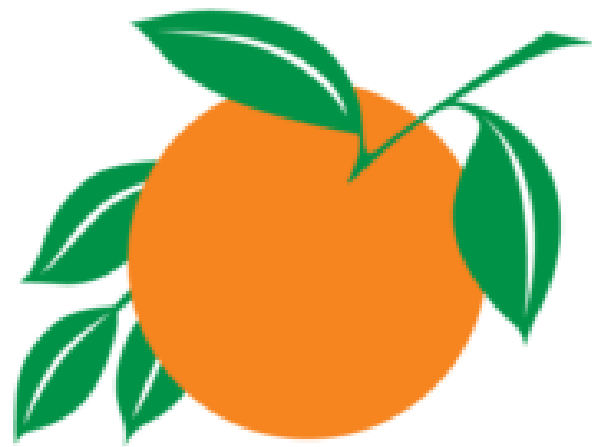


GRANT WORKSHOP

ORANGE



COUNTY

F L O R I D A

HOW TO APPLY FOR FY27 CULTURAL TOURISM FUNDING

Friday May 8, 2026, 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | Virtual

ORANGE COUNTY OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS

FY27 CULTURAL TOURISM FUNDING

Supported by Tourist Development Tax (TDT) Revenues*

- Office/Council created in Aug 2001, led by **Vicki Landon**, Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs & Advisory Council, with **Hayley Black**, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, and **Meghan Dawson**, Administrative Office Coordinator
- Fiduciary & Grant Management: United Arts of Central Florida, **Beatriz Ramirez**.

MISSION

“To elevate Central Florida’s arts & culture to that befitting a world-class community.”

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- **Enhance the Orlando area’s arts and cultural identity**
 - **Present quality arts and cultural experiences**
 - **Promote tourism**

HISTORY OF CULTURAL TOURISM FUNDING

TOTAL FUNDING 2003-2026: **\$57,683,961**

TOTAL FUNDING 2026: **\$5,164,747**

39 grantees:

- **11** small awards - **\$515,736**
- **6** medium awards- **\$563,227**
- **22** large awards - **\$4,085,784**

Total number of orgs who applied: **40**

Total project budgets of awarded: **\$41,874,506**

FY2026 Grantee Event durations

- **6** _ 1-day to 2-week events
- **3** _ 3-week to 3-month events
- **10** _ 4- to 10-month events
- **20** _ 12 months full season/year-long events

23% of all funded events ranged from 1 day to 3 months long

77% of all funded events were 4-12 months long

WHAT'S NEW IN FY27/ REMINDERS & CHANGES

NOTE: Panelists require complete applications and timely financial reporting in order to assess applications. Failure to provide all requirements by the application deadline will result in the applicant's ineligibility for that funding cycle.

Total funding pool: \$5,500,000

- Amount in each funding pool TBA; Totals are based on a percentage of total requests in each.

NEW! Increased funding caps for each request level:

- Large Request: \$200,000 (Previously \$190,000)
- Medium Request: \$105,000 (Previously \$100,000)
- Small Request: \$58,000 (Previously \$55,000)

NEW! Maximum request amount will be generated from either 3-year operating revenue averages of the three most recently filed IRS Form 990s or the most recent 990, whichever results in a higher permitted request amount. There is a new form to collect this information.

- Use the form "Calculate Maximum Request Amount" to determine the maximum request amount and financial statement requirements for your request
- The maximum request by each level is based on the chosen revenue with a maximum of 25% for large requests, 30% for medium requests, and 35% for small requests.

WHAT'S NEW IN FY27/ REMINDERS & CHANGES | 2

Reminder - Score threshold*: The scoring threshold remains at the original minimums for funding eligibility. Score requirements are: 70 for small requests, 75 for medium, 80 for large

Reminder - A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is required for each applicant

Translation Option - Using the Google Translate integration on the application portal will translate questions to Spanish, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Portuguese, and more. Simply click on the select language icon and select your preferred language

Resources

- Workshop materials and additional support can be found on the United Arts website, UnitedArtsCFL.org
- When viewing resources on a browser, locate the ReachDeck icon or browser settings. Once there, select the translate button.

ArtsInOrlando.com - grantees must post all events for cultural tourism funding at least 6 months prior to event using the OCACA category.

