



Texas  
Commission  
on the Arts

Investing in a Creative Texas

# NEWS FROM TCA: DECEMBER 2023

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Happy holidays from the Texas Commission on the Arts! May your days be merry and bright. Photo: Garland's Bankhead Cultural Arts District.

## Applications Open Now for Texas Touring Roster Inclusion

TCA is accepting applications for the 2024-2026 Texas Touring Roster. The application deadline is **January 31, 2024**.



The program is designed to ensure that all Texans have the ability to enjoy work done by outstanding Texas-based companies and artists in their own communities. Artists from throughout the state apply to be included on the Texas Touring Roster.

Touring artists offer performances as well as optional services that may include workshops, master classes, lecture demonstrations, arts education components, residencies, or short performances. These artists must have a history of touring and must be willing to travel outside of their community to do a performance. They are also required to maintain a reasonable fee range. Evaluators with expertise in touring arts evaluate applications to this highly competitive program.

TCA has prepared a wealth of **application resources**, all linked in the [program guidelines](#). We recommend that potential applicants review all these resources. TCA staff will also be offering **live online Q&A sessions** in January. Registration is required.

The next Q&A sessions will be held:

Friday, **January 5** at 10:00 AM Central (register [here](#))

Wednesday, **January 10** at 2:30 PM Central (register [here](#))

Thursday, **January 18** at 11:00 AM Central (register [here](#))

## Beware of SAM-UEI Scams



If your organization has a SAM UEI (System of Award Management Unique Entity Identifier) issued by the federal government, TCA wants to remind you this service is **100% FREE**. Scammers are sending out convincing looking "official" emails offering to help with SAM UEI renewals for a fee. **Renewals are free**, so any mention of a fee should alert you that the email is a scam. TCA recommends marking those emails as junk, blocking those senders, and deleting those emails.

Only organizations that apply directly to a federal agency for funding need to renew their SAM UEI.

## ArtsHERE: New Grant Initiative from the National Endowment for the Arts

TCA wants to remind you of this new **national grant opportunity**.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awards thousands of grants each year to provide diverse opportunities for arts participation.

However, historically underserved communities with rich and dynamic cultural identities continue to report lower arts participation rates than other groups. To address these disparities and better understand these dynamics, the NEA, in partnership with South Arts and in collaboration with the five other U.S. Regional Arts Organizations, launched a new grant program, ArtsHERE.



ArtsHERE supports organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to equity within their practices and programming and have undertaken consistent engagement with underserved groups/communities. Grants are for specific projects that will strengthen the organization's capacity to sustain meaningful community engagement and increase arts participation for underserved groups/communities. Grantees have access to peer learning and technical assistance opportunities designed to share knowledge and build networks. **ArtsHERE will award approximately 95 nonprofit organizations with non-matching grants of \$65,000 to \$130,000.**

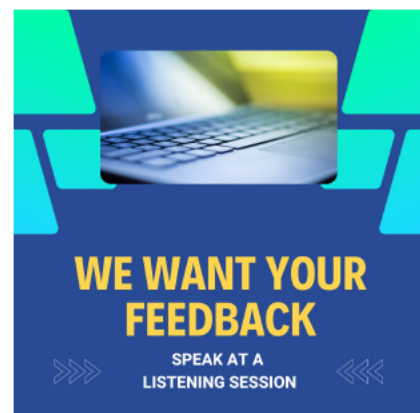
As a pilot program, ArtsHERE will be documented and evaluated by the National Endowment for the Arts to better understand the project activities supported and how grantees approached this work.

The deadline to submit a Statement of Interest is **January 19, 2024**. To learn more, review the full guidelines, and submit a Statement of Interest, visit [ArtsHERE.org](https://www.artsHERE.org).

## TCA Speaker Series: Listening Sessions

On November 29 and December 1, TCA held general listening sessions online with the field as part of our new Speaker Series. Each session was well attended and included robust conversation on how TCA could serve the field better, and opportunities that artists and nonprofits are seeking.

We appreciated learning more about you and your recent successes, challenges, and needs. TCA is using these events to assess the needs of our field, and to select topics for next year's slate of TCA Speaker Series events. The Speaker Series provides professional development opportunities through presentations and conversations from experienced arts professionals across the state. Thank you to all who attended these sessions!



