NORTH
Dakota | Council on the Arts
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Arts in Education Collaboration Grant Program

Program Overview and Application Instructions
NDCA Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)

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Arts in Education Collaboration Grant Program

Arts in Education Collaboration (AIEC) is a grant program that provides up to $6,000 to arts organizations, schools, school districts, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies to build collaborations and community partnerships in order to increase access to high quality, sustained arts education for K-12 students in North Dakota.

Program Deadlines

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE	Earliest Project Start Date	Latest Project End Date	Final Report Due Date
Thursday, April 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. CST	July 1, 2025	April 30, 2026	May 30, 2026

Incomplete or late applications are not accepted.

Program Officer
Matthew Anderson | Email: mbanderson@nd.gov | Phone: (701) 328-7593

Contact the program officer for application support or questions.
Alternate application formats available upon request.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW
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The Arts in Education Collaboration (AIEC) grant program includes collaborations between teachers or departments within a school, between multiple schools within a district, between multiple rural school districts, or between a school and a community arts resource nonprofit organization or for-profit organization. Projects may take place in school during regular school hours, after school, during summer sessions, or during professional development in-service workshops.

Note: Applicants seeking an entry-level or shorter experience are encouraged to consider NDCA's Artist in Residence (AIR) grant program. Applicants may receive only one NDCA Artist in Residence grant OR Arts in Education Collaboration grant per fiscal year.

Considerations
North Dakota Council on the Arts' AIEC grant program asks applicants to consider:
- What is standing in way of 'arts for every student' in their K-12 schools?
- What steps can be taken to address this challenge?

Program Goals
- North Dakota school and district leadership, arts organizations, and community members are focused on providing students and teachers with increased access to K-12 arts education and implementing a vision of high quality, sustainable arts education programming
- Encourage, support, and strengthen arts education partnerships
- Support initiatives for working toward long-term, self-sustaining, participatory, and meaningful arts education experiences for students

Eligibility
A North Dakota school district, government agency, or nonprofit organization is eligible to apply and serve as the lead partner and/or fiscal agent for the grant.
Applicants must be one of the following:
- **Federally tax-exempt nonprofit arts organization**
- **Federally tax-exempt non-arts nonprofit organization -** Arts budgets must be isolated from the larger entity's budget.
- **Public entity such as a unit of state, local, or tribal government**
- **Public and private schools**

All Applicants Must:
- Be physically located in North Dakota
- Have the majority of arts programming, services, or activities take place in North Dakota
- Primarily serve and engage North Dakota audiences and participants
- Be the organization that will receive the funds, not a fiscally sponsored group

This Program Funds:
- Fees for teaching artists (including travel expenses)
- Fees for an arts education consultant or provider of professional development (including travel expenses for the consultant)
- Fee for a project coordinator
- Administrative fees, including printing costs for lesson plans or other documents, and other administrative costs related to project planning and delivery. Administrative fees may not exceed 10% of the total requested amount.
- Fees for professional performing arts groups, student tickets, and transportation expenses for exhibitions and performances when there is a clear connection to the overall arts learning plan. Funds cannot be used to support stand-alone field trips or assemblies.
- Materials and supplies required for lesson/project implementation
- Fees for performance or exhibition space

This Program Does NOT Fund:
- Strictly field trip or performance-based activities
- Proposals that seek to replace arts programs, curriculum, or arts educators in schools
- Regular salaries for employees of schools, districts, or educational cooperatives
- Individual professional development activities
- Travel outside of the state of North Dakota
- Fees for out-of-state contractors, unless prior approval is given by the program officer

Ineligible Expenses:
- Projects completed in previous fiscal years
- Payment of project costs incurred before the project start date
- Debt reduction or elimination
- Replenishing depleted reserve and/or endowment funds
- Starting, matching, adding to, or completing any type of capital campaign or capital expenditures
- Capital costs, such as improvements, construction, property, equipment costing over $5,000
- Permanent acquisitions
- Fundraising events and activities
- Prizes, awards, or benefits
- Entertainment functions, including food, beverages, alcohol, and associated costs
- Sales inventory and related fees/taxes
- Fellowships, scholarships, or tuition fees
- Projects that are part of a required course or curriculum
- Travel and projects that take place outside the geographic boundaries of North Dakota
- Projects that are not open to the general public
- Projects involving the arts as therapy unless artists are employed as art therapists

Ineligible Activities:
- Projects that violate any federal, state, or local laws, ordinances, or policies
- Projects that support activities that are essentially for the religious socialization of the participants or audience or discriminate against people or groups
- Projects that attempt to influence any state or federal legislation or appropriation
- Projects that are managed by another entity other than the applicant

Ineligible Applications:
- Applications that are not complete and received by 4:30 pm CST on the application deadline
- Applications that use NEA or other federal funds or NDCA funds toward the match

Ineligible Applicants:
- Grantees of NDCA's Artist in Residence grant program in the current fiscal year
- Applicant is not in compliance with any active grant agreement with NDCA

Grant Award Amount

All grants are subject to available funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the North Dakota State Legislature.