- New TBA venues available

NEW/returning requirement: ALL first-time grantees will need to attend a mandatory Agreement review session with UA staff to fully understand compliance and how to best prepare for their required reporting. Session may be scheduled individually, after the BCC approval and awards are issued.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Application Opens** – Monday, April 20, 2026
- **Application Closes** – Thursday, July 09, 2026, 11:59 p.m.
 - Tuesday, June 16, 2026 – **Last day to submit a draft application for full narrative staff pre-review.**
 - Thursday, July 09, 2026, 3 p.m. – **Last day for staff assistance** – all general questions.
- **Lobbying blackout begins Friday, July 10, 2026**
- **Panel Materials Released** – Monday, August 10, 2026
- **Friday, August 28, 2026** – Final day to provide any updated Financial and match materials for Panel meeting. Materials submitted after this date will not be considered in scoring.
- **Review Panel Meeting** – Wednesday, September 16, 2026
- **Scores and Rankings Released** – September 2026
- **Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.** – Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Council votes on Review Panel funding recommendations. Applicants are encouraged to attend.
- **October 27, 2026** – Board of County Commissioners approves funding recommendations. Council members and applicants are highly encouraged to attend.
- **Project Period** – November 1, 2026, to Feb 28, 2028
- **Event Period** – January 1, 2027, to December 31, 2027
- **First Payment Available** – January – February 2027

7/09/26
Application deadline

9/16/2026
Advisory Council Review
Panel

10/27/2026
Approval and
notification of Award

**1/1/2027 –
12/31/2027**
All events must occur in
this time period.

ELIGIBILITY

WHO CAN APPLY?

Arts and cultural organizations must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- Cultural nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation registered and in good standing with the State of Florida and the IRS, OR, an American Alliance of Museums (AAM)-accredited museum that meets all other requirements the same as a 501(c)(3); AND are current/in compliance with any open Orange County grants.
- An organization must be a 501c3 for **at least three years** at the time of application date to apply for Cultural Tourism Funding.
- Successfully delivered an event or series of events in Orange County within the last five years, drawing significant tourist interest and enhancing the region's cultural appeal.
- The arts and culture event for which you are applying will take place in ORANGE COUNTY and will be accessible and promoted to the public.
 - The project occurs within the Project Period of Nov. 1, 2026, to Feb 28, 2028, with actual event(s) that occurs between January 1 to December 31, 2027.
 - The arts and culture activities proposed are NOT a supplementary event at a non-arts conference, professional meeting, reunion, or other similar gathering.

ELIGIBILITY | 2

WHO CAN APPLY? CONT..

- Show community support through donations, specifically for this project, that match the requested amount at least dollar-for-dollar (1:1 Cash Match for Large Request; with in-kind portions allowed for Medium and Small requests)
- Attend a Cultural Tourism Funding workshop. This is mandatory for first-time applicants and applicants that have not been awarded in the previous cycle.
- Have a checking account with a licensed financial institution.
- Prepare at least quarterly financial statements (Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement or Statement of Position & Statement of Activities) that are reviewed and approved by the board (either signed statements or shown in board minutes to have been approved); and provide year-end financial statements **within nine (9) months of fiscal year-end** (whichever level of financial statements are required, based on the revenue average of the three most recently completed IRS Form 990s. September 30, 2025 (or earlier) Fiscal Year End will be due with application.
- File an annual IRS Form 990 (also acceptable: 990-EZ, 990-N with additional financial statements or documentation of annual revenue), **also subject to the requirement to be filed within nine (9) months of fiscal year-end, regardless of IRS-granted extension.**

CRITERIA FOR FUNDING

UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES/EXPENDITURES

ORANGE COUNTY FUNDING MAY NOT BE USED FOR:

- General operating or administrative costs not specifically identified with the project
- Out-of-county staff travel
- Mortgage payments
- Past-due debts, contingencies, fines and penalties, interest
- Space rental, improvement or maintenance not specifically identified with the project
- Private entertainment, food and beverages, including alcohol
- Lobbying expenses or political activities (for example campaigning or contributing to political causes)
- Advertising which does not mention the specific project activities or omits required logos
- Activities that are restricted to an organization's membership or other private or exclusive participation
- Prizes or awards
- Contributions and donations
- Endowment contributions
- Any other expenses not specifically identified with the project

CRITERIA FOR FUNDING | 2

MATCH REQUIREMENTS

- Provide audit-ready documentation for every cash item listed as “confirmed,” such as:
 - Grant award letters: contributions, written or emailed pledges to support the project; sponsorship agreements; etc., which must contain:
 - Donor/Company name and contact information,
 - Amount of the contribution/award,
 - Date of pledge, check, award, appropriation,
 - Date by which the contribution, award or pledge will be paid and
 - Use or purpose for the funding — must be intended specifically for the project.
 - Must include any restrictions on the funding, such as third-party approval process, acknowledgement requirements, specific premiums of value such as tickets, advertising space, etc.
 - Identify all Matching Fund documentation clearly.
 - Orange County Funds may not be used to match OC funds (such as Venue Subsidy or Blockbuster).

