

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

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Leveraging State Investments in Creative Aging Grant Guidelines

Program Synopsis



In collaboration with Aroha Philanthropies, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) is offering up to \$1.46 million dollars in grant funding to help state arts agencies develop programs and partnerships that advance creative aging. Grant funds can be used to launch new efforts—or build on existing programs—designed to foster meaningful arts learning experiences for older adults.

Background/Purpose of Grant

State and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) share a public mandate to make the social, educational, economic and health benefits of the arts available to all residents, especially underserved populations. Older adults are an important part of this commitment:

- The number of Americans age 65 and older is projected to more than double from 46 million today to more than 98 million by 2060.
- Although older adults are living longer and healthier lives than in past generations, more than 40% routinely experience isolation or loneliness, which adversely affects both physical and psychological well-being.
- Older adults are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and other health challenges, and they are more likely to live in poverty. This is especially true for people of color and rural residents.

- Although attitudes about aging in our culture are changing, bias, ageism and false assumptions remain powerful forces that negatively impact how older individuals are viewed and treated.

State arts agencies have an opportunity to address the needs of this population through meaningful arts engagement. Older adults have important contributions to make to society as both creators and community members. SAAs are in a position to help facilitate those contributions through creative aging programs that enhance the artistry, well-being and social connections of older adults.

Leveraging State Investments in Creative Aging provides resources that help SAAs realize this opportunity. Through a combination of grant funds and professional development programs, this initiative will help SAAs meet the needs of their older adult populations and build state level capacity to advance creative aging.

This initiative is made possible by a partnership with Aroha Philanthropies. Through advocacy and strategic investments, Aroha Philanthropies empowers older adults to discover their creative capabilities and form meaningful connections within their communities. Starting in 2018, NASAA and Aroha Philanthropies have collaborated to raise awareness about creative aging, conduct research on the creative aging activities of SAAs and consult with SAAs about opportunities they see to grow their work in this issue area. This initiative is an outgrowth of that collaborative process.

Our Approach to Creative Aging

A [robust body of research](#) points to the power of the arts to support health and well-being as we age. Arts and cultural participation can improve the emotional well-being of older adults, support good physical and cognitive health, strengthen social bonds, and bring a heightened experience of purpose and joy to our lives. NASAA recognizes that there are many valid approaches to pursuing these positive outcomes. While we applaud the myriad tactics that have been used to serve older adults across the nation, for this particular initiative NASAA is placing an emphasis on programs or partnerships that equip artists, arts organizations and other service providers to:

- respect the high capabilities of older adults by challenging them to develop their artistic skills and creative techniques;
- offer sequential arts instruction that allows participants to broaden or deepen their creative practices in a sustained and organized fashion;
- deepen community or social engagement;

- employ teaching artists trained to understand the effects of aging and their significance for the design and delivery of arts programs that meet the specific needs of this population.

Award Amounts

Recognizing that state arts agencies are at different stages in the development of their creative aging capacity, two tiers of grant support are available. Up to 25 SAAs will be awarded grants in the \$20,000 tier, and up to 16 will be awarded grants in the \$60,000 tier. Funding in the \$20,000 tier will provide basic support for initiating or growing early-stage creative aging programs. Funding in the \$60,000 tier will be available to SAAs with larger senior populations, more challenging geography or plans to further develop established creative aging initiatives. All SAAs are eligible to apply in the \$20,000 tier. Eligibility for the \$60,000 tier requires prior training, convening or partnership efforts in creative aging. NASAA will accept only one application per state arts agency.

This is a nonmatching grant category. Because we're interested in learning about systems of support for creative aging across the country, SAAs who elect to or are able to secure additional resources to support the work will be invited to describe that on their budget form. However, the presence or absence of additional funds will not be a factor in the adjudication of this nonmatching grant opportunity.

Eligibility and Grant Requirements

Eligibility

- Only the 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies are eligible to apply for funding.
- To be eligible to apply for the \$60,000 funding tier, SAAs must be able to document prior programming, training, convening or partnership efforts relating to creative aging.

Allowable Activities

- The primary beneficiaries served through project activities must be older adults.
- Funds may be used for new programs or to augment existing creative aging projects.

