



## Access Arts Grants

### *Fiscal Year 2027 Guidelines*

Harford County Cultural Arts Board provides Access Arts awards to enhance arts experiences for youth, senior, disabled, and other underserved populations in Harford County. These awards are intended to ensure the ongoing availability and accessibility of the arts for Harford County youth (ages 0-17), seniors, people with disabilities of any age, and other populations traditionally underserved by the arts.

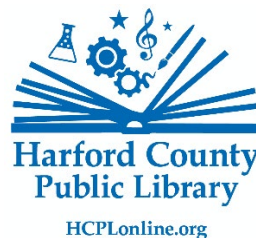
Funding Period: September 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

Application Deadlines and Review Cycle:

<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Reviewed On</b>
June 15, 2026	August 17, 2026
August 15, 2026	October 5, 2026
September 15, 2026	November 2, 2026
October 15, 2026	December 7, 2026
November 15, 2026	January 4, 2027
December 15, 2026	February 1, 2027
January 15, 2027	March 1, 2027
February 15, 2027	April 5, 2027

Final Report Deadline: July 15, 2027

Harford County Cultural Arts Board  
1221-A Brass Mill Road, Belcamp, Maryland 21017  
Culturalartsboard.org



To obtain this publication in an alternate format, please contact Harford County Cultural Arts Board at 410-273-5601 ext.6509 or [arts@hcplonline.org](mailto:arts@hcplonline.org).

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## OVERVIEW OF THE HARFORD COUNTY CULTURAL ARTS BOARD

Founded in 1973, the Harford County Cultural Arts Board's (HCCAB) mission is to "Preserve, enhance, and promote the culture of Harford County, Maryland." Its goal is to serve as the primary local arts funder and resource for arts and cultural organizations, independent artists, and the public of Harford County, MD, by providing grants, sponsoring workshops and events, championing the arts, providing professional development opportunities, and ensuring ongoing access to high-quality arts and cultural programming that inspires, educates, and connects the communities of Harford County.

As outlined in Harford County Code, Chapter 9, Part 2, Article XVIB, HCCAB consists of 15 citizen representatives and one ex-officio, non-voting member of the Harford County Council. Board members must be residents of Harford County who are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.

The Harford County Cultural Arts Board has the following duties:

1. Promote and support the overall development of arts and culture in Harford County;
2. Encourage local government and citizen interest in the arts and culture;
3. Act as the official Arts Council for Harford County in order to accept and disburse funds from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Since December 2015, Harford County Cultural Arts Board has operated under the auspices of the Harford County Public Library (HCPL) Board of Library Trustees. Its operations, grants, and programs are administered by staff employed by HCPL.

All grants, operations, and programming are made possible by an annual County Arts Development Grant from Maryland State Arts Council.

## Access Arts Grant Program Overview

To carry out its mission to “preserve, enhance, and promote the culture of Harford County, MD,” HCCAB provides Access Arts awards to enhance arts experiences for youth and underserved populations in Harford County. These awards are intended to ensure the ongoing availability and accessibility of the arts for Harford County youth (ages 0-17), seniors, people with disabilities of any age, and other populations traditionally underserved by the arts.

Applications for Access Arts (AA) awards are accepted between May 2026 and February 2027 on a rolling basis while funding remains, with monthly deadlines to ensure timely reviews. Organizations may submit one (1) AA application per deadline and are eligible to apply to other HCCAB grant programs. Award amounts vary up to a maximum of \$5,000, and organizations are limited to \$5,000 in total AA funding per fiscal year. Organizations that have received previous HCCAB grants must be in good standing and up to date with required reporting.

**Access Arts awards do not require matching funds.**

### Eligibility

1. Nonprofit organizations that are incorporated in Maryland and receive tax-exempt status from the US Internal Revenue Service, whose principal place of business is in Harford County, and who regularly serve youth, seniors, disabled populations, or other targeted underserved populations in Harford County.
2. Units of government, public schools, private schools (with tax-exempt status), and faith-based institutions (with tax-exempt status) based in Harford County who regularly serve youth, seniors, disabled populations, or other targeted underserved populations in Harford County are also eligible.
3. Nonprofit applicants must be in good standing with the IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search, Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation, as well as Maryland Office of the Secretary of State - Charitable Organizations Division.

