

New York State Council on the Arts

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Special Arts Services

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- General Operating Support

For complete instructions on how to apply to NYSCA's FY2017 Grant Program, please [click here](#).

Program Goals

Special Arts Services (SAS) has grown to represent the actual pulse of New York State by recognizing and validating creative communities with a formidable range of interests and expressions. Rallying artists and organizations to sustain meaningful dialogue with their audience, SAS welcomes and seeds excellence across a broad spectrum of the arts, all disciplines and all contexts. SAS espouses a truly inclusive and dynamic understanding of diversity, and makes a point of acknowledging the many variables that shape and energize the people of New York. SAS organizations are exemplar in their aggregate embodiment of race, gender, culture, language, income, age, and geographic diversity, and are often at the very forefront of issues like access to the arts, relational violence, youth at-risk, and homelessness. In all, SAS champions arts initiatives that reflect and celebrate the diverse richness of the entire State today.

Special Arts Services supports professional arts activities that serve distinct cultural and ethnic communities as well as organizational and project programming providing the following: programs that enhance access to the arts for historically underserved communities, activities that bring the arts to isolated geographic areas and to communities with high rates of poverty, programs for people with disabilities, scholarship programs for arts training and tuition-free or low cost classes serving students from historically underserved communities or with disabilities; and arts programs that promote intergenerational and multi-cultural communities, including ethnic traditions that serve their own unique and diverse populations.

Special Arts Services supports the activities of established and emerging organizations and professional training in arts disciplines to promote advanced study or entry of underserved artists towards an arts career. Special Arts Services encourages collaborations and innovative projects, whether they are multi-disciplinary activities or in a specific discipline of the performing arts, visual arts or media.

Though all Programs supported by NYSCA must be open to the general public; programs supported by Special Arts Services must specifically occur within and primarily directed for the underserved communities it seeks to serve.

Community-based organizations may apply for Special Arts Services grants that would support activities outside of their communities, but these programs must be primarily marketed to the specific underserved community served by the applicant, and the activities must relate directly to the mission of the organization.

The NYSCA grant program strives to make investments of public funds that serve all communities and people that comprise New York State's citizens and visitors. NYSCA strongly supports, values and encourages the sustained and concerted efforts of non-profit art, culture and heritage organizations to be inclusive and have its workforce, artists and programmatic offerings reflect New York State's diversity of people, geography and artistic interests.

[Program Information](#)

Program Prerequisites:

- Application organizations (including sponsoring organizations) must be a governmental or quasi-governmental entity, a tribal organization, or duly incorporated non-profit organization, either incorporated in NY State or registered to do business in NY State, with its principal place of business located in NY State; and
- Unless it is otherwise exempted from prequalification, the nonprofit must be prequalified to do business with NY State by the time of the NYSCA application submission deadline date. For more information about how to Register and Prequalify in the Grants Gateway, click [here](#).

Types of Support Available:

Applicants may make a total of two requests Council-wide, except in categories exempt from the two-limit request (see below). Applicants wishing to make two requests in Special Arts Services categories in FY16 should first speak to Program staff regarding eligibility.

General Operating Support is provided for organizations whose primary mission is Special Arts Services. General Operating Support applicants may not apply in Project Support, and are limited to one additional project request Council-wide.

Project Support is provided for applicants from a variety of arts disciplines undertaking projects or programs which promote an understanding of the mission of special arts services, and may be directed at a general or professional audience. Such arts and cultural programming might include: exhibitions, performances, workshops, conferences, public programs, or services to the field.

Instruction & Training is provided for applicants from a variety of arts disciplines undertaking training projects or programs which promote an understanding of the mission of special arts services, and may be directed at a general or professional audience.

Regrants and Partnerships Support is made by invitation from the Council only, and is *exempt* from the Council-wide two-request limit.

Eligibility to Apply for other NYSCA Support and Exemptions from the Two-Request Limit:

Organizations applying for or receiving General Operating Support from NYSCA may also apply for Project Support in one other program. Sponsored applicants and those funded under the following programs are exempt from the two-request limit:

Architecture and Design Program - *Independent Projects category*

Dance Program – *Rehearsal Space and Residencies category*

Electronic Media & Film Program – *Workspace, Art & Technology category*

Facilities Program - *All categories*

Folk Arts Program - *Apprenticeships category*

Folk Arts Program - *Regional and County Folk Arts Programs category*

Individual Artists Program – *All categories*

Literature Program – *Translation category*

Regional Economic Development Program – *All categories*

State and Local Partnership Program - *Decentralization category*

All Programs - *Regrants and Partnerships category*

Evaluative Criteria

Grant requests are evaluated in accordance with agency-wide criteria.

