



Statewide Community Regrants (SCR)

COMPLETE GUIDELINES:

COMMUNITY ARTS 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 FY2022, 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 are comprised of individuals who have limited access to arts programs, services, or resources and may be marginalized due to geography, race, economic status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, or other factors.

Community Arts

Community Arts Grants support arts and cultural projects of community-based organizations, groups, collectives, or artists in Cayuga, Seneca, Wayne, Yates, and Ontario counties. These grants provide partial funding to emerging professional artists and organizations of all populations whose projects

promote an increase in arts activity and promise to enhance the cultural climate in communities and neighborhoods where they live and operate.

The primary criteria for a funded project are the creative vision for the project backed by sound infrastructure for its successful execution and the potential for resonance throughout the surrounding community.

Community Arts grants may support all forms of multidisciplinary projects including but not limited to: theater, dance, music, film, video, literary arts, visual arts and folk arts. All funded projects in this category must be community-based and open to the general public.

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 under 'Grants'.

Eligibility

- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must be a governmental or quasi-governmental entity, a 501(c)(3) federal tax-exempt organization, or a tribal organization or a New York State non-profit incorporated organization. (*See "Proving Non-profit Status" section below for clarification.*)
- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must produce or present arts and cultural programming serving residents of Cayuga, Seneca, Wayne, Yates, or Ontario counties.
- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must have a board of directors or a governing body that meets to determine and review policy.
- Applicant organization, fiscal sponsor, or partner organization must conduct all activities in a way that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religious belief, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. Individual artists may apply directly under this program by (1) enlisting an eligible non-profit organization as a "fiscal sponsor" or (2) partnering with an eligible organization that shares its goals for the community. (*See the "Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations" section below for more information.*) Lead applicants must be at least 18 years of age at the time of the

submission and may not be enrolled in full time degree program.

- Applicant organization or artist or fiscal sponsor must be legally located (i.e., not a seasonal resident or local branch of an organization registered elsewhere) in the county where the activity will take place. If working with a partner organization, both application organization/artist and partner organization must be based in the county where the proposed activity is taking place.
- Previous grantees must have submitted ALL required final reports from the previous cycle.
- A first-time applicant must attend an Informational Meeting or meet one-on-one with SCR staff from Auburn Public Theater.

Ineligible Applicants

- 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.
- 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

- Non-incorporated chapters of organizations whose “parent” is incorporated outside the SCR area
- Start-up or seed funding for the establishment of a new organization
- Past re-grantees that have failed to submit final reports

Project Requirements

- Project must occur in the same county as the applying artist, fiscal sponsor, or organization’s legal residence.
- Projects must be completed during the funding cycle.

What the Grant Can Cover

- Project costs for live or virtual activities by local arts organizations
- Artist fees
- Marketing and publicity costs
- Direct administrative expenses and/or planning and preparation expenses for a proposed event
- Supplies and materials needed for the execution of 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 \$1000. Examples: cameras, lighting equipment, subscriptions associated with virtual programming, and training to utilize these tools

What the Grant CANNOT Cover

- 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
- Activities that are not open to the general public such as camps, clubs or college associations
- 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.
- 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).

Frequently Asked Questions

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

Of course! If you have received funding in the past, you are eligible to apply again. 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. The review panel will also consider compliance with the previous contract and reporting requirements.

When reviewing projects 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 Community Arts projects have ranged from \$500 to \$5,000. Historically, the average grant has been approximately \$1,200.

Grants are not intended to cover the complete cost of the proposed project. Community Arts 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.

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.

Must I attend an informational workshop?

Attending an informational workshop is **required** for all first-time applicants and *highly encouraged* for previous grantees. In lieu of attending a workshop, an applicant may meet face-to-face or via Zoom with the SCR Coordinator. The purpose is to give a personalized overview of the SCR program and to familiarize the applicant with the grant guidelines. It also gives applicants the opportunity to consult with the SCR Coordinator on the specifics of their projects and to get feedback before applying.

Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations

Individual artists and non-incorporated collectives wishing to apply for the Community Arts Grants *must* apply through enlisting the sponsorship of an eligible non-profit or by partnering with an eligible organization. See guidelines for Individual Artists to apply for funding without a sponsor or partner.

Fiscal Sponsorship

A fiscal sponsor must be a non-profit organization in the county where the arts activity is taking place, which meets the requirements listed above. The fiscal sponsor will receive the grant funds and

distribute them to the artist(s) or non-incorporated collective. 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 \$5000 maximum. There is no match required. 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 purposed.

