



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
**ARTS COMMISSION**

## **2026-27 ARTS MAKING IMPACT GRANT GUIDELINES**

Arts Making Impact (AMI) grants are intended to support cultural practitioners, artists, and organizations by funding projects, programs, and activities that enrich the lives of residents in communities throughout Santa Barbara County. AMI funds support projects and collaborative efforts that expand access and encourage broader participation in the arts. Grant proposals that help to eliminate current barriers to cultural activities— such as access to transportation, materials, artists, music and art instruction to traditionally underserved communities— are encouraged.

Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Santa Barbara County and provide services to its residents. Individual artists or collectives interested in applying must have a 501c3 fiscal sponsor to be eligible.

For this cycle, the application deadline is **April 20, 2026**. All proposed grant-funded activities must take place within the grant activity period, which runs for 12 months from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. Applying organizations must have annual operating budgets under \$500,000. Full guidelines and eligibility criteria below.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Arts Making Impact (AMI) grant program was established in 2012 via a partnership between the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission and Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation. As part of a lease agreement with the County of Santa Barbara, the Santa Barbara Bowl has created an arts subsidy fund with fifty cents per ticket sold.

AMI Grant funding has catalyzed greater community engagement in the arts and culture of our region. Since the initial grant cycle, a wide range of organizations and cultural practitioners have received support to expand resources and increase access to arts and culture countywide. These funds continue to reach communities that have limited resources to support arts and culture opportunities.

### **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible for AMI funding in the current cycle, the applicant must:

1. Attend a mandatory grant workshop. **ALL** applicants are required to attend a technical assistance workshop before applying. Workshops are free, but registration is required. To register, visit our website at: <https://www.sbac.ca.gov/county-grants>.
2. Be a non-profit organization with tax-exempt status [501(c)(3)] with an annual operating budget under \$500,000; [OR] individual artist with a [501(c)(3)] fiscal sponsor; [OR] district with an annual operating budget under \$500,000. **See definitions below.**
3. Show evidence of community need for services proposed to be provided by organization or artist. Partnerships and collaborations are encouraged.
4. Submit an application via the [Community Grants Portal](https://sbac.force.com/communitygrants) (<https://sbac.force.com/communitygrants>) on or before the deadline.

#### **TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE**

For this cycle, the total funds available are \$50,000. Grant requests may be between \$1,000-\$5,000. Grants selected for funding will be awarded 100% of their request.

***PLEASE NOTE: Grant funding is disbursed as reimbursement for expenses after they are incurred, not up front.***

#### **REVIEW PROCESS**

Grant applications will be reviewed by a panel made up of County Arts Commissioners and approved by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors.

#### **SCORING CRITERIA**

Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

- **Project Relevance and Community Impact:** The significance and benefits of the project to the community served, including its potential for lasting effects beyond the program's duration.
- **Audience Reach:** The number of people the project will serve, with consideration given to both the breadth (total audience size) and depth (meaningful engagement and impact) of the program.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Demonstrated cost-effectiveness, through a clear and comprehensive budget showing financial responsibility and evidence of additional financial or community support.

**Additional Consideration** may be given to projects that demonstrate:

- Strong partnerships, collaboration, innovation, or program expansion.
- Active inclusion of the community served and/or artists in program planning and execution.
- The involvement and fair compensation of professional artists for their contributions to grant-funded activities.

## **DEFINITIONS**

- **Nonprofit Organization** – is defined as any nonprofit public benefit corporation formed pursuant to the Nonprofit Corporation Law (commencing with Corporations Code §5000), qualified to do business in California, and qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. To comply with AB20 requirements, University of California and California State University applicants are required to secure an indirect cost waiver from the Regents of the University of California or the Board of Trustees of the California State University.
- **Artist or Individual using Fiscal Sponsor** – If an applicant does not have 501(c)(3) status, they may apply under the auspices of a registered 501(c)(3) organization. The fiscal sponsor acts as the fiscal agent for the group or individual applying and assumes all responsibilities required by the contract. Any payment for services rendered is issued to the fiscal sponsor. Organizations serving as a fiscal sponsor are exempt from having an annual budget of \$500,000 or less.
- **District** – is defined as any regional park district, regional park and open-space district, or regional open-space district formed pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with PRC §5500) of Chapter 3, any recreation and park district formed pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with PRC §5780), or an authority formed pursuant to Division 26 (commencing with PRC §35100). With respect to any community or unincorporated region that is not included within a district, and in which no city or county provides parks or recreational areas or facilities, “district” also means any other district that is authorized by statute to operate and manage parks or recreational areas or facilities, employs a full-time park and recreation director, offers year-round park and recreation services on lands and facilities owned by the district, and allocates a substantial portion of its annual operating budget to parks or recreation areas.

## **GRANT RESTRICTIONS**

Applicants need to be based in Santa Barbara County and provide services to Santa Barbara County residents.

**Funding Requests are INELIGIBLE for the following:**

1. Programs that are not within the grant period July 1, 2026- June 30, 2027.
2. Capital improvements and construction of buildings or facilities over \$1500.

