

Make Art Grant

Summary

Make Art Grant (MAG) provides grants of up to \$3,000 for artists to create or continue specific artwork in any discipline. Projects must have specific goals, though completion and public showing of the art is not required. Projects must be artist instigated and organized, outside of institutional support and structures. Open to projects of all arts disciplines, from artists of all levels, funds can be used to support experimentation, materials, space rental, paying collaborators, documentation and artist stipends.

- **Award Amount:** \$500 to \$3,000.
- **Who can apply:** Artists that live in Rhode Island.
- **What can be funded:** creation of art, with specific project goals.

Deadlines and Funding Periods

The deadline to apply for the Make Art Grant is 11:59 p.m. on:

- **April 1.** This deadline supports projects occurring between July 1 and December 31. For applicants applying at the April 1 deadline, award notification might not occur until after July 1, as we are prohibited from making award announcements until one week after the state budget for the fiscal year (which starts July 1) is enacted.
- **October 1.** This deadline supports projects occurring between January 1 and June 30.

If a deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will be 11:59 p.m. on the next business day. Late or incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Note that the application portal closes at 11:59 p.m., so you must hit submit before that time for your application to be considered.

Definition of Project and Example Projects

RISCA defines a project as a discrete set of connected activities with a defined beginning and an end. Projects may be single pieces, like one painting or installation or poem, or a defined series of works such as a series of drawings or songs. Projects with multiple components must show that there is a cohesive theme connecting the components together.

This grant is focused on enabling artists, working on their own or in collaboration, to create work. The proposal must have specific goals for what will happen during the funding period, but completion of work and/or public showings are not required.

- **Example One:** Name Namerson, Nombre Namington, and Nome Naminator will work toward creation of a new, site-specific performance piece. The three artists will spend time together developing work and experimenting using Viewpoints, a technique that uses improvisation and observation within time and space for ensembles to create work together. The artists will work around a theme of climate change and flooding, with the long-term plan being to perform this piece at Salty Brine State Beach in Rhode Island. During this period of creation, the three artists will create a framework for the performance and an outline of the script.
- **Example Two:** Name Namerson will complete the final three pieces in their series of abstract sculptures. The series is themed around mental health in artist communities, and there are currently seven completed mixed media sculptures. This grant will allow Name to create larger, more intricate pieces, and experiment with incorporating steel into the pieces.
- **Example Three:** Rooted in the history of storytelling, Name Namerson will create an hour-long performance based around their immigration to the United States with their parents at 12-years-old. This engaging oral history will be created with youth ages 8 and up in mind, though will be appropriate for all ages.

Eligibility

To be eligible, you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Not currently be in an arts degree seeking program or attending high school full time.
- Have been domiciled in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means your home in Rhode Island is your primary residence, and is the address you use for legal forms, state income taxes, car registration,

driver's license or state issued identification, and voter registration regardless of whether you own or rent your home.

- Be a legal resident of the United States with a tax identification number (either Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification (ITIN) number). This includes refugees, immigrants and temporary residents. This does not include people in the country on a tourist visa.
- Not be a staff member or council member of RISCA, or an immediate family member of a staff or council member.
- Be a practicing artist. RISCA defines practicing artist as: A person that intentionally creates or practices art in any discipline that:
 - Has sought learning or training in the artistic field from any source, not necessarily in formal academic institutions.
 - Is committed to devoting significant time to artistic activity, as is possible financially.
 - Is or is working toward earning some portion of their income from their art.
 - Disciplines include, but are not limited to musician, painter, poet, choreographer, teaching artist, ceramicist, storyteller, performer, playwright, sculptor, photographer, wampum artist, printmaker, animator, cartoonist, textile and fashion designer and filmmaker.

Other rules/things to know

- The maximum grant award in this category is \$3,000. You can apply for any amount between \$500 and \$3,000. We strongly encourage you to apply for the least amount of funding you need to do this project. Money is limited, and we want to be able to support as many artists as possible.
- No partial grants will be awarded, meaning you will either receive the full amount you apply for or no funding.
- Only one application per grant deadline per grant program. An individual may only submit one application per grant deadline to the Make Art Grant program. You may only receive one Make Art Grant per fiscal year, and if you are a current recipient of the General Operating Support for Artists grant you are ineligible to apply.
- If you receive a grant, you must credit RISCA on all marketing materials. Grants awarded by RISCA are provided by the Rhode Island State General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, on behalf of the residents of Rhode Island. For that reason, awardees must credit RISCA on all material where funders and supporters are listed and on all printed programs.

