



## GUIDELINES FOR ARTS GRANTS

The Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council, Inc., administers grant monies allocated by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota earmarked for arts-related projects and general operating support of qualifying arts organizations, as well as the McKnight Foundation by supporting the development of individual artists. Individuals and groups seeking to apply for funding are strictly held to the following qualifications.

### **Who May Apply**

The project must meet all of the following requirements.

- The applicant is located within the eleven-county SEMAC region of southeastern Minnesota: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona Counties.
- The primary focus of the project must be the fine arts, i.e., the development, education, performance or showcasing of the arts.
- The project must include a public component to benefit the citizens of southeastern Minnesota.
- The project or fiscal year must begin at least 60 days after the grant deadline. Further, the project or fiscal year must be completed within 12 months of the project start date.
- Arts organizations must be nonprofit, with Articles of Incorporation on file with the State of Minnesota.
- Arts organizations must have, or be in the process of applying for, federal income tax 501(c)(3) status from the IRS. Organizations still in the process of receiving tax-exempt status must use a Fiscal Agent, within Minnesota that is both tax-exempt and a nonprofit organization, who has agreed to receive and disburse SEMAC funds.

If you checked every box above, please consider the following restrictions that could make your project ineligible for funding.

### **Who May Not Apply**

There are certain restrictions on funds that SEMAC administers. SEMAC cannot consider an application if any of the following conditions exist:

- The applicant has overdue final or midterm reports from a previous SEMAC grant or their report was not approved by SEMAC staff.
- Artists are required to pay entry or exhibition fees in order to exhibit and/or perform in the program for which support is requested.
- The applicant received or will receive funding from the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) or from the McKnight Foundation during this fiscal year or in the past two fiscal years.
- The applicant is a church or religious organization that promotes religious backgrounds, faiths, or beliefs, and the activity is designed essentially for the religious socialization of the participants.
- The applicant artist, mentor or artist-in-residence is a student enrolled full-time in a school, college or university and/or the project is related to class, course or degree requirements.

Further, an application cannot be considered if the requested funds would be used:

- in lobbying or in feasibility studies;
- to purchase or commission a work of art for a public place, or for historic preservation projects;
- for capital improvement or construction, purchase of real property, or for endowment funds;
- for adaptations or translations of original works;
- for benefits, fundraisers, or for hospitality costs;
- to pay copyright or other legal fees;
- for touring costs, field trips, or where the proposed project will impact only members of the applicant group or institution; or
- for general operating support of festivals or arts fairs. However, funds may be requested to assist with specific artistic components of the festival or fair.
- to fund artist's lives and/or lifestyles.

## **THE FUNDING PROCESS**

### **Funding Restrictions**

The following restrictions are placed upon artists and organizations who receive funding through SEMAC. These restrictions are non-negotiable and will be strictly enforced.

- Recipients are restricted to two grants, from different categories, per year.
- Recipients may not submit the same work with future applications. This restriction applies whether or not the previous project received an award.
- Resubmission of the same work will disqualify the applicant from the review process.
- Recipients are required to sign a contract stipulating the terms of the grant award. Specific instructions for completing the contract will be provided with funding notification.
- When the project is completed, the recipient is required to file a final report with SEMAC. Failure to do so will prevent any future funding until that report has been accepted.

### **Review Criteria**

The Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council uses the following review standards for all applications. Applicants may call the office for grant review procedures and schedule details.

1. **Artistic Quality and Merit of the Project to the Arts.** Considerations used to address this criterion include the following:
  - A. How well do the resources (qualifications of artistic personnel, facilities, activities, etc.) meet the project goals?
  - B. How well does the project meet or advance the goals of the organization?
  - C. How does the project contribute to the artistic development of the respective art form and/or audience?
  - D. How does the project increase the number and variety of arts opportunities in the community or attempt new approaches to existing art programs?
2. **Need for the Project.** Demonstrated need by the artist, the arts organization, arts resources, or the public. Considerations used to address this criterion may include the following:
  - A. Community involvement and support for the project.
  - B. Whether the project is duplicated and if so, does it improve upon an existing program?
  - C. The method used to determine that the project is needed.
3. **The Ability of the Applicant to Accomplish the Project.** Considerations used to address this criterion may include the following:

- A. The planning process used to develop the project format.
- B. Qualifications of the personnel to be used in the project.
- C. Feasibility of the budget.
- D. Marketing and publicity efforts.
- E. Evidence of the applicant organization's fiscal responsibility.
- F. Previous successful efforts.