WHEN MUST MATCH FUNDS BE SUBMITTED?

Submit Form B: Matching Funds Summary and required documentation of confirmed match items by the application deadline. Only items supported by audit-ready backup documentation will be considered for the applicant’s Question 10: Matching Funds score.

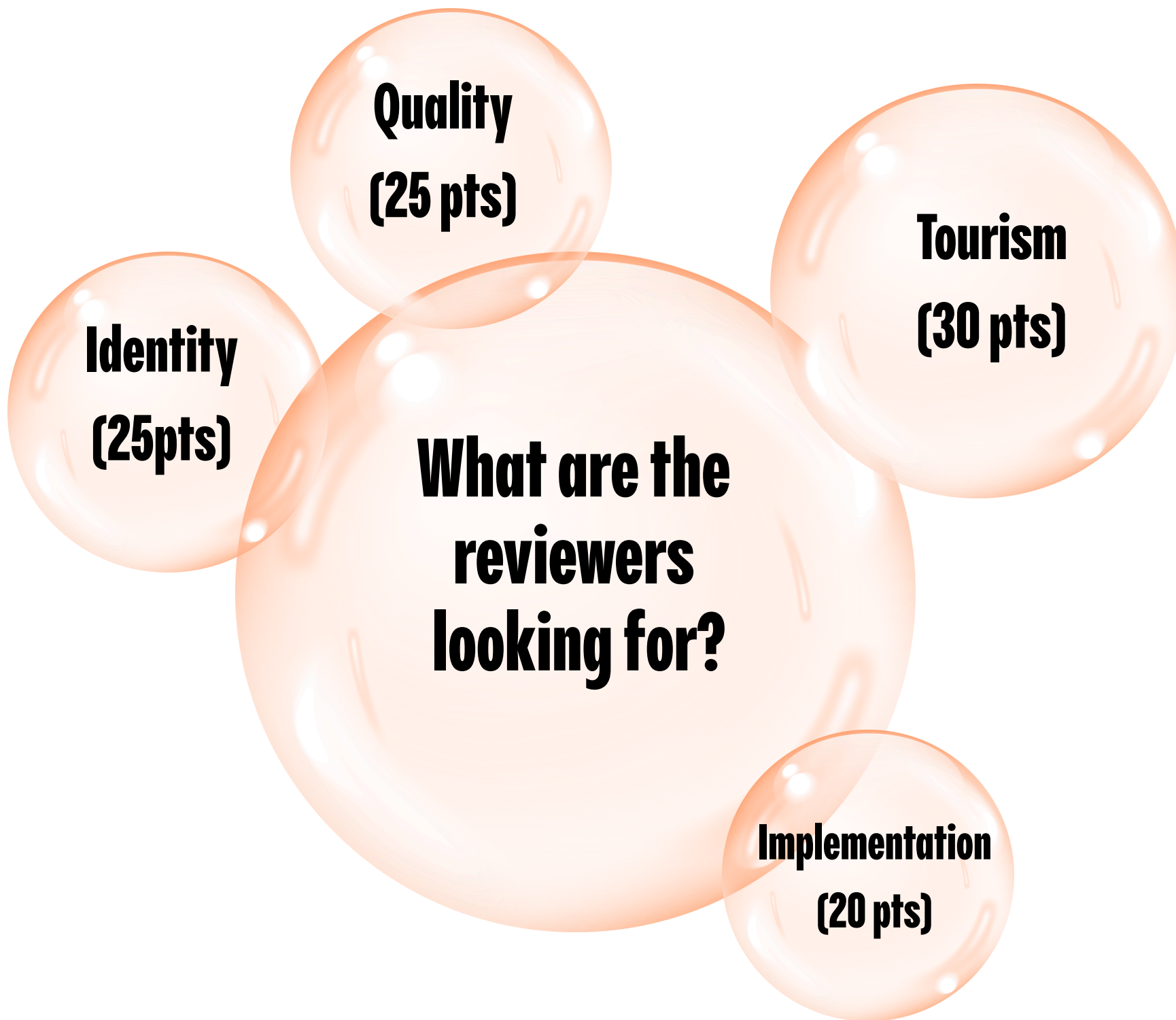
NOTE: An application may be submitted without confirmed Matching Funds, or with less than their entire request amount, however, the match score is based on the amount of match confirmed, and the start date of the event. The more that is confirmed at the time of application, the higher the score. Be aware of how much match will be available for use for events that occur early in the year.

