



MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE

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## **Artistic Innovations**

### **Frequently Asked Questions** (Issued December 2012)

This document is intended to answer as many questions about the Artistic Innovations Grant Program as possible. Thoroughly read through all questions and answers before sending an inquiry to M-AAA staff whose resources are limited. If you do not see your question addressed here, please send an email to [innovations@maaa.org](mailto:innovations@maaa.org).

#### **What does a great Artistic Innovations project look like?**

- A great Artistic Innovations project is one that has art, art making or artists at the heart of the initiative and introduces a new idea, product, method or service to the organization's or artist's audience. It must generate new creative work that is ultimately offered to the general public through presentation, publication, performance, exhibition and/or workshop. These kinds of projects result in greater visibility for the organization and/or artist. Preference will be given to activities that are replicable or can tour.

#### **What kinds of entities will M-AAA fund through Artistic Innovations Grant Program?**

- Funding for this program primarily comes from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) so M-AAA can fund individuals, nonprofit 501c3 organizations, governmental or tribal entities.

#### **Are there restrictions in terms of size of organization funded?**

- No. Eligible applicants must be a resident of or be incorporated in the M-AAA region.

#### **Do applicants have to submit a Letter of Intent and an application?**

- A Letter of Intent is required to begin the proposal process. If the project described in the Letter of Intent is deemed eligible for further consideration, the applicant will be invited to complete a full application proposal.

#### **Is an invitation to complete a full application proposal a guarantee of funding for the project?**

- No. The two step process of application (Letter of Intent and full proposal application) is meant to ensure the most efficient use of the applicant's time, as well as M-AAA's staff resources.

#### **Can one organization or individual submit multiple Letters of Intent?**

- No. An applicant is only allowed to submit one Letter of Intent per fiscal year.

#### **Are award amounts the same as requested or are they ever reduced?**

- M-AAA intends to award amounts as requested in the proposal, but reserves the right to award funding as it is available.

#### **How much funding can be requested for the project through Artistic Innovations?**

- The maximum of 50% of the project budget up to \$15,000 can be requested through any single Artistic Innovations grant application proposal.

#### **Does M-AAA have an award range for the Artistic Innovations Grant Program?**

- The maximum request for any single application is \$15,000.

**Does M-AAA require matching funds for the Artistic Innovations Grant Program?**

- Yes. The required ratio for matching funds is 1:1 for all awards. Organizations are required to show evidence of a 1:1 cash match, while individual applicants must show evidence of a 1:1 cash or in-kind match.

**What is considered an in-kind match?**

- Items or services provided to an artist by other organizations, businesses or individuals at no cash expense. To be considered an in-kind match or contribution donated goods and services must be necessary to the project; that is, goods or services that the artist would need to purchase if they were not donated.

**Do matching funds have to come from other grant requests or donations?**

- No. The only restriction on matching funds is that they cannot be from other federal funding sources. Funds from state agencies, foundations and organizational sources (including memberships, ticket sales, etc.) will meet the match requirement.

**Who will review my application?**

- Stage 1: Letters of Intent will be submitted to M-AAA staff and are reviewed by staff and a set of readers comprised of experts in the field. Those projects that most closely align with M-AAA's Artistic Innovations Grant Program goals are invited to make a full application through email notification.
- Stage 2: Full Proposal Applications (by invitation) are reviewed by an advisory panel consisting of staff from other regional and state arts agencies as well as artists and arts professionals in the field. All awards are subject to approval by the M-AAA Board of Directors.

**Does M-AAA have geographic priorities?**

- Yes. As a regional arts organization we are focused on distributing funds to individuals and organizations that reside or are incorporated in Arkansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. Furthermore our mission is to focus on the underserved and rural areas of our region.

**Will applicants from outside the region or outside of the country be funded?**

- No. All funding is distributed to organizations or individuals who reside or are incorporated in the M-AAA region.

