

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE January 17, 2025

TO Honorable Chair and Members of the Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee

SUBJECT **Office of Arts and Culture – FY 2025-26 Cultural Organizations Program Guidelines**

On February 26, 2025, City Council will consider a resolution authorizing and establishing the Cultural Organizations Program (COP) and approve the COP guidelines for fiscal year 2025-26. The Cultural Organizations Program contracts with arts and cultural organizations with budgets ranging from \$100,000 to over \$10 million to provide an annual season of programming for residents and visitors of Dallas. In FY 2024-25, City Council authorized contract amounts totaling \$6,166,801 to 55 organizations under this program.

The FY 2025-26 COP guidelines align with Dallas Cultural Plan 2018 priorities, including alignment to staff and board diversity goals, and resident panel evaluation of cultural programming in neighborhoods around Dallas.

In an effort to respond to the ever-growing administrative demands of Dallas arts and culture organizations, volunteer review panelists, and City staff, the FY 2025-26 COP guidelines propose an administrative change to the execution of the program moving from a one-year cycle to a three-year cycle. The FY 2025-26 COP application will be open to all eligible new and returning applicants and will serve as year one of the three-year cycle with all application, review, and scoring requirements remaining consistent with prior COP guidelines. FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28 will serve as years two and three respectively.

During these interim years, returning applicants will complete a significantly shortened application process that will not require panel review. All returning applicants will instead submit an updated scope of services for the upcoming year, as well as a shortened written application for which applicants will receive updated and more detailed administrative scoring for funding recommendations. Administrative scoring and compliance will hold more significance in the review and funding allocation process for returning applicants to emphasize the importance of contract compliance, financial compliance, and adherence to Cultural Policy diversity criteria.

New organizations wishing to apply for COP may be eligible to apply during the second and/or third years of the three-year cycle (FY 2026-27 / FY2027-28). During these interim years, new applicants will complete a similar application process as the full first-year application of a cycle to include a video submission, panel review process, and panel question and answer session to determine eligibility and acceptance into the program. Additionally, even if funded, applicants must repeat a full application when the following year one of the three-year program cycle occurs, likely FY 2028-29.

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Each year of the three-year cycle, City Council will review and approve updated Cultural Organizations Program guidelines and subsequent funding allocations to eligible organizations. This practice is aligned with Cultural Policy and maintains the same level of review and approval from City Council as prior years' COP processes.

Other updates made in the proposed FY 2025-26 COP guidelines are:

- Application and program timeline
- Program eligibility language to emphasize the required compliance to the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act
- Clarification that all core annual programming must be open to the public for residents and visitors of Dallas and be listed on GoSeeDFW
- Minor wording and document flow updates to improve readability for new and returning applicants, clarify requirements, and update submission deadlines and dates
- Proposed administrative scoring for FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28, which are subject to change as updated guidelines are brought back to City Council for approval

After the FY 2025-26 COP application and review process, cultural service contracts and related funding allocations are awarded in accordance with Cultural Policy. All funding recommendations will first be considered by the Allocations Committee of the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission followed by the full Arts and Culture Advisory Commission. The Commission's funding recommendations will then be brought to City Council in the Fall of 2025 for final review and authorization to execute the associated cultural service contracts.

Please contact me or the Director of Arts and Culture, Martine Philippe, with any questions.

Sincerely,



Liz Cedllo-Pereira
Assistant City Manager

c: Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, City Manager (I)
Tammy Palomino, City Attorney
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Billerae Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Dominique Artis, Chief of Public Safety (I)
Dev Rastogi, Assistant City Manager

Alina Ciocan, Assistant City Manager
Donzell Gipson, Assistant City Manager (I)
Robin Bentley, Assistant City Manager (I)
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer
Elizabeth Saab, Chief of Strategy, Engagement, and Alignment (I)
Directors and Assistant Directors

EXHIBIT A



Arts & Culture

Cultural Organizations Program

FY 2025-26 Guidelines for Non-Profit Arts and Culture Organizations

As recommended by the
Arts and Culture Advisory Commission of the City of Dallas

Approved by the
City Council of the City of Dallas
by Council Resolution No.
on

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Office of Arts and Culture

Vision

The Office of Arts and Culture aims to create an equitable, diverse, and connected community, whose residents and visitors thrive through meaningful arts and cultural experiences in every neighborhood across Dallas.

Mission

The Office of Arts and Culture works to enhance the vitality of the city and the quality of life for all Dallas residents by creating an equitable environment wherein artists as well as arts and cultural organizations thrive; people of all ages enjoy opportunities for creative expression; and all celebrate our multicultural heritage.

Our mission is to support and grow a sustainable cultural ecosystem that ensures all residents and visitors have opportunities to experience arts and culture throughout the city.

Statement on Cultural Equity

In Dallas, we envision a city of people whose success and well-being are not pre-determined by their race, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, social status, zip code, or citizenship status. We recognize that artistic and cultural expression are fundamental to the development of our identity, as individuals and as a community at large. We assert the right for all people to have access to arts and cultural experiences throughout Dallas.

We recognize the historic legacies of racism, overt bias and injustice that shape our present reality. In fact, the City of Dallas' arts funding originated to support organizations of the Western European canon, collectively referred to as "The Big Six." Going forward, we will strive to support the broadest range of art forms and creative producers, considering inclusivity, diversity, and neighborhood impact to direct resources equitably to artists and organizations. We will work to build a robust arts ecosystem that continually evolves to better reflect the diverse composition of Dallas. Towards this end, we recognize and affirm the potential of new and emerging artists and organizations.

The Office of Arts and Culture will serve as convener and connector to catalyze equity in the policies and practices of its partners across the Dallas arts ecosystem. Core to this is leading other organizations and private resource providers to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in concrete, measurable ways. Annually, the Office of Arts and Culture will summarize its own support for artists and arts organizations, highlighting measures of equity and diversity.

As we work together to create a more vibrant Dallas, the Office of Arts and Culture is committed to nurturing the wide diversity of creative culture and experiences that make up this great city.