Minimum award request: $2,500
Maximum award request: **May not exceed $6,000 or 50% of the total project cost**, whichever is less.

For previously awarded applicants in this program, the maximum grant award amount may be gradually reduced over a 4-year period depending on NDCA funding allocations.

Matching Funds
- A 1:1 match is required. For every one (1) NDCA dollar requested, the applicant must match or raise one (1) dollar from a cash source other than from NDCA and National Endowment for the Arts.
- Match sources may include general operating funds, past surpluses, other grants, earned income or revenue that is planned to be raised specifically for the project, and documented in-kind services and contributions.
- In-kind cannot be more than 50% of the total match, which means no more than $3,000 can be in-kind if the total request from NDCA is $6,000.

Multiyear Funding and Panel Review
Applicants may receive an Arts in Education Collaboration grant for up to four (4) consecutive years.

For each subsequent year of funding, the applicant must demonstrate progress towards the original programming goals and/or expansion of those goals.

After four (4) years, the grantee will have been able to grow the project into a sustainable program with other resources and/or will have expanded the project to include more partnerships, students, teachers, schools, and/or art forms.

Some grantees may qualify for funding beyond the 4-year period. To be considered, contact the program officer.

Project Requirements

All projects must include the following:

1) A Minimum of Two (2) Collaborative Partners, one from each category below:
- School(s) or school district(s)
- Parent group(s) or other community partner(s)

2) Demonstrated Commitment from School Administration and Teachers
It is important that the application demonstrate **active and ongoing** collaboration between the teachers, staff, and arts providers.
- School superintendents and principals play a pivotal role in establishing a vision for the arts in their school by articulating goals associated with the proposed project and providing direction for the allocation of time and resources. They should demonstrate a high level of leadership and commitment through participation in the proposed project activities when appropriate.
- Teachers are the cornerstones to success in all new instructional efforts and must be included in the planning and implementation of the proposed plan.

3) Core Strategy
A strong proposal increases access to high quality, sustained arts education for K-12 students rather than focusing on one-time exposure or enrichment activities or short-term projects with limited student engagement. Examples of strong proposals:
- **Planning and foundation building:** Audit of available community resources, strategic planning, curriculum development, evaluation, and resource development.
- **Student learning in the arts:** Sequential, hands-on learning in the arts, through the arts, and/or about the arts
- **Professional development:** Training and learning for certified arts educators, classroom teachers, administration, or teacher/artist teams.

4) Qualified Personnel/Experts and Alignment with ND State Standards
Arts learning projects must align with ND State Standards. Consultants and providers of professional development paid through the AIEC grant should have knowledge and expertise in addressing standards and various forms of assessment in the arts.

5) Realistic Scope
>
> The project proposal should demonstrate focused and achievable goals that are aligned with the partners' current capacity, needs, and resources provided by this grant.
>
> - The project plan may focus on one grade level, a full school, or the entire district, or, in the case of small, rural communities, a plan between several school districts.
> - The project plan may concentrate on one arts discipline, several arts disciplines, the integration of an arts discipline with another subject area, or any combination of these.

6) Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance
>
> NDCA requires AIEC applicants to consider physical and programmatic accessibility as an integral part of each organization's planning and budgeting process. The planned activities are required to be accessible to all participants.

Review Criteria

1. Program Goals (0-5 points)
- Described project is realistic in scope with achievable goals, aligns with the school's and district's vision for arts education and the intent of the Arts in Education Collaboration grant, increases access to high quality arts learning, and meets the needs of the described students.
- For past applicants, the applicant demonstrates progress towards the original programming goals and/or expansion of these goals.
- There is an accurate and realistic budget that is aligned with the project plan and includes an appropriate match and mix of income sources.
- There is demonstrated management capacity based on the budget plan and other application materials.

