



Request for Proposals (RFP)
Arts and Music Education Grants
May 8, 2025

OVERVIEW

The Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC), a non-profit organization, is Minnesota's exclusive affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The Humanities academic disciplines help us examine, learn, and understand what it means to be human. MHC strives to create a more just society that is curious, connected, and compassionate by increasing the collective understanding of ourselves, our communities, and our histories through stories and experiences.

In 2008, Minnesota's voters passed the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) to the Minnesota Constitution to ensure clean water, preserve opportunities for Minnesotans to enjoy nature, parks, and trails, and to appreciate arts and culture that exists within the State. The Legacy Amendment increases the state sales tax by three-eighths of one percent to create the Legacy Fund to achieve the goals of the Amendment – 19.75% of the Legacy Fund is dedicated to support arts and culture.

Organizations that receive funding from the Legacy Fund that support arts and culture are expected to:

- Amplify arts, culture, and heritage in Minnesota,
- Increase the depth and breadth of Minnesotans who will connect with arts, culture, and heritage, and
- Provide opportunities for individuals in Minnesota to enjoy arts and culture for free or at reduced cost to allow access for economically disadvantaged individuals and families in Minnesota to attend Legacy programs.

During the 2024 Minnesota Legislative session, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated funding from the Legacy Fund for MHC to administer a competitive grant line for organizations to offer scholarships to underserved youth and adults to pursue music, including singing, band, and orchestral instruments; creative writing; studio arts, including traditional craft and folk arts; and performing arts, including dance and theater, throughout the state of Minnesota.

Funding priority will be given to applicants whose project supports Arts and Music Education in the following Legislatively named areas:

- Programs that have matching funding or existing resources to help facilitate group or individual lessons in the arts,
- High-quality arts programming that helps provide students with access to experienced teachers, musicians, and artists,
- Programs that provide scholarships to low income and diverse communities that have been underserved by traditional arts funding,
- Programs that include partnering with, or plan to partner with, public schools and community organizations to help reach students from diverse backgrounds,
- Programs that offer scholarships to existing high-quality arts programming, including camps, schools, and centers devoted to teaching any of the artistic scholarships, and
- Programs that offer outreach and transportation services, as well as on-site services, to help communities gain access to and use the scholarship awarded.



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Funding Availability

MHC will award \$500,000 (less allowable administrative statutory fee) for Arts and Music Education grants.

Timeline

RFP posted	May 8, 2025
Informational sessions (virtual)	May 15, 2025
Informational sessions (virtual)	May 22, 2025
Deadline to request MHC feedback	June 13, 2025
Applications due no later than 6:00 p.m. CDT	June 23, 2025
Applications under review	June 24, 2025
Funding available following execution of the grant agreement	
Project End Date	May 31, 2026
Final Reporting Due	June 30, 2026

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility

An organization is eligible to receive grant funding if they are in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and MHC. An organization is in good standing with the IRS when they have completed all IRS reporting requirements and can receive tax-deductible charitable contributions.

An organization is in good standing with MHC unless they have a history of untimely or inaccurate financial or program reports or an open grant beyond its closure date. If you are unsure whether you are in good standing with MHC, please contact us at submissions@mnhum.org. MHC may grant an eligibility exemption to an organization if the applicant uses a fiscal agent.

Additional financial information may be requested based on review and assessment of application submitted.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

If you have any questions about this RFP, please email MHC's Grants Administrators at submission@mnhum.org

All applicants are strongly encouraged to contact MHC in advance of submitting a full proposal. MHC will discuss proposals, help align ideas with funding criteria, outline project and grant payment timelines, and review budgets for allowable expenses. MHC is available and committed to helping applicants submit the strongest application possible. We will attempt to respond to your question within 48 hours by phone or email.

MHC will host a series of public information sessions for anyone interested in applying. Information will include details about criteria, eligibility, tips for successful applications, and how to apply online:

Virtual	May 15, 2025	6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Virtual	May 22, 2025	2:30 pm – 4:00 pm



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Zoom links for the public information sessions can be requested from Briza Maldonado at Briza@mnhum.org.

