool. The panel will make funding recommendations based primarily on the following criteria:

- Artistic merit including artistic and program quality and the expertise of the artists.

- Community demonstration of interest, support and benefit - without duplicating existing programs. Seek to serve a broad constituency.
- Adherence to application guidelines, with clarity and completeness.
- Feasibility - clearly defined project objectives, project implementation and management:
  - Demonstrated ability of personnel to administer project
  - Reasonable project budget
  - Potential effectiveness of proposed promotional efforts throughout the community
  - Applicant's history with program success and contract compliance.

### **Funding Priorities**

Projects that reflect diverse cultural traditions or contemporary creative expression.

### **Low Priority Projects**

Projects that do not utilize or pay professional artists

Applicants who have not confirmed the artists to be utilized in the project

Projects that do not benefit underserved populations

Projects that duplicate existing and successful projects/services

### **Award Notification**

Auburn Public Theater notifies all applicants via email regarding their application's status after the panel review.

## **Appeals Process**

In the event that your program is not funded, or funded partially, the below guidelines are set in place to ensure a fair and equal opportunity to all applicants.

Applicants should first consult with the SCR Coordinator to review the considerations that went into the panel decision. If, after consultation, the applicant wishes to pursue an appeal, the applicant must do so in writing with all material supporting the appeal, addressed to Artistic Producing Director, Auburn Public Theater. The Artistic Producing Director must receive the written appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days from the issue date of the denial letter. The applicant will receive a written response and the appeal will be assigned to a different panel who will meet to examine the grounds of the appeal. The new panel will provide a recommendation to the Auburn Public Theater's Board for final approval.

### **THE ONLY GROUNDS FOR APPEAL ARE:**

1. Non-presentation of application information by staff or panelist.
2. Misrepresentation of application information by staff or panelist
3. Improper procedure by staff or panelist

**NOTE: DISSATISFACTION WITH THE AMOUNT OF SUPPORT OR A RECOMMENDATION OF “NO FUNDING”  
CANNOT BE USED AS A BASIS FOR AN APPEAL.**

### **Responsibilities of Grant Recipients**

- All awardees must sign and return a contract, which outlines all agreements with regard to fulfilling obligations and the procedures for providing the following materials:
  - A Final Report- accessible via the Auburn Public Theater website under 'Grants'
  - Notification of your event(s) at least 2 weeks in advance with two complimentary tickets, if applicable. Projects may be audited by Auburn Public Theater staff, panelists or other appointed persons.
  - Credit to Auburn Public Theater for support on all publicity and printed materials. **Required** acknowledgement language with logo is on the Auburn Public Theater website.
  - Immediate notification if a project cannot take place or if there are any changes in project plans.
  - Awarded funds must be returned if a project cannot take place.