

Arts & Cultural Organizational Development (ACOD)

2025 – 2026 Guidelines



Funding Purpose + Overview

The ACOD grant is intended to support organizations that enhance Tompkins County's brand as an artistic and cultural destination.

Award Information

- Maximum Award: \$35,000 OR 10% of organizational budget (whichever is less)
- Deadlines:
 - Eligibility Questionnaire: October 24, 2024
 - Full Application: December 10, 2024

Contact: Megan Barber, Executive Director of Community Arts Partnership
director@artspartner.org – 607-273-5072.

Supported Activities

This grant provides general operating support. The award can support specific activities, projects, and staff within an organization. Applicants will be asked to provide a detailed description of how they intend to use funding awards.

How to Apply

- [Common Grant Application](#) (scroll to Arts and Cultural Organizational Development).

Funding Source

This grant is funded by [Hotel Room Occupancy Tax](#) collected in Tompkins County, New York. A total of \$330,000 is budgeted for 2025 ACOD grants. The amount for 2026 will be determined as a part of the annual Tourism Program budget.

Who can apply?

Applicant organizations must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- Non-profit 501(c)3 organization in Tompkins County

- Public museum OR performing / visual arts organization
- Paid, professional staff
- Established for three years or more
- Elected board of directors
- Evidence of long-range planning
- Adopted organizational policy on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Minimum 20 days of public programming¹ offered per year in the County

Grant Award Term and Grant Cycle

Grant award terms will be for two years (2025 and 2026). Funding is conditional on the availability of funding and the receipt a satisfactory annual report. The next application cycle for this grant is expected in the fall of 2026.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated in four categories: Artistic/Cultural Impact, Tourism Impact, Administrative Capability, and Economic Impact. Indicators within each category will be scored from 0 to 5 by grant review committee members. The total score for each application will weigh scores from each category as described below. Specific indicators are listed below:

Artistic / Cultural Impact (weighted at 35% of overall score)

- Evidence of past successes and growth
- Evidence of the uniqueness of program offerings
- Programming reflects a significant effort to reach a broad array of audiences
- Evidence of programming that gives voice to diverse and non-dominant cultures
- Production of original artistic work
- Operation and maintenance of a physical venue

Tourism Impact (weighted at 35% of overall score)

- Number of tickets sold or attendance numbers
- Percent of audience from
 - outside Tompkins County
 - over 50 miles away
- Days of public programming offered within the County
- Web traffic and media reach
- Written annual marketing plan and budget
- Use of IthacaEvents.com and evidence of a working relationship with the Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)
- Effectiveness of past marketing campaigns (including print, broadcast, and social media)

¹ Public programming is defined as a cultural performance or exhibit available for the benefit of the community. Musical performances, film screenings, theatrical performances, museum exhibits and art galleries are all examples of public programming. Fundraisers, rehearsals, workshops, and classes are generally not considered public programming.

Administrative Capability (weighted at 15% of overall score)

- Evidence of the following:
 - Mission statement
 - Board roster that includes length of service
 - Bylaws
 - Employee manual
 - Strategic plan
 - Active financial management
 - Revenue from a variety of funding sources
 - Last completed audit or financial review
 - Grant reporting history
 - Collaborations with other organizations
- Diversity on staff and board of directors

Economic Impact (weighted at 15% of overall score)

- Clear and coherent operating budget
- Percentage of funding from donors / individuals and corporate
- Number of donors
- Number of full-time and part-time year-round staff
- Documentation of livable wage

Additional Key Points

- Organizations that were awarded the Tompkins Outdoors Grant in 2024 are ineligible for this award.
- Consider how your proposed use of funds reflects our community's diversity ([STPB Diversity Statement](#)).
- Organization budget is defined as the previous year's total expenses.
- Applicants are expected to have a clear method of documenting audience information including home location.

Attachments

1. Proof of non-profit status in the form of a 501(c)3 determination letter
2. Current organizational budget and other financial documents
3. Current board roster
4. Strategic plan
5. Organizational policy on diversity, equity & inclusion

Award Decision Process

1. Community Arts Partnership staff review applications for completeness and eligibility. Complete and eligible applications are shared with the grant review committee.

2. The review committee makes funding recommendations for each application to the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB).
3. The grant review committee's evaluation scores and feedback will be shared with applicants.
4. The STPB makes a funding recommendation to the Tompkins County Legislature.
5. The Legislature votes on the grant awards.
6. Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability staff send emails to all applicants with funding decision and a contract.

Grant Recipient Responsibilities

Contract and funding: Recipients must sign a contract with Tompkins County outlining the terms and conditions of the grant. Grant funds are disbursed after the contract is fully executed per contract terms. All unused funds must be returned to Tompkins County.

Payments: Grant awards are paid directly to registered nonprofit organizations. Grant award payments are made twice per year (April and October).

Marketing workshop: Grant recipients are required to attend an annual marketing workshop hosted by the CVB.

Public acknowledgement: Recipients are expected to recognize the support of the Tompkins County Tourism Program in promotional materials, using the standard acknowledgment statement: "*Made possible in part by a grant from the Tompkins County Tourism Program.*" You may also use the Tourism Program logo in accordance with the [recognition guidelines](#).

Grant report: Grant recipients are required to submit an annual report. In addition, recipients may be asked to submit a mid-year financial status report.

Prepare and Submit Your Application

All applications must be submitted through [Common Grant Application](#). Use and one of the links below to start an application:

- Already have an account: [Log in to start an application](#).
- First time applying: [Register for a new account and start an application](#).
- Review [other grants](#) offered by Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability/Tourism Program.

Additional Resources

The [Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) (CVB) offers technical assistance related to event promotion. Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to collaborate with the CVB to attract visitors from outside Tompkins County. For more information, contact Peggy Coleman, VP Tourism & Community Relations, peggy@visitithaca.com.