

Questions and Answers:

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11. What do you mean by “directly related to enhancing arts access and education and the preservation and promotion of Minnesota’s history and cultural heritage?”

1. Can I apply for multiple projects that equal \$7,368.42?

- A. Yes. If your projects are related, you may submit one application describing the theme of your project. Examples include, but are not limited to, submitting an application for Lumberjack Days; Legacy Day; Culture Through Music.

HOWEVER, if your projects are very different from one another—such as constructing a stage AND bringing in an exhibit from the MN Historical Society, you would need to complete two different applications for the projects.

2. What if my project costs more than \$7,368.42?

- A. As long as you have funds elsewhere to complete the project, it is not an issue to submit an application for a project that costs more than \$7,368.42. Please specify on the application, under the Budget worksheet, how much you have in matching dollars and the source. Note, we cannot fund projects that will not be completed. Therefore matching dollars must exist.

3. How specific do I have to be on the application about my proposal(s)?

- A. Be as specific as you can, as this will help you later in the process. If you think you want to bring in a polka band, make some calls before submitting the application to see if a band is available for your fair. If you apply for a project—such as having a polka band perform—and none are available to book, the contract will either be void or must be amended. Do you have to know the band name? No, but for your sake is it helpful to know the band and how much they charge. Why? Because the Equal Share application asks for a Budget worksheet. If you’re fairly accurate on the estimated costs, completing the Reconciliation Form, which asks for actual costs, will be a breeze!

4. Can I be reimbursed for an old project?

- A. No. All expenses must be incurred from the day the contract is signed to the day the project is completed.

5. How soon can I spend the money?

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- A. You can spend the money as soon as the Department of Agriculture has approved all signatures on the contract. The MDA will mail a copy of the original contract when all signatures have been accepted; payment will follow shortly thereafter. Once those funds have been released, that award is yours.

6. How long do I have to spend the money?

- A. Any advance payment the State issues a Grantee must be spent and reconciled within a year of the first check's date. The first check you'll receive is for an advance payment of 90% of the award. You have one year from the date you see on the mailed check or the deposit date, if you signed up for an EFT, to spend the funds and submit the Reconciliation form to the MDA.

7. Can I collaborate with other organizations in my community?

- A. Yes, although the County Fair Arts Access and Cultural Heritage Grant is only issued to county fairs. For example, if you are collaborating with your local arts board, that's fantastic! And contracting out work to them is fine. However, the money we give to you can only be spent by the fair. A fair cannot receive an award from the State and turn that money over to another organization to have them manage the funds.

8. Why is there an application?

- A. The County Fair Arts Access and Cultural Heritage Grant money is required, by state law and the Minnesota Constitution, to be spent on projects that fulfill certain criteria. An application gives the State an idea of how the grant will be spent to ensure everything's legal and constitutional.

At the MDA, we want this process to be as simple as possible for you.

- For the Summary of the Proposed Project and Project Potential Impact questions, we really want your responses to be 200 words or less. If you can summarize your answers in two sentences, great!
- The Project Evaluation Plan will help you complete the Closeout Evaluation; both are required by law.
- The Work Plan should be relatively simple, as you'll have been brainstorming about who you'll be working with, project feasibility and timelines.
- The Budget Worksheet asks for estimates, not exact costs. However, the more accurate your estimates, the easier it will be to complete the Reconciliation Form (and the easier it will be to get the 10% reimbursement).

9. If my proposal doesn't comply with the legislative objectives, will someone at the MDA notify me? What is the next step?

- A. The MDA will definitely notify you. We'll work on what parts of your application are great, and which parts need to be clarified, amended, or just plain can't be funded. The MDA reviews applications as they are received. If you get your application in early, we can let you know in a day or two any questions we have, and that will give you time to brainstorm and rework any details.

10. After I receive the grant, what are my responsibilities?

- A. Reconciliation Form and Financial Statements: Once the first check has been issued, it is the fair's responsibility to keep receipts, invoices, and document problems that arise and how the fair resolved them. Unless your fair is audited, the MDA will not be requiring the submission of financial statements, but they must be available upon request. Once the project is completed, you will need to record how the money was spent on the Reconciliation Form.

Closeout Evaluation: In the Equal Share application, you provided objectives and how you'll measure the success of those objectives. When the project is complete and the fair has concluded, we'll need those results to be shared with the public.

General Documentation: Document your progress! Take pictures of people appreciating what project your fair decided to undertake! Document accomplishments so your fair, your community, our state, the MDA, can brag about your results!

11. What do you mean by “directly related to enhancing arts access and education and the preservation and promotion of Minnesota’s history and cultural heritage?”

- A. “Direct” means a project must, in and of itself, highlight art, history or culture. Anything one step removed from directly touching art, history or culture, does not qualify.

This could mean improving lighting in an arts building so fair attendees can truly see and appreciate the paintings, quilts, woodwork, etc, exhibited in that building. It could mean investing in easels to display photographs and paintings. It could mean bringing in a band to hold a workshop so fair attendees can be exposed to a type of music they are normally not familiar with. It could mean bringing in an exhibit from the historical society so fair attendees can experience an exhibit they would normally not have access to. It could mean improving a historic building so fair attendees can enter the building and see and touch a bit of history.

It does NOT mean fixing plumbing in a building, making the exterior of a building more attractive, improving bathrooms in a facility, etc.