
2023 GUIDELINES CITY'S INITIATIVE

ABOUT HOUSTON ARTS ALLIANCE

Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) is a local arts and culture organization whose principal work is to implement the City of Houston's vision, values, and goals for its arts grantmaking and civic art investments. HAA's work is conducted through contracts with the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs.



HAA also executes privately funded special projects to meet the needs of the arts community, such as disaster preparation, research on the state of the arts in Houston, and temporary public art projects that vitalize neighborhoods.

ABOUT CITY'S INITIATIVE GRANT PROGRAM

Use this guide as a resource to assist with your application to the **City's Initiative grant program**. It contains all the information prospective applicants need to apply.

The City of Houston provides all funds for this program. The specific source of funds is the [Hotel Occupancy Tax](#). It is important to note that legal, contractual requirements state the City's Initiative grant program must be administered separately from other HOT-funded grants overseen by HAA.

Funds dedicated for the City's Initiative grant program cannot be diverted in any way to other grant programs, including SACI (Support for Artists and Creative Individuals), Festival, Support for Organizations, and Let Creativity Happen.

Funding for the City's Initiative grant program will support arts and cultural programming that is accessible to the Houston community and its visitors.

Spanish language assistance is available upon request, and HAA grants staff are available to provide technical assistance to people with disabilities. If you have any questions or need assistance, please email through the [Support Desk](#) or call Monday–Friday, 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m. CDT, 713-527-9330.

Asistencia en español está disponible a petición. El equipo de subvenciones está disponible de proveer asistencia técnica a personas con discapacidades. Si tiene alguna pregunta o necesita ayuda, envíe un correo electrónico a [Support Desk](#) o llame de lunes–viernes, 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m. CDT, 713-527-9330.

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I Would Like More Assistance/ Quisiera Más Asistencia

HAA provides full application support via informational workshops, scheduled meetings, phone calls, and email when requests or questions are submitted.

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- Workshops include instructions for applying and information on writing a competitive application. [Workshop schedules and registration information are on the HAA website.](#)
- To request a meeting or ask questions, email the Grants Team through the [Support Desk](#) or call 713-527-9330, ext. 450. [Support Desk](#) messages are monitored by several staff to ensure a quicker and more thorough response, and each inquiry receives a response within three business days.
- **On deadline dates, the HAA Grants Team is only available for technical assistance with online application technology due to the volume of calls, [Support Desk](#) inquiries, and emails.**

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Program Overview

The City's Initiative grant program provides funding to individual artists, creatives, and nonprofits for strategic and creative opportunities to engage visitors and residents while building upon Houston's cultural identity and tourism. **Proposed activities should not be a part of the applicant's regular programming or annual schedule of activities or events.**

Houston is a true international city, linked by both commerce and culture to countless places around the world. Its growing populations show that Houston is now the single most ethnically diverse major metropolitan area in the entire country. One in four residents is foreign-born, contributing to an ever-changing culture that spurs creative innovation. It is one of the best places in the world for arts, and its creative community represents **a strategic opportunity for Houston's civic identity and tourism.**

Grant expenses are restricted to project related costs, which include artist fees, and marketing costs. Typical awards are between \$5,000 and \$10,000. A preliminary meeting with grants staff is encouraged to discuss the details of your proposed project and ensure a successful submission at least two weeks prior to the application deadline (listed in a section below). [Schedule a meeting at this link](#). **Any request exceeding \$10,000 requires a preliminary meeting by September 22nd, 2023.**

Application Deadlines

This application has multiple deadlines each year.

In fairness to all applicants, we cannot accept late or incomplete applications. If the applicant does not provide the complete set of information in the appropriate format by the deadline, the application may be deemed incomplete and ineligible. No deadline extensions will be granted. Once applications are submitted, they cannot be revised in any way.

- **Round 1: April 1, 2023 – April 30, 2023, at 11:59 PM CDT** - Application submissions for this deadline should only include arts and cultural activities taking place after July 31, 2023.
- **Round 2: June 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023, at 11:59 PM CDT** - Application submissions for this deadline should only include projects taking place after September 30, 2023.
- **Round 3: September 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023, at 11:59 PM CDT** - Application submissions for this deadline should only include projects taking place after December 31, 2023.

