



What: Make Art Grant

Who: Artists that live in Rhode Island, and are over the age of 18.

Funds: Creation of art, in all disciplines.

Amount: \$500 to \$3,000

The RISCA Make Art Grant program provides grants of up to \$3,000 for artists to create or continue specific work. Projects must have specific goals, though completion and public showing of the art is not required. Projects must be artist instigated and organized, outside of institutional support and structures. Open to projects of all arts disciplines, from artists of all levels, funds can be used to support experimentation, materials, space rental, paying collaborators, documentation, and artist stipends. All Make Art grantees may participate in a work in progress showing, organized by RISCA staff.

We know for many applicants this is their first time writing a grant or this may be the only grant they apply to. For that reason, RISCA provides application support through grant workshops, one-on-one meetings, and drop-in office hours. Support from RISCA staff people extends beyond the grant application itself! In addition to being available throughout the application period to support you in developing your proposal, the Individual Artists Program Director will be available once you've received your award notification to provide advice and ideas.

For more information on what support opportunities are currently available, visit the RISCA website: <https://risca.online/>.

Meet RISCA's Individual Artists Program Director, Mollie Flanagan. Mollie is available to help you with your application!



Mollie Flanagan (she/her) is the Individual Artists Program Director at RISCA. She manages and oversees the agency's support for artists, including grants, programs, and services. After a decade long career as a lighting designer, stage manager, and production manager for a wide variety of performing arts, Mollie went to grad school for arts entrepreneurship and management. During grad school, she discovered a love for artist services – supporting individual artists in making art and making a living. She joined the RISCA staff in February 2017, and currently lives by the river in Central Falls. She is now a hobby crafter – knitting, crocheting, and making things out of cement (small planters, mostly). You can reach her by email at mollie.flanagan@arts.ri.gov.

Who is eligible to apply for this program?

To be eligible, you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.

- Not currently be in an arts degree seeking program or still attending high school full time.
- Have been domiciled in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means your home in Rhode Island is your primary residence, and is the address you use for legal forms, state income taxes, car registration, driver's license or state issued id, and voter registration - regardless of whether you own or rent your home.
- Be a legal resident of the United States with a tax id number (either Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification (ITIN) number). This includes refugees, immigrants, and temporary residents. This does not include people in the country on a tourist visa.
- Be a practicing artist. RISCA defines practicing artist as "A person that intentionally creates or practices art in any discipline that":
 - Has specialized training in the artistic field from any source, not necessarily in formal academic institutions.
 - Is committed to devoting significant time to artistic activity, as is possible financially.
 - Is or is working towards earning some portion of their income from their art.
 - Disciplines include, but are NOT limited to: musician, painter, poet, choreographer, teaching artist, ceramicist, storyteller, performer, playwright, sculptor, photographer, wampum artist, printmaker, animator, cartoonist, textile and fashion designer, and filmmaker.

I have a disability – what kind of assistance can Mollie provide me with my application?

Applicants who need assistance completing an application should contact Mollie in advance of the deadline. Mollie can provide – or arrange for the provision of – whatever assistance you require. For individuals with disabilities for whom writing a grant is prohibitive, Mollie can arrange for transcription support if an applicant discloses their needs. Please contact Mollie at least three weeks prior to the deadline.

Large print guidelines available here: [LINK](#).

I'm not comfortable writing or communicating in English – what kind of assistance can Mollie provide me with my application?

Applicants who need assistance completing an application should contact Mollie in advance of the deadline. Mollie can arrange for the provision of translation support for your application. We recommend you notify Mollie at least three weeks prior to the application deadline as we work with outside translation services.

Before I even think about applying for this grant, what are the TWO most important things I need to know?

1. First, Mollie is here to help you with your application – it is a big part of her job. Your emails will not annoy her but please understand that it might take her a bit to respond since she will have many requests from other applicants.
2. Second, read these grant guidelines at least twice before contacting Mollie as they will answer 95% of your questions and save you both time. That way you can spend your time together focusing on your project and your application.

What are the deadlines for this program and time periods for what they fund?

The deadline to apply for Make Art Grant for Individuals program is 11:59 pm on:

- **April 1.** This deadline supports projects occurring between July 1 and December 31. For applicants applying at the April 1st deadline, award notification might not occur until after July 1, as we are prohibited from making award announcements until one week after the state budget for the fiscal year (which starts July 1) is passed.
- **October 1.** This deadline supports projects occurring between January 1 and June 30.