Partner Organizations

An individual artist or collective may also apply directly for Statewide Community Regrant funds if working in partnership with a community-based non-profit. A letter of commitment from the community-based non-profit partner confirming the partnership with the applicant artist is required. The commitment letter must outline the scope of the partnership and each partner's investment or contribution (in-kind and/or cash) towards the proposed project.

In the case of a partnership, the grant will be sent directly to the awardee, and the partner organization does not act as a fiscal sponsor.

Auburn Public Theater can introduce artists and organizations to facilitate collaborations.

Application Process

Application Components

Community Arts Grant Application Questionnaire

All applications must be submitted through the online submissions platform Submittable. Applicants must visit www.auburnpublictheater.org and will be directed from there to register for Submittable. Application forms **must** be filled out completely. If you are not able to submit your application online for some reason, please contact us directly to see what other arrangements can be made.

Project Budget

The budget form, included in the application form, 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-point font). Be clear and concise.

Proof of Non-Profit Status for Applicant Organizations, Fiscal Sponsors, or Partner Organizations

Your organization must submit **ONE** of the following documents to prove non-profit status:

- Letter of Determination from the IRS indicating tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3)
- Documentation of Charter by the New York State Board of Regents under section 216 of the New York State Education Law
- Documentation of Incorporation under Section 402 of the New York State Not-for-Profit Corporation 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 stationary 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 Department of Taxation and Finance is **NOT** considered proof of non-profit status and should not be submitted.

Letter of Agreement between Fiscal Sponsor and Applicant, if applicable

See "Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations" section above.

Letter of Commitment from the Non-Profit Partner, if applicable

See "Fiscal Sponsorship and Partner Organizations" section above.

Organization's, Fiscal Sponsor's, or Partner Organization's Board Member List

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

Organization's, Fiscal Sponsor's, or Partner Organization's most current Audited Financial Statement and Budget

Project Manager's Resume and/or Bio

Artist's/Artists' Resume(s) and/or Bio(s), if applicable

Work Samples

Work samples 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.

Work samples should be submitted in *one* of the following forms:

1. Audio Work Samples:

Please upload 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 10 minutes.

2. Video Work Samples:

Please upload one 10-minute video excerpt or two 5-minute video 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:

- File type: JPEG
- Dimensions: No larger than 1240 pixels x 1240 pixels
- File Size: Each image must be under 4MB
- Resolution: 72dpi

4. Written Work samples

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

- File Size: No larger than 4MB
- File format: PDF or Microsoft Word

Letter(s) of Support (Optional)

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

Application Review

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

Application Deadline

Applications must be uploaded to Submittable by 11:59 P.M. on March 8th, 2026. Early submissions are encouraged. Incomplete, late applications or applications from ineligible organizations will not be considered. All applications must be submitted through the on-line submissions platform Submittable. Applicants must register for the www.auburnpublictheater.org and will be directed from there to register for Submittable.

After the Deadline

Grant Review Process

Applications are reviewed for eligibility, completeness, and accuracy by SCR staff at Auburn Public Theater. It is your responsibility to submit a complete and accurate application. As part of the review process, the SCR Coordinator may contact you by telephone or e-mail to clarify and review information. A panel of artists, arts administrators, educators, community leaders, and business people coordinated

by Auburn Public Theater will then evaluate each application and recommend a level of funding based on the evaluation criteria, the funding priorities, and the 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.

Panel Criteria

Awards are based on a ***competitive*** review process. Due to the strict guidelines and the competitive nature of the process, **not all applicants are guaranteed to receive funding**. Each application is reviewed on the basis of 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

- Activities of local arts organizations
- New, emerging, and grass-roots organizations, particularly those that serve diverse and underserved individuals
- Projects that reflect the cultural traditions or contemporary creative expressions of a particular ethnic group
- Applicants that provide a detailed marketing plan to reach/promote their project to underserved communities

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 communities
- Projects that contain minimal or poor marketing plans to reach underserved audiences
- Previously funded projects that do not exhibit further growth, artistic expansion, community support, and/or community need

- Projects that duplicate already existing and successful projects/services

Award Notification

Auburn Public Theater notifies all applicants by email regarding the status of their application after panel review.

Grant checks are issued after a review of the panel comments with Auburn Public Theater staff and receipt of the signed contract and all other requested information.

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 the material supporting the appeal, addressed to the 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 the recommendation of "no funding" cannot be used as a basis for an appeal.

Responsibilities of Grant Recipients

All awarded organizations 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 Program 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 the 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.