



CULTURAL ARTS GRANTS GUIDELINES & INSTRUCTIONS

FOR FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025 (FY25)

Online Submission Deadline:

Thursday, February 29, 2024, by 11:59 p.m.

GRANTS PROGRAM CALENDAR:

January 16	Applications Open
January 23, 6-7:30pm	Mandatory Grant Workshop, option 1
January 25, 6-7:30pm	Mandatory Grant Workshop, option 2
February 29, 11:59 pm	Grant Application Submission Deadline. Only web-based forms will be accepted.
April 18 & 24	Cultural Arts Committee reviews applications and recommends grant awards. Those recommendations are presented to Town Council for inclusion in the annual budget process.
June	Grant award recommendations will be communicated to applicants
By June 30 Early July	Council adopts the FY25 operating budget, which includes the grant funding
August 1, 2024	Grant Reports due for the period of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

CONTACT INFORMATION

Organizations that are applying for the first time are strongly encouraged to contact **William Lewis, Cultural Arts Manager, at william.lewis@townofcary.org or (919) 462-3861.**

If you need guidance in filling out this application, please contact **FY25 Cultural Arts Grants Manager Robbie Stone at robbie.stone@townofcary.org or 919-460-4969.**

FUNDING FOR CULTURAL ARTS GRANTS

Policy Statement 115

Cary's Policy for Support and Sponsorship of Cultural Groups and Activities supports the administration of granting funding to local non-profit cultural organizations.

The purpose of this policy is to foster development and growth of the arts for the benefit of Cary residents, to equitably and efficiently allocate resources to strengthen organizations and cultural programs, to promote partnerships between the Town of Cary and cultural organizations, and to provide sound and clear methods for decisions.

General Funding Assistance: Cultural organizations may apply to the Town of Cary for funds for operating or program costs. The total amount of funding available for award to all general nonprofit organizations shall be equal to \$1.00 (one dollar) for each person living in the Town of Cary as of January 1 of the preceding fiscal year, rounded to the next thousand. The population will be estimated

by the Town of Cary Planning Department staff. Total funding will be split among the various qualifying general nonprofit organizations. If the total amount of qualifying requests is less than the funding available, not all of the funding will be distributed. These requests will be handled as part of the annual budget year planning with advisory recommendations from the Town's Cultural Arts Committee through the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department. The written recommendation will state criteria and standards supporting the recommendation but is not binding on the Town Manager. Town Council action is required for approval or denial of a request.

For the Fiscal Year of **July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 (FY25)**, \$187,000 will be allocated for distribution to support Cary-focused Cultural Arts non-profit organizations.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Cary Focus: Cultural organizations serving Cary are defined as those with a 501(c)3 designation; is a group which regularly comes together for purposes of promoting, providing, or supporting activities for visual, literary, or performing arts, and is one which is described in one or more of the following:

- Uses a location within Cary's corporate limits for its primary meeting place.
- Has an office in Cary.
- Has a majority of Cary residents in its membership.
- Conducts a majority of its activities and programs in Cary.

Regional organizations which focus a significant program in Cary, but otherwise conduct business and operations outside of Cary, may also be considered for support or sponsorship for Cary-based activities (example: regional theatre and symphonic organizations).

Not-for-Profit Status: Cary's Cultural Arts Grants may be awarded only to not-for-profit organizations, chartered in the State of North Carolina, that have federal and state tax-exempt status. A copy of the letter of determination from the Internal Revenue Service recognizing the applicant organization as a not-for-profit corporation must be submitted as an attachment to the application.

Financial Statements and IRS form 990: State law (G.S. 55A-16-24) requires a non-profit corporation that receives over \$5,000 of grants, loans, or in-kind donations from a local government to provide its latest annual financial statements and filed Internal Revenue Service Form 990 upon written demand. The financial statements must contain details about the amount of public funds received and how those funds were used. To ensure state compliance, Cary requires all organizations to provide these statements and forms.

