



Creative Impact Fund

Grant Guidelines for Individuals

For Erie, Niagara, and Chautauqua counties

DEADLINE: Wednesday, March 26, 2025

HOLLY GRANT, GRANTS & PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR
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www.asiwny.org

Table of Contents

Overview	2
Eligibility Requirements.....	3
Allowable Expenses.....	5
Information Sessions... ..	5
Application Deadline... ..	5
Grant Review and Determination	6
Appeals Process.....	7
Common Questions... ..	8
Application Check List	9
Application Questions... ..	9

OVERVIEW

The Creative Impact Fund was created in 2024 to supplement state arts funding in the Western New York region. This funding comes from a New York State Senate initiative designed to provide equitable arts support to all regions across New York State.

Individuals have access to two different grant programs for 2025 – Arts Programming and Creation of a New Work.

Application deadline for all grant opportunities: **March 26, 2025.**

ARTS PROGRAMMING

Arts Programming grants are competitive grants that support high quality arts and culture programs and projects that center the community’s needs. Programs can encompass any art form or cultural expression.

Programs have to take place within one year of receiving the grant or no later than June 30, 2026.

Grants are available in the following amounts:

- **\$2,500**
- **\$5,000**
- **\$7,500**
- **\$10,000**

Applicants should choose the funding level they need and submit a detailed budget that shows exactly how the entire amount of funding will be spent. Grants will be awarded all or nothing with no partial funding awarded.

CREATION OF A NEW WORK

Creation of a New Work grants are competitive grants that provide support for creatives to create new work in any art form that engages with the community. Creatives residing in Erie, Niagara, and Chautauqua counties are eligible to apply for this grant.

The goal of this fund is to support the development of new work by individual creatives in all disciplines while encouraging interaction between artists and community members to highlight the role of the creative as a community resource.

Work has to take place within one year of receiving the grant or no later than June 30, 2026.

Grants are available in the following amounts:

- \$2,500
- \$5,000

Applicants should choose the funding level they need and submit a detailed budget that shows exactly how the entire amount of funding will be spent. Grants will be all or nothing with no partial funding awarded. It is perfectly acceptable to request the entire amount to pay yourself as the creative; however, you should demonstrate the hourly rate you are paying yourself and number of hours you anticipate it will take to complete the work.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Creative Impact Fund grant applicants are required to make their projects accessible to the public and hold their events at accessible sites.

Eligible applications must meet the following requirements:

- Applicants must be an individual living in Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua counties.
- Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- Must be willing to accept the grant as an individual and not through an LLC or other business designation.
- The program or project must take place in the same county in which applicant resides.
- The program or project must have arts or culture activities as the primary purpose.
- The program or project must be completed within one year of receiving the grant payment.
- If applying for a program grant, individual applicants must have a 501c3 nonprofit partner or fiscal sponsor to apply for this funding.
 - Applicants must include a letter of commitment or tentative agreement from a 501c3 nonprofit partner or the school they wish to partner with on the program.
 - The applicant and the partner school must both be based in the same county the event is taking place - either Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua county.
 - If using a fiscal sponsor, the fiscal sponsor must be the one to submit the application and would follow the organization applicant guidelines.
- Projects must be open and accessible to the public.*

*Programs taking place in a school must be open to any student in that school "community" who wishes to join. A school community could be any of the following: a classroom, grade level, all students enrolled at the school,

etc. It is up to the applicant to determine what the community is and ensure all students within that school community can access the program.

Additional eligibility for Creation of New Work

- Work created must be new, not the continuation or expansion of existing work.
- Projects must engage a segment of the community through some form of engagement, including: feedback, response, interaction, and/or presentation.

