Grant Writing Essentials for Artists 2.0

TAKING YOUR APPLICATION TO THE NEXT LEVEL

A WORKSHOP SPONSORED BY THE CT OFFICE OF THE ARTS

CREATED FOR THE FUNDING BOOSTER PROGRAM

OFFERED THROUGH THE CULTURAL COALITION SERVING EASTERN CT & THE CULTURAL ALLIANCE OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Funders Have Missions Too!
What Is COA Looking For?

- **READI** **Framework (Relevance, Equity, Accessibility, Diversity, Inclusion)**

- **Authentic Relationships -** Breaking down silos, reaching outside your comfort zone for those unique ways to amplify your programs and reach new audiences.

- **Understanding WHO Your Audience Is & What They Need** - Why this audience? Why this program? How do you know for sure this is what they need/want?

- **Community Impact -** Using the READI framework to create a deeper connection and more fully serve all audiences. Remember, you can't serve them if you don't know who they are!

- **Fiscal Responsibility** – Making the most out of your award funds, demonstrating that you can manage funds properly and be a good steward!

Is This Opportunity Worth It?
Use a Self-Test!

Step 1: <u>Funding Priorities</u> - Do the funding priorities line-up with your project/artistic goals?

Step 2: <u>Eligibility</u> - Are you eligible to apply? Do you fit the parameters?

Step 3: <u>Funding Period</u> - Does the funding period fit within the timeframe of your project?

Step 4: <u>FAQ's</u> - Frequently asked questions provide a wealth of information! Check them out.

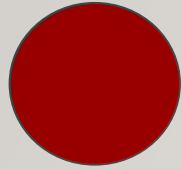**Step 5: <u>Awardees</u>** - Does anyone look like me? If not, that's a possible red flag.

Step 6: Capacity - Do you have the time/bandwidth to write, submit, manage the award, and do the final reporting?

Step 7: Not sure still… Get Some Advice - You may just need a little encouragement!

*** PERMISSION GRANTED: Release Yourself From The Guilt Of Not Applying If It's Not A Good Fit! ***

Does the Grant Fit your Project?

You can't fit a square peg into a round hole.

Never sacrifice the integrity of your program to fit into the funding priorities of a grant OR a partnership. Not only is it obvious to the grant reviewer, but you're not staying true to your personal mission.

HOWEVER, sometimes funding priorities & partnerships make us think "outside the box" about ways we SHOULD be partnering, opportunities we might be missing to be more equitable, and ways to reach new audiences and adapt.

Keep an open mind, but always be aware of where you're headed AND your internal capacity. I.e. What can you realistically handle.
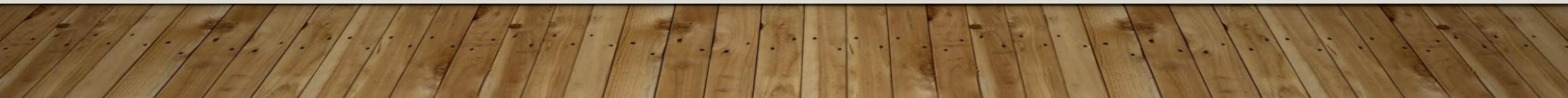
Collaboration
Relationships vs. Partnership

Relationships - Are based on trust, mutual benefit, shared burden, and longevity.

- A partnership is limited/contractual/transactional. Sometimes great relationships begin with transactional partnerships. If that's the case be honest about what you hope to achieve, and leave room for growth in the future.
- In any partnership OR relationship each side must contribute and benefit.
- The relationship hopefully extends beyond one program, or idea.
- It should be built by asking: what are your goals, and what are mine, and what can we co-create to satisfy both and raise each other up.
- Relationships take time, involve building trust.
- Collaborations require that you give up at least one of the following: time, money, control

Building trust and taking time for a partnership to grow will yield a much deeper impact for both sides, and hopefully create a long-standing relationship.

Collaboration
Think Outside The Box & Access More Funding!

