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Individual Artist Commission DEC Grant 2021 Guidelines

New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Program



FOR ERIE & NIAGARA COUNTIES

**DEADLINE: Friday, December 11, 2020
by 11:59pm**

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OVERVIEW

DECENTRALIZATION

NYSCA established the Decentralization Grant Program (DEC) in 1977 to ensure that New York State's cultural funding reaches every part of the state. The program forms the cornerstone of the Council's partnership with local arts agencies throughout the state (like ASI), providing a link between the Council and portions of the community that might not otherwise be able to access funding from NYSCA.

These grants are administered by Arts Services Inc. (ASI) and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). **The grants are awarded for specific projects occurring between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.** NOTE: Due to limited New York State funding, these grants are extremely competitive.

The INDIVIDUAL ARTIST COMMISSION DEC GRANT is a competitive grant that provides support for the creation of new work that engages the community through the artists' creative process. Artists residing in Erie or Niagara County are eligible to apply for this grant for community-based projects. The goal of this grant is to support the development of new work by individual artists **in all disciplines** while encouraging interaction between artists and community members to highlight the role of the artist as a community resource. This grant is a tier program of the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) Decentralization (DEC) Program.

New for 2021! Funding is available between the amounts of \$1,000 and \$2,500.

The goals of the Individual Artist DEC program include:

- Arts activities **MUST** be the primary driving force of project requests.
- Providing quality arts/cultural projects to Erie or Niagara County.
- Increasing the support for local artist-initiated activity.
- Highlighting the role of artists as important members of the community, through involvement of the community in the creation process.*
- Supporting cultural expression of our diverse ethnic groups.
- Making arts/cultural programming accessible to underserved or minority audiences, and economically disadvantaged communities.

**ALL requests must have a public component – one that is available to the entire community AND that incorporates community engagement into the project.*

This project is intended to expand, promote, and increase arts and cultural programming at the local level including, but not limited to, projects in the following areas: Dance, Design Arts, Folk Arts, Humanities, Literature/Poetry, Media (film, video, radio), Music, Opera/Musical Theater, Photography, Skilled Crafts, Textile Arts, Theater, Visual Arts and Multi-Disciplinary programs.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Individual Artist (IA) DEC funding is designed to increase support for local artist-initiated activity and to highlight the role of artists as important members of the community.

An essential element of this funding is **community engagement**. All IA project proposals must engage a segment of the community through a public program, such as an exhibition or performance that is open to the public, and/or the inclusion of community involvement in the development and creative process of the project. This can be in the form of feedback, response, interaction, and/or social practice by or with community members. Some examples of this type of interaction are interviews with a segment of the community, creation of parallel work by a community group, or stories and anecdotes collected from a community group that relate to the concept or content of the project.

Eligible applications must meet the following requirements:

- Projects must take place between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.
- Applicants must be an individual artist residing in Erie or Niagara County. NOTE: All project activities must take place in the same county in which you are an applicant.
- Applicants must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- Projects must include **new works** in any artistic discipline that serve communities and provide ways for communities to connect with it.
- Projects must reflect the life and/or culture of the artist or the artist's community. This is critical for helping the community to gain access to and understand your art.
- Projects must engage a segment of the community through some form of feedback, response, interaction, and/or social practice.

Fiscal sponsorship by a 501c3 organization IS NOT NEEDED. You will apply for this grant as an individual.

INELIGIBILITY

The following are NOT eligible to apply for this funding:

- Organizations and agencies of any kind. This grant is strictly for **individual artists**.
- Individuals who applied directly to NYSCA, regardless of funding status.
- Previously funded DEC recipients who have failed to provide final reports, use proper acknowledgement, or have failed to comply with previous contract terms.
- Individual artists who are under the age of eighteen (18).
- Student projects for a class or internship.
- Arts Services Inc., its employees, or board members.

ALLOWABLE AND NON-FUNDABLE EXPENSES

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Allowable expenses for a proposed project include:

- Activities/Projects of local arts organizations
- Artist fees
- Marketing/Publicity costs

- Direct administrative expenses and/or planning and preparation expenses for a proposed event.
- Supplies and materials needed to execute the proposed project. Individual items may not exceed \$1,000. Examples include art supplies, sheet music, hardware, memory cards, and other consumable equipment.
- Equipment, software, subscriptions, and training needed to execute the proposed project. Individual items may not exceed \$1,000. Examples include cameras, lighting equipment, subscriptions associated with virtual programming, and training to utilize these tools.

