# East Central Regional Arts Council

# Small/Art Project Grants

# <u>Guidelines and Application Instructions</u>

- Fiscal Year 2018 -
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

- Fiscal Year 2019 -
July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

**East Central Regional Arts Council**
**112 Main Avenue South**
**PO Box 294**
**Braham, Minnesota  55006**
**email:  info@ecrac.org**
**www.ecrac.org**
**320-396-2337**



**These guidelines can be made available in the following formats:**
**Braille, large print, and audio.**
**To accommodate your request ECRAC will need at least 5 working days.**

# Table of Contents

## East Central Regional Arts Council (ECRAC) Overview/Introduction

The East Central Regional Arts Council (ECRAC) is a regional grant-making agency that supports the arts through funding from the Minnesota State Legislature and The McKnight Foundation. The Council distributes grant awards to artists, arts and other non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and local units of government and provides technical assistance for these grants.

**Mission/Vision/Values:**
ECRAC's mission is to support the arts and bring the life enhancing values they afford to Region 7E residents. The vision is that all Region 7E residents have the opportunity to participate, appreciate, create, and invest in the arts. The values of ECRAC are: arts in action; integrity; artistic merit; and legacy.

The East Central Regional Arts Council accomplishes this mission through programs and special initiatives for artists and arts organizations. The current work program of the Arts Council includes the following: Grant programs for organizations (501c3 non-profits, units of government, schools or other groups using a fiscal agent), are the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, Art in Our Schools, and the Small/Art Project Assistance Grant; Grant Programs for individual artists such as the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, McKnight/ECRAC Individual Artist and Fellowship Grant Programs, and - IMAGE - the annual regional art show. Other resources include hosting various grant workshops, an arts library, art display equipment rental, an art gallery, and providing technical assistance and resource information.

ECRAC receives funding through appropriations of the Minnesota State Legislature and through The McKnight Foundation. These funding sources enable ECRAC to provide grant funds for local or regional arts projects in the following Region 7E counties of Minnesota: Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, and Mille Lacs. All grants are contingent upon the availability of funds. Funds are offered to organizations and individuals for a variety of arts projects that develop or enhance local arts organizations, artists, or art audiences.

The East Central Regional Arts Council is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit. The mailing address is 112 Main Avenue South, PO Box 294, Braham, Minnesota, 55006. You can reach ECRAC by telephone at 320-396-2337, and by email at info@ecrac.org. The agency website is: www.ecrac.org.

It is always best to contact staff of the ECRAC well in advance (see the grant deadline section)
prior to submission of a grant application for assistance, to determine current funding availability,
and for information on the correct application form to use. This allows applicants to review the grant guidelines
and to ask questions pertinent to you, or your organization, as an applicant
and regarding your proposed grant project.

## Who is Eligible? Organizations, Agencies, and Groups:

ECRAC serves the non-profit arts organization community in Region 7E Minnesota counties: Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, and Pine. Applicants must submit their annual organization budget with these proposals, and

annually, if applicable, a copy of their 990 or audit.  Agencies, organizations, or groups located in and serving Region 7E, meeting any one of the following three conditions are eligible to apply for grants:

a.  A public agency or organization such as a local unit of government, school, or public library.
b.  A Minnesota private, non-profit organization which has obtained a 501(c)3  tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code and is registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State and Department of Revenue.
c.  A local group/organization that does not meet the above requirements, but applies through a fiscal agent that does qualify. It is the responsibility of the group to find a fiscal agent and enter into an agreement with them.

A "fiscal agent" is any Minnesota non-profit, tax-exempt organization or governmental unit which applies to the Regional Arts Council on behalf of an organization not meeting non-profit tax-exempt requirements.  The fiscal agent must sign the certification form, and if funds are received, sign the grant contract (also called the Notification of Grant Award) and the Request for Payment.  The fiscal agent is legally responsible for the project and proper management of grant funds.  The fiscal agent must enter into a formal written agreement with the sponsored group carrying out the project clarifying the responsibilities of each party. A copy of this agreement must accompany the application.  A Sample Fiscal Agent Agreement is included at the end of these guidelines. The fiscal agent is not responsible for the completion of the project or the final report, but is responsible for the verification of these activities.

Please note that the organization application is NOT an application for individuals to use.   Examples are artists, booking agents, or performing groups, looking for contract work with an organization. The applicant organization itself needs to complete this grant application and is responsible for the project, if funded.


**DEFINITION:  WHAT IS ART?**
Art can describe several things: a study of a creative skill, a process of using the creative skill, a product of the creative skill, or the audience's experience with the creative skill. The Regional Arts Council defines "arts" as activities resulting in the artistic creation or artistic performance of works of the imagination. When we say arts, we are speaking very broadly of visual, performing, media, literary, and interdisciplinary art forms through which we learn about, explore, shape, and express the human experience.


These activities include the disciplines listed in ECRAC's online application form.  The list of disciplines is part of the National Standard for Arts Information Exchange which was developed by the National Endowment for the Arts and other state, regional, and national organizations. All state arts agencies in the country are required to report on their activities using this standard set of codes. The Regional Arts Council uses these disciplines to define and report the arts activities supported.


