ADVANCEMENT GRANTS
FOR ARTS AND HUMANITIES ORGANIZATIONS

FY18 GUIDELINES

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
Monday, January 30, 2017– 11:59 p.m.
Applications will be accepted for activities occurring from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.
The anticipated grant award announcement will occur in June 2017.

All applications must be submitted online
at http://creativemoco.culturegrants.org.
First-time applicants MUST contact Grants Program staff.
Late applications and support materials will not be accepted.

All grant funding is subject to fiscal appropriation, reduction or termination
by the Montgomery County Government.

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Web: www.creativemoco.com

The Mission of the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County

The Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC), in partnership with the community, cultivates and supports excellence in the arts and the humanities, expands access to cultural expression, and contributes to economic vitality in the region.

Introduction

Advancement Grants for Arts and Humanities Organizations are available to Montgomery County, MD based non-profit arts and humanities organizations that have annual cash expenses of at least $50,000. FY18 Advancement Grants cover activities occurring from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. The award amounts for *Advancement Grants* will range from $10,000 to $200,000. **Organizations applying for more than $25,000 MUST submit their FY16 audit.** Grants awards support organizations that work in a wide array of arts disciplines including performing arts, folk and traditional arts, media arts, visual arts, literary arts. Grants also provide funding for the humanities, including history, literature, and philosophy.

AHCMC encourages proposals submitted by African, Latino(a), Asian, Arab, and Native American (ALAANA) arts and humanities organizations.

Purpose

Advancement Grants are intended as supplemental funding for special purposes. Each year, the specific purpose of this grant will be defined in response to current conditions.

Through FY18 *Advancement Grants*, AHCMC seeks to:

- Assist arts and humanities organizations in maintaining fiscal stability and long-term viability; and

- Support arts and humanities organizations in their long-term planning, planning for capital improvement projects, and technology improvements critical to their mission.

Grants will be awarded for use beginning on July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. The amounts awarded for *Advancement Grants* range from $10,000 to $200,000. Grant awards will be determined based on a competitive process that includes review by an advisory panel. The panel will evaluate the applications based on the criteria contained in these guidelines. Organizations may apply for either an AHCMC *Advancement Grant* **or** a *Capital Improvement Gran*t, **not both**, in a given fiscal year.

Organization Eligibility Requirements

An organization is eligible to apply for *FY18 Advancement Grants* if it meets all of the following criteria:

- Has met all of the following three criteria for at least the previous three consecutive fiscal years immediately prior to the application deadline:

  - The applicant's mission the exhibition, presentation, production or performance of, and/or education in, an arts and/or humanities discipline; and/or provides support services to artists and/or scholars and to arts and/or humanities organizations;

  - Has a balanced budget and annual documented cash operating expenses of no less than $50,000 See definition of operating expenses in the Eligible Budget Requirement section on page 4;

  - Demonstrates 501(c)(3) status through one of the following ways:
    - The applicant has IRS code 501(c)(3) status;
    - The applicant operates as a specific arts and/or humanities entity or division within a larger 501(c)(3) organization whose primary mission is not arts or humanities based; or
    - The applicant has a Montgomery County-based fiscal sponsor[1] with current 501(c)(3) status, whose primary mission is not arts and/or humanities based. The fiscal sponsor has been a non-profit entity in Montgomery County for at least the previous three consecutive fiscal years;

- has its principal office in Montgomery County;

- Is governed by an independent, legally liable Board of Directors operating under a mission statement for the organization, and an operating budget specific to the organization;

- Has at least part-time paid staff to support the organization's Board, comply with the grant requirement, and maintain ongoing programming; At least 40% of its board members reside and/or work in Montgomery County as of the grant application deadline;

- Offers no less than 51% of its programs and services in Montgomery County;

- Has submitted the Cultural Data Project report in accordance with Cultural Data Project procedures. See section about Cultural Data Project on page 6; and

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[1] Fiscal sponsorship is a formal arrangement in which a 501(c)(3) public charity sponsors a project that may lack exempt status. This alternative to starting your own nonprofit allows you to seek grants and solicit tax-deductible donations under your sponsor's exempt status. For more information go to http://grantspace.org/tools/knowledge-base/Individual-Grantseekers/Fiscal-Sponsorship/fiscal-sponsorship.