**Will projects that involve artists or audiences from outside the region or the country be eligible for funding?**

- Yes. There are no prescribed restrictions regarding who is involved in the project. Similarly there are no prescribed restrictions regarding who the audience for the project should be as long as it is open to the general public.

**Can the scope of the project be statewide?**

- Yes. The scope of an Artistic Innovations project can be statewide; however, statewide or regional projects must offer some general public engagement within the applicant's local community.

**Will M-AAA make only one Artistic Innovations award per community per fiscal year?**

- No. M-AAA will consider multiple awards to organizations and individuals in a single community.

**How long should the proposed project be?**

- Proposed grant funding should be for activities that happen over the course of the fiscal year that is the grant period. If your project is part of a multi-year initiative, you may describe the broader vision but your application should reflect only the activities or phases of work that will occur within the grant period , July 1 through June 30.

**Should we submit letters of support for our project?**

- No. If you are working in partnership with other artists or organizations, please include information about the partnership and the common strategy you are pursuing together in the narrative sections of the Letter of Intent.

**Will an M-AAA Artistic Innovations award affect whether an applicant is eligible for grants from other governmental agencies or foundations?**

- No. The only restriction with respect to Artistic Innovations is that the matching funds cannot be from other federal grants or subsidies.

**Are organizations that receive other federal and state underwriting eligible to submit a Letter of Intent?**

- Yes. The primary source of funding for the Artistic Innovations Grant program is the NEA, which does not prohibit other federal or state financial support for individuals or organizations. For purposes of this grant, clarity regarding the match funding is the only issue in question. Federal money cannot be matched with other federal dollars.

**Is a project eligible to receive funding from M-AAA if funding for the same project has been received from a foundation that is a funder of M-AAA?**

- Yes. If you receive funding from non-federal M-AAA funders, it will not impact M-AAA funding eligibility.

**Will M-AAA Artistic Innovations grants be subject to the reporting and auditing requirements associated with federal programs?**

- No. M-AAA Artistic Innovations grants have their own final evaluations which are due within 30 days of the completion of the funded project. These evaluations are then used by M-AAA to report to its federal, state and foundation funders.

**Is there a preference for projects that are scalable and/or replicable?**

- Yes. These kinds of projects can leverage other opportunities that could take the work to other parts of the region thereby extending the impact of the project on the whole.

**Can renovation or capital improvement costs be included in an Artistic Innovations grant budget?**

- No. While such improvements to a facility or capital investments are certainly new, they are not true to the original intent of M-AAA's grant program.

**Are artists' and designers' fees eligible expenses?**

- Yes, as long as they are incurred during the period of support. Fees for all types of individuals involved in the project are eligible, such as fees for artists, choreographers, musicians, designers and curators.

**Can I include work samples of the project if it is already a work-in-progress?**

- Yes.

**Am I required to include work samples of the project?**

- No. The work samples do not need to reflect the proposed project, but they should highlight the artist's strongest technical and artistic abilities. For the purposes of the Artistic Innovations Grant, keep in mind that the most helpful work samples capture an artist's unique sensibility and area of investigation, especially as it relates to the proposed work. Therefore, take time in the work sample description document to point out the ways in which the work sample is specifically related to the work you are proposing. Don't assume evaluators and panelists will see the connection. The aim is to bring the panel as close to the actual experience of being part of your audience as possible. Work samples are only submitted as part of the complete proposal.

**What if I miss the submission deadline?**

- Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

**Can I know who is on the panel?**

- Panelists and evaluators names will be announced at the same time awardees are announced.

**Can I request panel comments or feedback after my project has been reviewed?**

- Yes. In order to do so, please complete and submit a Records Request Form.  
<http://www.maaa.org/SiteResources/Data/Templates/t7.asp?docid=939&DocName=Resources>

**I didn't find my question/answer here; now what?**

- If you did not see your question addressed here, please send an email to [innovations@maa.org](mailto:innovations@maa.org).