



2026 Arts Grant Program Guidelines

Application Deadline: 5:00 p.m. November 14, 2025



Arts Grant Program

City of Corpus Christi

Parks & Recreation Department

Office of Arts & Culture

400 Mann Street, Suite 200 (Bayview Tower), Corpus Christi, TX 78401

Parks & Recreation Phone: 361-826-3460 (press 8 for Arts and Culture)

OUR MISSION

The Corpus Christi Arts & Cultural Commission (ACC) advocates for an enriched quality of life based in a robust creative community in Corpus Christi. It supports, promotes, and celebrates a broad variety of artistic expression toward engaging an enlivened, inclusive cultural environment.

OUR VISION

The Corpus Christi Arts & Cultural Commission (ACC) promotes the arts by:

- Providing grants to non-profit organizations through Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) funds
- Advising civic and community organizations as well as private citizens
- Encouraging community engagement in the arts
- Serving as stewards of the public art resources of the City of Corpus Christi through maintenance and development of the public art collection

Important Dates (Subject to Change)

2025:

Oct 15 Arts Grant Program information and link to required forms available on website

Oct 22 Grant application workshop

Nov 14 **Grant Application Deadline no later than 5:00 p.m.**

Nov 19 – Dec 12 Eligibility Team and ACC review

Dec 15 Notification of unqualified applicants

Dec. 22 **Formal Appeal Deadline no later than 5:00 p.m.**

2026:

Jan 6 Notification of grant awards

Feb 2 – Feb 20 Grantee agreements signed

March Organizations receive first half of award funds

Oct 1 Fiscal Year 2026-2027 begins (Arts Grant contingent upon funding)

Dec 31 End of Arts Grant Program Year 2026

2027:

Feb 15 **Completion Report due for Year 2026 no later than 5:00 p.m.**

The link to the Arts Grant
application and workshop can
be found at:
www.ccparkandrec.com
Go to the Arts & Culture
page for information on
the 2026 Arts Grant

Online PDF Guide

Highly suggested for first time applicants and those who scored below 80 in a previous application, an online PDF guide will be available on the Arts and Culture page of the City's website. City staff is also available to walk you through the process and answer any questions you have about the application. Please email ACCartsgrants@cctexas.com with questions.

Things to Remember

- Read the guidelines before beginning the application process.
- Plan answers carefully to avoid repetition. Remember all applications are reviewed and scored on how well the applicant meets the Eligibility and Evaluation criteria. **Scores may reflect percent awarded.**
- Don't assume. The Eligibility Team or ACC Review Panel member who reviews the application may have no knowledge of your organization or its programming. Make sure you describe existing and proposed programs in detail. The application should stand on its own merits.
- Avoid generalizations. Rather than stating, "We have operated a successful series of concerts for the last four years," use numbers to prove your case. For example, "We have produced six plays with 10 performance runs for the last four years to audiences ranging from 75 to 100 patrons for each performance."
- Proofread before submitting your grant application.
- Demonstrate adequate revenue sources for the project's matching grant funds.
- All questions must be FULLY answered. Refrain from duplicating a response from a previous question.

Overview of the Arts Grant Program

SOURCE OF GRANT FUNDS

Funding for the Arts Grant Program is provided by the City of Corpus Christi utilizing the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund. Per state law, revenue from the municipal Hotel Occupancy Tax may be used only to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry. Organizations applying for and receiving Hotel Occupancy Tax funds are required to adhere to the state laws governing the use of such funds.

PERMITTED USES OF HOT FUNDS

Among the permitted uses of HOT funds are the following related to arts and cultural activity:

The encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms [Texas Tax Code Section 351.101(a)(4)].

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Arts Grant Program are to:

1. Support and promote arts and cultural activities that implement the intended use of Hotel Occupancy Tax funds to promote tourism, the convention and hotel industry.
2. Support the needs of local arts organizations and encourage creativity and artistic development.
3. Assist nonprofit organizations in producing and presenting arts and cultural projects that promote Corpus Christi as a cultural destination.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Grant application must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 14, 2025. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Applications may only be submitted online. The grant application link can be found at www.corpuschristitx.gov/artgrants.

SIZE OF GRANT AWARD

The maximum request is 50% of a project's actual/eligible expenses up to \$15,000. One application per eligible organization, except for higher education institutions, may be submitted. A 'project' is defined as a singular event or series of related activities.