If awarded a grant, at least half or 50% of the matching funds must be committed before the first disbursement can be made.

At the time of the second disbursement for the grant award, the grantee must have 100% of their award amount confirmed.

By the final payment, the entire matching funds must be paid to the grantee and fully documented as paid in full.

EVALUATION BREAKDOWN



Identity (Q1&2): project (innovation and uniqueness) & response (international/national attention and peer group) **(25 pts)**

Quality (Q3&4): product (artistic excellence) & reputation (professional acclaim) **(25 pts)**

Tourism (Q5a&b, 6a&b): marketing and PR plan & projected in-person attendance **(30 pts)**

Implementation (Q7, 8a&b, Q9, Forms, Financial Statements): outreach & impact, operational & financial readiness, and match **(20 pts)**

EVALUATION BREAKDOWN | 2

EVALUATION MATRIX

[SEE GUIDELINES FOR THE FULL EVALUATION MATRIX](#)

Each narrative or forms section has a related section on the Evaluation Matrix

Example: Q1 Innovation & Uniqueness / Identity: Project

The matrix will indicate how many points are awarded, with a score of 1-5 (5 as highest), and the multiplier (3 for this question).

The matrix lists examples of the content valuation to receive a score of 5, or less requirements for a score of 4, average for a 3, less than average for 2, and barely there would score a 1.

Innovation & Uniqueness

IDENTITY: Project

Q 1

Score

Points

possible

15 (multiplier = 3)

5	Excellent	Breaks new ground and/or is different from what has been done elsewhere or involves taking great risk artistically.
4	Above Average	Stands out creatively from the standard experiences of visitors and residents to similar events.
3	Average	Makes you stop, look and think. <u>Is</u> on the quality level of other similar experiences here or in the state.
2	Below Average	There are other similar experiences locally and this does not stand out.
1	Poor	There are more than enough similar experiences available locally and nationally that it is unlikely anyone would see this event unless they had a personal stake in it in some way.

EVALUATION MATRIX - GUIDELINES FOR SCORING

Panel will rate this using the matrix, but awarding points based on the weighted value

Score Points possible		Identity (25 Points)		Quality (25 Points)	
		Innovation & Uniqueness	Attention/Standing	Artistic Excellence	Feedback/Critical Acclaim
		IDENTITY: Project Q 1	IDENTITY: Response Q2	QUALITY: Product Q3	QUALITY: Reputation Q4
		15 (multiplier = 3)	10 (multiplier = 2)	15 (multiplier = 3)	10 (multiplier = 2)
5	Excellent	Breaks new ground and/or is different from what has been done elsewhere or involves taking great risk artistically.	Exceptional interest in and respect for this event from colleagues around the world. Highest recognition from peer group association. Taking a lead in the field.	Exceptional elements of artistic excellence resulting in a world-class event.	Exceptionally positive reputation in regional, national, and international press and extremely high admiration expressed by critics, peers and audience.
4	Above Average	Stands out creatively from the standard experiences of visitors and residents to similar events.	Significant interest and respect for this event from colleagues around the country. Recognized and involved in leadership with regional/national/international peer networks.	Impressive elements of artistic excellence resulting in a high-quality event.	Has a positive reputation with critics, peers and audience from outside the area.
3	Average	Makes you stop, look and think. Is on the quality level of other similar experiences here or in the state.	Belongs to and participates in regional or national peer networks. Colleagues in other parts of the state are aware of the organization and the event.	Quality elements of artistic excellence resulting in a satisfactory event.	Is respected in our community with positive comments from critics, peers or audience.
2	Below Average	There are other similar experiences locally, and this does not stand out.	Maintains membership in at least one industry network. Others in the state are only vaguely familiar with the organization and the event.	Less than satisfactory elements of artistic excellence resulting in a less than average event.	Has not received many positive comments from local press or peers.
1	Poor	There are more than enough similar experiences available locally and nationally that it is unlikely anyone would see this event unless they had a personal stake in it in some way.	Does not belong to or participate in any peer or industry networks. Neither this organization nor this event is known outside the immediate area.	Unsatisfactory elements of artistic excellence resulting in an uninspired event.	Is not well respected or admired outside its own circle.

