



## 2026 COMMUNITY ARTS GRANT GUIDELINES

*World Cup 2026!*



The **Community Arts Grant program** (CAG) was established in 1991 to benefit the local arts community for art-related programs and projects. It is overseen by the Cultural Arts Commission and funded through transient guest tax (TGT) revenue (tax paid by hotel guests). Since 1991, 252 grants have been awarded, equaling \$409,000 in City grant support.

The CAG Program aligns with the [City Strategic Plan](#), particularly the Unmistakable Identity outcome area and the following commitment areas: Community Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, and Environmental Sustainability, particularly UI-2, UI-6 and UI-13. [Unmistakable Identity Key Progress Indicators](#) help us measure our progress and guide our efforts into the future.

### **Equity and Inclusion Addition:**

In line with the City's commitment to [Equity and Inclusion](#), a new component has been introduced to ensure equitable access to arts funding. The Cultural Arts Commission (CAC) is committed to addressing historical disparities in arts funding and ensuring equitable distribution of resources among diverse communities within Lawrence.

A portion of the Community Arts Grants budget will be allocated specifically to projects that demonstrate a commitment to advancing equity and inclusion in the arts. A new criteria category will also be added to the scoring matrix.

### **Environmental Sustainability Addition:**

In line with the City's commitment to [Environmental Sustainability](#), a new component has been introduced to benefit art projects that include sustainability in practice and awareness. The Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission (LCAC) is committed to addressing environmental sustainability issues in accord with the strategic plan. Projects that include environmental sustainability are eligible for added scoring.

In addition to advancing the City's Strategic Plan, an overarching purpose of the Community Arts Grant Program is to advance the goals identified by the Lawrence community in the [City Wide Cultural Plan](#) which include: 1) Balance the Local, 2) Embrace All / Celebrate Community, 3) Build Places Together, 4) Build and Market a Creative Brand, and 5) Promote Lifelong Learning.

For those who are new to the Community Arts Grant application process, we are offering a **Pre-Application review**. Interested applicants can submit their grant application in [PDF form](#) by 11:00 p.m. on by January 15, 2026 – or sooner – for initial screening and review of basic minimum requirements by staff. Feedback will be returned by January 26, 2026 prior to the final application deadline. The pre-application fillable PDF form can be downloaded [HERE](#). *Pre-applications are optional, not required.*

**Grant Categories and Level of Support:** There are two grant categories: Mini Grants and Community Arts Grants. Applicants may apply for either a Mini Grant or a Community Arts Grant; but not both in the same year.

- **Community Arts Mini Grants** will provide up to five grants of up to \$500 each to help support artists with start-up costs for **equipment** specifically aligned with their art practice. *NOTE: Mini Grant application review will follow a different schedule than the regular grants, see timelines below. The Mini grant online application form will also be different than the online form for regular grants.*

- **Community Arts Grants** awards will range between \$500 to \$10,000 per project. Community Arts Grants awards will equal no more than 50% of the total project or activity cost. Cost-share may be cash and/or in-kind. Fifty percent match funds must be clearly shown in the budget proposal on the grant application. Only one grant is allowed per project.

**Community Arts Grants Application Opening and Deadline:** The [online application](#) will open on **December 31, 2025**. Applicants must submit their final online application by **11:00 p.m. on February 2, 2026**. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered; modifications are not allowed after the deadline passes. The full grant schedule is below.

*The final online application **must** also include current, signed letters of commitment confirming in-kind or cash contributions to a project from any third-party contributors and current letters from the named collaborators (or a representative of named collaborating organizations) confirming their participation. Applications that do not include these letters may be disqualified.*

**Mini Grant Application Opening and Deadline:** The application will open on **January 26, 2026**. Applicants must submit their final application online by **11:00 p.m. on March 6, 2026**. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered; modifications are not allowed after the deadline passes. The full grant schedule is below.

**Project Timeline:** The proposed art project or program must begin no earlier than January 1, 2026 and end no later than December 31, 2026. Grant awards can be retroactive to January 1, 2026. The final report is due within one month of project completion or no later than December 31, 2026. Failure to submit a final report will result in future ineligibility for Community Arts Grants.

**Eligibility:** 18+ individuals and organizations with a Lawrence, KS, address proposing projects sited in Lawrence that are designed to meet the purpose of the LCAC Grant Program and benefit Lawrence residents. All art-forms—visual, musical, and performing—are welcome and encouraged as part of this grant program. Only one grant can be awarded per project.

