



# Statewide Community Re-grants (SCR)

## 2026 Guidelines for Nonprofits, Tribal Organizations, and Government Agencies

Erie, Niagara, and Chautauqua counties and the Native nations that share this geography

### **DEADLINE:**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026 by 11:59  
pm**

HOLLY GRANT, GRANTS & PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR  
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[www.asiwny.org](http://www.asiwny.org)

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### OVERVIEW

The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) established the Decentralization (DEC) Grant Program in 1977 to ensure that New York State’s cultural funding reaches every part of the state. In 2021, NYSCA rebranded the DEC program as the Statewide Community Regrant (SCR) program to better reflect its purpose and goals.

The SCR grant program is designed to expand, promote, and increase arts and cultural programming at the local level. The SCR program provides a link between NYSCA and portions of the community that might not be able to access funding directly from NYSCA by partnering with local arts agencies.

These grants are administered by Arts Services Inc. (ASI) and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to those living in or operating in Erie, Niagara, and Chautauqua counties and the Native nations that share this geography.

Application deadline for all grant opportunities: **March 25, 2026 by 11:59 pm**

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### COMMUNITY ARTS GRANT

Community Arts grants are competitive grants that enable artists and organizations to grow professionally and to enhance the cultural climate in the communities and neighborhoods where they live and operate. Programs can encompass any art form or cultural expression and may include exhibitions, performances, workshop series, festivals, screenings, readings, or more.

Programs and projects must be community-based and open to the public. This fund prioritizes high quality arts and culture programs and projects that center the community’s needs in an accessible and equitable manner.

## **ARTS EDUCATION GRANT**

Arts Education grants are competitive grants that provide financial assistance to artists and organizations in support of arts education programs in K-12 public schools, publicly funded charter schools, after-school programs, and community-based learning.

Funding supports arts education projects that take place for **a closed group of learners** of any age **in partnership with a public school or an existing closed group of learners**, such as clubs, residents of senior living facility, individuals receiving social services, or a camp.

### All Arts Education projects must include:

- Sequential, skills-based study that incorporates one or more art forms and includes a minimum of three (3) hands-on learning experiences.
- In-depth, age and skills appropriate learning opportunities.
- Hands-on, participatory creation and/or learning.
- Stated learning goals, methodologies, outcomes, and a means for evaluation.
- Programs may culminate in an exhibition, production, or demonstration.
- Support materials may include lesson plans, evaluation plans, video/photo work samples of past arts education work, and letters of commitment.

This fund prioritizes high quality arts and culture programs and projects that center the community's needs in an accessible and equitable manner. Programs can encompass any art form or cultural expression.

Programs must take place within one year of receiving the grant or no later than June 30, 2027.

### **Grants are available in the following amounts:**

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

Applicants should choose the funding level they need and submit a detailed budget that shows how the entire amount of funding will be spent. Grants will be all or nothing with no partial funding awarded. Matching funding is not required.

Applicants can submit up to three (3) requests in either category as long as the total amount requested among all applications is no more than \$7,500.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

### Eligible Applicants

- Applicants must be one of the following:
  - a 501c3 nonprofit or New York State nonprofit organization with an active board of directors
  - a local government municipality or quasi-government entity
  - a tribal nation present within New York State

- individual artists, groups or collectives, and unincorporated entities who are working with an eligible fiscal sponsor or community partner
  - The Lead Applicant must be 18 years of age at the time of submission and cannot be enrolled in a full-time degree program.
- Must be legally incorporated and operating in Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua counties or this shared geography.

### Eligible Programs or Projects

- The program or project must take place in the same county in which you are incorporated and/or operate.
- Programs have arts or culture activities as the primary purpose of the program.
- If applying for an Arts Education grant, applicants must include a letter of commitment or tentative agreement from the school or partner group they wish to work with on the program.
  - The applicant and the partner group or school must both be based in the same county - either Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua county.
- Activities/Projects that are either in person or virtual.

### Ineligible Applicants

- Applicants located outside of Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua counties or this shared geography.
- Direct **applicants** of New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) grants for the 2026 fiscal year (FY).
  - When partnering with a direct NYSCA grantee:
    - An SCR applicant may hire or “book” a NYSCA-grantee for a service with a paid fee.
    - A NYSCA grantee must not profit or benefit from the SCR program, including profit from ticket sales, donations, or space rental fees.
    - A NYSCA grantee may offer their venue gratis or be paid funds for direct costs only.
- 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.
- A business corporation (S Corp or C Corp), limited liability company (LLC), limited liability partnership (LLP), or organizations incorporated as a 501c4 or 501c6.
- 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.

