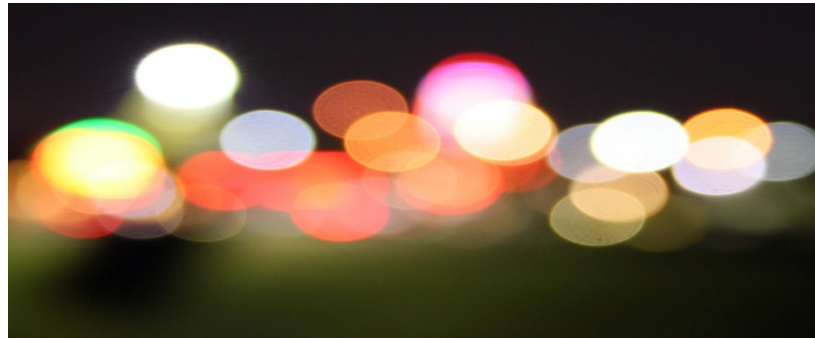




NAC Grant Writing Tips





Getting started...

Start Early! Review guidelines and scroll through the application to see what is required.

Applications are submitted via [NAC's online grant system](#). Does your organization already have an account? If not, you'll need to set it up. If you're not sure, contact NAC (nac.grants@Nebraska.gov) to inquire.

Contact NAC staff with any questions about the appropriate grant category, deadlines, or other concerns.

Think of your application as a planning tool.



Understand the Review Process

- Grant reviewers may know nothing about you – use your application to make the case for your project
- Get a second opinion from someone who is not familiar with your project. Does the application make sense to them? Does it read well?
- Keep the review criteria in mind. Scoring rubrics for different grant categories are linked on the NAC website.



Applications are aligned with Review Criteria

Refer to rubrics NAC website under different grant categories.

Artistic Quality



Planning & Evaluation



Outreach & Engagement



Underserved Community Outreach



Application Review Criteria and Scoring Rubric ARTS PROJECT GRANTS (APG)

ARTISTIC QUALITY: Evidence that arts are integral to the project and project will have high artistic merit for Nebraska		Average: 32-25 points		Weak: 24-8 points	
40 points	Excellent: 40-33 points	Average: 32-25 points	Weak: 24-8 points		
Project Description	Clear and SPECIFIC explanation of all activities with specific details (city, street, venue, dates, and/or staff)	BASIC explanation of artistic activities, but the specifics are not clearly articulated	INSUFFICIENT OR UNCLEAR explanation of artistic activities; few or no specific details are provided		
Goals	Clearly IDENTIFIED and MEASURABLE goals are provided with an explanation as to how those goals serve the organization's mission	IMPLIED goals are provided with an explanation as to how those goals serve the organization's mission	NO DISCREETABLE goals of the project are provided in the Narrative		
Artistic Merit	Clearly EVIDENT and WELL ARTICULATED artistic value of the project and its significance to the community	IMPLIED but NOT SPECIFIC evidence of the value of the project and its significance to the community	HARD TO DETERMINE or NO evidence of the value of the project and its significance to the community		
Qualifications of Artists	Clear and COMPELLING evidence of the qualifications of the primary artists --or-- if artists are not yet known, there is a CLEARLY EXPLAINED criteria for selection	SUFFICIENT evidence of the qualifications of the primary artists --or-- if artists are not yet known, there is a VAGUE criteria for selection	UNCLEAR evidence of the qualifications of the primary artists --or-- if artists are not yet known, there is NO or an UNCLEAR criteria for selection		
PLANNING & EVALUATION: Evidence that the project will be carried out successfully; completeness and accuracy of application					
30 points		Average: 24-18 points		Weak: 17-0 points	
Planning Process	Clear and EFFECTIVE planning process; identifies key people and specific collaborators and their roles in the project. Timeline is DETAILED and USEFUL as a planning tool.	BASIC planning process description with broad roles or names. Timeline is BASIC with FEW details.	UNCLEAR or INEFFECTIVE planning process; little evidence of planning and/or collaborations seems superficial. Timeline is INACCURATE, CONFLICTING and/or NOT DETAILED.		
Evaluation Process	Clear and EFFECTIVE evaluation process that relates to the project's goals, describing what will be gathered and how results will be used.	BASIC evaluation process, describing what info will be gathered AND the use of the results.	UNCLEAR or NO evaluation process describing what information will be collected or why.		
Budget	ACCURATE, ITEMIZED, REALISTIC budget that reflects what is proposed elsewhere in the application.	ADeQUATE and FEASIBLE budget that reflects what is proposed.	INCOMPLETE, CONFUSING, UN-REALISTIC budget and/or conflicts with other components of proposal.		
Application Quality	WELL-WRITTEN, with ATTENTION TO DETAIL. All components of proposal coordinate with one another (narrative, budget, bios, etc.)	ACCEPTABLY WRITTEN, components corroborative, sufficient detail provided to support proposal. Acronyms have been spelled out and explained, and the narrative contains no spelling errors.	CONFUSING TO READ, components of application are inconsistent with one another; insufficient information to support the proposal.		
OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT: Evidence that the project will positively impact the community					
20 points		Average: 16-13 points		Weak: 12-0 points	
Target Audience	Clearly IDENTIFIED and REASONED target audience. Useful information such as current demographics describe audience and/or community.	VAGUE target audience referenced, but unexplained. Includes generic or unrelated demographics.	NO target audience referenced or explained. No demographics provided.		
Promotion	EFFECTIVE promotion efforts planned to reach the intended audience.	ADeQUATE promotion efforts planned to reach the intended audience.	UNCLEAR or INEFFECTIVE promotion efforts planned.		
Outreach and Accessibility	SUBSTANTIAL education and/or outreach designed to increase accessibility and community participation (i.e. activities open and accessible).	BASIC education and/or outreach designed to increase accessibility and community participation (i.e. "we will create lots of open space.")	FEW or ANY education and/or outreach efforts designed to increase accessibility and community participation (i.e. "we will create lots of open space.")		
Engagement	ACTIVE and DETAILED EFFORTS to engage the public through collaboration in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project (i.e. open houses, public meetings, etc.)	PASSIVE EFFORTS to engage the public through collaborations in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project (i.e. "we will create lots of open space.")	FEW, NO or SUPERFICIAL EFFORTS to engage the public through collaborations in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project (i.e. "we will create lots of open space.")		
UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY OUTREACH - for projects with substantial outreach to "underserved populations."					
*An underserved community as defined by the NEA: "one whose residents often lack access to arts programs due to geographic isolation and/or have limited access to arts resources and programs due to economics, ethnic background, disability, or age."					
10 points		Medium: 8-2 points		Low: 6-0 points	
Underserved Outreach	The majority of participants are from underserved populations. Includes DETAILED explanation as to how project serves underserved audience.	A significant portion of participants are from underserved populations. VAGUE explanation as to how project serves an underserved audience.	An insignificant portion of participants are from underserved populations. INADEQUATE explanation as to how project serves an underserved audience.		



