

VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS


WHICH VCA GRANT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

December 10, 2024 Workshop




TODAY'S SLIDES AND RECORDING



HOME ABOUT ▾ GRANTS ARTIST ROSTERS ▾  INITIATIVES **RESOURCES ▾** NEWS

General Resources

PASSPORT PROGRAM INFO SESSION
VCA | VDH
November 13, 2024

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH 

Passport Program Info Session
[Slides and Recording](#)

VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

[Sample Press Release for Grantees](#)

Please enter your questions in the chat!

Colleen Dugan Messick
Executive Director

Cathy Welborn
Senior Grants Officer

Lo Bruner
Artist Engagement Coordinator

Dawn LeHuray
Administrative and Communications Coordinator

VCA AT A GLANCE



1968

year established

700+

*grants per year
across the
Commonwealth*

\$5.3 million

allocated in FY25

Only

*state agency
dedicated to
investing in the arts*

Mission

*to invest in the arts in the
Commonwealth of
Virginia*

9

*Governor-appointed
Commissioners*

56

*on the VCA Teaching
Artist Roster*

8

regions served

64

*on the VCA Touring
Artist Roster*

VCA COMMISSIONERS



Barbara Parker | Chair
Collinsville



Frazier Millner Armstrong | Vice Chair
Richmond



Lou Flowers | Secretary
Virginia Beach



Alex Grabiec
Farmville



Region 5
Vacant



Jan P. Monroe
Fredericksburg



Amanda Pillion
Abingdon



Vanessa Thaxton-Ward, Ph.D.
Hampton



Yan Zhao
Falls Church

Virginia General
Assembly, with budget
approved by the
Governor

National
Endowment
for the Arts



Virginia citizens:
Tax Credit Contributions

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR GRANTEES



- General Operating Support: Medium and Large Arts Organizations | GOS
- Operating Support Small: Small Arts Organizations | OSS
- Community Impact Grants

- Creative Communities Partnership Grantees
- Virginia Touring Grants
- Arts in Practice Grants



GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING
July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

<https://vca.virginia.gov/guidelines-for-funding/>

5 KEY UPDATES TO FY26 GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING



- GOS | increased minimum funding levels to \$3,500 (currently \$2,500)
- GOS | Final Report Part II will be due October 1st (currently December 1st)
- OSS | income range \$20,000 - \$150,000 (currently \$10,000-\$150,000)
- OSS | cumulative debt from previous two years may not exceed 20%
- Education Impact | eliminated to focus on Community Impact and Arts in Practice



HOME

ABOUT ▾

GRANTS

ARTIST ROSTERS ▾

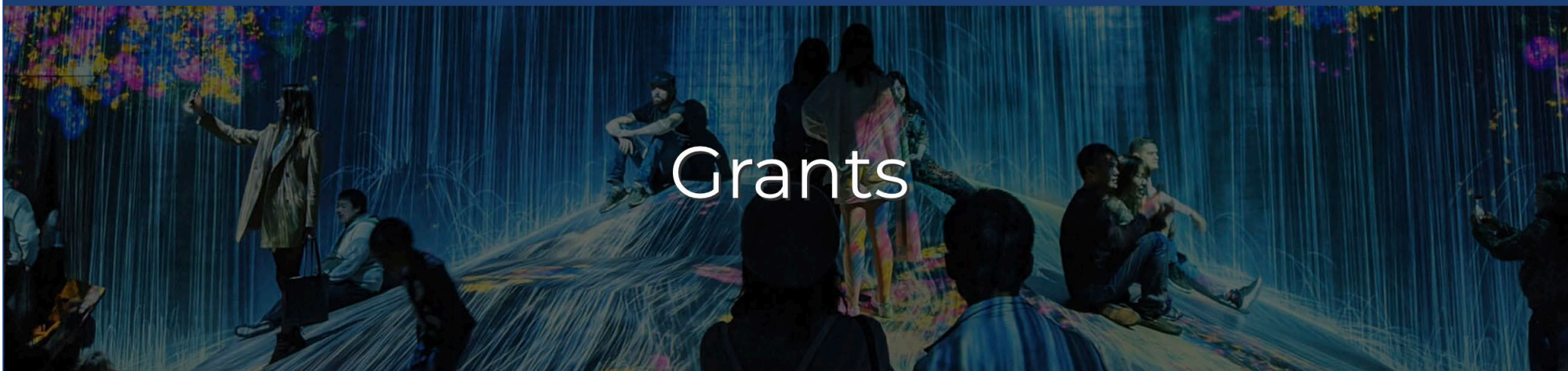


INITIATIVES ▾

RESOURCES

NEWS

APPLY



Grants

Which VCA Grant is Right for You? Find out, [HERE](#).