Individual artists have limited opportunities to access grant funding, but non-profits have access to TONS!

This is just another reason to think strategically about building authentic partnerships and relationships! Nonprofits can work with you as an individual artist to amplify their mission/programs, you get greater exposure, AND a grant can cover your fee and materials for your project/program.
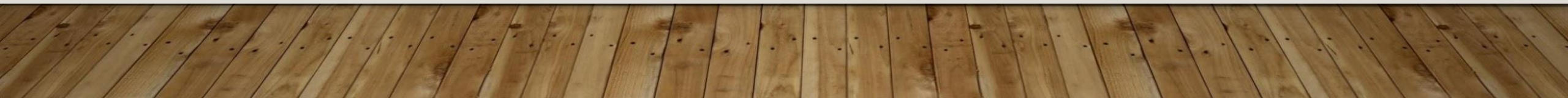
Don't limit yourself to just arts-based organizations!

Social Service

Health/Wellness

Academia

Social Justice

ALL benefit from working with the arts!
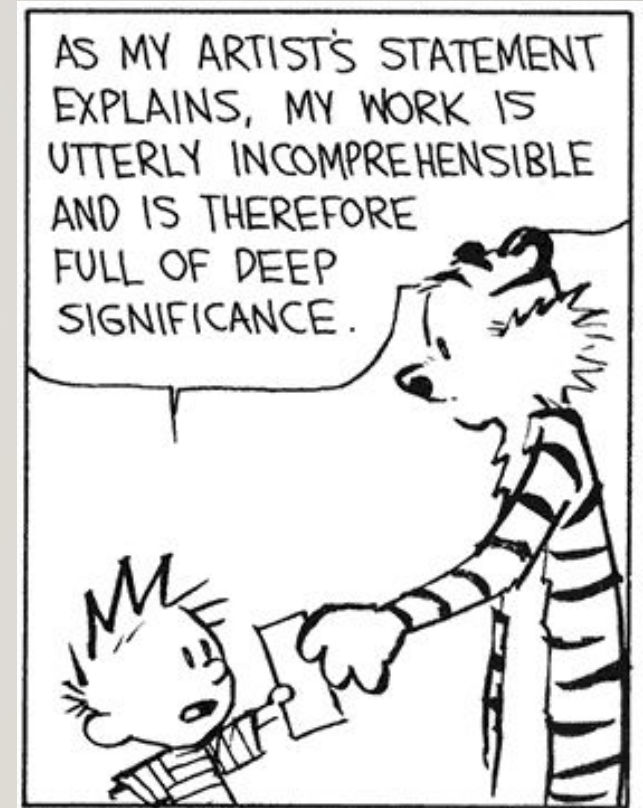
The Artist's Statement

The Artist Statement is comparable to a job application cover letter, but with more emotion. It gives you space to show your personality and passion, talk about your why, brag about your successes, and share your future goals.

What makes a statement compelling?
- **Engages the reader immediately.**
- **Flows like a story.**
- **Elicits Emotion.**
- **Keeps it short.**
- **Don't get too esoteric that you're leaving out people not in your field.**

The Art League
Let's look at some suggestions/examples.

Telling your story in a way that engages and excites! It should flow like a story and elicit emotion, whether it's quirky and funny, or moving, it should sound like you. Being vulnerable. Give the reviewer a glimpse into what drives you!

Grant Narrative Questions Vs. Artist's Statement

Artist Statement: For the most part, the content is yours. There are basic questions your artist statement should cover – your why, art form, experience, personal goals – but for the most part there is much more freedom in how you share your story. This is an opportunity to give the world a glimpse into your personality and style.

Grant Narrative Questions: Grants provide very little opportunity for you to share your personality. The goal is to address the specific questions asked, eliciting as much emotion as you can, while still staying in the parameters of the word/character limits. It's about answering all the who, what, where, when's, and why's of how the funds requested will be used.

General Rules of Grant Writing
Make it hard for them to say no!