### Grantee Requirements

1. All grant-funded activities must occur within the designated funding period, September 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027. Any activity rescheduled outside of this funding period is no longer eligible unless previously approved by the HCCAB Coordinator in writing.
2. Applicants must certify that they comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

3. Applicants must certify that they comply with Title IX, Section 1681 et seq. of the Education Amendments of 1972.
4. Applicants must certify that they comply with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 6101-6107.
5. Applicants must certify that they comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended.
6. Organizations must hold their activities in spaces accessible to persons with disabilities and make *reasonable* accommodations (i.e. sign language interpretation, assistive listening devices, large print programs, etc.) when provided with an appropriate notification of need.

### Eligible Activities

Applicants may apply for support of direct costs for the following eligible arts and cultural experiences:

- On-site arts or cultural experience at the applicant’s facility, artist-in-residence program, event, or limited term direct arts or cultural program outside of the school’s curricula.
  - Maryland Artist in Residence: bring a teaching artist on-site to work with youth over a defined period of time.
  - Maryland-based Visiting Performers: bring an arts or cultural performance, such as theatre, music, storytelling, literary/poetry, dance, etc., on-site for single or multiple day performances.
- Off-site or field trip experiences, including:
  - Visits to Maryland arts and cultural performances or events
  - Arts or cultural exhibits at Maryland museums or historic sites
- All experiences must be in person in the state of Maryland. Virtual programming is not eligible.
- Programs or events organized or hosted by the applicant organization that charge for tickets or require paid admission to participate are not eligible. These programs or events may be eligible for funding under HCCAB’s Arts Programming Grants.

### Allowable Costs

Grant funds may be used towards any of the following:

- Artist fees, including planning and performance costs
- Mileage fees for Maryland-based artists paid at the current IRS rate for travel to and from the program site
- Hotel/lodging costs for programs further than 50 miles from the artist’s residence

- Ticket costs for performances or museum or historic site visits when part of an off-site experience or field trip
- For off-site or field trip experiences, round-trip transportation from the applicant's home location to performance, museum, or historic site, when provided by a Maryland-based transportation company
- Art materials and supplies directly associated with the proposed activities

### Unallowable Costs

Grant funds may not be used towards any of the following:

- Programs presented by applicant's staff. Contractual artists, including recurrently contracted artists who provide supplementary programming, are allowable.
- Payment to artists-in-residence or visiting performers who live outside of Maryland
- Tickets to performances, museums, or historic sites located outside of Maryland
- Transportation to performances, museums, or historic sites located outside of Maryland
- Virtual programs
- General art supplies
- Capital projects or improvements
- Major equipment purchases
- Paying down existing debt
- Re-granting activities
- Scholarships
- Activities that are part of school curricula
- Pro-rated salaries, rent, or utilities
- Fundraising activities
- social functions, parties, or receptions
- The purchase of alcohol
- Activities that benefit only the members of an organization or those activities limited to all but an organization's membership
- Lobbying costs
- Compensation for board members who are also employees (defined as those who receive a W2 form)
- Contributions to any persons who hold, or are candidates for, elected office, to any political party, organization, or action committee, or in connection with any political campaign or referendum.

**Access Arts costs will not be funded retroactively. Pre-award costs are limited to 30 days prior to the start of the funding period.**

### Application

AA applications must be submitted by the hosting organization.

When identifying artists involved in programming, a CV or resume is not required if the artist is included in one of the following teaching artist rosters:

- [Maryland State Arts Council Teaching Artist Roster](#)
- [Maryland State Arts Council Touring Roster](#)
- [Arts for Learning Maryland](#)

Grant applications must be completed in HCCAB's online grant portal, <https://harford-county-cultural-arts-board.wizehive.app/program/access-arts-grants>. A link to GrantSpace can be found under the Grants menu on the [culturalartsboard.org](http://culturalartsboard.org) website.

