

Arts & Social Cohesion (2023) LOI

Vermont Community Foundation

Guidelines

The sense of belonging and connection that people feel in their community has a powerful influence on mental and physical health. At a time of polarization, ongoing disruption, and disconnection following the COVID-19 pandemic, the arts can help bring people back together to work, play, create, and solve problems at the community level—which has meaningful impacts on belonging and wellbeing.

The Community Foundation is seeking Letters of Interest (LOI) for projects and events in the visual, performing, music, and literary arts that create opportunities for positive social interaction, engagement, and collaboration. Projects should strengthen belonging and community cohesion in ways that are likely to persist and grow.

Here are some examples of what the program will fund:

- participatory mural projects;
- artist residencies that connect artists with community members for co-design and co-creation;
- public arts installations with community engagement elements;
- interactive musical or dance performances;
- new choral collaborations;
- talent shows;
- hands-on workshops;
- free public classes and events.

Successful projects will:

- Reach broad and diverse audiences, including those who may feel marginalized in their community
- Engage people as participants, co-designers, and co-creators
- Feature diverse artists as leaders and facilitators
- Create a safe, inclusive environment for creative expression
- Build new connections between neighbors
- Foster trust, fun, and resilience

Guidance for Letters of Interest

Letters of Interest should describe the project concept and the intended audience, as well as an explanation of how the project will create connection and belonging in the community. A budget estimate and draft project timeline are also required. LOIs that focus on planning for a future project that requires longer lead times or complex collaboration will be considered.

Grant Size

Grants will be awarded up to \$10,000. We intend to fund a range of project types and sizes in communities across the state with an average grant size of \$5,000.

Letter of Interest Deadline & Notification

LOIs will be accepted between May 15 and June 13, 2023. LOIs must be received by 5PM on Tuesday, June 13 to be considered. Following a review of all LOIs received, a smaller number of organizations will be invited to submit a full application for funding consideration. Organizations will be notified regarding the status of their LOI by June 20.

You may view the full program guidelines online [here](#).

Helpful Hints

- Character limits include spaces and punctuation.
- Be sure to save your work frequently by clicking the "Save" button at the bottom of the page as the system will log out after 90 minutes of inactivity.
- The size of text boxes can be adjusted by dragging on the lower right corner.
- Create a PDF version of your application via the "Application Packet" button at the top of the page. All content and attachments will be included.

All letters of interest must be submitted electronically to the Vermont Community Foundation through the LOI form in the Online Grants Manager, which can be accessed at www.vermontcf.org/OGM. LOIs will not be accepted by mail or email. If you have questions about the Online Grants Manager, please contact jmulcahy@vermontcf.org or 802-828-7760. With questions related to the Arts and Community Cohesion program, please contact Andy Barker at abarker@vermontcf.org or 802-995-2268.

Organizational Questions Part I

Please share the mission of the organization.*

Character Limit: 500

Issues your organization works to address (words not sentences).*

Ex. homelessness, food insecurity, carbon emissions, forest fragmentation, childcare, substance misuse.

Character Limit: 500

What is your organization's annual operating budget?*

Character Limit: 20

Did you receive a grant from the Community Foundation in either 2021 or 2022?*

Choices

Yes

No

Unsure

What status best describes the applicant?*

Our grants must be paid to a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, place of worship/religious group, or town/municipal agency. If your organization or group does not fall into one of these categories, you will need to use a fiscal sponsor. If you have questions, please contact 802-388-3355 ext. 222. We are happy to talk through your options.

Choices

Municipal entity (i.e., town, public school, or other municipal department or agency)

Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit

Place of worship or religious group

Other - Please provide details in your answer to the next question.

Use this space to provide additional information about the applicant's status. (If Applicable)

If you have a fiscal sponsor—or if you operate under the umbrella of a larger registered nonprofit—provide their name below.

Character Limit: 200

Which areas of the state does the organization serve?*

Choose all that apply.

Choices

Statewide

Addison County

Bennington County

Caledonia County

Chittenden County

Essex County

Franklin County

Grand Isle County

Lamoille County

Orange County

Orleans County

Rutland County

Washington County

Windham County

Windsor County

Which of the following strategic focus area(s) aligns best with the work of your organization?*

Choose all that apply.

Choices

- Economic Equity
- Climate & Environment
- Health & Wellbeing
- Education & Training
- Democracy, Trust, & Community Leadership

LOI Questions

Project Name*

Character Limit: 100

Project Description*

Please provide a brief description of your project concept (2-4 sentences).

Character Limit: 1200

Who will be involved in this project, as lead artist(s), participants, and/or audience members?*

Character Limit: 1200

How will this project create a stronger sense of connection and belonging in the community?*

Character Limit: 1200

Total Amount Requested*

Character Limit: 20

Maximum grant amount \$10,000

Geographic Area Served*

Where will your project happen? Provide town names and/or counties.

Character Limit: 1200

Timeline*

When will this project be created and/or presented in the community? A general answer is acceptable. The grant term begins September 1, 2023.

Character Limit: 1200

Draft Project Budget*

Please outline the anticipated project expenses. Revenue estimates are not needed.

Character Limit: 1200

Optional: Additional information you would like to share about this project.

Character Limit: 1200

Optional: Link you would like to share that illustrates the work described above.

Character Limit: 2000

Optional: Image you would like to share that illustrates the work described above.

File types accepted: png, jpeg, jpg.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Organizational Questions Part II

Which of the following populations does your organization serve? Please check all that apply.*

Choices

Children and youth

Families

Older Vermonters (age 65+)

Small, rural communities

Low-income or those living in poverty

Black, Brown, or other People of Color

Indigenous People

LGBTQ+

People with disabilities or special needs

No special populations

Unsure

Other, describe:

Other:

Character Limit: 500

Approximately how many people do you serve on a regular basis during the course of a year?*

If your service level varies from year to year, you can use an estimate of the number you served in the last year.

Choices

Fewer than 100

100-499

500-999

- 1,000-4,999
- 5,000-24,999
- 25,000-50,000
- More than 50,000
- Unsure

How many years has your organization existed?*

Choices

- Less than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21-50 years
- More than 50 years
- Unsure

How many paid full-time employees or the equivalent does your organization have?*

Choices

- no paid employees
- 1-2 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- 3-10 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- 11-20 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- 21-30 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- 31-50 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- 51-100 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- More than 100 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- Unsure

What are the demographics of your organization's leadership? Please check all that apply.*

Choices

- BIPOC led organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)
- BIPOC members on the Board of Directors
- LGBTQ+ led organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)
- LGBTQ+ members on the Board of Directors
- People with disabilities lead the organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)
- People with disabilities are members of the Board of Directors
- None of the above
- Unknown or prefer not to say
- Other, describe:

Other:

Character Limit: 500

Save and Submit

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By submitting your application to the Vermont Community Foundation, you give us permission to share your application and information about your project with other potential funders, both individuals and foundations.