EVALUATION MATRIX – GUIDELINES FOR SCORING – CONTINUED

		Tourism (30 Points)			Implementation (20 Points)			
		Marketing & Public Relations Q5 a&b	Total Attendance & How you arrived at numbers Q6 a	Tourist Attendance Q6 b	Community Outreach & Impact Q7	Operational Readiness Q8 a&b	Financial Readiness Q9/(Forms)	Match Q10/(Form & Backup Doc)
		20 (multiplier = 4)	5 (multiplier = 1)	5 (multiplier = 1)	5 (multiplier = 1)	5 (multiplier =1)	5 (multiplier =1)	5 (multiplier=1)
5	Excellent	Exceptional marketing and P.R. plan that will attract regional, national and international attention. Fully participating in UA Calendar, regional marketing such as Visit Orlando and other resources, and cross-promoting with other organizations.	Total attendance minimum of:30K (large request),20K (medium) 10K (small) The basis for projection is clearly explained; well supported by marketing plan and past accomplishments.	With minimum of: 5K (large request),3,333 (medium) or 1,667 (small), of total attendance are tourists.	Exceptional plan for advancing and reaching a broad spectrum of the community.	Extremely strong board and project team, with nearly all logistic details confirmed.	Extremely solid project budget, organizational financial condition, and ability to manage the event based on past events.	At least 100% match confirmed Jan-Feb event start.(Mar-May 80%;June-Aug 60%; After Aug 40%)
4	Above Average	Strong marketing and P.R. plan that attracts attention outside of the state. Participates in some of the collaborative community resources and cross-promotes.	Attendance minimum of: 20K (large request), 10K (medium) 5K (small) Basis for projection is clearly explained; supported by marketing plan.	With minimum of:3,333 (large request),1,667 (medium),or 833 (small), of total attendance are tourists.	Above average plan for advancing and reaching a broad spectrum of the community.	Better than average board and team, with most logistic details confirmed.	Above average project budget, organizational financial condition, and ability to manage the event based on past events.	At least 90% of match confirmed Jan-Feb event start.(Mar-May 75%;June-Aug 55%; After Aug 35%)
3	Average	Adequate marketing and P.R. plan for attracting attention from outside the four-County area. Participates in the community collaborative resource programs.	Attendance minimum of:10K (large request),5K (medium),2.5K (small) Basis for projection given; supported by marketing plan.	With minimum of: 1,667 (large request),833 (medium),or 416 (small) of total attendance are tourists.	Average plan for a broad spectrum of the community.	Average board and team, with a good number of logistic details confirmed.	Average project budget, organizational financial condition, and ability to manage the event based on past events.	At least 75% of match confirmed Jan-Feb event start.(Mar-May 55%;June-Aug 45%; After Aug 30%)
2	Below Average	Marketing and P.R. plan is not sufficient to attract attention outside the area.	Attendance minimum of:2K (large request),1K (medium),500 (small) Basis for projection given; not well supported	With minimum of:300 (large request),150 (medium),or 75 (small) of total attendance are tourists.	Limited plans for advancing and reaching a broad spectrum of the community.	Weak board and team and less than desired number of logistic details confirmed.	Below average project budget, organizational financial condition, and ability to manage the event based on past events.	At least 60% of match confirmed Jan Feb event start.(Mar-May 40%;June-Aug 30%; After Aug 25%)
1	Poor	Inadequate marketing and P.R. plan to speak of.	Attendance of less than: 2K (large request),1K (medium), 500 (small request), Weak basis for projection.	With <u>less than</u> 300 (large request),150 (medium),or 75 (small) being tourists.	Lacking plans for advancing and reaching a broad spectrum of the community.	The ability to complete the project is questionable.	Ability to complete the project on budget is questionable.	<u>Less than</u> 60% match is confirmed Jan-Feb event start.(Mar-May 40%;June-Aug 30%; After Aug 2%).

REVIEW, SCORING, AND DECISION PROCESS

REVIEW PANEL:

Applicants are required to attend

REMINDER! During the Review Panel meeting, applicant intro/update and responses will be limited to one minute unless the panel requests further clarification

SCORING & DECISIONS:

- Scores are compiled by calculating the average after the highest and lowest panelist scores are removed.
- The resulting ranking in each request level will be considered by the full Council for funding recommendations.
- **Full funding is considered from the top score down** (highest to lowest scores)
 - Even though an organization has an eligible score, this funding is competitive, and the lowest scores may not be funded
- The final decision is made by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) in October.