- Funded activities should lead to sequential, skill based activities that engage older adults in the process of artistic creation. These activities should include intentional, meaningful community or social engagement. (See Our Approach to Creative Aging above.) If the proposed project is for training, partnership cultivation, communications or other developmental purposes, those activities should create the conditions or capacities needed to provide sequential and skill based programs at a later time.
- While allowable activities are not limited to the following, applicants are encouraged to propose projects that include one or more of the following priorities:
 - Training teaching artists to address the specific needs of older adults
 - Developing the capacity of local providers (including but not limited to arts organizations, community organizations, libraries or retirement communities) to provide successful creative aging programs
 - Developing or deepening the online delivery of creative aging programs to make them more accessible to quarantined individuals, populations with limited mobility or rural communities
 - Seeding collaborative initiatives with state or local entities who serve older adult populations
 - Reducing ageism and bias in, or improving the equity of, programming geared toward older adults
- For projects that involve teaching artist training, SAAs may elect to use any provider with expertise in creative aging best practices and the unique needs of older adults. As you are weighing your options, NASAA encourages you to consider training services, workshops and conference keynotes offered by [Lifetime Arts](#), which is the national leader in the development of best practices, training, resources and support in developing creative aging programs. They have direct experience working with state arts agencies, state libraries and other cross-sector partners.

Allowable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- consulting fees
- honoraria for speakers, project advisors or panelists
- travel or registration fees
- convening expenses: space rental, audiovisual costs, food, etc.
- technology costs related to online program design or delivery, including video conferencing platforms, web programming, site design, etc.
- artist stipends for participation in trainings and professional development
- artist fees for the delivery of creative aging teaching/learning programs
- materials used in the delivery of creative aging teaching/learning programs
- salary for staff directly involved in creative aging program development or partnership activities

- grant awards for creative aging residencies or similar activities consistent with the intent of this NASAA grant program (If this option is elected, the SAA must make award determinations; adjudication may not be delegated to a third party.)

Unallowable activities and expenses include:

- stand-alone performances, exhibits or activities that are not part of a sustained arts learning program
- services designed primarily as health interventions (using art for therapeutic purposes to treat cognitive or physical diagnoses)
- tuition or activities for which academic credit is given
- programs or services for children, unless intergenerational programming with older adults is a focus of the program
- programs or services intended for private use
- rent or general administrative/overhead expenses unrelated to the proposed project
- deficits incurred from past activities
- expenses incurred before the start or after the ending date of the grant period

Applicants are encouraged to:

- Gather feedback from stakeholders, such as:
 - Prospective older adult program participants
 - Teaching artists
 - Service providers for older adults, including cultural, community, social service and residential organizations
 - State, county or municipal departments of aging
- Research and integrate into their program design best practices and key pillars of creative aging. Possible resources include:
 - Lifetime Arts's [Creative Aging Resource site](#)
 - Lifetime Arts's [Creative Aging Lifelong Learning program model](#)
 - [The Creativity and Aging Study](#), by Dr. Gene Cohen, George Washington University, 2006
 - [This Chair Rocks](#) anti-ageism resources
- Consider how to make creative aging programs more accessible to seniors experiencing the effects of racism, isolation, economic distress or trauma.
- Address the broader, cross-sector context in which creative aging exists and develop sustainable partnerships with community organizations and across state government as a means of enhancing the reach and impact of creative aging.

Grant Time Line

NASAA will initiate one grant application round in October 2020. State arts agencies may propose their own start and end dates for projects being implemented over the course of up to 18 months. Projects may commence any time after March 1, 2021, and conclude on or before August 31, 2022. Activities may be conducted in one fiscal year or may expand over more than one fiscal year, to give SAAs as much flexibility as possible.

