

SMALL STEP AWARDS
“Every long journey begins with small steps”



PURPOSE: Arts and cultural heritage activities can play a part in a community's efforts to:

- diversify or strengthen local economies
- improve community systems (such as transportation, urban planning, housing, safety, justice, etc)
- strengthen ties within and between cultural groups

To help communities develop strategies for using arts and culture in these ways, the Colorado Council on the Arts provides Small Step Awards that support planning and development activities.

WHAT WE FUND: A Small Step Award provides up to \$1,000 for a project which:

- furthers one of the three goals, above
- AND is developmental (a small step in a larger plan)
- AND brings together people or organizations with a stake in reaching the goal.

Your proposal may be for such activities as planning, a consultant, meetings, promotional activities, or an arts activity that “tests the waters” of an idea.

Here are some examples:

- A farmer's market wants to pay local folk artists to perform at three consecutive markets to test public response to the idea of including arts at the marketplace.
- The chamber of commerce wants to solicit ideas from local artists to build a brand for the city.
- The downtown business authority wants to place art by local artists in vacant store windows to see whether this improves pedestrian traffic and enhances neighboring businesses.
- A recreation center wants to pilot a new program to hire storytellers who are members of the local Russian and Salvadoran immigrant communities for their summer youth program.
- A Small Business Development advisor wants to test a workshop series on business skills for artists.
- An artist agrees to be the applicant, on behalf of the town's planning office, for a project to put two sculptures in public locations to test the community's response to public art.
- A traditional fiddler's group seeks funds to incorporate traditional music into the county rodeo.
- A newspaper seeks funds for a widget that will more easily allow artists and arts organizations to post upcoming events on the newspaper's website.
- A theatre company seeks planning money to work with the court system on a restitution program for juvenile offenders.

ELIGIBILITY: You are eligible to apply for a Small Step Award if:

- You are a legal resident of Colorado
- OR your organization is a business (nonprofit or commercial) registered or incorporated in Colorado
- OR your organization is a unit of local government (town, park district, county, etc)

You may not apply for a Small Step Award if you have received a CCA grant in the current fiscal year (July 1-June 30). If you have received previous CCA funding, you must have filed a Final Report for that funding. CCA may limit the number of Small Steps Awards granted to an individual or organization over the course of multiple years.

CCA is especially interested in proposals from the following counties: Baca, Cheyenne, Clear Creek, Conejos, Crowley, Dolores, Elbert, Fremont, Huerfano, Jackson, Kiowa, Lake, Lincoln, Moffat, Park, Prowers, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma.

SMALL STEPS DOES NOT FUND:

- arts education programs, unless activities take place outside of the school day and address an economic or community development goal (see the final example, above)
- projects whose primary goal is enabling an individual to create artwork, or strengthening the applicant organization or business
- cost of buildings or construction
- scholarships to colleges/universities
- touring outside of Colorado
- religious or sectarian organizations such as churches
- debt and deficit reduction

SIZE OF AWARD AND MATCH: You may request up to \$1,000. Your request must be matched dollar-for-dollar, and at least half of your match must be in cash. For example, if your total budget is \$2,000, and you request \$1,000 from CCA, then you must provide or raise at least \$500 in cash, and \$500 in donations that directly offset expense items.

TIMELINE: These awards are first-come, first-served. If an award is successful, an award letter and check will generally be mailed 4-5 weeks after the application package has been submitted to CCA. If the proposal is not successful, you will receive a response from the CCA within about 2-3 weeks. The end date of your project must be within a year of the application, and a final report must be submitted no later than a month after your end date.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

- First, contact one of the following individuals and describe your project to them:
 - Community arts specialist Maryo Ewell, 970-641-3570 or maryo@gard-sibley.org
 - Cultural heritage specialist Ronna Lee Sharpe, 970-242-0971 extension 221 or rsharpe@westcomuseum.org
- If they feel that your idea meets the criteria described above in What We Fund, they will send you the necessary forms to complete your application with instructions on where to send your application package. They can assist you in preparing your proposal if you wish.
- CCA staff will make the final funding decision. Not all proposals will be funded. Successful proposals will:
 - Meet the basic eligibility criteria, outlined above
 - AND show at least a dollar-for-dollar match, of which at least half is cash
 - AND articulate a clear goal for a specific cultural heritage group or a clear economic development or community development goal that includes the arts or cultural heritage as a strategy
 - AND show that the proposed idea is a step to meeting this goal
 - AND bring together individuals or organizations who will work together in planning and meeting this goal. CCA is especially interested in artists and arts organizations working with non-arts organizations.
 - (in the case of repeat applicants) AND show that the proposal grows out of what they learned with the previous award and is another step to meeting the original goal.

FINAL REPORT: As you carry out your project, be sure to document your activities with photographs, sample materials such as posters, media clippings, or notes from your planning meetings, depending on the nature of your project. You will submit a Final Report plus these documentation materials to CCA within 30 days after the project ends. We suggest that you look at the Final Report Form (<http://www.coloradoarts.state.co.us/grants/manage/forms/>) before you start so that you know what CCA expects you to provide.