- All RISCA grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funds from the Rhode Island State General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts. Sometimes delays in passing the state budget will delay grant award notifications and processing of grant payments – we can't award grants if we don't know for sure we will have funds.
- Grant applications are considered on a competitive basis. Your application may meet all the eligibility criteria and be incredibly meaningful but remember that there are anywhere between 80 and 100 other applications in an application cycle that are also amazing! Because of the many high-quality projects, panels always wish to award more grant awards than they are able with the funds they have. This is one reason applicants who apply for the support for the same project year after year may not always receive a grant award, and that the grant awards may vary cycle to cycle.
- The project must be artist-instigated and implemented. This project cannot be part of a nonprofit or business's operations or projects. This project must be taking place outside of the support and structure of a larger, more formal entity. You can receive in-kind donations from formal entities (like donated rehearsal space or materials), but the project must not be a program of the other entity. The applicant must be the primary force behind the project, though we actively invite groups of artists/collaborators to apply under a lead applicant.
- This project may not receive other funding from RISCA in the same fiscal year. There cannot be another application to support this project or aspects of this project through another RISCA granting program, including General Operating Support for Organizations.
- All RISCA funded project activities must take place within the state of Rhode Island.

Funding Restrictions

If you receive a grant award, it can be used for expenses related to your project and its production or creation, as well as marketing and accessibility efforts. This includes paying any artists or arts administrators involved for their time, including the applicant. You will use the grant for the expenses you planned for in the budget you submitted. We understand that this budget is just a plan, and that you may spend the funds in slightly different ways. This is ok, you just need to inform RISCA staff once your program is complete.

There many things your grant award cannot pay for. Because RISCA grants out money from the National Endowment for the Arts, we are obligated to follow these rules set forth by the NEA.

Expenses that cannot be covered by your grant award

- **Capital projects.** The construction or renovation of buildings or additions to buildings.
- Any **fundraising** expenses such as creating rewards for a Kickstarter or hosting a fundraising event for any purpose.
- **Prizes and awards.** You cannot spend funds on a prize or award for another event/person/organization.
- **Alcohol and some Hospitality Expenses.** Purchase of alcohol with grant funds is strictly prohibited. You may not spend funds on any other food or beverage unless it is integral to the project. Please contact RISCA staff with specific questions. You may not spend grant funds on hospitality, travel, or food and beverage expenses if it was not described in the budget you submitted with your application.
- **Expenses outside of award period.** Your grant award can't be used to cover expenses incurred or activities occurring outside of the award period. For applications submitted at the April 1 deadline, the award period is July 1- December 31 of that year. For applications submitted at the October 1 deadline, the award period is January 1- June 30 of the next year.
- **Regranting funds.** You may not use these grant funds to support grants to other artists or organizations through an application or award process.
- **Undergraduate or graduate school activities.** Activities which are part of a graduate or undergraduate degree program, or for which academic credit is received.
- **Religious activities.** Applications for projects that proselytize or promote religious activities, or which take place as part of a religious service.

Evaluation Criteria

Three review criteria

Artist Impact and Growth (50%)

- This project will positively impact the applicant's artistic practice in clearly identified ways.
- The work samples provided are relevant, cohesive, and speak to the potential of the work to be created.
- Success is clearly defined, with specific goals for the project period.
- This work is a logical and purposeful extension of the artist's existing practice, including both previous work and style and technique.

Feasibility/Likelihood of Success (25%)

- The application clearly states:
 - what will be done.
 - when and where things will take place.
how the applicant will go about organizing, managing, and evaluating the project.
- Budgets are clear, detailed and accurate; the planned allocation of funds supports project goals.
- There is evidence that what is proposed is achievable by the applicant, on their own or in partnership with others. In the absence of experience, information is provided that helps make a convincing case that this project will succeed.

Artistic Vibrancy and Intention (25%)

- Personal voice, vision and authenticity shows in the proposal.
- Applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of and commitment to their craft, both in look and feel and technical skill.
- Application and support materials demonstrate a consistency of actions, values, methods, and goals.

Support Materials

You are required to submit a budget and a timeline, using the provided templates. You must use the templates, and upload as either excel or PDF.

- [Budget template](#)
- [Timeline template](#)

You may submit up to 10 support materials, along with a website if you have one, and an artist bio, resume or cv. All support materials are optional, but strongly recommended. The support materials should help tell the story of your application and be directly related to the project you are proposing.