REMINDER! - Lobby Blackout from application due date through final BCC approval; **NO** lobbying of Review Panel, Council members, or BCC. You **MAY** invite them to public events, send e-news, press, etc., **but no private appeals or meetings that include discussion of the application/proposal.**

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS (IF FUNDED)

- i. **Commercial General Liability** –with a limit of liability of not less than \$1,000,000 general aggregate/\$500,000 per occurrence.
- ii. **Business Automobile Liability** – \$500,000 minimum limit of liability per occurrence, and must include All Owned, Hired, and Non-Owned Auto coverage.
- iii. **Workers' Compensation / Employer's Liability**– for all employees with statutory workers' compensation limits, and no less than \$100,000 each incident of bodily injury or disease for Employer's Liability.
- iv. **Employee Dishonesty/Crime Insurance**– No longer required (recommended), Commercial Crime Insurance or Third-Party Fidelity Bond, including coverage for Employee Dishonesty, equal to or greater than sixty-five percent (65%) of the amount of the Orange County Cultural Tourism Funding.

Additional Insured - The insurance certificate shall list **United Arts of Central Florida AND Orange County, Florida (201 S. Rosalind Ave, Orlando, FL 32801)** as additional insured.

Certificate Holder - Each other insurance certificate or policy shall list United Arts as the Certificate Holder, as follows;

United Arts of Central Florida
Attention: Outreach Department
3025 Edgewater Drive, Orlando, FL 32804
Email: Outreach@UnitedArtsCFL.org

Grantees are required to provide a complete and current Certificate of Insurance (COI) with each agreement and payment request.

TIPS FOR “A-STUDENT” GRANT WRITING

1. Write responses to the questions and reference the scoring Matrix.
2. Correct any typos and grammar; get fresh eyes. (Tip: answer questions outside of the grant portal first)
3. Don't overwhelm – limit use of acronyms, lengthy statistics, long blocks of type
4. DO use brief headers, break up paragraphs (bullets or dash)
5. Avoid generalized statements and unidentified quotes; if using a quote, identify the source & year of the quote, or add a descriptive reference. If it's too old don't use it.
6. Show what the project is & what you would do with the grant funding.
7. Review high-scoring grants; and prior year scores & comments (available on request)
8. Be sure content on all related website and social media is current.
9. Allow enough time; plan ahead.
10. Ask for help!