All

Partnership Grants

Impact Grants

Artist Engagement

WHICH VCA GRANT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

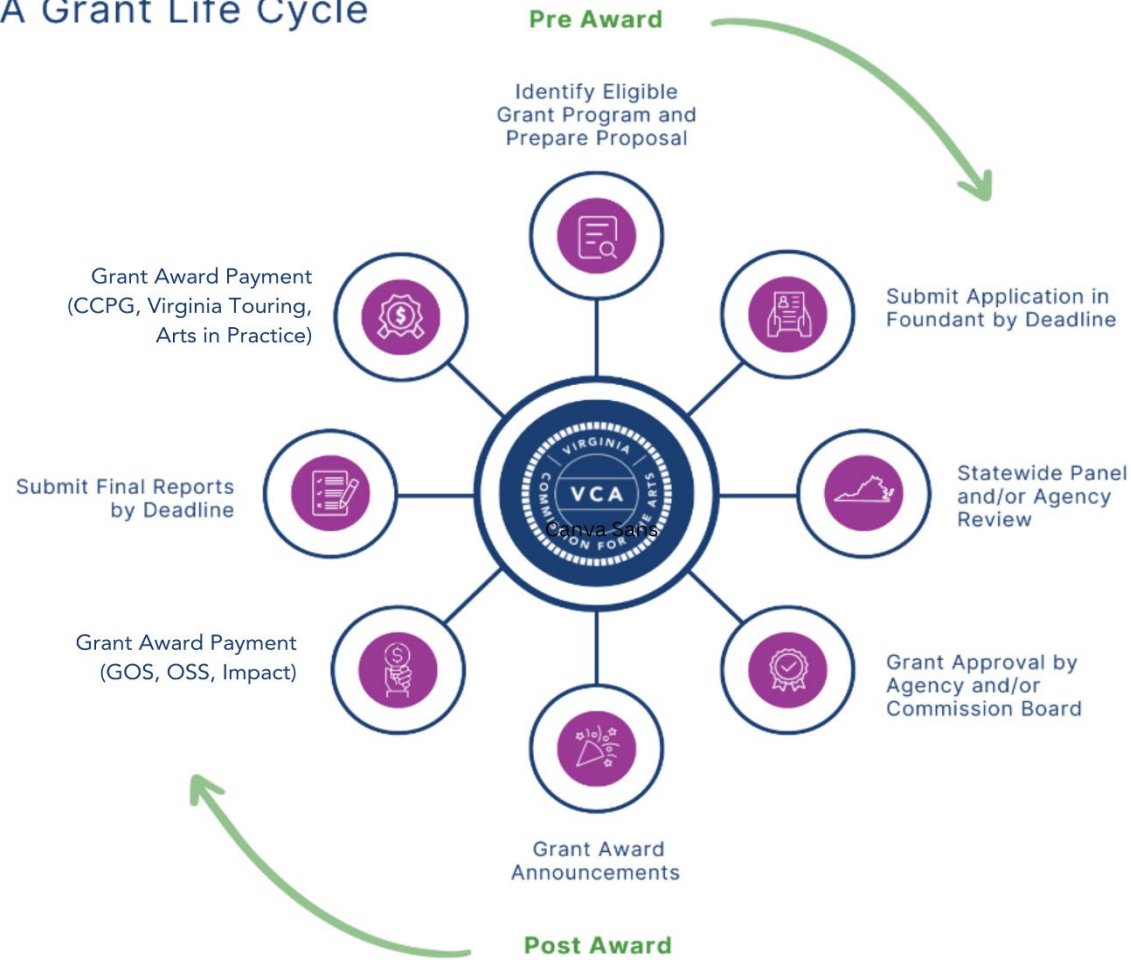
VCA FY26 Grants	Eligible Applicants	Application Deadline	Grant Support	Grant Allocation	Match Requirement
GOS General Operating Support for Medium & Large Organizations	501(c)(3) arts organizations with income greater than \$150K	February 1 Short Form* March 1 Long Form	General operating support	\$3,500 - \$100,000	None
OSS Operating Support for Small Organizations	501(c)(3) arts organizations with income between \$20k - \$150k	March 1	General operating support	\$2,500	None
Creative Communities Partnership Grants	Independent city/town/county/tribal governments in VA	April 1	Operating support for arts organizations serving the locality or tribal nation	Up to \$4,500	1:1 match, 50% of match must be cash
Community Impact Grants	501(c)(3) organizations, colleges/universities, units of local and tribal government	April 1	New arts initiatives GOS & OSS May Not Apply	Up to \$5,000	1:1 match, 50% of match must be cash
Virginia Touring Grants	501(c)(3) organizations, Pre-K-12 schools, colleges/universities, units of local and tribal government	March 1 - December 1	VCA Touring Artist performance fees	Up to \$7,500	1:1 match, 50% of match must be cash
Arts in Practice Grants	501(c)(3) organizations, Pre-K-12 schools, colleges/universities, units of local and tribal government	July 1 - April 1 or until funds are exhausted	VCA Teaching Artist residency/workshop fees GOS May Not Apply	Up to \$2,000	1:1 match, 50% of match must be cash
Touring Artist Roster	Performing artists/ensembles residing in VA	July 15	Inclusion on the VCA Touring Artist Roster	\$2,000 - \$30,000 allocation	Presenter pays 1:1 match through a Virginia Touring Grant
Teaching Artist Roster	Teaching artists residing in VA	July 15	Inclusion on the VCA Teaching Artist Roster	\$2,000 - \$2,500 allocation	Partnering organization pays 1:1 match through an Arts in Practice Grant



