859.255.2951
161 North Mill Street
Lexington, KY 40507
LexArts.org

(FY27) Community Arts Development Grant Guidelines

Project Support for Organizations

The LexArts Community Arts Development Project Grants for organizational support artists to produce or present projects with an arts or cultural focus. Projects must be initiated, directed, and implemented by the artist, take place in Fayette County, and include a public component.

Eligible project types include—but are not limited to—festivals, exhibitions, readings, performances, professionally directed public art (e.g., murals, temporary sculptural installations, environmental art), and planning for the redesign of existing public spaces for cultural activities.

Grant awards range from $500 - $5,000.

Program Goals

Through its Community Arts Grant programs, LexArts seeks to encourage and support activities and programs that contribute to the arts and cultural landscape of Lexington-Fayette County.

LexArts grant programs are guided by its purpose to promote, enhance, and contribute to the educational, artistic, and cultural lives of those living in Fayette County and to serve as a resource and supportive agency for organizations which affect or alter the cultural climate of the community; and by its organization values of collaboration; empowerment; innovation; generosity; inclusion, diversity and equity. Applicants are encouraged to consider the purpose and values when developing their application.

Priority Funding Areas

To advance impact and clarity for applicants, LexArts will prioritize CAD Project and Program applications that meaningfully address one or more of the following areas. Applicants should explicitly describe their alignment in the application narrative (see “Application Narrative” section).

1. Arts Equity

Initiatives that expand access to the arts for individuals and communities who have been historically marginalized or underserved—reducing financial, geographic, cultural, physical, or systemic barriers and uplifting artists, organizations, and audiences that reflect the diverse identities of our community.

Examples: Projects/Programs serving communities with limited access; culturally specific or multilingual programming; ADA-accessible activities; partnerships with community-based organizations; sliding-scale or free programs.

2. Arts & Health

Initiatives that use the arts to support physical, mental, emotional, or community well-being, including healing, reduced social isolation, strengthened health partnerships, or arts-based interventions.

Examples: Arts in hospitals/clinics/recovery centers/schools/senior facilities; trauma-informed practices; movement/music/visual arts for stress reduction; wellness workshops or community healing events; collaborations with health or social service organizations.

3. Youth Arts Engagement

Initiatives that nurture creativity, learning, leadership, and self-expression for children and teens, including arts education, youth-led projects/programs, mentorship, and positive youth development through the arts.

Examples: After- or in-school arts classes; youth-led projects/programs or performances; apprenticeships/mentorships; summer camps or intensives; projects/programs supporting underserved youth populations.

4. General Community Arts Engagement

Initiatives that build community connection and participation through accessible, inclusive arts experiences for the general public (e.g., neighborhood-based initiatives, workshops, cultural celebrations, and welcoming events).

Examples: Community festivals/performances/exhibitions; public workshops or hands-on activities; arts events in community centers/neighborhoods/parks; cultural heritage celebrations; collaborative projects/programs connecting diverse groups.

5. High-Quality Arts Programming or Beautification

Artistic work or creative placemaking that demonstrates strong artistic merit, craftsmanship, or aesthetic impact—performances, exhibitions, beautification initiatives, or public art that enriches community spaces.

Examples: Professional-level performances/exhibitions; murals/sculptures/public art; creative placemaking or neighborhood beautification; artistically excellent programming; large-scale or collaborative productions.

DATES AND DEADLINES

Application Open	Friday, July 3, 2026
Application Deadline	Friday, August 7, 2026 | 11:59 pm
Public Grant Review via Zoom	Monday, August 24, 2026 | 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Award Notification	Monday, September 28, 2026
Program Period	Calendar Year | January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027
Final Report Due	30 days following completion of project period

ELIGIBILITY	RESTRICTIONS
All applicants must document the following in order to be eligible: • 18 years of age • Lives in Fayette County • Compliance with prior LexArts grants and reporting requirements	Community Arts Project Grants for Artists will not fund: : • Instructional programs designed only to benefit students enrolled in public or private school districts, colleges, or universities • Activities/events outside Fayette County • General operating expenses • Activities intended primarily for fundraising • Historic preservation • Capital expenditures for equipment, or for facility construction or renovation • Debt reduction, penalties, or litigation costs • Hospitality activities including food or beverage • Programming or activities not available to the general public

SCORING CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

Community (40%)

- Benefit to Community
- Target audience
- Partnerships
- Accessibility

Program Planning and Evaluation (40%)

- Project Description
- Marketing and Publicity
- Evaluation
- Budget

Artistic Merit (20%)

- Artistic documentation upload
- Artist resume

FUNDING

LexArts does not require a match for CAD Project Grants; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to seek additional funding. Additional funding demonstrates the organization's commitment to completing the proposed project. It also illustrates that the project is well-received by the community (e.g. individuals, community organizations and businesses).