# WHAT IS NOT FUNDED


## ECRAC Small/Art Project Grants WILL NOT fund:

- Applications that do not have an arts and/or culture related focus.
- Applicants not located in or grant activities that do not take place in Region 7E.
- Activities of a for-profit project, organization, or business.
- **Projects when funds are requested for deficits in projects or programs begun prior to the earliest project start date**. In other words, payment of debts incurred before the grant activities begin or outside of the grant project scope of activity will not be approved.
- Applicants with either unacceptable or past due ECRAC final (or other) reports, or applicants that contact ECRAC members/panelists regarding the proposal before final grant approval.
- Applications when funds are to be used to match other ECRAC grant applications.
- Requests for new building construction, purchase of real property, or endowment funds.
- Projects in which total state arts funding (ECRAC and/or Minnesota State Arts Board) is more than 50% of the total project costs.
- Fundraising events.
- Relocating outside Region 7E or organizations established outside of Region 7E.
- Activities not open to the public.
- In-school projects by students or projects carried out exclusively by or for student organizations.
- Programs by schools that are limited in access to the public or serve only students or staff.
- Purchasing equipment for or improve facilities within K-12 public schools.
- Religious organizations or projects that are for the religious socialization of participants or audience.
- Activities that engage in political lobbying or intend to influence public policy.
- Projects when artists are required to pay excessive entry or exhibition fees in order to exhibit or perform in the project which funds are sought.
- Requests for operating support.
- Projects that will not use the proper grant funding credit line (in a legible font) and will not use the ECRAC logo and hashtag.  Also applicants that won't take responsibility for their publicity, media coverage, and public relations, or will not provide timely promotion of the project throughout Region 7E.  Grant awardees must include the required credit line in all advertising, news releases, printed programs, and promotional materials for the project.  The credit line to use will be found in your grant contract, the Notification of Grant Award (NGA). The funding credit line will either be: "This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the East Central Regional Arts Council with funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature from its general fund"; or "This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the East Central Regional Arts Council with funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature from its general fund and the arts and cultural heritage fund".  Grant awardees must also use the logo(s) and hashtag (#ECRAC) in all grant-related promotional materials and social media per the contract.
- Any organizations or grant activities occurring outside of Region 7E and any travel outside of Minnesota.

- Applicants determined by ECRAC to be ineligible for funding.

## TYPES OF ARTS GRANTS AVAILABLE

The intent of ECRAC grant programs for organizations is to increase the quantity and to stimulate and maintain high quality arts experiences in the region. Grants are made to eligible organizations engaged in the creation or production of art, art services, or sponsorship of art activities. Arts in all disciplines are supported by the Council including, but not limited to: theatre, visual arts, folk arts, music, literature, dance, film/video, artistic development of artists or organizational development of arts organizations.

ECRAC has funding for organizations and artists under separate applications and guidelines. Contact ECRAC staff at either 320-396-2337, or via email at info@ecrac.org, if you need assistance in determining which category to apply for your particular project and to determine current funding availability.   Please note that the Regional Arts Council funds art projects which are high in quality and merit, projects which are well planned, include qualified artists as proven by their artistic résumés, have a strong community impact, and are clearly needed and valued by the community they serve.  ECRAC does not fund planning projects at this time.

*Small/Arts Project Grants* - This grant category provides support to organizations for a wide variety of arts projects involving the creation, sponsorship, publication, performance, and/or exhibition of art. Arts producing activities or services for artists/arts organizations should result from the project. There are three application deadlines per year for this program (See page 7-8 for details). There is no limit on the number of grants that can be received each fiscal year, but applicants are limited to submitting one application per grant program per deadline.
**ECRAC funds requests ranging from $500 - $5,000 in this category with a 50% match (1-1) provided by the applicant.**

There are three grant deadlines per year (see page 7-8.) Examples of eligible projects are:
- Creation of art
- Performances
- Exhibitions such as visual art shows
- Theatre productions
- Residencies involving a professional artist
- Workshops, classes, publications, films, and presentations that promote artists and/or participation in the arts
- Other projects providing access to the arts for community audiences

Schools may apply for Small/Art Project Grants; however, be advised that there is also an ECRAC *Art in Our Schools Grant Program* with $3,000 grants available.  There is a separate application form and guidelines and no match requirement. Please contact ECRAC staff if you have any questions about funding for schools, or about which application form(s) to use.

There are also grants from $5,000-$15,000 for organizations and schools under the ***ECRAC Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund for Organizations****.*  This is also a separate application.

## Project Matching Funds

For Small/Arts Project Grants, the applicant **must show evidence of a match of at least 50% of the total costs of the project.** Matching funds may consist of cash, in kind contributions, earned income, and/or other grants. **Cash support of at least 10% of the total cost of the project is required.** The cash match can include earned income, other grants/contributions, and cash on hand.  In kind cannot be included as part of the cash match.

