

## THE GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT APPLICATION (Annual Budgets between \$100,000 - \$500,000).

Welcome to the General Operating Support for Organizations (GOS-O) for organizations with annual budgets between \$100,000 - \$500,000! Throughout this application, we have put in instructions, explanations, and links to more information to help you complete the application. For an overview of how to start this application, click [here](#).

There are three parts to the application: 1) BEFORE YOU START THE APPLICATION eligibility quiz, so you know if your projects can be eligible for RISCA funding, 2) INFORMATION FOR THE PANEL where you will tell the panel making funding recommendations for your grant program about your organization, and 3) INFORMATION FOR RISCA STAFF where you will share information that RISCA is required to collect and have on record when granting out state and federal funds.

If at any point in working on your application you have a question that can't be answered via the links and information provided, do not hesitate to reach out to Todd Trebour, Organizations Program Director at [todd.trebour@arts.ri.gov](mailto:todd.trebour@arts.ri.gov). Let's get started!

### BEFORE YOU START APPLICATION

- Are you a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, municipality, or a parent corporation to a division, branch, department, program, or other subunit of nonprofit corporation, municipality college, or university? Yes No

**INFORMATION FOR THE PANEL – THE APPLICATION:** All information in this section is seen by panelists. The panel evaluating your application will consist of five individuals from inside and outside of Rhode Island chosen for their experience working at arts and culture organizations of similar size to that budget cohort being evaluated that year, as well as expertise in the field. In line with our [strategic plan](#), at least two panel members will be BIPOC individuals, and at least one will be a practicing artist (see guidelines for definition). Additionally, RISCA will continue to consider age, gender identity or expression, disability, sexual orientation, geography, discipline of arts experience, type of arts administrative experience, and other factors when curating diverse GOS panels.

Panelists undergo a training that includes an implicit bias training and a review of the [grant program rubric](#).

While there are character count limits with each question, we've also indicated the ideal length of answers. You will want to give the panel enough information while remembering that they will be reading up to 30 applications. It is important to balance providing enough information with being concise.

- **WHO YOU ARE:** Answer the following questions:
  - **What is the name of your organization?**
  - **What is your organization's mission?** If you recently had a change in organizational mission, you may briefly elaborate here. An ideal response length is less than 2 paragraphs.

\*= check glossary for definition

- **INTRODUCING YOUR ORGANIZATION AND ITS STRUCTURE: Summarize your organization's core programs and infrastructure.** This question will give the panel context on who your organization is and what your organization does. You will also want to provide a snapshot of your staffing structure, including number of staff, artists and independent contractors employed. An ideal response length is 2-3 paragraphs.
  - **Optional:** you may upload a simple organizational chart. You can see example charts [here](#).
  - **Please submit up to four support materials from the past two years showing the artistic and/or cultural programming of your organization (video, images, resume, short bios with links to social media/Vimeo/YouTube, CVs, resumes, etc).** *Remember: the panel is reading up to 30 applications – keep your support materials targeted to what you want panelists to see, hear, and know*
- **YOUR GEOGRAPHIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNITIES: Define the geographic community\* and organizational community\* you engage.** Be sure to include the [demographics](#) of your communities in your response. An ideal response length is 2-3 paragraphs. Depending on the mission of your organization, these communities might be the same or different. Be sure to explain why your organizational community relates your mission.
- **RESPONSIVENESS TO YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNITY IN OPERATIONS: How does the operational decision-making of your organization reflect your organizational community and its needs?** You may speak about the staffing or board decision-making process of your organization, your policies, or your evaluative and planning processes. An ideal response length is 2-3 paragraphs.
- **YOUR BOARD AND STAFF: How is your board and staff reflective of your organizational community and its demographics? How is it reflective of your geographic community?** Additionally, If relevant, please also discuss how your organization is working to address diversity amongst your board, staff, artists, and volunteers, and ensure representation from those who are historically and/or continuously marginalized within your organizational community. See ["Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access" evaluation criteria](#) to understand why we are asking this question.

Per guidance from the National Endowment for the Arts, RISCA defines those who are historically and/or continuously marginalized as: immigrant groups, BIPOC communities, rural populations, aging populations, people living in poverty, people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, incarcerated populations, communities recovering from trauma or disaster, and military service members and veterans.

