

Creative Places Arts Facilities

Overview

The **Creative Places Arts Facilities** (CPAF) program assists arts organizations in building, renovating, restoring, or enhancing facilities used for arts activities that benefit Alabamians.

Requests are accepted from performing arts centers, art museums and galleries, multi-purpose arts centers, artist residency facilities, and outdoor performance venues. Only one request will be accepted per organization. Requests in the Creative Places Arts Facilities program are *not* included in determining the annual limit to apply for other Council on the Arts grant programs.

Categories and Request Limits

Grants are available to...

Enhance Creative Places

Fund equipment purchases which improve arts experiences by upgrading sound, lighting, seating, stage curtains, or similar items that improve how cultural assets and works of art are presented, produced, exhibited, and/or preserved.

- **Creative Place Enhancement Grants**
 - May **request up to \$50,000**.
 - Have **no requirement of applicant-funded expenses**.

Design Creative Places

Funding necessary steps to build, renovate, reuse, or restore an arts facility. Results must include tangible designs in the form of blueprints, schematics, renderings, or other documents needed construction.

- **Designing Grants**
 - May **request up to \$75,000**.
 - *Must* include the production of a tangible design document, such as blueprints, schematics, or renderings as a proposed expense.

Construct Creative Places

Build a new facility, substantially renovate an existing facility, or make significant repairs/modifications of existing facilities. Work may include addressing safety hazards, moisture mitigation, roof repairs or replacement, upgrade of mechanical systems, and/or ADA-compliant improvements that increase accessibility to arts programming for persons with disabilities.

- **Construction Grants**
 - May **request up to \$100,000**.

Designing and **Construction** grants require applicant-funded expenses equal to, or greater than, the amount requested. This dollar-for-dollar match may:

- Include up to 25% of matching expenses provided by in-kind donations or discounts of goods and services.
- Be reduced for applicants serving communities facing challenges, as indicated by the census tract location of proposed activities in the 50th percentile or higher of the [FEMA Community Resilience Challenges Index](#).



Eligibility

Organizations

Applications must be submitted by **nonprofit organizations**, tax exempt under subsection 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, legally chartered in Alabama, in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service.

Applicants that are part of city or county government must operate under the supervision of an independent governing board, *separate* from city administration. Applications must be submitted by the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Applicants must demonstrate the long-term dedicated arts-oriented use of facilities, with documented track record of year-round arts programming.

Ineligible applicants include:

- For-profit venues
- Historic homes
- Office space
- Non-art museums
- PreK-12 and post-secondary schools, public or private
- Grantees with *past due* final reports.
 - Applications will be accepted only when all incomplete forms are submitted and approved. To confirm your standing with the Council on the Arts, please contact your Program Manager.
- **Applicants who request, lobby, or receive funding from the Alabama legislature for capital projects, arts programming, and/or general operating expenses for their organization are *not* eligible to apply for a Creative Places Arts Facilities grant.**

Applicants must be compliant with federal and state laws and regulations, including the following:

- Organizations requesting more than \$5,000 must upload a signed and notarized disclosure form with the application.
- Applicants with paid employees are required by law to enroll in the eVerify service.
- Organizations which are suspended or debarred by the United States General Services Administration are not eligible. No expenses related to a grant may be paid to suspended or debarred vendors.



Eligible Activities

Grant funds must be used for activities occurring between April 1, 2025 and April 1, 2026. Grantees will be able to request an extension of the project period to September 30, 2026.

Examples of eligible project activities may include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Architectural or design plans for new buildings, expansions, or adaptive re-use.
- ✓ Renovations and/or construction of existing or new arts facilities.
- ✓ Arts facilities improvements, including essential technology updates, and infrastructure upgrades for presenting, producing, exhibiting, and/or preserving arts and cultural assets.
- ✓ Enhancements and equipment purchase to improve sound, lighting, seating, stage curtains, or other upgrades that enhance the ability of the applicant to provide arts experiences.
- ✓ Improvements that increase accessibility to arts programming for persons with disabilities and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- ✓ Repairs such as correcting structural deficiencies and conditions that pose a safety hazard to the building occupants or to the building itself, painting, moisture mitigation, roof repairs or replacement, and the repair or upgrade of mechanical systems.

Ineligible Expenses and Activities

The following are *not* eligible for Council on the Arts grant funding, *or* as matching expenses paid for by the grantee:

- ✗ General operating costs.
- ✗ Marketing, promotion, or advertising
- ✗ Purchase of real estate
- ✗ Indirect costs, such as unspecified "administrative overhead."
- ✗ Expenses or activities that are duplicated in any other grant of the Council on the Arts.
- ✗ Unrealized income, such as scholarships or complementary tickets.
- ✗ Fundraising events or social gatherings without clear arts-oriented outcomes or purposes.
- ✗ Food, catering, alcoholic beverages, or other refreshments.
- ✗ Rental or use fees for applicant owned or operated venues.
- ✗ Supplementing cash reserves, endowments, or investment portfolios.
- ✗ Purchase of wholesale products as merchandise for retail sale.
- ✗ Litigation
- ✗ Penalty fees, interest or debt payments
- ✗ Regranting of funds to individuals or other organizations.