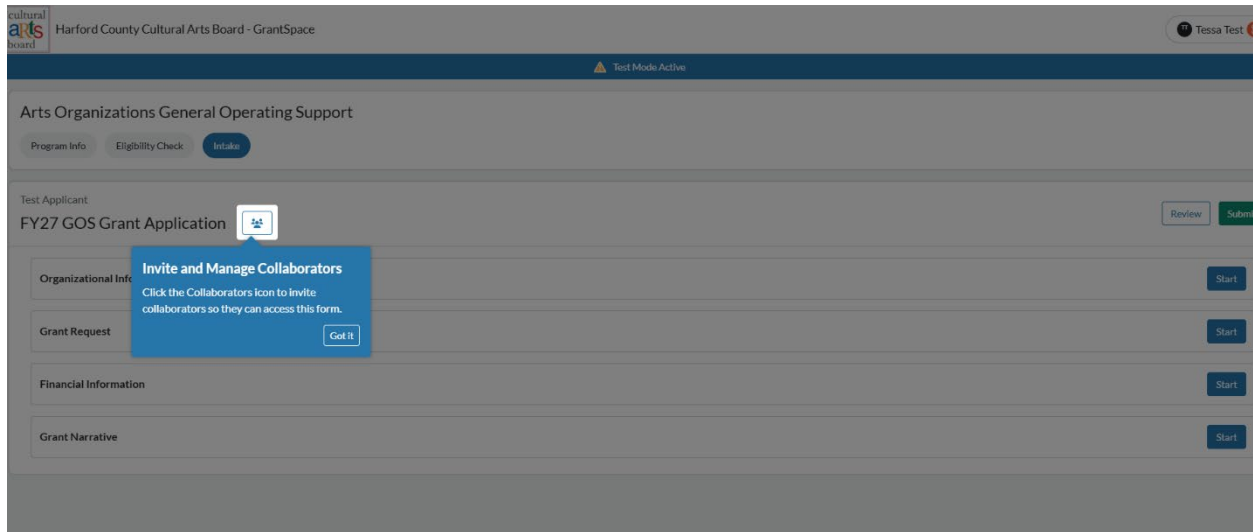
If you have issues accessing or using GrantSpace, please reach out to [arts@hcplonline.org](mailto:arts@hcplonline.org) for assistance.

Applications must be submitted by the stated deadlines. Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the HCCAB Coordinator and are not guaranteed.

**HCCAB does not accept responsibility for lost, misdirected, late, incomplete, or unsubmitted draft applications.**

### Harford County Public Schools

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) applications for support over \$2,000 must confirm the HCPS Grants Specialist approves this request by either 1) including a signed document from HCPS Grants Specialist as a supplemental document, or 2) adding the HCPS Grants Specialist as a "collaborator" and allowing them to digitally confirm their support within the application prior to submission. The collaborator invitation is located in GrantSpace at the top of the application page (example below).



The \$5,000 fiscal year limit for AA awards is applied by school within the HCPS system.

### Application Review

1. First, the HCCAB Coordinator will review all submitted applications for eligibility and completeness. Applicants missing any required application information will be contacted and given one week to revise and submit missing information before their application is declared ineligible.
2. All eligible AA applications will then be reviewed by the HCCAB board at their August, October, November, December, January, and February meetings, pending each board members conflict of interest recusals. Final funding amounts will be based on the amount of funding remaining for AA awards in that fiscal year.

### Evaluation Criteria

The review of AA grant applications will be based on the following criteria:

- *Application completeness*: Is the application complete, clear, with all required documents submitted?
- *Budget*: Is the budget reasonable for the proposed program or event?
- *Arts program*: Is the proposed program or event an arts or cultural event? Does it support HCCAB's goal of ensuring broad access to arts and cultural programs?
- *Access*: Does the proposed program or event serve Harford County youth aged 0-18, seniors, disabled populations of any age, or other underserved populations?

## Awards

AA awards will be finalized at eight (8) meetings of HCCAB: August, October, November, December, January, and February. HCCAB meetings take place on the first Monday of the month. The HCCAB Coordinator will email all applicants with the status of their application following each meeting. Successful applicants will be emailed instructions on how to access the Grant Agreement, which serves as the contract between the grantee, HCCAB, and HCPL. If the Grant Agreement is not completed by the given deadline in your email correspondence, the award will be considered forfeited, and the obligated funds will be returned to the HCCAB budget for future grantmaking activities.

