

## Greater Pittsburgh Artist Opportunity Grants - Guidelines

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 and requests must be thoroughly documented. Applications are considered twice per year; postmark deadlines are **March 1 & September 1**. Deadlines that fall on a Sunday or holiday are deferred to the next business day.

### **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.

### **Funding Criteria:**

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

- Whether the opportunity is unique, and not a repetition of the artist's similar, previous experiences
- Whether the artist has made the case that this opportunity has true potential to impact their career

### **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 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.
- Note: Two artists who have a history of working together may submit proposals to support expenses related to an opportunity presented to them as collaborators. Only one artist will submit the application, but both artists must answer the narrative questions and provide biographical information. (The funding limit for a collaborative opportunity is also \$1,500.)

### **Eligible Expenses:**

Artist Opportunity Grants can cover expenses related to a unique professional opportunity. Opportunities must take place no sooner than one month 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 for a unique opportunity to study with a significant mentor. (Lowest available fares or IRS mileage rate)
- Expenses for materials or for equipment rental needed to complete work for an exhibition, performance, publication, etc. 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
- Expenses related to childcare that would allow an artist to take advantage of a specific opportunity
- Reasonably-priced accommodations if opportunity is more than 100 miles from home

### **Ineligible Expenses:**

- Curatorial projects
- Creation of 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 or marketing costs
- Purchase of equipment costing more than \$500 or equipment not related to a specific, imminent opportunity
- Teaching opportunities
- Self-produced publications

### **Review Process and Timeline:**

A panel of artists and arts managers representing various artistic disciplines review requests and make funding recommendations. Artists will be notified of funding decisions within six weeks of the application deadline. Artists who receive a grant must wait 12 months after the postmark deadline of the funded application to submit another request.

### **Tips for Writing this Grant:**

As the applicant, is your responsibility to communicate clearly:

- HOW the opportunity is unique and what this opportunity offers that isn't otherwise available to you.
- WHY the opportunity is appropriate at this time or whether the opportunity is time-bound in some way.
- WHAT the impact will be on your career and work and why this is the best way to achieve those results.
- WHO will you be working with and why that is the best choice for you.

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

### **Send completed application by the postmark deadline to:**

David Seals, Artist Opportunity Grants  
Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council  
810 Penn Avenue, Suite 200  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

### **Questions?**

Contact David Seals  
Programs Manager  
412.391.2060 x227  
[dseals@pittsburghartscouncil.org](mailto:dseals@pittsburghartscouncil.org).

### **Special Thanks**

The Greater Pittsburgh Artist Opportunity Grants program is modeled on the Special Opportunity Stipend program of the New York Foundation for the Arts. We extend our sincere thanks to NYFA for sharing their work and expertise.

*If you are interested in serving as an Artist Opportunity Grant panelist, send a letter or email, along with a copy of your resume, to [sblackman@pittsburghartscouncil.org](mailto:sblackman@pittsburghartscouncil.org) or Susan Blackman, Director of Arts Programs, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, 810 Penn Avenue Suite 200, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3401. Panelists may not serve on a panel during a funding round for which they have submitted an application. All panelists are required to observe strict conflict of interest policies.*

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### **Other Arts Council Programs for Artists:**

**Project Grants** - In addition to this professional development grant program above, the Arts Council provides *project grants* to individual artists and arts organizations through Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts, a partnership initiative of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts administered in Allegheny County by the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. Visit our website for the annual summer deadline.



**Free Legal Assistance** - The Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council also operates Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, a program that provides free legal assistance to low-income artists for arts-related legal needs.

**Artist Workshops** - the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council hosts the *BusinessSkills For Artists* workshop series, designed to tailor business and legal skills to the needs of the individual artist. Topics include intellectual property law, contract law, portfolio presentation, operating as a freelancer, selling work/finding an exhibition space in Pittsburgh and more.

For more about these programs, visit [www.pittsburghartscouncil.org](http://www.pittsburghartscouncil.org)

**Greater Pittsburgh Artist Opportunity Grant**  
**Application for Support – Cover Sheet**

**General Information**

Legal Name of Artist \_\_\_\_\_  
*(as it appears on your social security card)*

Professional Name of Artist \_\_\_\_\_  
*(if different from above)*

Primary Artistic Discipline(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip (5 digit) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Day \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Do you read email daily? Y N

Amount Requested \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number - - \_\_\_\_\_

Yes No Is this a collaboration? 2<sup>nd</sup> Artist Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide a one-sentence description of your request:**

**Certification and Statement of Assurances**

I have enclosed **ALL** of the following required materials:

**Narrative Responses** to the five questions on pages 2-3 of this application form\*

**One-page Biography** that describes your education and career\*

**One-page List** of previous exhibitions, performances and/or publications\*

**A Letter of Invitation** from the organization or individual inviting you to the opportunity\*\*

**Sampling of Critical Reviews** on 8.5" x11" one-sided paper (optional)

*\*Required, \*\*Where an opportunity is by invitation only, preference will be given to applicants who provide a letter of invitation*

**I hereby affirm** that I am 18 years of age, that I have been a full-time resident of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Mercer, Lawrence, Somerset, Venango, Washington or Westmoreland county for at least one year, and that the information contained in this application is correct and, to the best of my knowledge, complete.

**Applicant Signature** (Please use blue ink)

**Date** (00/00/0000)

**Submit by Mail:** Mail to the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council - 810 Penn Avenue, Suite 200, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. None of the information you provide in this application will be returned to you. Keep copies of all application materials and attachments for your files.

**Please confirm receipt of your application** by contacting David Seals, Programs Manager, at 412.391.2060 x227 or [dseals@pittsburghartscouncil.org](mailto:dseals@pittsburghartscouncil.org).

**Follow-up:** All grant recipients are required to submit a brief final report upon completing the opportunity. 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.

Applicant Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Narrative**

**Your Work** – Provide a brief artistic statement about your work as an artist, including the discipline(s) in which you work, the type of art you create or perform, etc. (You will have an opportunity to elaborate in the one-page biography you attached to this application.)

**The Opportunity** – Describe the opportunity, including when and where it takes place. If the opportunity involves study with a mentor, include his/her resume. If the opportunity is by invitation only, provide a letter of invitation from the organization or individual extending the invitation. (Limit your request to a single opportunity, unless multiple opportunities are closely linked.)

Applicant Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Impact on Your Career and Work** – How will this opportunity positively impact your career and advance your work as a creative artist? (Relate the opportunity to the one-page biographical information you will attach to this application.)

**Use of the Artist Opportunity Grant** – How will you use the requested funds? Be specific about items & amounts, and only include eligible expenses. Attach documentation of projected expenses where appropriate.

**BUDGET**

<i>Description of Expense</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Total eligible costs: (The sum total of all expenses listed above)	
Total request for this grant: (May not exceed \$1,500. Must equal request on pg. 1)	

**Other budget explanation (optional):**

**Other Sources** – If you have applied to other funding sources to support this opportunity, list the sources and the amount you requested.

*Please ensure that you have included all required attachments before submitting this application, per the instructions on the cover sheet.*