General Operating Support for Organizations (GOS-O) Application: Q & A + Feedback Session

Annual Budgets under $100,000
January 28, 2022

How This Will Work.

- **We will (briefly) review the Guidelines and their development process, evaluation criteria, and rationale behind the application.** I can answer any questions you have, but will definitely move this section along as needed since the feedback session for the guidelines and evaluation criteria already occurred last year.

- **I will then go through each section of the application.** As I shared with you in an email accompanying the documents, there are things I definitely have questions on, and I want to hear from you all about.

- **After each section, we will have a set time for questions and answers, feedback, and discussion.**

- **You can put questions in the chat.** Depending on how many people we have, we might have you unmute and ask questions.

- **You can email me until Monday, January 31 if you have any further feedback or thoughts.** I'll be making additional edits to the applications between February 1 – 14, prior to the program opening on February 15.

- **While we are focusing on one version of the application in this session, you can provided feedback on different versions as well.** For instance, many of you might be "on the cusp" of a budget cut-off for an application. We are focusing on one in each session for organization sake.

The Working Group Process.

- **Public input in drafting process.**

- **36 working group members from 22 organizations.**
  - 18 organizations are in prior GOS program (Investments in Arts and Culture or IAC), four are not in the current program.
  - Six were RI Expansion Arts Alumni organizations.
  - 12 working group members identified as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color).
  - Representatives from organizations not in IAC program (or freelance artists associated with organizations) were provided stipends.

- **The Working Group met 4-5 times between May – October 2020.**
  - Initial meeting with Dr. Brea Heidelberg of ISO Arts Consulting about equity issues in arts funding.
  - In subsequent meetings, breakout groups identified issues and brainstormed new ideas based on presentation, research organized by Todd, RISCA's new strategic plan + values statement.
  - Later in process, reviewed draft sections of guidelines or full guidelines and provided feedback.
  - BIPOC Breakout Group reviewed "pre-final" draft prior to full working group.
  - Full Working Group reviewed and provided feedback on final draft.

- **RISCA's Governing Council approved draft for public feedback in December – now in that month-long process!**

The Working Group Process.

- **A second Working Group dedicated to developing a new Project Grant for Organizations (formerly Arts Access) application was convened February – May 2022.**
  - Stipended, 10 member, BIPOC majority Working Group.
  - Representation from around the state and individuals associated with a variety of organizations.
  - Eight members were from organizations with annual budgets under $100,000.
- **New Project Grant for Organizations application became basis for new GOS-O application.**
  - GOS Working Group was interested in different applications for each budget cohort of organizations.
- **Applications have gone through multiple drafts informing what you see today!**
  - Developed in collaboration with fellow RISCA staff, with feedback from the National Assembl of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), fellow state arts agency colleagues, and ISO Arts Consulting.

Questions?

Snapshot of new GOS-O Guidelines.

- Explicit goals around recruitment of BIPOC centered organizations, as well as organizations from municipalities currently unrepresented in program.

- Keeping three-year grant cycle and evaluation of organizations by budget size, but applications will now be "tiered" in relationship to budget size of organization.

- Program is now competitive – there will be winners and there will be losers each cycle.

- Fiscally-sponsored organizations with budgets under $50,000 are now eligible for the new GOS-O program.

- While the Project Grants for Organizations program will still function as an eligibility determining program, changes have been made to align with RISCA's recruitment goals.

- Panel Process will have an explicit BIPOC representation requirement, as well as other panel diversity requirements.

Snapshot of new GOS-O Guidelines.

- Evaluation of the program is written into the guidelines at five years and ten years.

- Evaluation Criteria have been changed to: Artistic Vibrancy and Relevancy, Organizational Capacity and Ingenuity, and Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access.

- Organizations that represent historically marginalized communities or constituencies in their mission, programming, staff leadership, and board (e.g BIPOC-centered organizations, organizations that are led by and serve people with disabilities) are automatically considered for grant awards 1.5 times higher than their budget cohort.