AA grant payments are made in a single payment. To receive the grant payment, AA grantees must submit invoices or receipts for all related program or event costs, including any receipts for tickets, transportation, or artist fees, along with a signed Grant Agreement. If your receipts total less than the approved amount, the grant payment will be adjusted to reflect the actual cost of the activity. No payments will be made until HCCAB receives these required documents.

*Grant disbursement may be impacted by the timing of MSAC grant delivery. Every effort will be made to disburse approved grant funding as close to outlined schedule as possible. Any delays will be communicated to grantees by the HCCAB Coordinator.*

Grant awards are contingent on the availability of funds from the Maryland State Arts Council, a Maryland State agency under the authority of the Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film, and the Arts.

Failure to comply with any requirements or terms outlined in this guidance document or in the Grant Agreement may result in the organization being required to repay funds and will jeopardize future grant eligibility.

## Reporting Requirements

AA grantees are required to submit one (1) final report to HCCAB. Failure to submit required reports may impact future grant eligibility and may result in the organization being required to repay grant funds.

- **Final Report:** A final report is required for all AA grantees. The final report will outline the outcomes and impacts of grant-funded activities. Supplemental materials including photographs, event programs, advertising materials, and links to relevant online program materials are required to be submitted with the final report. Additionally, grantees must maintain and provide the following impact and audience data with the final report: number of artists participating, number of paid artists,

total in-person audience, total virtual audience, total in-person juvenile (0 – 18 years) audience. AA final reports are due not later than July 15, 2027.

- Financial Reporting: HCCAB reserves the right to request financial reports or other documents relating to the operations or activities of an AP grantee at any time with appropriate notice.

If a significant change is made to any AA-funded program or project, HCCAB must be notified in writing within 30 days.

### Records Retention

All records relating to the expenditure of grant funds must be retained by the grantee for no fewer than seven years (7) from the date of submission for the Final Report. With reasonable notice, grantees may be required to produce these records for inspection, review, or audit to HCCAB or HCPL personnel.

### Grant Promotion and Credit Requirements

Credit must be given to HCCAB and MSAC whenever and wherever possible – verbally, in print, or digitally – including but not limited to verbal announcements, advertisements, press releases, program brochures, flyers, website or social media event descriptions. When including HCCAB and MSAC logos online, please link to both websites:

[www.culturalartsboard.org](http://www.culturalartsboard.org) and [www.msac.org](http://www.msac.org).

Please use the following credits in print and online:

- Support for this (arts program, event, presentation, etc.) has been provided in part by the Harford County Cultural Arts Board with funding from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Or

- (Arts Program, Event, Presentation, Etc.) is supported in part by the Harford County Cultural Arts Board with funds from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Logos and credit examples are always available at [culturalartsboard.org](http://culturalartsboard.org).

### Ineligible or Declined Applications

Applications that do not receive funding typically fall into one of two categories: ineligible or declined.

- An application is marked as ineligible if it is not complete or does not comply with the stated eligibility requirements of the grant program. An application can be marked ineligible at any time during the review process.

- An application may be declined for several reasons:
  - Due to funding limitations;
  - The information provided is incomplete or insufficient to make a final award determination;
  - There are material inconsistencies between the application and the organization's actual operations;
  - There are significant financial or operational circumstances that reasonably suggest the applicant is, or may become, unable to use the grant funds in alignment with grant requirements and the grant agreement.

Applicants may request feedback on their application by contacting the HCCAB Coordinator at [arts@hcplonline.org](mailto:arts@hcplonline.org). All feedback requests must be made in writing.

#### Contact Information

The HCCAB Coordinator is available for technical assistance throughout the application process. This may include one-on-one conversations and draft application review and feedback.

- Meg McReynolds, HCCAB Coordinator
  - [arts@hcplonline.org](mailto:arts@hcplonline.org)
  - 410-273-5601 x6509