



FY27 Orange County Venue Subsidy Funding for Arts and Culture - Guidelines



Orange County is offering to subsidize the use of event venues in Orange County by arts organizations for cultural programming at a publicly accessible venue, providing a performance or exhibition space for 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts and cultural organizations registered in Orange County, Florida.

Apply Online By: Saturday, October 31, 2026, 11:59 p.m.

Staff will be available until 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 30 to provide assistance.

Project Period – Venue Date(s)

Must Occur Within: Thursday, October 1, 2026, through Thursday, September 30, 2027

Award Notification: By Friday, November 20, 2026

Funding Period Ends: September 30, 2027

Final Report Due: 45 days after venue rental covered by the grant has been completed

Request Amount: Not more than 50% of the total venue bill(s) for rental and related venue costs, up to a maximum request of \$60,000.

Program Requirements

Organizations may apply for a season subsidy, or one event/festival. Funding is competitive; not all projects of merit will be funded or receive full funding.

As part of the application, the applicant must provide a formal quote from the venue(s) with contact information and confirmed event/production dates.

For an organization to be eligible to apply for a season using more than one venue, they must have: Successfully completed a grant from United Arts of Central Florida (either an Operating Support Grant or Community Project Grant) OR Orange County Arts & Cultural Affairs' (either Cultural Tourism Funding, Cultural Facilities Funding, or a previous Venue Subsidy Funding).

This award is to subsidize short-term venue rental costs and related costs billed by the venue ONLY, no third-party invoices. It does not cover staffing, artists, other programmatic expenses unrelated to the venue rental, or other expenses required to be purchased separately by the venue but not included in the venue invoice or settlement. **For a list of eligible and ineligible costs, please refer to the Award Eligibility section.**

Each organization is limited to one Venue Subsidy Award application. Approval of one year of funding carries no assurance of funding in subsequent years. Applicants must be in good standing with United Arts and Orange County Arts & Cultural Affairs concerning any prior reporting, if applicable.

Organization Eligibility

To apply, the organization must have:

- Nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporate status, **registered in Orange County**, in good standing with State of Florida Division of Corporations and the IRS (United Arts will verify current 501(c)(3) status at www.irs.gov and current good standing with the State of Florida Division of Corporations at www.sunbiz.org.)
- Arts/culture as their primary mission; providing cultural programming (defined as exhibition, production, presentation, or instruction of performing, visual, literary or media arts, the sciences, or history and heritage).
- Refer to the NTEE (National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities) listing below indicating eligible codes for Venue Subsidy program.
 - **Where to look up your self-identified NTEE code**
 - Candid/GuideStar Nonprofit Search - <https://www.guidestar.org/>

ELIGIBLE NTEE CODES

A01	Alliances & Advocacy	A40	Visual Arts	A6E	Performing Arts Schools
A02	Management & Technical Assistance	A50	Museums	A70	Humanities
A03	Professional Societies & Associations	A51	Art Museums	A80	Historical Organizations
A05	Research Institutes & Public Policy Analysis	A52	Children's Museums	A82	Historical Societies & Historic Preservation
A11	Single Organization Support	A53	Folk Arts Museums	A84	Commemorative Events
A12	Fund Raising & Fund Distribution	A54	History Museums	A90	Arts Services
A19	Support N.E.C.	A56	Natural History & Science Museums	A99	Arts, Culture & Humanities N.E.C.
A20	Arts & Culture	A57	Science & Technology Museums	B70	Libraries
A23	Cultural & Ethnic Awareness	A60	Performing Arts	C41	Botanical Gardens & Arboreta
A24	Folk Arts	A61	Performing Arts Centers	C42	Garden Clubs
A25	Arts Education	A62	Dance	D50	Zoos and Aquariums
A26	Arts & Humanities Councils & Agencies	A63	Ballet	N52	Fairs and Festivals
A27	Community Celebrations	A65	Theater	O50	Youth Development Programs
A30	Media & Communications	A68	Music	P01	Alliances & Advocacy
A31	Film & Video	A69	Symphony Orchestras	Q21	International Cultural Exchange
A32	Television	A6A	Opera	S80	Community Service Clubs
A33	Printing & Publishing	A6B	Singing & Choral Groups	W19	Support N.E.C.
A34	Radio	A6C	Bands & Ensembles		

Organizations are NOT eligible if they are:

- A public or private entity governed by a county, municipality, school district, community college, college, university, or an agency of state government
- Nonprofits whose primary mission is not the arts, science, history, or culture
- Faith-based organizations
- Fraternal or sports organizations
- Political causes, candidates, organizations, or campaigns
- Organizations that are adjuncts to for-profit organizations. ("Friends of" organizations are eligible to apply only in lieu of the parent nonprofit organization.)
- Organizations that have not yet received their 501(c)(3) IRS designation.
- Not registered within Orange County - **Nonprofits registered in Lake, Osceola and Seminole counties are not eligible.**
- Organizations with an operating budget **higher** than \$50,000,000.00.

