



Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund Instructions for Applying for a Grant Letter of Intent to Apply Form

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta's Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund grant program provides general operating support grants to sustain arts organizations as they pursue their missions. In the two-part application process, applicants will complete a three-page Letter of Intent to Apply for Grant Funding (LOI) and submit that LOI to one of two deadlines in 2010. The LOI is a snapshot of the organization's mission, strategies and strengths. Foundation staff and the Advisory Board of the Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund will review each submitted LOI and will invite up to 20 organizations to complete the Final Application. From the Final Applications, the Foundation will select organizations for further review through site visits.

The Foundation publishes Guidelines to help applicants understand the priorities and criteria of our competitive grants programs. Make sure you have reviewed the current Guidelines for the Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund found at www.MetroAtlantaArtsFund.org.

Completing the LOI:

- **Saving the Form:** Before beginning filling out the form be sure to download and save the form to your computer. As the Arts Fund will be receiving many of these applications, please include your organization's name in the file name and in the subject line of your emailed LOI (e.g. "ABC Arts Center - Letter of Intent to Apply").
- **Navigating the Form:** With your mouse, left click the grey boxes to activate the drop-down menus or to type in or paste in your answers. Use the Tab key or use your mouse to go to the next box or section.
- **The Best Choice:** If asked to choose options from a drop-down menu, choose the best answer.
- **Format Rules:** Allow the text to wrap automatically within the box. Do not use the Enter key to change lines or use bullets in text boxes. Complete your answers to all questions in a total of TWO pages. Your narrative should not exceed THREE pages. Do not recreate or alter the LOI form or its questions.
- **Character Counts:** All character counts include spaces as characters.
- **Un-answered fields:** Any field left blank will automatically exclude the application from consideration (deem it ineligible); n/a is not an acceptable response.

Guidance on Specific Questions in the LOI – Organization Information

- **Organization Name:** Enter your organization's name as it appears on your 501(c)(3) letter from the IRS; if your organization is using a name different from the one on your 501(c)(3) letter, be sure you provide your legal name and the DBA (doing business as) name in this area of the LOI
- **Mailing Address:** Use the P.O. Box or street address where the organization receives official communications
- **County:** From the drop-down menu provided, select the county where your main office is located
- **Organization Leader, Title, Phone and Email:** Enter the name, title and contact information of the Executive Director, President, CEO or executive that leads the organization or agency
- **Request Contact, Phone and Email:** Enter the name and contact information of the person who will be the primary contact for this LOI
- **Website:** Provide the full web address for your organization (ex. www.cfgreateratlanta.org)
- **Year Incorporated:** Provide the year your nonprofit was incorporated as an entity (not the year you received your 501(c)(3) letter from the IRS)

- **Tax ID:** Your 9-digit tax ID number is located on your 501(c)(3) letter from the Internal Revenue Service and on your 990 tax form.
- **DUNS #:** This is a 9-digit number provided by Dun & Bradstreet. If the organization does not have a DUNS number, one may be obtained for free by phone or online. Details instructions are on the Arts Fund website: http://www.metroatlantaartsfund.org/grants/faqs_duns.html
- **Applicant pays one full-time salaried employee:** Applicant organizations must have at least one person on staff who is paid full-time at the federally-designated minimum wage and has been on staff for at least one year. This person should be salaried and paid with a W2. A full-time person is defined as an employee that works at least 2,080 hours a year and makes at least \$15,080 (minimum wage). The Arts Fund may request support documentation later in the process. The applicant organization must be able to answer Yes in order to be eligible.
- **Registration with the Georgia Secretary of State:** All nonprofits in Georgia are required to be registered with the Secretary of State. Using a drop-down menu, select Yes or No to indicate whether the organization is current with its registration with the Georgia Secretary of State. The applicant organization must be able to answer Yes in order to be eligible.
- **Required financial statements:** Full details on which financial statements are required as attachments to the Final Application are detailed in the Guidelines in the “Financial Statements – Submission requirements” section. Organizations invited to submit Final Applications must have and submit either audits, statements of review or internal financials depending on the size of its annual operating budget.
- **Counties served by your organization:** From drop-down menus provided, select up to three counties where the people served by the organization live. Select the county serving the largest number (Primary); the next larger number (Secondary) and the third larger number (Other Counties).