- Has met all requirements for any grant(s) received from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County in prior years.

Proposal Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible, the *Advancement Grant* proposal must meet the following requirements:

- Contributes to the organization's fiscal stability and long-term viability;
- Addresses long-term planning, planning for capital improvement projects, or technology improvements critical to an organization's arts or humanities mission.

Examples of eligible proposals include, but are not limited to:
- Purchase of equipment or software intended to upgrade the organization's technological capacity or management efficiency
- Board or staff training, in an area such as financial management
- Creation of a long-term business plan
- Studies and plans related to new and replacement machinery, research and development and the production of new services, and other major capital expenditures. This is also called investment appraisal, or capital budgeting.

Budget Eligibility Requirements

Non-allowable as cash operating expenses include:
- Re-granting,
- Acquisition of capital assets,
- Allocations to cash reserves,
- Capital improvements,
- Depreciation,
- Deficits,
- Loan principal payments,
- Contributions of endowments
- Scholarships awarded by you for your own activities.

This is not an exhaustive list. There may be additional non-allowable expenses. Grants program staff will review all financial information, and may contact applicants for additional information.

Non-allowable operating income includes:
- Loans,
- Unrealized gains or losses,
- Carryover,
- Transfer of funds earned in prior years,

- Revenue raised for capital or endowment funds
- Funds intended for the purpose of re-granting.

This is not an exhaustive list. There may be additional non-allowable income. Grants program staff will review all financial data, and may contact applicants for additional information.

Audit Eligibility Requirements

NEW!
- **Organizations applying for $25,000 or more must submit an audit prepared by an independent Certified Public Accountant for their 2016 fiscal year. Organizations applying for less than $25,000 do not need to submit an audit.**
- The audit submitted to AHCMC must include the independent auditor's report, including the notes. The management letter should also be included if the organization consents to its inclusion.
- If this audit is not completed by the application deadline, the applicant must include a financial statement for FY16 signed by the organization's treasurer with a letter stating the estimated date when the FY16 audit will be submitted to AHCMC.
- The FY16 audit must be submitted to AHCMC **no later than June 1, 2017**. **If the audit is not received by June 1, 2017, the organization will be disqualified.**
- Grants awards are given to organizations that are fiscally stable and have a demonstrated history of fiscal responsibility. If the audit expresses a Going Concern, the organization may be deemed ineligible.

Matching Requirements

To be eligible, the applicant must provide a cash match for the *Advancement Grant* request of one dollar for every dollar of grant funds awarded.

- Sources of the matching funds may include gifts from new donors and increased gifts from current donors.
- At least 50% of the cash match must be from donors that are new to the applicant or gift increases from current donors. For the purposes of this match, those who have not given before June 30, 2016 are considered new donors. Applicants must submit documentation explaining the gifts from new donors and gifts increases from current donors.
- Except as restricted below, the remaining match may be from any source, including reserves, ticket sales, tuition, or state and federal grants.

The match may not include:

- In-kind contributions or donated services;
- Any earned revenue from County government; or
- Grants or appropriations from County government sources.

If funded, the applicant must submit documentation substantiating the entire match, and a confirmation that at least 50% of the matching funds are new donations (as explained above).

DataArts (Formerly the Cultural Data Project)

The Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC) is engaged in a partnership with DataArts, a national nonprofit that collects standardized organizational data to help strengthen the arts and culture sector. The Cultural Data Profile (CDP), is its principal and proprietary service offering.