- **The technical writer vs. the emotional writer** – BE BOTH! Data drives points home, emotion connects the reader to your vision and its impact.

- **ANSWER THE QUESTION!** Repeat the question, or provide headers to make sure you're answering everything. Multi-pronged questions are very common.

- **Use their words right back at them!!** Repeat key words to support your points. Don't be long-winded.

- Just like in applying for a job…**Confidence is a good thing!** As long as it's mixed with a touch of humility.

- **Don't show a picture of desperation or provide general information**, funders want to know how your program is going to make an impact/fill an essential need.

- **Watch-out for Word Limits!!**

- **Presentation Matters!** The easier you make it for the reviewer to read the better your chances.

COA Artist Respond Grant
Use the Questions As A Guide To Your Answer!

1. <u>Social Issue</u> & Artistic Merit - Select from the list.

2. **Project Details:** Where and when will it take place, who is involved and why? (NOT A CONCEPT/FIRM PLAN)

3. **Community & Audience:** Who is your audience, why did you choose them, and why do you think this will interest them?

4. **IMPACT:** What will the impact by on you personally and the audience?

5. **WORK SAMPLES:** Should support the project you are proposing & demonstrate the highest quality of work that you are capable of producing as an artist.

Use Their Words Back at Them!!

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CT Office of the Arts - Artist Respond Grant Overview

The Artists Respond grant program provides direct funding to CT artists to pursue community-based projects that use the arts to respond to social issues, current events, and community needs.

CT artists may apply for a grant for either $2,500 or $5,000 to support artist fees and other project related expenses.

Projects must occur in CT and be artist-centered initiatives that use the arts to inspire, empower, educate, and transform our CT communities.

The Artists Respond program aims to invest in a wide range of community-based programs from large audience events to small group activities. All activities must be ready to pivot, if necessary, to comply with the ever-changing social distancing measures implemented at the local, state, and federal levels.

Budgets & Financial Health
Earned vs. Contributed Income - You Need Both!

Contributed - Given

- Individual Donations - Unrestricted (can be used for anything) unless donor specifies use.

- Grants - Must be used for the purpose in which funds were awarded. Some grants are for general operating (can be used for almost anything). Grants can be cumbersome to apply for and manage but typically yield more $$ than sponsorships – $1-5K for programs.

Earned - Purchased

- Business Sponsorships - Because the Business is "buying" marketing presence. Easier to apply for and manage than grants. Typically supports events or areas with lots of marketing, $250-$1K depending on reach.

- Sales, Merchandise

- Program Registration Fees/Ticket Fees

- Special Event Income

- Interest on savings, long term savings, etc.

What is In-Kind?
How do you reflect it in your budget.

What is it? In-kind: In lieu of money, donated goods or services.

How do you account for it? Estimate the value of <u>time</u>, goods, or services. Include these values in your project and organizational budgets as income AND expenses.

Why is this important? If these goods/services were not donated you would need to find the money to cover them. Therefore your board/staff/partners need to see these very real expenses.

Why is it important to include in-kind in grant applications or budgets? In-kind shows that you're doing everything you can to keep the costs low by asking for donations of goods and time. Many grants require you to "match" your award (i.e. funder provides $10K, you match with $10K of your own for a total budget of $20K). Typically in-kind can be used to cover a portion of your match! In-kind also raises the overall cost of your project, making the grant ask less of the whole.
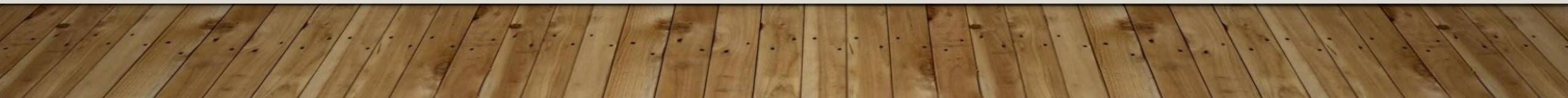
Creating A Project Budget Like A Pro!
*** *Example* ***

Think of your budget as your narrative in numbers! All the pieces must be represented.

