

Arts and Climate Grant

The Arts and Climate Grant, funded by the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) Advisory Board, supports arts and culture projects in Rhode Island that translate complex climate information into accessible, resonant visuals, stories, and experiences. This grant will support artists of all disciplines to improve public access to and understanding of climate change, and to build public support for and participation in positive climate action in Rhode Island. Artists may serve as community connectors, capturing public perspectives, lived experiences, and concerns to relay back to the EC4, EC4 Advisory Board, and other actors - ensuring community voices inform future decision-making. Projects must be artist instigated and organized outside of institutional support and structures. A project that has meaningful and robust engagement with a small group of people is equally as valuable as a one-time event many people attend.

About the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) Advisory Board

This grant program is funded by the EC4 Advisory Board and implemented by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA). The Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) is comprised of the leadership of state agencies with responsibility for and oversight of climate change efforts. The EC4 Advisory Board is charged with advising the EC4 on communication/outreach and improving public access to resources/information about climate change (both mitigation and adaptation) to build public support for making Rhode Island's communities more resilient. The EC4 Advisory Board secured funding to advance its duties in the FY 2025 EC4 Spending Plan, with \$40,000 of the \$80,000 awarded allocated to a partnership with RISCA for the creation of these arts and climate grant program.

References and Areas of Climate Change

- [2025 Climate Action Strategy](#)
 - [Advisory Board comments](#)

Related areas of climate change-mitigation include energy efficient & all-electric homes/buildings, renewable energy, a clean electric grid, public transit, EVs, and electric heat pumps.
- [Resilient Rhody 2025](#)

- Related areas of climate change resilience include flooding (coastal, riverine, as well as stormwater flooding), extreme heat, more frequent and severe storms, sea level rise, nature-based solutions like green infrastructure, forests, wetlands, and community resilience hubs.

Grant Program Goals and Objectives

- Prioritize projects and artwork relevant and accessible to frontline communities.
- Value the artists' role in visioning the climate ready and resilient futures and using art and creativity to build bridges, act as translators, and inspire positive change.
- Encourage artwork that includes community voices and active, two-way engagement.
- Strengthen climate literacy, build trust between the public and EC4, and expand support for the strategies outlined in Rhode Island's climate plans.

Award Amount: Up to \$5,000.

Who can apply

- Artists or groups of artists that live in Rhode Island.

Timeline

- Grants open for applications on Oct. 1, 2026.
- Deadline is Nov. 2, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.
- Funding period supports a project occurring between Jan. 1 and Dec. 30, 2027.
- Grant notifications will be sent in mid-December 2026 (tentative).
- Final report is due Jan. 31, 2028.

Project Definition and Examples

A project is defined as a set of connected activities with a distinct beginning and end. Projects can be one-time events including a festival, show, or exhibition, or series such as a roster of classes, or thematically connected concerts, productions, or arts program. Projects can also include planning and the development of curriculum, but a pilot or public sharing is mandatory.

- **Example One:** Three artists will create a new, site-specific performance piece about flooding caused by climate change, which will be performed at Salty Brine Beach in September.

- **Example Two:** An artist will facilitate a group of Woonsocket youth ages 8-12 in learning about renewable energy and will create a PSA for their city about energy options. The format of the project will be determined by the participants, and maybe a video, a brochure, a mural, or something else.
- **Example Three:** Birding the Future is an installation series that invites visitors to listen to endangered and extinct bird calls and to view visionary avian landscapes through stereographs, sculpture, and video. This ongoing project explores how declining bird populations signal profound changes over our entire planet. The next iteration will be a series of installments in front yards in South Providence, connecting residents to the birds they see and hear daily.

Eligibility

You must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have lived 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.
- This program occurs in spaces that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. See the [NEA's Accessibility: Publications, Checklists, & Resources](#) for more information.
- The funded portion of the project activity takes place in Rhode Island.