If a deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the revised deadline will be 11:59 pm on the next business day. Late or incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Note that the application portal closes at 11:59pm, so you must hit submit before that time for your application to be considered.

This is called a Make Art project – but how does RISCA define a project?

RISCA defines a project as a discrete set of connected activities with a defined beginning and an end. For the purposes of the Make Art grant, you do not need to complete a piece of art – but you must have a goal and set of activities that work towards that goal.

What are examples of the kind of projects does this grant program typically fund?

What this program funds, is intentionally broad, so it can be as responsive as possible to the all the ways people are making art. This grant is focused on enabling artists, working on their own or in collaboration, to create work. The proposal must have specific goals for what will happen during the funding period, but completion of work and/or public showings are not required.

- **Example One:** Name Namerson, Nombre Namington, and Nome Naminator will work towards creation of a new, site-specific performance piece. The three artists will spend time together developing work and experimenting using Viewpoints, a technique that uses improvisation and observation within time and space for ensembles to create work together. The artists will work around a theme of climate change and flooding, with the long-term plan being to perform this piece at Salty Brine State Beach in Rhode Island.

During this period of creation, the three artists will create a framework for the performance and an outline of the script.

- Example Two: Name Namerson will complete the final three pieces in their series of abstract sculptures. The series is themed around mental health in artist communities, and there are currently seven completed mixed media sculptures. This grant will allow Name to create larger, more intricate pieces, and experiment with incorporating steel into the pieces.
- Example Three: Rooted in the history of storytelling, Name Namerson will create an hour-long performance based around their immigration to the US with their parents at 12 years old. This engaging oral history will be created with youth ages 8+ in mind, though will be appropriate for all ages.

What other rules do I need to know about the Make Art Grant program?

- **The maximum grant award in this category is \$3,000.** You can apply for any amount between \$500 and \$3,000 – we strongly encourage you to apply for the LEAST amount of funding you need to do this project. Money is limited, and we want to be able to support as many artists as possible. No partial grants will be awarded – meaning you will either receive the full amount you apply for or no funding.
- **Only one application per grant deadline per grant program.** An individual may only submit one application per grant deadline to the Make Art Grant program. You may only receive one Make Art Grant per fiscal year, and if you are a current recipient of the Artist GOS grant you are ineligible to apply.
- **If you receive a grant, you must credit RISCA on all marketing materials.** Grants awarded by RISCA are provided by the Rhode Island State General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, on behalf of the residents of Rhode Island. For that reason, awardees must credit RISCA on all printed material where funders and supporters are listed and on all printed programs (see *I got a grant award! What do I do now?* section for more details).
- **All RISCA grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funds from the Rhode Island State General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts.** Sometimes delays in passing the state budget will delay grant award notifications and processing of grant payments – we can't award grants if we don't know for sure we will have funds.
- **Grant applications are considered on a competitive basis.** Your application may meet all the eligibility criteria and be incredibly meaningful. But remember that there are anywhere between 40-70 other applications in an application cycle that are also amazing! Because of the many high-quality projects, panels *always* wish to award more grant awards than they are able with the funds they have – this is one reason applicants who apply for the support for the same project year after year may not always receive a grant award, and that the grant award amounts may vary in amount cycle to cycle.

- **The project must be artist-instigated and implemented.** This project can NOT be part of a nonprofit or business's operations or projects. This project must be taking place outside of the support and structure of a larger, more formal entity. You CAN receive in-kind donations from formal entities (like donated rehearsal space or materials), but the project must not be a program of the other entity. The applicant must be the primary force behind the project, though we actively invite groups of artists/collaborators to apply under a lead applicant.
- **This project may not receive other funding from RISCA in the same fiscal year.** There cannot be another application to support this project or aspects of this project through another RISCA granting program.
- **All project activities must take place within the state of Rhode Island.**

What can I use my grant award for? And what CAN'T I use my grant award for?

If you receive a grant award, it can be used for expenses related to your project and its production or creation, as well as marketing and accessibility efforts associated with the project. This includes paying any artists or arts administrators involved for their time, including the applicant. You will use the grant for the expenses you planned for in the budget you submitted. We understand that this budget is just a plan, and that you may spend the funds in slightly different ways. This is ok, you just need to inform Mollie once your program is complete.

