



[Mollie Flanagan](#)

Grants Program Manager/Arts and Health

(401) 222-3881

mollie.flanagan@arts.ri.gov

Community Engaged Project Grants

Community Engaged Project Grants (CEPG) support arts and culture projects that directly and actively engage the public in Rhode Island and/or a specific Rhode Island community. Projects must be artist instigated and organized outside of institutional support and structures. The grant is open to projects of all arts disciplines, from artists and creatives at all levels and must welcome non or new artists to engage in making, experiencing, or learning about art as an active participant. The project should directly benefit the public in Rhode Island and/or engaged a specific Rhode Island community. A deep impact on a small number of people is equally as valuable as an event that many people attend.

Award Amount: \$500 to \$3,000.

Who can apply

- Artists that live in Rhode Island.

Timelines

April 1 Deadline

- Grants open for applications on Feb. 1.
- Deadline is April 1 at 11:59 p.m.
- Funding period supports project occurring between July 1 and Dec. 30.

Oct. 1 Deadline

- Grants open for applications Aug. 1.
- Deadline is Oct. 1 at 11:59 p.m.
- Funding period supports project occurring between Jan. 1 and June 30.

[Read more about deadlines, funding periods and decision-making process.](#)

[Click here to read Information for First-Time Applicants](#) or [download the pdf.](#)

Project Definition and Examples

A project is defined as a discrete set of connected activities with a distinct beginning and end. Projects can be one-time events such as a festival, show, or exhibition, or a series such as a roster of classes, or thematically connected concerts, productions, or arts program.

The type of projects funded have varied widely to be responsive to what communities want or need over time. Core to all funded programs is a connection and value to the community being engaged with, fulfilling the RISCA's mission to ensure that arts and culture will play an ever more significant part in the well-being and experience of all Rhode Island residents.

- **Example One:** An artist will lead weekly artmaking days at the Central Library in Warwick, for youth ages 8-12. The making days will include gentle instruction, a wide variety of materials, and space to imagine. The classes are in the afternoons, and free to all participants and their caregivers.
- **Example Two:** Three artists will collaborate to create an interactive performance featuring dance, music, and spoken word. This piece will be performed in Kennedy Plaza and is about how residents use the transit system. Creation will include observation and interviews of people using the transit hub, and the performance will be engaging, short, and created with a non-captive audience of people that will be moving around in mind.
- **Example Three:** Screen printing in the park. People of all ages will be invited to bring blank materials (posters, t-shirts, canvas bags) to screen print under the guidance of an artist. The artist will provide templates that celebrate the history of the city of Woonsocket, and the state of Rhode Island. This will happen on three Saturdays over the summer, in River Island Art Park.

[For additional examples review past grantees.](#)

Eligibility

You must be:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have been domiciled in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means 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. You must reside in the state for at least 183 days per year.
- Be a legal resident of the United States with a tax identification number (either Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number). This includes refugees, immigrants, and temporary residents. This does not include people in the country on a tourist visa.
- Submit only one application per grant deadline to the Community Engaged Project Grant program. You may only receive one CEPG per state fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).
- All projects must take place in Rhode Island and in a space that is ADA compliant.

Ineligible

If you are:

- A current recipient of the General Operating Support for Artists grant.

- A staff member or Council member of RISCA, or an immediate family member of a staff or Council member.
- Currently enrolled in an arts degree seeking program or attending high school full time.
- Proposing a project that is part of a nonprofit or other formal entity's work. You can receive in-kind donations from formal entities (like donated rehearsal space or materials).
- Not the primary artistic force behind the project.
- Applying for support for this project or aspects of this project through another RISCA grants program.
- Delinquent on any final reports for previous RISCA grants.

Funding Rules and Restrictions

- All grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funds from the Rhode Island State General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).
- 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.
 - **Note:** No partial grants will be awarded – meaning you will either receive the full amount you apply for or no funding.
- Grant applications are considered on a competitive basis. Grant awards may vary in amount cycle to cycle depending on available funds, number of applications, and the panel decision-making. [For more information on our Decision-Making Process, visit our Applicant Resources web page.](#)
- You have the option of declining the grant award with no penalties. If you receive a grant, you must credit RISCA on all marketing materials. [See Acknowledging RISCA.](#)

Allowable

- Grants can be used for expenses related to your project and its production or presentation, 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 your budget is just a plan, and that you may spend the funds in slightly different ways. You only need to inform the Artist Programs Director once your program is complete.
- Programs must occur in spaces that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. You are ineligible for a RISCA grant if your facility does not meet ADA standards. See the [NEA's Accessibility: Publications, Checklists, & Resources](#) for more information.