### **ADA Access Planning**

The Americans With Disabilities Act made access to cultural programs and services for persons with disabilities a civil right. In the spirit of that federal law, SEMAC believes that the receipt of public money obligates its grant recipients to ensure that people with disabilities can fully participate in and enjoy arts activities. One approach to understanding the many ways a group can become more accessible is to develop an ADA access plan. Such a plan serves to assess the accessibility of an organization's programs, services, and facilities and define strategies for improvement. For assistance with your plan, contact VSA Arts Minnesota at 800-933-8721, email [info@vsarts.org](mailto:info@vsarts.org), or the Minnesota State Council on Disability at 800-945-8913, email [council.disability@state.mn.us](mailto:council.disability@state.mn.us).

### **RAC Data Collection**

Each applicant is required to complete and submit a RAC Data Collection Form along with their application. This form is used to gather information about grant applicants to the Minnesota Regional Arts Councils (RACs). The data is maintained by the Minnesota State Arts Board in cooperation with the RACs, and may be distributed to others in accordance with the Minnesota Data Practices Act. Complete information is necessary to ensure the reliability of their data. This information will not be shared with any of the panelists who review your application.

## **CHOOSE A GRANT CATEGORY**

### **Artists in Education**

The Artists in Education grant is intended to support artist residencies in schools. A residency is an interactive arts activity involving students, teachers, and artists. Residencies should serve as a resource for teachers working to integrate the arts into the curriculum. Residencies provide young people with a direct arts experience with artists, as well as encourage the artist's professional development by providing a unique employment experience and audience contact. Residencies must be based upon a well-defined project and at least one full day or up to five full school days in length, and **culminate in a capstone event that is accessible and open to the public.**

- Artists in Education applications of no less than \$200 and no more than \$2,000 will be considered for funding.
- Artists in Education is an in-kind only matching grant; meaning no cash match is required. However, in-kind donations or support must be worth at least 50 percent of the total.
- Recipients of Artists in Education grants are eligible to reapply annually.
- The deadline for receipt of applications is June 15.

### **Arts Management Training**

SEMAC offers Arts Management Training Grants to help regional nonprofit arts groups send key staff, board and volunteers to management education workshops, seminars or conferences. Examples of management training topics include fundraising, audience development, financial management, organizational development, marketing, and volunteer management.

- Arts Management Training Grants are for a maximum of \$300 per event, per person, and for a fiscal year maximum of \$600 per organization.
- Funds for Arts Management Training are not always available; check with SEMAC.
- No match is required for Arts Management Training.
- The deadline for receipt of applications is thirty days prior to the training start date.

### **General Operating Support**

SEMAC will provide operating support of up to \$4,000 to qualifying arts organizations in the eleven counties of the region. The purpose of these grants is to strengthen and stabilize organizations.

- Applications for General Operating Support of no less than \$200 and no more than \$4,000 will be considered for funding.
- These grants do not require matching funds.
- Recipients of operating support grants are eligible to reapply annually.
- The deadline for receipt of General Operating Support applications is February 1.

### **Opportunity**

Opportunity grants provide assistance to artists, non-profit organizations, and schools or educational institutions for “sudden” projects. These grants are intended to enable artists, organizations, and schools to take advantage of opportunities that arise with little advance notice.

- Opportunity Grants of up to \$250 will be considered for funding.
- Opportunity Grants do not require matching funds.
- Recipients of Opportunity Grants are eligible to apply twice in a given fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) if funds are available.
- The deadline for receipt of Opportunity Grants applications is thirty days prior to the intended start date.

