

CNY Arts

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ONONDAGA COUNTY MICROGRANT GUIDELINES

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OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Onondaga County MicroGrant Program is to provide grant funding for arts and cultural projects, programs, and services offered by nonprofit organizations and grassroots entities that contribute to the cultural development of Onondaga County.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Who may apply: Nonprofit organizations and community-focused unincorporated entities in Onondaga County

Award Amount: Up to \$1,000

Available Funding: \$20,000

How to apply: All applications must be submitted online through [Submittable](#).

MicroGrant funding will be distributed in two rounds.

ROUND 1 OF 2

Project Period: January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026 **

Application Launch: Monday, March 2, 2026

Application Deadline: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Award Announcement: on or before Friday, May 15, 2026

** If you have held or plan to hold an arts event taking place within 2026 but prior to the application deadline, you are eligible to apply.

ROUND 2 OF 2

Project Period: January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027

Application Deadline: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Award Announcement: on or before Wednesday October 21, 2026

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

To apply for the MicroGrant, applicants must:

- Have a prior year operational budget of **less than** \$20,000.
- Have a permanent address located in Onondaga County.
- Produce arts and culture programming occurring January 1, 2026–March 31, 2027.
- Attend a CNY Arts Grant Seminar (either in person or online)

Unincorporated entities **are eligible** to apply but must have a short consultation call with CNY Arts Program Staff prior to submitting an application. The time and date of the consultation will be a required field in the application.

The following are **not** eligible for MicroGrant support:

- An organization with a prior year operational budget of **more than** \$20,000;
- An agency of the County (includes libraries);
- An educational institution, school or educational foundation;
- A radio or television broadcasting network or station, a cable communications system, or a newspaper or magazine;
- An organization that is engaged solely in the acquisition or physical restoration of property;
- An organization that has received direct funding from Onondaga County for 2026;
- Individual artists;
- A CNY Arts Grantee with an outstanding final report from a prior year grant

Organizations are eligible to receive one MicroGrant award in 2026.

- Applicants awarded funding in Round 1 are ineligible to apply for Round 2.
- Applicants denied funding in Round 1 are welcome to reapply in Round 2.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Grant dollars could cover expenses related to:

- Artist and talent fees;
- Space rental for arts and culture programming;
- Marketing and communication costs;
- Operating support directly related to arts and cultural programming, including administrative and personnel fees; contractual fees and equipment, dues and subscriptions

PROGRAM TIMELINE

Below are key dates for the MicroGrant Program. Please note we do not accept applications or corrections after the deadline.

ROUND 1	
Project Period	January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026
Application Opens	Monday, March 2, 2026

Mandatory Seminar Option #1: Online, Live	Thursday, March 5, 2026 2-3 PM (RSVP here)
Mandatory Seminar Option #2: Online, Recorded	Available Friday, March 6, 2026
Application Deadline	Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 11:59 PM
Award Announcement	Friday, May 15, 2026
Final Report Deadline	January 30, 2026

ROUND 2	
Project Period	January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027
Application Opens	Thursday, April 9, 2026
Mandatory Seminar Option #1: Online, Live	TBD
Mandatory Seminar Option #2: Online, Recorded	TBD
Application Deadline	Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 11:59 PM
Award Announcement	Wednesday October 21, 2026
Final Report Deadline	April 30, 2027

New in 2026! MicroGrant awards will be distributed in two rounds. Applicants are only eligible to receive a single MicroGrant award across both cycles.

We recommend submitting an application in Round 1 if the following applies to you:

- The programming for which you are requesting support is occurring in 2026.*
- You have sufficient information about the project (venues, collaborators, budget, etc.) to submit a clear and complete proposal before the Round 1 deadline.
- It is necessary or beneficial to receive the grant funds by early June 2026.

Apply in Round 2 if the following applies to you:

- The programming for which you are requesting support is occurring in 2026 OR the first quarter (January–March) of 2027.**
- Information about the project (venues, collaborators, budget, etc.) is clarified after the Round 1 deadline.
- Receiving award notification in October 2026 and funding in November 2026 aligns with your project timeline.