There many things your grant award cannot pay for. Because RISCA grants out money from the National Endowment for the Arts, we are obligated to follow these rules set forth by the NEA.

Expenses that cannot be covered by your grant award:

- **Capital projects.** The construction or renovation of buildings or additions to buildings, with the exception of accessibility improvements to cultural facilities.
- Any **fundraising** expenses – like creating rewards for a Kickstarter or hosting a fundraising event for any purpose.
- **Prizes and awards.** You cannot spend funds on a prize or award for another event/person/organization.
- **Alcohol and some Hospitality Expenses.** Purchase of alcohol with grant funds is strictly prohibited. You may not spend funds on any other food or beverage unless it is integral to the opportunity – please contact Mollie with specific questions. You may not spend grant funds on hospitality, travel, or food and beverage expenses if it was not described in the budget you submitted with your application.
- **Expenses outside of award period.** Your grant award can't be used to cover expenses incurred or activities occurring prior to the date of your application, or 3 months after the date of your application.
- **Regranting funds.** You may not use these grant funds to support grants to other artists or organizations through an application or award process.

- **Undergraduate or graduate school activities.** Activities which are part of a graduate or undergraduate degree program, or for which academic credit is received.
- **Religious activities.** Applications for projects that proselytize or promote religious activities, or which take place as part of a religious service.

Who makes grant award decisions at RISCA?

Because RISCA is a state agency granting out taxpayer funds, RISCA staff does NOT make any funding decisions: panels of Rhode Island residents do. This is great news for applicants! RISCA staff is available to answer questions and help applicants with their applications.

A typical review panel is made up of five people reviewing no more than 30 applications. This means in most cycles we have 2-3 different panels making grant award decisions for MAGI. Of the five panelists:

- At least two panel members will be BIPOC individuals (see definition in glossary).
- At least two will be practicing artists (see definition in glossary).
- One panelist will be from outside of Rhode Island.

RISCA is committed to a peer review process that provides fresh and diverse input from an ever-changing field. In addition, RISCA will consider age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, geography, discipline of arts experience, relationship to arts and culture (e.g. being an artist, arts administrator, or arts enthusiast), and other factors when curating its application review panels. A panelist can serve on a review panel three times over the course of a three years – which encompasses 6 grant cycles. Panelists cannot serve on a panel in the same grant program during the three-year period. This ensures a changing and diverse array of individuals evaluating our grant applications and guarantees that panels are different every grant cycle.

Serving as a grant panelist is a fantastic way to learn about RISCA’s grantmaking process, as well as how to write grants in general. If you are interested in serving on a grant panel, please fill out this form: [LINK](#). We can’t guarantee that we can accommodate your request because of our commitment to panel diversity, but we are always looking for new panelists. Panelists receive a small stipend of \$250 for their time and expertise.

How are grant applications evaluated by a panel?

You can view the full rubric grant panelists use to score your application here: [LINK](#). The three review criteria are:

Artist Impact and Growth (50%)

- This project will positively impact the applicant’s artistic practice and/or career in clearly identified ways.
- The work samples provided are relevant, cohesive, and speak to the potential of the work to be created.

- Success is clearly defined, with specific goals for the project period.
- This work is a logical and purposeful extension of the artist's existing practice, including both previous work and aesthetic interest.

Feasibility/Likelihood of Success (25%)

- The application clearly states:
 - what will be done.
 - when and where things will take place.
 how the applicant will go about organizing, managing, and evaluating the project.
- Budgets are clear, detailed, and accurate; the planned allocation of funds supports project goals.
- There is evidence that what is proposed is achievable by the applicant, on their own or in partnership with others. In the absence of past experience, information is provided that helps make a convincing case that this project will succeed.

Artistic Vibrancy and Intention (25%)

- Personal voice, vision, and authenticity shows in the proposal.
- Applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of and commitment to their craft, both in aesthetics and technical skill.
- Application and support materials demonstrate a consistency of actions, values, methods, and goals.

What is this Work in Progress showing, and is it mandatory?