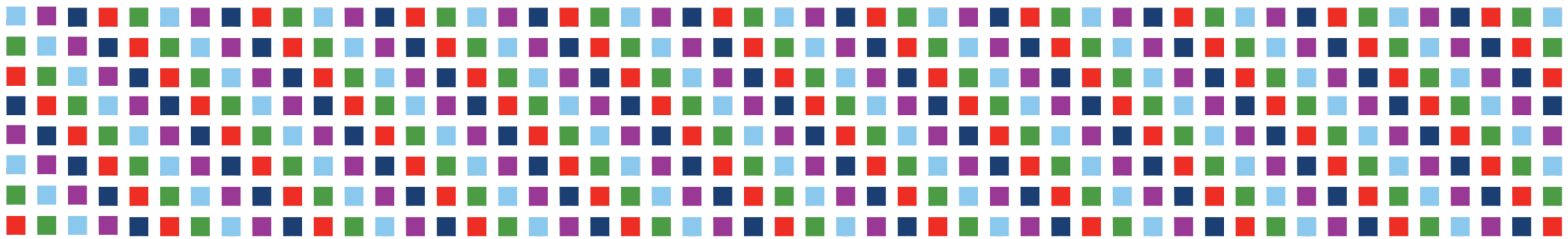
WHY DOES IT TAKE SO LONG TO GET A VCA AWARD?



VCA Grant Life Cycle



BASIC ELIGIBILITY



BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS



Applicants applying for a Virginia Commission for the Arts grant must:

- Be a **nonprofit and exempt from federal income tax**.
- Produce, present, or support the arts **in Virginia**.
- Have a **valid [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number**.
- Remain in **operation for the duration of the grant cycle** to receive and apply the funds.
- Not be **under current debarment or suspension** from federal funding.
- Comply with **federal non-discrimination laws**, including:
 - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (race, color, national origin).
 - Title IX of the Education Amendments (sex).
 - Age Discrimination Act (age).
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA (disability)
- Have no **past due Final Reports to the VCA** at the time of application.





The Virginia Commission for the Arts does not fund:

- Activities restricted to an organization's membership.
 - Expenses related to parties, receptions, fundraising events/benefits, etc.
 - Endowments or capital campaigns.
 - Activities that are primarily religious in purpose.
 - College or university-based projects that are part of a required course or curriculum, that do not involve and serve a significant non-student population, or that are for activities that are otherwise available in the community.
 - General operating support for historic celebrations or community promotional activities.
 - Fines and penalties, bad debt costs, or deficit reduction.
 - Arts activities / programs that have already started or otherwise occurred.
 - Activities or programs that take place outside Virginia.
 - Vocal, dance and musical ensembles that perform primarily pop, Broadway, or barbershop music, or that focus primarily on competitions.
- Lobbying** | No part of a Virginia Commission for the Arts grant shall be used for any activity intended to influence a member of Congress or the General Assembly, to favor or oppose any legislation.



APPLY
HERE!

Online Grant System

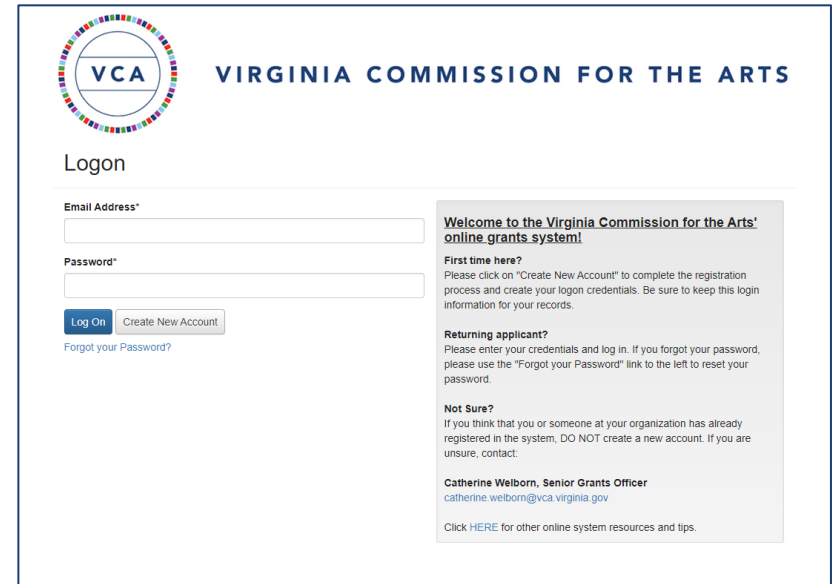
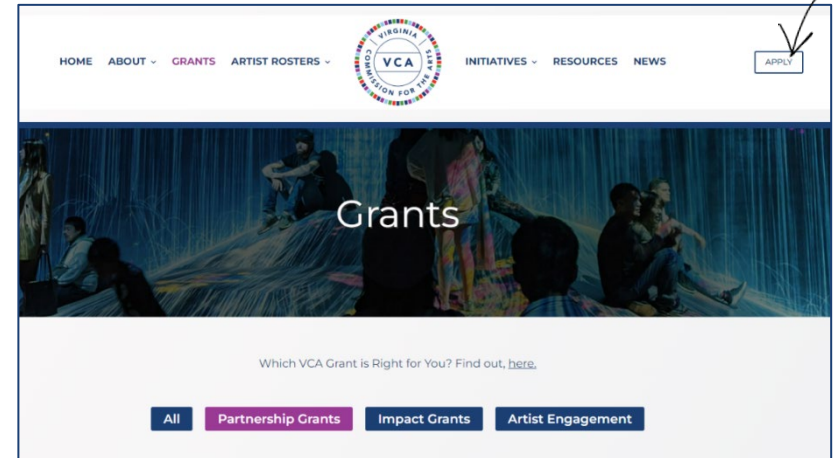
All applications must be submitted via [Foundant](#), the VCA's online grants system. Applications are due in Foundant by 5:00 p.m. EST on the date published for each individual grant program. No paper applications are accepted – no exceptions!

