CITY OF KENT ARTS COMMISSION
COMMUNITY ARTS SUPPORT PROGRAM

PURPOSE

The City of Kent Arts Commission's Community Arts Support Program provides financial support for arts projects by arts and cultural organizations, community service groups and individual artists. The program is designed to encourage, develop, and support community arts programming that serves the public in the Kent area. Through the program, the Commission seeks to provide opportunities for innovation and for the development of unique services outside the scope of the Commission's existing programming. The Kent Arts Commission will support these programs financially as funds are available and budgeted for the year.

BACKGROUND AND STATISTICS

- The City of Kent Arts Commission was established by ordinance in 1975 and is funded by the City of Kent. The Commission is the volunteer body aiding the City of Kent in providing leadership in the arts.

- The Kent Arts Commission allocates Project Support funding through an annual competitive application process.

- In 2026, $10,200 was awarded to five arts organizations through the Community Arts Support Program. Award amounts ranged from $1,500 to $3,500.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS INCLUDE:

- Independent Artists
- Arts and Cultural Organizations of all sizes, including professional and community-based groups
- Community groups involved in arts activities

* *Organizations are encouraged to obtain IRS not-for-profit status (501 (c)(3) status), but such status is not required to receive Project Support funding.*

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS:

- Proposed projects MUST take place in Kent or the Kent School District service area.
- Proposed projects MUST serve and be accessible to residents of Kent.
- Proposed projects MUST show additional sources of revenue or community support. In-kind contributions (i.e. volunteer time and/or donated space, supplies, services are allowed)

- Independent artists must present new works to the public.
- Applicants MAY NOT submit more than one application to the program in one year.
- Organizations and individuals recommended for funding must meet the following: legal obligations for public benefit, acknowledgement of Kent Arts Commission support, proof of insurance, compliance with laws, completion of contracts, approval of artists and evaluation. (See "Obligations of Award Recipients" on page 4 for more detailed descriptions.)
- Priority will be given to projects that involve Kent-based artists and organizations. However, this priority will not exclude outside organizations when it is determined that their services are not available within Kent or that they will supplement existing programs.

FUNDS MAY BE USED TO:

- Produce performances, exhibits, special events, or programs that bring high-quality arts experiences to Kent residents.
- Provide opportunities for independent artists to develop and present new work in all mediums.
- Improve arts and cultural opportunities for youth, multicultural audiences, seniors, and special populations by providing participatory and educational opportunities.
- Increase access to arts and cultural events by providing discount tickets and/or free educational programs.

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS:

Due to certain City, State and Federal law regulations and established Kent Arts Commission policy, the following are **NOT** eligible for funding:

- Purchase of equipment or real property
- Scholarships or tuition assistance
- Projects that have already been completed or partially completed
- General operating support
- Applications from religious or political organizations or institutions
- Events in which fundraising is a primary purpose
- For-profit projects
- Capital construction projects
- Cash awards to individuals
- Projects without additional sources of revenue or community support
- Projects exclusively or primarily benefiting the membership of the organization or those which preclude reasonable access by the public
- Continuing support *(Financial support from the Kent Arts Commission must be considered by all recipients as supplementary to their normal sources of revenue and should not be expected to continue beyond the time frame as defined in any current contractual relationship with the Commission.)*

REVIEW CRITERIA:

Quality

- Artistic excellence and innovation demonstrated by the proposed project
- Quality of the applicant's existing programming or work
- Relation of the project to the mission and goals of the organization or artist
- Artistic accomplishments/qualifications of the artistic personnel involved
- Impact of the project on the intended audience

Need for Services

- Evidence of public interest or demand for the service
- Availability of comparable services locally

Project Impact and Public Benefit

- Public benefit from the project
- Number of people the proposed project will serve
- Accessibility to general and special needs populations
- Efforts to build or diversify the audience and/or participants