Guidance on Specific Questions in the LOI – Financial Snapshot

- **Total Revenue, Total Expenses, Surplus (Deficit) and Net Assets/Fund Balance:** Provide these four amounts for each of the organization’s last three completed fiscal years and year-to-date figure for the current fiscal year. These figures can be found on your Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) in your audit or 990. When reporting Total Expenses, use the total amount AFTER depreciation
 - **Total Revenue:**
 - **Earned Revenue:** Revenue or income that an organization receives in exchange for a service or product. Payments can be made by the direct beneficiary or recipient (for example, tuition or performance ticket) or by a third party (for example, performance-based government contracts).
 - **Contributed Revenue:** Revenue or income received from individual, foundation, corporate or government donations. The donor may make contributions on an unrestricted basis (i.e. not specify the services to be delivered or the timeframe for service delivery) or may impose restrictions for use of the contribution under specific purposes.
 - **Total Expenses:** A measure of the total costs associated with managing and operating your nonprofit. These costs consist primarily of management fees, salaries, legal fees, operational expenses.
 - **Surplus (Deficit):** The amount that the organization is over or under the total amount budgeted for that fiscal year. Refer to your statement of activities to determine your year to date surplus or deficit.
 - **Net Assets/Fund Balance:** This number can be found at the bottom of the first page of the organization’s IRS Form 990. It can also be found on the organization’s balance sheet or statement of financial position in an audit or review. You do not need to provide this for the current year-to-date.
 - **PLEASE NOTE - Current Fiscal Year To Date:** This is the fiscal year the organization is currently in, even if it is only a month old. Use the most current amounts available.
- **How did organization report year-end financials?:** For each year (in each column), indicate how the organization reported its year-end financials (i.e. Audited, Reviewed, Compiled, Internal). For the last fiscal year end, there are additional options for reports currently in progress.

- **Fiscal year end date:** For each year (in each column), indicate the full date on which the organization’s fiscal year ended (e.g. 6/30/09).
- **What is the total amount of non-mortgage debt carried (loans, lines of credit, etc.)?:** Indicate the amount of debt the organization currently owes; this includes any loans, accounts payable, lines of credit, etc. and excludes a mortgage on a property. Please total all debt sources and provide a close estimate as to the amount. If selected to submit a Final Application, you will be required to provide detailed financials that contain this total. If you do not have any debt, enter “\$0”
- **What is the total amount of mortgage debt carried?:** Indicate the amount of debt the organization currently owes for a mortgage on a property. This includes debt that is secured against a piece of property or building that is an asset of the organization. If you do not have any mortgage debt, enter “\$0”
- **Clarification on the Financial Snapshot:** Use this space to provide clarifications on the amounts provided in the financial snapshot. The organization may use this space to explain large jumps or drops in expenses or revenues, a change in fiscal year or anything else that may not be clear to a reader who does not yet have the organization’s full financials to review.
- **Amount Requested:** Organization can request up to a maximum of \$75,000 or 10% of the organization’s current operating budget (expenses). To determine amount, use the most recent version of this year’s annual operating budget total as approved by your organization’s board of directors. If your board has approved a recent adjustment of your annual operating budget use this most recent amount.