RISCA staff will hold a Work in Progress showing each fall, for the previous year's grantees. If you receive a grant, you are invited to share either completed works or works in progress. This event will include robust artist talks along with a facilitated conversation using the [Critical Response Process](#). You are invited to talk about what you have learned and what you are experimenting with; share demonstrations; perform work either completed or in progress; show visual art, either completed or in progress; or whatever works for you in consultation with RISCA staff. This showing will be executed and marketed by RISCA. Participation in this showing is not mandatory, but strongly recommended.

What are the steps in the decision-making process for grant awards?

There are 12-steps in RISCA's decision-making process for grant awards:

- **STEP 1: Mollie assembles the grant panels starting prior to the grant deadline.** While this starts prior to the grant deadline, it often continues after the grant deadline once it is clear how many applications have been received, how many are eligible, and how many panels are needed.

- **STEP 2: You submit your application by the grant deadline.** Once the application deadlines pass, no alterations or additions may be made to your application. Applications are reviewed by the grant panel based on the contents of your application only.
- **STEP 3: Mollie reviews applications and makes sure they are eligible.** Mollie reviews each application for compliance with eligibility and submission requirements. If Mollie detects any issues, she may contact applicants for more information.
- **STEP 4: RISCA staff provides orientation and training to panelists.** Panelists don't receive the applications they are to review until they complete a two-part panel training: the first part focuses on implicit bias; the second part focuses on the logistics of being a panelist, including a review of the applications and rubrics.
- **STEP 5: Mollie sends all eligible applications to the panel(s).** If more than one panel is needed, Mollie uses a randomization process to randomly assign applications to panels.
- **STEP 6: The panel(s) review and score their assigned applications.** Using the evaluation rubric for the program, panelists have typically between 4-6 weeks to review applications and score each application, prior to their in-person panel meeting. We estimate that the panelists spend approximately 30 minutes reading and scoring each application.
- **STEP 7: Panel(s) meet for an all-day Panel Review and make funding recommendations.** The panel meets in person at RISCA offices or via Zoom to discuss each application. Panels typically spend between 10-15 minutes discussing each application. After each discussion, panelists have the option of privately updating their scores. Mollie facilitates the discussion but does not participate or influence the discussions. She and another RISCA staff person take notes during the panel to share with applicants later.

At the end of the day, the panel is shown a spreadsheet that displays the applicants and their total panel scores (meaning the combined total of each panelist's scores on a given application) in descending order. Using their rankings as a guide, panelists make funding recommendations.

- **STEP 8: Mollie writes panel comments for each applicant.** Based on the panel's discussion, Mollie provides feedback for each applicant on their application, including ways applicants can make improvements for future applications. Whether or not an applicant is recommended for a grant, they will have the option of meeting or having a call with Mollie to discuss the panel comments and ways to improve their applications.
- **STEP 9: RISCA's Governing Council reviews and approves panel recommendations.** Mollie presents the panel's award recommendations to the Governor-appointed Council that oversees RISCA. They are responsible for reviewing and approving panel's recommended grant awards.
- **STEP 10: Applicants are notified as to whether or not they have received a grant award!** For applicants applying at the April 1 deadline, they will be notified about their grant award status one week after the state budget is signed by the Governor. This is a

moving target – in an ideal year, the state budget will pass the legislature and be signed by the Governor in late June, with notifications happening around the first week of July. While you can of course reach out to Mollie and ask her the status of your April 1 application, her answer will typically be “you will be notified approximately one week after the Governor signs the state budget.”

- **STEP 11: Awardees will thoroughly read and sign their grant award agreements, AND register with Ocean State Procures (if necessary).** We cannot process your grant payment until you are an approved vendor of the State of Rhode Island (by registering with Ocean State Procures) with an approved W-9 form and you have signed your grant agreement form. Once those things are completed, applicants can assume it will take anywhere between 4-8 weeks to receive their grant payment. In many cases, grant funds may not be received prior to the start of a project. Applicants should be aware of this possibility and plan their cash flow accordingly.
- **STEP 12: Mollie will reach out to applicants and see if they want to discuss their panel comments.** This is totally optional – you are also welcome to reach out Mollie before she contacts you!

How do I apply for this grant and what things do I need to have to complete the application?

Make Art Grant applications must be submitted online via <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=artsriscscholarship>. You can view a PDF of the application form here: LINK.

Since applications will be reviewed and scored by panelists on their own, outside of RISCA offices, all support material must be included in the online application. We recommend sharing links to audio and visual files rather than upload the files themselves, as panelists may have difficulty reviewing audio and visual files if not shared via an online platform like Vimeo, YouTube, etc.