- **Website:** The website will be submitted as a link and should be to the website of either the lead artist applicant or the project.
- **Bio/Resume/CV:** The artist bio, resume, or cv will need to be submitted as either a word document or PDF. Please submit whichever of the three, or a combination, that you feel best represents you.
- **Support Material List:** A numbered list of the materials you are submitting, with a one to two sentence description. This must be either a word doc or a PDF.
- **Support Materials:** Up to 10 attachments that tell the story of your application and relate to the review criteria. Examples of support materials can include artist

resumes/CVs; images/video/audio of work by applicant and/or participating artists; letters of support from community members, past participants, project partners; marketing collateral for past projects. If you are submitting video or audio, please link to YouTube, Vimeo, SoundCloud in the text box and on the support material list. File formats you can directly upload to the application include, JPG, PDF, Word Doc, Excel. Please keep in mind that the panelists are reviewing up to 30 applications.

Review and Award Process

Panelists

Because RISCA is a state agency granting out taxpayer funds, RISCA staff does not make any funding decisions: panels of your peers do.

A typical review panel is made up of five people reviewing approximately 30 applications. This means in most cycles we have 2 to 3 different panels making grant award decisions for MAG. Of the five panelists:

- At least two panel members will be BIPOC individuals (see definition in glossary).
- At least two will be practicing artists (see definition in glossary).
- One or two panelists will live and work outside of Rhode Island.

RISCA is committed to a peer review process that provides fresh and diverse input from an ever-changing field. In addition, RISCA will consider age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, geography, discipline of arts experience, relationship to arts and culture (e.g., being an artist, arts administrator, or arts enthusiast), and other factors when curating its application review panels. A panelist can serve on a review panel three times over the course of a three years – which encompasses 6 grant cycles. Panelists cannot serve on a panel in the same grant program during the three-year period. This ensures a changing and diverse array of individuals evaluating our grant applications and guarantees that panels are different every grant cycle.

Serving as a grant panelist is a fantastic way to learn about RISCA’s grantmaking process, as well as how to write grants in general. [If you are interested in serving on a grant panel, please fill out this form.](#) We can’t guarantee that we can accommodate your request because of our commitment to panel diversity, but we are always looking for new panelists. Panelists receive a small stipend of \$350 for their time and expertise.

Decision Making Process

- **STEP 1: panelists are recruited, and panels assembled starting prior to the grant deadline.** While this starts prior to the grant deadline, it often continues after the grant deadline once it is clear how many applications have been received, how many are eligible, and how many panels are needed.
- **STEP 2: You submit your application by the grant deadline.** Once the application deadlines pass, no alterations or additions may be made to your application. Applications are reviewed by the grant panel based on the contents of your application only.
- **STEP 3: Applications are screened.** RISCA staff members review each application for completeness and compliance with eligibility and submission requirements. If any issues are detected, the applicant may be contacted or asked to fix their application within a certain number of days.
- **STEP 4: RISCA staff provide orientation and training to panelists.** Panelists don't receive the applications they are to review until they complete a two-part panel training: the first part focuses on implicit bias; the second part focuses on the logistics of being a panelist, including a review of the applications and rubrics.
- **STEP 5: Eligible applications are sent to the panel(s).** If more than one panel is needed, applications are randomly assigned to panels using a group randomizer program.
- **STEP 6: The panel(s) review and score their assigned applications.** Using the evaluation rubric for the program, panelists have typically between 4-6 weeks to review applications and score each application prior to their in-person panel meeting. We estimate that the panelists spend approximately 30 minutes reading and scoring each application.
- **STEP 7: Panel(s) meet for an all-day Panel Review and make funding recommendations.** The panel then meets in person at RISCA offices or via Zoom to discuss each application. Panels typically spend between 10-15 minutes discussing each application. After each discussion, panelists have the option of privately updating their scores. RISCA staff facilitate the discussion, but do not participate in or influence the discussions. We take notes during the panel to share with applicants later. At the end of the day, the panel is shown a spreadsheet that displays the applicants and their total panel scores (meaning the combined total of each panelist's scores on a given application) in descending order. Using their rankings as a guide, panelists make funding recommendations.
- **STEP 8: Panel comments.** Based on the panel's discussion, staff collate and synthesize panelist feedback into panel comments. These panel comments are provided to every applicant, regardless of whether they are funded.