How To Apply

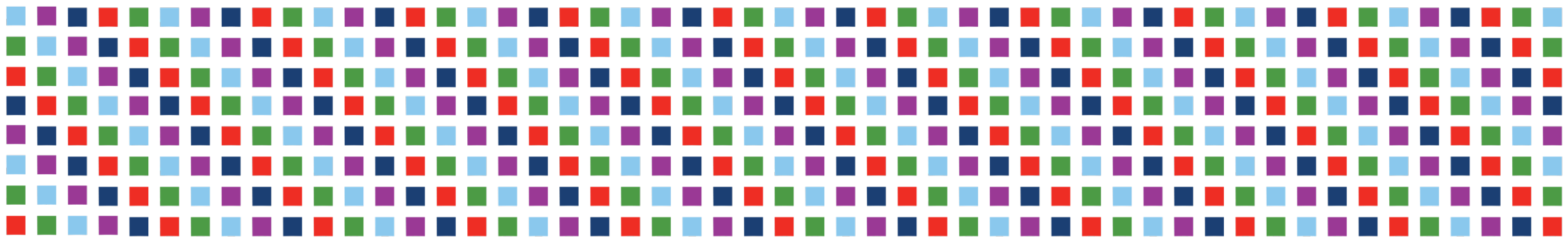
Go to www.vca.virginia.gov and click "[Apply](#)" in the top right corner.

Once you or your organization is registered in Foundant, you will have created an online profile and account. You can log on anytime to apply for funding opportunities, review active grants, view past submissions, request funds, and submit final reports. Simply enter your username and password to sign in.

Click here for [Foundant Tips and FAQs](#)



GRANT PROGRAMS



PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

- **General Operating Support: Medium and Large | GOS**
- **Operating Support Small | OSS**
- **Creative Communities Partnership Grants**

VCA forges strong partnerships with arts organizations and Virginia municipalities in support of unrestricted funding needs

IMPACT GRANTS

- **Community Impact Grants**

VCA drives impact through the arts in communities and learning institutions around the state

ARTIST ENGAGEMENT

- **Virginia Touring Grant**
- **Touring Artist Roster**
- **Arts in Practice**
- **Teaching Artist Roster**

VCA supports individual artists and their engagement with citizens and communities across the Commonwealth

PARTNERSHIP GRANTS



STRENGTHENING OUR ARTS ECOSYSTEM



arts organizations



Virginia municipalities

General Operating Support for Medium and Large Organizations | GOS

\$3,500 - \$100,000

- Medium to large arts organizations with annual income of \$150,000+
- 3 previous years of programming and 3 programs per year
- Long form applications are reviewed by statewide Advisory Panels. Short form applications are reviewed by VCA staff.
- FY26 GOS application assignments can be found [HERE](#)
- May not apply for OSS, Community Impact, and/or Arts in Practice grants

Deadlines:

FY26 GOS Short Form: February 1

FY26 GOS Long Form: March 1

Operating Support for Small Organizations | OSS

\$2,500

- Small arts organizations with annual income of \$20,000 and less than \$150,000
- 2 previous years of programming and 3 programs per year
- Applications are reviewed by VCA staff
- May not apply for GOS and/ or Community Impact grants

Deadline: March 1

Creative Communities Partnership Grants | CCPG

Matching grant up to \$4,500

- Independent cities, towns, counties, or tribal governments in Virginia
- Sub-grants to independent, ADA-compliant arts organizations for arts activities in the locality.
- Local or tribal governments that have not approved their budgets by the grant deadline may apply conditionally
- Grants may not be used to supplement school arts budgets or arts programming by local governments or to match payments paid to performers for specific performances.
- Applications are reviewed by VCA staff
- **Deadline:** April 1

**Artistic
Excellence**
30 points

**Operational
Excellence**
30 points

**Community
Engagement
and Access**
40 points

Artistic Excellence

30 points

What constitutes artistic excellence may vary in relation to the organization's mission, goals, audiences, and activities. The organization must demonstrate high-quality activities that achieve a distinct artistic vision consistent with the applicant's mission and goals.