AHCMC **requires** that applicants complete a CDP annually through the DataArts website (www.culturaldata.org) and submit a Funder Report as a component of the application. By participating in the CDP, your organization will have access to a suite of analytic tools to help better assess capacity, manage day-to-day operations, and plan for the future. Your participation will also enable DataArts to provide the cultural community with consistent, reliable, comprehensive data on the arts and culture sector. DataArts provides informative training sessions and resources for organizations on how to participate in the CDP, as well as a Help Desk to answer any questions. Register for a CDP orientation webinar: http://culturaldata.nonprofitsoapbox.com/calendar

Once your Funder Report has been generated, be sure to check your work for accuracy. If you need to make a correction, you can find instructions on how to edit your CDP here.

Please direct questions concerning your Cultural Data Profile to the DataArts Support Center:

- Toll Free: 877-707-3282 (or 877-707-DATA)
- Email: help@culturaldata.org

DataArts' Support Center is available Monday – Friday from 9:00am – 8:00pm ET

Grant Limitations

- The activity, and expenditures for the activity must occur between July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.
- Activities may not take place before a Grant Agreement between the organization and AHCMC has been signed.
- An organization cannot apply or receive an award below $10,000.
- An organization cannot apply or receive an award above $200,000.
- An organization may apply for only ONE *Advancement Grant* each year
- Each applicant can only request funding for **ONE** project, activity or program.

Advancement Grants will not fund:

- Purchase of real property, including land, buildings, warehouses, offices, and anything affixed to the land;
- Scholarships or tuition assistance awarded by the organization;
- Costs of receptions, refreshments or food;

- Cost of merchandise such as T-shirts;
- Debt retirement;
- Political advocacy, or activities that support or promote the interests of any one political party;
- Activities for the exclusive benefit of an organization's members; and
- Travel outside the United States.

Panel Process

An Advisory Review Panel will evaluate each grant application based on the criteria listed below. The panel meeting is open to applicants who wish to observe. Applicants are not permitted to make any comments or participate in any way at the panel meeting.

Based on the recommendations of the panel, AHCMC staff will recommend grant award amounts to AHCMC's Grants Committee. The Committee will review and revise, as necessary, the grant awards and forward its recommendations to the AHCMC Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has the final authority to approve all grant awards. Not all applicants will be awarded *Advancement Grants.*

The AHCMC staff will share the panel's comments and scores on a particular application at the request of that applicant following the award notifications. Applicants may contact the grants staff at 301-565-3804.

Evaluation Criteria

Each *Advancement Grant* application will be evaluated based on the extent to which it addresses the following criteria:

Effectiveness of Proposed Project (50 points)
- Project is significant to the mission and core work of the organization
- Objectives are clearly stated and achievable
- Project is an effective way to reach these objectives
- Achieving these objectives will benefit the organization's fiscal stability and long-term viability

Quality of Proposed Management (25 points)
- Implementation plan is clearly described and achievable
- Individuals who have participated in the planning and who will direct, manage and/or participate in the proposed project are well qualified

Expectations for Matching Funds (15 points)
- Proposed sources and amounts of anticipated matching funds are reasonable and attainable

Appropriateness of Budget and Amount of Grant Request (10 points)
- Budget is reasonable, realistic, clear and complete
- Budget is appropriate for the scale of the proposed project
- Budget is adequate to achieve the proposed objectives

Grant Disbursements

Grant payments will be distributed twice:

1. The first 75% of the grant award will be made to the grantee following AHCMC's receipt of the signed required Grant Agreement, the ACH Direct Deposit Authorization Form allowing direct deposit to the grantee's bank account, and payment from Montgomery County to AHCMC for the total of the grants awarded.

2. The remaining 25% of the grant award will be made upon submittal by the grantee of the final report showing evidence that all sources of the required match have been obtained.

AHCMC will not release an organization's first grant payment until the organization has reconciled its Cultural Data Profile (CDP) to its audit or final financial statement and its FY16 CDP profile has been verified in accordance with CDP procedures. See section about Cultural Data Project above.

