

Arts & Social Cohesion (2025) Application

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.

Your organization has been invited to submit an application for funding consideration. The Community Foundation is seeking to support 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. 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 formal and/or informal 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 Proposals

Applications should describe the project and the intended audience, with a timeline and workplan, as well as an explanation of how the project will create connection and belonging in the community. A project budget is required.

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.

Funds may be used for salaries, benefits, contracted workers, project materials and equipment, reasonable overhead costs, and similar, necessary project expenses. Priority will be given to new projects but existing programs that have a track record of success are eligible for this opportunity.

What We Don't Fund

- Capital costs and campaigns
- General Operating Support
- Performance ticket subsidies or scholarships that are not directly connected to community-building work
- Events and performances that do not have any components of audience or community participation
- Debt reduction or deficit funding
- Individuals (applicant should apply as part of a nonprofit organization, community group, municipality, or similar entity)
- Expenses that have already been incurred
- Programs with religious instruction
- Indirect expenses unrelated to the project such as fiscal sponsor fees, rent, or financing costs.

Grant Size

Grants will be awarded up to \$12,000. We intend to fund a range of project types and sizes with an average grant size of \$7,500.

Application Deadline & Notification

We anticipate inviting approximately 40 organizations to submit a full application. **Applications will be accepted between May 22 and June 30, 2025. Applications must be received by 5PM on Monday, June 30 in order to be considered.** Applicants will be notified of funding decisions by early September.

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 applications must be submitted electronically to the Vermont Community Foundation through the application form in the Online Grants Manager. If you are viewing a PDF version of the application questions, please note that you must log on to your online account to access the online form at www.vermontcf.org/OGM. Applications 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.

Organization Information

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 to your answer in 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

Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form (if applicable)

Download a blank Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form ([click here to download the form](#)) and forward it to your fiscal sponsor to print, fill out, and sign. The form must be filled out completely and you must use the official VCF form. 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. Please call 802-388-3355 opt 6 if you have questions.

Upload the form here.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Application Questions

Project Name*

Character Limit: 100

Project Summary*

Please provide a 1-2 sentence summary of your project.

Character Limit: 400

Total Amount Requested*

Maximum grant amount: \$12,000

Character Limit: 20

Geographic Area Served*

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

Character Limit: 400

Project Description*

Describe your project activities. Please explain how the arts will be integrated into the project.

Character Limit: 2000

Leadership*

Who will provide artistic leadership for this project? What background or experience do they bring that will help this project succeed?

Character Limit: 1000

Optional: If available, please include a link to a work sample or artist website.

Character Limit: 2000

Project Timeline*

Briefly outline the milestones and key steps in your project leading up to and including the presentation of this project in the community. If dates are uncertain, a general timeframe is acceptable. Please note the grant term is September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026.

Character Limit: 1500

Community Engagement*

What are the ways people can actively participate, connect with other people, and strengthen their sense of belonging?

Character Limit: 1000

How many people do you anticipate your project will reach?*

Character Limit: 50

Project Budget - Itemized*

Attach a copy of your estimated project budget. You should include both expenses and revenue, as well as pending and secured support. *Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our [Resources for Grantseekers page](#) for more details.*

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Optional: Website

Please share a link to your organization's website or other web resource that tells us more about this project.

Character Limit: 2000

Optional: Work Sample 1

If you have a sample of your lead artist's work that you would like to share, please upload it here. *File types accepted include png, jpeg, and jpg.*

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Optional: Work Samples 2

If you have a sample of your lead artist's work that you would like to share, please upload it here. *File types accepted include png, jpeg, and jpg.*

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Save and Submit

Applications will be accepted between May 22 and June 30, 2025. Applications must be received by 5PM on Monday, June 30 in order to be considered. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions by early September.

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.