An organization that receives higher scores in this area will:

- Offer programs and services that are closely aligned with its mission and goals.
- Show breadth and artistic excellence in the quality of programming, including participating artists, works produced or presented, and /or arts services provided.
- Demonstrate strong artistic standards and qualified artistic staff and leadership.
- Priority will be given to organizations that pay artists.

Operational Excellence

30 points

Operational excellence evaluates the organization's capacity to effectively manage its operations and resources as reflected by organizational stability and fiscal position. The organization has a Board-approved strategic planning process that shows evidence that it is maximizing opportunities to generate diversified income. The organization has a strong Board composition, staff qualifications, and clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for each.

This review category is broken into three areas:

1. Organizational Structure (10 pts)
2. Fiscal Responsibility (10 pts)
3. Planning and Evaluation (10 pts)

An organization that receives higher scores in this area will:

- Operate with qualified and appropriate staff and board structure to carry out programs and activities.
- Provide ongoing learning opportunities for staff, board, and volunteers.
- Show diversified and sufficient income to support stable programming and access to cash to cover occasional shortfalls.
- Demonstrate practical planning strategies for reaching its goals and adapting to the changing environment.
- Have a sound method of evaluating organizational and programmatic effectiveness.

Community Engagement and Access

40 points

The Commission invests in opportunities for quality arts experiences made available and accessible for the benefit all Virginians. This section seeks to understand the organization's efforts to understand and serve its community, its efforts to be inclusive of individuals, and the impact its programs and services have on communities and artists and patrons served.

An organization that receives higher scores in this area will:

- Have a clear understanding of the demographics and community(ies) /audiences it serves.
- Present a solid communications plan and strategies to expand its reach to new and/or underserved, under-resourced, or under-represented audiences.
- Demonstrate a commitment to arts education for Virginians of all ages as part of or beyond the organization's regular programming for the community it serves.
- Make the arts a vital part of community life through accessibility, outreach, advocacy, partnerships, and initiatives that enhance the quality of life in the community, region, and/or state.

General Operating Support (GOS) applications are scored on a 100-point scale.

Priority 1 Organizations

(90 - 100 pts/ average score 90% - 100%) meet the criteria for funding with high scores for artistic excellence, organizational excellence, community engagement, and overall professionalism. These organizations demonstrate best practices in the key areas above and are critical to the cultural life of their communities.

Priority 2 Organizations

(80 - 89 pts/ average score 80% - 89%) meet the criteria for funding and are critical to the community, although the artistic excellence, organizational excellence, community engagement and access may not be as high as that of the priority 1 applicants.

Priority 3 Organizations

(70 - 79 pts/ average score 70% - 79%) meet the criteria for funding but (1) are not as critical to the cultural life of their communities as the priority 1 and 2 applicants; do not demonstrate a compelling need for VCA funding; and/or have activities other than the arts as a substantial part of their programming.

No Funding

(Less than 70 pts /average score 69% and below)

Scoring Scale (0 - 100)	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	No funding
	(90 - 100 points)	(80 - 89 points)	(70 - 79 points)	(Less than 70 points)

IMPACT GRANTS





support for a wide range of new and expanded arts programs that drive impact



Matching Grant up to \$5,000

Eligible Activities

- New or expanded performances, exhibitions, screenings, conferences, readings, public art projects, and festivals that focus on engaging new and underserved, under-resourced, and under-represented audiences or communities
- program enhancements that enable participation of individuals with disabilities
- commissions of new works of visual, performing, and media arts
- public art projects that commission an artist for the creation of new work that engage the community in the planning, presentation, and/or fabrication

Note: Applications for traditional learning environments, including Pre-K-12 and lifelong learners with identified learning goals may be filed under the Arts in Practice Grant program if applicable. **Community Impact applicants may not apply for GOS or OSS.**

Eligible Applicants

- nonprofit organizations, universities/colleges, units of local and tribal government
- 1:1 cash match requirement
- Applications are reviewed by a statewide Advisory Panel

Deadline: April 1

Artistic Excellence

30 points

- Relative to the budget size of the organization, the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a committed effort to provide its audience/community an innovative, impactful, and quality artistic experience.

Operational Excellence

30 points

- The extent to which the applicant can demonstrate sound fiscal and project management.

Community Engagement and Access

40 points

- The extent to which there is an active, two-way engagement between the applicant and the audience/community in the planning, participation, and evaluation of the proposed activity, including intentional strategies to reach new and underserved, under-resourced, and under-represented communities.

COMMUNITY IMPACT | SCORING AND PRIORITY RATINGS



Community Impact Grant applications are scored on a 100-point scale.

Priority 1 Projects

(90 - 100 pts/ average score 90% - 100%) are innovative, professional, high-quality projects that fully meet the criteria for funding, will be accessible, well-managed and a cost-effective use of limited state/federal tax funds, and will benefit the cultural life of the community/target audience.

Priority 2 Projects

(80 - 89 pts/ average score 80% - 89%) meet the criteria for funding, but artistic excellence, operational excellence, community engagement and access are not as strongly evident.

