



Advancing the Arts **FALL 2026 GRANT GUIDELINES**

ARTS FOR EDUCATION · CREATIVE INSPIRATION **Funding range: \$500-\$1,500**

Fall 2026 Timeline

- July 2026: Grant cycle opens
- Sept 17, 2026, 5 pm: Free Online Grant Info Session #1 - [Click here to register](#).
- Sept 22, 2026, 4 pm: Free Online Grant Info Session #2 - [Click here to register](#).
- October 11, 2026: Grant applications due by 5 pm ET
NOTE: Late/incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- November 1, 2026: Grant recipients notified
- November 1, 2026-May 31, 2027: Projects occur
- June 1, 2027: Final Reports due by 5 pm ET

Our Mission

Arts Council of the Valley cultivates the arts, creates experiences, and connects communities in the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, Virginia.

Who We Are

Arts Council of the Valley (ACV) was founded in 2000 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to promoting and providing memorable arts experiences for the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County. It is supported in part by government grants from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, Rockingham County, and the City of Harrisonburg; and by individual and corporate donations. ACV has grown into a multi-faceted community organization that fosters innovative partnerships among area businesses, civic organizations, schools, and artists. Today, ACV manages Smith House Galleries; coordinates monthly First Fridays of the Valley community gatherings, supports public art installations, and funds local art projects through its Advancing the Arts grant program.

ACV's Advancing the Arts grants support artists, art educators, and organizations working in the visual, performing, and literary arts. Funds are awarded to those who advocate for the arts as a basic, central part of lifelong learning in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham community.

Arts Council of the Valley is a nonprofit 501(c)3, supported in part by Rockingham County, the City of Harrisonburg, and the Virginia Commission for the Arts, which receives support from the Virginia General Assembly.

Advancing the Arts Grant Guidelines

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Any artwork (visual, performing, literary) produced in connection with Advancing the Arts grant projects must be original and non-AI-generated.
- ACV reserves the right to determine applicant eligibility and to request additional documentation.
- ACV encourages applications from artists and organizations representing historically underserved communities.

ELIGIBILITY

Individual Applicants

Applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of application.
- Not be enrolled as a degree-seeking student at the time of application or during the grant period.
- Not have received an ACV grant within the previous twelve (12) months. *Example: An applicant who received a Fall grant may not apply again until the following Fall cycle.*
- Have submitted all required final reports or other outstanding documentation for any prior ACV grants.
- Not be a current member of the ACV Board of Directors, ACV staff, the ACV Grants Committee, or an immediate family member of any such person.

Note: While there is no residency requirement for individual applicants, all Advancing the Arts grant projects must primarily serve Rockingham County and/or Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Organizational Applicants

Organizations are eligible to apply provided that:

- No officer, director, employee with decision-making authority, or principal shareholder of the organization is:
 - a current ACV Board member,
 - a member of the ACV Grants Committee,
 - an ACV employee, or
 - an immediate family member of any such person. The organization has submitted all required documentation for any prior ACV grants.

Note: Organizations are not required to have federal nonprofit status; however, they must demonstrate a public arts or cultural mission. While the organization is not required to be physically located in the City of Harrisonburg or Rockingham County, all Advancing the Arts grant projects must primarily serve Rockingham County and/or Harrisonburg, Virginia.

For purposes of these guidelines:

- “Immediate family member” includes spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, sibling, parent-in-law, child-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, or any person residing in the same household.
- “Grant period” refers to the official project timeline stated in the grant agreement.

FUNDING

Applicants may submit funding requests ranging from \$500 to \$1,500. Payment of awarded grants will be made in two installments. The first payment of 75% will be paid upon receipt of a signed Grant Agreement Form. The second (final) payment of 25% will be paid as a reimbursement upon completion, receipt, and approval of a Final Grant Report (see valleyarts.org/grants-arts-for-education and valleyarts.org/grants-creative-inspiration for report form). The Final Report must be submitted within thirty (30) days of project completion or by June 1, 2027 (whichever is earlier). Failure to submit a complete final report by the stated deadline may result in forfeiture of all or part of the final grant payment, and may preclude Grantee's eligibility for current or future funding by ACV.

Grant funds may **NOT** be used for:

- Events sponsored by organizations not in compliance with the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** and **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**.
- Religious, sectarian, or political projects or activities.
- Projects undertaken to fulfill an academic course or program requirement.
- General operating expenses of an organization.
- Construction of new facilities, renovation of existing facilities, or other capital/facility improvement projects.
- Costs associated with deficits from previously funded projects.
- For-profit activities, fundraising events, private events, or lobbying efforts.
- Food and beverage expenses.

AWARD REQUIREMENTS

- Award recipients shall receive a Grant Agreement outlining terms of the grant. Recipients must sign and return the agreement to ACV within ten (10) days, or risk ACV's denial of full or partial payment.
- Grantees are required to acknowledge ACV's support for their program in all printed and electronic materials.
- In addition, grantees are encouraged to invite ACV's Board of Directors and staff to any performances or exhibitions resulting from their projects.

ARTS FOR EDUCATION GRANTS

[Arts for Education](#) grants are intended to help community artists, organizations, and art educators pursue a creative educational initiative. Proposals should articulate creative and educational goals, demonstrate a clear mission and significant purpose, contribute to arts enrichment for the local Harrisonburg-Rockingham community, and provide a feasible plan to realize the project. If the grant includes collaborative work, all participants and their roles should be explained.

Arts for Education Grant proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Clarity of project goals, mission, purpose; degree of impact and benefit to Harrisonburg-Rockingham residents	Exhibits artistic integrity and quality (innovative and creative thinking; artistic value).	Feasible with funds requested or scalable with partial funding. Reasonable, balanced budget supports project goals; shows itemized costs, ACV fund use.	Raises awareness of, and respect for, the value of the arts in the community.	Complements an educational curriculum within the schools or in related arts education programs.
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CREATIVE INSPIRATION GRANTS

[Creative Inspiration](#) grants are intended to help community artists and organizations pursue creative development. Proposals should articulate creative goals, demonstrate a clear mission and significant purpose, contribute to arts enrichment for the local Harrisonburg-Rockingham community, and provide a feasible plan to realize the project. If the grant includes collaborative work, all participants and their roles should be explained.

Creative Inspiration Grant proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Degree of impact and benefit to the residents of Harrisonburg and Rockingham	Exhibits artistic integrity and quality (innovative and creative thinking; artistic value).	Feasible with funds requested or scalable with partial funding. Reasonable, balanced budget supports project goals; shows itemized costs, ACV fund use.	Raises awareness of, and respect for, the value of the arts as central to lifelong learning in the community.	Demonstrates primary proposal component to fund time, supplies, facilities (rehearsal or studio), etc. for creation of new work. Work may be at various stages of completion. During or shortly after the grant period, there must be strong potential for public presentation of work created.
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[Applications must be submitted online using this link.](#)

Questions? Email advancingvalleyarts@gmail.com

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Arts Council of the Valley is a nonprofit 501(c)3, supported in part by Rockingham County, the City of Harrisonburg, and the Virginia Commission for the Arts, which receives support from the Virginia General Assembly.

311 South Main Street • Harrisonburg, VA 22801 • 540.801.8779 • valleyarts.org