

National Endowment for the Arts

FY26 Grants for Arts Projects Guidelines Webinar

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Hi everyone, welcome. I'm Michelle Hoffmann, Director of Arts Education here at the NEA. Today I'm joined by Daniel Beattie, Director of Guidelines and Panel Operations, and Brenna Berger, Director of Grants Management. We're so glad you could join us today. An archive of this webinar and a slide deck will be available on our website within the next day or two, so you'll be able to access the complete webinar at your convenience.

Most of our presentation today will be dedicated to covering the basics of the Grants for Arts Projects program, also known as GAP. However, we know there has been a lot of confusion and concern about recent changes so we will address several of the most frequently asked questions up front. Then we will go through what you need to know to apply to Grants for Arts Projects. We've collected questions emailed in advance, and will go through as many of them as we can in the remaining time. If we don't get to your question, please reach out to staff.

National Endowment for the Arts FY26 Deadline Changes: Challenge America

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- For FY26, Challenge America deadline rolled into Grants for Arts Projects; NEA staff recommendation to focus resources on GAP
 - Your application is welcome at either of the GAP deadlines.
 - Projects funded through Challenge America are eligible and competitive in GAP.
 - Grant amounts: Option to request more than \$10,000

For Challenge America Applicants: For this year, we are rolling Challenge America into Grants for Arts Projects. This means the 2025 Challenge America deadline has been canceled. Total application loads in the agency have increased but staff hasn't. Leadership asked us what changes could be made this year to help the team work more effectively and efficiently. Rolling Challenge America into GAP was one of the staff's recommendations. This is a change the agency has made in the past when it needed to focus staff resources on our grantmaking mission. We welcome your application at either of the GAP deadlines on March 11th or July 10th. Challenge America projects are eligible and competitive in GAP. Applications are not compared to each other; every application is reviewed on its own merit in relation to the review criteria. This means that new or smaller organizations are not at a disadvantage. Unlike Challenge America, in GAP you have the option of requesting more than \$10,000—so it's possible you could receive a larger grant.

National Endowment for the Arts Honoring America250

US Semiquincentennial Commission

- Established by Congress in 2016 under President Obama to honor the 250th anniversary of the United States in 2026
- NEA is named in legislation
- GAP has encouraged projects celebrating the anniversary since 2021

We Encourage

- Celebrate the nation's rich artistic heritage and creativity by honoring the Semiquincentennial
- Project activities may focus exclusively on celebrating the anniversary, or they may incorporate a special America250-related component or focus within a larger project

Project Examples

- Activities that examine the work of American artists
- Present or create art recognizing the milestone
- Undertake educational activities or related programming

America250 is Not Required

- Your application does not need to include an America250 component to be eligible or competitive

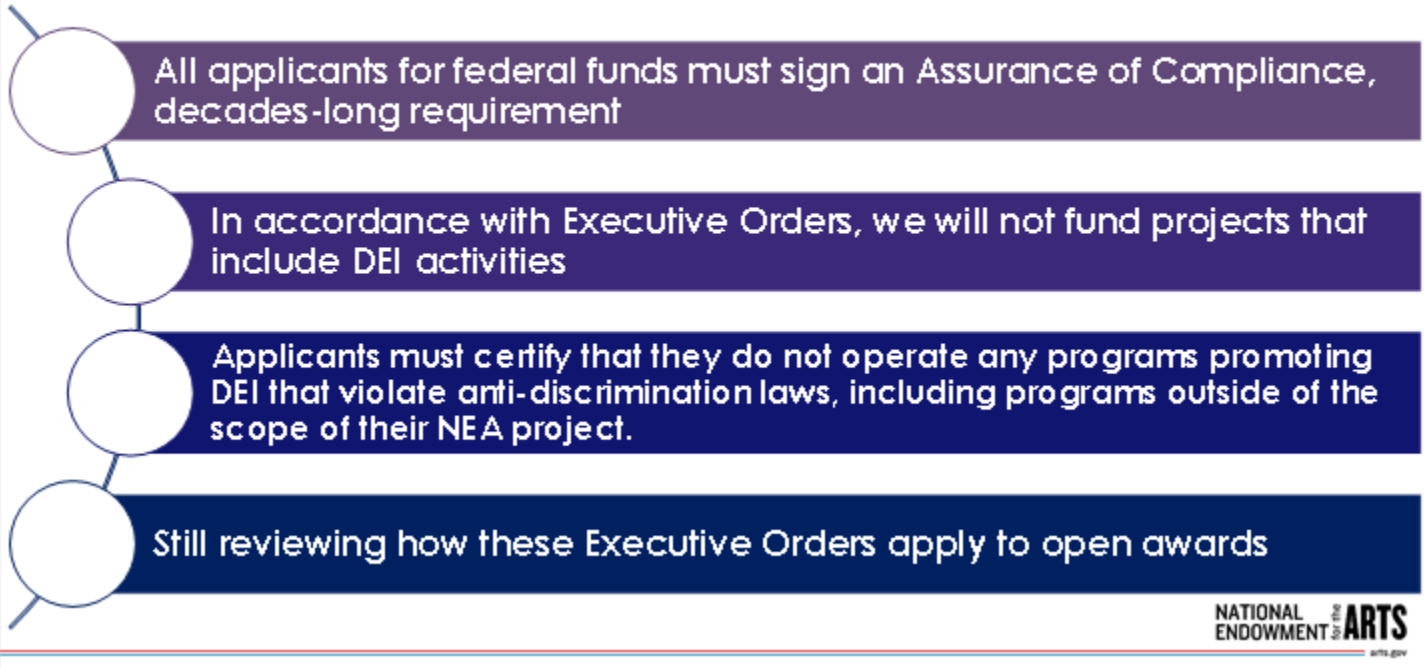
Each year, we encourage projects in several different areas, one of which is America250. We want to assure everyone up front, that we will continue to fund excellent arts projects of all kinds. For some background, the NEA has been a partner of America250 since Congress established the US Semiquincentennial Commission under President Obama in 2016. The NEA is one of many agencies named in the legislation as part of the Commission. President Trump also recently named the agency as part of a task force to celebrate the 250th anniversary of our country. Since 2021, we have encouraged projects celebrating America250 in our guidelines. We are highlighting it this year as we approach the anniversary in 2026.

Project activities may focus exclusively on celebrating the anniversary, or they may incorporate a special America250-related component or focus within a larger project. Projects could include activities in 2026 to 2027 that examine the work of American artists, present or create art recognizing the milestone, or undertake educational activities or related programming.

We also want to emphasize again that your GAP application **does not** need to include America250 activities to be eligible or competitive.

America250 is not the only area of interest that we encourage. We will discuss the other areas later in this presentation.

National Endowment for the Arts Assurance of Compliance Questions



We have received many questions from applicants about the changes to the [Assurance of Compliance](#). The Assurance is a longstanding legal requirement that all recipients of federal funds comply with applicable federal anti-discrimination laws, regulations and executive orders. They were updated on the NEA's website last week in alignment with the announcement of the updated guidelines and recent executive orders.

