



Illinois Arts Council

FY26 Creative Projects Grants

Tip Sheet

The Illinois Arts Council's FY26 Creative Projects Grant Program opens on July 1, 2025. Below are some tips on getting ready to apply and completing your application.

Get Ready to Apply

1. **Make sure you are eligible!** This program is for:
 - a. Individual artists and arts educators who are 21 years or older and have been Illinois residents for at least 1 year. Individuals currently enrolled in a degree-obtaining program, including a college or university in any undergraduate or graduate program, are not eligible.
 - b. Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State.
 - c. Local government entities, such as municipalities, counties, libraries, and park districts.
 - d. *NOTE: Recipients of the FY25 Creative Catalyst Grant and public K-12 school districts, schools, and charter schools are **not** eligible.*
2. Confirm you can **access the [IAC Salesforce grant portal](#)**.
 - a. PRO TIP: **Use Google Chrome** as your browser when accessing Salesforce. It will not work properly in other browsers.
 - b. Check to see if you need to update your password. After you log in, complete any updates to the Applicant Information tab and confirm you do not have outstanding grant reports that need to be submitted. If you don't have an account, click "Not a member" and complete the form with your name, email, and a secure password.
3. Download and review the [IAC FY26 Creative Projects Grant Guidelines](#) to make sure you understand everything you need for your application.
4. Submit all required application materials a **minimum of 8 weeks before** the arts project start date. Applications are **open until funds are expended**. Funding allocations are based on the [IAC regions](#). Reach out to your [IAC Program Director](#) with any questions.



Three Tips for a Successful Application

1. Meet all **Review Criteria**:
 1. Is your application **complete**?
 2. Does your application provide **details on an arts project or professional development opportunity**?
 3. Did you provide a **budget with standard industry expectations** for costs?
 4. Does the application prove that the **project is feasible** based on the description, budget, and timeline?
 5. Are you **eligible to receive funds from the State of Illinois**? IAC will look at the following to determine if you are eligible:
 - a. Applicant is up to date with IAC reports.
 - b. Applicant is not on the Illinois Stop Payment List.
 - c. Organizational applicants: need to be in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State.
 - d. Individual artists: show proof you have been an Illinois resident for a minimum of 1-year from the date of application.
 - e. Individual artists: submit a valid Illinois State ID or Driver's License.
2. Provide **all Supporting Documents**. These include:
 - a. **Proof of Project Feasibility**: This supporting document should demonstrate that this arts project, or professional development opportunity, can take place and that it was carefully planned and will have the time, space, people, and funds to take place if IAC funding is provided.
 - b. **Valid Illinois Driver's License or State ID** - required **only** for Individual Artist applicants.
3. For each of the required documents above, follow the supporting document **naming convention: Applicant Name_[supporting document type]**.

For additional support with your application:

- Watch this [webinar](#) that walks you through the requirements and application process.
- Attend a virtual [IAC drop-in session](#).
- Reach out to your [IAC Regional Program Director](#) for 1-1 support.

NOTE: If you have difficulties accessing your account, email Program Representative, Jasmine Roberson at Jasmine.Roberson@Illinois.gov for help.

Reminder: For additional support, application troubleshooting, or eligibility questions, submit a Help Desk ticket [here](#) to speak to one of our staff members one-on-one.