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Capacity Building Program Overview

Purpose

The Capacity Building Program was created in response to a recognized need to further develop the infrastructure of culturally based arts organizations providing programs and services serving minority and traditionally underserved segments of the community. The program's targeted approach to the development of Austin's community cultural institutions addresses the City's long term goals to increase diversify production of arts and culture, preserve the character of Austin, and to enhance the presentation of Austin's cultural diversity, reflecting its demographics in all areas. For a more complete description of the City of Austin's vision and goals for the Cultural Arts Funding Programs, please see page 7.

The Capacity Building Program targets established culturally based nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. The Capacity Building Program is designed to strengthen the organizational capacity of participating organizations, in turn strengthening the infrastructure and workforce of Austin's creative economy.

GOALS

- To grow culturally based community institutions in Austin
- To strengthen existing organizations so that in turn field/market growth can occur for the balance of cultural services
- To stimulate capability and tenure projection
- To improve the infrastructure of culturally based arts producing/presenting organizations through administrative and capacity building projects
- To improve the culturally based arts organizations

The Capacity Building Program offers two funding components with support for organizations based on the age and status of the organization as well as operational budget size.

Capacity Building Level I

Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must meet the following minimum requirements

- Incorporated in the State of Texas as a nonprofit organization. If applicant does not have federal 501c3 status, they must apply under the umbrella of a nonprofit organization.
- Culturally focused, arts organization with representative staff and board.
- Provide programs and services primarily to culturally based and/or historically underserved communities and audiences
- In operation in the Austin community for a minimum of 3 years.

Note: Sponsoring organizations that apply on behalf of unincorporated groups or individuals as the fiduciary agency must take on the legal responsibilities to carry out the contract. The City of Austin will contract with the sponsoring organization directly, which will be accountable for all administration, financial management, reporting, and any other responsibilities associated with the completion of the project.

What Will Be Funded

Generally, funded activities fall into the categories of Start Up, Fund Development, Strategic Planning, Marketing, and Staff/Board Development. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Development of application materials for submission to the IRS for establishment of the organization as a 501c3 nonprofit organization. (Level 1)
- Start up and organizational costs (Level I)
- Strategic or Business Plan creation.
- Organizational assessments.
- Board and/or staff leadership development.
- Administrative salary support
- Marketing services, including research or audience development, marketing and tourism promotion, and marketing training.
- Purchasing of advertising in mainstream media outlets (e.g. radio, television and print)
- Development or improvement of website presence for the purpose of promoting artistic and cultural activities.
- Earned income development, including development of strategies to increase admissions, tuition, merchandise sales, or facility rentals.
- Fund development training.
- Development of collaborative strategies.

Funding Requests

The Capacity Building Level I allows small and emerging organizations to apply for up to $2000 to support organizational development activities such as those listed above.

Matching Funds

There is no minimum match required for applications to the Capacity Building Level I program. However, applicants are encouraged to include other cash and in-kind resources in the proposed project budget that may strengthen the overall feasibility of the project.

Implementation

Following the approval of the funding recommendation, the City will enter into a contract with the organization. The contract will establish procedures and responsibilities for both the City and the contractor.

The organization will submit required revised budget information and reports and will follow contract procedures throughout the contract period. The City will conduct additional monitoring activities as required. These activities may include site visit by staff to verify compliance with contract requirements.

Insurance

Some activities supported through this program may require insurance coverage: e.g. hosting public events, using City facilities, private transportation of participants and/or equipment. Insurance will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Application Narrative

Narrative must be typed single spaced on 8 ½" x 11" sheets of white paper one-sided only. Do not use smaller than 12-point type and be sure to leave a minimum margin of 1" on all sides. Submit no more than two pages and answer the following four questions:

Project

1. What are the specifics of the project for which funding is sought? i.e. list specific date(s), time(s), activity(ies), participant(s), location(s).
2. Why is the proposed project a high administrative priority for the organization's development?