These Orders require that applicants are not in violation of any federal anti-discrimination laws, or operating any programs promoting DEI that violate federal law such as specifically excluding any group based on race, ethnicity, sex or age from programming, performances, etc. All applicants for federal funding programs will continue to be required to comply with these terms.

In accordance with the President's Executive Orders, the NEA will not fund projects that include DEI activities. Applicants must certify that they do not operate any programs promoting DEI that violate federal anti-discrimination laws, including programs outside the scope of their NEA project.

We know you have questions regarding whether the EOs apply to recommended applications and open awards. At this time, we have no updates on that question. We are still reviewing and implementing the executive orders on recommended applications and open awards. We will add information to our Frequently Asked Questions on our website as we resolve this issue. We've also been asked can organizations that are predominantly or solely one race or one sex still apply for grants? Yes.

National Endowment for the Arts FY26 Deadline Changes: Who is affected?

GAP1 February 2025 Applicants

- The February opportunity has been canceled and replaced by the March 11th deadline.
- If you already submitted Part 1 of your application, you need to resubmit.

GAP2 July 2025 Applicants

- No action required now. Review the new guidelines and instructions for updated information.

GAP July 2024 & Our Town August 2024 Applicants

- Schedule changes do not apply to your application, you do not need to resubmit.

GAP Webpage -> Frequently Asked Questions

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Here's more information for those of you who are affected by the deadline changes to the FY26 guidelines:

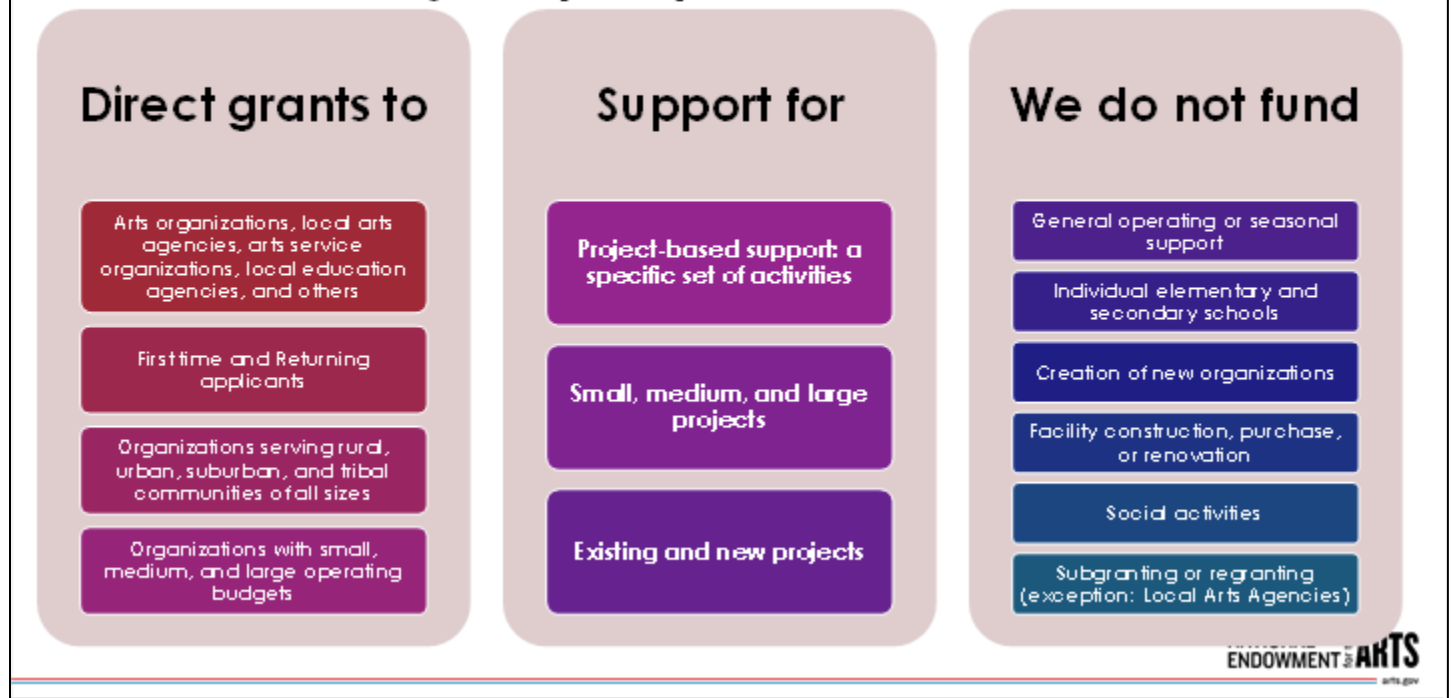
For organizations that submitted applications to the February 2025 GAP deadline: The February opportunity has been canceled and replaced by the March 11th deadline (we'll go over the new dates later in the presentation). If you already submitted Part 1 of your application, you will need to resubmit.

For organizations planning to apply to the July 2025 GAP deadline: No action is required right now—the July deadline date hasn't changed, but review the new guidelines and instructions to be sure that you are using the updated information.

For organizations that submitted applications to the July 2024 GAP, or the August 2024 Our Town deadlines: The schedule change does not apply to your application, and you do not need to resubmit.

FAQs specific to this year's changes are on the main [GAP webpage](#) in the sidebar.

National Endowment for the Arts Grants for Arts Projects (GAP)



Each year we fund over 2,000 projects through Grants for Arts Projects, supporting arts organizations, local arts agencies, arts service organizations, local education agencies, and other organizations that can help advance the NEA's mission. We support first-time and returning applicants; organizations serving rural, urban, suburban, and tribal communities of all sizes, in all 50 states and US jurisdictions; and organizations with small, medium, or large operating budgets

GAP funding is project-based. Meaning, your application should be for a *specific* set of activities. We support a wide variety of project sizes, all the way from very small to large projects. Projects can be an existing program that your organization produces or presents each year, or it can be for a brand new project

Some examples of activities or costs we do not fund include:

- General operating or seasonal support – as we mentioned before, applications should be for a specific set of activities.
- Individual elementary and secondary schools – although we do support school districts.
- The creation of new organizations
- Facility construction, purchase, or renovation
- Social activities, such as receptions
- And subgranting or regranting, with the exception of eligible Local Arts Agencies

This is only a partial list - a full list can be found in the GAP Grant Program Details document.

National Endowment for the Arts Other Areas of Focus

Originate from or are in collaboration with:

- Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- Tribal Colleges and Universities
- American Indian and Alaska Native tribes
- Hispanic Serving Institutions
- Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and
- Organizations that support the independence of people with disabilities.

Support the health and well-being of people and communities through the arts.