Contact OAC

For general inquiries or assistance, please contact the Office of Arts and Culture, Cultural Programs Division at OACFundingPrograms@dallas.gov. Specific staff contact information may be found online at dallasculture.org/contact.

About the Cultural Organizations Program

The Cultural Organizations Program (COP) is the program through which the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) provides operational support as described by the Dallas Cultural Policy, approved by City Council on November 28, 2018 [Section 5(D)(i)]. Per the Dallas Cultural Policy, the Office of Arts and Culture contracts for cultural services with established, Dallas-based non-profit organizations for a variety of cultural programs that include concerts, plays, exhibitions, performances, workshops, and other cultural programming for the benefit of Dallas residents and visitors. These cultural service contracts are awarded annually using a review panel approach to evaluate applications. Program eligibility and review criteria are published annually.

This document contains guidelines, deadlines and application instructions for the COP managed by the OAC for fiscal year (FY) 2025-26. Please refer to the appropriate sections of this guide for more detailed information about the different parts of this program. The FY 2025-26 City of Dallas fiscal year begins October 1, 2025, and ends September 30, 2026.

All applicants are required to read the guidelines and application instructions for details of program eligibility and requirements prior to beginning the application process. Guidelines are updated every funding cycle.

The Director may approve variances from these guidelines; however, material variances shall require City Council approval.

Material variances include:

- Changes in tier structure
- Changes in scoring criteria
- Non-profit status requirements
- Status as a Dallas-based organization or artist
- Changes to ineligible activities

COP Eligibility Requirements

Organizations must meet the following criteria to qualify for COP funding:

- Must be a 501(c)(3) Public Charity as provided by the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, as amended, in good standing for at least three years.
- Must be authorized to transact business in the State of Texas.
- Must be an established City of Dallas arts or cultural organization with an operation history of at least three years.
- Organizations must have administrative offices permanently located in the City of Dallas. **This does not include P.O. Boxes – the organization must have a physical Dallas administrative office address.**
- Must have an annual operating budget of at least \$100,000.00, based on the organization's prior year's unrestricted operating revenue, excluding in-kind revenues. An applying organization must be able to verify the most recently completed fiscal year's unrestricted revenue through a Form 990, Form 990-EZ, or third-party financial audit.
 - An organization that is a returning applicant (funded in the Cultural Organizations Program for FY 2024-25 at the time of application) may, at the OAC Director's discretion, be granted one probationary year in which it is allowed to have a reported revenue below \$100,000.00 for the prior year's revenue. If the probationary year is granted, the organization will be considered a Tier 1 organization for the probationary year. The organization will be required to have at least one paid full- or part-time employee as described below throughout the 12-month contract period of the probationary year. The organization may only be granted a single probationary year. After the probationary year, the organization must achieve revenues of at least \$100,000.00, as demonstrated by a Form 990, Form 990-EZ, or third-party financial audit, to be eligible for the Cultural Organizations Program in future years.

- Obtain and maintain during the contract term all necessary licenses, permits, insurance and other approvals required by law for the provision of services.
- Must have at least one paid full- or part-time employee of a Director/Manager level hired upon award of City contract and employed throughout the 12-month contract period. For the purposes of this requirement, an employee is defined as an individual who, through the applicant organization, is paid a regular wage, receives a W-2, and has taxes withheld from those wages. An independent contractor is not an employee.
- Must produce an annual season of programs, exhibitions, and/or performances for the public in the City of Dallas.
 - **NEW: Additionally, all main annual programming must be open to the public for residents and/or visitors and listed on GoSeeDFW.**
- The primary focus of the organization's operation must be to provide services to residents and visitors within the city limits of Dallas, and at least 50% of activities must take place within the city limits of Dallas. COP funding may only be used for services provided within the city limits of Dallas.
- Must comply with local, state, and federal laws prohibiting discrimination.
- **Must comply with all applicable provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, 29 U.S.C.A. §§ 151-169, as amended.**
- Must comply with regulations pertaining to federal grant recipients including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.
- Must have board-approved safe workplace policies (including, but not limited to, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies).
- Must have an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy with measurable goals related to equity, diversity and inclusion that are board-approved and published on the organization's website.

COP funds allocated cannot be used to pay direct costs for:

- Activities that do not have a cultural or artistic focus
- Projects planned primarily for fundraising purposes
- Activities restricted to members, or which do not benefit the general public
- Tuition expenses
- College/university or school projects that are part of a course or curriculum or that do not benefit the general public
- Fellowships/grants, scholarships, cash prizes or awards
- Activities that include food or alcohol
- Out-of-city travel
- Underwriting of capital expenditures (buildings, land, permanent equipment or artwork)
- Purchase of artwork
- Activities that have occurred prior to the execution of the cultural services contract
- Underwriting of past deficits
- Endowments
- Non-contract related services, lobbying, attorney's fees, fees for penalties, and fees for incorporation or obtaining tax-exempt status
- Activities of Dallas-based organizations that occur outside of the City limits
- Permanent or semi-permanent public art that is located on City property
- Activities, events, and programs already specifically funded through another Office of Arts and Culture funding source or program, including but not limited to a Cultural Center program, ArtsActivate, Community Arts, or Culture of Value¹

¹ COP recipients may always apply to other City of Dallas/Office of Arts and Culture programs for which they are eligible in those programs' guidelines. However, the proposed events/programs must be entirely unique from the scope of work funded through the Cultural Organizations Program.

COP Diversity Requirements

Per the Cultural Policy of the City of Dallas, organizations funded through COP should aim to meet the following goals, as set forth in the Cultural Policy. Organizations' progress will be monitored by the OAC on an ongoing basis and OAC staff are available to answer any questions or provide guidance on achieving these goals:

- (1) Have board-approved safe workplace policies (including, but not limited to, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies).
- (2) Have a policy and measurable goals related to equity, diversity and inclusion that is board-approved and published on their website.
- (3) Board Diversity² goals (by organization budget size):
 - a. Annual operating budget of \$5 million and above: at least 30% board diversity.
 - b. Annual operating budget of \$1 million - \$5 million: at least 20% board diversity.
 - c. Annual operating budget of \$500,000.00 to \$1 million: at least 10% board diversity.
- (4) For organizations with operating budgets over \$1 million: offer paid internships with livable wages to increase the diversity of the pipeline for future arts leaders.