Priority 3 Projects

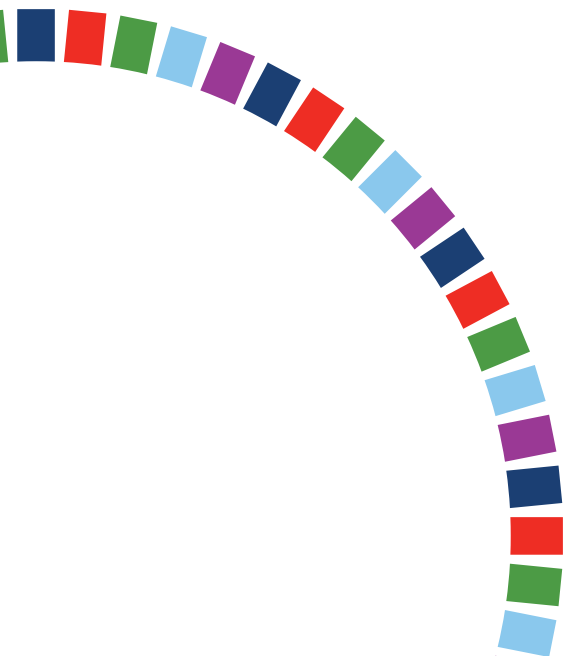
(70 - 79 pts/ average score 70% - 79%) meet the criteria for funding, but artistic excellence, operational excellence, community engagement and access are weak.

No Funding

(Less than 70 pts /average score 69% and below)

Scoring Scale (0 - 100)	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	No funding
	(90 - 100 points)	(80 - 89 points)	(70 - 79 points)	(Less than 70 points)

ARTIST ENGAGEMENT GRANTS



CONNECTING ARTISTS AND COMMUNITIES



theatre performances



interactive workshops



dance residencies



spoken word, literary events



music concerts



public art installations/murals

Elevating Virginia's artists and growing the creative economy

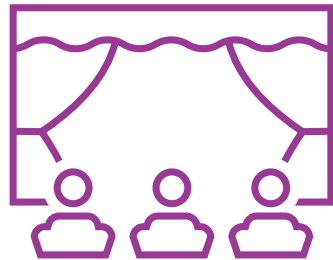
ROLLING GRANT PROGRAMS



Participatory
educational workshops
or residencies



Arts in Practice Grants
Teaching Artist Roster



Dynamic performances



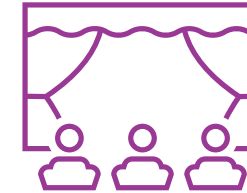
Virginia Touring Grants
Touring Artist Roster



FY25 Arts in Practice

Up to \$2,000
15% Cash Match

- Provides up to \$2,000 for participatory residencies/workshops fees led by artists on the VCA Teaching Artist Roster



FY26 Virginia Touring Grants

Up to 50% of performance fees
1:1 Cash Match

- Provides up to 50 percent of the performance fee for touring programs listed on the VCA Touring Artist Roster.

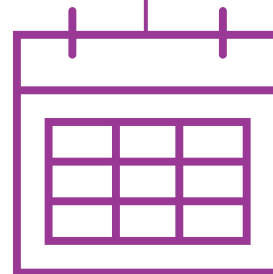
- Virginia nonprofit organizations; federally tax-exempt schools; and units of local and tribal government may apply
- Payments are made to the applicant who is responsible for compensating the VCA Roster Artist in full
- Applicants must submit their requests at least two weeks prior to the start of the activity. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis and are awarded internally by VCA staff.

FY25 Arts in Practice Grants

- **Open:** Currently open!
- **Deadline:** April 15, 2025, or until funding is exhausted
- For activities taking place now - June 15, 2025
- Applicants may apply **twice per grant cycle**, subject to the overall limit of \$10,000 per VCA Teaching Artist.
- GOS applicants may not apply

FY26 Virginia Touring Grants

- **Open:** March 1, 2025
- **Deadline:** December 1, 2025
- For activities taking place July 1, 2025 - June 15, 2026
- Applicants may apply **multiple times per grant cycle**, subject to the overall limit for each VCA Touring Artist/Ensemble.





Artist Rosters



Touring Artist Roster

PURPOSE

To identify and promote professional Virginia Touring Artists who are committed to showcasing their artistry across the commonwealth.



Teaching Artist Roster

PURPOSE

To identify and promote professional Virginia Teaching Artists who are committed to enhancing arts education across the commonwealth.

TIPS FOR APPLYING



START NOW!



- FY26 Guidelines for Funding
- Foundant
- SAM.gov UEI#
- IRS Determination Letter and VA W-9 Form
- P&L Statement
- Balance Sheet – December 31, 2024 for GOS
- Board List
- Website / VCA logo
- Advisory Panel Comments



Craft a Compelling Narrative

- Highlight your unique value and contributions to arts community.
- Align your organization's mission and activities with your goals and ours.

