



VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

FY27 Community Impact Grant | Applicant Evaluation Rubric

Artistic Excellence – 30 Points Total					
Criteria	Excellent (9–10)	Good (7–8)	Fair (5–6)	Needs Improvement (0–4)	Points
Project Purpose & Goals	Project purpose is clear, compelling, and strongly aligned with the organization's mission and goals; demonstrates clear rationale and impact.	Purpose is clear and aligned with mission; rationale generally evident.	Purpose or alignment somewhat unclear or inconsistently articulated.	Purpose unclear or not aligned with mission.	/10
Project Description	Project is well-defined with clear activities, timeline, location, scale, and (if applicable) thoughtful expansion from prior work.	Project is clearly described with most key elements included.	Project description lacks clarity or key details.	Project is poorly defined or incomplete.	/10
Artistic Excellence of the Project	Strong evidence of artistic quality through artist selection, process, and support materials (organization website and two artistic excellence documents); demonstrates innovation and meaningful artistic experience.	Good artistic quality and intent; materials support project with minor gaps.	Artistic quality or documentation uneven or limited.	Minimal or unclear evidence of artistic quality or artistic intent.	/10
Operational Excellence – 30 Points Total					
Criteria	Excellent (9–10)	Good (7–8)	Fair (5–6)	Needs Improvement (0–4)	Points
Organizational Structure & Planning	Qualified staff/leadership with clear roles; strong planning process with defined timeline and responsibilities.	Appropriate staffing and planning with some detail.	Staffing or planning lacks clarity or completeness.	Insufficient capacity or unclear planning.	/10
Project Budget	Budget is realistic, balanced, and cost-effective; expenses are appropriate; demonstrates strong use of funds and leveraged support.	Budget is generally sound with minor inconsistencies.	Budget lacks clarity, balance, or justification in areas.	Budget is unrealistic, incomplete, or poorly justified.	/10
Fiscal Responsibility	Organization demonstrates strong financial stability and management; clear financial position to carry out the project. <i>Note: For units of government, assess fiscal responsibility based on the narrative response and project budget; absence of financial statements alone should not reduce the score.</i>	Financial position is generally stable with adequate information.	Financial stability or documentation is unclear or limited.	Financial instability or insufficient information provided.	/10
Community Engagement & Access – 40 Points Total					
Criteria	Excellent (9–10)	Good (7–8)	Fair (5–6)	Needs Improvement (0–4)	Points
Demographics & Outreach	Clearly identifies geographic region and target communities, including underserved, under-resourced, or under-represented populations; strong understanding of who is being served.	Communities and audiences identified with general clarity.	Limited or unclear identification of communities served.	Communities served not clearly identified.	/10
Project Relevancy and Promotion	Highly relevant to community needs. Includes clear, intentional strategies for engaging the community /participants in planning, participation, and evaluation as appropriate to the project; strong and well-targeted promotion strategies to reach intended audiences.	Relevance and promotion strategies are evident but may lack depth or specificity.	Limited or unclear relevance or promotion strategies.	Project relevance not demonstrated; little or no engagement strategy.	/10
Project Evaluation	Clear, appropriate, & well-defined method for evaluating or measuring project success; evaluation approach is directly aligned with project goals and scale and includes meaningful indicators of impact.	Evaluation method is evident and generally appropriate to the project; includes some relevant indicators of success.	Evaluation approach is limited, unclear, or not fully aligned with project goals or scale.	No clear method for evaluating or measuring project success.	/10
Accessibility	Demonstrates clear, thoughtful strategies to ensure accessibility and accommodate individuals with disabilities; approaches are appropriate to the project scale.	Accessibility efforts are evident and generally appropriate.	Accessibility plans are limited, unclear, or minimally described.	Accessibility not adequately addressed.	/10
Priority Ratings	Definition				
Priority 1 (90 -100 points)	Fully meets funding criteria; strong across artistic excellence, operational excellence, and community engagement and access.				
Priority 2 (80 - 89 points)	Meets funding criteria; overall strong, though one or more areas are less fully developed.				
Priority 3 (70 - 79 points)	Minimally meets funding criteria; notable weaknesses in one or more review areas.				
No Funding (below 70 points)	Does not sufficiently meet funding criteria; significant weaknesses or insufficient evidence.				