Funding Level Restrictions

A. The limit on support through COP is scaled to be proportional, based on the **higher** of (1) the unrestricted operating revenue from the previous year's official audited records, Form 990, or Form 990 EZ or (2) the average unrestricted operating revenue from the previous **three (3)** years' official audited records, Forms 990, or Forms 990 EZ, and in no case shall the amount of funding for an organization through COP be greater than:

- (i) 30% of the applicant organization's revenues up to \$250,000.00;
- (ii) 25% of the applicant organization's revenues between \$250,000.00 to \$1 million;
- (iii) 15% of the applicant organization's revenues between \$1 million to \$5 million;
- (iv) 10% of the applicant organization's revenues greater than \$5 million

NOTE: All funding level restriction calculations shall be made excluding in-kind revenues.

B. Total support by the City in a fiscal year, whether cash or in-kind, regardless of the department from which the funds and support originate, shall not exceed:

- (i) 50% of an organization's most recent year's audited revenue for organizations with revenue less than \$1 million.
- (ii) 40% of an organization's most recent year's audited revenue for organizations with revenue of \$1 million or more.

C. In-kind support includes, but is not limited to, utility payments made directly by the City, payments made to a third party, including other City departments, in support of the organization, and facility use fee discounts at Cultural Centers.

Source of Cultural Support Funds

The City of Dallas invests in the arts by allocating a portion of the City's general fund (primarily property and sales tax collections) and a portion of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) revenue to eligible applicants who meet the established program criteria and are recommended for funding after an application and review panel process. Per state law,

² Diversity (as relates to board goals) means the percentage of non-majority (based on race/ethnicity) members of a board. For example, if the goal is at least 30% diversity on a board, an organization meeting that goal must have no more than 70% of any one racial/ethnic group on their board.

revenue from the municipal Hotel Occupancy Tax collection may be used only to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry (Texas Tax Code, Chapter 351.101. Use of Tax Revenue).

New Applicants

New applicants are applicants submitting proposals to the program for the first time, as well as to applicants that have applied in the past but are not currently funded through the program during the FY 2024-25 year.

New applicants must contact OAC staff (OACFundingPrograms@dallas.gov) before the application deadline, by April 9, 2025. This is to ensure that the applicant is aware of the COP requirements and additional information that is needed.

FY 2025-26 Cultural Organizations Program (COP)

NEW for FY 2025-26: In the FY 2025-26 funding year, the Cultural Organizations Program will begin a three-year cycle. The FY 2025-26 application will look and feel similar to previous years' applications; however, the following two years (FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28) will be significantly shortened and will consider administrative scores only. There will be no panel review requirements. Please see the "COP as a Multi-Year Program: Planning for FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28" section for more information.

The organization is responsible for the quality, completeness and timely submission of the proposal and supplemental materials. Application steps and deadlines are included in this document and online at dallasculture.org. OAC staff are available to answer additional questions. (See Contact OAC.) Post-application, OAC staff may reach out to applicants with questions or clarifications; organizations are responsible for responding in a timely manner.

All organizations, new and previously funded, must complete an application and review process to be considered for funding through the FY 2025-26 Cultural Organizations Program (COP).

The FY 2025-26 COP Application can be found on the COP page of the OAC website at: <https://dallasculture.org/cultural-programs/cultural-organizations-program/>. Applications must be submitted via the online application system by **Friday, April 18, 2025, at 11:59 PM**. Hard copies of applications will not be accepted.

To assist with the application process, the OAC staff will host information sessions, both virtual and in person, in March and April. These dates will be posted on the OAC website at the time of the online application opening. The week before the deadline, OAC staff will also host online "office hours" for individual questions on a drop-in basis. Additionally, returning applicant organizations may request feedback on prior years' applications from OAC staff. All information sessions and office hours are **optional** and do not impact application scoring.

NOTE: An organization that submits a substantially incomplete application at the time of the deadline, as deemed by the Office of Arts and Culture, will receive notification via e-mail as to the incomplete status of the application from OAC staff. This could result in the application being rejected. **While staff will make significant effort to communicate deadlines to organizations in advance, please note that the COP application deadline is non-negotiable, and it is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure its timely submission.**

FY 2025-26 COP Timeline

March 3, 2025	FY 2025-26 COP Online Application Opens
April 9, 2025	Deadline for new organizations to notify OAC of intent to apply at OACFundingPrograms@dallas.gov (organizations that were not funded in the FY 2024-25 year only) ³
April 18, 2025	FY 2025-26 COP Application Closes at 11:59 PM
April 18 – May 9, 2025	Virtual Panel Review Period
May 13 – May 20, 2025	Web-meeting Question and Answer sessions (Virtual)
	Tier 1 – May 13; Tier 2 – May 14; Tier 3 – May 15; Tier 4 – May 16; Tiers 5 and 6 – May 20
June – September 2025	COP Application Review/Funding Levels – Allocations Committee; COP funding recommendations made by the Arts & Culture Advisory Commission
October 2025	COP funding recommendations approved by City Council; initiation of COP Contract execution
January 2026	COP organizations eligible to receive first payment (if compliance and insurance requirements are met)
April 15, 2026	COP organizations eligible to receive second payment (if compliance and insurance requirements are met)
October 15, 2026	COP Final Monthly Report due for FY 2025-26
October 31, 2026	COP Final Report due for FY 2025-26
COP organizations are eligible to receive final payment after FY 2025-26 Final Report and Final Monthly Report are submitted (if compliance and insurance requirements are met)	

Application Checklist

The 2025-26 Cultural Organizations Program application includes five components:

I. Main Application

The Main Application includes:

- Applicant Profile
- Applicant Details
 - Tax Information
 - Organizational history, mission, and leadership
- FY 2025-26 COP Proposal
 - Organization core programming
 - Proposed scope of work for the FY 2025-26 season⁴
 - Public Benefit
 - Access and Impact
 - Proposed Programming Diversity

³ New organizations, including previously funded applicants who were not selected for the FY 2024-25 program, who do not notify OAC by the deadline may be disqualified from the application process.