### Ineligible Programs or Projects

- Programs or projects taking place outside of the applicant’s county of operation (Erie, Niagara, or Chautauqua counties).
- 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 the arts project or program.
- Student projects
- Activities not open to the public, such as camps, clubs, or college associations.
- Public art on private property.
- Development or fundraising activities, such as galas or benefits.
- Activities that are not arts-related (including balloon art, clowns, magic shows, bubble blowing, paint and sip)
- Activities with non-arts and culture related outcomes - such as social service, life skills, or financial literacy programs - or whose purpose is rehabilitation, therapy, or worship.

## ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

### Eligible Expenses

- 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. This budget line may not exceed \$1,000.

### Ineligible Expenses

- Requests greater than the applicants total project expenses minus total project income (profit).
- Operating expenses of privately owned facilities (e.g. homes and studios).
- Acquisition of works of art.
- Contingency funds.
- The purchase of permanent equipment and capital improvements.
- Creation of textbooks or classroom material.
- Lobbying expenses.
- Fees paid to children under the age of 18.
- Regrants by applicants to fund other activities and projects through cash prizes, scholarships, juried awards, fellowships, and other monetary gifts.
- Entertainment and hospitality costs, such as parties, receptions, food, beverage, etc.

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

## INFORMATION SESSIONS

**Attendance at an information sessions is required for new applicants and strongly encouraged for all applicants.** These sessions are meant to help ensure applicants fully understand the eligibility and priorities of this grant and to assist in submitting 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. Attendance is tracked as new applicants are required to attend an info session.

### **INFORMATION SESSION DATES**

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

## **GRANT REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

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. Draft review is completed on a first come, first served basis. Second reviews may not be accommodated based on the number of requests received.

Following the application deadline, ASI staff reviews all applications for eligibility and completeness. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be eliminated from consideration and not reviewed by the panel.

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

Once funding recommendations 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 slate and will approve the slate of funded projects.

### **EVALUATIVE CRITERIA**

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

1. **Artistic Quality** –
  - 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 art forms.
  
2. **Key Personnel** –
  - a. The proposal identifies key personnel and their qualifications for the project.
  - b. Key personnel are qualified to lead the proposed project.

### 3. **Community Impact** –

- a. The applicant clearly identifies how they will connect with under-resourced or marginalized communities to make the project accessible to them.
- b. The project fills a need in the community and/or supports the community in a meaningful way.
- c. The programming, staff, and/or artists involved are reflective of the community they seek to serve.

### 4. **Budget** –

- 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** – Rate the capacity of the applicant to carry out the project as proposed (consider structure, budget, personnel, resources, planning, etc.) within the required timeframe.

- a. (1) – Applicant cannot successfully complete this project as proposed or it is unclear if they would be able to successfully complete the project because not enough detail has been provided.
- b. (5) – Applicant has done thorough planning and has enough structure, support, and experience to execute this project successfully.

## **FUNDING PRIORITIES**

Panelists will prioritize programs that align with the following priorities:

- Applicants and programs led by traditionally under-represented, under-resourced, or marginalized communities.
- Applicants developing new and unique ways of engaging and connecting with their communities.
- Programs that center the community's needs.
- Programs that remove barriers to access, including financial, geographic, knowledge, and perception.
- Programs that request funds for appropriate payment of artists, teaching artists, technical production services, and other hired creatives.
- High quality\* programs and projects.
- Programs with a clearly defined plan for implementation and management.

\*ASI defines high quality as work that is created with intentionality, integrity, and rigor.

## **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** submit appeal if they do not receive **ANY** (\$0) funding and when any of the following grounds apply:

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

**NOTE: 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 you submit 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 10 days of receiving the denial notice**. 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.** The smallest grant that can be requested is \$2,500 and the maximum grant is \$7,500. There are three (3) set grant amounts offered: \$2,500, \$5,000, and \$7,500.

**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 of 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 it is typically something you would pay for, the value of in-kind gifts should be reflected in both the expense lines and the revenue lines, and the lines should offset. In-kind revenue cannot be valued at more than its corresponding expense.

### **HOW MANY FUNDING REQUESTS CAN BE SUBMITTED?**

Applicants may submit up to three (3) program requests as long as the total amount requested between all applications is **no more than \$7,500**. Each program request requires the submission of a separate, completed application through the grants portal by the application deadline.