Application Process

Deadline

Applications will be accepted through the Council on the Arts online grants portal found at arts.alabama.gov/apply **September 16 through December 2, 2024.**

The deadline is *promptly* at 5 pm on December 2, 2024.

Content

Narrative descriptions will allow applicants to describe the proposed activities, scope of work, timeline, key personnel, planned arts programming, facility management, and other relevant details.

Documents, photos, and other supplemental files may also be uploaded to the online application.

Required uploaded materials

- ✓ Documentation of the applicant organization's track record of *year-round arts programming*.
- ✓ Documentation of *ownership*.
 - This can be provided with either:*
 - The deed to property or facility identified in the proposal.
 - or*
 - A lease, legally binding local resolution, ordinance, memorandum of understanding, or contract stipulating the use of the property/facility for creative and artistic activities for 10 years or more.
- ✓ A notarized copy of the disclosure form, for requests greater than \$5,000.
- ✓ **Construction** requests *must* include architectural drawings, blueprints, renderings, diagrams, or other appropriate documentation.

Optional uploaded materials

- ✓ A current organizational strategic plan.
- ✓ Needs assessments, cost estimates, or similar planning and research documents.
- ✓ Maps, land surveys, aerial photography, or other documentation of the facility location.
- ✓ Letters of support or other evidence of community buy-in.

Along with required narratives, applicants must complete a table of eligible expenses, indicating the amount of each line proposed to be funded by the grant award, by the applicant in cash, and by donations or discounts given in-kind.

The digital signature of a representative authorized by the applicant organization to enter into binding agreements must be provided.

Note: For applicants with multiple people involved in the request, each individual must have their own account in the online grants portal. Digital signatures must match the identity associated with the user account.

Incomplete or late applications will not be reviewed.



Evaluation Criteria

Grant applications are reviewed and evaluated based on the benefit to Alabama, realistically feasible activities, professional competence, and the community circumstances. Competitive applications address these criteria with clear, specific evidence and examples.

Benefit to Alabama

The outcome of creative, artistic experiences that are accessible to all Alabamians, describing:

- The use of the facility upon completion, including the nature and frequency of arts programming.
- Those who will experience the arts through the growth of capacity and improved facilities.
- Barrier-free spaces and related programming approaches that ensure individuals may experience artistic and creative activities, regardless of disability.

Feasibility

The feasibility of successful completion of the proposed activities with a realistic timeline includes descriptions of:

- The current state of the building and the planned renovations or repairs, providing as much detail as possible, including any architectural studies or other work that has been completed on the project.
- Current circumstances of ownership.
- Phased projects, and how the proposed activities continue upon prior efforts, or will be further developed in the future.
- Financial backing, including the status and plans for raising funds.

Professional

The qualifications of those involved, along with the organizational support for the proposed activities, includes descriptions of:

- The qualifications of all identified *external personnel*, including:
 - Architects, building contractors, other sub-contractors, or other professionals.
 - The process used to select identified professionals.
 - The status of any pending personnel decisions.
- The qualifications and experience of *organization staff*, including:
 - Staff providing oversight of proposed activities.
 - Current facility and operations leadership.
 - Projected or anticipated facility and operations leadership upon completion of the proposed activities.



Timeline

Application

December 2, 2024	Application Deadline.
March 2025	Quarterly meeting of the Council.
March 17, 2025	Awards announced, grantees notified.

Grant Agreement

March 21, 2025	All Grant Agreements assigned to grantees in online portal.
April 25, 2025	Deadline to sign and return online Grant Agreement.

Award Disbursement

All disbursements are contingent upon registration through Alabama Buys, and a fully executed Grant Agreement. The final disbursement is contingent upon an approved Final Report.

April 1, 2025	Starting on this date: Enhancement grantees may request 25% to 100% of the award to be disbursed, with support documentation of incurred expenses and required match. Design and Construction grantees <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May request up to 50% of the award to be disbursed, with support documentation of incurred expenses and required match.• A second disbursement may be requested when 75% of the award and required match can be documented.• The third and final disbursement of the balance is requested with the submission of the final report, and support documentation of all incurred expenses and required match.
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Interim Report

September 1, 2025	Deadline for interim report to confirm timeline of activities, and incurred/projected expenses.
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Project Period Extension

March 1, 2026	Deadline to request a project period extension.
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Final Report

Documentation of expenses, along with narratives and supplemental materials, will be required of all grantees. The Final Report is due 30 days following the last day of your project period.

May 1, 2026	Unless a project period extension is requested, all Final Reports will be due on or before May 1, 2026.
September 30, 2026	All Final Reports for grants with approved extensions will be due on or before September 30, 2026.