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Funding Areas

1. **Art + Disaster Resilience Awareness:** Your proposed project should center on heightening awareness and preparedness concerning environmental risks such as the climate crisis, flooding, food deserts, hurricanes, tropical storms, environmental justice, electricity disruption, and related subjects, using your chosen artistic medium. We encourage you to consult [Resilient Houston \(Chapter 2\) and the Climate Action Plan](#) to better understand and align the proposed project with the city's goals in utilizing arts and culture to increase risk awareness and readiness. These documents highlight the city's commitment to collaborate with artists and creative professionals in educating and engaging the public in flood and climate risk education, mitigation, and adaptation strategies within Greater Houston. And that information should guide proposals for funding. Your project should create public engagement events or opportunities that are focused on preparedness, mitigation behaviors, adaptive capacity, and post-disaster lessons. Successful projects will find ways to assist people in preparing for possible disasters, dealing with environmental justice problems, improving their ability to handle such challenges, or learning what steps to take after a disaster occurs.

Example Project: Houston Climate Justice Museum, *“Climate Migration: Displacement, Travel, Home”*, 2022 Round 2 City’s Initiative Grantee

“This is a series of art installations, expert panels, and public engagements that aim to deepen understandings and experiences of climate migration in Houston. As the climate crisis worsens and accelerates, researchers expect unprecedented migration of humans and non-humans from de-stabilized environments to more resilient places. There is currently no legal designation for refugees displaced due to climate change. The Museum seeks to broaden understandings of this emerging phenomenon through engaging multiple sites -The Museum, Rice University Solar Studios, CHAT, and Baker Ripley -to ensure a diverse and varied audience including students, migrants, long-time Houston residents, families, citizen-scientists, and activists.”

2. **Art + Neighborhood Cultural Destinations:** Projects must have a primary goal to engage residents of a specific neighborhood or community. Proposed projects should incorporate at least one arts and culture event taking place in the selected neighborhood. This event should actively involve and celebrate the community and residents of that area, highlighting their distinctiveness, history, or contributions to the Greater Houston landscape. Successful projects will strive to aid community growth by using arts to bring people together, foster stronger connections, and celebrate the areas where we reside, labor, and innovate.

Example Project: José Hernández López, *“East End Echoes: Houston’s Latinx Immigration Through Sound”*, 2023 Round 1 City’s Initiative Grantee

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“The East End Echoes project will immerse listeners in the rich history and humanity of the Latinx community in Houston’s East End through a GPS-enabled soundwalk experience. By weaving together interviews with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation Latinx immigrants, live music performed by local musicians, and sound design, the project empowers East End residents to be the primary voices in sharing their stories, culture, and experiences with the wider community.”

3. **Art + Conference Tourism:** Your proposal should entail collaborating with a planned conference or hosting a conference to offer conference attendees, locals, and visitors an activity showcasing Houston artists or cultural attractions. The objective is to broaden the artistic dimensions of the conference's programming.

Example Project: Christy Poisot, “2024 Filipino American National Historical Society Conference”, 2023 Round 1 City’s Initiative Grantee

“The Filipino American National Historical Society Conference is held every two years and Houston has been chosen for 2024! As chair of the conference, author of the Filipinos in Houston book, I want to showcase Houston by lining up educational lectures, performances, a museum exhibit of local Filipinx artists, and food. 40+ chapters from all over the United States will converge onto the city to share their stories with Houstonians.”

Successful Projects Will Include the Following Elements

- Community Engagement – The project should include working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity or special interests.
- Measurable (tourism/neighborhood) Impact – The project should attract and be marketed to audiences from outside of the City of Houston either physically or digitally.
- Great Social Media Presence – The project should include a comprehensive marketing plan with a clear social media element.
- Documented Support of Local Artists and Creatives – A budget that reflects payments to Houston-based artists and creatives.
- Clear Alignment with One Of The Three Funding Areas – The project scope should fit well within one of the three funding areas listed above.