### **IF I/MY ORGANIZATION 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. All applications are reviewed in the context of the current program guidelines, funding priorities, and evaluative criteria by a 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 APPLIED DIRECTLY TO NYSCA FOR A FY2026 GRANT. CAN I APPLY TO THIS FUND?**

**NO.** Organizations and individuals who applied directly to the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) as part of their FY2026 funding cycle cannot apply to this fund regardless of their funding status.

## **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026 by 11:59 pm**

- 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](mailto: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>

## **APPLICATION CHECK LIST:**

**DO NOT EMAIL OR 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>
- **Partner Agreements and/or Commitments**

- Agreements or letters of commitment from artists, other organizations, schools, or other agencies that are participating in the program are required for Arts Education grants and strongly encouraged for Community Arts requests that have partnerships.
- **Budget Form**
  - Applicants must fully complete the budget form provided. A fillable PDF and Word version are both available.
- **Proof of Nonprofit Status**
- **Current Board of Directors List with Affiliations**
- **Other Related Materials** (optional)

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

### Applicant Profile

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#### 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\*

- Nonprofit Organization
- Government Municipality / Tribal Organization

#### 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
- Seneca Nation
- Tonawanda Seneca Nation
- Tuscarora Nation

**NYS Assembly District\***

Can be found at [www.nyasembly.gov/mem/search](http://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](http://www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator)

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

**Organization or Government Agency Profile**

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**Organization Mission & Major Programs\***

Please list your organization’s mission, vision, and major programs. Briefly explain how your programs are distinctive and what audience you serve through your programming.

**Website or Social Media (if available)**

**Organization Incorporation Year / Year Formed\***

In what year did your organization officially file as a 501c3 nonprofit or officially incorporate as a government entity?

**Grant Category\***

- Community Arts
- Arts Education

**Org/Gov Program Information – Community Arts**

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**Program Information\***

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?

*Character Limit: 7,000*

### **Partnerships**

If you are doing this work in partnership with others, such as an individual artist, collective, school, or nonprofit, please include the name, address, and phone number for the primary contact of the partner(s).

*Character Limit: 1,000*

### **Partner Agreements and/or Commitments**

Community Arts requests that include partners do not require letters of commitment but they are strongly encouraged. Having commitments from partners demonstrates a strong case for capacity to complete the project as proposed.

Strong letters of commitment should include details of the partner’s participation in the project and be signed by the partner or lead contact.

*File Size Limit: 5 MiB*

### **Accessibility, Equity, and Inclusion\***

Describe how this project is open and accessible to the entire community, such as individuals with disability, people facing financial hardship, and marginalized communities.

*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\***

### **Org/Gov Program Information – Arts Education**

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#### **Program Information\***

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?

*Character Limit: 7,000*

### **Partnerships\***

Arts Education requests require a partnership with an existing closed group of learners in a K-12 public school, after school program, or community-based learning program. Please include the name, address, and phone number for the primary contact of the partner(s).

*Character Limit: 1,000*

### **Partner Agreements and/or Commitments\***

Arts Education requests require a partnership with a K-12 public school, after school program, or community-based closed group of learners. You must attach a letter of commitment or contract from the partner.

Strong letters of commitment should include details of the partner’s participation in the project and be signed by the partner or lead contact.

*File Size Limit: 5 MiB*

### **Accessibility, Equity, and Inclusion\***

Describe how this partnership was selected or created, and how this program is open and accessible to everyone in the partner’s program, schools, or residence.

We understand that not everyone at the partner site will participate in this program, but they should have access to the program. For example, if working with a senior center, all residents should have the opportunity to sign up to participate in this program rather than being selected by someone else. If partnering with a school, be specific on who you are working with, such as a particular class, grade level, or club.

*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**

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#### **Grant Amount Requested\***

Requests **must be one of the following amounts: \$2,500, \$5,000, or \$7,500.**

#### **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](mailto: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 Organization and Government Applicants**

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**Proof of Organization's Nonprofit Status \***

Please submit one of the following forms:

- IRS 501(c)3 determination letter
- Documentation of charter by the NYS Board of Regents
- Letter of Acceptance of Incorporation under NYS Section 402 Not-for-Profit Law
- Current NYS Bureau of Charities filing receipt
- Official authorization as an arm of local government or tribe (on official stationary signed by city, town, village, or nation executive)

*File Size Limit: 10 MiB*

**Current Board of Directors or Trustees List \***

Must include names, titles, and business affiliations.

*File Size Limit: 1 MiB*

**Other Related Materials**

Optional space to attach any other materials related to your request.

If applying for an Arts Education grant, helpful attachments include:

- Lesson plans
- Outcomes and evaluation plans
- Samples of past arts education work

*File Size Limit: 10 MiB*