⁴ If applicants are selected for FY 2025-26 COP funding, this section will become the scope of work written into the 2025-26 contract. Please include all planned, regular activities for the calendar year. Any item listed in an organization’s COP scope of work will be considered funded through COP, and not be eligible for other funding opportunities from the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture.

- Organizational Capacity
- Organizational Goals, measurable in the FY 2025-26 season
- Required Materials
 - FY 2025-26 Projection Matrix
 - Most recently completed fiscal year’s IRS Form 990 EZ or Form 990
 - IRS Letter of Determination (new applicants only)
 - Board of Directors Roster, with contact and officer positions, i.e. Board Chair, not including ex-officio or non-voting members
 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, with a link to the public webpage
 - Safe Workplace Policy

II. Diversity Supplement

The Diversity Supplement, also found in the online portal, includes:

- ALAANA self-identification
- LGBTQIA+ self-identification
- Labor Diversity self-identification
- Employee Pay Data

III. Application Video

Applicants should create a video no more than 10 minutes in length that describes the applicant’s proposed scope of work for the season. While this video may include clips or “b-roll” from the applicant’s work, it is not intended to be a professionally produced “sizzle reel.” The video should be included with the online application and is due on the same date.

IV. Supplemental Materials

Applicants should add any supplemental material that they feel best reflects their success as an organization, recent work completed, or projects for the FY 2025-26 season that are not included elsewhere in the application. (Most applicant organizations reuse recently published material and do not create anything new for this section.) Successful supplemental materials may include:

- News articles about the organization and/or a recent performance or production
- A recent program book or catalog of previous years’ events
- Photos or video of a recent event
- An annual report of the past year

No more than 3-5 materials should be included.

V. Certification

This section certifies that the organization has read and understood the application process. Please ensure correct contact information; if the OAC has questions about the organization’s application, they will use this contact information to reach the applicant.

Review Panel Process

A review panel evaluates applications for COP. To the greatest extent possible, the review panel should reflect the diversity of the City of Dallas, without sacrificing expertise, knowledge, or demonstrated interest in arts and culture.

Interested members of the public, the Arts & Culture Advisory Commission, and City staff shall provide nominations to review panels. In no instance shall a City employee, Arts and Culture Advisory Commissioner, or other City official be a review panel member. Review panel members must:

- Live and/or work in the City of Dallas
- Participate in Dallas arts ecosystem as an artist, administrator, volunteer, or frequent audience member
- Be over the age of 18

Review panel members shall be independent, impartial, and responsible only to the people of the city and shall comply with the Code of Ethics in Chapter 12A of the Dallas City Code including, but not limited to, recusal and disclosure provisions. Panelists should strive to avoid the appearance and risk of impropriety.

Tier Structure

All COP applicants will be reviewed in tier levels based on the **higher** of (1) the unrestricted operating revenue from the previous year's official audited records, Form 990, or Form 990 EZ or (2) the average unrestricted operating revenue from the previous **three (3)** years' official audited records, Forms 990, or Forms 990 EZ. There will be one review panel for each tier level. The tier levels are as follows:

- Tier 1 – \$100,000.00 – \$249,999.99, or organizations in their probationary year (returning applicants only)
- Tier 2 - \$250,000.00 – \$499,999.99
- Tier 3 – \$500,000.00 – \$999,999.99
- Tier 4 – \$1,000,000.00 – \$2,999,999.99
- Tier 5 – \$3,000,000.00 - \$9,999,999.99
- Tier 6 -- \$10,000,000.00 and over

NOTE: A change from one tier to another will change the grouping of organizations in which a given organization will be reviewed by the review panel. Changing tiers may also change specific OAC administrative scoring criteria. Please refer to the "OAC Administrative Scoring," section under "Scoring," below.

Panel Review

In lieu of in-person presentations, each applicant will be required to submit a 10-minute maximum presentational video and attend a 10-minute question and answer session via a web-meeting platform (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.) with the applicant's respective panel. Both are required; applying without a video or not attending an assigned question and answer session may lead to disqualification from the award or a maximum of 60% of the organization's FY 2024-25 funding level. A new applicant who does not submit a video or does not attend the question-and-answer session will not be eligible for funding in FY 2025-26.

Applicants may reference the FY 2025-26 COP Timeline above for a date during which the question-and-answer sessions for each tier will take place. A shorter 30-minute timeslot will be made available to applicants at least a week in advance of the question-and-answer session. During the question-and-answer session, applying organizations must be represented by principal figures, e.g. the Executive Director, Artistic Director, Board President and/or a Financial Officer or other staff

as determined by the organization. OAC staff recommends that an organization consider sending between 1 and 4 representatives (maximum) to ensure that questions can be answered efficiently within ten minutes.

Scoring

Each applicant will be scored on a 100-point scale. 70 points will be at the discretion of the review panel. The remaining 30 points will be an administrative and compliance score calculated by OAC staff. All scores are normalized within their respective tiers. Normalizing a score means each score is divided by the highest score of that tier.

Review Panel Scoring

Public Benefit (35 points) – The applicant defines its community in relation to its mission and provides programming that serves its identified audiences and promotes sustainability in the arts and culture sector of the City of Dallas.