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Where to Apply

Applications must be submitted online through the [HAA Online Grants Portal](#).

Who Can Apply

Eligibility

- All applicants must provide official documentation demonstrating a physical address within the City of Houston limits which is verified by HAA staff through the [online Council Member verify mapping tool](#). P.O. Boxes are not accepted. Details about documentation can be found in the required documentation section on page 9 of this document.
- Organizations or fiscal sponsors must be tax-exempt under the Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), with fiscal year ending 2021 filed with the IRS (990/990N), as verified by the [IRS Tax Exemption Organization Search](#).
- An individual applicant must be at least 18 years old, which will be verified by the applicant's submission of an official state-issued identification card, passport, or other official document.
- Applicants' scopes of work must have a clear public presentation component, verified by staff review of the application.
- Applicants may only submit one application per grant program, per deadline, per year. Duplicate projects submitted across grant programs will be deemed ineligible.
- Applicants may only apply to one grant program per project.
- Applicants may not receive more than one City's Initiative grant in a calendar year.

For Fiscal Sponsorships

All fiscal sponsors and their projects must adhere to the following requirements in addition to meeting the eligibility requirements above. (Individuals are not required to have fiscal sponsorship for this grant program.)

- The individual applicant or collective who has fiscal sponsorship must also demonstrate residency within the City of Houston limits.
- The Sponsor's Board of Directors must adhere to the highest standards of legal and fiduciary responsibility regarding its policy-making and governance of the organization.
- The Sponsor's Board must pass a resolution approving the fiscal sponsorship arrangement, as expressed in the written agreement, with the Project.
- The Sponsor must have a conflict of interest policy in place that contemplates conflicts with

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sponsored Projects and their leadership and provides clear direction for vetting potential conflicts and otherwise implementing the policy.

- The Sponsor must maintain sufficient financial resources to assure continuous, uninterrupted operation and employ procedures and internal controls based on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and all regulations.
- The Sponsor must evaluate the capability, potential, experience, and integrity of Project leaders to assure a constructive, mutually respected working relationship between the Sponsor and the Project.
- The Sponsor may only charge Projects reasonable fees commensurate with the services it will provide. Further:
 - If the Sponsor is re-granting funds to the Project and not providing additional services, the overhead fee may not exceed 7% of the City grant if awarded.
 - If the Sponsor is re-granting funds to the Project and providing additional services, such as accounting or administration, the overhead fee may not exceed 15% of the City grant if awarded.

Highly Recommended:

- It is recommended that the sponsor have a conflict-of-interest policy in place that contemplates conflicts with sponsored programs and their leadership and provides clear direction for vetting potential conflicts and otherwise implementing the policy.
- It is recommended that the sponsor maintain sufficient financial resources to assure continuous, uninterrupted operation and employ procedures and internal controls based on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and all regulations.
- It is recommended that the sponsor evaluate the capability, potential, experience, and integrity of program leaders to assure a constructive, mutually respected working relationship between the sponsor and the proposed work.

For Fiscally Sponsored Projects

The “project” is an individual, collective, etc., that does not have the federal IRS tax-exempt status required to apply for organization grants and has entered into a fiscal sponsorship agreement with a 501(c)(3) organization to be eligible.

- The project will register as an organization in the HAA Grants Portal.
- The project contact who has fiscal sponsorship must also demonstrate residency within the City of Houston limits.

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- The project, once registered in the HAA Grants Portal and has started a new application, will need to attach their Sponsor with the application. When the application is in draft and edit mode, select “Associated Organizations” in the menu on the left side of the screen. Search for the Sponsor organization in the search bar, then select the role as Fiscal Sponsor. Click Save Draft.
- The project must also submit a project budget in the budget table for its grant application.

Public Presentation

During the grant cycle, one in-person event or one online, virtual presentation is required. The event must be open to the general public, benefiting a City of Houston audience.

The applicant must identify the publicly accessible in-person space or virtual platform in their application.

