



Osceola County
Cultural Venues & Capital Projects
Grant Guidelines & Instructions

September 2026 Cycle

Program Overview

The Osceola County Cultural Facilities Grant Program supports capital investments that strengthen Osceola County's cultural infrastructure, enhance visitor experiences, increase public access to eligible cultural facilities, and generate measurable impact for Osceola County residents and visitors.

Funding is intended to support repair, renovation, construction, and equipping projects at eligible cultural facilities located in Osceola County. Projects should help preserve, improve, expand, or equip facilities that provide arts, culture, heritage, and visitor-serving experiences open to the general public.

Funding is provided through Tourist Development Tax revenues and is intended to support eligible facilities that contribute to Osceola County's cultural tourism economy, visitor experience, and quality of life.

Contact Information

Purpose	Contact
Program information, application and panel review questions	Elyse Jardine Sr. Director of Community Outreach Elyse@UnitedArtsCFL.org 407-790-7844 Outreach Department Outreach@UnitedArtsCFL.org
United Arts Grant Portal	https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=unitedarts

Key Dates and Deadlines

Milestone	Date
Application opens	September 1, 2026
Applicant information session / workshop	Late August / September – Will be recorded
Application deadline	October 16, 2026 @ 11:59 PM
Volunteer Panelist Recruitment	September 2026 – November 2026
Staff eligibility and completeness review	October 19-30, 2026
Panel Orientation and Materials Distribution	November 2 – 6, 2026
Panelist review period & Site Visits	November 9 – January 1, 2027
Review panel meeting	January 4 – 8, 2027 (Week of)
UA Board Approval	January 2027
Award notification & Grants agreements	January 2027
Project period (18-month construction / project activity window)	February 2027 – August 2028
Progress Reports	Vary by project throughout activity period
Final Impact Reports	Sixty (60) days after completion of the project.

Funding Information

Applicants may request funding for one eligible cultural facilities project. The requested project should be clearly defined, achievable within the project period, and directly related to an eligible facility located in Osceola County.

Funding Item	Details
Total funding pool	\$4.5 Million over 2 years
Minimum request	\$2,000
Maximum request	\$4.5 Million
Match requirement	No match requirement
Number of applications	One application per organization, facility, project, site, or phase unless otherwise approved.

Eligible Project Types

Applicants must apply under one of the following project categories. The proposed project should be a single, clearly defined project. Related project components may be included when they are integrated into the same overall project scope.

Project Type	Description	Examples
Repair	Projects that restore an existing facility to a safe, functional, or usable condition.	Roofing, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, structural repairs, fire suppression, waterproofing, building envelope repairs.
Renovation	Projects that improve, modernize, upgrade, or enhance an existing facility.	ADA accessibility improvements, gallery improvements, theater modernization, visitor amenities, restrooms, code compliance.
Construction	Projects involving new construction, additions, or significant expansion of eligible cultural facilities.	Building additions, new performance or exhibit space, new visitor-serving facilities.
Equipping	Projects that provide fixtures, equipment, and facility infrastructure directly related to the cultural facility.	Theatrical lighting, audio systems, rigging, projection, security systems, permanent exhibit equipment, technical infrastructure.

Eligible Applicants

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in good standing with the IRS, Florida Department of State (Sunbiz), Osceola County and United Arts.
- Operate eligible cultural programming, services, or facilities within Osceola County for at least 2 years prior to applying.
- Have a minimum two-year operating history.
- Be current on all required grant reporting and contractual obligations, if previously funded.
- Demonstrate organizational and financial capacity to manage the proposed project.
- Submit a complete application and all required attachments by the published deadline.
 - Including the 990s for the two most recently completed fiscal years.

Facility Eligibility

Projects must occur at eligible facilities located within Osceola County. Facilities must be open to the general public and must support cultural, heritage, or visitor-serving experiences consistent with applicable Tourist Development Tax requirements.

Eligible facilities may include:

- Publicly owned or nonprofit-operated museums open to the general public.
- Publicly owned or nonprofit-operated auditoriums open to the general public.
- Performing arts venues that meet applicable eligibility requirements and are open to the general public.
- Historic cultural facilities open to the general public.
- Other eligible cultural or natural attractions that meet applicable Tourist Development Tax requirements.

