

General Operating Support for Artists

General Operating Support for Artists (GOSA) provides multi-year grants for Rhode Island artists to work toward longer term, self-identified goals in their art practice. Rather than focusing on a specific project, the three-year, unrestricted funding supports their artistic goals however they need.

Grant funding could support things such as the ability to set aside time to work on art making, art materials, space rental, technology, paying collaborators, research and experimentation, marketing, documentation, and more. Each year, three artists will be selected for this program, for a total of nine artists receiving GOSA grants at any given time.

Award Amount: \$6,000 per year, for three years.

Who Can Apply: Artists that live in Rhode Island.

Timeline

- Grants open for applications on July 1.
- Deadline is Sept. 1 at 11:59 p.m.
- Funding period supports work occurring between July 1 and June 30, the state's fiscal year.
- Grant notifications will be sent in mid-December (tentative).
- The final report is due July 31 each year for the duration of the award.

About the current cohort

Eligibility

You must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have lived in Rhode Island for at least two years 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 to RISCA per grant deadline.
- Be a practicing artist. RISCA defines a 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.

You are ineligible if you are:

- A current or former recipient of the RISCA 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.
- 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 State of Rhode Island General Assembly and the NEA.
- The grant award in this category is \$6,000 per year for three years, for a total of \$18,000. No partial grants will be awarded. Grant applications are considered on a competitive basis. [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.](#)
- You must continue to be a resident of Rhode Island for the full grant period. If you move out of state for any reason during your three-year funding period, you will not receive any of the remaining grant award payments. You will not have to repay previous grant payments.
- You must complete a yearly report to receive your next grant payment.
- The General Operating Support for Artists program is unrestricted funding. We expect you to spend the funds in a way that helps you advance your art practice and your art career, in alignment with your definition of success in your application. However, there are still many things your grant awards cannot be used for. Because we grant money from the NEA, we are obligated to follow these rules set forth by them.

Grant funding cannot be used for the following

- Capital projects, including 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.
- Addressing, eliminating, or reducing existing debt.

- Entertainment and hospitality, including expenses for activities such as receptions, parties, galas, etc. Specific costs that have a core programmatic purpose and are included in your budget may be allowable.
- Prizes and awards for an event, person, and/or organization.
- Regranting.
- 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.

Accommodation and Access Policy

It is the policy of RISCA that no qualified individual, based on a disability, shall be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of the agency or the agency's grantees, or be subjected to discrimination.

For questions on accommodations, contact Seamus Hames, Arts Education Program Director and 504 Accessibility Coordinator, at 401-222-6994 or seamus.hames@arts.ri.gov.

How to Apply and Application

RISCA only accepts applications through the online grant system Foundant. Please note there are two different grant portals, one for individual artists and one for organizations. If you have questions about whether you already have a profile in the system or logging in, please contact one of the program directors, [Staff Directory | RISCA](#).

To log in or set up an applicant profile: [Online Grant Application Portal for Individuals](#)

Application

- **Section 1: For RISCA staff** to determine if the applicant meets the eligibility requirements to move to panel review. Includes an eligibility checklist and required uploads.
- **Section 2: For Panel** to learn about the project and to review and score it based on the evaluation criteria. There are two parts:
 - **About the Artist:** Upload of work samples, bio/resume/cv, and artist statement; links to artist website and social media.
 - **Artistic Vibrancy and Impact:** Three narrative questions about your goals and the potential impact of this grant.

Evaluation Criteria

Panel reviewers will use the following criteria to evaluate and recommend applications for funding.

Artistic Impact and Growth (5 points)

- This grant will positively impact the applicant’s artistic practice and/or career in clearly identified ways.
- Artist’s stated goals are clear, in alignment with their work, and feasible given their current practice and career stage.
- The work samples provided are relevant, cohesive, and speak to the potential of the artist to advance in their career.

Artistic Vibrancy and Intention (5 points)

- Personal voice, vision and authenticity are clearly demonstrated in the proposal and work samples.
- Applicants demonstrate 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.

Note: Per NEA enabling legislation, the federal agency 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.”

Support Materials

Required Documents and Support Materials for panel review

- Bio/CV/Resume of artist.
- Artist statement.
- Artistic Work Samples: You may submit a maximum of three of the following, showcasing your artwork and information about you and your artistic practice.
 - Up to 10 images.
 - Up to 15 minutes of video.
 - Up to 15 minutes of audio.
 - Up to 30 pages of writing.
 - Note: You must upload support materials to a Google Drive folder, open to everyone with the link or link and password.
- Work Sample List. Required to use the RISCA [Work Sample List Template](#).

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 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.

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.