NON-FUNDABLE EXPENSES

The following items cannot be covered by DEC funding:

- Projects taking place outside of Erie or Niagara County.
- Activities and projects which cannot be completed between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.
- General operating expenses, administrative expenses not directly related to proposed project, and contingency funds.
- Project requests for deficit funding and capital expenditures, including purchase of property or permanent equipment.
- Operating expenses of privately owned facilities (e.g. homes and studios).
- Activities in venues that do not comply with all safety and accessibility standards.
- Projects in which the primary benefit is the financial gain by an individual.
- Start-up or seed funding for the establishment of new organizations.
- Artistic funds for university faculty and staff for work done through their position in their institutions.
- Projects where fees are paid to students of universities, high schools, middle or elementary schools, or use children as professional artists.
- Cash prizes, scholarships, juried shows, fellowships, and other awards to students.
- Entertainment costs such as parties, openings, receptions, food, or **fundraising events**.
- Art exhibitions that are not juried or assessed and/or organized by a professional curator.
- **Art projects that are recreational, rehabilitative, or therapeutic in nature** (e.g. art therapy, religious, liturgical or worship).
- Projects not open to the general public such as camps, clubs or college associations, or groups that require a membership.
- Residency programs.
- Activities that are not arts-related (e.g. balloon art, clowns, magic shows, bubble blowing, juggling) or with non-arts and culture related outcomes, such as at-risk/social service programs.
- Lobbying expenses.
- Acquisitions of works of art.
- Creation of textbooks or classroom material.
- Re-grants by applicants to fund other activities.

If you have any eligibility-related questions, contact the DEC coordinator for clarification before starting your application.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Attendance at an information session is mandatory for NEW applicants and highly encouraged for past applicants.

These sessions, led by ASI staff, offer assistance in understanding the grant process, as well as provides tips, program guidelines, and a copy of the grant application. RSVPs are required by emailing or calling ASI. Attendance is tracked as they are required for new applicants.

INFORMATION SESSION DATES

Visit <https://www.asiwny.org/dec-grants/> for the complete schedule.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Friday, December 11, 2020 by 11:59pm

- One (1) electronic submission of the application with ALL required attachments must be submitted by this date and time through your online grant portal profile. Please contact Holly at holly@asiwny.org if you have trouble accessing the online grant portal.
- Link to online grant portal - <https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=artsofwesternny>

A draft application can be submitted by **Wednesday, November 18, 2020 (12:00pm)** for staff review and feedback before submitting a final application.

Late or incomplete applications WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please double check and proofread your work before hitting submit.

GRANT REVIEW AND DETERMINATION

ASI reviews all applications for eligibility and completeness. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be eliminated from consideration.

A peer panel of area artists, arts administrators, and community leaders evaluates each application based on the evaluation criteria and funding priorities. Deliberations are based only on the information and materials contained in the application; additional information after the submission deadline will not be accepted or considered.

Upon request, panelists will have access to final and interim reports, audit information, and previous panel deliberation notes (where available). **Please note:** *Impact of COVID-19 on 2020 funded projects will not influence funding decisions.*

Once funding decisions are made by the panel, a separate Advisory Committee will review the decisions. Then, the ASI Board of Directors will review the funding recommendations and has the final authority for all decisions.

EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

The panel will make funding recommendations based primarily on the following criteria:

- Artistic merit and quality of arts and cultural based projects in underserved communities.
- Caliber and credentials of professional artists and other project personnel supported by work samples.
- Public arts and cultural projects which build an arts foundation by addressing community needs, interests and demonstrate that they benefit the community.
- Project budgets that are accurate, realistic, demonstrate a need and that feature diverse sources of funding.
- Clearly defined plan for implementation, management, and promotion of the project.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

The review panel is tasked with taking the following items into consideration:

- Projects must be new works in any artistic discipline that serve communities and provide ways for communities to connect with it.
- Projects serving traditionally underrepresented communities and/or include these communities as participants or artists in their projects.
- Projects that encompass a segment of the community through some form of feedback, response, interaction and/or social practice. Examples of this type of interaction include interviews with a segment of the community, creation of parallel work by a community group, or stories or anecdotes collected from a community group that relate to the concept or content of the project.
- Projects that initiate and reflect community life, culture, and/or engage local communities (or a segment of the community) in the work of the artist.
- Collaborative projects that support ongoing arts and cultural development.
- Projects that provide free participation or admission to individuals who are economically disadvantaged.

