



MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY THROUGH ART

Proposal to Jackson County Arts Grant Administrator

Organization Overview

Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA), established in 1972, is a nonprofit Regional Arts Organization dedicated to enriching communities through cultural programming, education, and creative support. With a mission to strengthen and support artists, cultural organizations, and communities throughout our six-state region of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas, M-AAA facilitates various programs that promote the arts as an essential part of daily life. M-AAA plays a crucial role in enhancing the cultural landscape across the heartland and beyond by providing resources, fostering collaborations, and encouraging innovation.

M-AAA's President and CEO, Todd Stein, brings a wealth of experience and a passionate vision for the arts. A veteran leader in the Kansas City arts community, Stein was instrumental in expanding M-AAA's reach and impact, advocating for greater access to arts and culture, and supporting diverse artistic expressions. Under his leadership, M-AAA continues to evolve to meet the needs of artists and communities while maintaining a steadfast commitment to its core values of creativity, inclusivity, and excellence.

Headquartered in the Crossroads Arts District of Kansas City, M-AAA maintains a practice of investing in the local arts ecosystem. By leveraging its strategic location to connect regional artists with national opportunities, M-AAA champions a vibrant and dynamic landscape for artists and cultural organizations to thrive. This is evident in the ongoing collaboration with Charlotte Street Foundation to offer business skill development for local artists through the 15-year-old Artist INC program.

For 53 years, M-AAA has invested over \$59 million in over 19,000 artists, cultural organizations, and creative communities, working closely with the National Endowment for the Arts, our five US Regional Arts Organization sister agencies, the State Arts Agencies, and Local Arts Agencies in its six-state service region. M-AAA has been working diligently to accomplish the objectives outlined in its FY21-FY25 Strategic Plan. We have completed over 82%, recognizing that many of our objectives (including our DEIA initiative) are ongoing. With just over 17% of our plan remaining, we are ready to enter a new era of strategic planning that will outline our goals and objectives for the next three years (FY26-28).

Arts Grant Administration History

M-AAA has a long and distinguished history of administering grant programs that support artists and cultural organizations across the United States. Over the years, M-AAA has developed a robust infrastructure for managing grants, ensuring that funds are allocated effectively to maximize their impact on the arts community.

One of the most notable recent examples of M-AAA's expertise in grant administration is the \$5 million grant program in partnership with the city of Houston. Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), this initiative was designed to provide critical support to artists and cultural organizations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program aimed to rejuvenate the local arts scene, ensuring artists can continue contributing to Houston's cultural vibrancy. M-AAA's experience and strategic approach to grant administration were pivotal in efficiently distributing these funds and supporting the city's recovery efforts.

In addition to local partnerships, M-AAA collaborates with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) on several national programs, including Creative Forces, Artistic Innovations, the Regional Touring Program, and, most recently, the ArtsHERE program. Creative Forces focuses on integrating the arts into the treatment of military service members and veterans with traumatic brain injuries and psychological health conditions. Artistic Innovations supports the creation of new work by artists and organizations in the region, fostering creativity and encouraging experimentation. The Regional Touring Program helps artists and ensembles reach new audiences by funding tours across state lines, enhancing cultural exchange and accessibility. ArtsHERE supports organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to equity within their practices and programming and have consistently engaged with underserved groups/communities.

M-AAA also administers grant programs tailored for individual artists, such as Interchange and Catalyze. Interchange provides support to artists who engage with their communities through socially impactful projects, emphasizing collaboration and community development. Catalyze is designed to help emerging artists advance their careers by providing funding for professional development and project creation. These programs offer financial support and provide artists with the resources and networks needed to thrive in their careers. Through these diverse and dynamic grant initiatives, M-AAA plays a vital role in nurturing the arts and fostering creative expression nationwide.

The implementation of new marketing efforts at Mid-America Arts Alliance has significantly boosted the organization's visibility and reach of our grant programs. This has resulted in a substantial increase in applications across our grant opportunities dashboard over the past year. This heightened interest underscores the effectiveness of our enhanced outreach strategies and reflects a growing demand for support among artists and cultural organizations.

Project Approach

M-AAA is proudly headquartered in Jackson County, a vibrant hub for arts and culture. Located in the heart of Kansas City's Crossroads Arts District, M-AAA offers a range of dynamic programming that enriches the local cultural landscape. Through initiatives like the Culture Lab, M-AAA showcases artists and programs in our neighborhood and participates in the city's First Friday celebrations. For example, local artist Jill Downen was featured at the Culture Lab, presenting the *I Spoke Truth and Someone Listened* exhibition.

In addition to the Culture Lab, M-AAA delivers impactful programming through many other programs, including Artist INC and ExhibitsUSA. Artist INC supports local artists by providing them with essential resources, training, and networks to advance their careers. Meanwhile, ExhibitsUSA brings high-quality, traveling exhibitions to communities nationwide, enhancing cultural access and education. These programs underscore M-AAA's commitment to nurturing artistic talent and promoting cultural vibrancy in Jackson County.

