

GRANT

Reviewer Guide

The Maine Arts Commission relies on teams of reviewers to help make decisions around the funding of grants and fellowships. Materials in this guide have been developed to assist reviewers in the review process.

Reviewer requirements include:

- Participate in a competitive peer-review process for awarding grant funds
- Represent the entire state of Maine, not one particular region or organization.
- Prepare for the review session by reading, analyzing, and evaluating the grant applications in your assigned review panel.
- Provide written comments and scores for each grant application in our Grants Management System
- Prepare to discuss your thoughts on the applications using the given criteria.
- Attend review session to discuss the applications with other reviewers. (All Sessions are recorded for public viewing)
- Review this guide and submit all forms or information that apply to you

The Basics:

1. Establish a **Maine Arts Commission Account**, if you do not have one yet.
 - a. Click this [link](#) and fill out the form to register.

2. Make sure you have a **vendor code (VC)** with the State (a # for anyone receiving funds from the State)
 - a. Skip this step if:
 - i. You have already submitted this form in the past and have not changed your Legal Name or Address since then.
 - ii. Do not want to receive the \$150 honorarium.
 - b. If neither of those apply; then fill it out this form ([link to form >>](#)) .
 - c. Print it out.
 - d. Sign with a pen.
 - e. Scan and email Kimberly.Jablon@maine.gov or snail mail back to:

Maine Arts Commission
193 State Street, SHS 25
Augusta, ME 04333-0025

3. Fill out a **Conflict of Interest form** at [Link >>](#)

Panelists are required to disclose any current or prospective affiliations they or their immediate family members have with an applicant. This applies to employment, board memberships, independent contractual relationships, advisory or policy relationships, substantial contributor relationships, or other financial relationships. Look at the list of applications to make sure you are aware of any possible conflicts.

4. Sign and return the Letter of Agreement form that is attached to your welcome email to eli.cabanas@maine.gov .
 - a. You will need to fill it out, print and sign in pen.

PLEASE READ

Implicit Bias

Implicit bias is the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

HOW CAN IT SHOW UP IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS?

Implicit bias can be activated involuntarily, without awareness or intentional control. Implicit bias can be either positive or negative. Everyone is susceptible to implicit bias.

TYPES OF IMPLICIT BIAS

- Race & Ethnicity Bias
- Age Bias
- Gender Bias
- LGBTQIA+ Community Bias
- Ability Bias
- Affinity Bias

EXAMPLES OF IMPLICIT BIAS

1

THE “LIKE ME” EFFECT (AFFINITY BIAS)

Where a person identifies characteristics of themselves.

Artistic Preference

- Discipline
- Style

Personal modifiers

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Spiritual

Text/Media Preferences

- Anecdotal, data-driven, cleanly edited, etc.

2

THE HALO/PITCHFORK EFFECT

- A positive/negative moment influences the entire application.
- Prior knowledge/experience of or with the applicant.
- A statement or statements within the application.

3

STEREOTYPING

Forming an opinion about an applicant’s gender, race, artistic discipline, etc. that then, influences evaluation.

4

NONVERBAL BIAS

Positive or negative evaluation is made based on presentation of application (organized, instructions followed, media used,) representation within work samples (hair length, mannerisms, etc.).

5

ACADEMIC ITERATION

- Favoring grant-writing (which can be influenced by privilege of resources) over impact.
- Punctuation and sentence structure.

Steps to limit the effects of implicit bias

- **Be mindful and take your time.**
- **Focus on the content of the application.**
- **Generosity comes from curiosity.**
- **Frame responses as recommendations.**
- **Each applicant stands alone, without comparison.**
- **Adhere to the review criteria.**
- **Think about the bigger picture of support.**

The goal is to get funding out into the state to organizations and artists providing strong arts programming and projects.



Artist: Becky Jane Rosen

Get Started:

- Familiarize your self with the guidelines for the grant you are reviewing
 - ❖ Your Grant: [Organization Operations Grant for FY 2024 - \(PDF >>\)](#)

- Familiarize yourself with the Scoring Criteria:
 1. **Relevance (35%)** Evidence that the funds will be used to address the organization **mission**.
 2. **Organizational Excellence (30%)** As demonstrated in operational planning and management, ability to carry out arts programming, sound administrative policies, and a demonstrable commitment to continuous improvement
 3. **Impact (25%)** Evidence of organizational and/or community benefit.
 4. **Artistic Quality (10%)** The extent to which the applicant provides its audience meaningful artistic programming and experiences

- Familiarize yourself with the **review rubric** for this grant
 - You should have received this in your welcome email.

- **Login to the Grants Management System and start reviewing***
 - <https://mainearts-grants.maine.gov/>
 - Once you're logged in on the right-side column of the screen you should see this grant under "My Grants To Review". That link takes you to the applications you are assigned. Read each one and then enter your scores using the "View Scoring" button located in each application.

*Note: if your review period hasn't stated there will be no grants in the system for review. You will receive an email from us when they are ready for review

Thank you for serving as a panelist for this Maine Arts Commission review panel! Below is a list of resources for you to reference if you need guidance. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns!

Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access

As we continue to expand our reach to all people living in Maine, we are committed to offer opportunities that are accessible to people historically under-served in the arts, including people who speak languages other than English, people with disabilities, people who are LGBTQIA+, people living in rural areas, and people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. In upholding our responsibility to cultural equity, we strongly encouraged applications from candidates with connections in these communities and from all counties across the state.

We invite the Maine arts and culture community to join us in this inquiry, reflection, and transformation. This will help us better understand longstanding and emerging needs, and determine ways we can steer funding, professional development, outreach, and other resources to ensure all Maine people have access to creative expression. We will learn and grow together.

MAC VIDEOS/WEBINARS

[Grant Reviewer Perspective](#)

Thoughts from past Maine Arts Commission reviewers.

HOW TO IDENTIFY AND OVERCOME YOUR IMPLICIT BIAS

- [Understanding Unconscious Bias Video](#)
- [National Education Association](#)
- [University of Maryville](#)

GENERAL CONTACT INFO

For questions contact
Eli.cabanas@maine.gov
207.287.6746