



GREATER PITTSBURGH ARTS COUNCIL

Arts loud and clear

Greater Pittsburgh Artist Opportunity Grants Guidelines & Application

The Greater Pittsburgh Artist Opportunity Grants help advance the careers of individual artists by supporting expenses related to specific, unique opportunities that have the potential to significantly impact an artist's work and professional development. Grants range from \$250 to \$1,500. Grants are considered three times each year. Visit [our website](#) for upcoming deadlines.

What is an opportunity?

An opportunity may be one of many things—an invitation to exhibit at a prestigious gallery, to audition for a major dance company, to study with a mentor or renowned teacher. It might be juried in some way or available only through a competitive selection process. In any case, it should not duplicate experiences the artist has had in the course of his or her ongoing work, and it must lead to professional growth in the artist's career in a clear and meaningful way. This program does not fund art projects or the creation of new works of art. If you have questions about this distinction, give us a call to discuss your opportunity before applying.

What are the criteria for deciding which applicants to fund?

Unlike grant programs that support art projects, this program does not ask panelists to critique the quality of artists' work. Instead, reviewers must determine *from the application*:

- Whether the opportunity is unique and not a repeat of past experiences (i.e. is it juried selectively, time-sensitive, prestigious for the artist's field, a "first" for the artist?)
- Whether the artist has made the case that this opportunity has true potential to impact his/her artistic and career development

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants must...

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Be a full-time resident of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Mercer, Lawrence, Somerset, Venango, Washington or Westmoreland counties for at least one year immediately prior to the application deadline
- Have a record of artistic accomplishment that can be documented, including evidence of work that has been publicly performed, exhibited, published, critically reviewed, etc.
- Wait 18 months after receiving an AOG award to reapply to the program

Artist collectives, ensembles, bands, or collaborations are not eligible. An individual may apply to participate in an opportunity to which his/her group has been invited, but the applicant must focus on the impact specific to his/her career as distinct from the group.

Review Process and Timeline

A panel of artists representing various artistic disciplines reviews requests and makes funding recommendations. Artists will be notified of funding decisions within six weeks of the application deadline.

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Eligible Expenses

Artist Opportunity Grants can cover expenses related to a unique professional opportunity. Opportunities must take place no sooner than six weeks after the deadline and must be completed within six months. The following are examples of eligible expenses:

- Travel associated with an imminent, concrete opportunity to perform, exhibit, or audition, or to study with a significant mentor (lowest available fares; IRS mileage rate)
- Expenses for materials or equipment needed to prepare existing work for an exhibition or performance in which the artist has been invited to participate
- Documentation of work that is part of an imminent, concrete opportunity
- Professional fees and services related to a specific opportunity
- Childcare expenses that would allow an artist to attend a specific opportunity
- Reasonably-priced accommodations if opportunity is more than 100 miles from home

Ineligible Expenses

- Curatorial projects
- Materials to create new works of art
- Activities that have already taken place
- Ongoing work—this fund exists to help artists take advantage of unique opportunities in their careers
- Undergraduate or graduate study
- Arts-in-Education programs
- Applicant's own artistic fees
- Medical, legal or accounting fees
- Administrative expenses
- Commercial activities
- Purchase of equipment costing more than \$500 or equipment not related to a specific, imminent opportunity
- Teaching opportunities
- Self-produced exhibitions, performances or publications

Submission Process

All applications and supplemental materials should be submitted by email to Michelle Lee at mlee@pittsburghartsCouncil.org no later than 11:59 pm on the day of the deadline.

Applications are preferred in .pdf format, but Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx) will also be accepted. If you are unable to submit an application by email or in one of the listed formats, you must contact Michelle no later than one week prior to the deadline to make other arrangements. Late applications will not be accepted.

All grant recipients are required to complete a brief final survey in order to be eligible for future funding. Please note that none of the materials you provide in this application will be returned to you. Keep copies of all application materials and attachments for your files.

Questions? Contact Michelle Lee, Manager of Grants and Professional Development, at mlee@pittsburghartsCouncil.org or 412.391.2060 x229.

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Our Helpful Hints for You...

In an ideal world, we would have enough money to help every artist who asked. Though we're always looking for ways to increase this fund, it remains really competitive.

You should know that we're not making decisions in an ivory tower—the people who decide how this fund gets distributed are artists like you. When you write your application, make sure you speak to them clearly so that they really understand why you're seeking these funds. Remember, lots of other artists are asking, so you have to make your request stand out!

As the applicant, it is your responsibility to communicate clearly:

- HOW the opportunity is unique and what it offers that isn't otherwise available to you
- WHY the opportunity is critical at this juncture in your career
- WHAT the impact will be on your career and work
- WHO you will be working with and why they are the best one(s) to learn from right now

Panelists are experienced artists but may not be familiar with your work or with the opportunity you present (i.e. its quality, value to you as an artist, the reputation of the person or organization offering the opportunity, etc.). We strongly suggest that you ask someone unfamiliar with your work to read both the guidelines and your application and to provide you with objective feedback about whether your application addresses the criteria and considerations above.