INELIGIBILITY

The following are **NOT** eligible to apply for this funding:

- Programs or projects taking place outside of Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua counties.
- Activities and programs which cannot be completed within a one-year window.
- Direct recipients of New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) grants for the 2025 calendar year.
- Programs involving partners or fiscal sponsors that have received direct NYSCA funding for the 2025 calendar year.
- Public universities and colleges; and public, private, or parochial schools, and their national components (PTAs, etc.).
- New York State agencies and departments (including SUNY schools).
- Non-incorporated chapters of organizations whose “parent” organization is not located in Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua counties.
- Projects taking place outside of the applicant’s county of residence (Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua counties).
- Programs in which the primary benefit is the financial gain by the applicant, including fundraising activities and events.
- Project requests for deficit funding, contingency funds, and capital expenditures, including purchase of property or permanent equipment.
- General operating and administrative expenses not directly related to an arts project or program.
- Operating expenses of privately owned facilities (e.g. homes and studios).
- Artistic funds for university faculty and staff for work done through their position in their institutions, including the creation of textbooks or educational materials.
- Projects where fees are paid to students of universities, high schools, middle or elementary schools, or use of children as professional artists.
- Regrants by applicants to fund other activities and projects through cash prizes, scholarships, juried awards, fellowships, and other monetary gifts.
- Entertainment costs, such as parties, receptions, food, etc.
- Lobbying expenses.
- Acquisition of works of art.
- Activities that are not arts-related (including balloon art, clowns, magic shows, bubble blowing, juggling) or with non-arts and culture related outcomes, such as social service, life skills, or financial literacy programs.
- Previously funded ASI grant recipients that have failed to provide final reports, use proper acknowledgement, or comply with previous contract terms.
- Arts Services Inc., its employees, and board members.

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

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Allowable expenses for a proposed project include:

- Payment to artists and creatives.
- Marketing/Publicity costs.
- Direct administrative expenses and/or planning and preparation expenses for a proposed event or program.
- Supplies and materials needed to execute the proposed project. Examples include: art supplies, sheet music, costumes, memory cards, and other consumable equipment.
- Equipment, hardware, software, subscriptions, and training needed to execute the proposed project. This budget line may not exceed \$1,000. Examples include cameras, computers, lighting equipment, audio equipment, subscriptions associated with virtual programming, and training to utilize these tools.
- For Training Access grant, can use funding for travel and lodging within New York State if training takes place outside of applicant's home county. Food is not expendable.

If you have any eligibility-related questions, contact ASI's grant staff for clarification before starting your application.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Attendance at information sessions is strongly encouraged for all applicants. These sessions are meant to help ensure applicants fully understand the process and priorities of these grants and to assist with a successful grant application.

These sessions, led by ASI staff, offer assistance in navigating the grant process, as well as provide tips, program guidelines, and best practices for submitting a successful project proposal.

INFORMATION SESSION DATES

Visit <https://www.asiwny.org/creative-impact-fund/> for the complete schedule.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 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 for staff review and feedback before submitting a final application **no later than 2 weeks prior** to the application deadline.

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

GRANT REVIEW AND DETERMINATION

ASI staff reviews all applications for eligibility and completeness following the application deadline. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be eliminated from consideration.

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

Once funding decisions are made by the panel, a separate Advisory Committee will review the decisions for bias. Then, the ASI Board of Directors will review the overall funding recommendations and will approve the slate of funded projects.

EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

The grant panel will make funding recommendations for arts programming and creation of new work requests based on the following criteria:

1. **Artistic Quality** – including:
 - a. Work is created with intentionality, integrity, and rigor.
 - b. Work provides opportunities for the development of the artist(s) involved and/or the art form.
 - c. Applicant is creating work and programming that distinguishes itself from other similar programming/projects.
 - d. The work that is being developed/ produced is relevant to the current creative conversation in the applicant's community, the region, or the field at large.
 - e. The artistic work reflects and represents the cultural and aesthetic diversity of the community, including marginalized or under-represented voices, communities, and/or artists.
2. **Key Personnel** - Does the proposal identify key personnel and their qualifications for the project?
Are key personnel qualified to lead the proposed project?
3. **Community Impact** – including:
 - a. The project will have a direct impact on the community.
 - b. The applicant clearly identifies how they will connect with under-resourced or marginalized communities to make their work accessible to them.
 - c. The program directly fills a need in the community and supports the community in a meaningful way.
 - d. The programming, staff, and/or artists involved are reflect of the community they seek are serving.