General Operating Support

General Operating Support represents an investment by NYSCA in an organization's ongoing work, rather than a specific project or program. General Operating Support seeks to reward exemplary practice in all areas of administration, finance, programming, and other organizational activities for organizations.

General Support is directed toward ongoing activities of arts and cultural organizations, arts and cultural programs operated as independent entities within their own organizations, or significant ongoing arts and cultural programming within organizations whose mission is not primarily arts based, for example, the education programs of an arts center operated as a discrete entity within a parent community service organization.

When considering the provision and level of General Operating Support the Council examines the nature, scope, and quality of an organization's programs and activities, its managerial and fiscal competence, and its public service.

General Operating Support grants will be no less than \$5000 and will not exceed 25% of an organization's budget, based on the income and expense statement for the organization's most recently completed fiscal year. General Operating Support is awarded on a multi-year basis.

General Operating Support Prerequisites:

In order to be eligible to apply for General Operating Support, an applicant organization must meet the following minimum criteria:

- Its primary focus or mission must be in *Special Arts Services*; or the organization must have significant ongoing activities that address the focus of the NYSCA program in which the organization is seeking support; and
- It must have ongoing programs, exhibitions, productions or other art and cultural activities that are open to the general public; and
- The organization makes evident a substantial commitment to arts and culture, with a prior record of accomplishment in producing or presenting cultural activities; or the organizational mission is primarily devoted to arts and culture, with a prior record of accomplishment in producing or presenting cultural activities; and It must demonstrate fiscal stability as indicated by such factors as a positive fund balance, an absence of substantial, recurring organizational deficits, a realistic and balanced organizational budget, diverse revenue sources, and strong internal controls; and
- The organization must currently employ one or more qualified, salaried (not contracted) full time or part time administrative staff; and
- It must have a viable, committed board of directors with officers that exercises oversight and accountability for governance, operations, programming and finances; and
- It must demonstrate a consistent policy of fair payment to resident artists and teaching artists.

General Operating Support Questions:

Artistic/Programmatic

1. Background

Describe the organization and how it was established, focusing on the activities for which support is requested. Provide the organization's url and any other social media links.

2. Artistic/Cultural Vision

Articulate the organization's artistic and/or cultural vision.

3. Program Overview

Describe programs and/or services for the coming year and how they will help the organization to realize its artistic and cultural vision. Discuss any new programs and/or initiatives that are planned for the next two years, the goals in undertaking these activities, and the expected outcomes.

4. Changes and Challenges

Describe any recent significant programmatic changes, developments, and/or challenges, indicating how any challenges will be addressed.

Managerial/Fiscal

5. Staff

Identify the key administrative and artistic staff members responsible for this program. Detail any recent significant changes (or vacancies) in key staff positions.

6. Governance

Describe the board and/or governing body in detail, including committee structure, diversity, meeting schedule, and approach to staff and fiscal oversight.

7. Facilities

Describe the facilities used for programming and administration and how they are maintained.

8. Organizational Development

Outline the approach to institutional and succession planning, highlighting the roles of staff and board.

9. Finances

Detail plans for meeting current and future expenses. Include sources of earned and unearned income. Explain any current and/or recurring surplus or deficits.

10. Artist and Programmatic Consultant Fees

Indicate how payment to artists and any outside consultants is determined. Please include the range of fees.

Service to the Public

11. Constituency

Describe the audiences and communities served including numbers in attendance.

12. Development and Outreach

Detail efforts being undertaken to cultivate and broaden the organization's constituency.

13. Marketing and Online Resources

Describe the breadth of the organization's marketing strategies.

14. Evaluation

Articulate how the organization evaluates its programs, services, and/or other organizational initiatives.

15. Community Context

Identify the other organizations in the area that provide similar arts and cultural activities, and tell us how their activities support, enhance, or differ from those of this organization. Describe any partnerships or collaborations with other organizations.

[Support Materials](#)

Support Materials

Support Materials must be submitted by uploading each into the Pre-Submission Upload menu in the Grants Gateway Grant Opportunity Portal. NOTE: On Grants Gateway each upload box allows for only a single file. Please be sure to bundle all pages for each upload box as a single multipage file.

Acceptable file types: Adobe Acrobat PDFs, Microsoft Word DOC or DOCX, Microsoft PowerPoint PPT or PPTX. To submit URLs, please create a Word or PDF file with a list of URLs with any notes or description. URLs cannot be password protected and must remain live until December 31, 2016. NYSCA is not responsible for any broken, inactive or password protected links.

In the event that an applicant fails to submit one or more of the following required materials, the application will not be eligible for review. For a more detailed description of how to submit your support materials for this application, please click [here](#) for more information.

General Operating Support:

1. *Résumés or biographical statements* of up to 3 key staff, maximum of 1 page each.
2. *Organizational Chart.*

3. *Long-range or Strategic Plan* (optional).