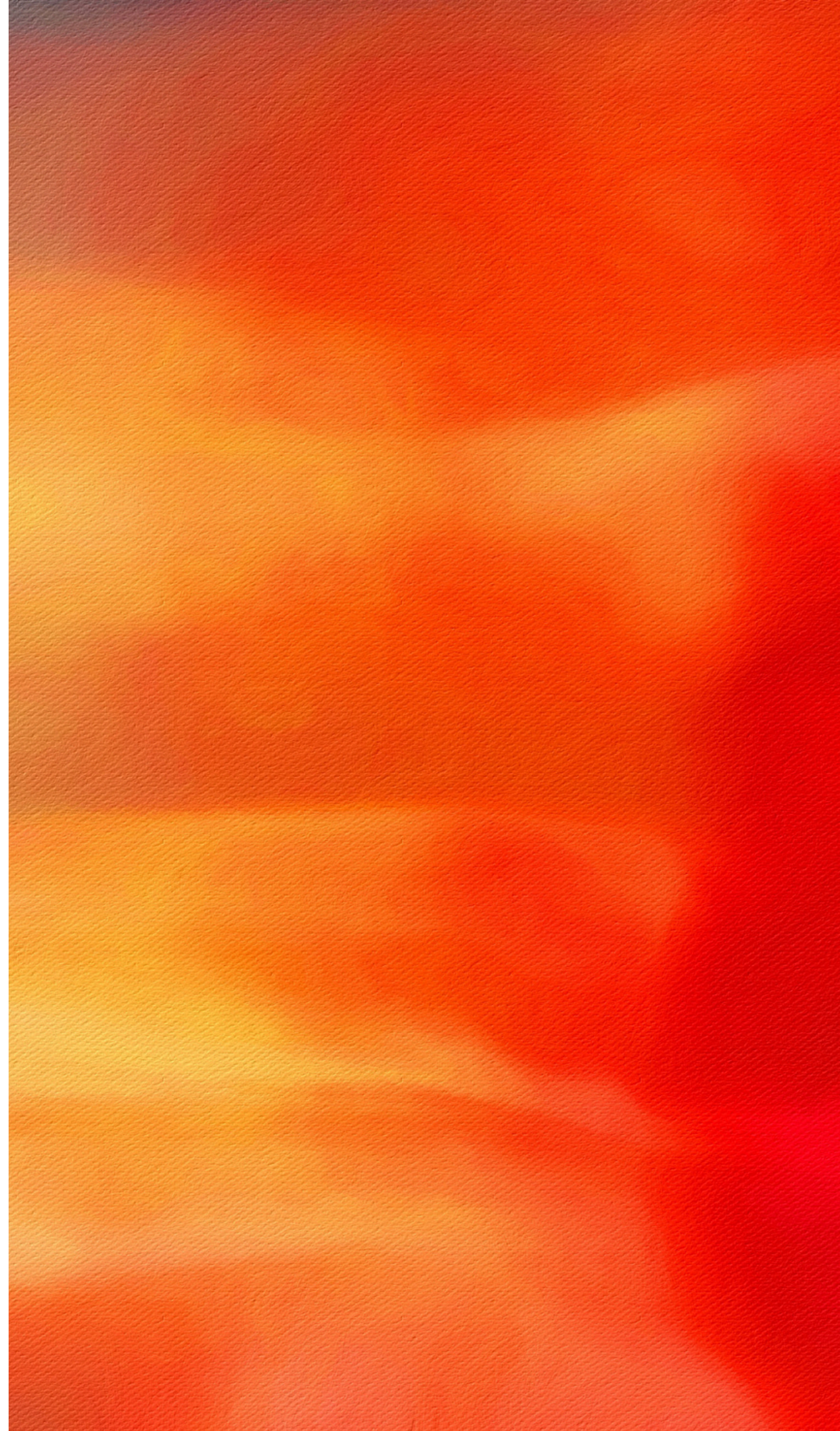
GRANT ACCESS, FORMS, & TOOLS

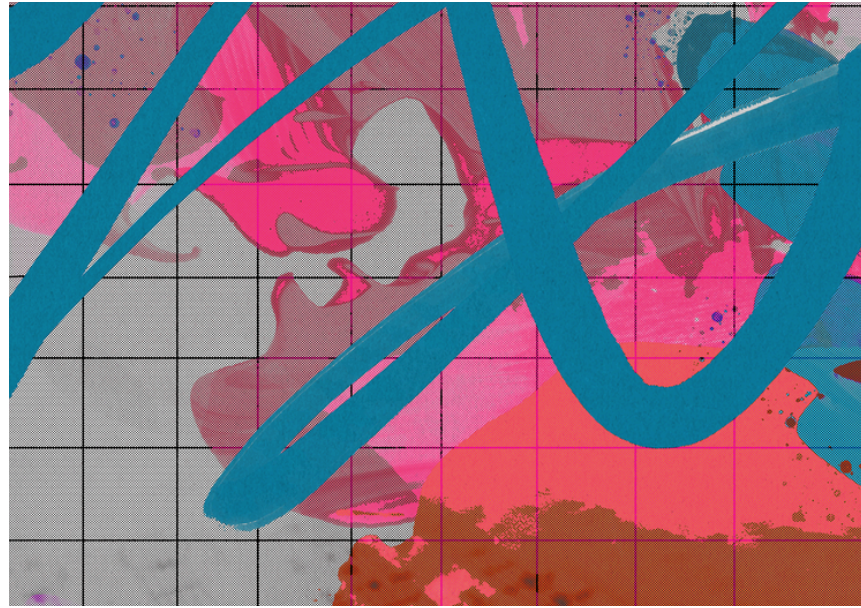
1. How to navigate the Grant Portal
2. Unique Entity ID
3. To start an account or a new grant application Log-on to Foundant
<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=unitedarts>
4. How to copy a previous application
5. Calculate your economic impact – using the Americans for the Arts Calculator
6. For link to the United Arts website for Orange County Arts & Cultural Affairs grants page – Link: <https://unitedartsCFL.org/grants/> (orange boxes are OC grants)
7. [ArtsinOrlando.com](https://www.artsinorlando.com)