Eligibility: Proposals must be for event(s) that occur in a venue(s), accessible to the public, based in Orange County, Florida. Programming must involve arts and culture, science, or history. Inclusive of:

- A single exhibition, production, or performance
- A season of productions/exhibitions
- Organizations may apply only once within the open application period, for events within the Performance Period of October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027. No exceptions.
- **The applicant must provide a formal quote from the venue(s) with contact information and confirmed event/production dates.** Related venue costs must be included and itemized in the quote, such as security, stagehands, sound/lighting engineers, ushers, custodial, and other costs required by, provided by, and billed by the venue(s).
 - **No third-party invoices will be accepted.** In cases where the applicant believes that the final settlement cost will be significantly different from what can be provided by the venue in a quote, the applicant can additionally provide a final settlement from the same venue from the previous year to demonstrate that difference. Staff may consider that information when determining an applicant's eligible request amount. A final signed contract or rental settlement from the venue must be supplied, to release funds (See Award Payment Schedule for details).
- Events/productions must be held in venues open to the public. This includes spaces such as Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, The Plaza Live, The Abbey, Orange County Convention Center, parks, community centers, churches, and school auditoriums or other cultural organizations' venues. For other ideas of possible eligible venues, see museums and performance venues at Orange County's [cultural facilities map](#) or [this list of eligible venues](#) prepared by United Arts.

This award will NOT fund:

- **Awards or prizes**
- **Capital expenditures** (including acquisitions or equipment), or any building, renovation, or remodeling of facilities.
- **Education:** Including tuition expenses, summer camps, scholarships, etc.

- **Endowment** contributions or contributions to cash reserves
- **Food or beverage costs**
- **For-profits:** Projects benefiting for-profit organizations
- **Lobbying** or attempting to influence federal, state, or local legislation
- **Mortgage payments**, deficit reduction, bad debts, contingencies, fines and penalties, interest payments, litigation costs, or any other comparable expenses
- **Non-arts events:** Events, activities, and related expenses (e.g., benefits, dinners, sporting events, etc.) where the artistic/cultural offering is not the primary activity
- **Non-venue spaces:** Long-term leases, rent for administrative offices, or warehouse/storage space
- **Private events** closed to the public and activities restricted to an organization's membership (including school competitions, recitals, and graduations); professional competitions are eligible if applications and events are open to the public
- **Program expenses** for staff, labor, or fees unrelated to venue rental and production/exhibition costs
- **Regranting**, contributions, or donations
- **Religious projects:** Projects of a religious nature designed to promote or inhibit religious belief and/or practice and that have no basic underlying secular theme or topics
- **Sales tax**
- **Self-dealing**, proposals to cover cost of a venue operated or owned by the applicant
- **Travel**

Review Process: United Arts staff will review all applications for eligibility. Staff may contact applicants with questions or for additional materials, please watch your email closely. If the primary contact will be out of town after the application deadline, designate a contact person and notify SarahB@UnitedArtsCFL.org. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Availability of Funding: If the total eligible requests are more than the amount available in the funding pool for this cycle, after fully funding requests of \$2,500 or less, all other requests will receive a percentage of funding of their request equal to the percentage of funds available. (Based on up to 50% of total rental costs; maximum of \$60,000).

Award Payment Schedule: The online award agreement must be signed before award funds are disbursed. Award agreements will provide detailed payment and compliance terms. Payments are made in two disbursements:

- **First payment** of 50% of the award is made after approval of the funding pool in late October and upon subsequent acceptance of the Award Agreement and compliance with insurance requirements (confirmation of either self-insured, nonprofit-secured policies or venue-provided special-event or event riders).
- **Final payment** is made after the final settlement invoice has been issued, confirming the total costs billed by the venue(s) that are within allowable expenses, and event and program dates.
- **Note that the applicant/awardee will be responsible to use their own matching funds** to pay down payments, and venue expenses for any events or deposits required prior to the funding approval in late October, notice of award by November 20, and receipt of the County funds to disburse the first and final payments.