Submit High Quality Materials Reflecting Mission and Excellence

- Recent reviews, videos, awards and recognitions.
- Letters of support from those who can attest to the organization's artistic integrity and contributions.

Showcase Community Impact and Accessibility Efforts

- Include metrics (e.g., attendance, geographic reach) and examples of community partnerships that demonstrate impact.
- Provide examples of how your programs serve diverse and underserved audiences.
- Emphasize your commitment to ADA compliance and inclusivity.
- If you participate in VCA's Passport Program, let us know!

Align Numbers with Narratives

- Ensure your budget aligns with the descriptive impact in your story.
- Document in-kind support and contributions to demonstrate community investment.

Acknowledge Challenges

- Be open about deficits, staffing changes, or audience declines.
- Share steps you are taking to address these issues with clear plans.

Highlight Accountability

- Demonstrate how you measure success through data and feedback.
- Include specific evaluation tools and how they inform your decisions.

BEFORE YOU CLICK SUBMIT!



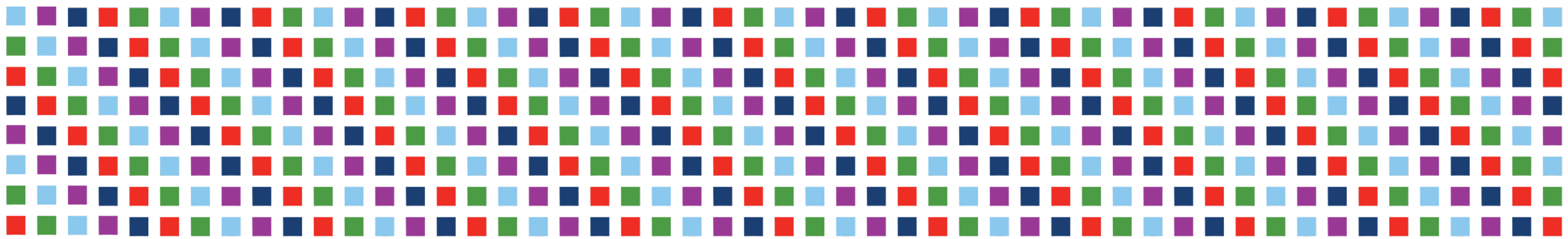
Proofread and Review

- Check for typos, errors, or missing details to ensure a polished application.
- Make sure your uploads can be easily viewed.
- Have a colleague review for clarity and alignment with the grant's goals.
- Once you submit your application, it cannot be updated.

Submit Early and Stay Engaged

- Avoid last-minute submissions—give yourself time to resolve any issues.
- Reach out to grant officers for guidance or clarification if needed.

CALL TO ACTION



Nominations for Advisory Panels

The Commission staff reviews nominations submitted via our nomination form that includes a brief description of the individual's experience in the arts, an address, and a telephone number.

Advisory Panelists Possess

- In-depth knowledge in a field of the arts
- Familiarity and understanding of a wide variety of arts events in their communities
- Willingness to offer opinions and work in a committee setting
- Contribute the time necessary to review grant applications and to understand the Commission programs and guidelines
- Ability to attend a one-day Advisory Panel screening session
- Access to a laptop computer for Advisory Panel application review





VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

Advisory Panelist Nomination Form

Please use this form to nominate an individual (self-nominations welcome) to serve as an Advisory Panelist on an upcoming Virginia Commission for the Arts Panel. The quality and integrity of the Commission's decision-making depend upon the individual contributions of time, thought, and energy of these volunteers.

Members of Advisory Panels are thought leaders in the arts industry who are passionate about the positive impact of arts on the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can include but are not limited to: individual artists; educators; community leaders; museum curators; theatre directors; board leaders; and arts administrators.