Support existing and new technology-centered creative practices across all artistic disciplines and forms

- Including work that explores or reflects on the impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) in ways that are consistent with valuing human artistry and improve the public's awareness and understanding of the use of AI.

In addition to America250-related programming, we also encourage applicants to submit projects that:

- Originate from or are in collaboration with:
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- Tribal Colleges and Universities
- American Indian and Alaska Native tribes
- Hispanic Serving Institutions
- Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and
- Organizations that support the independence of people with disabilities.

We welcome projects that support the health and well-being of people and communities through the arts, and projects that support existing and new technology-centered creative practices across all artistic disciplines and forms.

This includes work that explores or reflects on the impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) in ways that are consistent with valuing human artistry and improving the public's awareness and understanding of the use of AI.

Artistic Disciplines: Project Types

Artist Communities	Arts Education	Dance	Design	Film & Media Arts
Folk & Traditional Arts	Literary Arts	Local Arts Agencies	Museums	Music
Musical Theater	Opera	Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works	Theater	Visual Arts

Applications are accepted under 15 different sub-categories, called “disciplines.” Each discipline has identified several types of projects they encourage and accept in addition to the areas of focus we just mentioned. You can find a list of the project types in the discipline’s application instructions. We will show you how to find those instructions later in the presentation.

You should select the discipline that best suits the content of your **project**, which may differ from your organization type. If you are unsure which discipline best suits your project, our staff is more than happy to discuss the options with you, so please reach out to us. We will provide our contact information at the end of the presentation.

Applicant Eligibility

Not Eligible

- Individuals
- Fiscal Sponsors
- Commercial/ for profit enterprises

Eligible

- **US Organizations:**
 - 501 (c) (3) Non-profit organizations
 - Units of State/ Local Government
 - Federally recognized Tribes or Tribal Communities
- **NEW: Must have a 5-year history of arts programming**
 - March 2025 GAP 1 applicants: programming must have started in prior to March 2020.
 - July 2025 GAP 2 applicants: programming must have started in or prior to July 2020
 - If arts programming was suspended due to the pandemic, you may include examples that occurred in 2018 or 2019 to meet the five-year requirement
 - Virtual programming is also acceptable

Now we'll go over eligibility. GAP does not accept applications from individuals, fiscal sponsors, or commercial or for-profit enterprises.

To be eligible to apply, an organization must be based in the United States, *and* be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, a unit of state or local government, or a federally-recognized tribe or tribal community at the time you submit the application.

Organizations must have completed five years of arts programming prior to the application deadline. This is a change from our previous guidelines, which required three years of arts programming. For applicants at the March GAP deadline, this means your organization must have started arts programming in-or-prior-to March 2020.

For applicants at the July GAP deadline, your organization must have started arts programming in-or-prior-to July 2020. If arts programming was suspended due to the pandemic, you may include arts activities that occurred in 2018 or 2019 to meet the five-year requirement. Virtual programming is also acceptable.

Panelists use your previous arts programming information to better understand your organization's work.

Please note that nonprofit applicants need not have been a 501(c)(3) for all of the five year period, but you must have 501(c)(3) status at the time you submit an application.

Legal Requirements and Assurance of Compliance

Review before you apply

- Key legal requirements that may apply to an applicant or recipient
- Certify Assurance of Compliance at the time of application

ADA Compliance

- All projects must be both programmatically and physically accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with federal law including ADA and Section 504.

National Historic Preservation Act & National Environmental Policy Act

- Additional staff review for projects that:
 - Impact a historic site
 - Take place outdoors

GAP Grant Program Details -> Post-Award Requirements & Administration

NEA grants must adhere to federal regulations. In the GAP Grant Program Details, there is a link to the [Legal Requirements and Assurance of Compliance](#) information which we already covered. Please review this section before applying, as it includes key information about the legal requirements that may apply to an applicant or award recipient, as well as the Assurance of Compliance itself, which includes statutes, regulations, and executive orders that the applicant certifies compliance with at the time of application.

We want to highlight two specific areas applicants should be aware of while preparing an application:

- First, all projects must be programmatically and physically accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with federal law – including the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Second, Projects that may impact a historic property; and/or take place outdoors may be subject to additional staff review to ensure compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

For full information, please refer to the Post Award Requirements & Administration section of the GAP Grant Program Details.

Funding Amounts

Applicants may request an amount between \$10,000 and \$100,000

Exception: Local Arts Agencies subgranting projects may request between \$30,000 - \$150,000

Minimum 1:1 cost-share

\$10,000 NEA Request
\$10,000 Cost share
\$20,000 Project costs

Sources may include: private foundations, individual donations, ticket sales, and in-kind sources, among others

Funds do not need to be committed at the time of application

Federal funds may NOT be used as part of your cost-share

No funds from other federal agencies, such as NEH or IMLS

Funds from Local or State gov't or RAOs may be used in your cost-share, as long as those funds did not originate at the federal level

Applicants may request an award amount between \$10,000 and \$100,000 dollars, except for Local Arts Agencies, which may request between \$30,000 and \$150,000 dollars for subgranting projects.

All Applicants must demonstrate a minimum 1:1 cost-share. This means for a \$10,000 dollar NEA funding request you must show at least \$10,000 dollars in cost-share funds, and your total project costs must be at least \$20,000 dollars.

Cost-share funds may come from a variety of sources, including but not limited to: private foundations, individual donations, ticket sales, and in-kind sources. Cost-share funds do not need to be committed when you submit your application.

Federal funds may NOT be included as part of your cost-share. This includes funding from other federal agencies such as the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, among others. Funds from State or Local governments, or Regional Arts Organizations may be used in your cost-share, only if those funds did not originate at the federal level.

Application Limits

An organization may apply to GAP once per calendar year.

Exception: Independent Component (IC) :Independent unit of a larger (parent) organization

- Unique Mission
- Board
- Budget
- Staff
- 5 year arts programming history
- ICs must be approved by the NEA

Other NEA funding programs: Our Town & Research Awards

No overlapping costs/activities

More details: *Eligibility* section -> *Application Limits*

Let's discuss application limits. An organization may apply to GAP only ONCE per calendar year. The one exception to this rule is for organizations submitting an additional application on behalf of an Independent Component, which is known as an IC

An IC is a unit of a larger organization – known as the Parent organization - that operates independently

- To qualify as an IC, the unit must have its own unique mission, advisory board, budget, and staff, all of which are dedicated primarily to the IC, and not the Parent organization.
- The IC must also have completed at least five years of arts programming prior to the deadline. An IC cannot use the parent organization's programming history to establish eligibility.
- All ICs must be approved by the NEA – so if you are applying on behalf of an IC for the first time, reach out to our staff before the application deadline to start the IC approval process.