- Clearly describes core programs and services offered to Dallas residents and visitors on an ongoing basis
- Creates unique or meaningful arts and cultural experiences
- Provides inviting opportunities that are accessible to the intended audience
- Meaningfully engages the community to achieve its mission
- Promotes a sustainable arts ecosystem
- Partners with Dallas-based artists or organizations
- Builds meaningful relationships with Dallas residents and community partners

Access & Impact (20 points) – The applicant eliminates barriers and increases equitable access and inclusivity through mission-driven community/neighborhood programming, outreach, and involvement.

- Reflects the values of cultural equity, access, and inclusion through programming
- Invests time, resources, and programming in historically underserved communities
- Elevates and expands neighborhood cultural assets
- Increases creative access, awareness, and appreciation in neighborhoods across Dallas
- Involves, represents, and centers on people and communities most impacted by racism and other forms of discrimination

Organizational Capacity (15 points) – The evaluation of the organization’s ability to successfully plan for and manage its proposed services and audience.

- Clarity of application
- Ability to execute and deliver proposed services
- Supplemental materials enhance the overall application
- Clearly defined organizational goals
- Plans to monitor organizational success
- Marketing and communication strategies show an understanding of audiences

OAC Administrative Scoring

Contract Compliance & Financial Viability (10 points) – The organization has shown the capacity to comply with COP monthly reporting and financial report submission requirements required by the COP contract (measured from the prior complete fiscal year). The organization has sound financial viability in fundraising/development and unrestricted net assets (measured from the organization’s most recent audit).

2 Points: Monthly Reports (returning applicants only)

- 2 = 10 to 12 reports submitted on time
- 1 = 7 to 9 reports submitted on time
- 0 = 6 or fewer reports submitted on time

2 Points: Financial report submission (returning applicants only) – The organization has submitted the required financial reporting documentation 180 calendar days (six months) after the close of the organization’s fiscal year. (See table below for financial reporting requirements)

Budget Size	Financial Report Type
\$100,000.00 - \$199,999.99 Or applicants approved for a single probationary year (returning applicants only)	Form 990-EZ, Form 990, or Financial Audit
\$200,000.00 - \$499,999.99	Form 990 or Financial Audit
\$500,000.00 or more	Financial Audit

- 2 = Financial report submitted on time
- 0 = Financial report submitted after the deadline

2 Points: Panelist participation (returning applicants only) – During the 2024-25 year, the organization has nominated one qualifying volunteer to the Office of Arts and Culture Review panel on their behalf (1 point), and this person served on at least one OAC funding review panel between October 1, 2024, and September 30, 2025 (1 point).

- 2 = Organization had a qualifying panelist who served on a panel in FY 2024-25
- 1 = Organization had a qualifying panelist who did not serve on a panel in FY 2024-25
- 0 = Organization did not have a qualifying panelist on the OAC Panel Review Roster in FY 2024-25

2 points: Prior Contract Compliance (new applicants only) – The applicant has successfully been recommended for funding and executed at least one contract while maintaining full compliance for ArtsActivate or the Community Artist Program (CAP) in FY 2021-22, FY 2022-23, FY 2023-24, or FY 2024-25. If an applicant held multiple contracts throughout this time frame, all such contracts must have maintained compliance for full scoring consideration. Final acceptance into FY 2025-26 COP will be contingent upon completion of the terms of the contract amendment and compliance.

- 2 = Recommended for funding and maintained contract compliance
- 1 = Recommended for funding but has not yet completed their project with the Office of Arts and Culture
- 0 = Not recommended for funding or did not maintain contract compliance

2 Points: Guideline quiz (new applicants only) – The applicant organization notified the Office of Arts and Culture before application submission and received a 100% on a short, 10-question quiz about the Cultural Organizations Program guidelines. The link to the quiz can be found in the online application.

2 Points: Letter of recommendation (new applicants only) – The applicant organization submitted with the application a letter of recommendation from an executive of another 501c3 arts or cultural organization located in Dallas, demonstrating the impact of the applicant organization’s work in Dallas. The recommendation organization does not need to be a COP awardee but can be if the applicant desires.

2 Points: Fundraising Expense Percentage – Percentage of the sum of fundraising/development expenses to the sum of fundraising/development revenues.

- 2 = Ratio less than 20%
- 1 = Ratio between 20% and 40%
- 0 = Ratio more than 40%

2 Points: Average Days Cash on Hand – The applicant’s average days cash on hand, based on most recent Form 990 or Form 990 EZ, calculated by dividing the average of cash and cash equivalents over the year, including savings & temporary investments, by the average monthly expense for the most recent year. Depreciation, depletion, and amortization are excluded from the calculation of average monthly expenses.

Form 990 EZ – Average of Line 22A and Line 22B divided by Line 17 minus any non-cash expenses as detailed in Schedule O

Form 990 – Average of Part X, Line 1A plus 2A and Line 1B plus 2B divided Part IX, Line 25A minus Line 22A and any other non-cash expenses

- 2 = 60 days or more cash on hand
- 1 = 30 – 59 days cash on hand
- 0 = less than 30 days cash on hand

Organization Program Management (10 points) – The organization has performed reliably in the past in terms of contract sustainability, program management, board governance, and employee compensation.

4 points: Organization Projection Matrix – The organization has completed and submitted the matrix provided by OAC staff to show projections in organization management.

- 4 = Applicant has submitted a fully completed matrix
- 2 = Applicant has submitted a partially completed matrix
- 0 = Applicant has not submitted the matrix

4 points: Organization Employee Pay – The organization provides sustainability in the Dallas arts ecosystem by providing, at a minimum, a living wage to all full- and part-time employees as aligned with the City of Dallas living wage rate of \$22.05⁵ per hour as set for FY 2024-25. These criteria shall only be applied to organizations in Tiers 4, 5, and 6 (revenues \$1 million or more).

Points	Tier 1 and 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tiers 5 and 6
4			\$22.05 or more	\$22.05 or more
3			\$16.00 - \$22.04	\$16.00- 22.04
2			\$13.00 – \$16.00	\$13.00–\$16.00
0			\$13.00 or less	\$13.00 or less

⁵ The City of Dallas implemented a living wage policy for general service contracts on November 10, 2015, by Resolution No. 15-2141. The policy requires an annual adjustment according to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT) Living Wage Calculator, found here: <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/48113>.