Guidance on Specific Questions in the LOI – Narrative Questions

- **What is the organization’s mission and what does it do? Who does it serve and how deeply?:** Include the organization’s mission and a description of what the organization does and who its audiences, members or program participants are. Give the reviewers an idea of how deeply these audiences are engaged (e.g. are they in a seat for two hours once a year or are they part of a program where they create a new work).
- **How will this funding strengthen the organization as a whole its ability to address broader community needs and opportunities? What will be different?:** *This is one of the most important questions on the LOI.* Describe how a grant from the Arts Fund would allow the organization to meet internal capacity needs such as staffing or utilities and/or external community concerns such as expanding services. Write simply, avoid jargon and write out acronyms the first time they are used. Explain what difference an Arts Fund grant will make in the organization.
- **Strategic Plan section:** The Common Good Funds requires organizations to have a current written strategic or business plan for the whole organization that includes measureable goals and methods to assess effectiveness that covers at least three years (36 months) which includes the organization’s current fiscal year
 - **Date plan first effective:** Provide the start date of your organization’s current strategic plan. For example, if your board of directors approved the plan in November 2007 and the plan covers January 2008 through December 2012, the date the plan was first effective would be 1/1/08
 - **Date plan expires:** Provide the end date of your organization’s current strategic plan. For example, if your board of directors approved the plan in November 2007 and the plan covers January 2008 through December 2012, the date the plan expires would be 12/31/12
 - **Date last updated by board:** Continuing the example from the previous bullets, your plan has been in effect since January 2008. Many things have changed for your organization since then, so your board and staff revised the plan so that it would be more up to date and timely OR your organization annually updates the strategic plan based on the past year’s activities. The date your board last updated your plan would be 6/1/09
 - **Duration of plan in months:** Continuing the example from the previous bullets, your covers 1/1/08 through 12/31/12; the duration of the plan in months is 60 months (12 months/year x 5 years = 60)

- **What is the value of the strategic plan to the organization?:** Describe how the strategic plan guides the organization as it operates. In discussing the value of the plan, you may want to share how the plan is monitored, updated and revised on an annual basis.
- **Artistic Vitality: Explain the importance of the organization’s work. Why should the Arts Fund invest in it?:** *This is one of the most important questions on the LOI.* Explain why the organization is important to the community and why the community values it.
- **Is there anything else you would like to tell Arts Fund reviewers about the organization?:** Use this space to clarify anything you have written above or were not able to address in the answers to the questions.
- **For organizations that received an Arts Fund general operating support grant in 2009: What has changed in the last year?:** Compare your organization to where it was when it received its 2009 grant. Reviewers will be reading your 2009 LOI and Final Application at the same time. Organizations who did not receive a grant from the Arts Fund in 2009 need not answer this question.
- **Summary schedule of all programming (artistic, education, events, etc.) for 2010:** In a separate document (preferably MS Word) please list dates, locations and brief descriptions of your programming as planned for **January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010**. You do not need to list every specific date – ranges are fine. If your organization has not announced programming for whole period, give the best sense of what is planned or indicate when you will announce your programming. Please keep this to one page so it may be easily distributed to reviewers who may wish to attend a program.
- **Authorizing Signatures:** Typing the names of the organization’s staff and board leaders here indicate that both the staff and board support this request and have read and understood the guidelines and policies in outlined in the program guidelines.

Submitting a Letter of Intent to Apply to the Arts Fund.

- **Form:** Applicants must use the form provided on the Arts Fund website. A letter on letterhead is not acceptable.
- **Attachment:** Only one attachment is required for the Letter of Intent: A summary schedule of all programming (artistic, education, events, etc.) for 2010 (1/1/10 to 12/31/10) in a separate, one-page document in Microsoft Word or as a PDF.
- **By Email:** Letters of Intent to Apply should be completed in MS Word, saved, attached to an email and sent to artsfund@cfgreateratlanta.org. Please also attach the summary schedule of all programming. Note the name of the applicant organization and the phrase “Letter of Intent to Apply” in the subject line of the email.
- **Deadlines:** Noon on Friday, January 22, 2010 *and* Noon on Friday, July 9, 2010

Questions?

You are strongly encouraged to attend an orientation session. The orientation schedule is available on the Arts Fund website: www.MetroAtlantaArtsFund.org. If you still have questions after attending an orientation session, you may contact Arts Fund staff to answer questions:

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