In kind includes donated material, labor, or space that can be given a dollar value and is committed to the project. In kind should be significant items.  After the project is completed documentation must be provided for in kind contributions from the donor indicating the value of the in kind donation. ECRAC does have sample in kind donation voucher forms, if needed.

### Special Requirements for Art Project Equipment Purchases

Grant requests from organizations for project equipment purchase must include: a detailed plan for the use of the equipment; and a statement certifying they will not sell the equipment without prior ECRAC approval including the possibility of UCC filing.  Organizations using a fiscal agent must develop an equipment purchase agreement outlining who will own the equipment at the end of the grant period. The act of only purchasing equipment does not constitute a fundable grant project.  Please note that schools cannot purchase equipment or improve facilities.

# WHERE AND HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be completed online. The application portal information is at:  http://ecrac.org/node/175. Questions? You can reach ECRAC by telephone at 320-396-2337 and by email at: info@ecrac.org.  The agency website is: www.ecrac.org.

This is a competitive grant program. A reasonable amount of planning time should be allowed to develop an application.  Grant writing technical assistance is provided by ECRAC staff as requested.  The staff person can best be of help to you if you contact them well in advance of the application technical assistance deadline.  Assistance from the staff person does not, however, imply that grant funding will be received.

There are *specific* application forms for each of the funding categories (Small/Art Project Grants, Art in Our Schools Grants, Arts and Cultural Heritage). If in doubt about which to use, contact the Regional Arts Council staff. Applicants must use the ECRAC online application form for the specific category of funds requested.  The application guidelines can be made available in the following alternative formats: Braille, large print, and audio. To accommodate your request for alternative formats, ECRAC will need at least 5 working days notice. You may access the ECRAC website for the online application forms at www.ecrac.org/grants.  The online grant portal is at: http://ecrac.org/node/175.

**Do not apply for more than one grant, per grant program deadline.**  Be sure to include all attachments with your completed application or your application will be considered incomplete and thus ineligible.

**ECRAC has an online grant application process only. You cannot submit any grant application materials by mail, in person, or by email.  The online application materials can be found at:**
**www.ecrac.org/grants.**
**The grant portal is online at:  http://ecrac.org/node/175.**
**Completed applications must be submitted online**
**before 11:59 p.m. on the deadline date.**

## GRANT DEADLINES

The Arts Council currently holds a number of grant rounds each fiscal year. Organizations are required to complete an ECRAC Small/Art Project Grant funded activity before the end of the next fiscal year and must keep all project documentation for 3 years following project completion. Earliest allowable starting and dates are listed on page 8.

**What determines a project's start date?**
The start date for an ECRAC grant is defined as **"the point at which the project is set in motion (e.g. rehearsals, advertising and public notification, payment of fees, ordering and/or paying for supplies or printed material, etc.)."**  **ECRAC does not fund projects that are already underway.**  Grantees <u>must</u> wait until award notification before printing and/or disseminating publicity materials.  No funds can be expended prior to the project start date. Funds incurred before the project start date (such as entering into a contract with performers) cannot be included in the grant project and may make your project ineligible. Please call ECRAC staff if you are unclear about whether ECRAC would consider your project as already started.

**The scheduled grant deadline dates for FY 2018-2019 are:**

| TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DEADLINE | GRANT DEADLINE | FINAL APPROVAL BY | EARLIEST START DATE | LATEST END DATE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| October 15 | Nov. 1, 2017 & 2018 | Dec. 31, 2017 & 2018 | Jan. 15, 2018 & 2019 | June 30, 2019 & 2020 |
| January 15 | Feb. 1, 2018 & 2019 | Mar. 31, 2018 & 2019 | May 15, 2018 & 2019 | June 30, 2019 & 2020 |
| March 15 | April 1, 2018 & 2019 | May 31, 2018 & 2019 | July 15, 2018 & 2019 | June 30, 2019 & 2020 |

**If a deadline date falls on a weekend or a holiday, the deadline will be 11:59 p.m. on the next working day.**

**Technical assistance is guaranteed if you contact ECRAC staff _before_ the technical assistance deadline. After that date, assistance will be offered based on staff availability. Application materials cannot be submitted by mail, in person, or by email.**

# REVIEW PROCEDURE

ECRAC staff will review all applications for accuracy, completeness, and eligibility.  The ECRAC Board will have the final determination of completeness and eligibility. Applicants will be notified of the receipt of their application and when the grant application review/s will take place.  The accuracy, content, completeness, and merits of the application are solely the responsibility of the applicant. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the grant review meeting, but will not be permitted to provide any additional information from what was included in the application submitted.  The ECRAC board, by majority vote, makes all final funding decisions. ECRAC staff do not participate in this grant review and funding process other than to introduce applications, describe the status of the grant application completeness and eligibility review, and to take minutes.

**IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE:**
Grant applicants may not discuss their application with ECRAC review panelists or ECRAC board members following the grant deadline until the ECRAC board has acted on the application.  Communications regarding an application with ECRAC board members or panelists during this time will result in the application being deemed ineligible for funding.

