Artist Opportunity Grants (AOGs) remove financial barriers between artists and game-changing experiences to advance their careers. These grants will not help you make your art. AOGs will help you acquire skills to improve your work, pay for childcare while you acquire those skills, document your work, ship your work, buy a plane ticket, pay residency and lesson fees and many other expenses that other grant programs do not cover. You can apply for between $250 and $2500.

These grants support artists: self-taught or classically trained, makers, musicians, actors, writers, poets, performers, dancers, digital or analog, multi-platform, emerging to established - all are welcome and encouraged to apply.

AOGs are for people – not bands, organizations or groups of artists. If you are an artist who is 18 years old or older, live in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Mercer, Lawrence, Somerset, Venango, Washington, or Westmoreland county and are not enrolled in an undergraduate art degree program you can receive an AOG.

What is a “game-changing experience to advance your career?”

There is no one right way to succeed as a working artist. Each AOG application details an opportunity that could be very important to that one artist. But successful applications do have some things in common.

- The experience is something that artist has not done before;
- There is a direct connection between the experience and reaching a career goal; and
- It is the right time in the artist’s career for this experience.

The best way to understand the types of opportunities these grants fund is to take a look at past grants. [www.pittsburghartsorganization.org/aog](http://www.pittsburghartsorganization.org/aog)

What is a “career goal?”

Career goals are as individual as the artists who achieve them. Many factors impact the goals artists set for themselves including the type of work you create and whether you are emerging, established or in the sunset of your career. But common factors are that reaching the goal will build career momentum or build your resume. Examples include:

- Opportunities to expose your work to key audiences/collectors/editors;
- Learning skills that will help evolve your work;
- Exploring a new discipline;
- Studying with a new instructor/teacher/mentor.
How to apply:

1. Read these guidelines;
2. Download the application;
3. Gather the materials you have to submit with the application;
4. Complete the application;
5. Email your completed application and supporting materials to aog@pittsburghartsdimcouncil.org before midnight on the day of the deadline.

**IMPORTANT: If you have recently received an AOG, you must wait at least 18 months before applying for another.**

**Step One: These Guidelines**

These guidelines will give suggestions for writing the strongest application you can. On the next few pages you will learn the best way to answer each question and exactly what documents you have to submit with your application. After reading these guidelines, take some time and think about whether what you want to do fits with this grant program.

If you have questions that these guidelines don’t answer, are not sure if your project fits this grant program or if you are:

- Nervous, confused, concerned, worried; and/or
- This is your first grant application; and/or
- You just want to talk it through…

**If you have any questions Anne and Shaqui are here to help.**

amulgrave@pittsburghartsdimcouncil.org
sScott@pittsburghartsdimcouncil.org

Book a phone appointment at: https://amulgrave.youcanbook.me/

In a pinch call:
Anne: 412.391.2060 ext. 238
Shaqui: 412.391.2060 ext. 223
**Step Two: The Application**

The AOG application is short: four questions. Your answer for each question cannot be more than one page long.

These questions will lead you through the information the panelists want to know. The first question asks you to talk about your art and the career goals you have set for yourself. The second question asks you to describe the experience/opportunity you want to fund. The third (and most important) question asks you to explain how this experience will help you achieve your career goals. Question four is the money question: How much will it cost?

**Cover Sheet: The Details**

The application cover sheet tells us where you live, how to reach you and a little bit about your identity. We gather this information not just to report to our funders but also to make sure this process is fair and transparent.

**Question One: Tell us what kind of art you make and the next few steps in your career.**

Because we do not ask for work samples it is important you tell us directly and clearly:

- *Your discipline/s.* A good start would be “I am a … sculptor/musician/filmmaker/multiplatform artist;”
- A little bit about your current work (not more than a paragraph);
- How long you have been a working artist;
- *Your career goals.* These goals lay out the path you want to take to move your career forward;

**Question Two: Describe the experience/opportunity you want us to fund.** Important details to include:

- When and where it takes place. Specific dates please.
- Did you apply? Were you invited? Is it a class anyone can take?
- Is it really prestigious? We may not know so you have to tell us.
- How is this experience different than anything you have done before?
- What you will do/learn/create during the experience.

**Question Three: Tell us how this experience will help you achieve your career goals.**

- Explain how the opportunity you described while answering Question Two will help you accomplish the career goals you listed in your response to Question One.
- Why this is the right time in your career for this experience?
**ARTIST OPPORTUNITY GRANT**

**GUIDELINES**

**Updated February, 2019**

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**More information and downloads at www.pittsburgharts.org/aog**

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**Question Four: How much will the experience cost? Which expenses do you want the grant to cover?**