Arts education facilities are not eligible unless the facility otherwise meets the applicable definition of an eligible cultural facility and is open to the general public.

Site Control

Applicants must demonstrate legal control of the facility where the project will occur.

Owned Facilities

- Applicants must provide documentation demonstrating ownership of the facility.

Leased Facilities

- Applicants must provide a copy of the current lease agreement.
- Applicants must provide a letter from the property owner supporting the proposed project and acknowledging the proposed use of grant funds at the facility.
- Applicants may be required to demonstrate that the lease term is sufficient for the useful life and public benefit of the proposed investment.

Project Period

- All project work must occur during the approved project period.
- Grant funds may only be used for approved project expenses incurred after execution of the grant agreement.
- Projects must be completed within the timeframe established by the grant agreement (August 2028).
- Expenses incurred before execution of the grant agreement are not eligible for reimbursement or payment.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses must be directly related to the approved project and necessary to complete the repair, renovation, construction, or equipping of the eligible facility.

- Construction labor and materials directly related to the approved project.
- Repair or replacement of facility systems, including roofing, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and fire suppression systems.
- ADA accessibility improvements and code compliance improvements.
- Permanent or facility-related furniture, fixture and equipment directly tied to the cultural facility and approved project.
- Design, engineering, permitting, and related soft costs when directly required for the approved project.
- Project-specific professional services, contractor services, vendor services, and installation costs.

Ineligible Projects and Expenses

- Acquisition of land.
- Acquisition of buildings.
- Debt service, mortgage payments, past due debts, fines, penalties, or interest.
- Organizational operating deficits.
- Fundraising expenses.
- Lobbying activities.
- Food and beverage expenses, including alcohol.
- General administrative expenses unrelated to the facility project.
- General office furniture, office equipment, or administrative technology not directly related to the approved facility project.
- Routine operational expenses unrelated to the approved facility project.
- Expenses incurred prior to execution of the grant agreement.
- Projects located outside Osceola County.
- Projects that restrict access to members only or are not open to the general public.

Application Information

Applicants must submit a complete application through the designated grant portal by the published deadline. The application will request basic project readiness, organizational, financial, and facility information.

Basic Project Information

- Project title.
- Project category: Repair, Renovation, Construction, or Equipping.
- Project description.
- Request amount.
- Total project cost.
- Project location (including address).
- Project start and end dates.
- Primary contact information.
- Facility ownership or lease information.
- Description of public access.

Narrative Questions

Question 1: Project Need

Describe the need for the project. Applicants should explain the existing facility condition or opportunity, why the project is necessary now, and the consequences of not completing the project.

Applicants may address deferred maintenance, safety concerns, accessibility barriers, code compliance issues, equipment failures, facility limitations, or other relevant project-specific needs. Supporting materials such as photographs, assessments, reports, studies, or evaluations may be submitted.

Question 2: Impact

Describe the anticipated impact of the project. Applicants should address how the project will affect the organization, the facility, audiences, visitors, and Osceola County.

- **Tourism impact:** visitor attraction, visitor experience, cultural tourism opportunities, and regional visibility.
- **Economic impact:** job creation, job retention, contractor activity, increased visitation, visitor spending, or other economic activity, if applicable.
- **Organizational impact:** operational effectiveness, sustainability, facility capacity, and protection of cultural assets.
- **Community impact:** public access, cultural participation, improved audience experience, and service to Osceola County residents.

Question 3: Project Readiness

Describe the current status of the project and the applicant's readiness to begin and complete the work within the project period.

- Feasibility planning and design status.
- Project team members, roles and qualifications.
- Vendor or contractor selection status.
- Permitting or approval status, if applicable.
- Project schedule and major milestones.
- How programming or public access will be managed while work is underway, if applicable.
- Board Commitment
- Other funding sources (if applicable)

Question 4: Long-Term Stewardship

Describe how the organization will maintain the investment over time. Applicants should address maintenance planning, equipment replacement planning, facility upkeep, ongoing operating considerations, and long-term sustainability.

Required Attachments

Required attachments may vary by project type and request size. Applicants should submit clear, complete materials that support the project scope, budget, readiness, and organizational capacity.