Not Allowable

Grant funding cannot be used for the following:

- Capital projects, including the construction or renovation of buildings, or additions to buildings.
- Any fundraising expenses – like creating rewards for a Kickstarter or hosting a fundraising event for any purpose.

- Food or beverage that is not integral to the project. Purchase of alcohol with grant funds is strictly prohibited. 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.
 - Please contact the Artist Programs Director with specific questions.
- Addressing, eliminating, or reducing existing debt.
- Prizes and awards for an event, person, and/or organization.
- Regranting funds to support grants to other artists or organizations through an application or award process.
- Activities that are associated with a graduate or undergraduate degree program or for which academic credit is received.
- Applications for projects that proselytize or promote religious activities, or which take place as part of a religious service.
- Programming, performances, and exhibitions unavailable and/or inaccessible to the public.
- Expenses incurred or activity happening outside of the award period. For applications submitted at the April 1 deadline, the award period is July 1- Dec. 1 of that year. For applications submitted at the Oct. 1 deadline, the award period is Jan. 1-June 30 of the next year.

Evaluation Criteria

Per the National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) enabling legislation, The NEA requires that state arts agencies include artistic merit and artistic excellence in their evaluative criteria. However, the NEA allows state arts agencies to define artistic merit and excellence for themselves and in conversation with their communities. For this grant program, artistic merit and artistic excellence is defined as "Artistic Vibrancy and Intention."

Community Impact and Engagement (50%)

- Project incorporates active, two-way, and meaningful engagement with the participants.
- Project has a clearly defined target audience, and estimated participation is reasonable.
- Project has direct and deep relevance to the creative experience and/or cultural heritage of that community.
- Creates opportunities for all Rhode Island residents to participate in the arts, particularly persons in underserved communities, as defined by the NEA.
- This project directly relates to and serves residents of the state of Rhode Island.

Feasibility/Likelihood of Success (25%)

- The application clearly states:
 - what will be done.
 - when and where things will take place.
 - why the project should be supported with public funds.
 - 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 past experience, information is provided that helps make a convincing case that this project will succeed.

Artistic Vibrancy and Intention (25%)

- Demonstrates ability to provide an excellent and intentional experience for the participants.
- This artist or group of artists can provide relevant and respectful engagement with the identified community.
- Project directly supports creation of art by, for, and with a specific community.
- Project provides opportunities to participate in art experiences that are either not available or currently difficult to access for the identified audience.
- Demonstrates likelihood of a compelling and successful community-based project using the applicant's artistic approach and process.

Support Materials

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

- Budget template (see top right)
- Timeline template (see top right)

You may submit up to 10 support materials, along with a website if you have one. 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.

- You must include a numbered list of the materials you are submitting, with a one to two sentence description. This must be either a Word Document or a PDF.
 - Support Materials List template (see top right)
- The website will be submitted as a link and must be to the website of either the lead artist applicant or the project.
- 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.

Note: 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, Excel. Please do not submit files in Pages or Numbers format. Our grants system is unable to read files in these formats.

Accordion: Glossary

ALAANA (African, Latin American, Asian, Arab, Native-American): This is an acronym for Asian, Latina/o/x/e, African, Arab, and Native American intended to be inclusive of any individual, culture, community, or arts organization from these racial/ethnic identity groups. The term intentionally names these broad racial and ethnic identities rather than grouping them under the more generic term "people of color." *Source: Grantmakers in the Arts.*

BIPOC: An acronym that stands for Black, Indigenous and people of color. The term is meant to unite all people of color while acknowledging that Black and Indigenous people face different and often more severe forms of racial oppression and cultural erasure as consequences of systemic white supremacy and colonialism. *Source: diversitystyleguide.com*

Rhode Island residency: Have been domiciled in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means 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. You must reside in the state for at least 183 days per year.

Underserved communities. The National Endowment for the Arts defines "underserved" communities as "ones in which individuals lack access to arts programs due to geography, economic conditions, ethnic background, or disability." This definition may include BIPOC/ALAANA communities, people with disabilities, immigrant groups, rural populations, aging populations, people living in poverty, people experiencing homelessness, incarcerated populations, communities recovering from trauma or disaster, and military service members and veterans.