

GUIDELINES

FY 2022 ♦ UNION COUNTY LOCAL ARTS GRANT

January 01, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Revised Sept. 8, 2021

Grant Overview

The Union County Local Arts Grant Program (“LAP”) is made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Union County Board of County Commissioners, through the Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board and the NJ State Council on the Arts, have made funds available to support local arts through a State/County block-grant partnership for non-profit arts organizations and non-arts organizations located in and serving the residents of Union County. LAP funds are awarded to organizations (“re-grantees”) that demonstrate a high degree of professionalism in producing arts activities, to promote the growth and expand the public impact of arts organizations and arts projects.

The Local Arts Grant Program operates on a 12-month fiscal period. Applications must reflect arts activities to take place from January 01 to December 31, 2022. Expenses using grant funds must be paid during 2022.

These Guidelines outline the two types of LAP grants (General Operating Support and Special Project), and all requirements of the program. The application process is competitive.

How to Apply

Applications for 2022 funding must be submitted to the Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs (“OCHA”) online via the **OCHA Portal**, a platform from Foundant Technologies. To begin the process and create an account to apply, email a request for the link to the OCHA Portal to: msturm@ucnj.org and culturalinfo@ucnj.org.

On the OCHA Portal, applicants will first create a new account before logging in and selecting the correct LAP Application (GOS or Special Project). Applicants can log in and out of the system as often as needed to complete the application. Progress is saved during each session.

These Tutorials provide valuable guidance in using the Foundant platform:

- [Video Tutorial 1: Site Access & Account Creation](#) (3 minutes)
- [Video Tutorial 2: Applying for Funding](#) (5 minutes)
- [Video Tutorial 3: Your Applicant Dashboard](#) (3 minutes)
- [Written Tutorial](#)

Application period: July 8 – September 14, 2021

Deadline to submit application: September 14, 2021

Application Assistance

For clarification about this grant program, or for assistance, contact the LAP Coordinator at OCHA: Martha Sturm, email msturm@ucnj.org or tel 908-558-2552. Or email culturalinfo@ucnj.org.

Major Goals of LAP

LAP provides funds for arts programs in Union County to further these goals:

- create public recognition of the value of the arts
- strengthen local arts organizations, artistically and administratively
- foster and reward artistic excellence
- increase the availability of quality arts experiences to the general public
- increase accessibility to the arts through compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)
- broaden, deepen and diversify participation in the arts
- foster collaborations and partnership-building
- promote expanded public and private support of local arts activities

Applicants are encouraged to address any of these Special Areas of Interest:

- highlight the excellence of New Jersey artists and/or contemporary artists
- incorporate diverse programming and artists
- demonstrate effort to reach a diverse audience and/or underserved communities
- present programs that appeal to families
- promote high-quality, lifelong arts education

Eligibility Requirements

Applications are accepted from eligible organizations having the desire to provide the Union County public with a high-quality arts program or an arts project.

- **Arts organizations** may apply for General Operating Support (GOS) or a Special Project (SP).
- **Non-arts organizations** may apply to fund a specific arts project (Special Project).

Local Arts Grants will be awarded to **non-profit organizations** meeting* the following requirements:

- Is Union County-based; activities take place in Union County and benefit Union County residents
- Organization is incorporated in the State of New Jersey for a minimum of two years
- Has IRS tax-exempt status in accordance with Sections 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 or pending same

**Organizations not meeting the three criteria may apply as the Special Project of an “umbrella organization” for one year only.*

Local Arts Grants may also be awarded to **libraries, schools, and units of government** for a specific Arts project.

Grantees under this program must comply with Labor Standards under Section 5(1) of the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities Act of 1965; the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education and Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (which addresses accessibility issues); and may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual preference or disability.

Categories of Support

Eligible organizations may apply for funding in one of two categories:

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT (GOS)

This category is exclusively for arts organizations. Requests cannot exceed **25%** of the organization's total annual operating budget. This grant is not project-specific. Applicants should present the full range of their organization's operations and must demonstrate high standards of artistry and management.

SPECIAL PROJECT (SP)

This category is open to both arts and non-arts organizations, to fund an arts project or arts series.