If applying in English is a barrier or you need a reasonable accommodation to submit your application, please contact submissions@mnhum.org.

APPLICATION

Applicants are encouraged to apply online through [MHC's grants management system](#). We recommend reviewing the full application prior to logging on and setting up an account. You may save your initial application entries and subsequently return to the document to finish your application. Also, while an applicant may submit multiple proposals, an applicant may only be awarded one grant.

Applicants may partner with other organizations in submitting a proposal. If multiple organizations are applying, one organization must be designated in the proposal as the "lead" applicant. The lead applicant serves as the main contact and receives the grant funding if the proposal is selected for a grant award.

You may request up to \$75,000 in funding. If you request funding in the amount of \$25,000 or more, you need to submit the following financial documentation with your application:

- If your annual revenue was \$750,000 or more last year, please submit your most recent certified financial audit.
- If your annual revenue was at least \$50,000 but less than \$750,000, please submit your most recent IRS Form 990.
- If your annual revenue was no more than \$49,999, please submit the last financial statement (for example, income statement and balance statement) reviewed by your board.

Failure to submit the above financial information as requested may result in your application not being reviewed.

All applications must be received no later than 6:00 p.m. CDT, on **June 23, 2025**.

Please do not submit any additional materials other than what is requested, such as binders or photos, in the application. Unrequested materials will not be reviewed.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Legacy Funding Limitations

Legacy prohibits funds from being used to:

- Cover costs incurred before the grant agreement is fully signed,
- Start, match, add, or complete any type of capital campaign,
- Must not serve as a substitute for traditional sources of funding,
- Support capital costs (such as improvements, construction, property, or equipment),
- Support benefits and fundraisers,
- Purchase promotional giveaway items such as t-shirts, keychains,



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- Fund out-of-state expenses, such as out-of-state travel and lodging and contractor expenses,
- Pay for indirect costs or overhead charges not directly related to the activities outlined in the project proposal,
- Food expenses when expenses are either (i) incurred during the planning phase of the project, or (ii) are not essential to the final program,
- Wages, salary, and benefits of staff for the time that such individuals are not working on the project.

Grant Payments

Applicants will be asked in their application to identify whether they wish to receive funding through Reimbursement or Advance. An applicant awarded a grant is referred to as Grantee. Under Reimbursement, the grantee receives reimbursement after incurring the expenses and submitting documentation to MHC that the expenses have been incurred. Under Advance, the grantee receives funding prior to incurring expenses. Advances are available on the following schedule:

- If the grant is \$10,000 or less, the maximum available advance is 75%
- If the grant is at least \$10,000 and less than \$49,999, the maximum available advance is 50%
- If the grant is \$50,000 or more, the maximum available advance is 25%

Factors such as history of late reports, prior poor performance, and financial risk will be considered in determining Advance eligibility.

MHC is required to hold ten (10%) percent of a grantee's award until all reporting requirements have been met. Grant funds are not available until the grant Agreement has been signed by MHC and the grantee.

If Advance has been requested, the first Advance payment will be made within 25 business days of MHC receiving a W9 and/or ACH form. No payments will be made if the grantee has a past due progress report.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection Criteria and Weight

Funding decisions will be made on a competitive basis and independent review panels will be convened to assist in the determination. All eligible applications will be evaluated on a 100-point scale using the following scoring factors and weighted criteria:

Project Details (25)

- Is the primary purpose of the project to support underserved youth and adults to pursue music, creative writing, studio arts, or performing arts?
- Does the applicant identify how the project will support Arts and Music Education in Minnesota?
- Does the project meet any of the legislatively named priorities for the intent of this funding?
- How many underserved youth and adults that have been underserved by traditional arts funding will the project reach? Be specific with the communities that will be served, number of adults/students/youths, teachers, instruments, materials, musicians, or artists involved?
- How will the project provide students with high-quality arts programming and access to experienced teachers, musicians, and artists?
- Will the project offer scholarships to existing high-quality arts programming, including camps, schools, and centers devoted to teaching the arts, and



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- Will the project offer outreach and transportation services, as well as on-site services, to help communities gain access to and use the scholarship?

