



ARTIST QUICK START GRANT

2023-2024 GUIDELINES

Revised: June 8, 2023

LRAC welcomes questions about eligibility, grant programs, and application support for grant applications. First time applicants are especially encouraged to contact the LRAC office prior to starting an application, after first reviewing the guidelines and application instructions.

The following are subject to change for all FY24 LRAC grant programs:

- *Amount of funding available for each grant round
- *Acceptable date that the grant project activity can start

Contact the LRAC Grants Manager for more information.

Grant Information

Amount:	Fixed \$1,000 per applicant
Available Funds:	\$5,000 (five grants)
Purpose:	For activities and projects resulting in career development and artistic achievement.
For:	Individuals in the LRAC nine-county region, open to all disciplines; literary, music, performance, and visual arts.

Grant Schedule

Application Available: Monday, July 3, 2023

Instructional Videos for Grant Writing: Available online to view after June 16, 2023

Application Deadline: Thursday, August 3, 2023 at 5:00 pm

Grant Review: LRAC Board Meeting, Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Grant Project Start Date: *Project Start Date must be after October 17, 2023*

THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION

The McKnight Foundation's arts program is founded on the belief that Minnesota thrives when its artists thrive. The McKnight Foundation supports working artists to create and contribute to vibrant communities.

Lake Region Arts Council

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Fergus Falls, MN 56537

phone: 218.739.5780

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- * Check out the **Grant Instructions and Grant Writing Instructional Videos** available on the **LRAC4.org** website.
- * The Artist Quick Start (AQS) Grant is \$1,000.
- * If the AQS grant project is more than \$1,000, the applicant will need to cover the additional expenses.
- * **(New this year)** Grant activities or spending cannot start before the LRAC grant contract is signed and submitted to the LRAC online grant system.
- * The AQS grant project must be completed within 12 months. Taking less time is permitted, but no more than 12 months may be planned without approval from the LRAC Board. The project must have a specific end date.
- * Those awarded the grant will receive \$800 after submitting the AQS Contract online. After completing the full project and spending 100% of the budget (\$1,000 or more), a final report for the AQS project is required to be submitted.
- * After the AQS final report is approved, grantees will be reimbursed the remaining \$200.
- * The AQS final report is due 30 days after the AQS project end date. Proof of payment/receipts must be uploaded to the final report for all expenses related to the AQS grant project.
- * All grant applications and final reports are completed online through the LRAC's online Foundation grant system. Click on the APPLY button on the LRAC4.org website to create an account.
- * Any applicant needing access to a computer to complete the AQS application or AQS final report may schedule an appointment with the LRAC office to use our computer equipment or work with the LRAC staff one-on-one.

II. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Are you eligible to apply for the AQS Grant?

1. Are you a practicing artist, dancer, singer, musician, actor, performer, etc. or any other art form?
2. Have you lived in the LRAC nine-county region (Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin counties) for at least six months? Residency is determined by voting location, payment of Minnesota state income taxes, possession of a valid Minnesota driver's license or current utility bill.
3. Are you 18 years or older?
4. Are you a United States citizen or do you have permanent resident alien status?
5. Are you submitting online your complete and accurate application with all required supporting documents and work samples?

If all your answers are Yes in this section, then you are eligible to apply for the grant.

1. Have you received a LRAC Artist Quick Start Grant within the last 12 months?
2. Have you received a LRAC Career Development Grant within the last 3 years?
3. Have you received a LRAC Fellowship Grant within the last 5 years?
4. Do you have an outstanding final report due to LRAC that is past the due date?
5. Are you a LRAC employee, LRAC independent contract, LRAC Board member or a family member of any of these positions? (Family members are defined as spouse, domestic partner, child or spouse of a child.)

If all of your answers in this section are No, then you are eligible to apply for the AQS grant application at this time.

If you are unsure about your eligibility as an applicant, please contact the LRAC office.

If you have any questions about the grant guidelines or the application process, please contact the LRAC office. We are committed to helping and serving all of the citizens of the LRAC nine-county region!

III. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY (WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS WILL THE GRANT FUND?)

Applicants may request AQS grant funding for a large variety of projects from training, to supplies, to time to create. Please refer to the list below for the type of projects funded and not funded by the AQS grant program.

Training: fees and expenses to attend a workshop or master class or direct payment to work one-on-one with a professional in your field. **Exception:** the AQS grant will not pay for tuition or materials for college or university credit or for classes required for teaching licensure.