# REVIEW CRITERIA

The East Central Regional Arts Council makes every effort to distribute available funds fairly and equitably among the various art forms and across all geographic and cultural areas of the region. Projects supported by ECRAC are expected to encourage and reflect the highest possible standards of artistic excellence.  The Regional Arts Council will consider each application on its own merits. Applications are reviewed in the order received. In reviewing the applications, a grant review panel and/or the Regional Arts Council will use the following criteria listed in order of priority.  Grant review meetings are open to the public.

These factors constitute the grant review standards:  Merit and artistic quality; Ability of the applicant to accomplish the project; Demonstrated need for the project.

- **The merit and artistic quality of the project or program**.

   Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include:

    1. Does this proposal instill the arts into the community and public life?
    2. Does this proposal provide a high quality arts experience?
    3. Does this proposal give access in Region 7E to a quality arts experience?

4. Does this proposal help to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts?

5. Do the artist résumés substantiate artistic merit and quality?

6. If a repeat project does the project expand their own artistic capabilities or the artistic experiences of their audience?

If the application is determined to be of sufficient merit and artistic quality to indicate further review, the following standards will be applied.

- **The ability of the applicant or organization to accomplish the project or program outcomes and activities as presented.** This is demonstrated by providing evidence of a planning process, qualifications of artistic and administrative personnel, publicity efforts and previous successful efforts. Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include:

  1. Did the applicant explain the planning process for the project?
  2. Is the project budget feasible and does it demonstrate fiscal responsibility?
  3. Are the marketing and publicity plans appropriate for the project and applicant?
  4. Is the outcome evaluation plan appropriate for the project and applicant?
  5. If this applicant is a past ECRAC grant recipient have the projects been successful, and were all reporting requirements followed?
  6. If an organization application, do the project director's (and any other key project personnel) résumé/s substantiate organizational ability?
  7. Is the project open to the public?  Will it be held in an ADA accessible venue?

- **Applicants must demonstrate a demand/need for the grant project or program in the community served.** Grant review considerations used to address this criterion may include:
  1. Does the applicant define the community served?
  2. Does the application demonstrate community involvement and support for the project?
  3. Will the applicant be able to market the project effectively to the community served?
  4. How does the project meet the artistic needs of the applicant?
  5. How does the project meet the artistic needs of the community served?
  6. How does the budget demonstrate a financial need?  Note:  these are not for profit grant projects.  If the budget shows an income, the application is ineligible.

Based on the review standards and the recommendation of the grant review panel (if applicable), the Regional Arts Council shall make one of the following decisions for each grant applicant:
full funding of the amount requested; partial funding of the amount requested; table the request, pending receipt of additional information/modification of the application; or no funding.

The grant review panel (if used) will present its decisions for Small/Arts Project Grant funding in writing to the East Central Regional Arts Council board. ECRAC relies heavily on the recommendations of these panels.  ECRAC

will determine if the review procedures have been properly followed and will approve, disapprove, or table based on its adherence to the procedures herein described.  All applicants will receive a grant allocation notification within 30 days after final review of the grant application by ECRAC.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ECRAC observes strict procedures to prevent any conflict of interest.  Any member of the Regional Arts Council with a direct financial or employment interest relating to any grant application to be reviewed will inform the Council of such affiliation prior to review of any grant application.  The member will leave the room and not vote, rank, or participate in the grant review discussion. The Council reports annually on those members with affiliations who declared conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest exists if a Regional Arts Council member or grant reviewer:
- receives direct financial benefit from the organization or project being reviewed.
- serves as an employee or governing board member of an applicant organization.
- serves with or without pay as a consultant on the application being reviewed.
- has familial (or adversarial) relationship with an applicant or a staff or board member of an applicant organization.
- receives free tickets or other benefits from the grant applicant being reviewed.

The ECRAC board chair and executive director have the authority to determine the existence and effect of a conflict of interest.  Members acting in violation of the rules will be asked to resign and may be subject to prosecution under state law.

## GRANT PAYMENT

Grantees will receive notification regarding the ECRAC grant funding decision.  If funded, a contract called the Notification of Grant Award (NGA) contract and a Request for Payment (RFP) form will be included with the notification.  In cases where the grant is less than the full amount requested, or if the ECRAC board has stipulated revisions, the applicant will receive a revised approved budget in the NGA.  If the grantee agrees with the approved budget and other terms of the contract, an authorized signer of the grantee (or fiscal agent, if applicable) must sign and submit both forms to the Arts Council.  No funds will be authorized until the signed NGA and RFP have been submitted.  Funds will be approved and forwarded to the grantee within 45 days of receipt of the NGA and RFP. Grantees are also required to complete a Final Report Training once per year. ECRAC may request additional grant requirements as a stipulation of grant funding.  ECRAC may also split grant payments by providing initial grant funds after the receipt of the NGA and RFP, and the final payment after receipt of a successful interim progress review as stipulated by ECRAC.  If so, details will be included in the NGA and RFP notification.