The NEA has other funding opportunities available this year, but application limits may apply. If you are applying to GAP in calendar year 2025, your organization *may not* also apply to the Our Town program in 2025. However, you are allowed to submit an additional application to our Research Awards program

If you are submitting more than one application in calendar year 2025, be sure that your applications and any previous NEA grants do not overlap in terms of costs or activities. In other words, you cannot use more than one NEA grant to fund the same activities at the same time. More information can be found in the Eligibility section of the GAP Grant Program Details, under “Application Limits”

Application Review Criteria



**Artistic
Excellence**



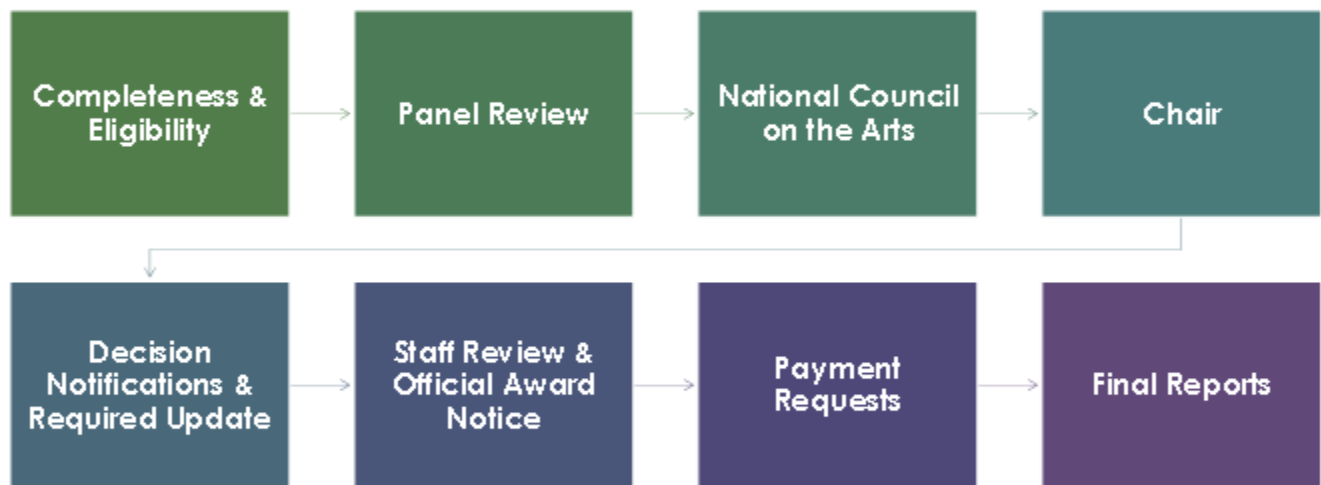
**Artistic
Merit**

Full List: [Grant Program Details](#) -> *Application Review*

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All applications are reviewed based on two review criteria: Artistic Excellence and Artistic Merit. Keep these review criteria in mind while preparing your application. Definitions of these criteria are found in the GAP Grant Program Details, under Application Review.

Review and Funding Process



Here is a brief overview of how we review applications and fund projects:

- First, staff checks the submitted applications for completeness and eligibility.
- Next, applications are reviewed by peer-review panels, comprised of artists and arts administrators from across the country. Each panel also includes at least one layperson – someone who is knowledgeable in the arts, but who is not engaged in the arts as a profession. Panelists score and comment on the applications based on the review criteria mentioned earlier.
- Next, Staff presents all funding recommendations to the National Council on the Arts for approval and recommendation, to the NEA Chair.
- The NEA Chair gives final approval on all funding recommendations.
- After receiving a funding recommendation, applicants will have the opportunity to provide a project update, including a revised budget based on the recommended funding amount, and an accessibility form
- Staff reviews these updated documents to ensure everything in the recommended application aligns with federal requirements. This part of the process can take several weeks. Once this review is complete, the formal award documents are issued. This is when your recommended application officially becomes a grant.
- Grant Payments are not automatically paid out. After you receive your award notification, you can begin to submit payment requests through REACH, our grants management system.
- Finally, Grantees are required to submit final performance and financial reports, which are due 120 days after the end of the grant period.

Application Calendar

Step	March Cycle (GAP1)	July Cycle (GAP2)
Part 1 Application Package Available on Grants.gov	February 2025	Mid-May 2025
Part 1 Grants.gov Submission deadline	March 11, 2025 11:59 pm ET	July 10, 2025 11:59 pm ET
Part 2 NEA Applicant Portal Opens to applicants	March 14, 2025 9:00 am ET	July 15, 2025 9:00 am ET
Part 2 NEA Applicant Portal Submission deadline	March 24, 2025 11:59 pm ET	July 22, 2025 11:59 pm ET
Notification of recommended funding or rejection	December 2025	Early to mid April 2026
Earliest project start date	January 1, 2026	June 1, 2026

All artistic disciplines accept applications at both cycles,
EXCEPT **Artist Communities** and **Design**, which only accept applications in March

Applications are accepted twice a year, GAP 1 in March, and GAP 2 in July. An application calendar can be found on the [GAP webpage](#).

Disciplines accept applications at both deadlines, with the exception of Artist Communities and Design, which have *only* a March deadline. Organization can only submit once per calendar year, so you cannot apply to both GAP deadlines.

Applications are submitted using a two-part process:

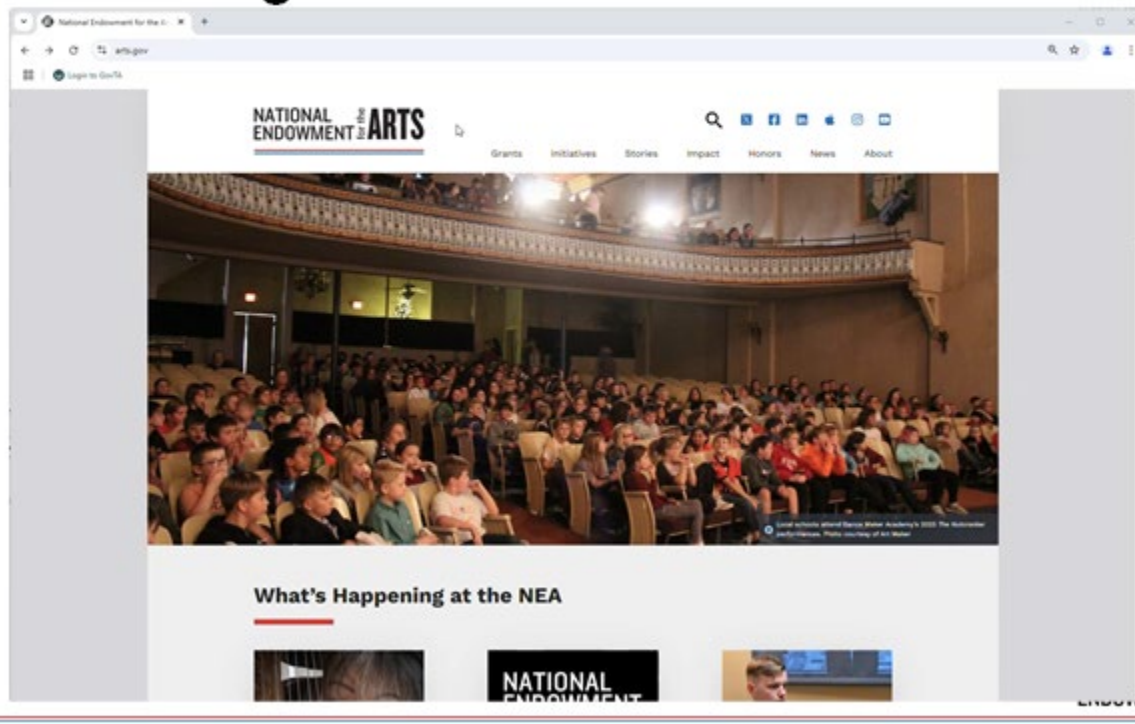
- Part 1 is submitted via Grants.gov.
- Part 2 is submitted via the NEA's Applicant Portal, which is separate from Grants.gov. Applicants have a little over a week to finish part 2.