Public presentations may be ticketed, but they cannot exclude the public or limit who may be a member of the audience. If the event has limited capacity, everyone must have equal access or opportunity to attend on a first come, first serve basis. Examples of the types of events these grants support include art exhibitions, film screenings, music, dance, and theater performances, online arts programming, literary readings and publications, local arts festivals, and other activities.

A nonprofit organization whose primary mission is not the public presentation or exhibition of art and culture should focus their grant application on the public facing arts programs they are proposing. It may be helpful to provide context on how the arts programming fits into the primary programming of the organization.

Nonprofit organizations or applicants whose primary programming takes place in K-12 schools must have a public facing arts program open to the general public. Public programming can be geared toward youth audiences but must be accessible to everyone.

The applicant will be solely responsible for securing the necessary permits, permissions, insurance, and approvals for any proposal that requires City permits or clearances, including, but not limited to, publicly installed art, street closures, sound amplification in public space, or murals.

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What May Not Be Funded

City grant funds may **not** support the following:

- Any activities taking place outside of the City of Houston limits, including any activities taking place in extrajudicial territories (e.g., Katy, Stafford, Bellaire, Pearland).
- Activities must take place within the respective grant term. Grants cannot be applied to programs outside of the grant term.
- Any activities funded by Miller Outdoor Theatre, which is also supported by the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT), as applicants may not duplicate funding support from HOT for the same program.
- City of Houston employees, elected officials, Mayor’s Office staff, and their immediate family.
- Houston Arts Alliance employees, Board members, and their immediate family.
- Grants to K–12 public, private, or charter schools.
- Events with exclusive audiences that do not allow participation of the general public, including visitors.
- Competitions, award ceremonies, scholarships, cash prizes, fundraising activities and events, sports and recreation activities, or parties and private celebrations.
- Trade fairs, events of primarily commercial nature, or consumer shows. For-profit entities may not apply directly. For-profit applicants may apply through fiscal sponsorship with a 501(c)(3) organization. The fiscal sponsor must identify a clear charitable purpose and public benefit with the proposed programming.
- Faith-based organizations using funds for any activities that have a primarily religious purpose or any activities that exist as part of religious sermons or services.
- Any activities receiving funds from other HAA grant programs, including collaborators applying to work on different components of the same project.
- Organizations and/or individual applicants collaborating on the same program or project cannot separately apply for support to fund this collaborative program. This includes:
 - Multiple submissions from different applicants for the same program.
 - Multiple submissions to the same grant program from the same organization or individual applicant.
- Organizations and/or individual applicants cannot use the same submission to apply to the same or differing grant programs.

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- Specific expenses not permitted include:
 - Travel outside of the City of Houston.
 - Deficits, loans, interest on loans, fines, penalties, or cost of litigation.
 - Training, including, but not limited to, classes, conferences, or workshops.
 - Purchase of equipment exceeding \$250, except rental costs directly affiliated with the funded project.
 - Capital expenses.
 - Meals, refreshments, and catering expenses.

Required Documents

The following documents are required of applicants. Both SACI and fiscally sponsored programs have one additional document, outlined below.

1. Proof of age: An individual applicant must be at least 18 years old, which will be verified by applicant submission of an official state-issued identification card, passport, or other official document. Acceptable documents include:

<u>Individuals:</u>	Requirement: Individual applicants must provide proof of age. Applicants must be 18 years or older to apply.
Proof of Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A photo ID such as a Texas driver license or Texas identification card, unexpired or expired within the last two years. ● Valid, unexpired U.S. passport book or U.S. passport card. ● U.S. Certificate of Citizenship or Certificate of Naturalization with identifiable photo (N-550, N-560, N-561, N-570, N-578) ● Unexpired U.S. military identification card for active duty, reserve, or retired personnel w/ identifiable photo.

2. Proof of headquarters or residence in the City of Houston: Applicants will submit paperwork demonstrating a physical address in the City of Houston limits, which is verified by staff through the [online Council Member mapping tool](#). P.O. Boxes are not accepted, as they do not establish residency or headquarters within the City of Houston limits. P.O. Boxes are allowed to be obtained by any individual inside or outside the City of Houston limits. All applicants must upload a current image of official documentation, such as utility or insurance, that includes a visible City of Houston address with the applicant or organization name.