Nominee Name

First Name

Last Name

ADDITIONAL GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



National Endowment for the Arts

www.arts.gov

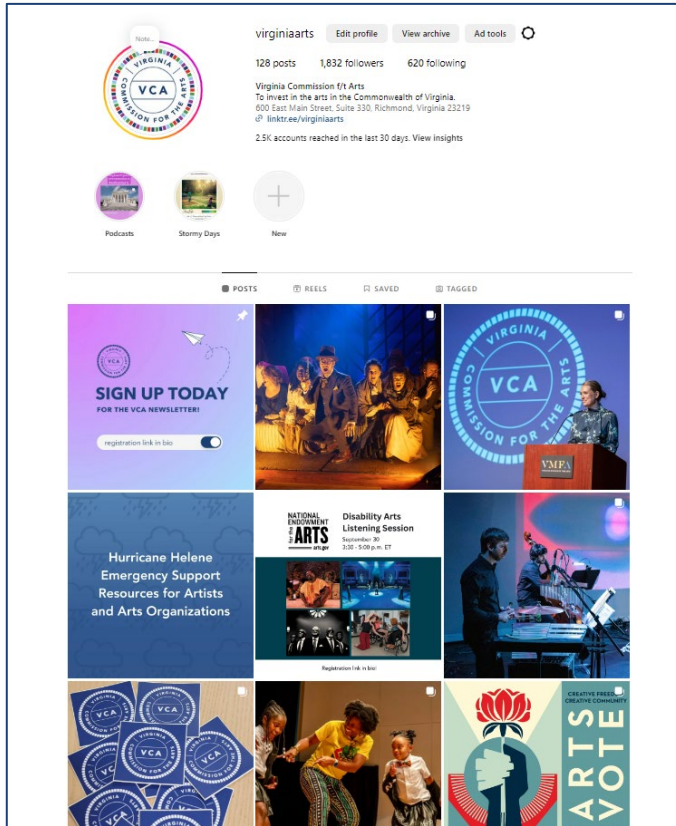
Mid Atlantic Arts

www.midatlanticarts.org

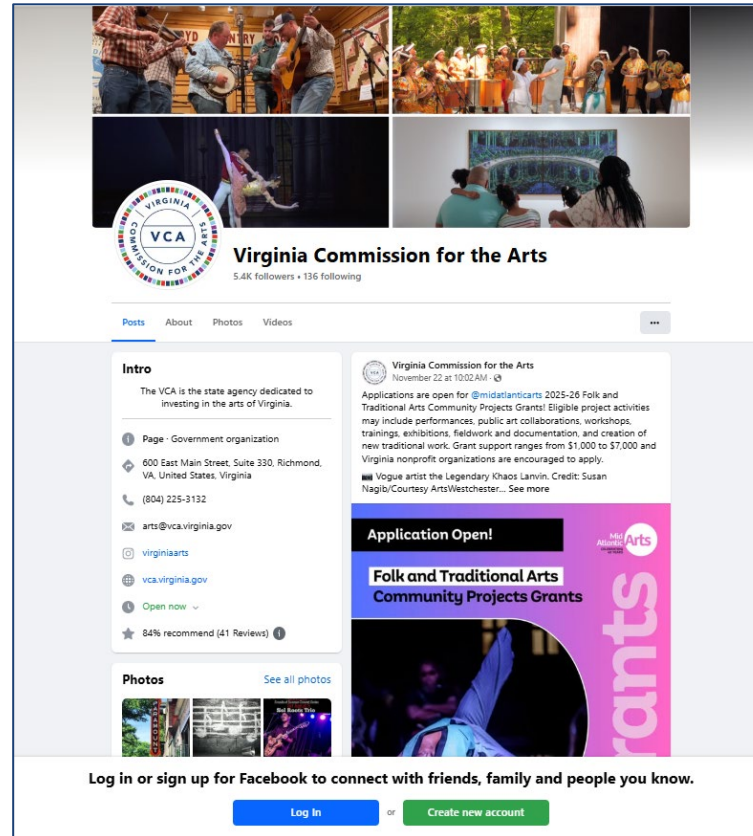
Virginia Tourism Corporation

www.vatc.org/

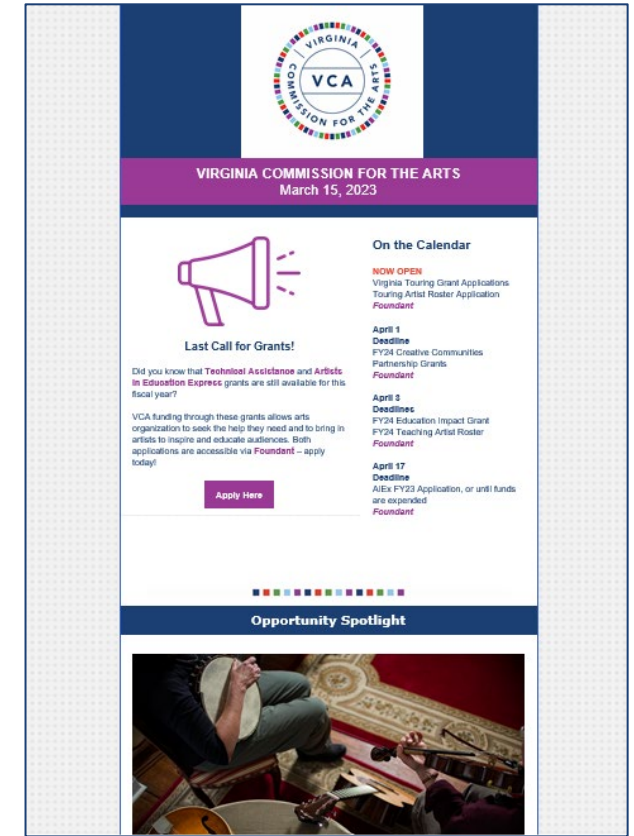
CONNECT WITH US



Instagram | @virginiaarts



Facebook | @VirginiaArts



Monthly Newsletter | Sign Up [HERE!](#)



QUESTIONS

Answers to FAQ's can also be found on our website, [HERE](#)

CONTACT US

Questions about VCA Partnership and Impact Grants

Cathy Welborn, Senior Grants Officer

catherine.welborn@vca.virginia.gov

Questions about Artist Engagement Grants

Lorraine Bruner, Artist Engagement Coordinator

lorraine.bruner@vca.virginia.gov

#virginiaarts

www.vca.virginia.gov

804.225.3132



THANK YOU!