Attachment Category	Potential Required Materials
Project documents	Project budget, contractor estimates, vendor quotes, project plans or drawings, construction documents, scopes of work.
Organizational documents	Board authorization, board list, 3 yr. annual operating budget – last fiscal year, this fiscal year, next fiscal year), strategic or long-range plan, project team list.
Financial documents	IRS Form 990, financial statements, current-year financial statements, audit or reviewed statements if required. Two most recently completed fiscal years, and most recent profit and loss and balance sheet.
Facility documents	Proof of ownership or lease, property owner support letter for leased facilities, documentation of site control.
Letters of Support	Two letters of support from non-employees and board members establishing the need.

Review Process

Administrative Review

United Arts staff will review applications for eligibility, completeness, required documentation, and compliance with program requirements. Applications that are incomplete or do not meet eligibility requirements may be removed from consideration.

Site Visits

Site visits may be conducted to verify project conditions, clarify project information, support panel review, and assess project readiness. Applicants may be asked to make appropriate staff, board members, project team members, or property representatives available during the site visit process.

Panel Review

Eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by an independent volunteer review panel. Panelists will evaluate applications using the published scoring criteria and may consider staff review notes, site visit observations, and submitted materials.

Scoring Criteria

Category	Points	Review Considerations
Project Need	20	The extent to which the project is necessary, well documented, and tied to a clear facility need or opportunity.
Impact	30	The extent to which the project demonstrates organizational, community, tourism, and economic impact. Job creation or retention may be considered where applicable.
Project Readiness	20	The extent to which the project is planned, realistic, and ready to move forward within the project period.
Organizational Capacity	15	The extent to which the applicant has the experience, staffing, governance, and project management capacity to complete the project on time and within budget.
Financial Feasibility	15	The extent to which the project budget is realistic and the applicant demonstrates financial capacity to manage and sustain the investment.
Total	100	Maximum total score.

Award Administration

- Award recipients must execute a grant agreement before grant funds may be used.
- Recipients must use funds only for approved project expenses.
- Recipients must maintain complete project and financial records.
- Recipients must submit progress reports and a final report as required by the grant agreement.
- Recipients must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and all contractual requirements.

Payment and Reporting

Payment and reporting schedules will be established in the grant agreement. Reporting may include project updates, financial documentation, invoices, proof of payment, photographs, lien releases, final project outcomes, and other documentation required to verify completion and compliance.

Acknowledgement Requirements

Grant recipients may acknowledge Osceola County support in project-related communications and materials. If requested, this may include the use of the County logo, written acknowledgement language, signage, website recognition, printed materials, digital communications or other recognition appropriate to the project.

Record Retention

Recipients must maintain project and financial records for the minimum period established by the grant agreement and applicable laws. Records must be available for review upon request by United Arts, Osceola County, or authorized representatives.

Definitions

Term	Draft Definition
Cultural facility	An eligible public-facing facility located in Osceola County that provides arts, culture, heritage, or visitor-serving experiences and meets applicable eligibility requirements.
Tourism impact	The project's potential to strengthen Osceola County's visitor experience, cultural tourism assets, and tourism economy.
Repair	Work that restores an existing facility to a safe, functional, or usable condition.
Renovation	Work that improves, modernizes, upgrades, or enhances an existing facility.
Construction	New construction, additions, or significant expansion of an eligible cultural facility.
Equipping	Fixtures, equipment, and infrastructure directly related to the eligible cultural facility and approved project.
Public access	The degree to which the facility and/or project benefits are available to the general public.
Project readiness	The degree to which planning, design, budgeting, team, approvals, and timeline indicate that the project can be successfully completed within project period/
Site control	Legal authority to use and improve the facility where the proposed project will occur.

Application Checklist

- Completed application form.
- Narrative responses.
- Project budget.
- Contractor estimates or vendor quotes.
- Project plans or drawings, if applicable.
- Financial statements and IRS Form 990.
- Board authorization.
- Organizational budget.
- Ownership or lease documentation.
- Property owner support letter, if leased.
- Strategic or long-range plan, if required.
- Any additional documentation required by project type or request size.