4. **Budget** – Including:
 - a. The budget is appropriate for the proposed project and includes all expenses that could be reasonably related to this program.
 - b. Budget appropriately utilizes the entire amount of the grant they are requesting. No expenses appear inflated or unrealistic.
 - c. Budget notes help address any questions and fill in blanks.
 - d. Artists are being paid and matching income (if included) appears realistic.
 - e. Everything adds up correctly.

5. **Capacity** – Does the applicant appear to have the capacity to carry out the project as proposed (consider structure, budget, personnel, resources, planning, etc.) within the required timeframe? This is determined by the amount of detail provided in the application.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Programs that support the following areas will be prioritized:

- Programs that center the community’s needs.
- Projects that enhance the creative individual’s artistry and career.
- Programs that request funds for appropriate payment of artists, teaching artists, technical production services, and other hired creatives.
- High quality programs and projects.
- Programs serving traditionally under-represented or marginalized communities, and/or include these communities as participants or artists in the program.
- Programs that remove barriers to access, including financial, geographic, knowledge, and perception.
- Applicants developing new and unique ways of engaging and connecting with under-represented audiences and communities.
- Programs with a clearly defined plan for implementation and management.

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 submit a formal appeal with supporting documentation to the Grants & Programming Director **within five (5) business days of receiving an e-mail of decline**. A separate Appeals Panel will meet to review the appeal and make any recommendations.

COMMON QUESTIONS

IS THERE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM REQUEST FOR FUNDING?

YES. Each grant category has set grant amounts that can be requested. Please refer to the information under the “Overview” section for details.

Grants can cover 100% of the projects costs with no matching funds required. However, projects and programs that cost more than the maximum grant amount should include an explanation for how additional funds will be secured to cover the balance. This can consist of a combination of cash and in-kind revenue.

WHAT IF MY PROGRAM EXPENSES FALL BETWEEN THE SET GRANT AMOUNTS?

No partial funding will be awarded, so it is up to the applicant to decide if they want to scale back their program and request less or dream bigger and request more. Applicants must demonstrate how the entire grant amount will be spent, so applicants should not request more than they have the capacity to manage.

HOW DO I ACCOUNT FOR IN-KIND REVENUE ON MY BUDGET FORM?

In-kind revenue is any product or professional service that you would normally pay for that is being donated. Since these are things you would pay for, the value of in-kind gifts should be reflected in the expense lines as well as the revenue lines, and the lines should off-set and zero out.

HOW MANY FUNDING REQUESTS CAN BE SUBMITTED?

Applicants may submit up to three (3) requests as long as the total amount requested is **no more than \$10,000**. Each project or program requires the submission of a separate, completed application through the grants portal by the application deadline.

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

YES. If you have received an SCR grant from ASI in the past, you are eligible to apply for this fund. However, previous recipients that did not meet the contract requirements or failed to complete a final report by the due date are not eligible.

Also, keep in mind prior grant 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 by a unique panel of peers. Priority will be given to those applicants who submit requests for new programs/projects or existing ones that demonstrate growth, artistic expansion, and support of marginalized communities.

I RECEIVED A GRANT DIRECTLY FROM NYSCA FOR FY2025, CAN I APPLY TO THIS FUND?

NO. Individuals that received a grant directly from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) as part of their FY2025 funding cycle cannot apply to this fund. If an individual applied to NYSCA's FY2025 grant cycle and was declined, they are eligible to apply to this fund.