- **Please submit a listing of board members and executive leadership.** Indicate by asterisk (\*) members who are one or more of the following: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; Black or African American; or Hispanic or Latina/o (see why we use those definitions here [\[link to National Endowment for the Arts\]](#)). You may also include other demographic information that

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you feel is relevant to understanding your organization's leadership in relationship to its mission and organizational community.

- **Please submit a listing of paid full- and part-time staff members.** Indicate by asterisk (\*) members who are one or more of the following: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; Black or African American; or Hispanic or Latina/o (see why we use those definitions here [\[link to National Endowment for the Arts\]](#)). You may also include other demographic information that you feel is relevant to understanding your organization's staff in relationship to mission and organizational community.
- **RESPONSIVENESS TO YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNITY IN PROGRAMMING: How are the needs, desires, or identities of your organizational community reflected in your artistic and cultural programming?** If relevant, please also share how your organizational community was included in your decision-making processes about programming. An ideal response length is 2-3 paragraphs.
  - **Please submit up to four support materials from the last two years showing how the work of your organization is meaningful to your organizational and geographic communities.** This can be letters of support from community partners or community members inside or outside of the arts sector that are personally impacted by your organization's work; a document of quotes from past or current program participants; or anything else in the voice of community members outside of your organization. *Remember: the panel is reading up to 30 applications – keep your support materials targeted to what you want panelists to see, hear, and know*
- **HOW YOUR ORGANIZATION NEGOTIATES FINANCIAL CHALLENGES: How did your organization and your organizational community work to address a recent financial challenge?** We understand we are in a pandemic that has presented and continues to present many financial challenges. The panel is curious to hear about the process your organization went through to negotiate a recent challenge. Ideal response length is 2 paragraphs or less.
- **PROVIDING ACCESS: Beyond your programming occurring in an ADA compliant space, tell us three ways your organization has worked to be more accessible and inclusive, and reduce barriers to access for those in your organizational community.** What things you have done to reach out and engage with ALL people within your organizational community? An ideal response length is 2-3 paragraphs.

We want to know how you are planning to engage people from different cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, and physical and mental abilities. See our definition of historically and/or continuously marginalized communities in the prior question for more details.

#### **INFORMATION FOR RISCA STAFF – ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS.**

The following information asks for documents and information RISCA is required to have as a state agency granting out federal funds. Within each question, we explain why we are asking it. The

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**Commented [TT(1):** I'm considering changing this question to:

**COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY\*, EQUITY\*, INCLUSION\*, AND ACCESS – PAST AND CURRENT WORK:** Please share with the panel the efforts your organization has made to center diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in their work. An ideal response length is 2-3 paragraphs.

Will want to hear your reactions to this!

information in this section is seen only by RISCA staff and not by the panel, with the exception of the grant award questions (see explanation below). Learn more about how RISCA panels make grant award recommendations [here](#).

- **What type of organization are you?** We ask this so we can quickly see what kind of organizations are applying for our grants and can compare year over year. <drop down>
- **501(c)(3) Determination Letter.** We are required to grant out federally sourced funds to nonprofit organizations. If you are not a federally registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, this is a letter you will need from your fiscal sponsor.
- **What is the legal name of your organization?** This is the name of the nonprofit listed on the 501(c)(3) Determination Letter.
- **Unique Entity ID (UEI) or SAM.** A UEI is a special 12-digit identification the federal government requires of any entity receiving federal funds. If you are not a federally registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, this is a number you will need from your fiscal sponsor. If you don't have one at the time application, don't worry! The process to get a UEI is free and simple. Email Todd at [todd.trebour@arts.ri.gov](mailto:todd.trebour@arts.ri.gov) and he will tell you what to do so you can still submit your application.
- **Your organization's most recently filed 990.** Your 990 must be from your most recently completed fiscal year. A 990 is the type of annual tax return 501(c)(3) nonprofits file. We need this document so we know your nonprofit is in good standing. If you are not a federally registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, this is a document you will need from your fiscal sponsor. If your non-profit is new and hasn't completed a 990 yet, submit a Word document that indicates that.
- **A board approved organizational budget for your current fiscal year.**
- **State House, Senate, and Congressional Districts.** Knowing what State House, Senate, and Congressional Districts you are in is important. As a state agency, we want to be sure we are supporting projects around the state. We also notify legislators what projects are receiving grants in their districts so they understand how RISCA is distributing tax payer money and that we are doing so in their districts. We also encourage you to reach out to the legislators and invite them to your project or let them know of its success or accomplishments, whether you are funded or not. For your legislators to do their work well, they need to hear from you and understand how your work is important to your community.
  - **Please provide the address you are using to determine your State House, Senate, and Congressional Districts.** If there is no physical business address for your organization (for example, if mail is sent to a board member's home address), then use the address for the venue where a majority of your programming is presented, and share this address in the field below. If you have any questions or issues answering this question, please reach out to your program director for this grant program.
    - **State Rep:**
    - **State Senator:**
    - **Congressional District:**

