

ARTS CONNECT

H O U S T O N

What is the Arts Action Fund?

Arts Connect Houston works to ensure that all students in Houston ISD have access to quality arts education. To support this goal, the Arts Action Fund provides grant-structured funding to schools and Arts and Culture partners via application for **in-school** arts programming to expand access and support capacity building efforts both in Houston ISD schools and organizations.

Apply today at bit.ly/AAFR2-Apply. **All Houston ISD school can now participate in the Arts Action Fund.**

Ways to Participate in the 2020-21 School Year

1. Seed Funding: **Micro-grant of up to \$2,000** (28 remaining in round two)
 - Organizations may apply to this tier for use with HISD schools for the program cost (no more than \$2,000 per application, per school); schools may apply to this funding tier and access up to \$2,000 per round for their use with **one** arts organization via **one** application **per round**.
 - Example: My organization will be distributing a program that will be delivered online with no major adjustments or changes to what we planned to do in-person. We're considering sharing our new digital content on the HISD virtual platform or hosting it online for public consumption. We may also create a tailored version for just one school. **Can also include in-person instruction, subject to the discretion of your organization and Houston ISD school.*
2. Innovation in Action: **Grant up to \$10,000 for NEW program development** (10 remaining in round two)
 - Organizations may apply to this funding tier independently; schools must apply in direct partnership with an Arts Connect Arts and Culture Partner organization to qualify. *If a school submits the application, your organization should provide them with a word document or pdf that includes: a program description, an explanation on how this work and program is "innovative" and different than what has been done before and an in-depth budget.* If your organization submits the application, please have your school partner complete the School Questionnaire [bit.ly/ACHSQ], you will need to attach a word doc or pdf in your application.
 - When your organization applies, please provide a detailed budget as to how funding will be used as well as a program distribution plan that ensures Houston ISD students will directly benefit and have access to the program being developed.
 - "NEW" program development can be defined as new working concepts, a new program for your organization, program with a new or sustained school, etc. New does not mean *"transferring online" or "digital content previously created"* as in this moment that is a norm, not an innovation.
 - Example: My organization has begun work internally to create a brand-new program that will be an innovative partnership with a specific school or even intended for public sharing with multiple schools that express interest.

****The 2020-21 Arts Action Fund directly reflects the impact of COVID-19 and is subject to change in January 2021.****

Funding Limits: Organizations can receive (1) Innovation in Action grant per school year and up to \$12,000 of overall funding per round. Schools can receive (1) Innovation in Action grant per school year and (1) Seed Funding grant per round.

Dates to Remember

[artlook@ Survey](mailto:artlook@Survey)

August 24 - artlook@ survey window opens

December 11 - artlook@ survey due (required to receive funding)

Round Two

October 26 - Round two application portal opens on Submittable

November 9 – Arts Action Fund Open House

November 13 - Round two portal closes

December 11 - Round two notification

Application Review Process

Applications received will be evaluated by a Review Committee comprised of community members. Applications will be reviewed based on school's needs, current community needs, and data from the artlook@ Houston platform.

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Frequently Asked Questions

How has the Arts Action Fund adapted to COVID-19?

To adapt to the impact of COVID-19 on Houston ISD schools and arts organizations, the Arts Action Fund has shifted its Seed Funding and Innovation in Action grants to ensure arts education is delivered directly to students in innovative and relevant ways. The Arts Action Fund will also allow organizations to apply directly for funding to support digital program development through both Seed Funding and Innovation in Action to be distributed to multiple schools as opposed to focusing on specific, one-on-one partnerships.

Is there a limit to how much an organization may be granted through the Arts Action Fund?

One organization will not be approved to receive more than \$12,000 of funding per round. As you develop partnerships with schools and explore your organization opportunities through the Arts Action Fund, we encourage you to diversify the applications submitted and to submit as many applications as you'd like. All applications will be reviewed and approved as funding is available. Please keep this in mind as you develop partnerships with schools as well as submit applications on your own behalf. We hope this will ensure a level of fairness for all. Limit subject to change based on available funding after the disbursement of Round One funding. **An organization may receive (1) Innovation in Action grant per school year of funding. A school may receive (1) Innovation in Action grant per school year of funding. If an organization or school receives (1) Innovation in Action grant, they can only receive (1) Seed Funding micro-grant within the same round.**

What will happen if multiple applications are submitted for one school?

If multiple applications are submitted for one school, we will defer the decision to the school principal. If a school submitted an application on their own accord, we will defer to the application they submitted. If a principal submits an application that causes an Arts and Culture Partner application to be invalidated, we will notify you that this is the case. Please work to communicate clearly as you begin to work with schools. Arts Connect will also be intentional as we share the opportunity with schools to ensure they communicate clearly and concisely with you as well.

