



**State of Illinois  
Bruce Rauner, Governor**

**Illinois Arts Council Agency  
Shirley R. Madigan, Chairman  
Tatiana Gant, Executive Director**

**Illinois State Board of Education  
James T. Meeks, Chairman  
Dr. Christopher A. Koch, State Superintendent**

# **Arts Planning Assistance Grant**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**FY 2015**

March 16, 2015

### **General Information**

**Eligible Applicants:** School districts, public university laboratory schools approved by the Illinois State Board of Education, charter schools, and area vocational centers are eligible to apply.

No grantee shall receive more than one planning grant for the arts. No grantee, other than a grantee located in a city with over 500,000 inhabitants, shall receive a second planning grant until the implementation phase has been completed with respect to the initiative to which the original planning grant related (or until at least three years have elapsed since completion of the original planning grant in the case of an applicant that did not secure implementation funding).

**Grant Award:** Annual grant awards will not exceed \$25,000 depending on programmatic needs, size of district, and level of planning to take place. Total amount of funding available for planning grants in FY 2015 is up to \$200,000.

**Grant Period:** The grant period will begin no sooner than June 15, 2015, and will extend from the execution date of the grant until December 15, 2015.

**Application Deadline:** Mail one original and seven copies to ensure receipt no later than 4:30 p.m. on April 30, 2015 to:

Illinois Arts Council Agency  
Attention: Arts Planning Assistance  
James R. Thompson Center  
100 West Randolph, Suite 10-500  
Chicago, IL 60601

No late proposals, facsimile proposals, or electronic proposals will be accepted. Substantially incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding.

**Letter of Intent to Apply:** Eligible applicants are encouraged to submit an electronic letter of intent to apply no later than April 14, 2015. The letter must include the following: the name and address of the applicant, and the name, telephone number, and email address of the contact person. This letter should be emailed to Jerome Grand at [jerome.grand@illinois.gov](mailto:jerome.grand@illinois.gov).

**Online informational Forum:** There will be an online interactive informational forum about the RFP designed to provide technical assistance to applicants as well as answer questions about the process. The date for this forum is March 31, 2015 at 1:00 PM. Registration information will be posted at [www.arts.illinois.gov/AFL](http://www.arts.illinois.gov/AFL). The application information will also remain available on the website until the application deadline.

**Changes to the RFP:** Should changes to the RFP be made prior to the deadline, the Illinois Arts Council Agency will post those changes to <http://www.arts.illinois.gov/AFL> . Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.

**Contact Person:** For more information on this RFP, contact Jerome Grand, Program Consultant, at (312) 814-6766 or [jerome.grand@illinois.gov](mailto:jerome.grand@illinois.gov) .

### **Background and Program Specifications**

The benefits of arts education are well-documented and have been acknowledged by the State of Illinois. Section 27-1 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-1) identifies fine arts as one of the fundamental areas of learning and requires all school districts to “give priority in the allocation of resources, including funds, time allocation, personnel, and facilities, to fulfilling the primary purpose of schooling.” Districts are required to establish learning objectives consistent with the Illinois Learning Standards for Fine Arts (see [www.isbe.net/ils/fine\\_arts/standards.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ils/fine_arts/standards.htm)) and to develop appropriate testing and assessment systems to determine the degree to which students are achieving the objectives. Also, 23 Illinois Administrative Code 1.430 and 1.440 require that each school district offers in all elementary and secondary schools a comprehensive curriculum that includes fine arts (see [www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/oneark.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/oneark.pdf)).

Many schools and districts, however, have had to neglect some instructional areas due to budgetary concerns or increased concentration on English language arts, mathematics, and/or the sciences, as required under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). In other cases arts programs, in particular, may have languished or been incorporated into classroom activities, rather than being offered as distinct courses taught by staff specifically licensed to teach the arts.

Section 2-3.65a of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/2-3.65a) authorizes the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Arts Council Agency (IACA) to provide grants to school districts and other eligible applicants for the purpose of supporting arts and foreign language education in schools, with an emphasis on ensuring that these areas become part of the school’s core curriculum. The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from eligible applicants that are seeking resources to plan for strengthening or expanding instruction in the arts.