2 points: Organization Board Governance – Organization has a “give or get” policy with board of directors. In the most recently completed fiscal year, what percentage of board members contributed by personal donation or securing predetermined funding from a third party for the organization.

- 2 = 90% - 100% board participation in “give or get” policy
- 1 = 75% - 89% board participation in “give or get” policy
- 0 = Less than 75% board participation in “give or get” policy

Adherence to Cultural Policy Diversity Criteria (10 points)

5 points: Board Diversity – Per the City of Dallas Cultural Policy adopted November 28, 2018, the following goals have been implemented for cultural organizations to demonstrate a commitment to diverse community representation of the organization’s board.

Points	Tier 1 and 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tiers 5 and 6
5	10% or more	10% or more	20% or more	30% or more
3	3% - 9%	3% - 9%	6% - 19%	10% - 29%
0	2% or less	2% or less	5% or less	9% or less

5 points: Staff Diversity – While the Cultural Policy does not set specific goals for staff diversity, the OAC will mirror staff diversity goals based on those of board diversity goals and definitions for the purposes of this scoring category. Staff is considered pay-rolled staff, not contracted labor. Because organizations in Tier 1 and Tier 2 generally do not have significant numbers of staff, they are exempt from staff diversity goals and receive credit for this criterion.

Points	Tier 1 and 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tiers 5 and 6
5		10% or more	20% or more	30% or more
3		3% - 9%	6% - 19%	10% - 29%
0		2% or less	5% or less	9% or less

Selection & Funding Allocation Process

FY 2025-26 COP funding allocations will be initially reviewed and recommended by the Allocations Committee of the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission. The Allocations Committee recommends a level of funding for each organization considering applicant scoring, funding projections, contract compliance, fiscal standing of applying organizations, and standing compared to peer organizations. These recommendations are then reviewed and recommended by the full Arts and Culture Advisory Commission. The Commission’s recommendation is then forwarded to the City Council through the City Manager's Office. The recommended allocation and individual contracts will receive approval or modification by the City Council in October of each year pending City of Dallas budget approval.

Be advised that prior year funding allocations are not guaranteed in the FY 2025-26 funding allocation process and may change based on the aforementioned factors.

NOTE: A new applicant whose normalized score is below 70% will not be eligible for funding in FY 2025-26.

The following are some specific examples that an organization may be disqualified from receiving funding or receive decreased funding from previous years:

1. A returning applicant whose normalized score is below 70% is only eligible to receive a maximum of 60% of their FY 2024-25 COP funding level.
2. A returning applicant who does not maintain compliance in the three main areas in the year prior (maintaining a W2 employee; hosting greater than 50% of their main, public events in the City of Dallas; and hosting a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement year-round on their website) is only eligible to receive a maximum of 60% of their FY 2024-25 COP funding level.
3. A returning applicant who does not submit a video with their application or does not attend an assigned question and answer session may be disqualified from the program or only be eligible to receive a maximum award of 60% of the organization’s FY 2024-25 funding level.
4. A returning applicant who does not submit their written application on time may be disqualified from the program.
5. A returning applicant whose core operation and/or programming drastically changes.

Compliance

COP contracts require compliance for the entirety of the contract period (October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026). Any major contract compliance issues, such as current audits not being received, or other similar items will be presented to the Allocations Committee to recommend a course of action to be taken. This will then be presented to the full Arts and Culture Advisory Commission for recommendation of funding continuation.

To signify a willingness to comply with COP Guidelines, awarded organizations will be required to attend a mandatory training in November 2025. Post-training, organizations must provide the following to maintain compliance throughout the year:

Financial Reports

An annual financial report must be submitted to the OAC no later than six months after the completion of the organization’s fiscal year. Depending on an organization’s operational budget size, the organization will submit a third-party financial audit, a Form 990, or a Form 990-EZ (see table below). Failure to meet a financial report submission deadline may result in withholding contract payments.

Budget Size	Financial Report Type
\$100,000.00 - \$199,999.99 (Or applicants approved for a single probationary year)	Form 990-EZ, Form 990, or Financial Audit
\$200,000.00 - \$499,999.99	Form 990 or Financial Audit
\$500,000.00 or more	Financial Audit

Monthly COP Reports

A monthly report listing Dallas activities and programs presented by the organization, the total attendance at each activity and supporting information must be submitted by the 15th day of each month (reporting the prior month’s activities) to OAC. Monthly reports consistently completed incorrectly after correction from OAC staff may be considered “late” submissions.

If organizations choose to share upcoming events and activities with their City Council representatives and/or the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission, there is an optional tab in the Monthly Report to do so.

Final Report

A final evaluation report summarizing activities for the contract period must be submitted to OAC by October 31, 2026. Failure to submit the report in a timely manner or submission of an incomplete report may result in delayed payment or non-payment of the final contract installment and payment on future contracts. This online form can be found on the COP page at dallasculture.org.

Business Inclusion and Development: Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises

It is the policy of the City of Dallas to use qualified Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) to the greatest extent feasible on the City's construction, procurement, and professional services contracts. The City and its contractors shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, age or sex in the award and performance of contracts. In consideration of this policy, the City of Dallas has adopted the Business Inclusion and Development Plan (BID Plan) for all City of Dallas contracts. The purpose of the Business Inclusion and Development Plan is to increase participation of M/WBEs in City procurement and contracting opportunities, and to develop the local business base through awarding contracts and purchases to locally owned businesses. Under the BID Plan, bidders/proposers must sign an affidavit agreeing to comply with the City's BID Plan.

The BID Plan shall apply to all City contracts for the procurement of construction, architectural and engineering, goods, other services, and professional services, with emphasis on first tier subcontracts on City contracts over \$50,000.00. As a prerequisite for City Council award, the prime contractor must make a good faith effort to meet established M/WBE subcontracting goals and if goals are not met, must demonstrate and document its good faith effort to meet the established goals.

