Pennsylvania
Creative Industries
Powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

2027-2028 Application Guidelines
Pennsylvania Creative Asset Program

Application Opens: Monday, February 1, 2027
Application Closes: Monday, March 15, 2027
Performance Period: July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2028

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About Pennsylvania Creative Industries

Pennsylvania Creative Industries is the new flagship brand of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency. With this name, the Council aims to elevate the creative sector's visibility, engage broader audiences, foster collaboration across disciplines, and underscore creativity's vital role in innovation, economic growth, and community vitality.

In 2025, our Council adopted a new strategic plan with the mission to empower, connect, and amplify creatives and creative industries and their contributions to Pennsylvania's communities, economy, and workforce. Our vision is that Pennsylvania becomes the national leader among states for creative communities, talent, and industries.

To maximize impact and align with state community and economic development goals, Pennsylvania Creative Industries invests resources in five key areas:

- Asset Development (e.g., creative organizations, entrepreneurial ecosystem, technical assistance, regional networking).
- Workforce Development (e.g., creative skills, career awareness, and employment pathways).
- Community Development (e.g., creative placemaking, engagement with local governments, and networking for practitioners).

- Visibility (e.g., promotion of creative industries, products and services, and of the contributions and opportunities within our commonwealth's creative sector).
- Policy (e.g., creation of policies that promote and foster relevancy and opportunity for creative industries, within governmental and non-governmental agencies and businesses).

Creative Industries Defined

Creative industries encompass individuals, organizations, and businesses that generate goods, services, and intellectual property through creative work. This includes, but is not limited to, advertising, architecture, performing and visual arts, design, crafts, music, media and film production, publishing, and digital games. Innovation, technology, and creative expression unite these diverse sectors.

In 2023, our commonwealth's creative industries contributed $30B to Pennsylvania's economy and supported nearly 190K jobs. Learn more here.

About this Program

The Pennsylvania Creative Asset Program supports small- to mid-sized creative organizations that deliver services, products, and/or programs that align with one or more of Pennsylvania Creative Industries' strategic plan focus areas.

Program Features:

- Funding to support creative organizations that deliver services, products, and/or programs.
- Collaboration and networking opportunities for grantees. This may include webinars organized by grantee discipline (theatre, orchestra, museum, etc.) and/or PA Creative Industries' focus areas (Asset Development, Workforce Development, Community Development, Visibility, Policy).
- Grants are non-matching.
- One application per organization, per year, may be submitted.
- Anticipated grant amounts will range between $10,000-$15,000 per organization.
- This is a reimbursement-based grant program, which means grantees must first incur and pay for eligible expenses, then submit an invoice/final report with required documentation, such as receipts, invoices, and proof of payment to receive funding.
- Grant awards may be subject to the National Endowment for the Arts' (a federal agency) General Terms and Conditions-Appendix A: GTC-PARTNERSHIP-FY25-PLUS-6-25-25-FINAL.pdf.

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Demonstrate at least two year's average annual revenue between $100,000 and $2,000,000 (as demonstrated by IRS Form 990). Please note that the 990 must be no older than 2024 and cannot be in DRAFT form.
- Be a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation whose mission is to create, perform, present, promote or serve the creative (arts) sector (e.g., advertising, architecture, performing and visual arts, design, crafts, music, media and film production, publishing, and digital games, etc.).

- State of legal domicile is Pennsylvania. (Letter M. on 990 State of legal domicile must be PA) and registered as a Pennsylvania Non-profit Corporation with the Pennsylvania Department of State Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations, and in compliance with required annual report filing(s).

Ineligible:

- Arts programs of non-arts organizations.
- Colleges or universities and entities directly affiliated with them, such as university foundations, campus-based arts centers or museums, departments or academic units (e.g., theatre departments, music schools, etc.), student organizations, and others.
- Fiscally sponsored entities.
- Pre-K-12 public, private, and parochial schools and programs, including all charter schools and affiliated booster organizations.
- Auxiliary support organization such as "friends of" or "booster" groups that raise funds on behalf of another entity.
- Local Governments including counties and municipalities.
- Libraries including municipality, county, authority, and non-profit.

Funding Restrictions

- Activities that occur outside the performance period.
- Activities that have a religious purpose.
- Payments to lobbyists.
- Cash prizes and awards.
- Benefit activities.
- Hospitality expenses (e.g., receptions).
- Competitions.
- Performances and exhibitions not available to the public.
- Activities for which academic credit is given.