GAP 1 decision notifications will be sent out in December 2025, and for GAP 2 in early to mid April 2026.

The earliest start date for project activities differs between the deadlines - for the March GAP1 cycle, the earliest start date is January 1, 2026; and for the July GAP2 cycle, the earliest start date is June 1, 2026.

Website: Finding Guidelines

arts.gov



Funding guidelines can be found on our website, www.arts.gov. From our homepage, click on “Grants”, then select “Grants for Arts Projects”

This will take you to the [introductory page](#) where you’ll see an overview of the program, with full information found under the “Grant Program Details and Instructions” heading. Information is divided into two sections: the “GAP Grant Program Details” and the “Application Instructions”.

Slide 17: GAP Grant Program Details

GAP Grant Program Details

Published February 2025

National Endowment for the Arts
Notice of Funding Opportunity: FY26 Grants for Arts Projects (GAP)
Grant Program Details

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GAP FY26 Grant Program Details		Basic Information
Grants for Arts Projects		
Basic Information		
Federal Agency Name	National Endowment for the Arts	
Funding Opportunity Title	Grants for Arts Projects	
Announcement Type	Modification of previous announcement	
Funding Opportunity Number(s)	March: 2025NEA01GAP1MARCH July: 2025NEA05GAP2	
Assistance Listing Number(s)	45.024	
Agency Contact Information	GAP Contacts Page	

Details in the chart below are estimates. Actual figures may vary.

FUNDING DETAILS	AMOUNT (Contingent upon availability of funds)
Total amount of funding expected to award	\$62,245,000
Anticipated number of applications	4,500
Anticipated number of awards	2,075
Expected dollar value of awards (range)	All Applicants: \$30,000-\$300,000 Local Arts Agencies Subgranting Projects: \$30,000-\$150,000

Executive Summary

Grants for Arts Projects (GAP) provides project-based funding for organizations in the areas of Artist Communities, Arts Education, Dance, Design, Film & Media Arts, Folk & Traditional Arts, Literary Arts, Local Arts Agencies, Museums, Music, Musical Theater, Opera, Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works, Theater, and Visual Arts. Funded activities may include public engagement with the arts and arts education, the integration of the arts with strategies promoting the health and well-being of people and communities, and the improvement of overall capacity and capabilities within the arts sector. Awards require a 1:1 cost share/match.

Eligible applicants include: nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organizations; units of state or local government; and federally recognized tribal communities or tribes. Funding in this category is not available for individuals, fiscally sponsored entities, commercial/for-profit enterprises, State Arts Agencies (SAA), or Regional Arts Organizations (RAO).

Applications are evaluated based on the published [Review Criteria](#).

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The “GAP Grant Program Details” document includes a description of the program, eligibility information, award information, unallowable activities/costs, application review details, FAQs, and post-award administrative requirements. This information is relevant for *all* of the GAP Artistic Disciplines.

GAP Application Instructions: Discipline Info

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Application Instructions: Dance

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FY26 GAP	Dance	Discipline Description
Dance Program Description		
Dance as a vital expression of human artistry and culture. Our grants support a wide range of dance genres and organizations including companies, presenters, service organizations, educators, festivals, and more. Dance companies may be artist-led, collaborative, disability-led, physically-integrated, and/or repertory-based.		
We encourage dance projects of all sizes that are working to cultivate dance in their communities or throughout the country. Projects can be at any stage of the process including planning, creation, and presentation/touring, and may focus on providing services such as training, documentation, residencies, and access to dance. We aim to support a variety of projects across the country in communities of all sizes.		
Applicants may request cost share/matching grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000.		
Project Types		
We are committed to supporting excellent arts projects for the benefit of all Americans. We welcome proposals that address one or more of the activities listed below, as well as the general areas of interest outlined in the Grants for Arts Projects program description (GAP Grant Program Details, pg. 6).		
Applications must be for projects only. A project may consist of one or more specific events or activities. A project should not cover an entire season of programming as we do not fund seasonal or general operating support.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation, documentation, and archiving of choreography, performances, and other aspects of dance history • Professional artist development and services to the field such as programs that give artists time and space to make their work, convenings for artists and arts workers, and arts leadership training and mentorship programs. This includes projects that advance or sustain the creative work of, or careers of people with disabilities through employment, industry training, and technical assistance • Creation and development of new dance works, especially by artists and companies who have been underserved, through commissioning, rehearsal periods, residencies that support artistic research, creation, or technical staging, and collaborative work • Restaging of existing dance works, including innovative reimagination of the original work • Presentation and touring of dance, especially in communities with fewer opportunities to experience affordable, live dance, and/or by artists whose work broadens the scope of dance available to audiences • Education projects specifically designed to serve youth in their communities, especially in places where access may be limited • Cross-sector projects with non-arts organizations that bring dance into the realm of other fields, including technology 		
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Each discipline has its own set of instructions. These include a description of the discipline, project types, and characteristics of competitive proposals. This information can help you determine if your project is a good fit in the discipline.

Slide 19: GAP Application Instructions

GAP Application Instructions

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Application Instructions: Dance

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FY26 GAP Dance Part 1 Instructions

Application Part 1: Submit the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/ Short Organizational Form (SF-424) to Grants.gov

You will use [Grants.gov Workspace](#) to complete Part 1 in Grants.gov.

Step 1: Access the Application Package and Create a Workspace

Review the Grants.gov video tutorial on [how to create a Workspace](#).

1. Access the Part 1 application package on the [GAP workspace](#) by clicking on the application package link found under "How to Apply." This will take you directly to the pre-populated application package for this opportunity in Grants.gov.
 - NOTE: The packages for the March and July deadlines are different and are typically posted at least one month prior to each deadline. Do not use the March deadline package to apply at the July deadline.
2. The Grants.gov "View Grant Opportunity" screen will open, click the red "Apply" button. To create the Workspace application, you must be logged into Grants.gov with a [participant role](#) of either Workspace Manager or Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).
 - If the Apply button is grey or you receive a "bad request" error, see [instructions on how to troubleshoot](#).
3. Create a Workspace application:
 - Fill in the Application Filing Name field with your organization name, then
 - Click the Create Workspace button.
4. Go to the Manage Workspace page, where you can begin working on the application.