\*= check glossary for definition

## **Glossary**

*A special thanks to our colleagues at the City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture and Grantmakers in the Arts whose fantastic work informed some of the definitions in this glossary.*

**Arts and Culture Organization:** Not-for-profit based groups that provide as their primary mission regular cultural programs or services, which may include producing or presenting a series or regular program of performances, educational programming, exhibitions, media presentations, festivals, readings, or literary publications. Producing is a primary focus on direct creation, production, performance or exhibition of arts; presenting is a primary focus on organizing, selecting or curating and contracting a series, season or festival of performances or events created by other artists and producing groups.

Not-for-profit organizations that include arts and culture as a primary and major focus of a larger mission may apply, if their larger mission is centered in serving a specific cultural group.

**BIPOC:** an acronym that stands for “Black, Indigenous, and people of color.” The term BIPOC is meant to “emphasize the particular hardships faced by Black and Indigenous people in the US and Canada – especially because Indigenous people often get forgotten in social justice causes and that anti-Black racism is particularly virulent.” (dictionary.com)

**BIPOC centered organizations:** A BIPOC centered organization is an organization with a mission and programming that is explicitly reflective of a community or communities of color, and where the board, staff, artists, and collaborators, include a significant representation of that community. A BIPOC-centered organization is defined by the following organizational characteristics:

- Primary mission, intentions, and practices are BY, FOR, and ABOUT art, heritages, histories, cultures and communities of color.
- Executive Leader (Executive Director, Managing Director, Producing Artistic Director, CEO, President) identifies as BIPOC.
- Board is at least 60% BIPOC-identifying individuals, per the definition above.
- Staff is at least 60% BIPOC-identifying individuals, per the definition above.

**Culturally specific organization:** an organization with a significant arts and cultural program that engages a specific cultural community but might not have arts and culture as their primary mission. Many of these organizations were established to address the needs and desires communities that were historically (and in many cases continuously) marginalized from receiving equitable access to existing programs. Many of these non-arts organizations evolved to support their communities in holistic ways and as a result developed significant and meaningful arts and cultural programs to better address the needs of their communities.

**Diverse:** composed of distinct qualities and characteristics; age, color, ethnicity, ancestry, sex, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental disability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, citizenship status and other characteristics that make individuals unique.

**Equity:** The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

\*= check glossary for definition

**Inclusion:** The act of creating an environment in which every person feels welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming place embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people, where each person is able to share the full spectrum of their humanity and be seen and heard without fear.

**Institutional Racism:** Institutional racism, or systemic racism, describes societal patterns and structures that impose oppressive or otherwise negative conditions on identifiable groups on the basis of race or ethnicity (wikipedia.com). It is a form of racism that is embedded as normal practice within society or an organization. It can lead to such issues as discrimination in criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, political power, and education, among other issues ([thoughtco.com](http://thoughtco.com)). In arts and culture funding, institutional racism has led to the historic exclusion and undervaluing of BIPOC communities and individuals, and an inequitable distribution of philanthropic dollars. To learn more, see the study [Not Just Money: Where is the Money Going?](#) by the Helicon Collaborative.

**Geographic Community:** the constituents who live in the geographic service area of an organization, as defined by an organization's location. The mission and vision of an organization may also inform their definition of their geographic community. Depending on an organization's mission, their geographic community might be different or the same as their organizational community. Descriptions of the community should include demographic and geographic makeup, including information about relevant socioeconomic factors, as well as diversity of age, ethnicity, race, gender, ability, education, etc.

**Organizational Community:** the constituents an organization engages or intends to engage as directed by their mission and vision. This community should include audience members, artists, students, and other groups that are significant to the organization. Depending on an organization's mission, their geographic community might be different or the same as their organizational community. Descriptions of the community should include demographic and geographic makeup, including information about relevant socioeconomic factors, as well as diversity of age, ethnicity, race, gender, ability, education, etc.

**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, cartoonist, textile and fashion designer, and filmmaker.

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