AHCMC will reduce the total grant award by 5% for any organization that submits its final report after the deadline. The deadline to submit the FY18 final report is **July 31, 2018**.

Return of Grant Funds

- The grantee must return the grant funds if it is not possible to carry out the project as described in the grant agreement. **Please contact Grants Program staff before grant funds are returned.**
- If AHCMC determines that grant funds were spent for activities not in compliance with these guidelines, or for activities that were not described within the approved grant proposal, the grantee must return the amount spent on non-allowable expenses.
- Grant funds received but not spent by June 30, 2018 must be returned to AHCMC by July 31, 2018 with the grantee's final report.

Changes in Grant Implementation

The grantee must alert AHCMC in case of significant changes in the organization's administration, financials, and/or programming. The grantee must submit a change request form and get AHCMC approval. A meeting may be required. In case the grantee is not able to implement its programs and/or conduct business as described in the grant agreement, the grantee must return the grant funds.
All requests for changes must be submitted in writing on a form supplied by AHCMC. Requests for changes may not be submitted, nor will be considered, after May 15, 2018.

Grant Agreement and Reporting

Following the award of a grant, an authorized representative of each grantee organization must sign a Grant Agreement with AHCMC stating that the organization agrees to:

- Use the grant funds only for the purposes described in the grant proposal(s);

- Repay any grant funds not used for the stated purpose of the grant;
- Not use the grant funds for: purchase of real property; scholarships or tuition assistance awarded by the organization; costs of receptions, refreshments or food; cost of merchandise such as T-shirts; debt retirement; political advocacy, or activities that support or promote the interests of any one political party; activities for the exclusive benefit of an organization's members; and travel outside the United States;
- Operate with its principal office in Montgomery County, MD;
- Not discriminate against any person on the basis of any characteristic described in Section 27-1(a) of Chapter 27 of the Montgomery County Code or on the basis of political opinion or affiliation in any of its policies, procedures or practices;
- Acknowledge the support of the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County and the Montgomery County Government on all materials distributed to the public, including use of the AHCMC logo when possible;
- Send copies to AHCMC of all materials that are distributed to the public, e.g., flyers, brochures, program booklets; and
- Submit a final report through AHCMC's online grants system no later than **July 31, 2018**, presenting information about the implementation of the project funded by this grant, including evidence that the required match has been obtained. AHCMC will reduce the total grant award by 5% for any organization that submits its final report after July 31, 2018.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in grant cancellation, forfeiture of remaining funding, return of disbursed grant amount, and ineligibility to apply for future grants.

Grantees are encouraged to notify AHCMC about exhibitions, performances or other activities resulting from this grant and to participate in CultureSpotMC.com, AHCMC's online calendar.

Grantees are strongly encouraged to attend the County Executive's Awards Ceremony in October 2017.

The Online Application Process

First-time applicants MUST contact Grants Program staff.

All applications for *Advancement Grants* must be submitted online at http://creativemoco.culturegrants.org.

1. Log on to your online grant account using your username and password.

2. Once you have logged in, select "Advancement Grants for LO" or "Advancement Grants for MSO," click on the first blue square icon to the right of your screen to access the application form. Complete all the questions contained in the online application. Before moving on to the next page, be sure to click "Save" at the bottom of each page.

3. Provide information about: the project description, project purpose, implementation plan, and the personnel who are involved with the project; the budget for the project; and the anticipated match.

If you have any questions, please contact Nabil Ghachem, Grants Program Manager, at nabil.ghachem@creativemoco.com or 301-565-3804 or Takenya LaViscount, Senior Grants Program Manager, at takenya.laviscount@creativemoco.com or 301-565-3805 x 26.