- Please provide the budget for the experience and then let us know which expenses you want this grant to cover. Include all your big expenses, even if they are not eligible for grant funding.
- Make sure you check the chart below to make sure you are only requesting money to fund **ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**
- **AOGs cannot be used for these common expenses:**
  - Primarily commercial experiences such as booth fees to sell your work at a festival, the costs for pressing CDs or printing the cover art, setting up an e-commerce site or paying to promote your work online;
  - Audition fees, studio rent, or materials to make your art.
- If your costs exceed the $2500 please tell us how you will pay the remaining expenses. Make sure you tell us how much you are paying out of your own pocket – in-kind or cash.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Eligible Expenses</strong> (Stuff the grant can cover)</th>
<th><strong>Ineligible Expenses</strong> (Everything else...)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel costs for the artist applicant (plane tickets, mileage, meals, and accommodations if you are more than 100 miles from home)</td>
<td>Travel expenses for anyone else OR Opportunities that have already happened OR Experiences that are underway before the panel meets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs to document the opportunity or your work</td>
<td>Curatorial costs or curatorial projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing/mounting/shipping work for an exhibit</td>
<td>Supplies to create the work (including printing photographs) or self-publishing costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference registration costs</td>
<td>Teaching opportunities or opportunities designed to improve teaching skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition, registration fees and other fees associated with the opportunity</td>
<td>Opportunities while you are enrolled in an undergraduate art degree program or any activity for which you would receive academic credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare expenses</td>
<td>Pet sitting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson fees to study with a mentor</td>
<td>Your own artist fees or studio rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs to professionally mix and master music you have already recorded</td>
<td>Medical, legal, administrative, marketing, PR or accounting fees/expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment worth up to $500 necessary for the opportunity</td>
<td>Equipment not related to the opportunity or that costs more than $500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Tools and tips for calculating travel expenses**

**How to estimate the cost of driving your own car:**

Figure out how many miles you will drive and multiply that by the [IRS Mileage Rates](https://www.irs.gov/individuals/mileage-rental-expense-deductions).

**How to estimate hotel and food costs:**

Look up the daily reimbursement allowed (per diem) for US Government employees for your destination and multiply that by the number of days you will stay.


*Outside the US:* [State Department Per Diem Rates for Travel Outside the US](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/travel-warnings/health-safety-advisories.html)
Step Three: Gather Your Supporting Materials

Your application is not complete unless you submit a few more documents along with your application.

- **REQUIRED FOR EVERYONE:** A resumé or CV (no more than two pages) documenting your career as an artist. Include:
  - The milestones in your career. Tell us about the achievements that meant the most to you or gave your career some momentum.
  - Your art education. Formal or self-taught, you learned about art, share how.
  - Please do not include details of your non-art jobs.

- **REQUIRED IF** you had to **apply for/were invited** to the experience you **must** submit a letter or email:
  - Confirming the invitation/acceptance; and
  - The date and location of the opportunity.

- **REQUIRED IF** you are applying to **study with a mentor** you **must** submit:
  - Letter or email confirming that you have been accepted as a student/mentee;
  - Specifying the dates you will be studying; and
  - A bio of mentor/instructor/teacher.

- **OPTIONAL FOR EVERYONE:** Up to three pages of information about the opportunity. Some suggestions:
  - A description of the organization/event/experience from a website;
  - Reviews or news articles or blog posts about the experience;
  - Materials that demonstrate the impact of the experience.

Step Four: Submit Your Application

- All applications and supplemental materials must be submitted by email to aog@pittsburghartscouncil.org no later than 11:59 pm on the day of the deadline.
- Applications can be submitted as either PDFs or Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx).
- If you cannot submit the application in these formats please contact Anne Mulgrave (contact details below) to find a way for you to submit your application.
- We encourage everyone who applies to complete a profile on the Pittsburgh Artist Registry http://www.pittsburghartistregistry.org so we can link to your profile when we announce our grantees.

If you have any questions Anne and Shaqui are here to help.
amulgrave@pittsburghartscouncil.org    sscott@pittsburghartscouncil.org
Anne: 412.391.2060 ext. 238    Shaqui: 412.391.2060 ext. 223

More information and downloads at www.pittsburghartscouncil.org/aog
What Happens Next?

- **Confirming Email:** Within a day or two of the grant deadline you will get an email confirming that we received your application. If you do not receive a confirming email, contact Anne (details below) to make sure we received your application.

- **GPAC Review:** GPAC staff read all the applications to make sure they are complete and eligible for a grant.
  - If your application is incomplete, we will send you an email and ask you to submit the missing materials;
  - If your application is ineligible it will not be reviewed by the grant panel and we will send you an email to let you know.

- **Panel Review:** About six weeks after the application deadline a grant panel will meet and score the eligible applications:
  - Each panel is made up of four or five local artists;
  - The artists are selected after the application deadline to make sure that the panelists have the expertise needed to assess this group of applications;
  - The panelists receive paper copies of the application materials two weeks before the panel meets;
  - The panelists read and assess each application;
  - The panel meets for a whole day to discuss the applications and agree on a consensus score for each one;
  - Each application receives a score between 1 (terrible) to 5 (awesome); and
  - These application guidelines are the basis for the panel guidelines and score the panel gives your application.

- **Good news or bad news?**
  - About 10 days after the panel meets you will receive an email letting you know if you received a grant.

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