Individuals: Individuals are not eligible to apply directly for funding, but many artists are hired through organizations that receive Town cultural arts funding

Serving the General Public: The use of Town of Cary funds to serve only the applicant organization's membership is deemed inappropriate. Requests from membership organizations must emphasize

service to the general citizens of Cary. When participation in activities is based on invitation or jury process, the means to ensure systematic, unbiased selection should be delineated. In summary, all programs funded by the Town must be open to the general public, whoever the sponsor is or wherever the program is presented.

GENERAL FUNDING CRITERIA

As the Cultural Arts Committee members review each application, they consider, score, and allocate with the following general criteria in mind:

- **Quality: Overall quality of the project or ongoing work.** Application provides a clear overview of the organizational history, mission, and programming. Artists, programs, and seasons selected by the organization provide quality arts programming to Cary residents. Staff, volunteers, and artists show commitment to artistic quality (supported by application and/or supplemental materials).
- **Impact: Impact of the project on the Cary community.** Public value is clearly communicated. Demographics of community served are clearly stated. Organization's programming demonstrates a commitment to broadening and enhancing arts programming in the Cary community.
- **Budget: Appropriateness of the project budget.** Budget is clear and accurate. Budget is relevant to the organization.
- **Ability: Ability to complete the project during the fiscal year.** Organization staff, volunteers, and board members are effective and capable of continuing to provide artistic services to the community. Marketing and planning showcase the organization's ability to deliver programming.

INFORMATIONAL GRANT WORKSHOPS

Cultural Arts staff will present informational grant workshops in January. The workshops will be virtual. These workshops cover the grant application process and provide opportunities to ask questions about requirements. All potential grant applicants are required to attend at least one of these workshops. Sign up [Here](#).

- **January 23, 6-7:30 p.m.** Mandatory Grant Workshop, option 1
- **January 25, 6-7:30 p.m.** Mandatory Grant Workshop, option 2

SUBMITTING A GRANT APPLICATION

It is important that potential organizations carefully review the guidelines for general information.

- The deadline for submitting grant applications is **Thursday, February 29, 2024 by 11:59 p.m.** Applications received after the deadline will be ineligible.

- **Applications are online at** <https://carync.eformsolutions.com/dashboard>
- Create an account in the on-line Grants Portal by choosing a Username and Password. Using these credentials, you can save your work as you go and return to the application at your convenience.
- An incomplete or inaccurate application will jeopardize funding.
- Applicants should be aware that good grantsmanship is a significant factor in a favorable review of proposals. While an application may be declared technically eligible, a miscalculated budget, incomplete responses to questions, or a failure to itemize expenses and income, etc. will make the application less competitive and will result in a negative evaluation.
- Applicants should be aware that all previous year's reports, including audits, must be up-to-date and submitted according to deadlines for consideration for the next fiscal year's funding. Arts organizations with a history of non-compliance with deadlines (for required reports, audits, contracts, etc.), must contact William Lewis to discuss current eligibility prior to applying.

WHAT TO SUBMIT

- **Complete the web application form at** <https://carync.eformsolutions.com/dashboard>
- Click on the grant sections in the left column to navigate the application.
- Attach documents, spreadsheets, etc. for any questions asked in the application.

Required attachments:

- **501 (c)(3) status documentation**
- Your organization's **most recent IRS Form 990/EZ/N**
- **Financial statements** for your organization's most recently completed fiscal year. Audited, if applicable.

Optional attachments:

You have the option to include up to five additional attachments. These attachments should relate specifically to your application and help strengthen your request for funding Town in FY25.

Examples of supporting documentation: Samples of publicity, reviews, playbills, marketing materials; sample evaluation tools (audience surveys); sample photos; links to videos/audio clips from recent or upcoming programs, etc.

A [Glossary of Terms](#) is included for reference.

ONCE A GRANT APPLICATION IS RECEIVED

The Cultural Arts Committee reviews each proposal. The Committee convenes on April 18 & 24 to discuss the proposals and make recommendations for funding. Those recommendations are presented to Town Council for inclusion in the annual budget process. Applicants will receive communications in June regarding the Committee's recommendations. By June 30, grant awards are approved by Town Council during the adoption of the annual budget. Funding will be made available to cultural arts grant recipients in July.

Applicants are strongly discouraged from commencing operation in anticipation of Town of Cary funding prior to formal notification.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

FY25 Grant final report is due by August 1, 2025.