GRANTS.GOV HELP: Grants.gov is a government-wide portal, and NEA staff does not have control of, or administrative access to, the site. If you run into technical issues with Grants.gov, please contact them directly at 1-800-518-4726, via email support@grants.gov, or consult the information posted on the Grants.gov website at [support](#) or [help](#). The Grants.gov Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Submit Part 1 of your application by the dates and times below:

GRANTS.GOV	MARCH CYCLE (GAP 1)	JULY CYCLE (GAP 2)
Part 1 Grants.gov Submission Deadline	March 11, 2025 11:59 pm ET	July 10, 2025 11:59 pm ET

Step 2: Complete the Form

Review the Grants.gov video tutorial on [how to complete forms in Workspace](#).

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FY26 GAP Dance Part 2 Instructions

Application Part 2: Submit the Grant Application Form through the Applicant Portal

Applicants who successfully submit Part 1 of the application to Grants.gov by the Part 1 submission deadline will be able to access the Applicant Portal to submit Part 2. **The Applicant Portal is a separate website from Grants.gov – a link can be found below.** The Applicant Portal is an NEA-administered site. If you run into technical issues, please reach out to your designated [program specialist](#).

Applicant Portal Submission Window

The Applicant Portal will be open for a one-week submission window, during which applicants will have access to complete and submit Part 2 of the application. Applicants will not have access to the portal prior to the dates below. **However, we urge you to use this document to prepare your Part 2 responses and material well in advance so you will have them ready to upload once the system opens.**

We recommend applicants set up calendar reminders to avoid missing the submission window. All times are Eastern.

APPLICANT PORTAL ACCESS	MARCH CYCLE (GAP 1)	JULY CYCLE (GAP 2)
Part 2 NEA Applicant Portal Opens to applicants	March 14, 2025 9:00 am ET	July 15, 2025 9:00 am ET
Part 2 NEA Applicant Portal Submission Deadline	March 24, 2025 11:59 pm ET	July 22, 2025 11:59 pm ET

Step 1: Access the Applicant Portal

The AP user name and password are unique to each application you submit. Do not use tracking numbers from a previous application to log into the AP.

Log on to the Applicant Portal at: <https://applicantportal.arts.gov>

- **User Name = Grants.gov Tracking Number (Example: "GRANT18906754")**
 - Your Grants.gov tracking number is assigned by Grants.gov when you submit Part 1.
 - A confirmation screen will appear in Grants.gov once your submission is complete, your Grants.gov tracking number will be provided at the bottom of the screen.
- **Password = Agency Tracking Number/NEA Application Number (Example: "1425736")**
 - The NEA assigns the number to your application 3-2 business days after you submit Part 1.
 - The AOR may retrieve the number by following these steps:

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After the discipline description, you'll find full applications instructions, including all of the questions and requirements for both parts 1 and 2 – we'll walk you through the application process in just a moment. Some requirements vary by discipline, so make sure you use the right set of instructions - each document includes the discipline name on the first page, as well as at the top of every page.

How to Apply: Required Registrations

How to Apply

Submitting an application is a multi-step process. **Detailed instructions on how to complete and submit the both parts of the application package can be found in the Application Instructions documents above.**

Applying for a federal grant can be time consuming, we estimate that after registering, the process to draft and submit an application takes approximately 26 hours.

REGISTRATION

Registration Guidance [PDF](#)

Before you can submit an application, you must register with [Login.gov](#) [□], the System for Award Management (SAM) at [SAM.gov](#) [□], and [Grants.gov](#) [□] or renew/verify these registrations. Registration can take several weeks.

Create and maintain free registrations with Login.gov, SAM and Grants.gov

Registrations can take several weeks to finalize. Start early!

NEA staff does not have access to your registrations

Links & Technical support resources:
How to Apply ->Registration Guidance

- To apply, your organization must first register, or renew registrations with Login.gov, the System for Award Management, also known as SAM, and Grants.gov. Registering and maintaining these accounts is always *free*.
- Registrations can take several weeks to finalize, so begin this process early. Registrations must be active to submit your application. If you have applied to the NEA in the past, you probably already have these registrations. Double check to make sure they are active and up to date.
- Login.gov, SAM and grants.gov are operated by other federal agencies, if you need assistance with any of these agencies, you can reach out to them directly.
- The “Registration Guidance document” in the “How to Apply” section of the [GAP webpage](#) includes information on the registration process, including links to each site, and technical support resources.

Slide 21: How to Apply Part 1

How to Apply

Submitting an application is a multi-step process. **Detailed instructions on how to complete and submit the both parts of the application package can be found in the Application Instructions documents above.** Applying for a federal grant can be time consuming, we estimate that after registering, the process to draft and submit an application takes approximately 26 hours.

REGISTRATION
Registration Guidance [PDE](#)

Before you can submit an application, you must register with [Login.gov](#) [□], the System for Award Management (SAM) at [SAM.gov](#) [□], and [Grants.gov](#) [□] or renew/verify these registrations. Registration can take several weeks.

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION
Application Part 1, Grants.gov
Submit the *Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organization Form*. Clicking the link below will take you **directly** to the pre-populated application package in Grants.gov.

PART 1 GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION PACKAGE
March Cycle: Funding opportunity number [2025NEA01GAP1MARCH](#) [□]

July Cycle: The Grants.gov application package for the July cycle will be available in mid-May 2025. Do not use the March application package to apply to the July cycle.

How to Apply: Part 1

```
graph TD; A[Submitted via Grants.gov Workspace] --> B[To access package click link on the GAP webpage]; B --> C[March package available now]; B --> D[July Package available in May]; C --> E[Application for Federal Domestic Assistance form]; D --> E; E --> F[Basic information]; E --> G[Refer to Application Instructions];
```

Submitted via Grants.gov Workspace

To access package click link on the GAP webpage

March package available now **July Package available in May**

Application for Federal Domestic Assistance form

Basic information **Refer to Application Instructions**

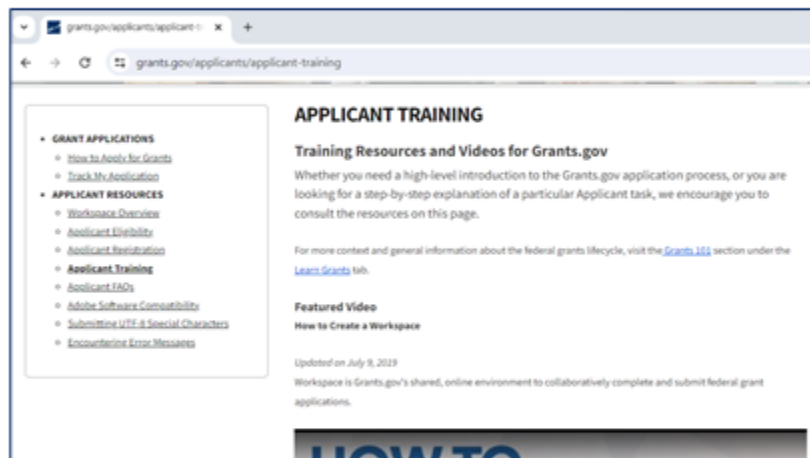
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Once your registrations are all set, you can start the application process. Go to the How to Apply section on the [GAP webpage](#), and scroll to “Submit your application”.

