



**Hillsborough  
County Florida**  
Arts Council

FYE 2026 Community Arts Impact Grant (CAIG) For  
Non-Profits and  
Community Arts Impact Grant (CAIG) For  
Colleges and Universities  
Program Guidelines

TIMELINE

**Grant applications open online: Monday, March 10, 2025, at 9 am.**

Go to: <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/HILLSBOROUGHCOUNTY/Participant>

**Community Arts Impact Grant Remote Grants Workshop, Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 3 p.m.** Registration required.

**Deadline:** All applications must be submitted in the online grant system by **Friday, March 28, 2025, at 5 p.m.** Deadlines will not be extended, and partial or incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.

**Board Review and Scoring of Applications: Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 11 a.m.**

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**OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY ARTS IMPACT GRANT**

The Community Arts Impact Grant (CAIG) Program recognizes the value of the arts. The program is designed to make arts and cultural opportunities more accessible for underserved populations across Hillsborough County. We are committed to supporting programs with geographic, ethnic and age diversity, as well as those that serve veterans and people with disabilities.

## **WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY ARTS IMPACT GRANT FOR NON-PROFITS?**

Funding from this program can be used to support arts programming taking place in a variety of settings throughout the county, often offered by non-profit organizations. This grant program is meant to provide nimble/flexible funding while serving as a "training opportunity" for community-based nonprofit organizations that are new to grant writing and/or seeking support from the Arts Council of Hillsborough County.

## **WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY ARTS IMPACT GRANT FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES?**

The Community Arts Impact Grant for Colleges and Universities (CAIG-CU) is for Colleges and Universities headquartered in Hillsborough County. It is for support of a specific project only. The grant is not intended to provide on-going operational support or administrative overhead.

The CAIG-CU project should focus on community impact through arts and cultural programming. Students and faculty are not the focus. Students may be engaged with the community to design and facilitate the arts and cultural project.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY**

Community organizations, neighborhood associations, ethnic/cultural organizations, and emerging arts and cultural organizations. All applicants must be:

- A 501(c)(3) organization in good standing at the time of application.
- Registered as an active nonprofit Florida corporation with the Florida Division of Corporations with a principal address in Hillsborough County.
- Apolitical and non-ideological.

Ineligible Applicants include:

- Organizations and groups based outside of Hillsborough County, Florida.
- Organizations currently receiving an Arts Council Cultural Development Grant.
- Organizations that have not fulfilled contractual grant agreements with the Arts Council of Hillsborough County in previous years.
- Municipalities, governmental entities, educational institutions (except the aforementioned Colleges/Universities) and fiscal agents.

### **COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ELIGIBLE TO APPLY**

All applicants must be headquartered in Hillsborough County. All College/University applicants must be:

- A 501(c)(3) organization in good standing at the time of application.
- Registered as an active non-profit Florida corporation with the Florida Division of Corporations with a principal address in Hillsborough County.
- Apolitical and nonideological.

Ineligible College/University Applicants include:

- Departments/Divisions of colleges and universities based outside of Hillsborough County, Florida.
- Departments/Divisions of colleges and universities receiving a Special Event Partnership Grant, or other Hillsborough County funding.

### **REIMBURSEMENT-BASED GRANT**

The CAIG (for both non-profits and colleges/universities) is a reimbursement-based grant. In its simplest form, this means that the organization or college/university must first spend the money required for the implementation and execution of the project BEFORE any funding can be requested or received from Hillsborough County. Furthermore, the organization or college/university must maintain documentation of what has been spent and present it at the time of requesting the reimbursement.

### **FUNDING LEVELS**

Non-profit organizations are eligible for a maximum grant of \$5,000.

Colleges and Universities are eligible for a maximum grant of \$12,500.

A College/University applicant may make only one application per grant period, per Department/Division of the college or university. Multiple Departments/Divisions or a college may apply, but only one Department/Division of the same institution can be funded in any given year. Each application will be scored by a grant panel and the score will determine the awardees.

### **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS (FOR BOTH NON-PROFITS AND COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES)**

- Cultural projects must be within the disciplines of dance, folk arts, literature/creative writing, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts or multi-disciplinary art forms.
- All activities funded through this program must be open to the general public.
- Projects must take place between November 1, 2025, and August 15, 2026.
- Projects must be designed to elevate and advance arts and culture in the community.
- Community impact through the arts and cultural programming must be the primary focus of the proposed budget.