HOW TO APPLY

1. Visit the LexArts Grants Portal at https://lexarts.org/grant-applications/.
2. Review the available funding opportunities and select the grant program that best aligns with your proposed project or program.
3. Complete the Grants Profile Form, which captures applicant information and will automatically populate applicable fields within the grant application.
4. Once your profile has been submitted and approved, you will receive access to the corresponding grant application.
5. Applicants must submit their grant application and all requested materials by Friday, August 7, 2026, 11:59 pm. LexArts will not accept late applications, and will only accept hard copy application with prior approval.

HELPFUL TIPS:

- Give yourself ample time to plan, write, re-write and review the application with LexArts' Community Arts Services staff. This includes developing the application, gathering artistic documentation and all supplemental materials.
- The application process will require the dedicated efforts of one or two individuals in your organization.
- Attend a LexArts grants workshop and if so desired, schedule a one-on-one consultation for additional assistance.
- Write the application narrative sections in a separate document and then cut and paste into the online application.
- Format the narrative so that it is reader-friendly (e.g. space between paragraphs, bullets, etc. if space permits.)
- Check and double-check your application for spelling and mathematical errors.
- Have a reader not familiar with this grant application review it for content, clarity, and budget and other errors.
- Applicants are only allowed to submit one grant per fiscal year.
- Submit your application days before the submission deadline as technology challenges are possible and input errors occur more often when applicants are rushed.
- When preparing the application save as you go. Although our grants portal does auto-save your progress, please be aware that the program may time out.

Applicants are encouraged to contact LexArts Community Outreach Manager, Kay'mon Murrah at kmurrah@lexarts.org for assistance.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Enter the following information in the application as indicated.

1. Organization Information
    - Applicant name
    - Applicant contact information
    - Applicant incorporation information

2. Priority Area – Select the appropriate outcome that aligns with our dedicated priority areas. (Examples provided on pages 1 and 2.)

    - Arts Equity
    - Arts & Health
    - Youth Arts Engagement
    - Community Arts Engagement
    - High-Quality Arts Programming or Beautification

3. Title of Project
4. One sentence description of project
5. Project Location(s)
6. Funding request – CAD project grant request may not exceed $5,000
7. Start and end date (month, date) of the project. Projects must take place between 1/1/2027 and 12/31/2027)
8. New or Repeat Project – Select the appropriate designation. New Project – applicant has not received LexArts funds for this project in the past. Repeat Project – applicant has previously received LexArts funds for the same program.
9. Project Category - The following project categories are eligible for CAD project support. Select the one that best describes your project.

    - Cultural/Multi-Arts: Projects involving more than one art and cultural discipline (e.g. festivals, neighborhood events, etc.)
    - Youth Arts: Projects specifically targeting young people as the primary audience, including arts education and training or participation in other kinds of arts or cultural events, such as a public celebration or festival.
    - Literary Arts: Projects involving creative writers including poets, novelists, and short-story writers.
    - Performing Arts: Projects involving the performing arts including theater, dance, and music.
    - Visual Arts: Projects involving the visual arts including painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, fiber arts, crafts, film, and new media.
    - Public Art: Temporary or permanent artwork in the public realm, including murals, sculpture, interactive and community engagement projects.

APPLICATION NARRATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Summary - Summarize your request in a few sentences. Begin your narrative with a single-sentence description of how much money is requested and the purpose: (Your name) requests

($X) to (support/expand/etc.) the (name of program/series/event, etc.)

Project description - Provide a clear detailed description of your project. Describe the project in detail, painting a vivid picture so panelists unfamiliar with your project can envision it. What will happen? Where will the project take place? How will the project be implemented? If organization was awarded project support funds in the previous year for the same project, the applicant must identify new components or differences from prior year.