- Separate income into **Contributed vs. Earned vs. In-kind** (volunteer hours, donated goods/services). In-kind must cancel itself out/be reflected in both income & expenses.

- Project Budgets should **show a real picture of program expenses** - including all administrative and overhead costs, but you don't necessarily charge these to the grant.

- Are your **line items clear** or are several expenses mixed into one category?

- **Limit "miscellaneous"** income or expenses. What are these incomes/expenses?

- **Matching grants** – Can you use in-kind? Where are the matching funds coming from?

- **Typically you "zero-out" program budgets**. Operating Budgets SHOULD show surplus! Surplus/Cash Reserve shows responsible financial management - ability to plan for future.

Final Reporting
# *** Don't Make These Mistakes ***

Mistake #1 - You were awarded the grant, and you do not look at the final report requirements until after the project is over…

Mistake #2 - You forget to do any evaluations or collect any data from your project…

Mistake #3 - You spent the funds in different ways than you originally applied for, and now it's time to complete the final report…

A final report is simply asking you to report back on exactly how the funds were used, the results of the program in which you received funding, and lessons learned/successes achieved. The biggest mistake an awardee can make is forgetting about the original grant and the goals, and purposes the funds were to be spent!

Your grant is still "open" until the final report is accepted. If major changes occur with the project or how the funds will be spent you must connect with the funder for pre-approval.
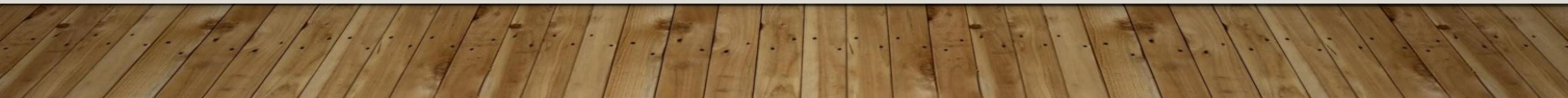
Looking at COA's Final Reports & Data Collection Forms

Artist Fellowship

Artist Respond

National Standard Data Collection Form

CT Office of the Arts
Did you know about these resources?

COA Funding Opportunities: Artist Respond & Artist Fellowship are specifically for artists.

Programs & Services: AIR Collaborative, Arts Learning, Creative Economy Research, Directory of Teaching Artists, Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, & MORE!

Professional Development: Arts Workforce Initiative, Creative Conversations & The Talking Artist, PD for Artists & MORE!

Additional Resources for Artists

- CT Office of the Arts

- Dept Economic & Comm. Dev.

- NEA/NEH/IMLS: National Endowment for Arts, NE for Humanities, Inst. Museum & Library Services

- Americans for the Arts: Great data!!

- CT Humanities Quick Grants (MUST talk to them first. 6x/year; Up to $5K; Only if there's a humanities component)

- Bank of America (BOA) Searchable Database

- Assets for Artists - VIA MassMOCA, open to CT artists for FREE

- CT Women's Business Council - Not just for women!! Great workshops and assistance for FREE

- COA - Directory of Teaching Artists - Applications will open soon and will be rolling.

- The Talking Artists - Cultural Series through COA

- Artist Communities Alliance - Directory of Artist Residencies (RI)

Resources for Artists, Continued

- Artworkarchive - Subscription tool to help artists, guide to artist opportunities; call for artists Call for Entry
  - Find Calls for artists, manage entries, apply.
- Massachusetts Arts Council - ArtSake Calls to Artists
- Creative Ground - NEFA/New England's Directory of Creative Enterprises & Artists Creative Capital
  - Funding for ground-breaking projects by artists.
- Hyperallergic - Newsletter with opportunities for artists
- New York Foundation for the Arts - Classifieds/Opps/Jobs
- Springboard for the Arts - Artist Opportunities