Application Required Materials

Upload to the online application:

Organizational Support Materials
- The organization's IRS letter of Determination (if the applicant organization did not apply for a grant from AHCMC in FY16 of if there have been changes to the applicant's non-profit status);
- List of Board of Directors with residency and work address;
- List of key staff with bios; and
- The organization's current Strategic Plan, if available.
- Organizational Chart

One PDF containing **Project Support Materials**
- If the application requests funds for equipment or technology, one of the support materials must be a list of the items that will be purchased with a list of possible manufacturers/vendors and the estimated cost of each item.
- Materials should assist the reviewers in determining how you designed or planned your proposed activity. These materials may include reports from earlier phases of the project, consultant proposals, information about how other organizations have approached similar activities, articles about best practices in the field for this type of activity, or relevant training bulletins.

Financial Support Materials
- The organization's FY16 Cultural Data Project (CDP) Funder Report or if the CDP Funder Report is not available, a statement explaining why. If the CDP Funder Report is not received by June 1, 2017, the organization will be disqualified.
- The organization's FY16 990, or if the FY16 990 is not yet available, the letter of extension. If the FY16 990 is not received by June 1, 2017, the organization will be disqualified.
- The organization's FY17 adopted budget and FY18 budget, explaining budget variances of 20% or more;
- The organization's FY16 audit, if the requested amount is $25,000 or more. If the FY16 audit is not submitted by June 1, 2017, the organization will be disqualified; and
- Documentation of pledges of financial support.

One PDF containing **Programming Support Materials**
- Include materials that will assist the panel in learning about the organization's programming, presenting, and /or producing activities, i.e., newspaper clippings, program booklet, photos, brochures, or fliers.

Work Sample

Upload a work sample that demonstrates your organization's recent programming. The quality of your presentation on the work sample indicates your organization level of expertise and professionalism. Submit your best work. If your work includes audience interaction, a live performance recording is helpful. Submit your work sample in the format specified below.

- Video: Maximum: 2 videos, no more than five minutes combined.
- Maximum size per file: 100 MB
- Audio: Maximum: 2 audio files, no more than five minutes combined.
  Maximum size per file: 10 MB
- Images: Maximum: 15 images, which can be uploaded individually or formatted as one PDF.
- Maximum size per file: 4 MB

Grant Preparation Assistance

First-time applicants MUST contact Grants Program staff.

Grant Preparation Workshops

AHCMC will conduct free grant preparation webinars and workshops to instruct prospective applicants on how to complete grant applications. While attendance is not required, AHCMC strongly encourages all potential applicants to attend this workshop, even if the applicant has applied under this grant category previously. Whether or not an applicant attends a webinar or a workshop will not be a factor in evaluating the application. Please click here or go to http://creativemoco.com/newsletters to join our email list and receive notifications about grant deadlines, webinars, and workshops.

Personal Appointments

Personal appointments are available for those who are unable to attend a webinar or a workshop or who need additional assistance. These appointments are available for assistance with both the content of the application and/or assistance with the online grant application system. Consultation services in languages other than English are available by appointment.

Personal appointments must be held at least two weeks prior to the application submission deadline. To schedule an appointment, contact Nabil Ghachem, Grants Program Manager, at nabil.ghachem@creativemoco.com or 301-565-3804.

Important Reminders:

1. Applications must be submitted online at http://creativemoco.culturegrants.org by **11:59 pm on the posted deadline.**
2. All required attachments must be submitted online by the deadline or the application will not be accepted.
3. Applications may *not* be emailed, delivered in person, faxed or submitted in any fashion other

than the online grants system.
4. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

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TIPS

- Write clearly and concisely. Do not use jargon. Remember that the people who are reading your application may be unfamiliar with your organization, organizations in Montgomery County and/or current events in Montgomery County.
- Keep in mind that the AHCMC staff does not participate in panel discussions. The application must stand on its own.
- Be sure to reference the evaluation criteria as you are developing and writing your application.
- More information on energy-efficient opportunities to reduce energy costs through energy assistance programs may be found here:
    - http://energy.maryland.gov/empower3/index.html
    - https://cienergyefficiency.pepco.com/NonProfits.aspx

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