ARTS COUNCIL
FAYETTEVILLE • CUMBERLAND CO.

RAPID RESPONSE FUNDING

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2025-2026 Fiscal Year

The Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County is seeking proposals for its Rapid Response funding program. This initiative offers swift financial assistance for smaller arts projects and events, enriching Cumberland County's cultural landscape to entice tourism and visitation. It supports timely opportunities through a simplified application and expedited review process.

Rapid Response Funding is supported by the Cumberland County Occupancy Tax.

1.Overview

1.1 Objective: To provide quick-turnaround financial support for smaller arts projects, activities, and events that enrich Cumberland County's cultural vibrancy and tourism landscape.

1.2 Focus: Supports timely opportunities through a streamlined application process and expedited review.

1.3 Funding Available: Up to $5,000 per project.

1.4 Application Deadline: Rolling submissions accepted.

1.5 Project Completion: All projects responding to this call must conclude by June 30, 2026.

2.Eligibility Requirements

2.1 Eligible Applicants:

- 501(c) organizations based in and serving Cumberland County
- Unincorporated art collectives/guilds based in Cumberland County using a fiscal agent with 501(c) status.

2.2 Eligible Projects:

- Festivals, performance series, and exhibitions in Cumberland County
- Community arts engagement activities
- Projects that respond to current community needs through artistic expression
- Projects must be public-facing with a goal to drive cultural tourism in Cumberland County.

2.3 Ineligible Projects:

- Projects not taking place in Cumberland County
- Projects benefiting only closed populations
- Projects promoting specific religious dogma or faith
- Projects not accessible to the general public
- Projects led by applicants not in good standing with the Arts Council
- Operational support requests (must be project-specific)
- Requests from individuals or for-profit organizations.

3.Allowable and Ineligible Expenses

3.1 Allowable Expenses:

- Marketing and promotional expenses.
- Contracted artist fees
- Other project-related contracted services
- Space/equipment rental
- Materials and supplies for the project

3.2 Ineligible Expenses:

- Food and beverage expenses
- Capital expenditures
- Funds for subgranting or awards/scholarships
- Educational curriculum requirement expenses
- General operating costs or overhead
- Deficit reduction
- Activities completed prior to award notification.

4.PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Format Requirements

- Maximum 2 pages in PDF format (up 3,000 characters)
- Standard fonts and margins for readability

4.2 Required Proposal Elements

Proposals must address the following components:

A. Project Overview and Artistic Significance

- Clear description of the proposed project
- Artistic merit and significance to the community

B. Community Impact and Tourism

- Specific impact on Cumberland County community
- How the project will drive cultural tourism

C. Project Goals and Outcomes

- Specific, measurable project goals
- Intended outcomes and success metrics

D. Implementation Timeline

- Detailed timeline showing project completion within 6 months of award
- Key milestones and deadlines

E. Use of Funds

- Proposed use of requested funds
- Total project budget (if funds exceed grant request)
- Any matching funds or in-kind contributions

5.SUPPORTING MATERIALS

5.1 If your proposal advances for funding consideration, you will be requested to provide:

- **Itemized Budget:** Complete project income and expenses breakdown
- **Supporting Materials:** Work samples, collaboration letters, venue commitments (as applicable)
- **Current W9 Form**
- **Current Charitable Solicitation License**

6.EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on three primary criteria:

6.1 Program Excellence

- Artistic quality and merit of the proposed project
- Alignment with Arts Council mission to connect communities, embrace diversity, promote creativity, advance tourism, and foster lifelong learning
- Use of qualified artists with adequate compensation

6.2 Community Impact

- Benefits to Cumberland County residents
- Promotion of cultural tourism and visitation
- Engagement with diverse communities and/or underserved populations
- Contribution to cultural vibrancy

6.3 Project Feasibility

- Clarity and achievability of project plan
- Realistic and appropriate budget
- Demonstrated capacity to complete the project
- Clear, achievable 6-month timeline

7.REVIEW PROCESS AND TIMELINE

7.1 Review:

Intake: Arts Council staff will work with applicants to refine competitive proposals.

Presentation: Staff will present eligible proposals to the Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County Board of Directors.

Funding Decision: Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County Board of Directors will review final proposals and vote to fund activity.

Timeline: Approximately 6 weeks from submission to funding decision

Award Notification: Applicants will be notified via email and will work with staff on acceptance paperwork.

Funding: Awards made on rolling basis as funds are available

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

8.1 Recipient Obligations

If funded, recipients must:

- Complete the project within 6 months of award notification
- Acknowledge the Arts Council in all promotional materials using required logos and credit lines
- Submit a final report within 30 days of project completion
- Provide project documentation (photos, videos, etc.)
- Submit expense receipts verifying use of funds
- Provide two complimentary tickets to funded events (if applicable)

9.SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

9.1 How to Apply

Submit proposals through our online application portal. The portal is found online at www.TheArtsCouncil.com or directly at **bit.ly/ACGrants**

9.2 Questions and Contact Information

For questions regarding this RFP or the application process, contact:

Michael Houck
Director of Grants and Allocations
Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County
Email: michaelh@theartscouncil.com

9.3 Application Assistance

Arts Council staff are available to provide guidance.

We encourage applicants to reach out early in their planning process.