2. Partnerships and Collaboration (0-5 points)
- Project demonstrates meaningful partnerships and a process for engaging schools, school leadership, artists and arts organizations, and/or community members in support of arts learning.
- There are appropriate partners on board committed to active collaboration.
- There are appropriate levels of expertise and experience for key arts educators and program leaders.

3. Strategy (0-5 points)
- Project includes a clear process or strategy that works toward long-term, participatory, and meaningful arts learning rather than a one-time exposure or enrichment activity. Project includes possible next steps or ideas for extending and growing the project in coming years.

4. Documentation/Evaluation (0-5 points)
- Project includes a clear plan and process for documenting student work and for evaluating the final outcomes or success of the project.

Generating Project Proposals that Address the Review Criteria and Program Goals
Applications that are the most successful in receiving funding address the topics below:
- Enhance or advance the school's vision for arts education
- Increase access to arts learning
- Include and/or enhance community partnerships
- Have clearly stated and achievable goals and objectives
- Demonstrate depth of learning for students
- Demonstrate depth of learning for teachers
- For returning applicants - Quality of Final Report from the previous AIEC grant. The applicant demonstrated responsible use of funding, provided a thorough evaluation that was supported through documentation and evidence, and included a feasible and sustainable plan for moving forward that builds upon success and challenges.

Application Review Process

1) After Submission: Applications are reviewed by staff for eligibility and completeness.

2) Panels: Panelists are selected annually. For more information, visit: arts.nd.gov/get-involved/become-panelist. Online meetings are open to the public. Anyone may attend and listen to the discussion but may not present or participate. See arts.nd.gov/news/ndca-meetings for meeting dates.

3) Review Criteria: The panel evaluates each application and makes funding recommendations to NDCA's Board based on how well the applicant addresses specific review criteria. Panelists individually score complete applications. Those scores are averaged to arrive at the final score.

4) Panel Score: To be recommended for an award, an applicant must receive an average total score of at least 60% out of 100%.

5) Board Approval: NDCA's Board of Directors has final authority to approve grants.

If Funded

Notification
- Communication regarding the grant award is via email (administrator@grantinterface.com).

Payment
- **Request for Funds Form and Timing:** Community Arts Access grantees are required to submit a Request for Funds to receive payment of grant funds awarded. After submission, allow up to four (4) weeks for payment.
- **Disbursement Amounts:**
    1. Requests can be made up to 80% of the total grant award upon signing the grant agreement. The remaining 20% can be requested after the completion of the online final report.
    2. Or grantees can request the total amount of the grant award after the completion of the online final report.
- **Return of Funds:** Grantees are required to spend the entirety of the NDCA grant award. In cases where a match was required, groups are required to raise and spend the match requirement as well as the grant award. The final report must show expenses at or greater than the budgeted amount or funds will need to be returned.

Reporting
- **Change Reports:** Any project changes to the activities, timeline, or budget need to be approved in writing by the program officer. Note that not all project changes can be approved.
- **Final Reports:** An online final report is due by May 30, 2026. The final report must include documentation and evidence of evaluation. Overdue final reports will affect future eligibility to apply for and/or receive NDCA funding.

Recognition
- Grantees are required to acknowledge NDCA support by using the **NDCA logo and credit line** on all promotional materials of the funded activity.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

How to Apply

Grant applications are submitted online through the NDCA online grant system.

1. To apply, go to grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=ndca
2. Register or log into account.
3. Click "Apply" at the top navigation of the website.
4. Click the "Apply" button next to "Arts in Education Collaboration FY26 Application."

Application Support

First-time applicants are encouraged to contact the program officer if they have questions while preparing the application. The program officer can assist with eligibility questions and project idea development and goals.

Online Application Tips

- You can type responses to application questions into text boxes or you can work in another document and paste the answers in. The online grant system automatically saves your work. There is also a "Save Application" button at the bottom of the application form.
- Rich text formatting is limited in narrative questions. You may use bullets, numbers, bolding, italicizing, and underlining. Text boxes with character length limits include letters, numbers, spaces, and paragraph breaks.
- **Links are only allowed in the work sample section.** Links provided in any other sections will not be reviewed.
- Confirmation emails are sent automatically to the applicant after the application is successfully submitted. If you do not receive a confirmation email (administrator@grantinterface.com), contact the program officer.