- **STEP 9: RISCA's Governing Council reviews and approves panel recommendations.**
- **STEP 10: Applicants are notified as to whether or not they have received a grant award!** For applicants applying at the April 1st deadline, they will be notified about their grant award status approximately one week after the state budget is signed by the Governor. This is a moving target – in an ideal year, the state budget will pass the legislature and be signed by the Governor in late June, with notifications happening around the first week of July.
- **STEP 11: Awardees will thoroughly read and sign their grant award agreements and register with Ocean State Procures (if necessary).** We cannot process your grant payment until you are an approved vendor of the State of Rhode Island (by registering with Ocean State Procures) with an approved W-9 form and you have signed your grant agreement form. Once those things are completed, applicants can assume it will take anywhere between 4-8 weeks to receive their grant payment. In many cases, grant funds may not be received prior to the start of a project. Applicants should be aware of this possibility and plan their cash flow accordingly.

Accepting the Grant and Processing the Award Payment

Congratulations! First things first, you will want to sign the grant agreement form and register with Ocean State Procures as soon as possible so we can start processing your grant payment. Once completed, your grant payment may take between 6-10 weeks to receive. Read your **Grant Award Email** thoroughly, as it will have instructions on how to register with Oceans State Procures and how to upload your W-9 to the state payment system.

Other things you will need to do:

- **You must acknowledge RISCA support** in a prominent manner in all materials and announcements, both audio and visual, related to the grant program. Grant recipients must also display, in a prominent manner, the RISCA logo in association with that acknowledgment. [Further detail regarding acknowledgment can be found at the acknowledging RISCA page.](#)
- **You must submit a brief final grant report to RISCA via the online grant system.** All grantees are required to submit a brief final report no later than one month following the grant funding period. For grants awarded at the April 1 deadline, this will be January 31; for grants awarded at the October 1 deadline, this will be July 31. You will not be able to apply for another RISCA grant if you have an overdue final report.

- **You must keep records of receipts and expenditures related to the funding.** You should be prepared to make your records available to RISCA if requested by RISCA. All grantees are subject to periodic audit or review by RISCA or the State of Rhode Island and must retain fiscal records for a period of seven (7) years following the grant period.
- **You must notify RISCA of any significant changes in your project.** Any changes must be reported to RISCA within two (2) months of the change.
- **The grant must be used exclusively for the purposes specified in the Grant Agreement.** Any alternative use of funds needs to be cleared by RISCA staff in advance in writing (by email), or the grant funds must be returned.
- **RISCA reserves the right to use any submitted materials for promotional purposes.** This includes any text, photographs, audio, or video submitted as part of funded grant applications for limited non-commercial educational or promotional use in publications or other media produced, used or contracted by RISCA including, but not limited to brochures, invitations, newsletters, postcards, websites, etc.

Ocean State Procures

All grant award recipients need to have an approved vendor profile in the Rhode Island Ocean State Procures (OSP) system. This new online registration system is used by the State of Rhode Island for any vendor of the state, not just those working with or receiving grant awards from RISCA. [Use the Vendor Self-Registration Quick Start Guide](#) for complete details on to fully register and create a login to access your secure Vendor Portal at [R.I. Department of Purchases registration](#). Please note this is a 2-step process.

1. **Create Vendor Profile** - After completing Quick Start Guide step 6 “submit registration”, your login credentials and the login link will be emailed to you (with the subject line: “**Welcome to WebProcure!**”).
2. **Upload W-9** - Once you have registered (including uploading a new W-9) and been approved by OSP, RISCA can process your award payment.

Declining a Grant Award

Before deciding to decline your grant award due to changing circumstances or any other reason, we recommend you reach out to RISCA staff to see if you can accomplish your project with some modifications. If you do decide to decline your award, this is totally fine to do so. It will have no bearing on future grant applications you might submit to RISCA. You will send an email to RISCA staff indicating your desire to decline your award, and she will assist you.

Glossary

Practicing Artist - A person that intentionally creates or practices art in any discipline that:

- Has sought learning or training in the artistic field from any source, not necessarily in formal academic institutions.
- Is committed to devoting significant time to artistic activity, as is possible financially.
- Is or is working towards earning some portion of their income from their art.
- Disciplines include, but are not limited to musician, painter, poet, choreographer, teaching artist, ceramicist, storyteller, performer, playwright, sculptor, photographer, wampum artist, printmaker, animator, cartoonist, textile and fashion designer and filmmaker.

Rhode Island residency: Have been domiciled in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means your home in Rhode Island is your primary residence, and is the address you use for legal forms, state income taxes, car registration, driver's license or state issued id, and voter registration - regardless of whether you own or rent your home. You must reside in the state for at least 183 days per year.

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/BIPOC>.