Feasibility

- Ability of the applicant to accomplish the project
- Management capabilities and experience of the project director
- Appropriateness of the project budget and request
- Financial stability of the applicant as evidenced by history and budget
- Accurateness and completeness of the application materials
- Well-developed publicity and audience development plan
- Extent of community support, including community involvement and cash or in-kind donations from individuals, foundations, corporations (REQUIRED)

**Generally, an organization must have been in operation for at least a year before it is eligible for funding consideration. Therefore, projects that would create new local institutions of the arts are rarely considered for funding.*

APPLICATION MATERIALS:

All applicants must submit:

- An online application
- Support materials (resumes, newsletters, press clippings, etc.)
- Work sample (link to video, sound clip, or photos)

Additionally, organizations must submit:

- List of Board of Directors
- Current fiscal year's operating budget

- Financial statement or audit from last year
- IRS determination letter of not-for-profit status (if applicable)

Additionally, independent artists must submit:

- Resume

OBLIGATIONS OF AWARD RECIPIENTS:

Acknowledgment/Promotional Responsibility

Organizations and individuals receiving funding from the Kent Arts Commission's Community Arts Support Program will be required to provide promotional materials for the project and should budget for this expense. The Kent Arts Commission must be acknowledged for its support in all printed materials, signage, announcements, and other ways appropriate to the project. Promotional credit must be clear and prominent, or support to artists/organizations may be forfeited. Suggested language: ***"This project is made possible through the support of the City of Kent Arts Commission."***

Public Benefit

The Kent Arts Commission is authorized to purchase cultural services, but not to donate public money to organizations or individuals. It is the responsibility of the contractors to assure that the performance/activity is open and accessible to the public. Organizations and individuals receiving funding MUST provide quantifiable public benefits. This may include special promotional materials to low-income or multi-cultural audiences, reduced cost tickets, free community outreach, plans for physical access to the facility for persons using wheelchairs and/or plans for program accessibility for audience members with hearing or visual impairment.

Insurance

Recipients of funding are typically required to demonstrate proof of insurance for the project. Individuals and organizations are to provide a certificate of insurance evidencing general liability coverage and naming the City of Kent as an additional insured.

Compliance with Laws

Organizations and individuals receiving funds for services must comply with federal laws governing Fair Labor Standards, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Act of 1991, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (ADA) of 1990, and any other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Contracts/Disbursement of Funds

Recipients of funding will be required to enter a contract for services. After funding recommendations are approved, Kent Arts Commission staff

will work with the recipients to develop a contract detailing the service(s) to be provided.

Any funds committed to a project will be disbursed directly to the organization or individual responsible for services rendered. Contractors are paid on a reimbursement basis and the Commission will require receipt of the project budget and all final evaluation materials before funds will be released. The funds will only be dispersed in the fiscal year for which they were committed. All payments will be made within thirty days (30) of the date services have been rendered and the contractor has completed and submitted all final evaluations.

Evaluation

Funding recipients are required to provide evaluation materials to the Kent Arts Commission upon completion of the program to include: A completed copy of the online program evaluation form, the project budget, event posters/flyers, and promotional materials documenting acknowledgment of City funding. These evaluation materials must be submitted with the invoice for payment.

Approval of Artists

The Commission reserves the right to prior approval of artists involved in any Commission funded program.

NOTIFICATION:

Applicants will be advised of Commission recommendation for support and City Council funding after the final 2027 City budget is approved (generally December of 2026).

DEADLINE:

Friday, October 9, 2026, 5 p.m.

Applications must be submitted online by the published deadline.

QUESTIONS:

Please direct all questions regarding the guidelines and funding procedures to:

City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department
City of Kent Arts Commission
220 4th Avenue South, Kent, WA 98032-5895
(253) 856-5050
Rbillerbeck@kentwa.gov

Potential applicants are encouraged to call in advance to discuss their proposed projects. Kent Arts Commission staff will be happy to clarify any restrictions or qualifications in advance so that applications have the best chance for success.

p:cultural/kentartscommission/casp/casp27/27guidelines