- The new program has a funding formula. Previously awards were based on historic funding without a consistent scheme, and ranged from approximately $1,500 – $91,000 a year. Awards will now be between $3,000 - $40,000 a year.

Questions?

Evaluation Criteria for GOS-O.

- Artistic Relevancy and Vibrancy (50%).

- Organizational Capacity and Ingenuity (40%).

- Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (10%).

Artistic Relevancy and Vibrancy – ORIGINAL.

- Having a clear relationship between core programming and mission.

- Being able to define the geographic area and communities* they serve.

- Demonstrate that the organization understands, works with, and is responsive to its community through its programming.

- Identifying groups in their community who are underrepresented in their programming, and showing evidence of proactively working to engage those groups.

- Building meaningful relationships with community partners, within and outside of the arts and culture sector.

- Being accessible and inviting to its community and open to the public

Artistic Relevancy and Vibrancy – NEW.

- Having a clear relationship between core programming, mission, and organizational community.

- Clearly defining the geographic community and organizational community they engage.

- Demonstrating that the organization understands, works with, and is responsive to its organizational community through its programming.

- Identifying groups in their geographic community who are underrepresented in their organizational community and programming, and showing evidence of proactively working to engage those groups.

- Building meaningful relationships with community partners, within and outside of the arts and culture sector.

Organizational Capacity and Ingenuity – ORIGINAL.

- Have a diverse* board and staff that is demographically reflective of the community being served by the organization.

- Clearly articulate how their organization functions and the context of their financial information.

- Display processes and strategies for responding to changing financial circumstances.

- Engage in short and long-term planning using processes commensurate with the size and capacity of the organization - and take action based on those plans.

- Evaluate the quality of their programs, services, and administration using processes commensurate with the size and capacity of the organization – and take action based on those evaluations.

Organizational Capacity and Ingenuity – NEW.

- Have a diverse* board and staff that is demographically reflective of the <mark>organizational community</mark> being engaged by the organization.

- Display processes and strategies for responding to identified financial issues changing financial circumstances.

- <mark>Engage in policy-making, planning and evaluation processes – commensurate with the size and capacity of the organizations – that incorporate or respond to their organizational community.</mark>

- <mark>Take actions based on the result of their policies, and planning and evaluation processes.</mark>

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access – ORIGINAL.

- Exhibit practices that are inclusive and welcoming of all people in their defined community including those who have been historically and/or continuously marginalized and underrepresented, e.g. immigrant groups, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color – see Glossary) communities, rural populations, aging populations, people living in poverty, people who are homeless, people with disabilities, incarcerated populations, communities recovering from trauma or disaster, and military service members and veterans.

- Demonstrate history and commitment to creating a work practice centered in diversity, equity, inclusion, and access through concrete actions and well-developed work plans.

- Show that staff at a variety of levels, board, artists and key collaborators include those in their community who have been historically and/or continuously marginalized and underrepresented in both their public-facing programming and administrative work.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access – NEW.

- Exhibit practices that are inclusive and welcoming of all people in their ==geographic community== including those who have been historically and/or continuously marginalized and underrepresented, e.g. 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.

- ==Demonstrate practical application of stated DEIA goals through documented recruitment & selection and work processes.==

- Show that staff at a variety of levels, board, volunteers, artists and key collaborators include those in their ==organizational community== who have been historically and/or continuously marginalized and underrepresented in both their public-facing programming and administrative work.

Rationale Behind Application.

- Overall structure and way of communicating instructions came from work of PGO Working Group in the first half of 2021.

- Circling within and around evaluation criteria were these sentiments:
  - How is an organization putting its defined community at the center of their core functioning?
    - Programming.
    - Governance.
    - Reflection, evaluation, and planning.
  - How are they approaching DEIA work?
    - Engaging and in some cases centering the organizations work with members of historically and/or continuously marginalized communities.

Rationale Behind Application.