- Explain the benefit to the community.
- Identify your target audience.
- Describe your plan for publicizing your project. Describe the tools you will use to promote your project, including public service announcements, print materials, special events, press releases, social media, etc.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Does this project provide an opportunity for diverse artists? Please click the question mark for our definition of diversity.
- Do you plan to partner with any artists or organizations?
- How will you determine and measure success?

Required Support Materials

The following required documents must be uploaded as either PDF or Microsoft Word files in the Upload section of the application. Place the applicant's name and title of document in the upper right-hand corner. Multiple PDF can be combined into a single document.

- IRS Determination Letter
- Current fiscal year annual budget with year-to-date actuals
- W9 Form
- FY27 annual budget – include information on endowments and restricted funds
- Board approved long range or strategic plan – and date adopted
- Current board list including professional and community/arts affiliations; length of time served on board; officer position held and membership on any board committees
- Current staff list including title/area of responsibility and length of time with the organization
- Resumes or biographical information on key program personnel
- Organization promotional materials - recent materials (brochures, programs, etc.) illustrating how LexArts funding support is acknowledged. Package as a single PDF.
- Organization Logo – Official Logo/Branding to be used on LexArts promotional material.

Optional Support Materials

- Letters of commitment or contracts signed by proposed artists
- Letters of support – maximum of two
- Evaluation Sample

- Resume or biographical information for other key project personnel (artists, consultants, program coordinators, etc.)

Required Artistic Work Samples

Select high quality artistic documentation that clearly illustrates the merit of your work and/or the work of the proposed artists for the project. All artistic support materials will be uploaded through the online form. Applicants may submit up to two types of media for their artistic documentation with a total of six samples. Applicants must describe documentation clearly including concise, detailed and descriptive information.

- **Audio / Video:** Panelists will review up to 5 minutes of video or audio. Indicate in the upload description both the cue point and the description of what the panel is viewing/hearing at the cue point. Links to material are also acceptable and can be provided via hotlink in a PDF.
- **Images:** Submit no more than 6 images.
- **Manuscripts and Publications:** Panelists will read no more than 5 pages of material (8.5" x 11" single sided, single spaced, saved as a PDF and uploaded.)

GRANT REVIEW PROCESS

Phase 1 – Eligibility

All applications will undergo an eligibility audit by the LexArts Community Arts Services staff. If an applicant fails to meet the eligibility requirements the application will not be forwarded to the panel. The staff makes no assessment of the review criteria.

Phase 2 – Panel Review

LexArts relies on arts, cultural and community experts both within and outside Lexington-Fayette County to review Community Arts Development Grant applications. Panelists are selected based on their knowledge of an art discipline, non-profit sector and/or community. The Community Arts Development Project Grants for Organizations review process is open for observation by the public and will take place Monday, August 24, 2026 | 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Panelists review each application and provide comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the application based on the criteria.

Following this assessment, panelists score each criterion on a 5-point scale (1 = low; 5 = high). Funding recommendations by the panel are based on these scores.

Phase 3 – Grants Committee

The Grants Committee of the LexArts Board of Directors reviews the panel's funding recommendations and allocates funding based on funds available.

Phase 4 – LexArts Board Approval

The Grants Committee's recommendations are submitted to the LexArts Board of Directors for its approval.

REQUIREMENTS AFTER FUNDING

- Grantees must sign the Grant Agreement Form and, if required, complete the Project Revision Form. Grant Agreement Forms must be signed and returned within 30 days of receipt.
- All grantees must attend the grantee orientation.
- If there are significant changes to the projects, grantees must contact the Community Arts Services staff for approval and the approved changes must be provided in writing.
- Grantees must acknowledge LexArts as the funding source for the project and include its logo in print, social media platforms, websites, press releases and public presentations.
- All public activities must take place in facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities.
- A Final Grant Report and support materials are due 30 days after the completion of the funded project.
- Payments will be issued in two equal installments. The first half of the payment will be disbursed one month before the anticipated project, and the second half will be issued 30 days after the project has been completed. To receive the final payment, grantees must complete the programming submitted from the application and submit a final report.
- By signing the application, the applicant agrees to abide by all rules set forth in these guidelines. If an instance arises where the applicant does not complete the project for which funds were given, the applicant agrees to refund the total grant amount received to LexArts.

ON-SITE EVALUATIONS - LexArts' Community Arts Services staff may attend funded activities to monitor compliance with the terms of the grant agreement.