Production or Presentation: expenses for your visual art show preparations, portfolio production, music production, video production, editorial assistance, development of promotional brochure, online and social media promotion, etc. **Exception:** the AQS grant will not pay for continuation of past work; creating the same concept over and over *unless* there is a new focus or audience.

Supplies: supplies and materials for the completion or production of new work. A price list is required if your supply request is \$500 or more.

Equipment: specific equipment that would be needed to create your new work. Arts related computer software is eligible. Computer hardware is not eligible unless a strong case can be made that it is vital to the artist's development. If your equipment is **\$500 or more per item**, you will provide two quotes for that item along with an explanation for your quote selection.

Services: fees related to venue, site or equipment rental, or other services provided by other professionals or services to accomplish your new work.

Creative Time and Travel: expenses for time to create new work and/or travel to study or create new work. The current IRS business rate will be used to calculate mileage and meal per diem. You will set an hourly rate for your creative time and the number of hours to create the new work.

Your project's primary focus must be fine arts.

You may not ask for funding to pay for:

1. Tuition or materials for college or university credit.
2. Projects that have received Minnesota State Arts Board funding.
3. Routine completion of work in progress. Your project must be new work with a new, expanded focus or audience.
4. Curriculum plans, teaching materials, or teaching programs for classes, workshops, or trainings, regardless of the location to be presented (public schools or private studios).
5. Translation or editing of materials that is not a literary work or translation or editing of someone else's literary work; it must be your literary work.
6. Expenses or debts incurred before the grant request is approved. No money should be spent before the AQS Grant Review date.
7. **(New this year) Grant activities or spending that start before the LRAC grant contract is signed and submitted to the LRAC online grant system.**
8. Religious socialization of the audience or participants such as a worship service, bible study, denominational hymn, altar cloth, etc. Projects may be spiritual in content without a specific religious indoctrination focus.
9. General travel or living expenses which don't have your artistic growth as the primary focus.
10. Financially benefits a secondary group. Example: sales to be donated to a charity or proceeds for a private fundraiser.

Your project's events must be open to the general public and not limited to a select group of people.

IV. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS (HOW DO YOU APPLY FOR AN AQS GRANT?)

Application Assistance

You are encouraged to contact the LRAC office early in the planning process so the staff may provide assistance and answer questions.

In addition, an **AQS Tip Sheet and Step by Step Instructions** are available online at the LRAC website, LRAC4.org.

LRAC Board members may provide advice and assistance during the grant preparation period. The Board member would not be able to review your application.

Advice and assistance from the LRAC staff or Board during the application process does not guarantee that the application will be completely free of errors or omissions.

After applications are formally submitted, LRAC Board members are prohibited from discussing them with grant applicants.

Grant Training Instructional Videos

If you are a first time applicant, you are encouraged to watch the LRAC grant writing instructional videos. Check out the LRAC4.org website for access to these videos, helpfully broken up into different topics relevant to the AQS grant.

LRAC Online Grant Application

All applicants will need to start by creating a logon profile in the LRAC Foundant online grant system.

Going forward, your email address will be your username.

If you forget your password, you will be able to create a new one 24/7 without LRAC assistance.

After you have logged in, you will move into the Dashboard. Start your grant application by clicking on the Apply button.

Supporting Documents and Work Samples

Your supporting documents and work samples are uploaded into the attachment sections of the online grant application. You will need to follow the instructions in the application for correct file format and size for uploading your documents.

Application Submission

Your application must be submitted to the LRAC Grants website by **5:00 pm on the first Thursday in August**.

Submission Confirmation

Once your application has been submitted to the LRAC online grant program, you will receive an email which will be your confirmation of the submitted grant application. *You should save this email to document your submission date and time.*

Application Staff Review Timeline

Once your application is submitted to the LRAC online grant system, it will be checked by the LRAC staff for errors and omissions.

If the LRAC staff has any correction recommendations, an email will be sent to the primary contact through the LRAC online grant system. Please make sure you are receiving emails from this system.

The deadline to make any recommended changes to the application will be one week from the notification to the applicant. **Changes other than those suggested by LRAC staff are not allowed and could affect the application's eligibility. The content, accuracy and completeness of an application are solely the responsibility of the applicant.**

If the applicant takes no action or does not communicate with the LRAC office by the end of the week allowed for changes, the application will go to the LRAC Board for review **“as is”**.