## REPORTS/GRANT EVALUATION

Grant recipients must submit a final report to ECRAC.  Organizations have 60 days, from  the end of the grant project date as proposed in the approved application and as stated on the NGA and RFP.  ECRAC may also require an interim report, or may conduct a mid-point grant progress review.  The final report must be the ECRAC online format provided in the grant portal, and will include: project narrative; documentation of press releases, project publicity, website pages, and news articles.  The final report will show how grant funds were used, and will provide documentation of income and expenses pertaining to the project, including copies of proofs of payment. The final/financial report form will also include all documentation on the outcome evaluation of the grant project. The Regional Arts Council CANNOT provide any grant funds to applicants who have outstanding or unacceptable grant final reports or unsatisfactory mid-point progress reviews.

## GRANT TERMINATION & REVOCATION

A grant contract may be terminated at any time upon written request of the grantee. Such termination does not necessarily relieve the grantee of its responsibilities as set forth in the grant contract.  ECRAC may terminate a grant contract at any time upon failure of the grantee to comply with one or more of the conditions of the grant contract.  A contract may be terminated by mutual written consent of ECRAC and recipient. Occasionally, additional stipulations or conditions will be placed on the use of the grant funds. These conditions, or in some cases recommendations, from the Regional Arts Council will be clearly outlined in the contract.

ECRAC will rescind its grant commitment if:
- a grantee does not submit the NGA and RFP within 45 days, or
- upon request, the recipient does not return any required grant stipulations with the NGA/RFP.

## APPEALS POLICY & PROCEDURE

If an applicant can show cause that the established grant review procedures have not been followed, the applicant may file an appeal.  There is no right of appeal for disputes of decisions of the Regional Arts Council with respect to artistic merit.

To file an appeal, the applicant must notify the Regional Arts Council Executive Director in writing within 10 days of the notification of ECRAC's action, and describe the point(s) of issue with the grant review procedure.  ECRAC will approve, disapprove, or table the appeal based on adherence to its grant review procedures.

## OTHER

ECRAC reserves the right to adopt other policies related to grants and to revise these grant documents as needed.

## ECRAC SERVICES

**ECRAC provides a variety of services to the arts community in the region, including:**

- **Art Gallery**

- **Resource Information**

- **Arts Library**

- **Workshops for artists and organizations**

- **Grant and Outcome Evaluation Workshops**

- **Grant Writing Technical Assistance**

- **Art Show Display Equipment Rental**

- **Art shows such as the annual IMAGE Art Show**

- **Space for meetings and art events**

**Please contact ECRAC staff if you or your organization would like further information regarding these services.**

**Grant Application Workshops: Information sessions** are held monthly. Participants will learn about the grant programs, application process, and how to write an effective ECRAC grant application. This is a great opportunity to get your questions answered on your project ideas.

**Grant Library:** ECRAC maintains a library of submitted grant applications.  Reviewing these materials can enhance your understanding of the process and may improve your application. The application library is normally open during regular office hours (9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.). Our staff is happy to help you. To see a list of previously funded projects, visit our web page: **www.ecrac.org/grants.**

# APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS
## <u>BEFORE YOU BEGIN</u>

You will first need to familiarize yourself with the basic information about grant funding through the East Central Regional Arts Council. Please read through this entire document before beginning the application form. The application form includes specific questions which will assist the Regional Arts Council review team in determining artistic quality & merit, ability, and artistic need for the project.

Technical assistance is available for applicants who need advice in developing a grant proposal.  The Regional Arts Council also conducts grant workshops that help applicants understand the grantmaking philosophy as well as the process for submitting successful grant applications**.**  Assistance from staff does not imply funding for an application. The content, accuracy, completeness, and merits of the grant proposal are solely the responsibility of the applicant.


## <u>TIPS ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION</u>

1.      START EARLY! A reasonable amount of planning time should be allowed to develop an application.  Grant writing technical assistance is provided by ECRAC staff as requested.  The staff person can best be of help to you if you contact them well in advance of the application technical assistance deadline.  Assistance from the staff person does not, however, imply that grant funding will be received.

2.      Contact the ECRAC office to determine the availability of funding and which of the grant areas your proposal fits into. The ECRAC phone number is: 320-396-2337.

3.      Attend an ECRAC Grant Workshop Information Session.  This is not currently a grant requirement, but it is strongly recommended by ECRAC for this funding.

4.      Read over the form to be sure you understand all the questions.  Call the ECRAC office (320-396-2337) or email <u>info@ecrac.org</u> if you are unclear about the application questions or grant review criteria.

5.      Use the online forms provided by ECRAC.  The application materials are on the ECRAC website: <u>www.ecrac.org/grants</u>. The online grant portal is at <u>http://www.ecrac.org/node/175</u>.

6.      You will have to remain within the specified amount of space for answers. Do not submit additional materials. Additional pages and materials will not be reviewed by the Council or by a grant review panel. Do not mail any application-related materials to ECRAC.

7.      Complete and submit your online application before **11:59 p.m.** of the deadline date. Applications cannot be accepted after the deadline.

8. To be eligible, your application must include <u>ALL</u> required materials. If not, the application will be found ineligible.