- Structure of application narrative questions:
  - Your Organization → Your Geographic and Organizational Communities → Responsiveness to Community in Operations → Responsiveness to Community in Programming → Negotiating Financial Challenges → Commitment to DEIA.

- Operating Support application, not Project Grant application.
  - Applicants have been through Project Grant program and been "vetted."
  - Application intent to help panel understand an organization and how they function in relationship to their organizational community.

- Process as conversation.

- Importance of cultural democracy.

Questions?

Questions for You from Todd.

- **Is there anything I'm missing that you see in the evaluation criteria but not in the questions?**

- **Geographic community vs. organizational community:** Do these make sense to you? Do you see any place where I am being inconsistent with these terms? Or where I use one but should use both or vice-versa?

- **Evaluating the finances of an organization:** I'll unpack this and explain my current thinking and would love your reactions to this.

- **How we determine budget category**: I'll unpack this and explain my current thinking and would love your reactions to this.

- **Evaluating commitment to DEIA:** particularly requesting board and staff lists with demographic information by individual. I'm trying to figure out the balance of how we get the information you and the panel need within the parameters of what is realistic, respectful, and legal.

- **Final Reports**: I won't be covering these today – but mark your calendars for March 4. I will elaborate on our current thinking.

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•**WHO YOU ARE:** if you are applying for funds via a fiscal sponsor, you will answer all questions from the perspective of your organization.
      ●**What is the name of your organization or group?**
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.

Application Narrative.

1) 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.

- **2) INTRODUCING YOUR ORGANIZATION: Summarize your organization's programming and infrastructure.** An ideal response length is 2-4 paragraphs. In this response, you will:
  - Describe your organization and its core programs.
  - Who leads and works at your organization. Are you volunteer-led and run? Do you have part-time staff, or do you work with independent contractors? Etc.
    - ▪ **OPTIONAL:** Upload a simple flow chart or diagram showing who leads and works at your organization.
  - **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.*

Application Narrative.

3) 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.

Two Different Definitions of Community.

- **Geographic Community:** the constituents who live in the geographic service area of an organization, as defined by an organization's location and (perhaps) their mission and vision. 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.

Application Narrative.

- **4) 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, your evaluative and planning processes and actions you've taken based on those processes. An ideal response length is 2-3 paragraphs.

Application Narrative.

- **5) YOUR BOARD, VOLUNTEERS, AND STAFF (IF ANY): How is your board, volunteers, and staff (if any) reflective of your organizational community?** If relevant, please share how they are also 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.

Application Narrative.

- **Please submit a listing of board 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 leadership in relationship to its mission and organizational community.

Application Narrative.

- **6) 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 showing how the work of your organization is meaningful to your organizational and geographic community.** This can be letters of support from a diverse array of community partners or valued members of your communities inside or outside of the arts sector; a document of quotes from past or current program participants; or anything else in the voice of community members <u>outside</u> 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*

Application Narrative.

- **7) 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.

Questions?

Calculating Budget.

- Current proposed scenario for applicants who are 501(c)(3)
  - Average of three years cash expenses - numbers pulled from 990.
    - Practice similar to what other state arts agencies with analogous grant programs do.
  - For FY23 – two possibilities I see:
    - FY21, FY20, and FY19.
    - FY20, FY19, and FY18.
  - Ensures compliance and timely filing on the state's end.
- Current proposed scenario for fiscally-sponsored organizations.
  - Profit and Loss statements from past two fiscal years.
  - Organizational budget from current fiscal year.
  - 990 from fiscal sponsor from one of last two fiscal years.
- Reactions?

Final Report.

- 1-hour meeting with me:
  - Could take a variety of different formats including small group.
- Programming we offer in Organizations' portfolio will be informed by GOS-O applications, specifically denials.
- Final report will no longer have narrative questions.
  - Will be asking for federally required data.
  - Will be asking for specific financial numbers or other data for aggregation and case-making purposes.
  - Friday March 4!

Thank You!

More questions or feedback?
Email Todd at todd.Trebour@arts.ri.gov