A project submitted for funding does not have to be a new activity. Existing projects looking to expand to new audiences or measurable increase the program are equally competitive with new activities, provided that they support programs in communities that have limited access to traditionally structured arts programming.

It is recommended that applications focus on one program or project.

Projects can be small in scope and do not need to serve large numbers of people as long as they positively impact the organization's purpose or mission and are aligned with the funding priorities of the CAIG program.

**WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF THIS FUNDING FOR THIS GRANT?**

Funding for this program is provided by the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners and managed by the Arts Council.

**REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

- Board of Directors List with Affiliations (Affiliation is defined as the educational qualifications, professional/work experience and length of current term of each board member.)
- IRS Letter of Determination
- Form 990/990EZ or 990 Postcard

**OPTIONAL DOCUMENTS**

- Letters of Partnership/ Collaboration/ Support (These would be from someone (outside your organization) or an organization with whom you have worked or will work on the project or who supports the organization.)
- Support Documents (This can include brochures, flyers or other documents that further explain either the project or your organization.)

**WHAT IS THE SCORING CRITERIA?**

Applications must earn a minimum average score of 75 to be recommended for funding. The maximum number of points an application can earn is 100 points. Grant reviewers will individually score each application. The average of the individual panelists scores will determine the final score.

Community Arts Impact Grants are awarded on a competitive basis and are judged by criteria divided into three categories: 1) Access & Community Engagement; 2) Artistic and Cultural Vibrancy; and 3) Financial and Administrative oversight. A scoring rubric for FYE 2026 funding is posted at <https://hillsborougharts.org>.

**WHAT IS THE GRANT PERIOD?**

Projects must take place during the grant period, November 1, 2025, through August 15, 2026.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**CAN I SUBMIT MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION?**

- For Non-profits: No. Please determine your strongest project for community impact through arts and culture.
- For Colleges and Universities: Multiple Departments/Divisions of a college or university may apply, but only one Department/Division of the same institutions can be funded in a given year.

**DO I HAVE TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION ONLINE?**

Yes. Applications are only being accepted online. Emailed copies or paper copies are not accepted. You may copy and paste into the application form from another document if you wish.

**DO I HAVE TO COMPLETE MY APPLICATION IN ONE SITTING, OR AM I ABLE TO SAVE MY WORK AND RETURN TO IT LATER?**

You will not need to complete your application all at once. The online application is divided into sections and stages and can be completed over time. You can save your progress, exit, and return to your application at any point during your completion. To review and edit your application, sign into your profile at:

<https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/HILLSBOROUGHARTSCOUNCIL/Participant>

**MAY I ASK THE ARTS COUNCIL TO REVIEW OR PROOF MY APPLICATION?**

In the interest of fairness and transparency, the Arts Council will not review or proof your application prior to submission. Successful applicants have found that it is most helpful to have a friend, colleague, or mentor review their application before it is submitted.

**CAN I SEE A PREVIEW OF MY APPLICATION OR MAKE CHANGES BEFORE I COMPLETE MY SUBMISSION?**

Yes, you will be able to review and edit your responses until you finalize your application by completing the “Final Certification” task and clicking “Mark as Complete.”

**IF I FIND A MISTAKE AFTER SUBMITTING MY APPLICATION, MAY I CORRECT IT AND RESUBMIT?**

Once you finalize your application by completing the “Certification” task and clicking “Mark as Complete” you can no longer make additions, corrections, or any other edits.

**MAY I DROP OFF OR MAIL IN A COPY OF MY APPLICATION?**

No, all applications must be submitted via our online application at:

<https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/HILLSBOROUGHARTSCOUNCIL/Participant>

**I HAVEN'T RECEIVED NOTIFICATION ABOUT THE STATUS OF MY APPLICATION. WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT THE ARTS COUNCIL?**

You should receive an automatic email from our online program once you submit your application. If you have not received any notifications or emails, first check your “junk” or “spam” folder. If you still have not received an email, you can request assistance at [arts@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:arts@hillsboroughcounty.org). You can also view the status of your application by logging in to your account at:

<https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/HILLSBOROUGHARTSCOUNCIL/Participant>

**NEED FURTHER HELP? HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT A TOPIC NOT COVERED HERE?**

You can request assistance at [arts@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:arts@hillsboroughcounty.org) or by calling 813-571-6991.