Part 1 of the application is submitted via Grants.gov Workspace – to access the application package, click on the link found under “PART 1 GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION PACKAGE”. The link for the March cycle is available now, and the link for the July cycle will be available in May. Clicking on this link will take you to Grants.gov to fill out and submit the “application for federal domestic assistance” form. This form asks for basic information, such as the name of your organization, and contact info.

You must successfully submit this form to continue to Part 2, where you will submit the rest of your materials.

How to Apply: Grants.gov Workspace



FY26 GAP Dance Part 1 Instructions

9. Authorized Representative: Enter the requested information for the AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) who is authorized to submit this application to Grants.gov. Optional: Select a Prefix (e.g., Ms., Mr.)

The AOR must have the legal authority to obligate your organization (e.g., be a senior member of the staff such as an Executive Director, Director of Development). See the NEA's [General Terms and Conditions](#) for who can serve as an AOR for colleges and universities. Contractors/consultants, including grant writers, or administrative support staff cannot serve as an AOR.

NOTE: By clicking the "I Agree" box at the top of Item 9, this individual will be certifying compliance with relevant federal requirements on your organization's behalf. These requirements can be found in the [Assurance of Compliance](#).

The "Signature of Authorized Representative" and "Date Signed" boxes will be populated by Grants.gov upon submission of the application.

Step 3: Submit the form via Grants.gov's Workspace

Be certain you are satisfied with your Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form (SF-424) before you click submit. No revisions to your application form are possible through Grants.gov once it is submitted.

The NEA strongly suggests you submit your application well before the deadline to provide ample time to resolve any problems you might encounter.

Review the Grants.gov video tutorial on [submitting an application in Workspace](#).

When ready to submit, navigate to the **Forms** tab on the **Manage Workspace** page:



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Grants.gov has a number of resources to help you. If you are new to the process, check out their "[Applicant Training](#)" webpage, which includes video tutorials. You can find this page by using the QR code on the screen. In the Application Instructions, we have included links to some of the video tutorials alongside the instructions.

How to Apply: Part 2 Applicant Portal Access

FY26 GAP Dance Part 2 Instructions

Application Part 2: Submit the Grant Application Form through the Applicant Portal

Applicants who successfully submit Part 1 of the application to Grants.gov by the Part 1 submission deadline will be able to access the Applicant Portal to submit Part 2. The Applicant Portal is a separate website from Grants.gov – a link can be found below. The Applicant Portal is an NEA-administered site. If you run into technical issues, please reach out to your designated [program specialist](#).

Applicant Portal Submission Window

The Applicant Portal will be open for a one-week submission window, during which applicants will have access to complete and submit Part 2 of the application. Applicants will not have access to the portal prior to the dates below. However, we urge you to use this document to prepare your Part 2 responses and material well in advance so you will have them ready to upload once the system opens.

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APPLICANT PORTAL ACCESS	MARCH CYCLE (GAP 1)	JULY CYCLE (GAP 2)
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Step 1: Access the Applicant Portal

The AP user name and password are unique to each application you submit. Do not use tracking numbers from a previous application to log into the AP.

Log on to the Applicant Portal at: <https://applicantportal.arts.gov>

- **User Name** = Grants.gov Tracking Number (Example: "GRANT38906754")
 - Your Grants.gov tracking number is assigned by Grants.gov when you submit Part 1.
 - A confirmation screen will appear in Grants.gov once your submission is complete, your Grants.gov tracking number will be provided at the bottom of the screen.
- **Password** = Agency Tracking Number/NEA Application Number (Example: "1425736")
 - The NEA assigns the number to your application 1-2 business days after you submit Part 1.
 - The AOR may retrieve the number by following these steps:

Accessing the Portal

Portal access window:
Dates are in the calendar

Link to the portal under "How to Apply"
& in Instructions

No additional registration required

Username and password are specific to each application

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Part 2 of the application is submitted through NEA's applicant portal website

- You'll have a window of a little over a week to access the portal to submit your materials. You will not be able to log into the portal prior to the dates listed in the application calendar.
- A link to the portal can be found in the application instructions, as well as in the "How to Apply" section of the [GAP webpage](#).
- No additional registration is required for the Applicant Portal, your username and password will be automatically generated after you submit Part 1.
- Information on how to find your username and password are in the Instructions document, under "Access the Applicant Portal".
- Login credentials are specific to each application, so make sure you are using the credentials for the current application.

How to Apply: Part 2 Applicant Portal

Application Materials

Background organization info

Project narrative & budget

Work samples/supplementary materials

FY26 GAP

Dance

Part 2 Instructions

Step 2: Fill out the Grant Application Form

Application content is collected through a series of tabs and sub-tabs in which applicants will enter text or upload files:

- View Application Data Tab
- Organization Info Tab
 - Subtab: Organization Details
 - Subtab: Organization Budget
- Arts Programmatic History Tab
- Project Details Tab
 - Subtab: Project Activity
 - Subtab: Additional Project Details
 - Subtab: Project Partners & Key Individuals
- Project Budget Tab
 - Subtab: Project Expenses
 - Subtab: Project Income
- Additional Items Tab
- Items to Upload Tab
- Organization & Project Data Tab

Through the Applicant portal, you'll use a webform to submit the rest of your materials, including background information about your organization, your project narrative and budget, and work samples or supplementary materials. The Application Instructions document includes a complete breakdown of questions and requirements.

Slide 25: How to Apply Part 2

How to Apply: Part 2

The screenshot shows the 'Part 2 Instructions' page for the FY26 GAP application. It features a navigation bar with tabs: View Application Data, Organization Info, Arts Programmatic History, Project Details (selected), Project Budget, and Additional Items. Below this is a subtab bar for Project Details: Project Activity (selected), Additional Project Details, and Project Partners & Key Individuals. The main content area includes sections for NEA Discipline for Proposed Project*, Project Synopsis*, and Project Description*. Red arrows point from the instructions on the left to the corresponding form fields on the right. The Project Synopsis section has a 200-character limit, and the Project Description section has a 5,000-character limit. The National Endowment for the Arts logo is in the bottom right corner.