In addition to the goal-based policy, it is the preference of the City of Dallas for the workforce of contract awardees to be reflective of the diversity of the residents of the City of Dallas.

The City reserves the right to request a company's affirmative action plan or equal opportunity plan from potential contract awardees. In addition, if the potential awardee plans to hire additional staff to complete the contract, the City reserves the right to request a local hiring plan.

Insurance Requirements

Insurance requirements are included in the contract and are determined by the City of Dallas Office of Risk Management. A Certificate of Insurance (COI) must be submitted to the City whenever a policy expires and is renewed. Funds cannot be released without a memorandum of compliance from the Office of Risk Management stating the insurance requirements have been met. Proof of insurance must meet the specific terms of the contract. During the contract term, applicants are required to obtain and maintain all necessary licenses, permits, insurance and other approvals required by law for the provision of services.

Failure to meet insurance requirements will be reported to the Arts & Culture Advisory Commission and is a default under the contract terms.

Panel Review Representatives

To help strengthen the Arts and Culture ecosystem in Dallas, each awarded organization must nominate at least one staff member, board member, and/or affiliated artist to the Office of Arts and Culture funding review panel. (See Review Panel and Selection Process for eligibility details.) These individuals must be eligible reviewers, attend a panel reviewer orientation, and participate in at least one round of adjudication during the FY 2025-26 year. This can include but is not limited to: Community Arts, Community Artist Program (CAP), ArtsActivate, or other ad-hoc review opportunities. (Please

note that this individual will only be able to participate in reviewing the COP process if the nominee is not on staff, and may only adjudicate different tiers than the applicant organization, due to conflict of interest.)

If an awarded organization already has a staff member, board member, or artist on the review panel roster, this fulfills the requirement if the individual serves at least once during the FY 2025-26 year.

Logo and Credit Line

It is imperative that the residents of Dallas know that their local tax dollars make it possible for them to enjoy the caliber of arts produced in this City. All contractors must recognize the City of Dallas in the same way it recognizes other contributors at the same support level in terms of benefits, type size on publications, and frequency of acknowledgment.

The City of Dallas logo can be downloaded from our website: www.dallasculture.org/our-logo.

Arts organizations and artists awarded City of Dallas contracts for cultural services must include the following reasonably visible and legible credit line and logo in publications, programs, press releases, season brochures, lobby displays, advertising, and every other mode of public communication:

“(Name of your organization/program) is supported in part by the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture.”

Complimentary Tickets

Cultural organizations shall make available to the OAC up to four complimentary tickets per event, program, production, exhibition, or other activity produced by the organization to allow City staff or City officials to assess the management and operation of City-owned facilities within their jurisdiction and to oversee City-sponsored events. This requirement applies to the organization’s regular programming only and not to special fundraising events. Additionally, the organization may provide free tickets for promotional activities to the Director for distribution to the public at various OAC facilities.

Receipt of complimentary tickets by City staff or City officials is subject to the provisions of the City’s Gift Policy for City Employees and City Officials, provided in Council Resolution No. 17-0516 adopted on March 22, 2017.

Social Media Recognition

In social media promotions related to any service funded by COP, organizations may tag the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture. See Dallas Culture handles, preferred hashtags, and recommendations for social media engagement below.

X

- Follow Dallas OAC’s X account at <https://twitter.com/dallasculture>
- Tag OAC at the handle @dallasculture
- Include hashtags: #dallasculture #liveart #oac

Facebook

- “Like” the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture’s Facebook page at <https://facebook.com/dallasculture> Tag OAC at @City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture
- Tag @City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture in any photos/videos related to COP projects.
- Include hashtags: #dallasculture #liveart #oac

Instagram

- Follow the Dallas OAC Instagram account at https://www.instagram.com/dallas_culture/
- Tag OAC at @dallas_culture
- Include hashtags: #dallasculture #liveart #oac

Arts and Culture Advisory Commission Liaison

Funded COP organizations will be assigned a liaison from the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission whose duties will be outlined per organization needs. The liaison assignment will depend on the availability of the Commissioners. COP organizations shall allow attendance by and share minutes with the assigned Arts and Culture Advisory Commission liaison for governing board proceedings, excluding confidential proceedings, to the extent allowable by law and board governance.

ALAANA Designation

Applicant organizations are asked to identify as an ALAANA organization if applicable. ALAANA means African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American. This also includes Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (category as defined by the US Census Bureau). An ALAANA organization is one whose primary intentions, practices, and mission are by, for, or about ALAANA artists, cultures, and communities. The word “for” refers to the intention of the organization to perpetuate, promote, and present art that is representative of an ALAANA culture and people and/or is given form by ALAANA artists. ALAANA designation has no impact on funding decisions by the City of Dallas. However, it does assist OAC in tracking Dallas Cultural Policy and Plan goals surrounding diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

Probation

Organizations that fail to provide contractual services or meet program eligibility and reporting requirements may be in default of the contract and may be placed on probation per OAC Director discretion. Failure of an organization to satisfactorily address the City’s concerns within a period of the probation may result in a recommendation of “no funding” for the next fiscal year.

Revisions

Once the contract has been signed, any changes in the project (either programmatic or financial) must be approved in advance by the Director of the Office of Arts and Culture and will require a formal amendment if it affects the contractual requirements. The contractor must submit a written request for approval of any changes.

COP as a Multi-Year Program: Planning for FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28:

The FY 2025-26 Cultural Organizations Program will be the first year of a three-year application cycle. All new and returning applicants will submit a full application as detailed in the FY 2025-26 COP Guidelines above, including a video portion and a panel question and answer session. **Each year's Cultural Organizations Program's guidelines will be reviewed and approved by the City Council and may be subject to change.** However, to provide applicants with as much advance notice as possible, the following processes and scoring for returning and new applicants are proposed for off-cycle years.

