



OREGON ARTS
COMMISSION

Grant Panels: Procedures and Guidelines

Grant panels play an important role in the review of the Oregon Arts Commission's grant applications. Each year, over 50 people volunteer their time and expertise to help the Commission fairly and openly distribute public funds to support the arts across Oregon.

The Commission thanks all panel members for the experience and expertise they bring to the panel review work.

About the Oregon Arts Commission

The Oregon Arts Commission believes that the arts and culture are touchstones of community and civic life and that it is essential to preserve, stabilize and develop their central role in Oregon. The Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine Commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts.

The Arts Commission became part of the Economic and Community Development Department in 1993 in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon Legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development.

The Arts Commission is supported with General Funds appropriated by the Oregon Legislature, federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust. More information about the Oregon Arts Commission is available at www.oregonartscommission.org.

Purposes

By enabling legislation (ORS 359.020), the Commission is directed:

1. To complement, assist and strengthen existing or planned programs and activities of public and private associations in the arts to promote the broadest public benefit while maintaining high artistic and scholarly standards.
2. To encourage and give greater opportunities and recognition to individual Oregon artists whose work is, or gives promise of being, of high quality.
3. To stimulate and encourage private and local initiative and financial support in connection with programs and activities in the arts.

Overall Grant Policies

1. The Oregon Arts Commission encourages grant applications in all disciplines. Awards are made on the basis of merit. There are no geographic or per capita grant fund allocations. The Oregon Arts Commission seeks to assist arts activities in all areas of the state.
2. Oregon Arts Commission support should be considered supplementary and not a dominant part of the budget of any arts organization.
3. Grant applicants must demonstrate at least a dollar for dollar match for grant funds requested.
4. The Oregon Arts Commission encourages all applicants to charge a reasonable admission fee for arts events, rather than offering free events.
5. Grants must be spent within the period of the grant, typically a one year period.
6. Every applicant must submit a copy of its most recent financial audit. Applicants without an outside professional or certified audit should submit a board-approved financial statement for the most recently completed fiscal year.

Nominations

Nominations of prospective panelists are accepted year-round. Panelists may also be self-nominated.

Nominations may consist of:

- submission of a letter of interest with a resume outlining professional achievements, education, arts related employment history and awards/distinctions and a brief statement about the nominee's particular interest within their field of specialization.
- Submission of the panel interest form found on the Arts Commission website, www.oregonartscommission.org

Preparation

Arts Commission staff will provide copies of all applications to be reviewed in advance of the panel meeting. Panelists will also receive grant guidelines, published review criteria and score/comment sheets prior to the panel meeting. Panelists who have questions or need clarifications necessary for the review of any application should refer the need for the information to Arts Commission staff. Staff will research and disseminate the information to the full panel.

Although panelists may be assigned particular applications for review or presentation, panelists are expected to be familiar with all applications reviewed.

Panel Meeting Process

Panel chairs reviews Commission policies and priorities and the evaluation criteria relating to the specific grant program with the panel. The chair facilitates the review of each application submitted for funding. Panel members discuss the application's merit and may be assisted by staff or Commission members with factual information.

Panel discussions are a matter of public record. While panel meetings are open to the public, observers may not address the panel. Panelists may direct questions to observers to seek clarification on specific points. Panelists' questions should be specific rather than open-ended. The panel chair will insure that panel meetings are used for the focused review of applications rather than as a forum for applicants to deliver statements.

Responsibilities

Panel Chair	Panel Members	Arts Staff
Preside over the panel meeting, facilitating discussion by all panel members. Inform and guide the panel in matters of Commission policy.	Review and evaluate grant proposals submitted to the panel. Present applications as assigned at the grants review meeting. Make recommendations to the Commission.	Coordinate meeting schedules and application processing.
Represent the panel at Commission meetings, presenting panel recommendations for Commission consideration.	May advise the Commission on needs in the various disciplines or programs or suggest improvements for the grant review process.	Inform the panel in matters of Commission policy.
Identify and evaluate any policy issues.		Provide all available facts regarding an applicant to the panel.
		Record panel comments and summarize recommendations for the Commission. Follow up on identified policy issues.

Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

The Arts Commission publishes guidelines for each of its grant programs, outlining its purpose, review criteria and accompanying weights for evaluation.