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<p><u>Organizations</u></p> <p>Proof of Headquarters</p>	<p>Requirement: Organization applicants must provide proof of headquarters within the City of Houston limits with current calendar year documentation addressed to the organization by name. Acceptable documents include:</p> <p>Verification Tool: Who Is My Council Member</p> <p>Maps: 2020 to 2024 Council District Maps (houstontx.gov)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current deed, mortgage, or a residential rental/lease • Current insurance policy or statement • Current Bank Statement • Utility bill or residential mail dated within 2023 calendar year. Examples include electric, water, gas, Internet, cable, telephone bills. • Mail, dated within 2023 calendar year, from a government entity addressed to the organization.
<p><u>Fiscal Sponsors:</u></p> <p>Proof of Headquarters</p>	<p>Requirement: Fiscal sponsors must provide proof of headquarters within the City of Houston limits. The sponsored applicant (individual or collective) must provide current proof of residency within the City of Houston limits. Acceptable documents include:</p> <p>Verification Tool: Who Is My Council Member</p> <p>Maps: 2020 to 2024 Council District Maps (houstontx.gov)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current deed, mortgage, or a commercial rental/lease. • Current insurance policy or statement. • Current Bank Statement. • Utility bill or residential mail dated within 2023 calendar year. Examples include electric, water, gas, Internet, cable, telephone bills. • Mail, dated within 2023 calendar year, from a government entity addressed to the fiscal sponsor.

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Individuals:**Proof of
Residency**

Requirement: Individual artists and creatives must provide current calendar year proof of residency within the City of Houston limits. Acceptable documents include:

Verification Tool: [Who Is My Council Member](#)

Maps: [2020 to 2024 Council District Maps \(houstontx.gov\)](#)

- Unexpired Texas driver license or Texas identification card
- U.S. Certificate of Citizenship or Certificate of Naturalization with identifiable photo (N-550, N-560, N-561, N-570, N-578).
- Unexpired U.S. military identification card for active duty, reserve, or retired personnel w/ identifiable photo.
- Current deed, mortgage, or a residential rental/lease.
- Current insurance policy or statement.
- Current Bank Statement.
- Utility bill or residential mail dated within 2023 calendar year. Examples include electric, water, gas, Internet, cable, telephone bills.
- Mail, dated within 2023 calendar year, from a government entity addressed to the individual.

3. **Work Samples:** Applicants must upload documentation of their work meant to demonstrate consistent and confident proficiency in the proposed project or applicant’s body of work. Applicants may include five individual image or audio files and five PDFs, not to exceed a file size of 100MB each. Applicants are encouraged to include text descriptions to help panelists understand work samples.

Work Sample Submission Guidelines:

- a. **PDFs:** Submit images; links for audio or video samples with any passwords; fiction or nonfiction manuscripts; other literary samples; and articles, reviews, and sample publications, such as PDF documents not exceeding 10 pages.
 - b. **Images:** Submit images as .jpg or .png files.
 - c. **Audio or video samples:** Submit files as .mp3, .mp4, or .mov files.
4. **W-9 and ACH forms** are for contracts and payment processing if the applicant becomes a grant recipient.
5. **Fiscally sponsored applicants only:** All fiscally sponsored applicants must upload a copy of the fiscal sponsorship agreement.

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Application Questions

Artistic Programming

Detailed Project Proposal (35 points)

The proposed work goals, vision and process are clearly defined; demonstrate clarity and depth of concepts; and are relevant to the scope of the specific grant category. The proposed work has distinct outputs that engage the general public.

Application Questions:

- Describe the work you are proposing: Will the work take place on a single site or across multiple sites? How would you describe the community(ies) where your work will take place? Please describe how arts and culture will be used in the chosen funding area. What does success look like for this work? What is your goal for this work? What do you hope to learn? How is art being used in this work? Identify the artists that will work on the work and their connection to the project's focus.
300 words max.

Resiliency, Neighborhood, Conference

Is this work focused on a specific neighborhood, conference, or resiliency category?