If my organization does not have any relationships with Houston ISD schools, what should we do?

Don't worry! Arts Connect Houston will host an Open House as well as develop marketing materials for your organization to participate in. From these different touchpoints, we hope to support you in building relationships with Houston ISD schools, but also encourage you to pursue relationships with schools in a way that is organic to your organization. The Arts Action Fund should be used as a great tool to aid you in building a relationship with schools who express concern or inability to fund arts education programming in their school.

Who will comprise the Review Committee?

The Arts Action Fund Review Committee will be comprised of community members. Members **will not** represent any organization who stands to benefit in the review process. Members will review applications based on school need as expressed by the school and current community needs as established through the artlook® Houston data platform and partnership with Houston ISD leaders.

How should my organization plan to receive payment for our services?

Arts Connect Houston will collect invoices, reporting, service agreements and program plans through the platform Submittable, which will also be where you or the school you work with complete the initial grant application. Once an application is approved, the system will send a notification email and follow-up with requests to submit all relevant information. Arts Connect will disperse an initial 50% payment when funding is approved and the remaining 50% when the program is complete and grant reporting is submitted.

When you create a Submittable account, be sure to keep the information handy as this is how the Arts Action Fund grant will be managed moving forward.

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Does my organization have to deliver an arts program in-person this year considering COVID-19?

While arts education is our focus, we also want to ensure that your organization is able to keep teaching artists safe. To support this, Arts Connect Houston and the Capacity Building Working Group will work to establish a “best practices” resource for organizations. We will also work in tandem with HISD Fine Arts Department to understand HISD’s procedures and rules surrounding COVID-19 as they are developed and share them with you! **Ultimately, liability does fall to your organization and the campuses you engage with this year to determine the risk, safety procedures, and best practices.**

What is digital programming? How should we handle digital program distribution? What about virtual learning?

At this time, we are all still learning, but when Arts Connect Houston and the Arts Action Fund refers to digital learning, programming, etc., we are open to multiple definitions of what this might be or look like as it is relevant to your organization and Houston ISD school partner.

Here are some examples of what this may look like for your organization:

- Houston ISD Platform – The HISD platform is slated to distribute programming district-wide to schools, teachers, and families. This would be a great platform to distribute a specific program or new innovation to a broad audience.
- Live Teaching – Live teaching via Zoom, Microsoft Teams and like programs could be used for public distribution by providing the link and opportunity to a large amount of people but might also be shared with just one school, one grade, or one classroom.
- Pre-recorded Lessons – Pre-recorded lessons teaching for public distribution, pre-recorded teaching for private distribution with a specific school/classroom.

For digital program distribution, we encourage you to track the exposure your program receives. There are many ways to do this, some examples might be tracking attendances, clicks on a unique link or video views on YouTube based on location.

What is the Capacity Building Working Group and how do they impact the Arts Action Fund?

As part of our collective impact work, the Capacity Building Working Group works on crafting opportunities to support shared-learning, including guiding the development of the Arts for Education Learning Series, which provide diverse opportunities for arts organization leaders, teaching artists, Houston ISD educators and the community at large to share, learn and build community. These sessions impact the Arts Action Fund by creating learning opportunities relevant to the current landscape of arts education, including but not limited to equity and justice, digital learning, the importance of arts education and more. Those who receive funding from the Arts Action Fund and/or are an Arts and Culture Partner may participate.

What does “grant reporting” look like for the Arts Action Fund?

Due of the nature of this year’s funding, reporting will be more comprehensive in what is asked of you. Please be prepared to share the following when reporting a completed program: how the program was delivered, when and with who the program was shared with, an estimate of how many students, classrooms and schools the program was shared with, the project’s budget and more. Arts Connect Houston will not ask you to report on any information not initially gathered through the initial application submitted for the grant.

Does my organization have to be an HISD vendor to receive funding from the Arts Action Fund?

Short answer, no, your organization is not required to be a vendor with HISD to receive funding. However, if you are not a vendor, the district (and by extension, the schools) are not able to pay you for programming. It is possible for PTO’s or other organizations to cover the costs of a school, but those are special circumstances. We encourage partners to become vendors if and when they can, but also acknowledge how rare it is to become a vendor and how difficult that process is. At the end of the day, our partners are responsible for maintaining their relationships with HISD campuses. (e.g. contracts, scheduling, payments, liability) and your organizations can manage content and administration how you normally would (e.g. program objectives, target campuses, program funding models, background checks, vendor status). Please be transparent with schools about your vendor status, so they are not surprised or confused if a problem arises.

Have a question we did not address?

Contact Taylor Bush by email at taylor@artsconnecthouston.org or by phone at 210.325.2708. Please note that once you submit your application via Submittable, we encourage you to submit questions through your account via Submittable.