For arts organizations only, a Special Project may also be a Technical Assistance project — a one-time consultancy by qualified professional(s) to strengthen the administration of an arts organization or the quality of programs presented to the public. Organization must demonstrate a genuine need for assistance in one of these areas: administration, marketing, long-range planning, ADA services, or artistic development. Consultant's proposal must be uploaded with application.

Examples of Special Projects:

- Series of performances or films
- Programs for youth, senior citizens, or people with disabilities
- Poetry readings by New Jersey poets
- Culturally specific work attracting traditional and/or new audiences
- Arts education
- Enhanced costuming, orchestration, choreography or marketing
- Board development
- Strategic planning
- ADA assistive services (Americans with Disabilities Act)
- Technical Assistance (*see above*)

Levels of Support

Minimum request: **\$1,000**

General Operating Support - Maximum request: **\$8,000** *

**For GOS, requested amount cannot exceed 25% of an organization's total annual operating budget.*

Special Project - Maximum request: **\$5,000**

Restrictions:

Applicant organization cannot be funded in the same fiscal year by both the Union County Local Arts Program AND directly by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

If organization also applies for 2022 funding from the Union County HEART Grant Program or the Union County History Grant Program, your Local Arts Program grant application must request funding for a project/program that is separate and different from that HEART (or History) grant application. If uncertain which program to apply to, applicant should contact OCHA to discuss options.

New for FY2022

- All applications must be entered online. Hard copies are not required and will not be accepted.
- **Maximum Amount:** The maximum amount an applicant can request has increased to **\$8,000** for GOS. The maximum amount a Special Project applicant can request is **\$5,000**.
- **No Cash Match:** To support the arts strongly during the pandemic recovery, the customary/standard Cash Match requirement for 2022 is **WAIVED** (*change made effective Sept 8, 2021*).
- **In-Kind Donations:** In-Kind donations (donated goods or services) should be tracked and reported, but not included in the Budget.

Artistic Disciplines

- Music
- Dance
- Theatre
- Opera / Musical Theatre
- Visual Art
- Design Arts
- Crafts
- Photography
- Media Arts / Film
- Literature
- Folklife / Traditional Arts
- Multidisciplinary (more than two of above)

Eligible & Ineligible Use of LAP Funds

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT (GOS)

ELIGIBLE Use of Funds

This grant is for arts organizations only, and is not project-specific. Budget expenditures may include, but are not limited to:

- Staff salaries
- Consultants
- Professional development
- Internet, phone or other utilities
- Printing and postage
- Marketing, publicity and advertising
- Fundraising and development
- Leased equipment
- Assistive services or equipment (ADA)
- Insurance and audit expenses
- Domestic travel and transportation

INELIGIBLE Use of Funds (GOS)

LAP funds **cannot** be used for:

- Capital improvements or capital equipment purchases
- Hospitality / refreshments
- Previous program deficits
- Fellowships, endowments or scholarships
- Foreign travel

SPECIAL PROJECT (SP)

ELIGIBLE Use of Funds

This grant is project-specific, for either arts organizations or non-arts organizations producing an Arts Project. Grant funds must be spent on goods and services specifically for the Project, including:

- Fees for outside professional artists
- Fees for other outside Professionals
- Printing
- Postage
- Insurance
- Utilities
- Materials or supplies
- Rented space or equipment
- Maintenance costs
- Marketing, publicity and advertising

INELIGIBLE Use of Funds (SP)

LAP funds **cannot** be used for:

- Normal staff salaries in a non-arts organization
- Projects that serve as a fundraiser
- Capital improvements or capital equipment purchases
- Hospitality / refreshments
- Previous program deficits
- Fellowships, endowments or scholarships
- Foreign travel
- Projects by religious institutions that do not actively seek a wide general audience

Funding Requirements

Organizations funded by LAP are required to spend the grant funds awarded on eligible expenses during 2022 and to properly document all expenses.

For Special Projects, all funds must be spent specifically on the Project. Determine the costs of a project prior to requesting grant funds. The total cost of a Project often exceeds the maximum grant amount. Funds from other sources may be needed, and such other funds may be stated in plans and reports if desired.

Deadlines & Schedule for Application Process

Jul 08	Portal opens to applicants
Sep 14	Application deadline – portal closes at 11:59 pm
Sep-Oct	Evaluation by Professional Panel
Nov	OCHA Advisory Board approves funding decisions and awards
Dec	Applicants notified of funding decisions and award amounts

Application Components

The application must be completed online using the Foundant Technologies platform. Applicants may log on and off as often as needed. Work is automatically saved during each online session as content is entered.