V. GRANT PROCESS (HOW DOES THE LRAC BOARD REVIEW AND RANK APPLICATIONS?)

Grant Review

If the number of applications warrants it, applications are reviewed by a LRAC review panel prior to the grant review meeting. Applications recommended by the review panels will be submitted to the full LRAC Board for funding decisions.

At the LRAC grant review, grant applications are reviewed in the same order in which they were submitted online.

All the artist work samples are reviewed by the LRAC Board prior to the grant review.

LRAC Board, review panels and staff observe strict procedures to prevent any conflict of interest in the processing, review and selection of grant awards.

The full Conflict of Interest Policy can be viewed at www.LRAC4.org/grant-management or by contacting the LRAC office.

LRAC Board determines the eligibility of the application, based on both **applicant eligibility** and **project eligibility**.

A complete and accurate application is required in order to be an eligible applicant.

This includes the following:

*Your resume or bio

- *Required Work Samples: (based on disciplines)
 - 5 visual images in jpg format
 - 2 literary samples in pdf format (5 pages each)
 - 3 minutes music sampler with website link
 - 3 minutes performance sample with link

If applicable, depending on your request, you may also need:

- Other resumes for mentors, instructors
- Workshop & Training website links
- Two Equipment Quotes for items over \$500
- Supplies Price List if total is over \$500

Any applicant or project determined to be ineligible will be eliminated from the review process.

Each eligible grant application is considered according to the **Review Criteria** on Page 6, Section VI.

Through majority vote, the LRAC Board determines whether the grant application will be eligible for funded or denied funding.

Ranking

Each approved grant application will be ranked by assigning a numerical score to each **Review Criteria**. The grants are then awarded according to their ranking order.

If two grant applications receive identical rankings, the application with the earliest submission date will be given priority.

Applicants should be aware that even though an application may be approved for funding, its rank may fall below the line of available funds.

A minimum ranking of 65% is required to be eligible for grant funding.

Notification Process

Applicants are notified of funding decisions within two weeks after the grant review. All applicants will receive a notification email and letter updating them of the LRAC Board decision mailed to the address of record.

In the LRAC Foundant online grant system, all unfunded grants are labeled as **“Denied”** in the Decision. This includes applications that are approved by not funded or declared applicant ineligible or project ineligible.

All awarded grants are labeled as **“Approved”** in the Decision. Grantees need to log back into the LRAC Foundant online grant system to complete the AQS Contract, Request for Payment and W-9 form.

Applicants wishing to know the funding decision after the LRAC Grant Review may log back into the LRAC Grant Site to check out the status of their application or call the LRAC office **on the following Monday after the grant review.**

The content, accuracy and completeness of an application are solely the responsibility of the applicant.

VI. REVIEW CRITERIA (HOW ARE THE APPLICATIONS RANKED BY THE LRAC BOARD?)

Grants requests will be reviewed on the basis of the following three criteria, with artistic quality being the most significant:

A. Overall excellence of the artwork, and demonstration of exceptional talent.

B. The project's contribution to the artist's professional growth.

C. Evidence of serious professional commitment.

The LRAC Board is an 18 member board, comprised of two people from each of the nine LRAC counties.

All reviewing LRAC Board members will rank each application on a scale of 1 to 10 in the three criteria; Overall Talent, Professional Growth, and Serious Commitment. A perfect score would a 30 (10, 10, 10).

The average score is generated based on the number of reviewing LRAC Board members. A board member that declares a conflict of interest for an applicant will not rank the application.

VII. GRANT PAYMENT/FINAL REPORT (HOW WILL THE GRANT BE PAID OUT?)

1. A check for 80% of the grant award will be sent to the grantee within 30 days after the signed W-9 from, Grant Contract and Request for Payment are completed in the LRAC Foundant online grant system.
2. The grantee may claim the remaining 20% of the grant award after submitting an approved final report, budget and supporting documents within 30 days of the project's completion date.
3. The final report is an extremely important document. If the project has been carefully managed, the project description and budget in the original application and the final report should be very similar.
4. The project will be carried out in compliance with the project description, budget and dates as set forth in the application. *Any significant revisions in the project must be requested and cleared, in advance and in writing, with the LRAC office.* Changes can be requested at any time using the Universal Post-

ponement/Revision Form in the online grant management platform.

The types of changes would include large budget expenditures, i.e. in excess of \$500, changing artists, venues or dates, or scope, focus or artistic intentions of the project.