**Ineligible** for a Lawrence Community Arts Grant are:

- Prior recipients of a Lawrence Community Arts Grant who failed to submit a final report
- Educational activities for college students that are a requirement of their major discipline
- Projects that are not collaborative in nature
- Projects that do not take place at least partially within the Lawrence community
- Projects that are not submitted by a Lawrence-based organization or individual
- Capital projects

## Criteria for Selection

### Community Value

- Degree to which the project meets the Lawrence Community Arts Grant Program purpose
- Project's anticipated impact on the Lawrence community
- Value of the project as described by the applicant
- Evidence of collaboration

### Project Quality

- Qualifications and strengths of the partners involved in the proposed project
- Feasibility as demonstrated by the detailed timeline for implementation
- Well designed and documented budget sufficient to support all proposed activities
- Current, signed letters of commitment documenting all collaborations and cost share (including in-kind and cash match) commitments described in the proposal

## **Equity**

- Demonstrated commitment to advancing equity and inclusion in the arts, including outreach to underrepresented communities and equitable distribution of resources

## **Sustainability**

- Demonstrated commitment to advancing environmental sustainability in both practice (materials) and awareness (increasing awareness about environmental sustainability).

## **Application Quality**

- Completeness, organization, and clarity of the application packet

### **PLEASE NOTE - Increased Equity for Grant Applicants**

- Starting in 2025, to increase equity, each event or arts program can only receive one grant. This can be either from the **Unmistakable Events Grant Program** or the **Community Arts Grant Program**, but not both.
- However, if two separate non-profits are working together on the same event, they can each apply for their own grant. For example, if the XYZ event is awarded funds from the Unmistakable Events Grant Program, the ABC arts program, which is part of XYZ, could still get support from the Community Arts Grant Program. This setup helps encourage local event organizers and arts groups to collaborate, creating more opportunities for everyone involved.
- Plus, the application timelines for these grants are organized so that applicants will know if they received one grant before the deadline for the other. This makes it easier to plan and helps provide a fair chance to receive funding.

### **Community Arts Grant Program - ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE**

#### **Regular Grants**

- December 31, 2025, to February 2, 2026, at 11 p.m. – Application period for FY 2026 Community Arts Grants (Grants can be awarded retroactively to January 1, 2026.)
  - *Application deadline: February 2, 2026, by 11 p.m.*
- Thursday, January 8 (2 to 3 p.m.) and Friday, January 16 (2 to 3 p.m.) – Informational meetings for grant applicants – Virtual and recorded on YouTube
  - [Zoom Registration for 1/8/2026](#)
  - [Zoom Registration for 1/16/2026](#)
- Pre-Application review. Interested applicants can download the pre-application [PDF form](#), fill it out and submit it by email by January 15, 2026 – or sooner – for initial screening and basic minimum requirements staff review. Feedback will be returned by January 26, 2026.
- Wednesday, February 11 (7:30 p.m.) – Cultural Arts Commission meeting - review scores and make recommendations
- Tuesday, February 17, 2026 – City Commission reviews regular Community Arts Grants Program funding recommendations for approval at City Commission meeting

#### **Mini Grants**

- January 26, 2026, to March 6, 2026 – Application period for FY 2026 Community Arts Mini Grants
  - *Application deadline: March 6, 2026, by 11 p.m.*
- Wednesday, March 11 (7:30 p.m.) – Cultural Arts Commission meeting - review scores, discussion and make recommendations

- Tuesday, March 17, 2026 – City Commission reviews Community Arts Grants Program funding recommendations for approval at City Commission meeting

**Post Award Requirements:**

- Awardees must acknowledge the support of the City of Lawrence in publicity associated with the programming funded by the LCAC Grant and during presentations of the project or program. The City of Lawrence logo will be provided to grant recipients.
- Awardees must submit a final report that details the outcomes of the project to the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission within one month of project completion or no later than December 31, 2026. This report consists of the final report form and documentation of the event, project, or program such as photographs, reviews, and programs. Failure to submit the final report will result in disqualification for future Lawrence Community Arts Grants Program competitions.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

**Regular Community Arts Grant applications are to be completed and submitted online [here](#) by 11:00 p.m. February 2, 2026.**

Late and incomplete applications will not be considered; modifications are not allowed after the deadline passes.

**Mini Grant applications are to be completed and submitted by 11 p.m. March 6, 2026.**

***(IMPORTANT: To minimize the risk of losing information online, we highly recommend that you assemble the required grant information in a separate document first and then copy the information into the online application form.)***