- Please name and describe the neighborhood, conference, or resiliency category.
100 words max.

Event Locations + Activity Description + Date

Table with up to 10 location entries.

- Event Description.
- Event Address.
- Event Date.

Public Benefit

Community Engagement (30 points)

The proposed work is responsive to the community and successfully engages audiences, and applicant is able to demonstrate the impact and benefits of the project.

Application Questions:

- How will you engage the local community and visitors? Will they be engaged in the planning process, if so, how? Will they play a role in the design? Why is this content relevant to them? What would attract them to the work? What will they experience? What artists or creatives will participate? How will artists contribute to the work? How will participating artists be compensated? What are the shared interests or challenges that exist within the

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community(ies) the applicant will address? Does the applicant have a history of executing culturally specific arts and cultural events and/or activities?

250 words max

Promotion (20 points)

The proposed work uses arts, culture and a marketing strategy as vehicles for neighborhood and destination tourism to the City of Houston, applicant is able to demonstrate the impact and benefits of the work, including qualitative and quantitative results.

Application Question:

- How will you promote this work? What is your online marketing strategy? How will this highlight Houston as an arts and cultural tourist destination? How can residents and visitors find out about the event? What is your timeline for promoting the event(s) or activities? Please describe your social media strategy, include specifics such as platform, hashtags, designated accounts or handles? What promotional efforts will be used to attract community participation and engagement?

200 words max.

Stewardship of Public Resources

Budget Table and Timeline (10 points)

The proposed work demonstrates alignment with the project's goals, is viable and appropriate, and reflects payments to Houston-based artists and creatives.

Using the Budget Table, provide a detailed full-cost budget for the proposed arts and cultural programming.

How to Use the Budget Table

Use the income and expenses table to report the full-cost of your proposed arts and cultural programming.

Income Section: In this section, you will add all your funding sources including the amount you are requesting in your grant application. In Row 1, "Contributed - City of Houston", list your request under the "Amount of Request" column. In Rows 2-9, you will list other funding sources under the "Other Funds" column. The columns will automatically calculate the sum which will appear in the row labeled "Total".

Expenses Section: In this section, you will list all of your expenses for the program. In the "Amount of Request" column, you should only list the expenses that will be covered by the HAA grant. Be sure to review the What May Not be Funded Section of the grant guidelines to ensure only eligible expenses are listed under this column. In the "Other Funds" column you should list all the expenses that will be covered by other funding sources. The columns will automatically calculate the sum which will appear in the row labeled "Total".

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Description Column: Use the description text box in each row to provide additional details about the income or expense line item.

Income

Source	Description	Amount of Request	Other Funds
Contributed – City of Houston	HAA Grant	\$10,000	
Contributed - Foundations	Houston Endowment		\$500
Contributed - Corporations	Texas Commission on the Arts		\$500
Contributed - In-kind donations	Donations		\$1,000
Contributed - Government			
Contributed - Other			
Earned - Admission			
Earned - Classes/Workshops			
Earned - Other			
TOTAL		\$10,000	\$2,000

Expenses

Source	Description	Amount of Request	Other Funds
Marketing Expenses	How to Market an Event	\$2,000	
Artistic Personnel	Artist Fees	\$5,000	
Administrative Personnel	Admin Salaries	\$3,000	
Technical Personnel	Technical Personnel		\$1,000
Production Expenses	Production Expenses		\$1,000
Other Expenses			
Other Expenses			
Other Expenses			
Other Expenses			
TOTAL		\$10,000	\$2,000

Overall Proposed Project Timeline

Please complete a detailed project budget table with how you intend to use the funds and a project timeline detailing your steps to launch your project.
100 words max.

Artist Fees (5 points)

The applicant has demonstrated payment to artists through the budget table within the application.
[Yes/No]

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Review Process

Applications received by Houston Arts Alliance undergo a multi-step review process, as follows.

HAA Staff

Applications are reviewed by HAA grants staff to verify eligibility, application completeness, public presentation requirements, and scores of objective criteria through the process detailed below.

