

## Call for Proposals: Strengthening Schools through Arts Partnerships FY2016

### Program Description

A tremendous body of research stands behind the benefits of arts education for students, including improved academic performance, greater leadership and social skills, advanced creative problem-solving skills and overall enhanced ability to compete in a 21st Century workforce. In addition, there is significant evidence supporting the positive effects of arts programs on a school community, such as improved student attendance and motivation, higher graduation rates and a child's enhanced sense of belonging.

Research and case studies also show the transformative effects that leveraging community resources can have, providing schools with the support they need to implement new (or to grow existing) programs. A strong partnership with an arts or cultural organization can provide infrastructure, personnel, teacher professional development, access to additional funding sources and more. However, the ability of schools to offer arts education and to partner with community entities is often significantly hindered when resources are lacking.

**The Arizona Commission on the Arts, in partnership with the Arizona Department of Education, developed the Strengthening Schools through Arts Partnerships program to support substantive school/community partnerships that implement initiatives aimed at effecting change in low performing schools (Arizona "D" and "F" label schools) by strengthening teaching and learning in arts education and/or arts integration.**

Proposals may focus on any number of effective models and must utilize the proposed arts education programming to address desired goals and outcomes in support of the school's school improvement plan and/or capacity-building efforts.

### Applicant Eligibility

Partnerships must include at least one school and one nonprofit arts organization or governmental entity; eligible schools must be Arizona "D" or "F" label schools (based on current accountability letter grade). Either partner may serve as the primary applicant. Proposed programming must take place in Fiscal Year 2016 (July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016). Due to the limited number of grants available, previous recipients of this grant program are not eligible to apply.

### Grant Program Review Criteria & Scores

**Impact (40 points):** Proposal strengthens teaching and learning in arts education and/or arts integration, and contributes to ongoing school improvement or capacity-building efforts.

**Quality of Programming/Outcomes (30 points):** Proposal presents quality, school-based programming designed to address clearly articulated outcomes that are appropriate for the partners.

**Viability (30 points):** Proposal demonstrates viability of programming and capacity of the partners to manage the project to successful completion.

**Review score based on a total of 100 points.**

### Deadline & Grant Cycle

**DEADLINE FOR LETTER OF INTEREST:**  
**5:00pm, Thursday, April 16, 2015**  
for submitting a letter of interest.

**DEADLINE: 11:59pm, Monday, June 1, 2015**  
for submitting an application.

### Primary Staff Contact

**Alex Nelson**  
Director of Arts Learning  
(602) 771-6521  
[anelson@azarts.gov](mailto:anelson@azarts.gov)

## Funding Restrictions

This program does not fund the following:

- Organizations and schools that received Arts Commission funding in Fiscal Year 2014, but failed to file a final report by Monday, September 15, 2014.
- Applications submitted by for-profit organizations.
- Support for teacher or staff salaries (*stipends for professional development or supplemental activities beyond the teacher contract are eligible for support through this grant*).
- Funding for insurance.
- Food and beverages for any purpose.
- Fundraising projects.
- Scholarships, awards and competitions.
- Religious institution-led or religious group-sponsored projects not open to participation by non-congregants.
- Religious institution-led or religious group-sponsored projects whose primary purpose is the religious socialization of individuals, or which exist as parts of religious sermons or services.
- Indirect costs.
- Grant administration, overhead or processing fees taken by an umbrella/parent organization as a percentage of the total award, with the exception of fiscal sponsors.

*This list is not comprehensive.*

Additionally, according to the Arts Commission's enabling statutes, "Notwithstanding any other law, no monies from the Arizona Commission on the Arts may be spent for payment to any person or entity for use in desecrating, casting contempt on, mutilating, defacing, defiling, burning, trampling or otherwise dishonoring or causing to bring dishonor on religious objects, the flag of the United States or the flag of this state." Recipients of Arts Commission support are further instructed to "take into consideration general standards of decency and respect for the diverse beliefs and values of the American public" within funded programs.

## Award Amount

Grant requests can range from \$10,000 to \$15,000. A 1:1 match is required; up to 50% of the matching funds may be made up of in-kind support. Up to 4 grants will be awarded.

## Requirements of Funding

This grant program is developed in partnership with the Arizona Department of Education, which will provide expertise to support comprehensive evaluation of funded projects. Successful applicants must agree to participate in the evaluation process by developing an evaluation plan, a communication plan for disseminating the results and a high-quality program evaluation report. Successful applicants must also agree to meet with the evaluators/funders at various points throughout the funding cycle.

## Submission Process

### Letter of Interest

Potential applicants will submit a letter of interest which will be reviewed by the Arts Commission and the Arizona Department of Education. Letters of interest will be reviewed for their potential to meet the grant program review criteria and their alignment with the intent of the funding initiative.

Potential applicants should submit one letter of interest, no more than 2 pages in length. The letter of interest should

- describe the proposed programming;
- articulate the desired outcomes and how they connect to the school's school improvement plan;
- identify partners and their roles related to the proposed programming;
- provide a timeline;
- provide a budget, describing matching funds (including in-kind support) and grant request amount; and
- be signed by the authorizing official of *both* the school and the primary partner organization, indicating agreement on the proposed programming's development, focus and scope.