Impact

3. Does the organization demonstrate involvement of culturally diverse populations on the board and staff?
4. Does the applicant provide programs and services primarily to culturally based or historically underserved/under-represented segments of the community?
5. How will the proposed project or activity enhance the applicant's professional development and strengthen its organizational stability and long-term capacity?

Other Evaluation Criteria

- Is the applicant an organization or individual that is ineligible for funding in other categories due to years in operation and/or budget size?
- Is the budget for the activity accurate and appropriate?
- Will a successfully implemented project ensure a stronger, sustainable organization?

Note: Successful applicants will be required to complete a final report, including a summary of the project and submission of receipts and other documentation to substantiate the funded expenses.

Review and Award Process

Staff will review applications, including the narrative and budget; clarifying information will be requested, as needed, and staff will develop funding recommendations based on narrative responses, budgetary limitations, and City of Austin policies and priorities. Funding recommendations will be forwarded to the Austin Arts Commission and City Manager for approval.

Program Timeline

Capacity Building Program Level I applications will be accepted annually on an ongoing basis during the Cultural Arts Funding Program fiscal year, while funds are available.

Application

Contact Cultural Arts staff at 974-9315 for more information on this program and/or for application forms.

Capacity Building Level II

Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Organizations must be a 501c arts organization (as evidenced by a current IRS determination letter or copy of the most recent Form 990 filed with the IRS and identified in the organization's mission statement) If applicant does not have federal 501c3 status, they must apply under the umbrella of a nonprofit organization.
- Culturally focused, arts organization with representative staff and board.
- Provide programs and services primarily to culturally based and/or historically underserved communities and audiences
- Organizations must have an active volunteer board of directors that meets at least three times a year.
- Public activities and services must occur within and for the benefit of the residents and visitors of Austin and/or its Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ).Activities and services must be open to the public.
- Been in operation in the Austin community for a minimum of 5 years.

Note: To apply for Capacity Building Program funding with the sponsorship of a non-profit 501c-3 organization, an applicant must demonstrate a significant track record of service to the community and the *sponsored organization must initiate the formal process to obtain independent 501c3 status as part of the funded activities.* Sponsoring organizations that apply on behalf of unincorporated groups or individuals as the fiduciary agency must take on the legal responsibilities to carry out the contract. The City of Austin will contract with the sponsoring organization directly, which will be responsible for all administration, financial management, reporting, and any other responsibilities associated with the completion of the project.

What Will Be Funded

Generally, funded activities fall into the categories of Fund Development, Strategic Planning, Marketing, and Staff/Board Development. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Development of application materials for submission to the IRS for establishment of the organization as a 501c3 nonprofit organization.
- Start up and organizational costs (Level I)
- Strategic or Business Plan creation.
- Organizational assessments.
- Board and/or staff leadership development.
- Administrative salary support
- Marketing services, including research or audience development, marketing and tourism promotion, and marketing training.
- Purchasing of advertising in mainstream media outlets (e.g. radio, television and print)
- Development or improvement of website presence for the purpose of promoting artistic and cultural activities.
- Earned income development, including development of strategies to increase admissions, tuition, merchandise sales, or facility rentals.
- Fund development training.
- Development of collaborative strategies.

Funding Requests

The Capacity Building Program Level II offers two tiers of support. Maximum requests are based on organizational size.

- Medium and Large Arts Organizations $10,000
(Annual operating budgets over $100,000)
- Micro and Small Arts Organizations $5,000
(Operating budgets less than $100,000)

The capacity building program application budget must be specific to the activities for which funding is requested and separate from the general operating or artistic programming budget. Request for Capacity Building Program support may be in addition to regular cultural arts funding (if applicable) but may not be included as part of the regular cultural arts application budget or the match. An organization's total operational budget may not be appropriate for submission under this component.

Matching Funds

Capacity Building Level II

A 50% match is required for all requests/awards. Up to half of the match may be in well-documented in-kind support (at true market value with proper documentation).

Only funds used to support capacity building activities specified in the application will be accepted as cash matching funds. Funds requested and dedicated as match for capacity building projects must be separate from any other cultural arts funding and may not be included in the application for funding or the match of a regular cultural contract.