Any requests for revisions submitted between LRAC Board meetings will be considered at the next scheduled meeting.

Depending on the decision made by LRAC at the meetings, the grantee may or may not be required to return money to LRAC or may or may not receive their final 20% payment.

5. Applicants who fail to submit the final report within **the prescribed time, which is 120 days after the final report due date**, without good cause, subject to LRAC Board approval, will automatically be considered ineligible for future funding.

VIII. GRANT RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES (WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?)

The grant recipient must:

1. **Sign, date, and submit online** the **Grant Contract, Request for Payment and W-9 forms** to the LRAC within **45 days** of the grant award date.
2. **Grant activities or spending** cannot start before the LRAC grant contract is signed and submitted to the LRAC online grant system.
3. **Complete** the project within 12 months of the start date.
4. **Expend** granted funds only for the project described in the grant application.
5. **Be aware** that *any significant revisions in the project must be requested and cleared, in advance and in writing, with the LRAC office.* The types of changes would include large budget expenditures, i.e. in excess of \$500, changing artists, venues or dates, or scope, focus or artistic intentions of the project. Changes can be requested at any time using the Universal Postponement/Revision Form in the online grant management platform.
6. Any requests for revisions submitted between LRAC Board meetings will be considered at the next scheduled meeting. **Depending on the decision made by LRAC at the meetings, the grantee may or may not be required to return money to LRAC or may or may not receive their final 20% payment.**
7. **Maintain** reports showing evidence of grant income and expenditures and proper management of grant funds.
8. **Ensure** that access to participation in the project will not be limited on the basis of national origin, race, religion, age or sex.
9. **Comply** with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations and ordinances in relation to the use of these funds. Failure to comply may result in termination or forfeiture of the grant.
10. **Include** the following credit line in any advertising, news releases, printed programs or promotional material related to the grant:

"This activity is funded in part by a grant from the Lake Region Arts Council with McKnight Foundation funding."
11. **Submit** the Final Report Form **online within 30 days of completion of the project** along with the supporting materials and documentation of expenses. Log into the LRAC Foundant online grant site to complete the final report.
12. **Upload** the Final Report's attachments into the final report. These documents should include:
 - **(New this year)** Proof of payment of all grant expenses: Acceptable documents include purchase receipts, copies of checks or bank statement line items, credit card statements or detailed organization QuickBooks/accounting reports
 - Any new work samples
 - All publicity containing the LRAC credit line as listed in item 10.
12. **Return the entire grant award** to the LRAC in the event the project cannot be completed as stated in the application or if the grantee leaves the LRAC region before the project is completed.

Note: If necessary, additional, clearly outlined conditions may be added to the contract. An audit of the project and/or the applicant may be performed by the LRAC if deemed necessary.

IX. GRANT TERMINATION

A grant contract may be terminated at any time upon the written request of the grantee, but such termination does not necessarily relieve the grant recipient of the responsibilities stipulated in the contract.

The LRAC may terminate a grant contract at any time upon the failure of the grantee to comply with one or more of the contract conditions or a grant may be terminated at any time by mutual agreement.

The grant contract is considered terminated if the applicant leaves the region before the project is completed.

X. REVOCATION OF FUNDS

If termination occurs after funds have been distributed, the entire amount of the distributed grant award must be returned to the LRAC.



"This activity is funded in part by a grant from the Lake Region Arts Council with funding from the McKnight Foundation."

XI. APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Grant applicants may appeal the decisions of the LRAC only on the basis of procedure used during the review of the grant applicants. The appeals procedure is as follows:

1. Applicants must notify the LRAC office, in writing, of their wish to have an appeals hearing and the basis for the appeal. The applicant has ten business days from the date of receipt of the LRAC funding decision to submit this letter.
2. The appeals committee reviews the request for an appeals hearing and recommends to the chair whether or not there is a basis for an appeal. This recommendation is sent to the chair within ten business days of receipt of the request for an appeals hearing.
3. The chair then authorizes an appeals hearing or denies the request based on the committee report. If it is determined that there is no basis for an appeal, the applicant is so informed. The chair must take one of these actions within ten business days of receipt of the appeals committee recommendation.
4. When an appeals hearing is authorized, it is scheduled by the appeals committee chair with the applicant. Following the hearing, the appeals committee makes a recommendation to the LRAC at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
5. The LRAC then reviews the committee recommendations and makes a final decision on the appeal. The applicant is then notified of the LRAC's decision within ten business days of that LRAC meeting.