



# 2025-2026 Artist Support Grant Guidelines

The 2025-2026 Artist Support Grant application window is open through September 30, 2025 to artists living in Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Iredell and McDowell Counties. This program will provide financial support to emerging and established individual artists as well as small, unincorporated groups of collaborating artists who have resided in Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Iredell, and/or McDowell Counties for at least a year.

## Eligibility and Scope

Artists representing visual, craft, performing, traditional, and interdisciplinary art forms are encouraged to apply. Applicants should demonstrate a commitment to spending a significant portion of their time on their work as artists. **Funded projects must take place from January 1 through December 31, 2026.** Awards may range from \$500-1,500, and applicants may receive full or partial funding for professional development projects that can include workshops, equipment purchases, marketing, website development, etc. This is a highly competitive regional program that receives over 30 applications each year. Please note that previous award recipients must wait at least two years after the award year to reapply.

The program is administered by the Burke Arts Council, Caldwell Arts Council, United Arts Council of Catawba County, Iredell Arts Council, McDowell Arts Council Association, Hiddenite Center, and Rock School Arts Foundation, in partnership with the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

## Timelines

- September 1, 2025 - Application Window opens
- September 30, 2025 @ 11:59pm – Application deadline**
- November 30, 2025 – Applicants will receive funding status notification by this date
- January 1 - December 31, 2026 – Project must take place within this timeframe
- June 30, 2026 – Grant funds must be requested by this date
- January 31, 2027 - Final Report submission deadline

**Before applying, Caldwell County artists must contact the Caldwell Arts Council at 828-754-2486 for an initial review to confirm that the project meets required criteria and to receive instructions for the online application.** In addition, applicants who do not have access to a computer or lack adequate internet, etc. are encouraged to request assistance from the Arts Council.

## Grant Guidelines

- Individuals and Artist Collectives: Both individual artists and small unincorporated groups of collaborating artists are eligible to apply.
- Residency: Artists should have lived continuously in the region in which they are applying for at least one year prior to the application deadline. region (Region 14: Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Iredell, and McDowell)
- Applicant must be at least 18 years old and either a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident alien. Artists who live in more than one region should apply only where they spend most of the year.

- All members of a collaborating team must be North Carolina residents, live in the region in which they are applying, and meet the other eligibility requirements. Résumés for all team members documenting residence must be included with the application.
- Multiple Awards: Artists who are sole proprietors of organizations that have already received funding for FY2025-26 from the N.C. Arts Council are ineligible to apply. Awardees must also wait at least two years after their most recent award year before becoming eligible to reapply.
- Conflict of Interest: Current board and staff members of the consortium partner organizations and their immediate family members are ineligible.
- Student Status: The Artist Support Grant is intended for adult, non-student artists. Artists enrolled full time in undergraduate or associate degree-granting programs may not apply for the grant. Those in certificate programs are generally eligible. Artists pursuing graduate degrees in subjects other than their art form may be eligible if they meet the other eligibility criteria. Other questions and special circumstances should be discussed with your county's Arts Council representative.

### **Eligible Projects and Costs**

- In project year 2025-2026, applicants may apply for up to 50 percent of the grant to support artist fees.
- Completion/Presentation of a New Work: Cost of resources necessary to complete or present a significant new work (e.g., purchasing art supplies or equipment or space rental). Digital may qualify.
- Career Promotion: Projects aimed at advertising artists' work and/or demonstrating their skill level (e.g., websites, portfolios, audio-visual documentation, and online presentation).
- Training: Costs to attend a class or workshop (in-person or virtual) aimed either at enhancing the artist's skill level or professional development (e.g., a master class or workshop taught by acknowledged authorities in the applicant artist's medium).
- Travel: Costs of transportation, lodging, and food for training, professional conferences, or research.

### **Ineligible Projects and Costs**

- Scholarships for undergraduate- or graduate-level education.
- Projects that support or oppose a particular candidate for public office.
- Projects that are exclusive to members of a particular religious' faith group.
- Nonprofit initiatives.
- Projects that do not have a direct effect on the applicant's growth as an artist (e.g., the promotion of other artists' work).

### **Evaluation Criteria**

All complete applications will be reviewed by a panel of arts professionals with experience in various disciplines. Panelists will score each application based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Artistic Merit: Demonstrated talent in an art form and overall excellence of the artist's work as demonstrated by work samples; clear commitment to a career as a practicing professional artist.
- Project Merit: Benefit of the proposed project to the artist's professional growth and practice; and the proposed project's feasibility.

### **Apply**

**Before submitting an application, Caldwell County artists must contact Caldwell Arts Council Executive Director Ellen Ball at 828-754-2486 or [director@caldwellarts.com](mailto:director@caldwellarts.com) for an initial review to confirm that the project meets required criteria. If eligible, the artist will receive instructions to access the online grant application portal.** Those who do not have access to a computer or lack adequate internet, etc. are encouraged to request assistance from our office.