Community Involvement (25)

- How were community members, organizations, or schools, involved in developing this grant proposal and does the proposal help reach students from diverse backgrounds? How were their ideas incorporated?
- How will the community be involved in implementing and evaluating the success of the project?
- Can you identify past success in collaborating with the community to offer Arts and Music education or scholarships?
- Does the project have existing or matching funds to help facilitate group or individual lessons in the arts?

Project Management (25)

- Does the project identify which individual(s) are responsible for ensuring the proper implementation, evaluation, and financial oversight of the project?
- Does the submitted budget align with the proposed project?
 - Is the budget in MHC's required template?
- Are itemized expenses detailed, clear, and consistent with Legacy?
- Is the evaluation process, including criteria and methodology, clear?
- If applicable, how will you ensure compliance with Minnesota competitive bid laws?

Evaluation & Impact (25)

- Is the success of the project clear?
- Is the evaluation process clear as to methodology?
- What audience are you attempting to reach with your project?
- How do you expect to impact the audience you are attempting to reach?
- What steps are you taking to maximize your desired impact?

MONITORING EXPECTATIONS

Monitoring

MHC will monitor your activities throughout the course of the grant period. During the project or upon completion of the project, you will be asked to provide and should be prepared to produce information concerning:

- Details of program income and expenses to date compared to the original budget,
- Details of how you evaluated success, what information you measured, and whether you believe you achieved success,
- Timesheets, payroll allocations, and paycheck stubs for personnel expenses,
- Details regarding the number of counties served,
- Full-Time Equivalent results,
- A list of board members or directors (as applicable),
- Identify non-MHC funds you were able to secure for the project and how the funds were used,
- Details regarding the direct and administrative expenses for the project,
- Fiscal Agent contact information (if applicable), and
- Proof of invoice for payment made.



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Monitoring Visit

If you receive a grant award of \$50,000 or more, MHC, consistent with Minnesota law, will schedule and conduct at least one monitoring visit during the grant period.

Using Third Parties

If you use grant funds awarded to hire or retain a third party not originally identified in your grant application, you must use the following processes:

- \$100,000 or more, must undergo a formal notice and bidding process.
- Between \$25,000 and \$99,999, must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids.
- Between \$10,000 and \$24,999, must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or awarded to a targeted vendor.

You must use all possible steps to assure that targeted vendors certified from the following entities are given an opportunity to bid:

- [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
- Metropolitan Council's Targeted Vendor list: [Minnesota Unified Certification Program](#)
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Program](#)

You must not contract with any entity that is suspended or debarred in Minnesota. [Suspended/Debarred Vendor Information](#)

You must have a written process for awarding and administering contracts. If you proceed with a single source bid, you must maintain proper documentation justifying your decision. Your process must also address how you will address conflicts of interest.

Non-Discrimination and State Contract Compliance

Minnesota law requires all grantees to agree not to discriminate in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act and to abide by Minnesota law that requires ensuring equal opportunity within contracting.

Interim Written Report

Depending on the amount of award, you may be required to prepare an Interim Written Report for MHC to demonstrate adequate progress in fulfilling the terms of your award. The terms of your Interim Report will be, if applicable, stated within your grant agreement with MHC.

Final Written Report

At the end of the reporting period, identified within your Grant Agreement, you will be required to submit a Final Written Report to MHC. If your grant is \$50,000 or more, MHC will also engage in a reconciliation of your expenses under the terms of the Grant Agreement. Under the terms of the Grant Agreement, upon receipt and review of your final report, MHC will issue the remaining ten (10) percent of your grant following your final payment request.

Document Retention

Minnesota law requires all grantees to maintain their books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices relevant to their grant for examination by the Minnesota Legislative auditor or



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Minnesota state auditor for a minimum of six (6) years from the grant agreement end date or the state retention requirements, whichever is later.