3. Organizations primarily involved in political action, legislation, lobbying; projects with religious purposes.
4. Programs in facilities that are not ADA compliant.
5. Trusts, endowment funds, or investments.
6. Profit-making organizations, ventures, or replacement of deficit funds.
7. Fundraising or arts services for events in which fundraising is the primary purpose.
8. Programs or services intended for private use, or for use by restricted membership.
9. Hospitality or food costs.
10. Prize money.
11. Purchase of tickets and/or scholarships for an event/program produced by the applicant.
12. Programs or expenses incurred outside the 12-month grant activity period, which runs from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

### **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

The AMI Grant Application must be submitted online through the Community Grants Portal no later than **4:00 p.m. PST on April 20, 2026**. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

### **GRANT ACTIVITY PERIOD**

All grant-funded activities must take place within the 12-month grant activity period, which runs from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

Please note: activities cannot begin until the grant agreement is fully executed, meaning the actual start date may be later than July 1, 2026. We will make every effort to provide grant agreements to grantees in a timely manner, but it is the grantee's responsibility to ensure that all required paperwork is completed and signed before beginning any grant-funded activities.

Expenses incurred before the agreement is fully executed will not be eligible for funding. Applicants should plan accordingly to ensure all activities are completed within the designated timeframe.

### **GRANT FUND DISBURSEMENTS**

Up to 90% of the total grant award may be requested during the grant activity period as expenses are incurred. To receive payment, grantees must submit payment requests through the online Community Grants Portal. ([hsbac.force.com/communitygrants](https://hsbac.force.com/communitygrants)).

The final 10% of the grant award may not be requested and will be withheld until the successful completion of the project and submission of the final report. These materials must be submitted through the Community Grants Portal ([hsbac.force.com/communitygrants](https://hsbac.force.com/communitygrants)) no later than 45 days after project completion and no later than June 30, 2026, whichever comes first.

Final payment will not be disbursed until the County Office of Arts & Culture has received and reviewed the final self-evaluation and final invoice. Failure to submit these materials by the

deadline may result in forfeiture of the remaining grant funds.

**GRANT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

A final self-evaluation and invoice must be submitted within 45 days of completing the grant project or before June 30, 2026, whichever comes first; otherwise, any remaining grant funds may be forfeited. All required forms are available in the Community Grants Portal ([hsbac.force.com/communitygrants](https://hsbac.force.com/communitygrants)) and must be completed online.

A reference final report template can be found online at: <https://www.sbac.ca.gov/county-grants>

A user guide for the Community Grants portal is available online at: <https://www.sbac.ca.gov/grant-portal-how-to>



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
**ARTS COMMISSION**

**2026-27 ARTS MAKING IMPACT  
REFERENCE APPLICATION**

**Overview**

*This section must be complete before you can move to the other sections, however, you are able to go back and edit. The description will be used in the grant panel to give a **brief (no more than 250 characters)** overview of the grant project.*

Funding Requested:

Application Title:

Description:

**Project Description**

Please use the questions below to provide details about the project for which you are requesting grant funds.

The last three questions in this section are “additional consideration prompts” and are based on the "Additional Consideration" criteria outlined in the grant guidelines. Please respond to the prompts that are relevant to your specific project. If a prompt does not apply to your project, you may leave it blank.

*Please note all character counts are maximum limits and include spaces.*

- Project/Program Name:
- Anticipated Dates of Project/Program (*Must be between July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027*):
- Provide the number of participants you estimate to be directly impacted by this grant project.
- Which of the following geographic area(s) does this grant project serve? (Select all that apply)
  - Carpinteria/Summerland
  - Cuyama
  - Goleta/Isla Vista
  - Guadalupe
  - Lompoc
  - Los Alamos
  - Orcutt
  - Santa Barbara
  - Santa Maria

Santa Ynez Valley

- Which of the following best describes the goal of this project?
  - Arts/Artists in Schools
  - Increasing Access to Arts & Culture
  - Linking Art & Human Services
  - Exhibition Opportunities for Regional Artists
  - Public Art/Community Engagement
  - Other
- If you selected "other" above, please describe the goal here. (500 characters)
- **Program Description:** Please provide a detailed description of the program, including its duration, the individuals or groups who will benefit or participate, and the artistic medium(s) involved. (2500 characters)
- **Access to the Arts:** Explain how the proposed program increases opportunities for participation in cultural activities by addressing barriers such as transportation, materials, artists, or music and art instruction for underserved communities. (1500 characters)
- **Audience Reach and Community Engagement:** Please provide details about your organization's involvement with the community this program aims to serve, including how you plan to engage and reach participants. (1500 characters)
- **Project Relevance and Community Impact:** The significance and benefits of the project to the community served, including its potential for lasting effects beyond the program's duration. (1500 characters)
- **Additional Consideration:** Describe how your project demonstrates strong partnerships, collaboration, innovation, or program expansion, and explain how these elements enhance the program's impact on the community. (1500 characters)
- **Additional Consideration:** Explain how the community served and/or artists are actively involved in the planning and execution of your program, and how their participation ensures inclusivity and relevance. (1500 characters)
- **Additional Consideration:** Describe the role of professional artists in your program and explain how they are fairly compensated for their contributions. (1500 characters)