Application Requirements

1. Applicant Information
2. Narrative
3. Support Materials (Partnership Form, Project Personnel Resumes, Letters of Commitment)
4. Budget
5. Work Samples and Supplemental Material
6. Determination Letter

Applicant Information

SAM Unique Entity ID *(Required)*
For organizational applicants, provide a System for Award Management (SAM) Unique Entity ID (UEI) number. Applicants can attain a SAM UEI without having to complete a full entity registration.
1. To apply, click here sam.gov.
2. You will need the organization's legal name and address.

Please check your SAM UEI expiration date and renew your SAM UEI before it expires.

Organization Mission Statement *(Required)* (750 maximum characters)
Provide the applicant's board-approved mission statement. Do not include additional information such as vision or values statements.

Organization/Group History *(Required)* (2,000 maximum characters)
This section helps introduce your group to panelists who may not be familiar with who you are.
• Provide a brief general history of the applicant. Summarize why and how the group formed and what it does.
• Give a brief description of the group's structure.
• What kinds of events or programming has the organization provided? Briefly describe activities over the past five (5) years.

NEA Questions *(Required)*
NDCA collects this information for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Authorizing Official *(Required)*
Provide the name, phone, and email address of the person who has the authority to make financial decisions for the applicant organization.

Project Coordinator *(Required)*
Provide the name, phone, and email address of the person who will manage the day-to-day aspects of the proposed project.

Applicants may receive Arts in Education Collaboration grant funding for up to four (4) consecutive years. Indicate which year the organization is currently applying for. *(Required)*
From the menu provided, indicate year 1, 2, 3, or 4.

Narrative

In this section, describe the details of the proposed project and illustrate how the proposal addresses the Arts in Education Collaboration grant goals and intentions.

Project Title *(Required)* (75 maximum characters)
Provide a short title describing the project.

Project Start Date *(Required)* The earliest date that can be entered is 7/1/2025.

Project End Date *(Required)* The latest date that can be entered is 6/30/2026.

1) Background *(Required)* (5,000 maximum characters)
- What is the specific arts education need that will be addressed?
- Who are the key project partners, how did they come together, and how did they select and agree on this focus area?
- Describe any defining characteristics of the students, teachers, and partners. If the project will serve a high percentage of students who are considered underserved (such as economically disadvantaged, geographically isolated, disabled, or composed of specific cultural or ethnic groups), describe the population and any relevant statistical and demographic information.

2) Project Summary *(Required)* (6,000 maximum characters)
- Provide a **brief** summary of the proposed project's key components and goals.
- How will the need identified above be addressed?
- What are the project's expected outcomes?

3) Project Plan (Required) (10,000 maximum characters)
- How will the project partners work collaboratively and ensure shared goals in an ongoing way?
- How will the project be developed, implemented (address who will manage the project activities), documented, and evaluated?
- How are the arts lessons aligned with National Common Core Standards or ND State Standards in the arts?
- How will the student learning be assessed?
- How might this project serve as a building block toward sustainable arts education programs in the applicant's school and community? How or why will it lead to increased support for arts education and a broader arts education plan in the future?
- As appropriate, include general timeline information or target implementation dates for key components of the plan.
- For applicants that have received an AIEC grant in the past, briefly address how the project has grown or changed since your initial proposal, noting any key achievements, challenges, and revisions.

    Project Evaluation Tip: To have an impact, to learn from successes and mistakes, and to assure sustainability, it is important that that the project proposal has a plan to document and evaluate the outcomes. "Getting Started with Program Evaluation: A Guide for Arts Organizations," located here nasaa-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Getting-Started-with-Program-Evaluation.pdf, is a valuable resource for any organization funded through a state or federal grant.

4) Arts in Education Advocacy and Outreach *(Required)* (1,500 maximum characters)
- Describe with whom and how the results of the project will be shared. Consider including the following: legislators, ND Department of Public Instruction, superintendent, school board members, parents, and community at large.

5) Accessibility and Accommodations *(Required)* (3,300 maximum characters)
- Every grantee commits to hold all funded activities in spaces that meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements. How does the activity meet this requirement and ensure people with disabilities can participate? *Examples might include ADA accessible venue, ASL interpretation, audio described performance, large print programs, sensory tours, etc.*

- How will accessibility options be publicized and made available to the public?
- Who is responsible for handling inquiries concerning accessibility?

General Information about Accessibility and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
NDCA's applicants' programs and facilities should ensure the arts are accessible to every person. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides guidance to ensure the arts are available to everyone.