Crediting Pennsylvania Creative Industries

Grantees must prominently acknowledge Pennsylvania Creative Industries funding in promotions, flyers, programs, media announcements, press releases, websites, social media that relate to this grant, by utilizing approved logos, branding, and materials. Pennsylvania Creative Industries will provide said materials to the grantee.

Narrative, Submission and Review Process

Narrative:

1. What is your mission?
2. Describe how your organization aligns with one or more of the Pennsylvania Creative Industries' strategic plan focus areas:
    - Asset Development
    - Workforce Development
    - Community Development
    - Visibility
    - Policy

Required attachments:

If any of the following items are not submitted, the application will not be considered for funding:

1. IRS Determination Letter confirming nonprofit 501(c) status.
2. Most recently completed review, compilation, or audited financial statements prepared and signed by an independent CPA or external auditor. These must be no older than 2024 and cannot be in DRAFT form (internally prepared financial statements will NOT be accepted).
3. Most recently submitted IRS Form 990 tax filing. IRS Form 990 must be no older than 2024 and cannot be in DRAFT form.

Submission process

1. Read this document thoroughly.
2. Read and comply with the checklist for applicants and grantees: grants management checklist for applicants and grantees as of 7.17.25.pdf
3. Register and apply through Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) Electronic Single Application (ESA): https://grants.pa.gov/Login.aspx.
    - Note: You must register for a Keystone Login in order to apply through grants.pa.gov: https://keystonelogin.pa.gov/Account/Register
4. Submit online.
5. Please note that ACH must be established to make grant payments. Please sign up for ACH grant payments if you have not already done so: https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pennvest/programs-and-services/financing/ach-authorization-change-form
6. **Questions?**

    For questions, concerns, and issues with Keystone Login call: (877) 328-0995.

    For technical and login questions, contact the Enterprise eGrants Customer Service Center: (833) 448-0647 or egrantshelp@pa.gov.

    For questions about grant application content and required attachments, contact one of the following PA Creative Industries staff:

    - Ian Rosario: irosario@pa.gov or (717) 525-5548
    - Amy Gabriele: agabriele@pa.gov or (717) 525-5547

Review process

- PA Creative Industries staff will review all applications to verify eligibility and evaluate the completeness of responses to questions and required attachments.
- PA Creative Industries staff will review financial documents to assess financial stability.
- Funding recommendations will consider the following:
    - Applicant eligibility.
    - Completeness of application responses and required attachments.
    - Financial stability (based on IRS Form 990 and financial statements).
    - Pennsylvania Creative Asset Program's budget and total number of eligible applicants.
    - Each year, the Council reviews funding parameters and may consider factors such as county distribution, etc.
    - Council has final authority in approving award amounts.
- Awards are generally approved at the July Council meeting. Council meeting dates may be found on PA Creative Industries' website: https://www.pa.gov/agencies/coa/about/council-members/meetings
- Applicants approved to receive awards will be sent email communication outlining the next steps in the grant process, including the reimbursement payment process.

- Reimbursement materials/Final Report are due no later than 30 days after the performance period closes (July 30, 2028).
    - A grant will be cancelled if a grantee fails to submit reimbursement materials by July 30, 2028.
    - In addition, if the reimbursement materials/final report remains incomplete or unacceptable after September 30, 2028, the grantee's award agreement will be terminated.
- Grantees that fail to meet material terms and conditions of a grant award agreement, including but not limited to, submission of a final report and reimbursement materials, may not be eligible for future PA Creative Industries grant awards.

Appeals Process

The Council recognizes that errors may occur in the application process. The Council is committed to acknowledging any errors and responding to rectify the effects of an error. The appeals process enables applicants to identify these errors and omissions and bring them to the attention of the Council. Appeals may result in a change in the determination of eligibility or the award amount if the applicant can satisfactorily document that an error or omission occurred through no fault of the applicant. Appeals are awarded only if the error or omission had a substantial effect on the evaluation of an application or on the determination of an applicant's eligibility.

Appeals are not intended to provide the applicant with an opportunity to challenge the qualitative assessment of the application. Missing the published application due date or failure to submit required information or documentation are not grounds for appeal.

Applicants considering an appeal should contact the applicable program director for advice and guidance. The appeal must be made in writing (hardcopy letter) to the Council's Chief of Staff within ten business days of the date of the notification of the award status from the Council. Appeal letters should identify the error or omission and the effect such error had on the Council's application review process. If the appeal is supported, funds will be awarded only if they are available.

Grants under this program are processed under the authority of the act of January 25, 1966 (P.L. 1542 (1965), 71 P.S. Section 1530.1 et seq., as amended, and 58 Pa. Code §301.32.