**St. Mary’s County Arts Council (SMCAC)**

**GUIDELINES FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The purpose of the St. Mary’s County Arts Council is to:

* increase the county and community’s awareness of the value of the arts and how the arts can enhance the quality of both our community and individual lives
* to foster and encourage the development of the arts and artists in St. Mary’s County
* and to serve as a subsidiary of the Maryland State Arts Council to receive, review, and approve local project grant applications worthy of County and State support.

**REQUIREMENTS** for organizations receiving grants from the **SMCAC**

* Must have been in existence for one year prior to the application
* Must have been both incorporated in Maryland as a not-for-profit and have received tax exempt status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Units of government, colleges and universities are also eligible to apply
* All performances, exhibits, and/or classes must be held within St. Mary’s County and be open to the general public.
* **Must not have any Final Reports outstanding. A final report form will be provided by SMCAC accompanying the contract. This final report must be filed within 30 days of the completion of the event.**
* Recognition for the grant must be given to the **St. Mary’s County Arts Council and the Maryland State Arts Council** in all public service announcements, programs, press releases, web sites, etc.
* Four tickets or complimentary passes to the event must be forwarded to the Arts Council to be used at its discretion at least one month prior to the event.
* Must comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which states that no persons, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination to the arts
* Must comply with the Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Action, Section 6101, of 1975, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex or age.
* Must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which states that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to the arts.
* Supplementary materials must be provided which can include catalogues, reviews, programs, brochures or promotional materials related to the artists/performers of the proposed project.

**FUNDING CATEGORIES**

To be considered for funding, a project must be directly related to the arts. These categories are usually: Children’s Arts Events • Dance • Folk Art • Literature • Music • multi-Discipline • Media • Theater • Visual Arts.

**Grants for an organization or event shall not exceed $5,000 per Fiscal Year.**

**NON-QUALIFYING PROJECTS**

Grants will not be awarded for any of the following: re-granting, capital construction and/or equipment purchases, social functions, parties and receptions, loan principal payments, pro-rated salaries, rent, utilities, activities that benefit only the members of an organization or those activities closed to all but an organizations membership, transportation, general operating expenses not directly associated with an arts event, program, or project, and fund-raising events.

**DEADLINES**

The SMCAC strives to provide funding to all qualified applicants. Grants are awarded throughout the fiscal year, which runs from July 1 – June 30. Grants for Non-Profit Organizations, Arts in Education Grants and Sponsorships will be accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. Organizations may apply for a grant at any time during the fiscal year or in the first quarter of the next fiscal year in order to accommodate summer events.

We encourage applicants to apply as early as possible so that if denied, reapplication is possible for the next window. If the grant requests exceed our funding, we will refer to a rubric for evaluating applications and make awards to the top-scoring applications. Applications will be reviewed on the schedule shown below.

Requests will be evaluated at SMCAC public board meetings, held on the second Tuesday of the month at 5 pm. Approved grant processing will be initiated within 14 days of approval. Initial payments of 75% of the total grant amount will be dispensed upon contract execution. The remaining 25% will be awarded upon review of a final report after the program’s completion. The SMCAC caps awards to any single recipient at a maximum of $5000 per fiscal year, across award categories.

Applications received by:

* August 31 will be reviewed in September.
* October 31 will be reviewed in November.
* December 31 will be reviewed in January.
* April 30 will be reviewed in May.

*\*Grant disbursement may be impacted by the timing of our annual MSAC grant delivery. Every effort will be made to disburse approved grant funding as close to approval as possible.*

Grant applications may be postmarked the day that they are due. **Written Statements of intent** **to apply** are encouraged as soon as possible.

**TIPS FOR GRANT WRITING**

1. Grant writing is simply a budget for your event. Keep accurate records of expenditures and income. This will be helpful when filling out the **Final Report**.
2. Describe the purpose of your event clearly. Show its artistic merit and benefit to the community.
3. Make sure the **Grant Application** is typed or neatly printed and all additions are correct. Keep a copy of all paperwork for your records.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

1. Applications must be typed or neatly printed. **If you generate your application on a computer, you must use our format. Do not design your own forms**. To submit the application: send via email (preferred method) to info@smcart.org, mail via the US Post Office to the Arts Council address below, or hand-deliver to our office during open hours.

**Mailing address: ST. MARYS COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL**

 **PO BOX 1310**

 **LEONARDTOWN, MD 20650**

2. Application funds should be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis. In-Kind services can serve to support the match up to one quarter of the total project budget. In-Kind services are services which ordinarily would be paid for by your organization but are being voluntarily contributed to help carry out your activities.

3. **Events will not be funded retroactively**. All grant applications must be received for consideration by SMCAC on or before the published deadlines. Notification of the Board decision will be made within 30 days of the deadline.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The review and evaluation of grant requests will be based on the following criteria:

* Artistic merit of the proposed project
* Serving St. Mary’s County residents
* Financial feasibility of the project
* Engagement & Outreach

Questions should be directed to the SMCAC office by calling **240-309-4061** or by e-mail: **info@smcart.org**

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