TERMS OF GRANT SUPPORT

The period of support for this grant cycle is January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Grant funds cannot be used for budgeted expenses incurred prior to or after the grant term and the matching funds required for the grant must be collected during the grant term. A Completion Report will be due by February 15, 2027, no later than 5:00 p.m. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Early submissions are highly encouraged.

WHAT WILL BE FUNDED

- Marketing and promotion
- Production or exhibition-related costs
- Payments to artists
- Other direct costs with proper documentation that are specific to the project outlined in the application for funding

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR ARTS GRANT FUNDS

- Elimination of accumulated debt, fines, penalties, costs of litigation or items for resale
- Operating/overhead expenses including personnel expense normally associated with general operations of the organization
- Programs, which are primarily recreational, therapeutic, rehabilitative, religious and educational, where art is incidental
- Staff travel, meetings, conferences, or membership dues

- Lobbying
- Fundraising events or activities; events or projects closed to the public
- Projects already funded or complete
- Receptions, social functions, or parties
- Food or alcoholic beverages
- Fireworks
- Scholarships, awards, or cash prizes
- Grant preparation costs

Eligibility Criteria

BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Submit application and all supporting documents by grant deadline of **November 14, 2025, 5:00 p.m.**
2. An organization must have received its IRS 501(c) designation as a public charity no later than August 1, 2024, and maintain the designation current with the IRS during the grant period. If this criterion cannot be met, the applicant may apply through a 'sponsor organization.' **If a sponsoring organization is used, written approval from the governing body of the sponsoring organization should accompany the application along with proof of its tax-exempt status.** The sponsoring organization will become responsible for project administration and management.
3. Provide documentation that organization has registered, or in the process of registering, with the Texas Secretary of State office and is considered 'active' (schools and religious organizations are exempt from this requirement). An organization must be 'active' by November 1, 2024, should the project be selected for funding.
4. Provide a copy of the first page of IRS Form 990, 990 PF, 990 EZ, or 990 N for Fiscal Year 2024 (or most recent year available). If exempt, provide documentation of exemption.
5. The organization's project must support and promote arts and cultural activities that implement the intended use of Hotel Occupancy Tax funds, as described in Sections 351.101(a)(4). (*see 'source of grant funds' on page 4*)
6. The organization is physically based and offers events primarily in the City of Corpus Christi.
7. The organization is governed by a local board of directors that meets quarterly, at minimum.
8. The organization does not have any outstanding legal or financial items due to the City of Corpus Christi, including overdue reports for previous grants or projects.
9. The organization's project is matched dollar for dollar from cash revenue other than the City of Corpus Christi's Arts Grant Program or other City sources. The matching funds must be collected (not just pledged or awarded) during the term of the grant.

Review Process

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW TEAM

Upon receipt of the grant application, an Eligibility Review Team composed of City staff from Parks and Recreation, Legal, Budget, and an advisory representative from Visit Corpus Christi, will review for the Basic Eligibility Requirements outlined in the previous Section. Incomplete applications or those that do not meet basic eligibility requirements will not be eligible for consideration. Applicants that do not submit their application and supporting documents by the deadline or not in the required format will not be eligible for consideration. Applications submitted to the City of Corpus Christi become the property of the City and may be reviewed by the public upon request. Eligibility Review Team members may neither discuss, review, nor score applicants with whom they have a conflict of interest (*see definition below*) currently or in the past twelve months or projected grant term.

ACC REVIEW PANEL

If applications have met all the Basic Eligibility Requirements, they will be reviewed and evaluated by the Review Panel composed of members from the Arts & Cultural Commission. Meetings will be scheduled so that panelists may review, discuss, and score all eligible applications. The ACC Review Panel will meet in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. All meeting dates and agendas are publicly posted on the electronic bulletin board in the atrium of Corpus Christi's City Hall. Members of the ACC Review Panel must declare their conflicts of interest regarding the organizations being reviewed. ACC Review panel members may neither discuss, review, nor score applicants with whom they have a conflict of interest (*see definition below*) currently, or in the past twelve months, or projected grant term.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the Review Panel must declare their conflicts of interest regarding the organizations being reviewed. Review panel members may neither discuss, review, nor score applicants with whom they have a conflict of interest currently, in the past twelve months, or for the projected grant term. A conflict of interest is defined as a circumstance such as employment, board membership, or other personal interest that influences an individual's ability, or the perception of their ability, to perform their duties without bias or prejudice.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The two main criteria below will be used to score each application up to a maximum score of 100 points. A score of at least 70 points (ACC Review Panel average) must be earned for the application to receive a funding recommendation.