The arts include visual arts, music, drama, and dance. The goal of each planning grant will be to assist applicants with measuring the effectiveness of their existing arts education program, identifying areas for improvement, and establishing a realistic timeline and budget for improving arts education. As part of the planning process, grant recipients must identify the necessary components of an instructional program to be added or enhanced and the human, financial, and other resources that will be necessary in order to incorporate these components into the affected schools’ curriculum and sustain them when State funding is no longer available.

Eligible applicants should consider the steps necessary to implement innovative, curriculum-based arts education programs that are presented in a sequential and developmentally appropriate manner, add higher-level learning opportunities, and are aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards and other district learning goals. See [www.isbe.net/ils/fine\\_arts/standards.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ils/fine_arts/standards.htm) for further information about the standards.

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Each applicant must propose a comprehensive, district-based planning process. The planning process must include not only school administrators, teachers, and other relevant staff members, but also parents and community-based organizations with an interest in fostering the availability of arts programming. In the case of proposals for high school programs, students should be included in the planning process.

The proposed planning process may include the following steps:

1. Information gathering
  - A. Determine the current status of the program. This phase could include but is not limited to curriculum, instruction, assessment, personnel, funding, other resources and facilities.
  - B. Conduct research about best practices, available resources, model programs, etc.
2. Information analysis
  - A. Identify strengths and weaknesses of the current program based on the analysis conducted in Step 1A.
  - B. Develop strategies to enhance the areas that need improvement.
3. Action plan development
  - A. Write goals and objectives from the development of strategies conducted in Step 2B.
  - B. Create an action plan to meet the objectives. The plan should include goals and objectives, implementation tasks, timeline, responsible personnel, needed resources, estimated cost, and sources of funding. The plan should reflect how the grantee intends to allocate local resources and secure other external support in order to meet those needs in a program that can be sustained over time.

**Reporting:** In addition to expenditure reports, each grantee will be required to submit a final performance report including an outline of the activities completed with grant funds and an action plan that identifies programmatic goals and objectives developed through an analysis of the applicant's curricular needs and that describes how the resulting program will be implemented, including the grantee's approach to allocating local resources and securing other external support in order to meet those needs so that the program can be sustained over time. This report form will be available at the end of the project period at [www.arts.illinois.gov/AFL](http://www.arts.illinois.gov/AFL) and will be due January 15, 2016.

### **Fiscal Information**

Eligible applicants may not request funding for special one-time projects, before- or after-school programs, extra-curricular or summer programs, or for outside organizations or individuals to provide programming. Administrative costs must not exceed five percent (5%) of the total grant amount requested and must relate directly to this grant program.

Funds made available under the Arts Planning Assistance Grant must relate directly to the planning activities to be conducted and **may be** used for:

- Evaluating and aligning curricula with state standards;
- Hiring substitute teachers to allow the planning team to meet during the school day;
- Providing stipends to allow the planning team to meet outside the work day;

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- Providing funds to hold district-wide meetings to facilitate articulation from elementary to secondary programs;
- Hiring planning facilitators;
- Purchasing supplies and materials related to the planning process;
- Supporting travel related to the planning process; and
- Paying for space rental for planning activities.

Funds made available under the Arts Planning Assistance Grant **may not be** used for:

- Incidental or short-term projects;
- Extra-curricular programs, before- or after-school programs, or summer programs;
- Technology for student use;
- Software (except where it directly relates to curriculum development by staff);
- Capital improvements (e.g., building modifications);
- Capital outlay for classrooms (e.g., materials, supplies, textbooks, classroom-based software packages);
- Staff salary to work with students;
- Administrative costs of more than 5 percent; and
- Outside organizations or individuals to provide programming.

### **Proposal Format**

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please use the following as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal. Substantially incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding.

- \_\_\_ 1. **Cover Page** (Attachment 1): Must be signed by the school district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal. One copy with original signatures (i.e., no facsimiles, photocopies, or electronic signatures) must be submitted.
  
- \_\_\_ 2. **Proposal Abstract** (Attachment 2): Describe in 300 words or less the ways in which the school district intends to utilize grant monies by providing overall objectives and activities of the project. Not to exceed one page.
  