Additionally, the following are **LOW** funding priorities:

- Travel, space, and equipment rental costs associated with the project.

APPEALS PROCESS

Once funding determinations have been made, ASI staff will notify applicants of their status. Applicants who are denied funding may file an appeal for the decision. All applicants, regardless of funding status, may request feedback from the review panel to strengthen future applications.

An applicant may **ONLY** appeal if they do not receive **ANY** (\$0) funding and when any of the following grounds apply to the application that was submitted at the time of deadline:

- Non-presentation of information
 - Information known to the panel or staff prior to the panel's decision that was not presented and that might have altered the decision.

- Misrepresentation of information
 - Information known to the panel or staff prior to the panel’s decision that changed in its presentation and that, if presented differently, might have altered the decision.
- Improper procedure
 - Contention by the applicant that: 1.) the review of the funding request by the appropriate panel was biased; 2.) the decision by the panel was arbitrary and capricious.

Dissatisfaction with the funding decision is not justification for an appeal.

You cannot submit new information that was left out of your application. All funding decisions are based on the content you provide when submitting your application.

Applicants not recommended for funding and wishing to appeal must initiate a formal appeal to the DEC Coordinator **within five (5) business days of receiving an e-mail of decline.** A separate Appeals Panel will meet to examine the appeal and make any recommendations.

ASI reserves the right not to expend all available grant funds.

COMMON QUESTIONS

HOW MANY FUNDING REQUESTS CAN BE SUBMITTED?

Only 1 (one) request for the grant can be submitted for the Individual Artist DEC grant. Please note, applying for this grant does not disqualify you from applying to the Community Arts and Arts Education DEC grants. Applicants may submit up to three (3) project requests in any combination of categories (Community Arts, Arts Education, or Individual Artist Commission) as long as the total requested is **no more than \$5,000.**

WHAT IS THE AMOUNT OF THIS GRANT?

Individual Artist Commission DEC grants can range from \$1,000 to \$2,500. The total available funds will be split equally between Erie and Niagara County applicants.

IF I RECEIVED A DEC GRANT IN THE PAST, CAN I STILL APPLY?

YES. If you have received funding in the past, you are eligible to apply again. However, previous projects that did not meet the contract requirements or failed to complete a final report by the due date are not eligible for funding. **Also, keep in mind prior DEC funding does not guarantee continued support in any succeeding year.** Each application is reviewed in the context of the current program guidelines, funding priorities, and evaluative criteria.

NOTE: This grant is for **new** works only, not the continuation of current or past work. Arts projects should enhance standard offerings, while at the same time provide artistic programming to underserved constituencies.

DEC APPLICATION CHECK LIST:

DO NOT SUBMIT HARD COPIES OF YOUR APPLICATION. Applications will ONLY be accepted through our online grants management portal. Please contact the DEC Coordinator if you need assistance with the grants portal.

ALL APPLICANTS:

- One completed online application.** Available at <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=artsofwesternny>
- Artist Resume/CV**
Examples of what to include are education, exhibition record (solo and/or group), collaborative projects, commissions, curatorial projects, honors/awards, grants/fellowships, collections, and/or publications.
- Promotional Materials/Marketing Samples**
Examples: posters, flyers, brochures, press, programs, newsletters, marketing samples, etc.
- Artistic Work Samples**
Applicants must submit samples of work using any one of the following formats. Materials should be examples of your best work and, if possible, relate to the topic of the project you are applying for.

For Performing Arts Projects (e.g. theatre, dance, music, etc.)

- ◆ Audio files and Video files.

For Visual Arts Projects (e.g. 2D or 3D in any medium or mixed media)

- ◆ Up to five (5) images. Include a detailed image list with medium, dimensions, title, date, etc.

For Literary Arts Projects (e.g. plays, fiction/nonfiction, poetry, screenplays, etc.)

- ◆ Manuscripts or creative writing samples (3 pages maximum).

For Media Arts Projects (e.g. film, video, radio, etc.)

- ◆ Audio files and video files. Brief outline of proposed plot arc and/or storyboards are also encouraged.

- Support Documentation - Tentative Agreements (optional)**

Commitment letters or contracts from other artists, other organizations, other agencies, or schools that are necessary for a successful project.

Depending upon your artistic discipline and specific project proposal, submission of a mock-up, sketch, model, etc., of your proposed project is strongly encouraged. The final project does not need to meet the specifications of this initial rendering; however, it may help the panel to understand your vision more fully. **This is optional, but very helpful to the review panel.**