Artistic Quality

A table with multiple rows and columns, likely representing a rubric or checklist for evaluating artistic quality. The table is too small to read the specific text within the cells.

- Explain your project or program clearly and concisely.
- Do the arts drive your project? Make sure that is clear to the reviewer.
- Artist bios help make the case for artistic quality. Administrator bios help to ensure that the project will be well-managed.
- Work Samples also show artistic quality and help tell your story. *Limit three - select your items carefully!*



Planning & Evaluation

A grid table with multiple columns and rows, likely representing a project plan or evaluation matrix. The table is divided into several sections with different background colors (green, yellow, pink, white) and contains various text entries, possibly representing different project phases or evaluation criteria.

- Timeline: Shows plans for a successful project; include pre-planning details.
- Letters of Support: Evidence of public value and community buy-in
- Has this project been funded before? If so, explain how past experience and evaluation is being used to refine and improve it.



Project Planning & Evaluation Process

- *Backward Design* to planning looks at the 'big picture' with the end goals in mind. What do you want to achieve, and how will you get there?
- Use both formative and summative evaluation methods with this approach.



Budget Notes

- Back up information listed elsewhere in your application – make sure budget items reflect all important aspects described in your narrative answers.
- Itemize all major items – explain clearly so outside reviewers understand them.
- Be realistic
- Check grant guidelines for allowable request amounts
- Double-check your math! Make sure proposed Income matches Expenses



Outreach & Engagement

A small, multi-colored grid or table with various colored cells (green, yellow, red, blue). The text within the cells is too small to read, but it appears to be a structured data table or a checklist.

- Who is the target audience in your project, and how are you serving Nebraskans?
- Are you reaching out pro-actively?
- Do your letters of support show community support and impact?



Underserved Community Outreach



Project Title	Project Description	Project Dates	Project Location	Project Status
Project A	Description A	Dates A	Location A	Status A
Project B	Description B	Dates B	Location B	Status B
Project C	Description C	Dates C	Location C	Status C
Project D	Description D	Dates D	Location D	Status D
Project E	Description E	Dates E	Location E	Status E
Project F	Description F	Dates F	Location F	Status F
Project G	Description G	Dates G	Location G	Status G
Project H	Description H	Dates H	Location H	Status H
Project I	Description I	Dates I	Location I	Status I
Project J	Description J	Dates J	Location J	Status J

What is the extent of your outreach to underserved groups and who are they?

This may vary from project to project.

NEA defines underserved communities as lacking access due to geographic isolation, and/or having limited access to arts programs due to economics, ethnic background, disability, or age.



Accessibility

Ensuring access for everyone is a priority

- All NAC-supported projects must be ADA compliant
- Read checklist items carefully
- Consider how you could be more proactive



Additional Considerations

- Address specifics: 'Who, What, When, Where, and Why'
- Be thorough, but succinct. Keep in mind that in some instances panelists must read many applications, and too much information can be overwhelming.
- Be consistent throughout your proposal.
- Answer *all* parts of *all* questions.
- Write for the reviewer who is unfamiliar with you or your project.
- Densely spaced responses make reading difficult for reviewers.



Before you submit your application...

- Is information consistent throughout the application?
- Have you gotten feedback from someone else?
- Will an outside reviewer understand your plans?
- How well does your proposal meet the review criteria?



Please thank your elected officials for their support of the arts in Nebraska!

