



Evanston Arts Council Special Projects Grant Guidelines for 2026

Purpose and Overview

The Arts Council's Special Projects Grant supports special projects, programs, events, or opportunities that arise during the calendar year, serve the Evanston community, and align with the EAC's Statement of Purpose and Values. This funding opportunity is open to projects led by either individuals and organizations who intend to create a special art project, an art program, or event with a focus on art that serves the Evanston community. Organizations seeking general operating or ongoing organizational support should apply to the Cultural Fund Grants opportunity.

With the Special Projects Grants, the Arts Council seeks to support projects that have one or more of the following suggested attributes or intended impacts:

- are artist-led and/or have leading involvement from artists in project planning and execution
- involve artists from marginalized or under-resourced groups
- reach and are accessible to diverse audiences
- enliven public spaces and/or non-traditional arts spaces
- actively engage the Evanston community
- reflect the fabric of the City of Evanston

The Evanston Arts Council supports up to 50% of the project's total budget to a maximum of \$2,000. Matching funds for the required 1:1 match may include in-kind donations.

The Arts Council reviews Special Projects Grant applications on a rolling basis at each monthly Arts Council meeting. This fund is allocated at the discretion of the Arts Council, and grants are given on a first-come-first-serve basis throughout the calendar year until the fund is depleted. The procedures for application are below.

The Arts Council encourages applications from first time applicants and artists who identify as being from all marginalized and under-resourced groups including any of the following:

- BIPOC
- LGBTQIA+

- Older Adults
- Neurodiverse Individuals
- Those with Disabilities
- Immigrant and Refugees
- Un-housed
- Vulnerable Youth

If you have questions about the application process, please email artscouncil@cityofevanston.org.

Eligibility Criteria and Funding Restrictions

1. Any individual or organization who intends to create a special art project, an art program, or event with a focus on art that serves the Evanston community.
2. Organizations who are under consideration for or have received a Cultural Fund Grant in the same year are not eligible, even if the application is for a different project.
3. The applicant may not receive funding from this grant more than once per calendar year.
4. The applicant may not receive Special Project Grant for the same project that has received Special Project Grant in the past.
5. No food or alcoholic beverages will be funded.
6. Applications must be received at least one month in advance of the anticipated project date. Projects that have taken place prior to Arts Council application review are not eligible for funding.

APPLICATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Step 1: Online Application

All grant applications must be completed and submitted online:

<https://cityofevanston.wufoo.com/forms/zh5fkh81xhpbxm/>

Complete applications must include:

- Detailed narrative of the artistic project and outcomes
- Intended and projected audience
- Plan for involvement of community partners and community members
- Clear outcomes of the project
- Identifiable areas where the project will address inclusion, diversity, and equity
- Plan for community engagement, participation, and accessibility
- Timetable
- Detailed budget of the project, program, or event

If you have questions about the application process, please email artscouncil@cityofevanston.org.

Step 2: Review Process

Staff will review applications for compliance with eligibility guidelines and scope of work to be funded. The Arts Council will review the applications, prioritizing projects that have one or more of the following suggested attributes or intended impacts:

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Step 3: Public Review and Approval Process

Applicants are invited and highly encouraged to attend the Arts Council meeting when their project will be reviewed, to be on hand to answer clarifying questions. Arts Council meetings take place on the third Tuesday of each month.

Step 4: Award and Project Implementation

Grantees are responsible for submitting an invoice to the City of Evanston for the amount awarded within 15 days of the approval of the award. The grantee also agrees to execute the project within 180 days of receiving the funds, and to submit a report within 60 days of completing the project. Any unused funds must be returned to the City of Evanston within 180 days of receiving the funds if the project is not completed or 60 days after the project is complete if there is any money left over.

The grantee must also recognize the Arts Council's contribution in the program and any print materials by adding the following language: "This project is partially funded by the Evanston Arts Council's Special Projects Grants Program, in partnership with the City of Evanston." Use the Evanston Arts Council logo as appropriate.

Timeline

Day 1: Award approved

Day 2-15: Submit invoice for the full amount of the award. Complete Vendor Registration Form, if you have never received a payment from the City.

Day 2-180: Project execution or return money if the project did not take place

Day 181-240: Turn in Final Report and any leftover funds

Questions should be directed to artscouncil@cityofevanston.org