



Arts & Culture Grant Program: 2026 Guidelines

Community Foundation for MetroWest (CFMW) envisions a region where artistic and cultural initiatives are centered as a key component to cultivating vibrant communities and a sense of belonging for all residents. Our mission for the 2026 Arts & Culture Grant Program is to invest in local nonprofit organizations whose primary mission is to provide access to arts and cultural initiatives in the region.

This year, the Community Foundation for MetroWest seeks to award **one-time general operating grants of up to \$10,000*** to support arts & culture nonprofits in MetroWest. Grant decisions and amounts will be determined based on a variety of factors, including:

- Organization size – understanding the impact of a grant of this size for your organization
- Location(s) of impact – demonstrating commitment to MetroWest and role in the region's cultural ecosystem, including strong collaboration and partnership
- Organization impact and reach –including population served, type(s) of programs offered, etc.
- Organization's leadership and financial health
- Alignment with the Foundation's priorities outlined below

*Maximum grant size will be 10% of the organization's annual operating budget or \$10,000, whichever is less. Average grant size in 2025 was \$6,800.

In 2026, the Foundation will be prioritizing organizations that demonstrate a commitment to and strong mission alignment with one or more of the following:

- Prioritization of access to arts education, visual arts, or performing arts initiatives for under-resourced and underrepresented residents
- Celebrating and/or preserving the region's history and dynamic and ever-changing cultural heritages
- Encouraging and increasing opportunities for various communities to create and participate in arts & cultural activities
- Promoting arts & culture as an engine of social and economic vitality in the region
- Fostering innovation, community collaboration, and community-driven programming

As our MetroWest communities continue to change and evolve, we recognize the importance of arts & culture to help us learn, connect, thrive, and celebrate one another. We look forward to hearing how we can consider supporting nonprofit partners in need of additional funding to sustain their efforts or transform their work to benefit MetroWest.

GRANT PROCESS

The 2026 grant cycle is an online process and will operate based on the following timeline:

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| • Monday, August 3, 9:00 AM | Applications open online |
| • Thursday, August 6, 9 – 10 AM | Info Session #1** (register) |
| • Wednesday, August 19, 12 – 1 PM | Info Session #2** (register) |
| • Friday, September 11 5:00 PM | Applications due |
| • October 1 – November 6 | Follow up conversations or site visits, as needed*** |
| • Early December | Applicants notified of decisions via email |

**We will provide the same presentation and information at both Info Sessions. Attendance at one is sufficient. A recording will also be made available on our website following the last session.



***Please note that we are unable to visit every applicant due to limited capacity. If you are not chosen to receive a site visit, this in no way serves as a reflection of your organization or your likelihood of receiving funding.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must:

- Have 501(c)(3) tax status as a registered nonprofit organization OR have an eligible fiscal sponsor
- Not discriminate in the hiring of staff or the provision of services on the basis of race, religion, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability
- Serve one or more of the following MetroWest cities/towns: Acton, Ashland, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Dedham, Dover, Framingham, Harvard, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Lexington, Lincoln, Marlborough, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Milford, Millis, Natick, Needham, Sherborn, Southborough, Stow, Sudbury, Walpole, Waltham, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, Weston, Westwood

Ineligible organizations or requests include:

- City/town agencies, including libraries
- Individuals
- Schools – private, public, pre-K, charter, or Chapter 766
- Human service organizations providing arts-based programs to their clients

HOW TO APPLY

1. Beginning August 3rd applicants will have access to the application form online.
2. If your organization is new to CFMW, please create an account.
 - a. https://bit.ly/cfmw_foundant
 - b. Multiple short video tutorials are available on the righthand side of the login page.
3. If your organization has applied to CFMW in the past, please log into your existing account:
 - a. https://bit.ly/cfmw_foundant
4. Once you are logged into your account, click on the Apply icon from the top menu bar.
5. Select **2026 Arts & Culture Grant Program**.

GRANT DECISIONS

Awards will be determined by early December. All applicants will be notified by email of decisions.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: September 11, 2026 AT 5:00 PM

If you have questions regarding the eligibility or suitability of your application, please send a detailed email to grants@communityfoundationmw.org as early as possible. We may provide additional guidance via email or schedule a brief call to discuss.

If you need assistance or accommodations to access this application process, please contact us at grants@communityfoundationmw.org or 508-647-2260.