9. Give all grant project personnel (project director/artists/fiscal agent) a copy of your grant proposal.

# STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS
## for ECRAC Small/Arts Project Grants

## REQUIRED GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION

Use this information in preparing the narrative and all other requirements:

1. The **Project Director** is the person responsible for the day-to-day details of the project. This is the organization's contact person who is knowledgeable about the project and who is available to receive calls, emails, and correspondence. The Project Director has responsibility for all reporting requirements. For example, writing the final report and compiling the financial documentation after project completion. Include the mailing address and your email and web information for the organization.

2. The **Grant Writer** is the person from the applicant organization responsible for writing the grant proposal and needs to ensure that the project director, authorizing officials, artists, and key project personnel are all aware of the grant proposal details. The Grant Writer should be a representative of the organization applying for funding. The Grant Writer can also be the Project Director. Contact ECRAC staff if you have any questions/concerns regarding this.

3. **Tax Exempt Number**: This MUST be completed if you are in an incorporated, non-profit group.

4. **Fiscal Agent**. If your organization is a unit of government, an independent school district (ISD) or is incorporated as a Minnesota private, non-profit organization which has obtained a 501(c)3 tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code and which is registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State and Department of Revenue, **DO NOT** <u>complete this section</u>. Unless the applicant organization is a unit of government or ISD you must provide proof of your organization's non-profit, tax-exempt status with your application. To clarify, Independent School District applicants do not use the fiscal agent section nor do units of government.

   If your group is **NOT** incorporated as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit organization, you may receive funds through a **fiscal agent**. Please refer to the Guidelines for who is eligible to receive and administer the funds as a fiscal agent. You must furnish the fiscal agent agreement (contract) with the organization that has agreed to

serve as your fiscal agent and a copy of their proof of non-profit, tax-exempt status with your proposal. A sample copy of a **Fiscal Agent Agreement** is included for your convenience.  The fiscal agent is legally responsible for the proper completion of the project and the grant project finances.  This fiscal agent contact person should be an authorizing official of the organization.

5. The **Grant Guidelines (page 7-8)** contain the __earliest starting dates__.  ECRAC cannot fund projects which start before this deadline.  **In most cases, applicants will use the date of the first expenditure of project funds as the start date and NOT the event date.**

## Narrative

The narrative sections are your proposal's detailed project description.  Be sure to answer all questions asked in these sections, or your proposal will be considered incomplete and ineligible for funding.  Describe your project in the space provided.

## Detailed Project Description

The review panel uses the following criteria to evaluate your application:

**Artistic Merit and Quality; Organizational Ability; Demand/Need for the project in the community served.**

The Project Description portion of the application is designed to help you address these criteria.

Describe the arts project for which you are requesting grant funds. Include descriptions of all activities involved in completing the arts project, the dates, location(s), number of performances, names of all key staff, artists or companies, and any other information that will help the Arts Council understand your proposal. Define your community. Explain the artistic merit of your project. Describe how your organization will provide promotion and publicity for the project.

### Artistic Merit and Quality

These questions refer to the artistic quality of this project. __If this is a repeat project__, you must explain how this project has a heightened sense of artistic merit from the previous grant funded project. Contact ECRAC staff with any questions you may have regarding project criteria.

### Applicant Ability

Please answer all questions in this section regarding your organization. Résumés of artists or arts project staff must be submitted as attachments with the completed application.

### Need or Demand for the Project

This section refers to the need or demand for the intended project, and community involvement with, or support, for the project. Answer all questions clearly and concisely using the space stipulated.

## Outcome Evaluation Plan

ECRAC feels it is important to have an obligation and be intentional about evaluating art grant projects: the outcomes, impacts and results, and the community benefits. Therefore, outcome evaluation is an important part of a funding proposal. Be sure to include the costs of the outcome evaluation in your budget as a grant funded expense.

You will be asked to describe which of the following best describe the majority of the people you plan to serve with this project:

- Young children
- School age children
- Teens or youth
- Adults – general public
- Adults – professionals or peers
- Adults – artists
- Adults – learners
- Adults – seniors or elders
- Inter-generational groups (e.g., families)
- Communities (e.g., neighborhoods or cities)
- Organizations
- People in institutional settings
- People who might have difficulty communicating (e.g., reading, writing, or speaking)
- People who may have sensory difficulties (e.g., vision or hearing)
- People who may have mobility difficulties
- People who may have cognitive difficulties

Sometimes thinking about different kinds of possible changes or effects with a grant project can help us connect a grantmaker's very broad program outcomes to your own, specific outcomes for your project. Which of these broad areas best describes the kinds of change you expect from your project?

- Artists and the arts are visible in communities
- Artists develop their practice
- Organizations develop capacities that advance the arts
- People access arts experiences
- People develop arts skills or knowledge
- People have meaningful arts experiences
- People make connections to ideas, organizations, or one another

Having a specific outcome in mind means that the people you serve are supposed to be different in some way as a result of this project.  What kinds of specific changes do you expect to see in the people to be served by this project?

- An emotional response or reaction
- A changed attitude about something or someone
- A new awareness about something or someone
- A new intention or motivation to take some course of action
- A changed perception of themselves or others
- A new or expanded understanding or knowledge about some topic
- A new or expanded skill in some area
- A change to their behavior after this experience
- Changes to their relationships with someone else: could be new, strengthened, enriched, or changed in some other way
- Your organization will have a new or improved ability or capacity to do something
- A change to some other condition (for example, some kind of individual well-being, community strength, etc.)

**Outcome Measurement**
There are many ways to measure the results of projects; for example, collecting verbal or written stories and comments, surveys, focus groups, and interviews. For the visual arts, exhibit guest books are often used to capture comments. For the performing arts, attendance numbers or audience surveys may be useful. Comments/Critiques by peers can also be a way to assess the impact of your work. ECRAC staff has samples of outcome evaluations. Schedule an appointment with staff if this will assist you in your proposal.

**Organization Grants - Outcome Evaluation Plan, cont.**

ECRAC expects that you will provide either quantitative or qualitative measurements or both.

What kinds of methods do you anticipate using to document progress toward your project outcomes?

- Reviewing program statistics or other documents related to the project
- Reviewing or critiquing a portfolio, experience, or other artifacts of the project (by experts, peers, or others)
- Conducting interviews with stakeholders
- Conducting focus groups with stakeholders
- Creating one or more case studies about the project
- Making structured observations of stakeholders during project activities
- Surveying stakeholders about their knowledge skills, attitudes, behaviors, or motivations
- Gauging stakeholder priorities using interactive methods such as sorting cards or voting
- Having stakeholders describe or capture their own impressions using PhotoVoice, talk-aloud interviews, making maps or illustrations, journaling, etc.

Please note that the term stakeholder suggests the people data is gathered from and could be participant, audiences, community members, artists, project partners or organization staff. It depends on your proposed project.

# Project Budget

**These grants may provide up to 50% of the total project cost. Eligible applications will show at least 10% cash support (i.e. not in kind) for the project.** The cash match can include earned income, other grants/contributions, and cash on hand. In kind cannot be included as part of the cash match.

**Round off all amounts to the nearest dollar.** Applications should present the total project cost. **DO NOT** inflate your figures. An inflated budget reflects poorly on the organizational ability of the project. Applicants must also provide a copy of their current annual organizational budget and, if applicable, annually a copy of their most current IRS 990 and/or audit.

**Project Budget - Expenses: Use the ECRAC on line format for the budget.** Be as specific as possible. All costs of the project are to be identified in this section. Dollar values should be given to in kind and cash match and identified in this section. Contact staff if you have questions regarding in kind dollar values. ECRAC does not fund general operating expenses with this program; however, project administrative costs are allowable if they are tracked and clearly documented in the final report.

1. **Salaries or Wages** - May include the project director, artistic director or other personnel assisting with the project. An hourly rate should be identified along with estimated hours for the project. **Personnel should be named and the work résumé(s) for each must be included with your application.**

2. **Artist Fees** - This will include artist fees for service, artist contracts, and/or honoraria and the total to be paid to each. Artists must be identified by name and their artistic résumé(s) included in the application.

3.  **Travel and Expenses** - Include travel expenses such as allowable mileage and room & board for guest artists. An explanation of transportation expenses should be included, with the amount and rate of mileage (if applicable.) Submit proof of these expenses with the final/financial report. <u>No travel costs outside of Minnesota are allowed with this grant program</u>.

4.  **Publicity** - List the costs of all marketing; radio, website, newspaper, posters, flyers, etc.

5.  **Rental Fees/Equipment** - This can include the costs for renting performance space, costumes, audio equipment, etc. If performance or other space is in kind, the applicant must document, with a letter from the donor, to verify the value. This section can also include the purchase costs for needed equipment. You will need to include three separate quotes to document the expense. The lowest bid need not be selected; however the applicant should state the reason why it wasn't selected. If your proposal includes the purchase of equipment $500 or more you also need to submit an Equipment Use Plan, signed by you, and certifying you will not sell the equipment without prior ECRAC approval and the equipment may be subject to a UCC filing.

6.  **Supplies and Materials** - List consumable supplies for the project such as playbooks, music, etc. <u>Reusable items should not be listed here</u>. You can list the cost of refreshments here if they are an important part of your project budget.

7.  **Printing and Postage** - List all printing and postage costs here.

8.  **Other** - Costs in this category could include telephone, royalties, and other costs.

**Total -** Total all costs to get the Total Expenses.

**<u>Project Budget - Income</u>**
1.  **Earned Income** - Project income based on your group's experience. Estimate the earned income you will receive during this project. An example of earned income is ticket sales.

2.  **Grants and Contributions** - Other grants, anticipated grants, and expected contributions should be listed here. These funds should be already secured/anticipated.

3.  **Cash** - Cash on hand that is budgeted for the proposed project should be listed here.

4.  **In kind** - In kind includes donated material, labor, or space that can be given a dollar value and is committed to the project. In kind should be significant items.

**Sub-Total** - Total all Project Income. Identify your funding request to ECRAC. The sum of the project costs and the ECRAC grant request is the **Total Income**.

**The Total Income must be equal to the Total Expenses.** If the income is more than the expenses, it is for profit project and will be ineligible for grant funding.

## Board of Directors Information

This will be used to help determine organizational ability.  Attach a list of your board members, indicating their address, profession, organizational affiliation or area of expertise.  If you are using a fiscal agent, do not include the board members of the fiscal agent - include the members of *your* organization.  (An organization or group using a fiscal agent must have *at least* three board members.)

## Résumé's

Include work résumés of the project director and any key project personnel mentioned in the application. Include artistic résumés for all artists or companies.  These are used to determine both organizational ability and artistic merit.  Any staff person or artist to be paid for with ECRAC grant funds **MUST** be named and have a résumé included with the proposal. The ECRAC grant reviewers strongly prefer résumés, *not bio's*. If a bio or narrative  is submitted for an artist ensure that it contains information usually included in an artistic résumé.  If you have questions on this contact ECRAC staff.

## Tax Exempt/Non-Profit Status

You are required to furnish proof of your group's IRS tax-exempt status Letter of Determination that shows Minnesota non-profit status, OR furnish a letter of agreement with your fiscal agent and proof of your fiscal agent's Minnesota non-profit status**.  If you are with a unit of government or public school you do not have to provide non-profit status unless ECRAC has a question regarding current status.**

## Certification

You must certify that your board of directors supports this application, that it is accurate, and that you will carry out the project as described if it is funded.  **Two different signatures are required; one signer must be an authorizing board officer. The other signer will be the project director.**

Download and complete the certification form and get the appropriate signatures, and then upload it to the online application form.  If your organization does not have a board of directors, you will be using a fiscal agent. In that case, their authorizing board officer, or signer, and the project director will sign the form.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- **Re-read and review your application for accuracy and completeness. Be sure your budgets and your narrative tell the same story!**

- **Submit on or before the deadline date.  This is an online only grant application.**

- **Do not submit information that is not requested by ECRAC.**

- **These applications are public documents.  <u>DO NOT submit information with private personal information such as social security numbers or other non-public information</u>.  Your organization or fiscal agent <u>is</u> required to submit their Employer Identification Number.**

- **Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their grant proposal application and materials are submitted online correctly. ECRAC staff can provide technical assistance if needed.**

# S A M P L E

## F I S C A L   A G E N T   A G R E E M E N T

The _____ agrees to serve as fiscal agent for
            (Fiscal Agent Organization)

the _____ under the following stipulations:
        (Sponsored Arts Organization or Group)

1. The fiscal agent status is for one East Central Regional Arts Council (ECRAC) grant project only.

2. The sponsored arts organization or group is responsible for completing: the art project per the approved grant application; and the subsequent final financial report. The group will provide copies of these to the organization serving as fiscal agent.  The fiscal agent is responsible for reviewing and signing the Certification, Notification of Grant Award (NGA), Request for Payment (RFP), and Final Report, and will ensure that records are kept regarding the grant project for at least 3 years after the end date.

3. The sponsored arts group will keep the organization serving as fiscal agent informed about the progress of the project. Any deviations from the approved grant project will have prior approval of the fiscal agent and of the Regional Arts Council.

4. The sponsored arts group will neither enter into grant-related contracts nor accept additional grant-related contributions from any individual(s) or group(s) without prior approval of the fiscal agent organization.

5. The fiscal agent organization will keep all funds in its account and will write checks only when furnished with appropriate bills or proof of expenses by the sponsored arts group.

6. The fiscal agent and sponsored arts group are both bound to the terms of the ECRAC notification of grant award contract (NGA) and the applicable grant guidelines.


_____     _____     _____
Signature (Fiscal Agent Organization)        Position                    Date


_____     _____     _____
Signature  (Sponsored Arts Group)            Position                    Date

**Two different signatures are required.**  When using a fiscal agent, one signer must be an authorizing official of the fiscal agent organization, and the other an authorizing official of the sponsored arts group.

# Any questions?    Please call 320-396-2337!

**East Central Regional Arts Council**
**112 Main Avenue S.**
**PO Box 294**
**Braham, MN 55006**
www.ecrac.org

**STAY UP-TO-DATE!  Make sure you are on the e-newsletter mailing list!**

# ECRAC Mission

**The ECRAC mission is to support the arts and bring the life enhancing values**
**they afford to Region 7E residents.**

**If funded, when advertising the open to the public component of your grant, grantees are required**
**to use the logo(s), funding credit line, and hashtags (for social media use) as**
**found in the grant contract:**



**This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the East Central Regional Arts Council with**
**funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature from its general fund.**

**or**

**This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the East Central Regional Arts Council with**
**funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature from its general fund and the arts**
**and cultural heritage fund.**

**These guidelines can be made available in the following formats:**
**Braille, large print, and as an audio.**
**To accommodate your request ECRAC will need at least 5 working days.**