## Program/Project Budget

Instead of uploading a budget template, please enter the amount and a brief description for each line item below. Provide the full program or project budget and indicate in the description fields whether

AMI Grant funds will support all or part of each line item. **If you do not have an expense for a line item enter 0. For any line item that you enter 0 in the amount, please enter n/a in the description.**

*Please note all character counts are maximum limits and include spaces.*

- If awarded funding, how will you spend the grant funds? Please be specific as this will be used to create your grant agreement. (1000 characters)
- Staffing Expenses:
- Staffing Expenses Description (250 characters):
- Supplies, Materials and/or Equipment Expenses:
- Supplies, Materials and/or Equipment Expenses Description (250 characters):
- Marketing Expenses:
- Marketing Expenses Description (500 characters):
- Facility Costs (rentals, utilities, etc.):
- Facility Costs (rentals, utilities, etc.) Description (250 characters):
- Other Expenses:
- Other Expenses Description (250 characters):
- Total Project/Program Budget (Should be the total of the line items listed above):
- Please list the pay rates for artistic services.
- Please list any additional funding sources that will be used for this project/program. (1000 characters)
- UCSB grantees are required to secure an indirect cost waiver from the Regents of the University of California. If you are affiliated with UCSB, please upload the waiver here.

## Supporting Documentation

This section is available for organizations to provide supporting documentation for your project. This section is **NOT** mandatory and is **NOT** scored, but is provided as a courtesy in response to organizations asking if they could provide supporting documentation. **PLEASE NOTE:** Uploading documents/links does not supplant answering the required questions in the grant application.

- Please upload any supporting files that you would like included with your application. PLEASE UPLOAD PDF FILES ONLY.
- Please provide any additional links you would like included with your application.
- Please provide any videos that you would like included with your application.
- Please provide any audio clips that you would like included with your application.

## General Information

Please provide a designated contact person's information for this grant's purposes. If you are using a

fiscal sponsor, please provide their information in the last section: “Fiscal Sponsor Information.”

*Please note all character counts are maximum limits and include spaces.*

- Organization Name
- Contact's First Name
- Contact's Last Name
- Contact's Title
- Email
- Phone
- Street Address
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Tax ID Number (If you are using a fiscal sponsor this should be your fiscal sponsor's tax ID number.)
- Organization Mission Statement (500 characters)
- Please provide a brief history of your organization’s programs and accomplishments in relation to your organization’s ability to accomplish the objectives set out in this grant application. (1000 characters)
- What is the applying organization’s annual budget? Please remember, this grant cycle is only open to organizations with an operating budget under \$500,000.
- Please provide a link to your organizations or projects website (if available).
- Facebook page or URL (for tagging if awarded funding)
- Instagram handle/username (for tagging if awarded funding)
- Hashtags (for tagging if awarded funding)

## **Fiscal Sponsor Information**

**This section is only required for those artists/projects that are using a fiscal sponsor. If your organization is applying directly for this grant you may proceed to the next section.** All organizational information must match the organization that will receive the payment (via Direct Deposit or check). If you are using a fiscal sponsor, please use your fiscal sponsor’s information in this section.

*Please note all character counts are maximum limits and include spaces.*

- Name of Organization Serving as Fiscal Sponsor
- First Name of Designated Contact
- Last Name of Designated Contact

- Email of Designated Contact
- Phone Number of Designated Contact
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization Address
- City
- State
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## Acknowledgments

All applications will be scored and eligibility will be determined according to the criteria listed in the guidelines. By submitting this application, the grant applicant confirms that they have read the 2026-27 Arts Making Impact Grant Guidelines and that the application they are submitting meets the eligibility requirements. Failure to meet the eligibility requirements will render an application ineligible for funding.

Furthermore, by initialing below the grant applicant acknowledges the following:

- No current Arts Commission members, their spouses, or family members, are employed by, paid by the applying organization. Please initial.
- The proposed program or project outlined in this grant application is not a fundraiser. Please initial.
- I understand that only costs incurred between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027, are eligible, and I will not seek reimbursement for expenses outside this period, including any pre-event costs incurred before July 1, 2026. Please initial.
- I further understand that if the grant panel determines any proposed expenses fall outside the July 1, 2026–June 30, 2027, period, my application may be deemed ineligible. Please initial.
- I understand that the application and any supporting documentation may be shared publicly in part or as a whole, with the redaction of personal contact information. Please initial.
- The applying organization has federal non-profit tax-exempt status [501(c)(3)] or is applying in partnership with an eligible fiscal sponsor. Please initial.
- The applying organization is a nonprofit corporation and has "active status" with the CA Secretary of State showing evidence of "good standing" at the time of application. Please initial.
- I understand that submission of a grant application does not guarantee grant funding. Please initial.
- Please select the date of the workshop that your representative attended.
  - February 11, 2026
  - March 10, 2026
- Please list the name and title of the representative from your organization that attended the mandatory grant workshop.