

Public Art for Neighborhoods Fund: 2024 Community Connection Grants

*Funded by the City of Indianapolis
through the Public Art for Neighborhoods Program*

General Grantwriting Tips

When you submit an application to the Indy Arts Council for the Public Art for Neighborhoods Fund grant program, you are competing with many other worthy projects for funding.

Whether you are new to writing grant applications or you are a seasoned veteran, please consider following a few basic grant writing strategies that will help strengthen your application:

1. **Review the guidelines, instructions, and review criteria carefully before starting to write.** Just about everything you need to know about the program is in those guidelines. There is also a FAQ document providing answers to common questions.
2. **Plan ahead.** Before you even start writing the application, gather the information you will need:
 - Partners' names, addresses, and contact information
 - City-County Council district number and Councillor name. Find your district and Council member here: <https://www.indy.gov/workflow/find-your-elected-official>
 - Outline of project activities: what will you do and why?
 - Anticipated timeline
 - Commitment letters from partners
 - Support letters from the community
 - List of anticipated project income and expense items and the dollar values for each

3. **Ask Arts Council staff for help** with any questions about the program, interpretations of the guidelines, etc. We can help you understand what you need to do, and even review and advise on draft applications. Email jmoore@indyarts.org with questions for this program.
4. **Check to see if there are any answer length limits.** Remember--longer does not necessarily mean stronger! Concentrate on the basics – who, what, when, where, why and how - and keep the review criteria in mind when writing.
5. **Write your narrative responses offline first.** We recommend writing your answers outside of the online application form, as it's easier to share and edit them until you get them the way you want and then paste the completed text into the application form. You can use the basic “note pad” program that comes with your computer to write your texts, or try these online versions:
 - a. <https://onlinenotepad.org/notepad>
 - b. <https://anotepad.com/> (comes with ads though)
 - c. <https://notepad.link/JfcSC>
6. **Don't assume the reviewers know anything about you and your world.** Remember that the information contained in your grant application may be the first contact the reviewers have with you and your partners. Try not to use abbreviations, jargon, etc. that the reviewers may not be familiar with, or refer to local events or situations without a bit of explanation.
7. **Allow yourself enough time to write, edit, and upload your grant application.** This includes getting information from other people, which may take a while, and sending it to other people to review, critique, and proofread. This is not a last-minute activity!
8. **Follow instructions carefully.** For example, answer the questions that are being asked, carefully check file type requirements for uploaded materials, and do not upload or provide additional support materials beyond what is requested.
9. **Coordinate your budget with your narrative.** Make certain the narrative information and the listed income and expenses support each other. Each

should be able to independently tell the story of your project, and they should tell the same story. Make sure that artist fees are fair and generous: we recommend that for this program, dedicate *at least* one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of your request to paying the artist(s) you're working with. And if you're an artist and applying for funding: make sure that you're paying yourself!

10. **Double-check offline for spelling, math, and typographical errors.** Although we don't "take off" points for spelling or grammar, sometimes errors completely change the meaning of what you want to say!
11. **Use your offline version to "copy and paste" text into the application form.** It's so much quicker to share and finalize offline than to compose in the application form. Remember not to use any formatting or special characters in the version you're copying from: depending on where you are copying from, the text could appear like gibberish to the reviewers!
12. **Remember to click "Submit."** You will know you have successfully submitted your application when you see a submission confirmation message on the screen AND you receive an email acknowledgement. If one or the other is not received within minutes, check your spam folder and if it's still not there, email grants@indyarts.org immediately. We can verify whether we received your application—but in most cases, if you see the onscreen confirmation, it was received.
13. **Submit the application form a few days before the deadline—because you CAN edit it after application.** We get it, sometimes you think of something you forgot to say or upload, and now you're kicking yourself. Luckily, our application system allows you to edit a submitted application up until the deadline! Allow yourself some extra time just in case. If you don't need it...great! And if you do make changes, remember to save them by clicking the "submit" button again.