## Upcoming TCA Application Deadlines

TCA has several upcoming application deadlines. As always, the TCA staff is happy to

discuss your goals and eligibility to determine which programs are right for you. You may also request that a TCA staff member review your application and provide feedback. Ideally, these requests would be made at least two weeks before the application deadline.

#### **Grant Program: Arts Respond Project**

Arts Respond Project grants provide project assistance grants to nonprofit arts organizations on a short term basis and may include administrative costs directly related to the project. Projects must address one of the following priority areas: economic development, education, health & human services, public safety & criminal justice, or natural resources & agriculture.

**Activity dates must be:** Between April 1, 2024 and August 31, 2024

**Application deadline:** Midnight on January 16, 2024

**Application form:** [Online](#)

**Application Limit:** Organizations may submit one application for this deadline. Organizations should not submit more than one application addressing the same priority area per fiscal year.

**Resources:** [Grant guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

#### **Designation Program: Cultural District Designation**

This program designates special zones in cities and Texas communities that harness the power of cultural resources to stimulate economic development and community vitality.

**Application deadline:** Letter of Intent to apply due January 31; application due June 15

**Application form:** On [Cultural Districts Program page](#)

**Resources:** [Program guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

#### **Designation Program: Touring Roster Inclusion**

Texas based nonprofits, individuals, universities, and unincorporated/for profit groups providing arts performances apply to be included on the 2024 2026 Texas Touring Roster. See separate article in this newsletter.

**Application deadline:** January 31, 2024

**Application form:** On [Submittable](#)

**Resources:** [Program guidelines](#), [FAQ](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

#### **Grant Program: Arts Respond Performance Support**

This program provides professional artist fees to Texas nonprofits, schools, colleges, and units of government for hiring an artist from the [Texas Touring Roster](#) to do a performance. These applications are funded based on a percentage of contracted fees.

**Activity dates must start:** Between March 15, 2024 and June 14, 2024

**Application deadline:** Midnight on February 1, 2024

**Application form:** [Online](#)

**Resources:** [Grant guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#), [FAQ](#)

## **High Schools: Sign Up Now for Poetry Out Loud**

Time is running out for high schools across the state to participate in the Poetry Out Loud program. Interested educators should sign up [here](#) so they can receive materials to help them promote and conduct the program during the fall semester. Full information on this free national

program is online [here](#).

The Poetry Out Loud recitation contest is a national project of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. This exciting program helps students master public speaking skills, build self confidence, and learn about their literary heritage. High school students memorize poems and perform them in competition. Each participating high school will hold its competition to determine its school winner by December 15, 2023. The school winner will compete at the state virtual semi finals competition in January 2024.

At the state finals level, the winner and runner up receive cash awards and their school libraries receive money to help them buy poetry books. The state winner will represent Texas in the national competition, which has a pool of \$50,000 in scholarships for students and cash awards for schools. More information on the state competition is [here](#).



Photo: James Kegley

## Support Texas Arts with the New *State of the Arts* License Plate



Shopping for someone who has everything? TCA's new black and silver *State of the Arts* minimalist design license plate is shipping and is available to order at <https://www.myplates.com/go/arts>. This plate design can go on a passenger car, motorcycle, trailer, or private bus (attention, Texas bands!).

TCA will receive a portion of the sales of the plate. Note that this plate is part of MyPlates' "Lone Star Series," but only the *State of the Arts* plate supports TCA. There is a price break for those ordering their plate for multiple years. Make a long term commitment to the arts!

## Apply to Be a TCA Grant Evaluator

Each year, TCA invites roughly 200 Texans to serve as peer reviewers of the grant applications we receive. We are grateful to these members of our arts field who donate their time and knowledge to our panel review process and assess the quality of grant applications. The peer review process is central to the Commission's efforts to maintain an accountable, accessible awards system for the State of Texas.

If you would like insight into the grant evaluation process, we invite you to nominate yourself to serve on a panel. TCA is not able to pay for this work, but it will allow you to gain experience as a grant evaluator, see how other organizations present their programs and challenges, and ensure that TCA grant decisions can be made—we really can't do this without you. Nominations are accepted year round and can be made [here](#).

Panels can be held online or in person in Austin. TCA reimburses for travel and hotel costs for in person meetings. For online panels, TCA assigns reviewers no more than 25 grant applications to help keep the workload reasonable. **Evaluators can also be grant applicants**—TCA excludes evaluators from reviewing and scoring an application that they submitted or have any other conflict of interest with.

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