APPLICATION CHECK LIST

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

Application Packet Includes:

- **One completed online application.** Available at <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=artsofwesternny>
- **Tentative Agreements**
 - Tentative agreements or letters of commitment from artists, partner organizations, or training sites that are participating in the creation of a new work are encouraged. These are required for individuals applying to the Arts Programming grant.
- **Budget Form**
 - Applicants must fully complete the budget form provided. A fillable PDF and Word version are both available.
- **Artistic Work Samples**

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Applicant Profile

Project Title*

Artistic Discipline of Project*

Select the artistic discipline that best describes your proposed project or program.

- Crafts
- Dance
- Design Arts
- Folk Arts
- Humanities
- Interdisciplinary
- Literature
- Media Arts
- Multi-Disciplinary
- Music
- Opera / Musical Theatre
- Photography
- Theatre
- Visual Arts

I am applying as a/an*

- Collective/Informal Group
- Individual Creative

County*

The county you select indicated that all public components of your project will take place here and should also be the same county as your place of business or permanent residence. For additional information, please refer to the guidelines.

- Chautauqua County
- Erie County
- Niagara County

NYS Assembly District*

Can be found at www.nyasembly.gov/mem/search

- District 139
- District 140
- District 141
- District 142
- District 143
- District 144
- District 145
- District 146
- District 147
- District 149
- District 150

NYS Senate District*

Can be found at www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator

- District 57
- District 60
- District 61
- District 62
- District 63

Individuals & Collectives

Resume, CV, or Bio

Provide a resume, CV, and/or bio that includes any relevant experience, such as exhibition record (solo and/or group), performance experience, recordings, collaborative projects, commissions, curatorial projects, honors/awards, grants/fellowships, research, collections, and/or publication.

File Size Limit: 10 MiB

Creative Goals*

Describe yourself as a creative worker, including your professional goals, work style, and/or your creative process.

Please also explain how the attachments you submitted to this application support your request, artistic process, and show your capacity and ability to complete the proposed project.

Character Limit: 2,000

Website or Social Media (if available)

Grant Category*

Please check the grant category in which you are applying. For more information on the categories, please refer to the guidelines.

- Arts Programming
- Creation of a New Work

Project Information – Arts Programming

Project Description*

Thoroughly explain your project or program, including the following information:

- What is the project or program?
- Who is the intended audience and how can they engage with the project or program?
- Who is involved (key personnel) and their qualifications?
- When do you anticipate it will take place?
- Where do you plan to do your project?
- What are your goals for the program and how you will measure whether or not you successfully meet them?

If you are an individual or collective, please include details on any partnerships you have for this project as required by this grant.

Character Limit: 7,000

Partnerships*

Please list the name, address, phone number, and primary contact for your program partner, including any nonprofits and/or schools you are working with.

Character Limit: 1,000

Accessibility, Equity, and Inclusion*

Describe how this project is open and accessible to the entire community, including economically disadvantaged, marginalized populations, and persons with disability.

If applying for in-school programming, include how the participating students will be selected and served by this project.

Character Limit: 5,000

Outreach to Under-Resourced Community*

What are your specific outreach plans for under-resourced and/or marginalized populations within the community? This should include both proactive outreach efforts (*i.e. meetings, conversations, presentations, off-site performances, etc.*) and passive marketing and promotional efforts (*i.e. direct mailers, posting flyers or posters, radio/tv ads, sending promotional emails, etc.*).

Character Limit: 5,000

Anticipated Audience

Total number of artists involved (Must be 18 years old and up)*

Total number of youth (under 18) served.*

Total anticipated audience*

Project Information – Creation of a New Work

Project Description*

Thoroughly explain your project or program, including the following information:

- What is the new project or program?
- What other artists are involved (if any) and what are their qualifications?
- When do you anticipate it will be completed?
- Where do you anticipate the work will be installed or premiered?
- How will this project advance your career or artistry, and/or how will it advance the art form?

Character Limit: 7,000

Community Involvement*

Explain how the community will be involved with your proposed project. In addition to presenting or exhibiting the completed work for the public to view, examples of this interaction could include interviews with a segment of the community, creation of a parallel work by a community group, or stories or anecdotes collected from a community group that relate to the theme, content, or design of the project.