### **Original Works**

SEMAC will provide Original Works Grants to encourage the development of entirely original work by both Emerging Artists and Established Artists from the region. Such works could include original literary or dramatic scripts, musical compositions, choreographies, visual arts creations, and interdisciplinary works. **The original work must be earmarked for a public showcasing, via publication, performance, or exhibition, in conjunction with a non-profit arts organization located within the region.**

- Original Works grants of no less than \$200 and no more than \$2,000 will be considered for funding in the Emerging Artist, and no more than \$3,000 in the Established Artist category.
- No matching funds are required for Original Works grants.
- Recipients of Original Works grants are not eligible to apply for funds over the next two consecutive deadlines, i.e., application may only be made as often as every three years.
- The deadline for receipt of Original Works applications is February 1.

### **Presenter/Production Assistance**

*Presenter Assistance* grants are intended to help local arts organizations in Southeastern Minnesota sponsor appearances by touring artists or companies which have demonstrated a high level of artistic quality. These grants are not intended for local productions or artists’ school residencies.

*Production Assistance* grants support activities directly involved in the creation, performance, publication, and exhibition of art. The two distinct subcategories within Production Assistance grants are: 1) Arts Production Projects, and 2) Administrative Support Projects.

- Presenter/Production Assistance grants of no less than \$200 and no more than \$3,000 will be considered for funding.
- Both types are matching grants. The applicant must provide a one-to-one cash match for the proposed project. The support provided by the applicant (the match) may include in-kind donations, but also must also include cash income equal to at least 50 percent of the amount requested from SEMAC.
- Recipients of Presenter/Production Assistance grants are eligible to reapply annually.
- Deadlines for receipt of Presenter/Production Assistance applications are April 1 and October 1.

### **Program/Administrative Consultancies**

The Program/Administrative Consultancies program offers professional consultants for board retreats, fundraising, working with volunteers, or budgeting. Non-profit arts organizations that

have been in existence for at least three years and program year-round may apply, unless they have received General Operating Support from the MSAB or the McKnight Foundation. These grants are not competitive, but rather handled by staff and a Board committee.

- Funds for Consultancy grants are not always available; check with SEMAC.
- Consultancy grant proposals of no less than \$200 and no more than \$3000 will be considered for funding.
- These are in-kind only matching grants; meaning no cash match is required. However, in-kind donations or support must be worth at least 50 percent of the total.
- Recipients of Consultancy grants are eligible to reapply annually.
- Deadline for receipt of Consultancy applications is thirty days prior to intended start date.

### **Small Towns/Rural Areas**

SEMAC wishes to support and encourage the creation and development of art and arts organizations in communities with populations under 7500. This support may be used for assistance in activities which directly involve the creation and performance, publication, or exhibition of art or assistance in administrative, operating, or capital expenditures.

- Small Towns/Rural Areas grants of no less than \$200 and no more than \$3,000 will be considered for funding.
- Small Towns/Rural Areas grants are matching grants. The applicant must provide a one-to-one cash match for the proposed project. The support provided by the applicant (the match) may include in-kind donations, but also must also include cash income equal to at least 50 percent of the amount requested from SEMAC.
- Recipients of Small Towns/Rural Areas grants are eligible to reapply annually.
- Deadlines for receipt of Small Towns/Rural Areas applications are April 1 and October 1.

### **HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDS**

Complete the selected application and mail or hand-deliver on or before the due date to:

Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council  
1610 14th Street NW Suite 206  
Rochester MN 55901-7683

- Applications must be postmarked by midnight on the deadline date.
- Applications will not be accepted by fax or email.
- Keep a copy of your entire application for your files.
- Original, single-sided applications should be clipped together in the upper left corner. No binders, covers, folders, staples, etc. will be accepted.
- Up to 8 pieces of support material may also be included (see application).

#### **HELPFUL HINTS**

- ★ Plan ahead! It takes time to plan and write a good application.
- ★ Visit the SEMAC office to review past applications. Learn from the success of others.
- ★ Get a friend who is not involved with the project to read your application. It helps to have a fresh set of eyes check your work.

### **Application Assistance**

Applicants may submit a typewritten draft of their application to the SEMAC staff at least one month before the deadline. Staff assistance, however, does not guarantee funding. To obtain assistance in applying contact the SEMAC staff.