**Letters of interest must be received via email by Alex Nelson, the Arts Commission's Director of Arts Learning, at [anelson@azarts.gov](mailto:anelson@azarts.gov) no later than 5:00pm on April 16, 2015.** Letters submitted after the deadline will not be eligible for review.

### Formal Application

Promising partnerships will be invited to submit a short narrative application. Applications will be reviewed by a public panel consisting of Governor-appointed Commissioners, community members and staff of the Arts Commission and the Arizona Department of Education. Each application will be evaluated based on the published grant program review criteria. Successful proposals will demonstrate the following:

- Potential to build the school's capacity and to strengthen teaching and learning in arts education and/or arts integration.
- Alignment with the school's arts education goals and school improvement plan.
- Alignment with the partner organization's mission and goals.
- Alignment with the Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts.
- Support of and contribution to the school's school improvement plan and/or capacity-building initiatives.
- Utilization of effective approaches that are promising (*based on research*) or proven (*based on outcomes*) and enhance the learning environment.
- Description of an organized plan for implementation.
- Clear, measurable outcomes and appropriate, effective evaluation.
- Capacity of the partners to manage the project to successful completion.

*Additional guidelines will be provided to those partnerships invited to submit a formal application.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **I represent an Arizona “D” or “F” label school and would like to apply. How can I find a nonprofit arts organization or governmental entity which might be an appropriate partner?**  
We encourage you to contact Arts Commission staff, who can assist in connecting you with potential organization partners.
2. **I represent a nonprofit arts organization or a governmental entity and would like to apply. What is the best way to determine which school might be an appropriate partner?**  
We encourage you to contact Arts Commission staff, who can assist in connecting you with potential school partners.
3. **Can I submit a letter of interest without having an established partner/partnership in place?**  
No. Letters of interest must be submitted jointly by the school and the nonprofit arts organization or governmental entity, indicating agreement on, and commitment to, the proposed programming.
4. **How do I find a school’s accountability letter grade?**  
Visit the Arizona Department of Education’s website at <http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/a-f-accountability/>, to find a list of schools and their letter grade.
5. **What if our school does not yet know its letter grade for the next school year?**  
Eligibility for this opportunity is based on a school’s current letter grade, which is based on the letter grade for the 2013-2014 school year.
6. **Can a school district apply?**  
A school district cannot be the primary applicant, but a school district can serve as the applicant on behalf of a “D” or “F” label school in the district.
7. **What if we have more than two partners?**  
To be eligible to apply, one partner must be an Arizona “D” or “F” label school and one must be a nonprofit arts organization or governmental entity, but additional partners of any type may be included in the proposal.
8. **Do the proposed program outcomes have to be student outcomes?**  
The goal of this funding initiative is to support arts education programming which addresses outcomes that are appropriate and timely for a school, as determined by the partner organizations. Outcomes could be related to a number of efforts, including student learning, teacher professional development, classroom instruction, parent engagement, student support strategies, and more.
9. **Where can the matching funds come from?**  
Matching funds could come from any combination of school district maintenance and operations, Title I, Title II or other local funds (*e.g. tax credit, PTO/PTA*) as appropriate, the nonprofit or governmental partner’s budget or grant funds, other grants (excluding other Arts Commission grants), earned revenue or donations.
10. **What can be used as in-kind support?**  
In-kind support could include teacher salaries for time spent on the project, staff time in support of the project from the partner organizations (this can include administrative support from both nonprofit/governmental partners as well as the school partners), evaluation support at the local/partnership level, supplies provided for the project, etc. Contact Arts Commission staff for questions related to other possible in-kind support.
11. **We would like to include a reception. How can we fund this without violating the funding restrictions?**  
Receptions or similar events can be part of the proposed programming, but food and beverage items for those types of events must be purchased with funds other than the grant funds.



## Resources for Applicants

### Arizona Department of Education-Approved Technical Assistance Providers For Arts Integration

A list of providers approved by the state of Arizona to help schools implement a high quality arts integration program.

<http://www.azed.gov/art-education/files/2012/11/technical-assistance-providers-arts-integration-approved-list.pdf>

### Arts Ed Search

An online clearinghouse that collects and summarizes high quality arts education research studies and analyzes their implications for educational policy and practice.

<http://www.artsedsearch.org/>

**The Arizona Commission on the Arts** is an agency of the State of Arizona which supports access to quality arts and arts education opportunities for all Arizonans; the development and retention of statewide jobs in the nonprofit arts, culture and education sectors; and increased economic impact in local communities through arts-based partnerships that develop tax and small business revenue.



**We imagine an Arizona where everyone can participate in and experience the arts.**

For more information, contact us at (602) 771-6501, email [info@azarts.gov](mailto:info@azarts.gov) or visit [www.azarts.gov](http://www.azarts.gov).

To request this or any other publication in an alternative format, contact the Arts Commission offices.  
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