NOTE: This response is critical as it is a requirement that state-funded projects engage with and connect to the community. Please refer to the guidelines for more information.

Character Limit: 2,000

Accessibility, Equity, and Inclusion*

Describe how this project is open and accessible to the entire community, including economically disadvantaged, marginalized populations, and persons with disability.

Character Limit: 5,000

Outreach to Under-Resourced Community*

What are your specific outreach plans for under-resourced and/or marginalized populations within the community? This should include both proactive outreach efforts (*i.e. meetings, conversations, presentations, etc.*) and passive marketing and promotional efforts (*i.e. direct mailers, posting flyers or posters, radio/tv ads, sending promotional emails, etc.*).

Character Limit: 5,000

Anticipated Audience

Total number of artists involved (Must be 18 years old and up)*

Total number of youth (under 18) served.*

Total anticipated audience*

Project Budget

Grant Amount Requested*

For Arts Programming grants this request **must be one of the following amounts: \$2,500, \$5,000, \$7,500, or \$10,000.**

For Creation of New Work grants this request **must be either \$2,500 or \$5,000.**

Total Project Budget*

Please list the total amount you plan to spend on your program or project.

This may be higher than the grant amount you are requesting but it cannot be lower than the Grant Amount Requested line.

Budget Form *

All applicants must use the provided budget form. Please complete the form and upload it below in PDF format. Contact Holly at holly@asiwny.org if you need assistance converting your document into a PDF.

File Size Limit: 5 MiB

Budget Notes*

Please use this space to provide additional notes on your project budget, such as explaining line items, breaking out larger budget lines that combine multiple items, and clarifying anything that may be unclear.

Character Limit: 2,000

Attachments for Individual and Collective / Informal Group Applicants

Tentative Agreements

Individual artists and collectives / informal groups applying for arts programming grants **are required to** have a

nonprofit or school partner and must attach a letter of commitment or contract from the partner organization.

Individual artists applying for the Creation of New Work grants do not require a letter of commitment. However, if you are partnering with others in the community on your project, letters of commitment present a strong case for capacity to complete the project and are encouraged whenever possible.

For more than one (1) letter of commitment, please use a [PDF merger](#) to create a single PDF file and upload it here.

File Size Limit: 10 MiB

Artistic Work Sample (up to 2 attachments and one web link)

Applicants of the **Creation of a New Work** grant can attach a work sample here. Artistic work samples can include:

- Audio Files
- Video Samples
- Photographs / Images
- Writing Samples (up to 3 pages)
- Lesson Plans
- Other media / digital files for review

File Size Limit: 10 MiB

Demographics

The questions below are optional. However, we would appreciate you taking a few moments to share some demographic data with us.

Please note: none of this information will be shared with our panelists or the public. This information will not be considered as part of your program proposal.

ASI firmly believes that the arts belong to everyone and everyone should have access to our resources. This data will help us learn who we are not reaching and discover how we can support all members of our arts community in the future.

We do not share or sell anyone's personal information. If you have any questions or would like more information about how we use your information, please contact Holly Grant at holly@asiwny.org.

With what gender do you identify?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

In which age range do you fall?

- 18-30 years
- 31-40 years

- 41-50 years
- 51-60 years
- 60+ years
- Prefer not to answer

Which of the following best reflects your race and/or ethnicity?

- Arab or Middle Eastern
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Caribbean Descent
- Hispanic or Latino/a/x
- Indigenous or First Nations
- White or European American
- More than one
- Prefer to self-identify
- Prefer not to answer

Self-Identify

If you selected “Prefer to self-identify”, please answer that here.

Do you identify with any of the following populations?

Please select all that apply.

- Immigrant or newly arrived
- LGBTQ+
- Neurodiverse
- Person with Disability
- Refugee
- Veteran
- Other
- None of the above
- Prefer not to answer