If you have questions about the ADA or need ideas to make your programs and facilities accessible, contact NDCA's Accessibility Coordinator Rhea Beto at rbeto@nd.gov or (701) 328-7594 or visit the National Endowment for the Arts' Office of Accessibility resource page arts.gov/impact/accessibility.

Support Materials

Partnership Form *(Required)*
Download the AIEC Partnership Form here: https://www.arts.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/grants/AIECPartnershipFormFY26.pdf. Complete and upload to the online application.
- On the Partnership Form, provide the names and contact information of the organization(s) and individuals who are participating in the proposed project. This may include teaching artists, consultants, lead teachers, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, parent groups, and other local organizations.

Project Personnel Resumes *(Required)*
Include a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of three (3) summary resumes for key project personnel. This can include lead teaching artists, arts education consultants, and/or program coordinators. (1-page maximum for each resume, upload a PDF)
- Select individuals who are central to the project's success and/or those who will be compensated with NDCA grant funds.
- It is not a requirement to submit resumes for teaching artists or consultants who are already pre-approved on NDCA's Teaching Artist Roster https://www.arts.nd.gov/grants/arts-education/rostered-artists.

Letters of Commitment *(Required)*
Include a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of two (2) signed Letters of Commitment from the primary organizational project partner(s). Letters should confirm the specific nature of the partner's role in the proposed project, including resources they intend to provide such as financial support, staff time, and/or facilities. Do not provide letters from staff or consultants for the project. (upload PDF files)

If the lead applicant is a nonprofit organization:
- Include a letter from the school principal or a district administrator.
- If submitting a second letter, strong choices include a K- 12 leader or an additional community partner.

If the lead applicant is a school or district:
- Include a letter from someone in a leadership role at the partnering organization.
- If submitting a second letter, strong choices include a district superintendent or an additional community partner.

Budget Form and Instructions

Download the budget form here: https://www.arts.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/grants/AIECFY26BudgetandInstructions.pdf Complete and upload to the online application.

Work Samples and Supplemental Material *(Required)*

Submit **one (1) supplemental material or work sample type or one (1) of each** that demonstrates the quality of arts teaching and learning, the quality of the planning process, and/or a documentation of outcomes. Select items that will provide the panel with a deeper understanding of the teaching artist's work.

Supplemental Material *(500 maximum characters)*
Provide a context statement that includes the date(s) of project completion and who was involved.

Notes about Rights
- The works and the rights to those works resulting from NDCA grants are the sole property of the artist(s).
- Copyright registration is the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- All work samples submitted are public information and will not be returned. NDCA may use samples in promotional materials.

Complete work samples include:
1. Images, video, and/or written work
2. A work sample description

Images
Provide a **JPG or JPEG** file for **one to five (1-5) images** with a maximum of **5 MB each.**

Video
Provide a URL link for **up to two (2) video samples** for a maximum total length of **3 minutes.**
- Video files must be uploaded to youtube.com/ or vimeo.com/
- Include only the material intended for panel review
- Include a Vimeo password, if applicable
- No video slideshow of images or promotional videos

Online Samples: Keep video samples available online until notified of grant award status.

Written Work
Provide a **PDF file** for **up to three (3) pages** of written work.
- Include only the material intended for panel review
- Remove title pages, table of contents, etc.
- Prose: double-spaced
- Scripts: formatting should follow industry standards

If you do not want your video(s) to be public, see guidelines below on how to make them private and available for panel viewing.
- In YouTube, set the video sample to "Unlisted" (not the "Private" setting listed). This allows anyone with the link to view the video without a Google account and it is not public for viewing.
- In Vimeo, when uploading a video, select "Only people with a password can see this video."
- For YouTube support, visit support.google.com/youtube.
- For Vimeo support, visit https://help.vimeo.com/hc/en-us.

Work Sample Description

Include the following information for each work sample:

1. Artist Name
2. Title of Work
3. Completion Date
4. Location - Provide the location of any work sample that is a performance, concert, event, exhibition space.
5. Medium – Provide the medium for any work sample that is visual art (e.g., acrylic, clay, etc.).
6. Duration/Pages
7. For video and audio samples, state the length of the sample and the length of the complete artwork (e.g., 2 minutes of a 46-minute symphony).
8. For written work, provide the number of pages of the portion of the artwork that will be read in the work sample. (e.g., 2 pages of a 12-page scene, or 3 pages of a 200-page novel).

Determination Letter *(Required)*

Provide the Federal IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter, North Dakota certification of nonprofit incorporation, or tax-exempt certificate letter for a public entity. (upload a PDF)