Be advised that all applicants, returning or new, must maintain program eligibility each year of the three-year cycle as laid out in the program eligibility section of each year's City Council approved guidelines.

Off-cycle Applications

RETURNING APPLICANTS: For the off-cycle years of FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28, returning applicants will submit a modified application, which will **not** include a video or panel question and answer session. All returning applicants will instead submit an updated scope of services for the upcoming year, as well as a shortened written application. During off-cycle years, administrative scoring and compliance will hold more significance in the applicant review and funding allocation process to emphasize the importance of contract compliance, financial compliance, and adherence to Cultural Policy diversity criteria.

NEW APPLICANTS: New organizations wishing to apply for COP may be eligible to apply during the second and/or third years of the three-year cycle (FY 2026-27 / FY2027-28). During these off-cycle years, new applicants will complete a similar application process as the full first-year application of a cycle to include a video submission, panel review process, and panel question and answer session to determine eligibility and acceptance into the program. Additionally, even if funded, applicants must repeat a full application when the following year one of the three-year program occurs, likely FY 2028-29.

OAC Administrative Scoring in Off-cycle Years, for returning applicants

Contract Compliance (20 points) – the organization has shown the capacity to comply with COP monthly reporting and financial report submission requirements required by the COP contract (measured from the prior complete fiscal year). The organization has sound financial viability in fundraising/development and unrestricted net assets (measured from the organization's most recent audit).

4 Points: Monthly Reports

4 = 10 to 12 reports submitted on time

2 = 7 to 9 reports submitted on time

0 = 6 or fewer reports submitted on time

4 Points: Financial report submission – The organization has submitted the required financial reporting documentation 180 calendar days (six months) after the close of the organization’s fiscal year. (See table below for financial reporting requirements)

Budget Size	Financial Report Type
\$100,000.00 - \$199,999.99 Or applicants approved for a single probationary year (returning applicants only)	Form 990-EZ, Form 990, or Financial Audit
\$200,000.00 - \$499,999.99	Form 990 or Financial Audit
\$500,000.00 or more	Financial Audit

4 = Financial report submitted on time
0 = Financial report submitted after the deadline

4 Points: Insurance updated – The applicant organization maintained insurance compliance with the City of Dallas between October 1 of the current COP year and the respective upcoming year’s COP application deadline.

4 Points: Panelist participation – Since October 1, 2024, the applicant organization has nominated one volunteer to the Office of Arts and Culture Review panel on their behalf (2 points), and this person served on at least one OAC funding review panel between October 1, 2024, and the COP application deadline in April of 2026 (2 points).

4 Points: Marketing participation – Since October 1, 2024, the applicant organization has posted at least two public events on GoSeeDFW (2 points), and the OAC logo is visible on applicant’s website and other marketing materials (2 points).

Financial Compliance (20 points) – The organization has sound financial viability in fundraising/development and unrestricted net assets (measured from the organization’s most recent audit or required submitted financial forms).

4 Points: Fundraising Expense Percentage – Percentage of the sum of fundraising/development expenses to the sum of fundraising/development revenues.

2 = Ratio less than 20%
1 = Ratio between 20% and 40%
0 = Ratio more than 40%

4 Points: Average Days Cash on Hand – The applicant’s average days cash on hand, based on the most recent Form 990 or Form 990 EZ, calculated by dividing the average of cash and cash equivalents over the year, including savings & temporary investments, by the average monthly expense for the most recent year. Depreciation, depletion, and amortization are excluded from the calculation of average monthly expenses.

Form 990 EZ – Average of Line 22A and Line 22B divided by Line 17 minus any non-cash expenses as detailed in Schedule O

Form 990 – Average of Part X, Line 1A plus 2A and Line 1B plus 2B divided Part IX, Line 25A minus Line 22A and any other non-cash expenses

2 = 60 days or more cash on hand
1 = 30 – 59 days cash on hand
0 = less than 30 days cash on hand

4 points: Organization Projection Matrix – The organization has completed and submitted the matrix provided by OAC staff to show projections in organization management.

- 4 = Applicant has submitted a fully completed matrix
- 2 = Applicant has submitted a partially completed matrix
- 0 = Applicant has not submitted the matrix

4 points: Organization Employee Pay – The organization provides sustainability in the Dallas arts ecosystem by providing, at a minimum, a living wage to all full- and part-time employees as aligned with the City of Dallas living wage rate of \$X per hour, to be set with updated guidelines. These criteria shall only be applied to organizations in Tiers 4, 5, and 6 (revenues \$1 million or more).

4 points: Organization Board Governance – Organization has a “give or get” policy with board of directors. In the most recently completed fiscal year, what percentage of board members contributed either by personal donation or securing predetermined funding from a third party for the organization.

- 2 = 90% - 100% board participation in “give or get” policy
- 1 = 75% - 89% board participation in “give or get” policy
- 0 = Less than 75% board participation in “give or get” policy

Adherence to Cultural Policy Diversity Criteria (10 points)

5 points: Board Diversity – Per the City of Dallas Cultural Policy as adopted on November 28, 2018, the following goals have been put in place for cultural organizations to demonstrate a commitment to diverse community representation of the organization’s board.

Points	Tier 1 and 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tiers 5 and 6
5	10% or more	10% or more	20% or more	30% or more
3	3% - 9%	3% - 9%	6% - 19%	10% - 29%
0	2% or less	2% or less	5% or less	9% or less

5 points: Staff Diversity – While the Cultural Policy does not set specific goals for staff diversity, the OAC will mirror staff diversity goals based on those of board diversity goals and definitions for this scoring category. Staff is considered pay-rolled staff, not contracted labor. Because Tier 1 and Tier 2 organizations generally do not have significant numbers of staff, they are exempt from staff diversity goals and receive credit for this criterion.

Points	Tier 1 and 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tiers 5 and 6
5		10% or more	20% or more	30% or more
3		3% - 9%	6% - 19%	10% - 29%
0		2% or less	5% or less	9% or less