- Application opens: Monday, October 26, 2020
- Application deadline: Friday, December 18, 2020, 11:59 p.m. Eastern
- Award notification: Monday, February 22, 2021
- Grant implementation period begins: Monday, March 1, 2021
- Grant implementation period ends: Wednesday, August 31, 2022
- Final report deadline: Friday, September 30, 2022

How to Apply

- The application will be available on NASAA's [Creative Aging](#) web page on October 26, 2020.
- Please e-mail NASAA Arts Learning Projects Director Susan Oetgen for log-in and password to access the application web page (susan.oetgen@nasaa-arts.org).
- Applicants will submit Project Details, a Project Narrative (no more than five pages), and Project Budget electronically to creativeaging@nasaa-arts.org.
- Applicants will receive a confirmation e-mail once your submission has been accepted.
- For more detailed information about how to apply, please refer to the [Grant Guidelines FAQs](#).

Application Components

Project Details

- Name of state arts agency
- Name, title and phone/e-mail contact information of the individual responsible for the application
- Name, title, organizational affiliation and phone/email contact information of the individual responsible for project implementation
- Project title

- Project start and end dates
- Funding tier: \$20K or \$60K
- Do you anticipate needing to use a fiscal agent? See the [Grant Guidelines FAQs](#) for more discussion on this point.

Project Narrative

Please address all of the following questions in a Project Narrative of no more than five single-spaced pages.

1. What do you see as the creative aging needs in your state? How can your state art agency make a difference?
2. What creative aging programming, trainings, convenings or partnership efforts, if any, has your agency already undertaken?
3. Please describe the creative aging initiative you propose to undertake with this award.
 - What project activities will occur?
 - Who will be served by project activities? How will stakeholders be consulted in the design of the initiative?
 - Where and when will project activities take place? If projects are digital/virtual, describe that strategy.
 - How will you promote the project and secure the buy-in of partners and participants?
4. Who are your partners and collaborators?
 - If you have existing relationships, please describe how you've partnered in the past.
 - If you're building new partnerships, please describe why and how you want to collaborate with these partners.
5. How will your project promote best practices or raise awareness of the value of creative aging?
6. How will you know if your proposed initiative is successful? How will you reflect on the project or harvest lessons learned?
7. How will you take diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility into account as you develop your strategies for this program?
8. How might your project advance creative aging in your state over the long term?

Project Budget

- Please complete the Project Budget form for your proposed project, including income and expenses.

- Project revenues should reflect either \$20,000 or \$60,000 in the Leveraging State Investments in Creative Aging line, depending on the application tier you have selected.
- Applications that do not have a balanced budget will not be eligible for funding.
- There are no required matching funds; however, applicants should include any matching funds (cash) or in-kind (resources, services) that are available for the project.

Adjudication Process and Criteria

Process

- To assist state arts agencies with preparing their applications, NASAA will convene a technical assistance webinar and host ongoing "office hours" throughout the application period. Applicants also are encouraged to contact NASAA's [arts learning projects director](#) with specific questions, and/or to request review of application materials prior to the submission deadline.
- Incomplete applications or those proposing unallowable expenses will be removed from consideration.
- A panel of independent reviewers will evaluate applications according to the program criteria.
- Panelists will include arts administrators, artists, and creative aging specialists who represent diverse geographic, ethnic, and aesthetic perspectives and who are knowledgeable about state arts agencies and arts learning.
- The panel will convene virtually in January 2021. Any applicant can listen to panel meetings.
- NASAA will make final funding decisions based on panel ratings, available resources and the goals of the program.
- NASAA will notify applicants about grant awards by February 22, 2021.

Criteria

- Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:
 - **Creative Aging Opportunity** (35 points)
Strong Evidence (25-35), Some Evidence (13-24), Little to No Evidence (0-12)
 - Project fulfills a compelling need or interest to serve older adults.

