



City of Lynchburg Arts & Cultural District Program Guidelines

Background

From the Code of the City of Lynchburg: “The Lynchburg City Council finds that the continued development and success of its arts and cultural venues requires incentives, and determines that the most appropriate method of offering incentives for the area described below is to create an arts and cultural district in that area, as authorized by Section 15.21129.1 of the Code of Virginia. City Council believes the establishment of an arts and cultural district will improve the economic conditions of this geographic area located in the central portion of the City which could, in turn, benefit the welfare of the citizens of Lynchburg.” In order to equitably administrate the Arts & Cultural District, and to encourage the participation of citizens and arts & cultural organizations to conduct projects, events and activities to further the arts and culture in Lynchburg, City staff has created the Arts & Cultural District Program.

Guidelines

Guidelines for the Arts & Cultural District Program are intended to attract citizens, organizations and consortiums that wish to create and execute projects within the Arts & Cultural District to benefit the welfare of the citizens of Lynchburg. The term “project” may include events, activities, capital investments, promotions, improvements, displays or like pursuits that serve to further arts and culture in the District. Guidelines include but are not limited to:

- Project funds are for arts- and culture-related projects only;
- Projects must show an estimated economic impact, if the project is of a Public Art nature please show estimated public access and make a case for the artwork in the location chosen;
- Projects must demonstrate a public benefit;
- Applicants must demonstrate familiarity with arts & cultural organizations, artists and/or other relevant constituencies within the District;

- Applicants must demonstrate collaboration with organizations and individuals with priority towards collaborations with constituencies within the District;
- Projects that have secured other funding resources will be given priority;
- Project funds can only be used for the specific project or event applied for, and cannot be used for organizations' routine operating expenses;
- Projects must take place within the Arts & Cultural District - see District map.
- Projects that have been funded by the grant program for more than 2 years are not eligible to apply for funding again without significant program innovation or change.
- Projects that do not already receive other forms of City support, including City sponsorship, will be given priority.

Other Funding Sources

Priority consideration will be given to applicants who have secured other funding sources for their projects. Applicants should not expect the Arts & Cultural District Program to award more than 75% of their project.

Application Requirements

First-time applicants must attend a How to Apply workshop led by the Office of Economic Development prior to submitting an application. Staff is on hand to answer questions about the application process.

Applications are reviewed and funds awarded two times per fiscal year. Applications must be received no later than 5:00 pm on September 1 and February 1. Projects seeking funding must begin within six months of application submission. Funding is not intended to be retroactive.

Please submit one hard copy of the Arts & Cultural District Project Fund Application to: The Office of Economic Development and Tourism, Attn: Arts & Cultural District Program, 900 Church Street, 2nd Floor, Lynchburg, VA 24504. A PDF copy of the grant must also be delivered via email to jason.witt@lynchburgva.gov or via external hard drive to the Office of Economic Development and Tourism. Certain projects that utilize public space or City streets require permitting from the City of Lynchburg; it is the responsibility of grant applicants to determine these requirements. To learn more about Special Events permits, please visit the City's website <http://www.lynchburgva.gov/reservation-rentals-events>.

Eligible Applicants

Any citizen of Lynchburg, non-profit organization within city limits, or any consortium of organizations within the City is eligible to apply. Though an applicant is not required to be a citizen of Lynchburg or be located within City limits, priority will be given to these applicants. Funds cannot be used for projects for which a single entity or individual profits directly; this is not applicable to projects in which proceeds are donated or there is no intent for profit generation.

Eligible Use of Project Funds

Funds are only for projects within the geographic boundaries of the Arts & Cultural District. Funds can be used to leverage other funding sources for the specific project, but are solely intended to cover expenses directly related to the project for which the applicant requested funding. Funds may not be used to cover the routine operating expenses of an organization, or for expenses incidental to a project or event such as personnel expenses, dues, planning expenses, etc.

Application Review Process

Applications are reviewed three times per year by an appointed panel comprised of District stakeholders and other business and community leaders. Program recipients will be selected based on the merits of their project vis-à-vis the program guidelines and thorough completion of the application. The City of Lynchburg Office of Economic Development will utilize the recommendations of the review committee, but in all cases will retain sole discretion for the grant amounts awarded.

The application review process will take approximately 6 weeks with notification by September 15, January 15 and April 15 each year.

Program Fund Terms and Amounts

The maximum award is \$5,000. Multiple organizations or individuals may apply separately for funding for the same project. The amount awarded will be based on the criteria described in the program guidelines, to include but not limited to the scope of the project, the greatest public benefit, the greatest economic impact, collaboration, and percentage of total project funding. The Arts & Cultural District includes three sections: Downtown, Fifth Street and Rivermont Avenue.

Project Fund Administration

Recipients of funds will be required to sign a Program Disbursement Agreement that may include an audit of awarded expenditure. Recipients will be required to acknowledge the City of Lynchburg and the James River Arts & Cultural District in all promotional materials. All applicants must provide a final report specific to the funded project. All final reports must be completed and returned to the Lynchburg Office of Economic Development and Tourism no later than 45 days after completion of the project. Additional information is provided in the Notice of Award and Program Disbursement Agreement. All projects should be completed within 12 months of the award notification date.

Amusement Tax

Every business or organization that charges admission to an activity or event shall impose a 7% tax on the total amount charged for admission. The fees for admission taxes imposed by the city code and collected by qualified arts organizations in the Arts & Cultural District are redistributed through the Arts & Cultural District Program to promote and market the district and to improve aesthetic or infrastructure. In order to be eligible for project funds, organizations should contact the Commissioner of the Revenue's office to determine if they are required to pay the City's amusement tax and to obtain the necessary remittal forms which are due on or before the 20th of the following month. Learn more at <http://www.lynchburgva.gov/amusement-tax>.