The application must address each of the following:

Artistic Merit (40 points, possible 10 points per question)

- Describe how the organizations past programs or services have demonstrated cultural significance for the community.

Reviewer will evaluate applicant's past programs and/or services.

- Describe the unique characteristics and artistic vision of this proposed project.

Reviewer will evaluate the project's originality and creativity.

- List the qualifications of the proposed participating artists or experts and identify their role in the project.

Reviewer will evaluate the qualifications of participating artists or experts.

- How will the project enhance Corpus Christi's cultural identity?

Reviewer will evaluate project's ability to enhance Corpus Christi's identity as an arts and cultural destination.

(OPTIONAL)

To assist with the Economic and Social Impact criteria (*see Page 9*), the Corpus Christi Parks & Recreation Department offers to provide organizations with estimated numbers of attendance for non-ticketed events based on *foot traffic data software analysis*.

Analysis requests should be emailed to ACCartsgrants@cctexas.com.

Economic and Social Impact (60 points, possible 10 points per question)

- Detail how the project will attract visitors to Corpus Christi and what the expected attendance is.

Reviewer will evaluate the project's potential draw/expected attendance and the applicant's research and analysis of potential audience.

- Describe your marketing plan to attract overnight visitors.

Reviewer will evaluate the applicant's marketing plan to attract tourists as described in application and whether marketing budget is reasonable and complete.

- List the methods that will be used to collect data regarding audience demographics, audience involvement, and tourists in attendance (example: ZIP code collection, online ticket sales, phone apps, social media).

Reviewer will evaluate the applicant's information gathering/record keeping methods.

- Describe the growth of your event from years past (include solid statistics if you have them). How do you see your event growing or changing in the next 5 years?

Reviewer will evaluate the growth potential of the event.

- List all sources of revenue for the proposed project (including this grant request).

Reviewer will evaluate the applicant's revenue diversity.

- How will the project stimulate the local business economy? List local businesses and organizations you will be working with on this project (example: local printers, event firms, reserved blocks at hotels).

Reviewer will evaluate the project's ability to stimulate the local business economy and the level of engagement with local businesses.

Appeal Process

A score of at least 70 points must be earned for the application to receive a funding recommendation. Applicants who meet the basic eligibility requirements, but do not score at least 70 points, will be notified by December 15, 2025, and have until December 22, 2025, to submit a formal appeal.

Applicants who believe their proposals for funding or approval were rejected for the following two reasons may appeal to the Commission for reconsideration:

1. influence of evaluation panel or Commissioners who willfully failed to disclose conflicts of interest; or
2. provision of incorrect information by City staff or evaluators at the time of scoring, despite the presence of the correct information as part of the original application.

The applicant must be able to show a link between one of these circumstances and a low score or rating and/or negative panel comment. Failure to submit a complete application by the deadline does not constitute grounds for an appeal. Dissatisfaction with the denial of a grant or with the amount of the grant is an insufficient reason for appeal.

Appeals must be presented through the Arts Grant appeal form to City Staff. The link to the Arts Grant appeal form can be found at www.corpuschristitx.gov/artgrants. The deadline for appeals is December 22, 2025. **No exceptions.** All appeals will be presented to the Commission for their consideration. Applicants will be notified after the Commissioners' final decision. **All decisions of the Arts and Cultural Commission are final.**

How to Apply for an Arts Grant

A link to the grant application will be available on the Parks and Recreation website at:

www.ccparkandrec.com, **October 15, 2025.** From the Parks and Recreation homepage select 'Arts & Culture' for information on the 2026 Arts Grant Program.

The grant documents one (1) through seven (7) listed below constitute one (1) grant packet.

1. Application: To be completed by an authorized official of organization.
2. Project Narrative Form

3. Budget Form: A full itemization of each expenditure and revenue amount is required. Project budget must indicate expenses and revenue available during the grant year, January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026.