Project Details Tab

Subtab: Project Activity

NEA DISCIPLINE FOR PROPOSED PROJECT*
Drop down, select: Dance
Select the discipline that most closely aligns with your proposed project activities, not necessarily with your organization as a whole. This selection will determine which panel of experts will review your proposal. [Contact us](#) if you have questions about which discipline is most appropriate for your project.

PROJECT SYNOPSIS*
Text box: 200-character limit, including spaces
Provide a brief synopsis for your proposed arts project. For example: "To support the 'ABC Project,' which will XYZ."
If your project focuses on activities to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States, please include the phrase "America 250" in your synopsis. For example: "To support the 'ABC Project' as part of America 250, which will XYZ".

PROJECT DESCRIPTION*
Text box: 5,000-character limit, including spaces
We fund arts projects and make awards for specific, definable activities. Describe in plain language the project activities that will take place during the period of performance, and provide information on the curatorial/selection process, artists, creative process, works of art, productions, venues, public or community engagement activities etc. Panelists will use the Review Criteria (GAP Grant Program Details, pg. 25) to evaluate your application, so make sure your narrative addresses the review criteria. **Do not describe unrelated organizational programming.** For more information about what may not be included in a project, see Unallowable Activities/Costs (GAP Grant Program Details, pg. 13).

Detailed Applicant Portal tutorial -> Applicant Resources

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The Portal is organized through a series of tabs, some of which have subtabs. Navigate through each tab and subtab to complete the application. For narrative sections, there is a character limit listed at the bottom.

The Application Instructions document outlines each tab and subtab.

Each question is listed with information about the character count, and what information you should include in your response.

Since you won't be able to access the portal until the application window, we strongly recommend that you draft your application materials before logging into the portal.

If you need more help, there's a video tutorial on the [Applicant Resources](#) page.

Tips

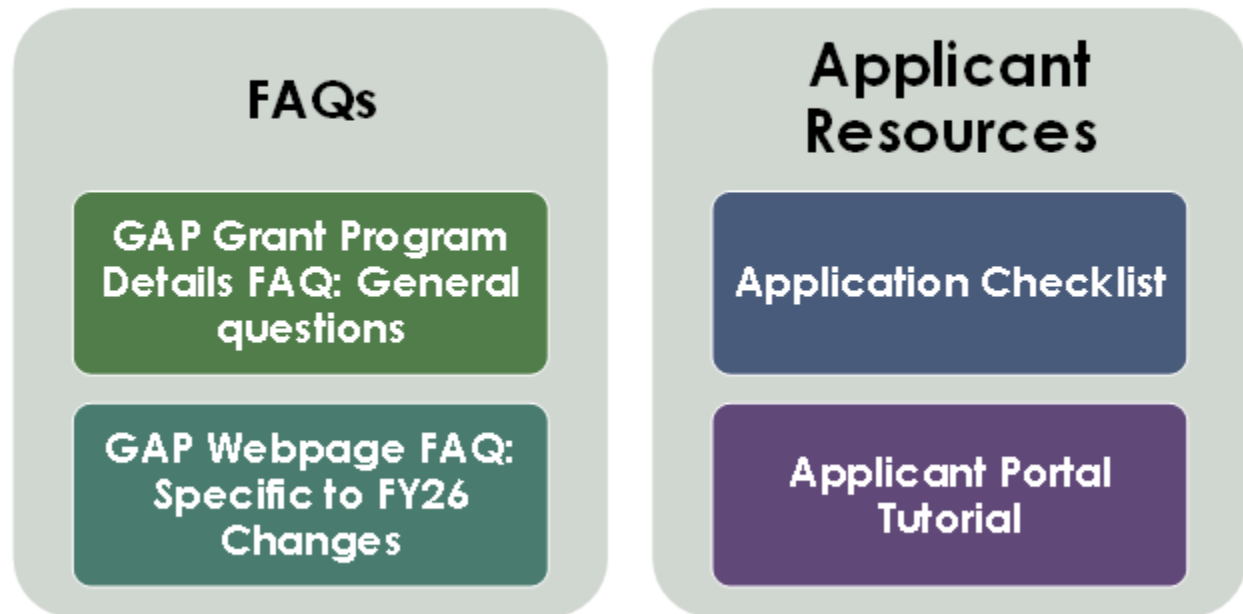
- Applications are not compared to one another. Each application is reviewed on its own in relation to the review criteria
- Clearly outlined plan
- No information about previous applications is shared with panelists
- Reach out to staff before the deadline
- Volunteer to be a panelist -> www.arts.gov/grants
- Start early!

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Now we'll go over a few tips:

- Applications are not compared to each other; every application is reviewed on its own in relation to the review criteria. This means that new or smaller organizations are not at a disadvantage.
- Make sure you have a clearly outlined plan in your application, and have identified the who, what, when, and where of your project so that panelists can understand the scope of your planned activities.
- Panelists will not receive information about your previous applications or grants with the NEA as part of their review
- Reach out to program staff with questions. While staff cannot review your draft application, they are available to answer your questions and provide insight. We recommend that you contact staff well in advance of the application deadline, so that you have enough time to make adjustments, if needed.
- We also encourage you to volunteer to be a panelist - it's a great way to learn about the process. There is a link to sign up on the main grants page on our website, and if you know any friends or colleagues who would be good panelists, encourage them to sign up as well.
- Start Early! Each part of the application process can be time consuming, so give yourself enough time to complete each step.

Frequently Asked Questions & Applicant Resources



For more tips, a list of Frequently Asked Questions can be found at the end of the GAP Grant Program Details document. It includes general questions about the grant program. Additionally, due to the number of questions we've received about the changes for FY26, we've also created a separate FAQ section on the website, which you can find on the left sidebar of the [GAP webpage](#). We anticipate updating the webpage FAQs regularly.

We also have [Applicant Resources](#) linked on the left hand sidebar of the [GAP Webpage](#).

Some of the resources you will find there include:

- An Application Checklist outlining the application
- A video tutorial demonstrating in detail how to use the Applicant Portal

Contacts & Resources

NEA Contacts

Email: apply@arts.gov

Login.gov, SAM, or Grants.gov Help

Refer to the Registration Guidance document in the How to Apply section for contact info and other resources.

Webinar Archive and Slides

Available on the Applicant Resources page next week

If you have questions, you can reach out to us via email at apply@arts.gov. For help with login.gov, SAM, or Grants.gov you can find contact info and other resources in the Registration Guidance document in the How to Apply section of the [GAP webpage](#).

An archive of this presentation and a PDF slide deck will be available on the [Applicant Resources](#) page within the next week.

Alright, now we'll move into the Q&A section of this webinar. We've collected questions emailed in advance, and will go through as many of them as we can in the remaining time. If we don't get to your question, please reach out to us. Now I'll turn things over to Daniel Beattie.

[Q&A Period]

Thank you again for joining us today! If we weren't able to get to your questions, please feel free to reach out to staff.