All applications are reviewed and scored according to the published review criteria for the particular grant program. Arts Commission staff tallies panelist scores in order to develop a ranked list of applicants for final review by the panel and for funding recommendation to the Arts Commission.

The Commission's grant decisions are determined by the ranked scores as well as additional weight for geographic area served or the uniqueness of the activity.

The following sample scoring matrix is typical of the system used for each grant program.

Oregon Arts Commission
Operating Support Grants: Panel Review Sheet

Applicant:
Grant Requested: \$

Review Criteria	Maximum Points	Panelist Score	Comments
Artistic Quality: Evidence of applicant's major artistic accomplishments? Strong, solid artistic leadership. Articulated artistic goals.	40		
Organization Capacity and Fiscal Management: The management and fiscal capacity of the applicant to successfully undertake quality programs.	20		
Community and Economic Impact: The extent of local, regional or statewide support including partnerships and collaborations. Individuals benefiting from programs/services. Volunteers associated with organization. Payments to artists.	15		
Outreach and Access: Evidence that the project will be accessible to all interested persons, regardless of disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, gender, and sexual orientation.	15		
Capacity of Education Programming: Evidence of and realistic plans for education programming.	10		
Total:	100		

Meetings

All panel meetings are open to the public and are a matter of public record. Persons with disabilities who need special accommodations are encouraged to contact the Commission at least two business days prior to the meeting date.

Panelists may direct questions to observers or applicants but those questions must be narrow and specific, not open-ended. The panel chair will ensure that meetings are not a forum for applicants to deliver statements other than responses to specific questions. Staff records panel comments for the public record and to include with notifications to applicants. Panel discussions are also taped for the public record.

Arts Commission Conflict of Interest Policy *(Adopted December 11, 1981)*

The Arts Commission has adopted the following Conflict of Interest policy governing its members and staff.

1. No Commissioner or staff member will submit a grant application or proposal on behalf of any organization with which they or their immediate family are associated as employees, officers, or members of the governing board.
2. Commission members and staff may take part in grant related activities undertaken with Commission support but will not receive any remuneration, except expenses where appropriate.
3. Commission members will declare a potential conflict and will abstain from voting on grant applications involving organizations with which they or their immediate family members are involved as employees or members of the governing board.
4. No Commissioner or staff member will solicit or accept any gifts or favors during a calendar year with an aggregate value of over \$100, from any person or organization whose activities are supported by Commission funds. The acceptance of hospitality, however, including free admission privileges, within reasonable limits, is exempt.

Definitions

Affiliation: An individual is considered to be affiliated with an organization if the individual or a member of the immediate family (a spouse, unmarried partner, or child) is:

1. a director, officer, trustee or employee;
2. a paid professional fundraiser or public relations officer;
3. an independent contractor who has received fees or payments in the year preceding the filing

of the affiliation statement;

4. a contributor, directly or through an entity which she/he controls, of an amount which is more than five percent of the organization's annual budget for the year.

Panelist Affiliations

Disclosure of affiliation with an applicant is required in order to protect the Commission, panelists and applicants from actual, as well as the appearance of, conflict of interest.

1. Panel members shall not submit an application for Commission funds on behalf of an organization with which they are employed or affiliated, nor shall they sign any document relating to a grant of Commission funds to said organizations.
2. Panelists may take part in activities undertaken with Commission support but may not receive any remuneration, except for out-of-pocket expenses where appropriate.
3. Affiliation with an applicant is to be declared at the start of discussion of that application. Panelists who declare an affiliation may not join in the discussion except to the extent provided any other observer or applicant.
4. Panel members shall not solicit, accept or agree to accept any gift of money, goods, loans or services or engage in any other arrangements for personal benefit which would improperly influence them in their Commission-related duties and responsibilities. The Commission approves of the acceptance of hospitality, however, including free admission privileges, within reasonable limits, recognizing that attendance at arts events and performances is essential to the performance of their duties.
5. Panel members shall not attempt to influence the vote of fellow panel members or Commission members on applications or any other matter involving applicants with which they are affiliated.

Violations of the foregoing policies may be investigated by the Commission and/or staff. Action resulting from said investigations is at the discretion of the Commission.

Travel

Panel members serve without compensation. Travel expenses and mileage will be reimbursed at prevailing state rates. Travel regulations established by the state of Oregon apply to all panelists.