*No funding for 2027 programming will be distributed in Round 1. Grants can support projects that occurred in 2026 prior to the application deadline or award date.

** Round 2 funding can support projects forthcoming within the eligible project period, or that have already occurred within the eligible project period.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications must be completed and submitted through **Submittable** via:

<https://cnyarts.submittable.com/submit/>

You may save your progress on Submittable as you complete your application. Please note that once the application has been submitted, it **cannot** be edited any further.

Upon completing and successfully submitting an application through Submittable, you will receive an automated email confirmation to the registered email address. **If you do not receive an email confirmation, the application has not been correctly submitted and cannot be considered for funding.**

For further assistance, please refer to the [Submittable Help Forum](#) or contact the CNY Arts [Regrants Program Staff](#).

Attendance at the Applicant Support Webinar is required. This free, public seminar is designed to provide applicants with an understanding of the purpose and eligibility requirements of the MicroGrant opportunity. Attendees must register in advance using [this link](#). A recorded version will be available on the CNY Arts website by Friday, March 6.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

APPLICANT INFORMATION

- Contact information of applicant;
- CNY Arts funding history;
 - New applicant? Y/N;
- 510(c)3 status;
- Organization Summary

BASIC PROJECT INFORMATION

- Brief project summary, including dates & locations;
- Project budget and grant request amount

PROJECT NARRATIVES

You will be asked to provide detailed project descriptions in response to the project narrative questions, such as:

- Artistic/cultural merit of project;
- Community engagement;
- Venue/Timeline;

- How you frame success for this project;
- Admission fees

UPLOADED DOCUMENTS

- Project Budget Form;
- Prior Year Annual Operating Budget;
- Biographies or Resumes of Key Artists;
- For 501(c)3 organization applicants: Proof of nonprofit status and list of staff and Board of Directors;
- Letters of support (optional); and
- Additional artistic samples and support materials.

HOW GRANTING DECISIONS ARE MADE

Grant awards and funding recommendations will be determined by a competitive peer review process conducted by a panel of artists, arts administrators, and community leaders from throughout Onondaga County. The panel's funding recommendations will then be submitted to the CNY Arts Board of Directors for approval.

Panelists for the MicroGrant program are nominated by residents and community members of Onondaga County and are subsequently appointed by the CNY Arts Board of Directors. Panelists must be nominated and must be residents of or work in Onondaga County to serve. Panelists are paid a nominal honorarium to participate and may not serve for **more than three consecutive years**. To nominate yourself or another individual to serve as a peer review panelist, please complete [this nomination form](#). New panelists will be selected on a rolling basis.

SCORING CRITERIA

All applications are reviewed by CNY Arts staff for completeness and eligibility before they enter the Peer Review Panel Process. The Peer Review Panel will then use the following criteria to evaluate and score each application:

ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL MERIT (40%)

- Clarity of arts and culture program being proposed, its intended audience, and benefit to community;
- Experience, credentials, and work samples of proposed artists and personnel;
- Originality, innovation, relevance within the community

PUBLIC SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT (40%)

- Level of engagement with intended audiences;
- Availability of free or low-cost attendance options;
- Thoughtful engagement with audiences from historically excluded communities (those communities might be cultural, racial, ethnic, religious; related to age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, income level, education, geographic location, access to transportation, etc.)

CAPACITY & FEASIBILITY (20%)

- Overall clarity of project proposal with defined objectives;
- Previously demonstrated ability to implement projects;
- Clear budget that aligns with project scope

PANEL SCORING RUBRIC

We share this scoring information to support you in crafting a strong application.