I've received a grant award! Now what do I do?

Congratulations! First things first, you will want to sign the grant agreement form and register with Ocean State Procures (ADD LINK TO VNDOR QUICK START GUIDE?) as soon as possible so we can start processing your grant payment. Once completed, your grant payment may take between 4-8 weeks to receive. Read your **Grant Award Email** thoroughly, as it will have instructions on how to register with Oceans State Procures and how to upload your W-9 to the state payment system.

Other things you will need to do:

- **You must acknowledge RISCA support** in a prominent manner in all materials and announcements, both audio and visual, related to the grant program. Grant recipients

must also display, in a prominent manner, the RISCA logo in association with that acknowledgment. Further detail regarding acknowledgment can be found at <https://risca.online/grants/public-acknowledgment/>.

- **You must submit a brief final grant report to RISCA via the online grant system and have a one-on-one half hour call or meeting with Mollie.** All grantees are required to submit a brief final report and have a one-on-one half hour call with Mollie no later than the July 31 following the grant funding period. Mollie will reach out to applicants in December and June about scheduling calls, but you are also welcome to reach out to Mollie to arrange a time. You will not be able to apply for another RISCA grant if you have an overdue final report.
- **You must keep records of receipts and expenditures related to the funding.** You should be prepared to make your records available to RISCA if requested by RISCA. All grantees are subject to periodic audit or review by RISCA or the State of Rhode Island and must retain fiscal records for a period of seven (7) years following the grant period.
- **You must notify Mollie of any significant changes in your project.** Any changes must be reported to RISCA within two (2) months of the change.
- **The grant must be used exclusively for the purposes specified in the Grant Agreement.** Any alternative use of funds needs to be cleared by Mollie in advance in writing (by email), or the grant funds must be returned.
- **RISCA reserves the right to use any submitted materials for promotional purposes.** This includes any text, photographs, audio, or video submitted as part of funded grant applications for limited non-commercial educational or promotional use in publications or other media produced, used or contracted by RISCA including, but not limited to: brochures, invitations, newsletters, postcards, websites, etc.

What is Ocean State Procures, and how do I register?

All Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) grant award recipients need to have an approved vendor profile in the Rhode Island OCEAN STATE PROCURES (OSP) system. This new online registration system is used by the State of Rhode Island for any vendor of the state, not just those working with or receiving grant awards from RISCA. **Use the Vendor Self-Registration Quick Start Guide** (<https://www.ridop.ri.gov/documents/vendor-self-registration-quick-start-guide.pdf>) for complete details on to fully register and create a login to access your secure Vendor Portal at <http://ridop.ri.gov/vendor-registration/>. Please note this is a 2-step process:

1. **Create Vendor Profile** - After completing Quick Start Guide step 6 “submit registration”, your login credentials and the login link will be emailed to you (with the subject line: “Welcome to WebProcure!”).
2. **Upload W-9** - Once you have registered (including uploading a new W-9) and been approved by OSP, RISCA can process your award payment.

What if I don't want my grant award because circumstances have changed and/or I can't complete the project?

Before deciding to decline your grant award due to changing circumstances or any other reason, we recommend you reach out to Mollie to see if you can accomplish your project with some modifications. If you do decide to decline your award, this is totally fine to do so. It will have no bearing on future grant applications you might submit to RISCA. You will send an email to Mollie indicating your desire to decline your award, and she will assist you.

Glossary:

Practicing Artist: A person that intentionally creates or practices art in any discipline that:

- Has specialized training in the artistic field from any source, not necessarily in formal academic institutions.
- Is committed to devoting significant time to artistic activity, as is possible financially.
- Is or is working towards earning some portion of their income from their art.
- Disciplines include, but are NOT limited to: musician, painter, poet, choreographer, teaching artist, ceramicist, storyteller, performer, playwright, sculptor, photographer, wampum artist, printmaker, animator, tattoo artist, cartoonist, textile and fashion designer, and filmmaker.

Rhode Island residency: Have been domiciled in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means your home in Rhode Island is your primary residence, and is the address you use for legal forms, state income taxes, car registration, driver's license or state issued id, and voter registration - regardless of whether you own or rent your home.

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/BIPOC>