Completeness

All required documents and application fields must be completed to be considered for funding. Any applications with missing or incorrect documentation will be notified for rectification. Staff will notify those applicants with missing/incorrect documentation via email. The email notification will provide applicants with the opportunity to cure the missing or incorrect documentation within four business days from the date of notification. Applicants may only be prompted to cure the following:

- Illegible or unacceptable proof of age documentation.
- Illegible or unacceptable proof of residency documentation.
- Financial assessment documentation.
 - Missing financial statements (audits or CFO letters).

Applications will not be reopened to correct narratives, work samples, responses to questions, or budget tables. No information will be accepted after the curing deadline as indicated in the notification email. Those who fail to submit correct documentation within the allotted time frame will be ineligible and will not be considered for funding. Any concerns regarding eligibility determination must be resolved following the grants appeals guidelines, which may be requested at any time through the [Support Desk](#) or call 713-527-9330, ext. 450.

Peer Panel

HAA uses the competitive peer review process to score and rank eligible grant applications—a longtime, national practice of engaging community representatives with arts expertise to make critical decisions about public funding competitions. The panel's ranked scores are then combined with the objective measures in the application to determine the final ranking on a 100-point scale. A description of each 100-point scale can be found within this document. This process removes the HAA staff and Board from the evaluation of grant applications, except for the objective scoring sections outlined above. Panels include individuals with a diversity of skills, self-identity, art forms, expertise, and experience, ensuring they are able to properly assess merit in each of the applications requesting City arts funding. HAA invites anyone with arts experience to be part of the panelist database through [the online application form](#). For demographic data about the panelists that HAA uses, please refer to this [dashboard](https://www.houstonartsalliance.com/get-a-grant) <https://www.houstonartsalliance.com/get-a-grant>.

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HAA Committee and Board

Peer panel recommendations are forwarded to Houston Arts Alliance's Grants Committee, which reviews and votes to ensure the panel process was followed with integrity. The Grants Committee then sends its approval to the HAA Board of Directors for its approval. The Committee and Board do not alter the recommendations from the panel's adjudication.

City of Houston

Once the HAA Board has approved, recommendations are forwarded to the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs for final approval by the Mayor. Recommendations are not final until the City of Houston approval process is complete.

Award Determination

The HAA staff takes the panel recommendations and assesses the grants budget to determine the number of grants that may be funded.

After Decisions Are Made

Grant Awards

HAA will email final decisions to applicants. These award notification emails will include instructions about receiving panel feedback and, if the grant was awarded, details on completing contracts, payment schedules, and more. The City of Houston will publicly announce the grant recipients, and Houston Arts Alliance will echo this announcement via its own social media channels and newsletter. The grant term is one year from award notification.

Share Your Success: We highly encourage you to share the press release from the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs announcing grant recipients. Make sure to tag MOCA and HAA in your posts using the hashtags: #HoustonArtsAlliance #HoustonMOCA #HOUcitygrants

Panel Feedback

Panelists' evaluative comments are available to applicants upon request. We strongly recommend applicants request the available panelist feedback in the pursuit of preparing for future applications. Use the [Support Desk](#) to request these comments. Please note that comments will be available 10 weeks after award notifications, as they are formatted for clarity while HAA staff balances other grants activities.

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Final Reporting

Final Reports can be submitted anytime, upon completion of your public presentation. All Final Reports are due to Houston Arts Alliance within 30 days of the end of the specific grant program's term. Visit the [Final Report webpage](https://www.houstonartsalliance.com/final-report) <https://www.houstonartsalliance.com/final-report> for more details.

Required Public Acknowledgment

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support of the City of Houston and Houston Arts Alliance to demonstrate how City funds support arts and culture. Recipients receiving funds must use the required logos and credit line on all printed and electronic materials that advertise performances, exhibitions, or other public events throughout their work or, for those receiving operating support, throughout the grant period. The credit line and links to logos are listed below:

- “This work [event, organization, or individual name] is funded in part by the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance.”
- Required [logos are available](#) for download. <https://files.haatx.com/grants/2020-haa-logoset.zip>

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