M-AAA proposes the following timeline for oversight and review of the Jackson County Small Cash Grants to Artist and Small Arts Organizations program:

- July 2024:
 - Discuss priorities and parameters for the grant with Jackson County. Include:
 - Grant Purpose
 - Eligibility Guidelines
 - Panel Review System
 - Final Report Parameters
 - Grant Agreement
 - Funding Distribution
- August 2024:
 - Build grant guidelines and the application form
 - Test application form
 - Prepare for technical training, including a webinar for prospective grantees
 - Prepare for launching a targeted marketing campaign promoting the grant
- September 2024
 - Applications open on Wednesday, September 4, 2024
 - Record and post the webinar training materials online
 - Host drop-in online office hours throughout the month (4 hours per week)
- October 2024
 - Seek and confirm application external reviewers and panelists
 - Application closes on October 14, 2024
 - Applications undergo an internal review for eligibility by M-AAA staff

- November 2024
 - Applications are presented to panelists for review from November 6-27, 2024

- December 2024
 - Panelists meet to discuss award recommendations on December 4, 2024
 - Awards are announced on December 11, 2024
 - Initial funding distribution upon return of grant agreement

- January 2026
 - Following the completion of the grant period, M-AAA will collect final reports from grantees.
 - Final report data will be compiled and reported to Jackson County.

Conclusion

M-AAA is well-positioned to administer Jackson County's grant program, leveraging our extensive experience and proven track record in grant oversight and review. With a strong presence in the local community, including our headquarters in the Crossroads Arts District, and a history of impactful programming, M-AAA is uniquely equipped to understand and address the needs of artists and cultural organizations in Jackson County. Our meticulous grant administration process, which includes comprehensive planning, rigorous application review, and ongoing support and monitoring, ensures that funds are effectively utilized to foster artistic growth and cultural enrichment.

By partnering with Jackson County, M-AAA aims to amplify the reach and impact of the county's grant program, providing crucial resources to empower local artists and enhance the cultural landscape. We are committed to transparency, efficiency, and community engagement, making us an ideal steward for these funds. Together, we can support a vibrant, thriving arts community in Jackson County, driving innovation and cultural vitality for years to come.



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Jackson County Arts Grant Administrator Budget Mid-America Arts Alliance

Grants		\$ 216,500
	Individuals	
	Small-Midsized Arts Organizations	
Panel		\$ 3,500.00
Outreach		\$ 2,000.00
Data Collection/Impact Analysis		\$ 3,000.00
Administration		\$ 25,000.00
Total		\$ 250,000.00

MORE **ART** FOR MORE PEOPLE

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AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF Missouri)
) SS.
COUNTY OF Jackson)

Ivan Lundberg of the city of Kansas City

County of Jackson State of Missouri being duly sworn on her or his oath, deposes and says,

1. That I am the Director of Finance (Title of Affiant) of Mid-America Arts Alliance (Name of Bidder) and have been authorized by said Bidder to make this Affidavit upon my best information and belief, after reasonable inquiry as to the representations herein.
2. No Officer, Agent or Employee of Jackson County, Missouri is financially interested directly or indirectly what Bidder is offering to sell to the County pursuant to this Invitation (though no representation is made regarding potential ownership of publicly traded stock of bidder).
3. If Bidder were awarded any contract, job, work or service for Jackson County, Missouri, no Officer, Agent or Employee of the County would be interested in or receive any benefit from the profit or emolument of such.
4. Either Bidder is duly listed and assessed on the tax rolls of Jackson County, Missouri and is not delinquent in the payment of any taxes due to the County or Bidder did not have on December 31, 2023 any property subject to taxation by the County and if bidder is duly listed and assessed on the tax rolls of Jackson County, Missouri, bidder agrees to permit an audit of its records, if requested by the Jackson County Director of Assessment, as they relate to the assessment of Business Personal Property.
5. Bidder has not participated in collusion or committed any act in restraint of trade, directly or indirectly, which bears upon anyone's response or lack of response to the Invitation.
6. Bidder certifies and warrants that Bidder or Bidder's firm/organization is not listed on the General Services Administration's Report of Debarred and/or Suspended Parties, or the State of Missouri and City of Kansas City, Missouri Debarment List.
7. Bidder certifies and affirms its enrollment and participation in a federal work authorization program with respect to the employees working in connection with the contracted services.
8. Bidder certifies and affirms that it does not knowingly employ any person who is an unauthorized alien in connection with the contracted services.

Mid-America Arts Alliance (Name of Bidder)

By: [Signature] (Signature of Affiant)

Director of Finance (Title of Affiant)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 21st day of June, 2024.

[Signature]

NOTARY PUBLIC in and for the County of Jackson (SEAL)

State of Missouri

My Commission Expires: 04.03.2026