	3 (makes a strong case for public funding)	2 (makes a moderate case for public funding)	1 (makes a limited case for public funding)	0 (does not make a case for public funding)
ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL MERIT (40%)	Proposed arts and culture programming is described with complete clarity.	Adequately describes the proposed arts and culture programming.	Minimally describes the proposed arts and culture programming.	Proposed program is unclear, or insufficient arts and culture component.
	Has notable artistic/cultural significance for its community.	Has moderate artistic/cultural significance for community.	Has minimal artistic / cultural significance for community.	Doesn't demonstrate artistic/cultural significance.
	Offers something unique and/or innovative to its community.	Offers something moderately unique or innovative to its community.	Limited unique or innovative elements to its community	Does not demonstrate uniqueness or innovation.
	Proposed artists are high caliber and well-suited to the project.	Adequate information about proposed artists and their suitability to the project.	Minimal information about engaging artists who would be suited to the project.	No indication of engaging suitable artistic collaborators.
PUBLIC SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT (40%)	It is clear how many people the project will reach, and in what capacities.	Adequate evidence the project will have reach corresponding to its scale.	Limited indication of the project's intended audience, or that it can reach them.	No indication of project's intended audience, or that it can reach them.
	Project is developed and executed in meaningful partnership with area groups.	Includes plans for moderate partner engagement.	Includes limited partner engagement.	No indication of the applicant engaging with community partners.
	All participation free or affordable for intended community.	Pricing includes ample access to free or affordable tickets.	Pricing includes some access to free or affordable tickets.	Free or affordable tickets are not available.
	Ongoing, intentional approach for engaging participants from at least one historically excluded community.	Offers a plan for starting engagement with audiences from at least one historically excluded community.	Acknowledges engagement with historically excluded communities, but plan is limited or unclear.	No clear or feasible approach to engaging with audiences from historically excluded communities.
CAPACITY & FEASIBILITY	Budget is clear and relates to the proposed project.	Budget could be more detailed, but raises no significant questions about project's viability	Budget raises moderate concerns about the project's viability.	Budget is incomplete or incorrect and raises significant questions about viability.

(20%)

Demonstrates capacity to produce successful programming of this size and scope	Applicant offers moderate detail about how they will organize and manage the project.	Applicant offers limited detail about organizing or managing the project.	Insufficient explanation of how applicant will organize and manage the project.
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APPLICANT SUPPORT & ACCOMMODATIONS

CNY Arts provides extensive, free assistance to all interested applicants.

Regrants Program Staff offer one-on-one consultations [by appointment](#).

Available accommodations include but are not limited to interpretation or translation services (including a translation function built into our website), computer or technical support, budgeting support, grant-writing support, or project development support. For more information, contact the CNY Arts [Regrants Program Staff](#).

Our impact is enhanced when people from different backgrounds with unique perspectives are engaged in our grantmaking activities and decision-making processes, which is why we deliberately build a board, staff, panel, and grantee pool that reflect the communities we serve. We are committed to eliminating disparities in access to the arts and arts and culture funding and to advance equity in our organization and community. CNY Arts will continue to deliberately address systemic barriers to opportunity and is committed to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and access for all residents in our service area.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF RECIPIENTS

Organizations that receive a 2026 MicroGrant award must meet the following requirements.

- Sign and follow to the terms laid out in the contract (funding agreement);
- Produce all funded activities as described in the application;
- Send CNY Arts an advance schedule of all funded events;
- Provide CNY Arts with complimentary tickets for all funded events for auditing purposes, as applicable;
- Immediately and in writing notify CNY Arts of any changes to the project, including dates, locations, admission fees, artists hired, or activities conducted (all changes to funded projects are subject to approval);
- Submit a final report within 30 days of completing the funded project

CREDITING REQUIREMENTS

- Prominently and correctly include the following credit language in all printed and published materials:

Made possible with the generous support from the County of Onondaga.

- Credit language should be accompanied by the CNY Arts logo (found [here](#)) and the Onondaga County seal (found [here](#)).
- Language should be used in all printed, broadcast, or online publicity related to the services supported by Onondaga County and CNY Arts, or in any program, publication, catalog, film, or comparable product.

NOTIFICATION OF PROGRAMS/EVENTS AND UTILIZING ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

- All grant-funded events, projects, and programs must be submitted to **CNY Arts' Arts & Entertainment Calendar** (cnyarts.org/events) at least 30 days in advance of the first event.
- Agencies must maintain an up-to-date profile on the CNY Arts directory (cnyarts.org/directory) for the full contract period.