Supporting Documents:

4. Proof of 501(c) tax exempt status - copy of IRS tax determination letter only
5. Proof of 'active' status (or recent registration) with Texas Secretary of the State Office (*NOT Comptroller's Office*).
6. Copy of first page of IRS Form 990, 990 PF, 990 EZ or 990 N for organization's Fiscal Year 2024 (or most recent year available). If exempt, provide documentation of exemption.
7. Provide a notarized sworn statement from the Board of Director's Chair or Recording Secretary which includes a list of the past 12 month's meeting dates, a list of the organization's current Board of Directors and the contact information for the Board Chair.

Receiving an Arts Grant

GRANT AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Organizations that are awarded grants ("grantees") will enter into a grant agreement with the City of Corpus Christi. Only an authorized official of the organization may sign the grant agreement, such as the Board President, CEO, or Executive Director; the organization must be legally and financially eligible to enter into a grant agreement. The grant agreement will outline the terms of the grant, scope of services, reporting requirements and legal issues applicable to the funding.

AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS

GRANTEES MUST

- Acknowledge the support of the City of Corpus Christi through the use of logos and credit line on all marketing and promotional materials. The logo will be made available to all grantees.

- Actively promote tourism and the hotel and convention industry as a goal of the grantee's activities.
- Submit a Completion no later than **February 15, 2027, no later than 5:00 p.m.**, to the Director of Parks and Recreation, or designee, who will review the reports to verify whether the grant funding provided to the grantee was spent in accordance with the requirements in the agreement.
- Provide the Arts and Culture office with written notification of any significant changes to the grant funded project for approval by the Arts & Cultural Commission. Significant changes may include but are not limited to: change in venue, project date, or artists or performers.
- Observe and obey all applicable laws, ordinance, regulations and rules of the Federal, State, County and City governments. The agreement is subject to applicable provisions of the City Charter and the City Code of Ordinances.

GRANT PAYMENT

Grant payments will be made in two installments. Generally, the initial payment will be made after the execution of the grant agreement and funds will be made available after March 1, 2026. Please plan accordingly. The second payment will be made upon submission and approval of the Completion Report. Grantees with outstanding reports from previous years are not eligible to receive payments until the previous grants are closed out. Grantees with outstanding Completion Reports that are more than 6 months overdue forfeit the next year's grant award. Organizations are ineligible for any grants if they are in default of a previous grant.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Completion Reports are requirements of the Arts Grant program, as well as financial documentation of all related expenditures and revenues. Failure to submit could cause forfeiture of grant award and jeopardize future awards.

Completion Reports will include the following:

- A copy of all advertising and promotion materials for the funded activity(s) to demonstrate use of the City-provided logo on all materials.
- All necessary documentation for each revenue line item which will include proof of required income supported by copies of bank statement(s) or validated deposit slip(s) showing funds deposited into the organization's bank account within the grant year. For each revenue item, there should be two attachments (revenue source & proof of deposit).
- All necessary documentation for each expenditure line item which will include copies of invoices, bills or contracts for all grant related expenses and any associated credit card receipts, credit card statements,

copies of cancelled checks or bank statements which provide proof of payment by the organization for the expense within the grant year. For each expense item, there should be two attachments (expenditure & proof of payment).

- The Arts Grant is a matching grant.
 - organization must submit documentation for their matching revenue. *For example, if the grant is for \$5,000 then the organization must also have \$5,000 in income from sources other than the Arts Grant funds.* Documentation must only be submitted for \$5,000.
 - organization must submit expense documentation for twice the amount of the grant funds. *For example, if the grant is for \$5,000 there should be \$10,000 in expenses.* Documentation must only be submitted for \$10,000.
- A written estimate of the number of grantee's arts program attendees that reside at least 125 miles outside the City of Corpus Christi. This may be accomplished with the use of a visitor log, audience survey, tallying the number of out-of-town billings or by listing the out-of-town mailing addresses gathered through the ticket sales process.
- A written description of the marketing or advertising strategy used as part of the final completion report.

Completion Report with supporting documentation must be submitted no later than **February 15, 2027, at 5:00 p.m.** and as early as the grantee's last grant-related event. Any copies of cancelled checks not yet received from the grantees bank at time of submission must be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Department upon request.

City Staff, or its authorized representative, may call for a complete breakdown of actual event expenditures, cash resources, and in-kind services and shall have access to the financial records of each event.

The City of Corpus Christi promotes participation regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or political belief. Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request and in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. For assistance or to request a reasonable accommodation, please call 361-826-3460 at least 48 hours in advance. Upon request, this information can be available in large print or digital file.