- All disbursements are contingent upon United Arts' receipt of the funding from Orange County. Initial payments have historically been available in January.
- **** If the final venue costs are less than the initial quote, the award amount will be adjusted to reflect this change. ****
 - All changes need to be approved. If your organization has been overpaid in relation to your final venue costs, the overage will need to be reimbursed.

Requirements During the Award Period:

- **Request Permission for Changes:** Significant project or budget changes, including change of venue, must be communicated to United Arts **in advance of finalizing the venue rental** by submitting a change request form, which can be found on the United Arts website - Orange County [grants page: www.UnitedArtsCFL.org/grants](http://www.UnitedArtsCFL.org/grants) Change of venue and failure to notify United Arts of a venue change may result in forfeiture of the award. Contact SarahB@UnitedArtsCFL.org with questions or to discuss a potential project change. No exceptions can be made to the award period. **If the proposed event cannot occur during the program period ending September 30, 2027, all unspent funds must be returned to United Arts.**
- **Notification:** During the project, awardees must keep Vicki.Landon@ocfl.net and SarahB@UnitedArtsCFL.org on their email list, renew insurance policies (as required) when they expire and provide United Arts with updated certificates, and notify United Arts of any contact changes or changes in IRS tax-exempt status. United Arts and Orange County Arts & Cultural Affairs will add awardees to its email list including resources and opportunities.
- **Publicity:** Recipients of venue subsidy funds are required to post their events on the free, online Arts & Culture Calendar at: ArtsinOrlando.com when the dates and other details have been set. Posts to the Calendar **must include** the "OCACA" event tag. United Arts promotes select events through its email newsletter and, at least two months in advance, the calendar section of *Artistry* magazine. To add your event, go to <https://artsinorlando.com/login/>. For assistance with the calendar, contact: Ryan Dean, RDean@UnitedArtsCFL.org.
- **Insurance:** At the time of award acceptance, all awardees are required to provide a Certificate of Insurance, listing United Arts of Central Florida and Orange County Government as certificate holders and provide current coverage for the following types and limits of coverage:
 - **Commercial General Liability, \$500,000** (event riders or special event provisions are acceptable, or insurance held by the venue that covers your organization for the event).
 - United Arts of Central Florida and Orange County, Florida **MUST BE** listed as additional insured (usually listed in the notes field) with regard to at least the Commercial General Liability coverage, as required per the funding agreement, and
 - United Arts must be named Certificate Holder, 3025 Edgewater Drive, Orlando, FL 32804; Outreach@UnitedArtsCFL.org. Some venue-provided insurance will not include this; if that is the case, notify Outreach@UnitedArtsCFL.org.

- **Workers Compensation**, as required by law (if the organization employs more than three staff on payroll)

Awardees must submit a new copy of the insurance certificate whenever one of the policies expires. Any organization that believes it cannot meet the coverage requirements throughout the project period should contact Outreach@UnitedArtsCFL.org with a request for an exemption and a reason why that is being requested.

- **Acknowledgement:** Awardees must acknowledge the award in all project publicity and materials (whether printed, online, verbal, or other), with the Orange County Florida logo and statement: "This project [or project name] is funded in part by Orange County, Florida through the Arts & Cultural Affairs Program."
- **Record keeping:** Awardees must keep information (including description and photos of the project, press or publicity about the project including use of logo or acknowledgement statement, and attendance statistics) for the final report. Also keep records about the project's activities and financial documents for at least five years after the project is completed; such records must be available for audit by Orange County or United Arts representatives.
- **Final Report:** A final report follow-up form will be provided in your online account, due 45 days after the final event. **All requirements, receipts, and related documents must be provided with the final report.**

Application and Questions: For application portal support or other questions: Contact SarahB@UnitedArtsCFL.org.

Application can be accessed via the [United Arts Grant Portal](#).

For new applicants, follow the directions on the right-hand side to create a new account. More information on the Venue Subsidy Award program can be found on the [United Arts website](https://unitedartscfl.org/grants/orange-county-venue-subsidy-for-arts-and-culture/) <https://unitedartscfl.org/grants/orange-county-venue-subsidy-for-arts-and-culture/>