Once submitted, the application cannot be changed.

The Application consists of these sections:

- Introduction & Eligibility
- Application Summary (or Special Project Summary)
- Organizational Background
- Arts Program/Project Management & Details
- Financial Plan
- Publicity & Marketing
- Accessibility & ADA
- Authorization & Certification

Certain support materials must be **uploaded**. For example, applicants may upload Word or Excel files, or scanned documents. Ensure that scanned documents are fully legible. File-size limits apply. In some cases, applicant can opt to either enter text OR upload a document. In some cases, applicant may combine entering text AND uploading a document.

Support materials include documentation of tax-exempt status, resumes, budgets, publicity samples, and examples of the arts program (such as photos or links to performances). Materials representing the arts program should document artistic quality, and should not be more than two (2) years old.

Special Project applicants must complete and upload the OCHA Special Project Budget Form (choice of PDF or Excel). Operating expenses, such as printing and supplies, should only reflect costs spent on the Project. Maintenance costs are usually in-kind, unless specifically charged to the Project. Income and expenses should produce a balanced budget. If not, explain any differences.

Overall, applicants should demonstrate:

Artistic Excellence – Demonstrate specifically what the arts organization does and/or what the artists being hired do, reflecting professionalism.

Administrative Capacity – Answer all questions thoroughly and succinctly. Furnish all materials requested, and submit accurately calculated budget(s). Proofread before submitting.

Community Outreach & Participation – Demonstrate outreach to specific populations.

Review Process & Evaluation Criteria

Each application will be carefully read, evaluated and discussed by an independent Panel of Arts Professionals. Evaluations are based on these criteria:

Artistic Merit

- Quality of program and artists, demonstrated by support material and resumes
- Activities that further applicant's artistic goals and objectives
- Programming that enhances or stretches participants' artistic potential

Administrative Ability

- Strong management and a realistic plan for executing project
- Demonstrates ability to deliver program effectively
- Promotes greater public awareness of the importance and value of the arts
- Demonstrates effective marketing/PR plan with tactics to promote activities widely
- Quality of evaluation tools shown

Public Participation - Accessibility & ADA

- Demonstrates efforts to involve people of diverse ethnicities
- In compliance with ADA, or making substantial progress and effort to make programming accessible in accordance with ADA
- Demonstrates commitment to inclusion and accessibility
- Collaborates with other group(s) to expand impact

Financial Management

- Demonstrates fiscal responsibility
- Realistic budget
- Shows diverse funding sources

Overall Impression

- Overall impression of grant application and program in totality
- Significant strengths or weaknesses

Evaluations will also consider whether application addresses any Special Area of Interest:

- Program highlights New Jersey artists and/or contemporary artists
- Incorporates diverse programming and artists
- Program appeals to families
- Efforts to reach diverse and/or underserved communities
- Promotes high-quality, lifelong arts education

Funding Decisions & Notification

After Evaluations are closed and award decisions are reached, the OCHA Advisory Board convenes. Final decisions and grant awards must be approved by the OCHA Advisory Board. Specific grant award amounts are based on several factors: the total funds granted to Union County by the state of NJ, the number of applicants, and the Panel's Evaluations. Prior-year reporting and compliance can affect decisions and awards for applicants previously funded.

In December 2021, applicants will be notified of the funding decision and specific award amount for 2022, if funded.

Appeals Process

Appeals to the LAP decision will be entertained only if an applicant is not funded and can specifically demonstrate that the application was misinterpreted or misunderstood during the evaluation process. An appeal must be made only on the basis of the information contained in the initial application. The specific amount of an award is not grounds for an appeal.

Applicants may submit a written appeal up to 30 days after notification of the OCHA decision. Such an appeal should be initiated by email to culturalinfo@ucnj.org as well as a hard copy letter sent by US mail to: Office Administrator, Union County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, 633 Pearl St., Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

OCHA staff will clarify the appeals procedure for any applicant requiring further information.