Implementation

Following the approval of the funding recommendation, the City will enter into a contract with the organization. The contract will establish procedures and responsibilities for both the City and the contractor.

The organization will submit required revised budget information and reports and will follow contract procedures throughout the contract period.

The City will conduct additional monitoring activities as required. These activities may include site visit by staff to verify compliance with contract requirements.

Funding Cycles

The Capacity Building Program Level II is a two-year program:
Participation in the Capacity Building Program Level II is not guaranteed, nor is there a commitment to fund this program, or participating organizations, at previous or current levels.

Year 1 Comprehensive grant application submission, program eligibility determination, peer panel application review, grant award determination, and year 1 final report submission.

Year 2 Interim grant application submission, final year 1 grant report submission/assessment award determination, and year 2 final report submission.

Reports

During the years no application is due, a report update will be required from the first 12-month funding cycle in order to receive the next funding installment.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications to the Capacity Building Program will be reviewed according to the following criteria. Each of the following four criteria total to a maximum score of 100 points. A score of at least 75 points must be earned for the application to receive a funding recommendation. Your proposal must address the information and questions listed in each of the four areas. In that respect, the review criteria may also serve as an outline for your proposal narrative. Each application will be scored individually based on the criteria outlined. The following criteria will be used for evaluation of applications:

Organizational Profile/ Project Need 35 Points

- Does the applicant demonstrate a history of providing programs and services of high quality?
- Does the organization produce/present quality work that contributes to the unique artistic/cultural landscape in Austin?
- Does the applicant demonstrate a specific organizational development need for the type of activity proposed?
- How does the project strengthen the applicant's organizational stability and long-term capacity as a cultural resource in the community?

Management and Capability 25 Points

- Does the organization/individual demonstrate skills needed to complete the proposed programming/project?
- Does the organization/individual demonstrate measurable involvement of culturally diverse populations on the board, staff and in the development and presentation of programs/projects?
- Is the organization prepared to undertake the proposed project in addition to performing its regular/ongoing programming and activities?

Community Involvement and Impact 20 Points

- Does the applicant organization promote public and private awareness, access, and education of arts and culture through programs and services?
- Does the applicant organization provide programs and services primarily to culturally based or historically underserved/under-represented segments of the community?
- Is there evidence of the anticipated impact on the community as well as the organization from the Capacity Building Program's funding outcomes?

Project Feasibility 20 Points

- Does the project described reflect a high administrative priority for the organization's development?
- Is the project scope and timeline proposed realistic and capable of being completed within the specified time period?
- Is the project budget appropriate, complete and reasonable for the proposed project?

Narrative Instructions

The narrative is vitally important to the panel reviewers, as it tells the story of your project and includes details about the proposed activities. It is the primary document that reviewers will use to evaluate the merit of your proposal based on the criteria outlined on the previous page(s).

Narratives should be written so that it can be easily understood by someone not familiar with your organization. Please be concise and to the point.

The narrative must respond to the specific review criteria. Provide a detailed description of the specific program activities for which funding is requested (who, what, when, where, why, and how). Your narrative should address the total scope of activities for which funding is requested.

Narrative Formatting

Narrative must be typed single spaced, on 8½" x 11" sheets of white paper one-sided only. Do not use smaller than 12-point type, and be sure to leave a minimum margin of 1" on all sides. **Failure to adhere to formatting criteria may result in a loss of points.**

Submit no more than 3 narrative sheets and label as Proposal Narrative. Collate and number each page in the upper right corner. Be sure to include the name of the organization and criteria area(s) addressed on each page.

Review and Award Process

Applications will be evaluated by the assigned review panel as part of the application review process. Capacity Building requests will be scored separately from the regular application for cultural contracts funding and an award determination will be made based on the panel score.

Funding recommendations will be forwarded to the Cultural Arts Advisory Board and City Manager for approval.

Contact Cultural Arts staff at 974-9315 for more information on this program.

Application Information

Contact Cultural Arts staff at 974-9315 for more information on this program