- \_\_\_ 3. **Proposal Narrative** (Attachment 3): Use the attached forms to respond to each of the following in the order in which they are presented below (500 words or less for each section).
  - a. **Need.** Indicate the needs to be met or problems to be addressed by the proposed planning process. This description should at least include:
    - How the need was determined;
    - Information about the arts program currently offered, as applicable;
    - The percentage of students participating;
    - Staffing considerations;
    - Equitable access to the programs among the applicant’s schools and students;  
and
    - Availability of community resources or support to assist in planning the proposed program.

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- b. **Proposed Planning Process.** Indicate who will participate in the comprehensive, district-based planning process, why they were chosen to participate, and the responsibilities they will have during the process. Participants must represent each category identified in the Background and Program Specifications section of this RFP.
  
  - c. **Proposed Program.** Describe the implementation program to include:
    - The specific areas of instruction to be offered (e.g., visual arts, vocal music);
    - The grade levels to be targeted;
    - The number of schools to be involved;
    - The steps to be taken to ensure that the program will be aligned to the applicable Illinois Learning Standards; and
    - How the proposed program will address the needs described under item (a) above.
  
  - d. **Sustainability.** Describe how local resources (e.g., monetary, material, human) will be used or redeployed to ensure that the arts program is implemented after the planning grant ends. Describe the commitment of the district and building administrators to long-term implementation of the program. Include any community resources that will be made available for program implementation and ongoing support.
- \_\_\_ 4. **Objectives and Activities** (Attachment 4): Use the form provided to list the objectives and activities of the proposed project in a time-specific format. All objectives must include an explanation of the activity, a timeline for said activity (i.e., start and completion dates) and person(s) responsible.
- \_\_\_ 5. **Budget Summary** (Attachment 5): Information must be submitted on the form provided and signed with an original signature of the district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal.
- \_\_\_ 6. **Budget Narrative** (Attachment 6): Must include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures as related to the planning objectives and activities, correlated to the line items set forth on the Budget Summary (Attachment 5). For purposes of the proposed budget, per diem should be calculated at a rate of not more than \$28 per day, and mileage should be calculated at a rate of not more than 57.5 ¢ per mile.
- \_\_\_ 7. **Program Specific Terms of the Grant** (Attachments 7): Each applicant is required to submit the program specific terms of the grant. It must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.

### **Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals**

Proposals will be reviewed according to the criteria listed below. The maximum number of points an application may earn is 100. It is the intention to fund as many programs as possible that show a commitment to substantive and sustaining interest in arts instruction.

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Proposals will be evaluated by a panel of practitioners familiar with arts programming according to the criteria below. IACA and ISBE reserve the right to negotiate budget amounts and program activities based on readers' comments and to award grants on the basis of fair and equitable distribution of programs throughout the state.

Funding decisions made by the Illinois Arts Council Agency are final.

1. **Quality of the Plan** (40 points)

- A. The proposal demonstrates that the planning team includes individuals with knowledge of the curricular field, individuals with decision-making authority in the district, and individuals who can help make relevant community-based resources available to the district as an integral part of the program that will subsequently be implemented.
- B. The proposal indicates a role for parents' and students' preferences in the determination of the program to be implemented.
- C. The plan of work for the planning project is based on a timeframe that is reasonable when implementation of the instructional program in the subsequent year is taken into consideration.
- D. The proposal acknowledges the central role of qualified staff in the relevant curricular area and includes strategies for determining how these positions will be staffed.

2. **Sustainability** (30 points)

The proposal identifies a plan for allocating district resources as well as securing additional resources from local organizations, businesses, and governmental agencies that will be useful to the grantee in sustaining a new or enhanced arts or program in the future.

3. **Need** (20 points)

The proposal demonstrates that the district is currently unable to offer the desired instructional program or the desired quality of instruction in the arts due to issues related to finance, staffing, curricular expertise, or facilities.

4. **Cost-Effectiveness** (10 points)

The proposed budget is reasonable based on the scope of the planning work to be conducted and the number of individuals to be involved.