OTHER INFORMATION

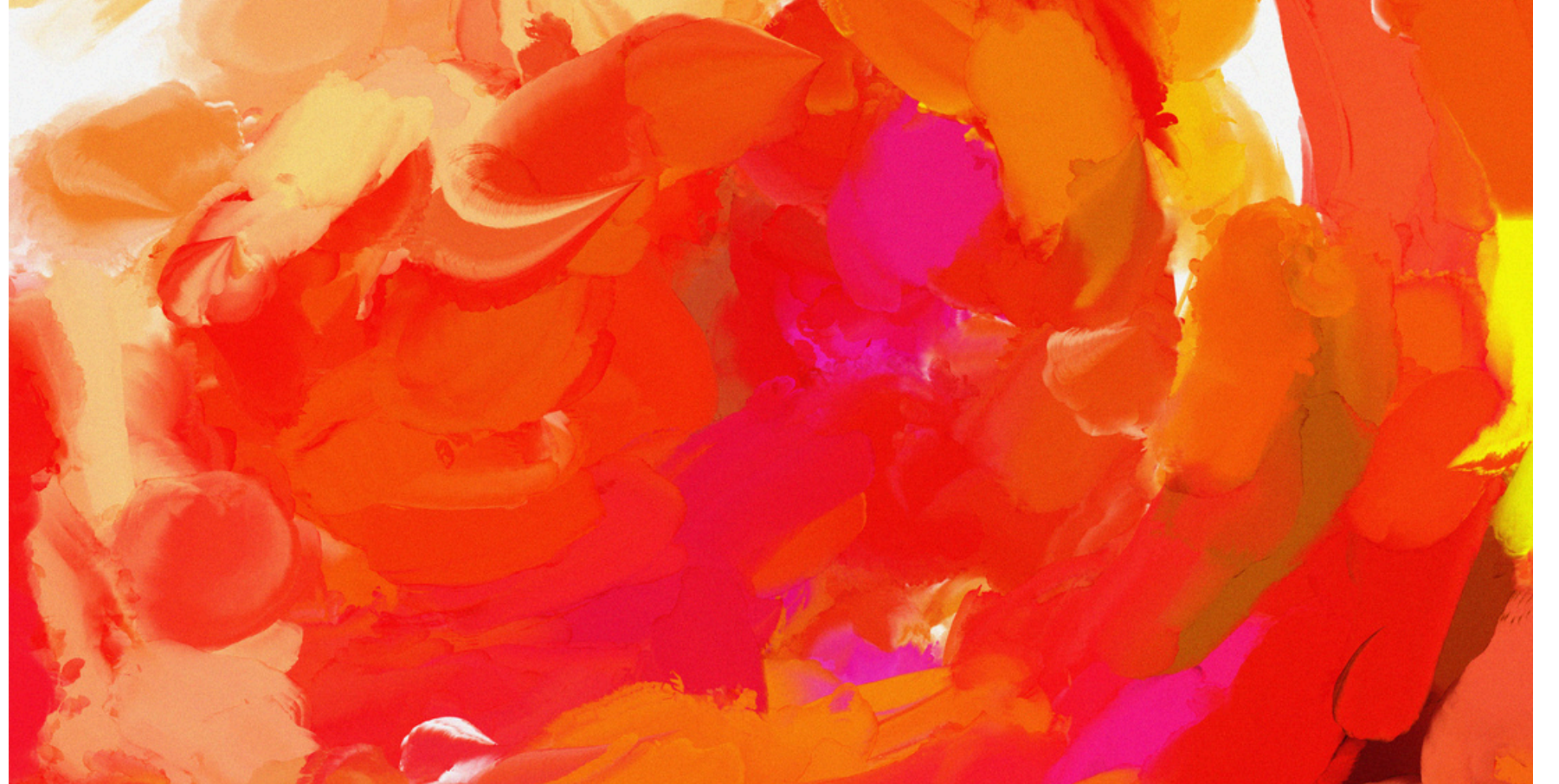
- Individual Artist Awards - currently in review process
- Next Community Impact Grants cycle - end of the year
- Current General Operating Support Grants - you may receive notice soon about a participatory review of this program (your input welcome)
- Tuesday, June 16, 2026 9 a.m. - Arts filled day at Orange County Board of County Commissioners and Chambers
- Artistry magazine & ArtistryOnline.org - Cindy@UnitedArtsCFL.org | artistryonline.org

Q&A





THANK



Information on Orange County Arts
and Cultural Affairs

Vicki Landon, Administrator

Vicki.Landon@OCFL.net

Phone: (407) 836-5540

Questions on Application, Grant Portal,
and Review

**Beatriz Ramirez, Outreach Program
Officer, UA**

Beatriz@UnitedArtsCFL.org

Phone: (407) 636-5126

YOU!

ORANGE



COUNTY
FLORIDA



**U
A**