About Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund
The Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund (Arts Fund) was created in 1993 to support independent small and medium-sized nonprofit arts organizations located throughout the metro Atlanta region by providing financial resources to strengthen nonprofit arts organizations with annual operating budgets under $2 million.

July 2020 – Program Update
The Community Foundation received insights, criticism and feedback from members of our community regarding our first round of Arts Fund grants, which were announced in May 2020. The ensuing conversations and dialogue, both internally and externally, highlighted that we moved too fast using our legacy grantmaking approach instead of leading with an equity lens. The Arts Fund doesn’t have a strong history of grants to Black-founded and Black-led organizations. When looking at the Arts Fund’s grantmaking history, staff analysis shows approximately 85% of grants have gone to White-led groups.

Given the Foundation’s commitment to equity of opportunity, equitable grantmaking and the critical feedback, the Foundation’s Board and staff determined the best way to proceed was to take a full stop and assess the Arts Fund’s eligibility criteria and application process. We listened to Black arts representatives from our region on June 10, and we value their feedback as it helps us shape a forward course for Black arts organizations to receive equitable funding. Through this program update, which is effective July 1, 2020, it is our intention to:

1. Honor the requests and promises made to prioritize racial equity in the Arts Fund’s grantmaking. We will do this by prioritizing nonprofit organizations founded and led by people of color, especially Black-founded and Black-led organizations that have not been supported in the Arts Fund’s 27-year history.

2. Incorporate feedback and recommendations from Black arts leaders, artists and members of the community by adjusting the program’s eligibility criteria and application process. We have removed and/or modified certain eligibility criteria and significantly streamlined the application so that the process requires only essential information from our applicants. It is our intention that these changes will underscore our desire to welcome a broader group of arts organizations to apply.

Award Sizes
In our upcoming grant cycle, eligible organizations are invited to apply for up to 30% of their annual operating expenses based on 2019 year-end expenses (see page 3 for complete eligibility criteria). Awards will vary in size based on the number of applicants and funds requested, and all awards will be for general operating support. The minimum grant size will be $10,000 regardless of the organization’s 2019 year-end expenses. General operating support provides unrestricted funding to help support an organization as it pursues its mission. This type of grant is flexible and gives the recipient the ability to use funding where most appropriate.

The Foundation cannot guarantee funding to every applicant given the competitive nature of the process.
Nonprofit organizations that meet the following requirements are eligible to apply:

- Must be located and providing services within the Foundation’s 23-county service area; all grant funds must be spent within the **23-county service area**;
- Must have current annual operating expenses between $25,000 and $2 million;
- Must present, produce or provide arts and cultural programming OR provide direct support to organizations that present, produce or provide arts and cultural programming;
- Must have at least one paid part-time staff member;
- If an organization has artists and performers, organization must pay artists and performers associated with arts and cultural programming;
- Must be classified by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3) of the I.R.S. code as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, donations to which are deductible as charitable contributions under Section 170 (c)(2) and the I.R.S. determination must be current;
- Must be registered with the Georgia Secretary of State as a nonprofit (click here to verify: [ecorp.sos.ga.gov/BusinessSearch](ecorp.sos.ga.gov/BusinessSearch));
- Must have a Board of Directors where 100% of members made personal cash donations or made financially measureable in-kind contributions during the last completed fiscal year.

Ineligible organizations

The following organizations are *not* eligible to apply for funding:

- Organizations that require participation in religious services and/or religious education as a condition of receiving services; and/or
- Organizations that have discriminatory policies and/or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

Ineligible uses of Foundation funds

Foundation funds may not be used to support the following:

- Religious services and/or religious education;
- Endowment funds;
- Capital campaign contributions (for building construction or renovation) or use of funds to cover capital campaign feasibility studies or campaign implementation expenses.
Application Process

Application process

1] Organizations complete or update their Organizational Profile using the Nonprofit Online Portal.

2] Organizations submit the grant application supplement and required attachments through the provided application form. The application will ask organizations for general information as well as information about how they have been adversely impacted due to COVID-19.

   Required attachments:
   - Current fiscal year operating budget as approved by the applicant’s board of directors with year-to-date actual information
   - Last fiscal’s year year-end financials
   - Most current balance sheet

3] Foundation staff reviews submissions and contacts organizations if additional information is needed.

4] Funding recommendations are made to the Foundation’s Community Committee and grants are awarded.

Timeline

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Application opens</td>
<td>July 1</td>
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<td>Arts Fund informational webinar</td>
<td>July 10 @ 2 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application closes @ 5 p.m.</td>
<td>July 22</td>
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<td>Awards announced</td>
<td>By August 28</td>
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We understand the urgency in awarding these grants and want to honor applicants’ efforts in preparing their grant applications. The timeline above is longer than the timeline for the May 2020 cycle as our staff needs time to review all application materials thoroughly and follow up with applicants as needed in order to make thoughtful and informed grant recommendations.

How are organizations evaluated and prioritized?
The Foundation will prioritize organizations that show clarity in their mission and vision and those founded and led by people of color, especially Black-founded and led organizations that have not been supported in the Fund’s 27-year history.

How do I learn more about the Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund?
Please reach out to us! Our staff is ready to connect with you, learn more about what your organization does and answer your questions. Additionally, you may participate in the informational webinar scheduled for Friday, July 10. Click here to register for the webinar; a recording of the webinar will be posted after it takes place on the Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund page on the Foundation’s website.

Staff contacts:
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