Grant Payments

An organization awarded an LAP grant is a "re-grantee," since funds are granted to Union County, then re-granted to organizations. Funds are paid to re-grantees in two installments:

- **Initial payment (75%)** is paid after the LAP contract is signed and executed, and state funds for 2022 have been allocated by Union County.
- **Final payment (25%)** is paid after the re-grantee's Final Report is submitted, reviewed and approved by OCHA and confirmed in good standing.

The Final payment *reimburses* funds already expended and documented in the Final Report, which should show that the project was completed in good form, and must document that grant funds were spent during 2022 on eligible expenses.

Reporting

At grant-funded events, re-grantee shall record attendance and demographics for the purpose of reporting. Taking photos and compiling publicity materials regularly will facilitate eventual reporting.

Reports will be submitted online using the Foundant Technologies platform, via the OCHA Portal.

An Interim Report will be due by **July 14, 2022**.

A Final Report will be due by **December 14, 2022**. Final Report must include all required materials, including documented expenses.

Qualifying forms of documented expenses: paid itemized receipts, cancelled checks, or Accounting / bookkeeping output (such as QuickBooks ledger or bank statement). Expenses should be categorized and itemized clearly, according to the organization's budget for the grant. The purpose of expenses submitted must be clearly indicated.

Re-grantees should record all **In-Kind donations** (defined as any donated goods or services, including volunteers' time). The Final Report requires assigning all In-Kind donations a fair-cash value.

Non-compliance with terms of the grant may affect current or future funding.

ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 (Federal law), requires that **all public programs and services be made accessible to all people**, regardless of an individual's physical or developmental disability. ADA applies to all providers of public programs, whether an organization applying owns the site of programming, rents it, or uses donated space.

Full participation in your project by people with disabilities is facilitated by physical accessibility (such as wheelchair-accessible venues and restrooms); by program accessibility (such as following guidelines for accessible design, or using large type, audio devices, or a sign-language interpreter); and by training staff to implement policies and practices.

Organizations are strongly encouraged to send at least one Board Member to attend an ADA workshop annually. To learn about ADA, visit the Cultural Access Network Project at www.nitheatrealliance.org (click "Accessibility" for numerous resources), and/or call the NJ Theatre Alliance at 973-731-6582.

To consult about **outreach** to people in Union County with disabilities, call the Union County Office for Persons with Disabilities & Special Needs at 908-527-4781.

Other Requirements for Grant Recipients

Workshop Attendance

During each year funded, grant recipients are expected to attend at least one Technical Assistance Workshop hosted by OCHA. Any Board member or multiple people can attend. To fulfill this requirement, organization members may attend a **comparable** professional development event or workshop that suits the re-grantee's specific needs.

Funding Credit

Grant-funded projects, events or performances must display or include the LAP funding credit on all publicity, whether print, web or broadcast, using the following language:

**Made possible by funds from the Union County
Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, a partner
of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.**

Displaying the NJ State Council on the Arts logo is optional (a sample follows). The logo may not be displayed alone without the funding credit. The logo will be furnished by OCHA on request, or re-grantees may download the logo from the [State Council website](#).



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of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Programs & Evaluation

In advance of public programs funded by LAP, the re-grantee shall furnish OCHA with event information, using the [OCHA web form for Event Submission](#).

Once per year, a re-grantee shall furnish OCHA with two complimentary tickets (or announcement of a

free event; or a link to a virtual event), so that an OCHA Board member or staff can attend for evaluation purposes. Contact culturalinfo@ucnj.org with event details and/or ticket information.

New applicants for FY2022 are encouraged to request an on-site evaluation for a program presented prior to Oct 30, 2021.

Three-Year Funding Cycle

OCHA will notify grantees who qualify for the three-year funding cycle (fiscal years 2022, 2023 and 2024), designating a commitment from OCHA for funding over the three-year period, provided that the New Jersey State Council on the Arts provides funding to the County of Union through the Local Arts Program each year.

Specific awards each year will depend on the level of funding County of Union receives for each fiscal year. After the first year in the cycle, awards may increase or decrease based on available funds and the number of worthy applicants.

Criteria for organization to qualify:

- has received LAP funding for five (5) previous consecutive years
- has consistently demonstrated high standards of artistry, management and accountability, including timeliness in submitting reports

For organizations who attain three-year-cycle designation, only an **abbreviated application** will be needed for the two years remaining in the cycle. Full Interim and Final Reports are required every year.