You are ineligible, if you are:

- A staff member or Council member of RISCA, or an immediate family member of a staff or Council member.
- A member of the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council Advisory Board or an immediate family member.
- A state agency employee with close ties to the work of the EC4 or an immediate family 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 grant program, with the exception of General Operating Support for Artists.
- Delinquent on any final reports for previous RISCA grants.

Funding Rules and Restrictions

- All grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funds.
- The maximum grant award in this category is \$5,000 – but partial awards are common. Partial awards will be no less than 50% of the application request or \$1,000, whichever is higher.
- Grant applications are considered on a competitive basis. Award amounts may vary depending on available funds, number of applications, and the decision-making panel. [For more information on our Decision-Making Process, visit our Applicant Resources web page.](#)
- If you receive a partial award, you will not be expected to accomplish the project as initially outlined. You may reach out to the Program Director to discuss project modifications at any time.
- You have the option of declining the grant award with no penalties.
- If you receive a grant, you must credit RISCA and EC4 Advisory Board on all marketing materials. [See Acknowledging RISCA.](#)

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

RISCA accepts applications for this grant through the online grant system Foundant. If you have questions about whether you already have a profile in the system or if you have questions about 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 three parts:

- **Logistics** - simple questions, check boxes and uploads about who, what, where, and when of the project. Includes project plan and budget uploads.
- **Artistic Vibrancy and Impact** – two short narrative questions about art being central to the project and how the artist/s will provide a positive and purposeful experience for the intended participants.

- **Community Engagement** – short narrative question and testimonial upload to demonstrate how this project aligns with the specific grant program.
- **Climate Change Connection** – short narrative question about which area of climate change this project will be focusing on.

Evaluation Criteria

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

Logistics

- The application clearly states what will be done by whom, when, and where things will take place, and how this project will happen both logistically and financially.

Artistic Vibrancy and Impact

- Art is central to this project.
- The artist/artists will provide a positive and purposeful experience for the participants.
- The project will be accessible and inclusive and reduces barriers to access for those who want to attend or participate.

Community Engagement

- This project is relevant and accessible to frontline communities.
- This project welcomes non-and-new artists to engage in making, experiencing, or learning about art and climate action and impacts as an active participant.

Climate Change Connection

- The application clearly states what area of climate change the artist(s) will be focused on.
- This project will translate climate information into artwork that is accessible, relevant, and engaging to a specific community and/or the public.

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 impact.”

Support Materials

For Panel Review: Required Documents and Support Materials for Project Evaluation

- Project Budget (Required: Use the [RISCA Artist Project Budget Template](#).)
- Project Plan (Required: Use the [RISCA Project Plan Template](#).)
- Bio/CV/Resume of artist(s) involved.
- Artistic Work Samples: Documentation of up to three pieces of art.
 - This may include images, video, audio, and/or writing. Pieces of art include but are not limited to a short film; a graphic novel; a dance; a painting; a piece of jewelry; a song; a sculpture; a performance in a public place; a poem; a class/lesson/workshop you taught or work of your students; or a quilt.
 - You may submit a maximum of 10 images; and 10 minutes of video; and 10 minutes of audio; and up to 20 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](#).
- Testimonial: This can be quotes, a short testimonial, or some other statement from a person or people who has/have experience with this program or the artist(s). Must not be from someone directly involved in the project or a member of the applicant's family. Maximum of one page.

Glossary

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.

Environmental Justice Focus Area: The Rhode Island Department of Environment Management defines EJFA as: a census tract that meets one or more of the following criteria: Annual median household income is not more than sixty-five percent (65%) of the statewide annual median household income; Minority population is equal to or greater than forty percent (40%) of the population; Twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the households lack English language proficiency; or Minorities comprise twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in the proposed area does not exceed one hundred fifty percent (150%) of the statewide annual median household income.

Frontline Communities: Communities who are impacted first and worst by environmental hazards and climate change. This includes vulnerable populations and overburdened populations.

Vulnerable Population: A group of people that is more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental harm due to socioeconomic, demographic, work, and health sensitivity factors.

Overburdened Population: A geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts.