



# METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

## Metro Arts Grants' Grant Submission Guide

The reflective questions below can support the grant submission process. If you have any questions, please contact Jonathan Saad ([jonathan.saad@nashville.gov](mailto:jonathan.saad@nashville.gov)) or Dana Parsons ([dana.parsons@nashville.gov](mailto:dana.parsons@nashville.gov)) for support.

### Pre-Application:

1. Am I clear about the purpose of the organization?
2. Have I planned for multiple perspectives to contribute to a draft of the application responses?
3. Have I shared reflective materials with all contributors?
  - a. Budget
  - b. Strategic or other plan
  - c. Compilation of feedback/community input
  - d. Purpose, Goals, Values
4. Do I have an account in [Submittable](#) (Metro Arts' grant platform)?
5. Am I starting the application process at least 3 weeks before the submission deadline?

### Application:

Use the rubric's "Outstanding Response" as a way to guide your thinking.

After each question's draft, ask - Does this response align with the "Outstanding Response" description?

(An option for Micro organizations only) Tell us your story.

*Outstanding Response: Story shows significant impact (community value or benefit clearly connected to needs and aspirations).*

- Think about - What makes the organization shine? Why is its work important? How is it impacting the community?



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What does the organization do?

*Not scored, just informational.*

- Think about providing a foundation for the rest of the questions. What is the purpose of the organization (What work does it do? Why does it do this work? Who does it serve? What is the size of the organization? What makes it shine?)

What is the impact of the organization's work?

*Outstanding Response: Demonstrates significant impact in connection to community value or benefit.*

- Think about what the community values (and how you know they have those values). What does impact mean for the organization when it's connected (or even evolving to connect more deeply) to community values?
- Think about - Impact is not necessarily quantitative or qualitative. The organization can explore impact as it relates to its purpose and its community.

Where is the work going next, including artistic risk-taking?

*Outstanding Response: Demonstrates a commitment to move the organization forward, with risk-taking being a central and consistent part of the process.*

- Think about - How does the organization commit to growth? What could be an example of growth over the last year? How does the organization define growth or forward movement (eg. improvement of programming, improved response to the community, expansion, increased funding, better internal culture and climate, etc.)?
- Think about - What does risk-taking mean as it relates to the organization's purpose and community? Is the organization's purpose organically considered a risk in relationship to its service or type of programming? How is risk-taking a part of the creative process for internal and public-facing decision-making, operations, and programming? How does it connect to equity goals and action?

What communities do you serve and how does the organization work to increase accessibility to the arts?

*Outstanding Response: Demonstrates evidence of engaging historically underserved communities and communicates plans to sustain and/or expand accessibility to programming.*

- Think about - Who does the organization currently serve? Who are we actually connecting with and how do we know? If we're serving privileged communities and demographics, what work is being done to serve historically underserved



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- communities? How are we thinking about access to our programming as more than just exposure and how are we challenging or removing barriers to participation?
- Think about - evidence. How do we know that we're engaging (not just exposing our programs to) those that we say we are serving and want to serve?

How is the community involved in decisions regarding artistic programming?

*Outstanding Response: Process shows authentic community collaboration, where the community is essential in the artistic decision-making process.*

- Think about - What is the process in place for decision-making? Where and how are community voices being heard? What does it mean to honor community voices in the collaborative process?
- Think about - Can the process of launching programs be analyzed to embrace art *of the community* rather than *for the community*?

Describe how the leadership and team reflects the community or communities you serve.

Include a brief reflection on the overall climate and culture within the organization and any plans for development and/or changes.

*Outstanding Response: Organization leadership and team clearly reflects the community(ies) served and planned professional development and changes reflect a sustained commitment to elevating climate and culture.*

- Think about - Who makes up the community or communities served? What are the demographics of race, age, household income, or people with disabilities, within the community or communities served? What action is being taken to better align the community or communities reflection with the organization's reflection (and why this is important for the organization's impact)?
- Think about - Embracing the forward movement and growth from the earlier question, how is professional and personal development a strategic part of the growth of internal operations? How is the internal team feeling about the work and how is that information used to inform support?
- Think about - What is still unknown? Where are there additional support needs?

(For Mid-Sized and Large Organizations Only)

What are current challenges of the organization, including budgetary challenges, and how are they addressed?



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*Outstanding Response: Response shows a process of regularly monitoring and proactively addressing challenges.*

- Think about this being a reflective exercise for action. Remember! Sharing challenges openly creates a space for additional support to arrive.
- Think about an example of a challenge (internal operations, sustainability, programs, public-facing engagement, etc.) and reflect on what worked well and what could have been improved when action was taken.
- Think about - How is a team (more than one perspective) involved in problem-solving?

Explain the process for long-term or strategic planning. (If your organization does not have a long-term or strategic plan, how do you design programs and activities for the future?) How does this process align with the organization's values?

*Outstanding Response: Explanation of long-term/strategic planning process that directly connects with the organization's values and the community's needs and aspirations.*

- Think about - How did/does the process of creating a strategic plan connect to the community? How are community voices present in the strategic plan?
- Think about - How are priorities for the organization established in alignment with the community's needs and aspirations?
- Think about - How is leadership and the team held accountable for the strategic plan's actions?

Post-application:

1. Have multiple people read, edited, and made suggestions to improve the draft?
  - a. Is at least one of the readers someone who has little knowledge of the organization?
  - b. Can I confirm that multiple perspectives are included in the review and feedback process?
2. Is equity and accessibility embedded within the responses? If not, are approaches shared regarding future action and vision of embedding equity and accessibility for that question(s)?