- SAA is able to articulate its role in making a difference.
 - Project starts or strengthens a foundation for future creative aging efforts.
- **Quality of Program Design** (35 points)
Strong Evidence (25-35), Some Evidence (13-24), Little to No Evidence (0-12)
 - The proposed project will expand the quality and/or availability of arts programs that benefit older adults.
 - The SAA has or is seeking partnerships and collaborations that will expand expertise or opportunities to serve older adults through the arts.
 - Well-defined lines of inquiry and ongoing reflective practice will help the SAA learn from its experience and gauge the project's success.
 - Any teaching artist training or direct services to older adults reflect best practices of creative aging as outlined in Our Approach to Creative Aging above.
- **Community Inclusion** (15 points)
Strong Evidence (11-15), Some Evidence (6-10), Little to No Evidence (0-5)
 - Project beneficiaries and stakeholders are consulted in the design of the project.
 - Applicant has taken into account how systemic issues like ageism, racism or poverty affect older adults.
 - Intentional efforts will be made to ensure diversity among all project participants, including audience, artists, collaborators, supporters, etc.
- **Feasibility** (15 points)
Strong Evidence (11-15), Some Evidence (6-10), Little to No Evidence (0-5)
 - Proposal defines clear roles, responsibilities and contributions for the SAA and its partners.
 - Proposal reflects a realistic time line.
 - Proposal reflects alignment between proposed activities and budgeted expenses.
 - Artists and consultants will be compensated fairly for their time.
 - Application evidences overall readiness to take on a project of the proposed scope.

Payment Disbursal and Reporting Requirements

- Once grants are announced, NASAA will request from awardees an invoice and W-9 for the amount of the grant.
- State arts agencies must be the grantees of record on award letters of agreement.
- Please note: The time line for processing your grant award does not start until we receive your signed letter of agreement, invoice and W-9. Once we receive these documents, it will take approximately four weeks for NASAA to issue a check.
- NASAA will disburse 80% of the grant amount at the beginning of the grant period and 20% at the conclusion, upon receipt of a final project report.
- At the project midpoint, all grantees will be required to submit a brief progress report describing work completed and spending to date. Progress reports must demonstrate continued commitment to the project.
- All grant recipients are required to notify NASAA of any significant changes in time line, personnel, collaborating organizations or strategy.
- Recipients must submit a final report 30 days after the completion of the grant period, no later than September 30, 2022.
- NASAA will engage an independent evaluator to conduct an assessment of this grant initiative. Cooperation with this evaluation, including the supply of descriptive information or participation counts, is a condition of accepting the grant.

Additional Requirements

- Throughout the award period, grantees will ensure that NASAA and Aroha Philanthropies receive any public communications or media releases pertaining to the project.
- Grantees will take photographs or capture screenshots of events related to this grant project and will supply those images to NASAA or Aroha Philanthropies upon request.
- Grant recipients are required to acknowledge NASAA and Aroha Philanthropies in all print, audio, video and Internet materials, and all publicity materials (such as press releases, brochures, posters, advertisements and websites) related to grant activities. Detailed information will be provided in the grant contract package.
- Social media postings should include (Facebook/Twitter) @NASAA.Arts/@NASAA_Arts and @arohaphilanthropies/@arohaphil tags.
- NASAA has the right to withhold, reduce, or discontinue funding if a grantee:
 - misses deadlines for grant reports;

- does not notify NASAA of changes in project collaborators or other significant changes in the project;
- fails to comply with the terms of the grant agreement;
- demonstrates inadequate financial management and oversight;
- does not properly credit NASAA/Aroha Philanthropies support;
- does not respond to requests for evaluative data in a timely manner.

Ownership and Copyrights

NASAA and Aroha Philanthropies do not claim ownership, copyrights, royalties or other claims to artworks produced as a result of these grants. NASAA and Aroha Philanthropies reserve the right to reproduce and use such materials for official, noncommercial and educational purposes, including but not limited to use on NASAA and Aroha Philanthropies websites, e-mails, social media and print materials.

Access and Nondiscrimination Policy

NASAA is committed to supporting entities that maintain an environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic bias, disability, citizenship, veteran status, or other category protected by applicable state or federal law. All activities supported through these grants must be conducted in compliance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA Amendment Act of 2008, and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design as well as the 2010 ADA Title III regulations for nondiscrimination.

Questions/Contact

NASAA staff is available to provide assistance throughout the application process, including answering eligibility and requirement questions, refining proposal ideas, discussing fiscal receiver issues, reviewing proposal drafts and providing other forms of assistance. Discussions with staff do not influence funding decisions. For inquiries about the grant program or the application submission process, please email NASAA Arts Learning Projects Director Susan Oetgen at susan.oetgen@nasaa-arts.org.