



City of Lynchburg Arts & Cultural District Program Guidelines

Background

From the Code of the City of Lynchburg: “The Lynchburg City Council finds that the continued development and success of its arts and cultural venues requires incentives, and determines that the most appropriate method of offering incentives for the area described below is to create an arts and cultural district in that area, as authorized by Section 15.21129.1 of the Code of Virginia. City Council believes the establishment of an arts and cultural district will improve the economic conditions of this geographic area located in the central portion of the City which could, in turn, benefit the welfare of the citizens of Lynchburg.” In order to equitably administrate the Arts & Cultural District, and to encourage the participation of citizens and arts & cultural organizations to conduct projects, events and activities to further the arts and culture in Lynchburg, City staff has created the Arts & Cultural District Program.

Guidelines

Guidelines for the Arts & Cultural District Program are intended to attract citizens, organizations and consortiums that wish to create and execute projects within the Arts & Cultural District to benefit the welfare of the citizens of Lynchburg. The term “project” may include events, activities, promotions, displays or like pursuits that serve to further arts and culture in the District. Guidelines include but are not limited to:

- Project funds are for arts- and culture-related projects only
- Projects must show an estimated economic impact, if the project is of a Public Art nature please show estimated public access and make a case for the artwork in the location chosen
- Projects must demonstrate a public benefit

- Applicants must demonstrate familiarity with arts & cultural organizations, artists and/or other relevant constituencies within the District
- Applicants must demonstrate collaboration with organizations and individuals with priority towards collaborations with constituencies within the District
- Projects that have secured match funding will be prioritized
- Project funds can only be used for the specific project or event applied for, and cannot be used for organizations' routine operating expenses
- Projects must take place within the Arts & Cultural District - see District map
- Projects that have been funded by the grant program for more than 3 years are not eligible to apply for funding again without significant program innovation or change
- Projects that do not already receive other forms of City support will be given priority
- Certain projects that utilize public space or City streets require permitting from the City of Lynchburg; it is the responsibility of grant applicants to determine these requirements. To learn more about Special Events permits, please visit <https://www.lynchburgvirginia.org/special-events/>

Other Funding Sources

Priority consideration will be given to applicants who have secured other funding sources for their projects. Applicants should not expect the Arts & Cultural District Program to award more than 75% of their project. Projects with a 1:1 financial match will be given priority.

Application Requirements

Staff is on hand to answer questions about the application process.

General JRAC Program applications must be submitted no later than 5:00 pm on Friday, March 28, 2025. Funding is not intended to be retroactive.

Digital submissions are highly encouraged, but if you need to submit a hard copy, please submit one hard copy of the Arts & Cultural District Project Fund Application to: The Office of Economic Development & Tourism, Attn: Arts & Cultural District Program, 900 Church Street, 2nd Floor, Lynchburg, VA 24504. Certain projects that utilize public space or City streets require permitting from the City of Lynchburg; it is the responsibility of grant applicants to determine these requirements. To learn more about Special Events permits, please visit <https://www.lynchburgvirginia.org/special-events/>.

Eligible Applicants

Any citizen of Lynchburg, non-profit organization within city limits, or any consortium of organizations within the City is eligible to apply for the General JRAC District Program. Though an applicant is not required to be a citizen of Lynchburg or be located within City limits, priority will be given to these applicants. Funds cannot be used for projects for which a single entity or individual profits directly; this is not applicable to projects in which proceeds are donated or there is no intent for profit generation.

To be eligible for the JRAC Cultural Infrastructure Program, organizations must have contributed at least 10% to the annual Amusement Tax sum.

Eligible Use of Project Funds

Funds are only for projects within the geographic boundaries of the Arts & Cultural District (see map for description). Funds can be used to leverage other funding sources for the specific project, but are solely intended to cover expenses directly related to the project for which the applicant requested funding. Funds may not be used to cover the routine operating expenses of an organization, or for expenses incidental to a project or event such as personnel expenses, dues, planning expenses, etc.

Application Review Process

Applications are reviewed by an appointed panel comprised of stakeholders and other business and community leaders. Program recipients will be selected based on the merits of their project vis-à-vis the program guidelines and thorough completion of the application. Members of the judging panel may not be employees or officers of an organization that is applying for a grant. JRAC Cultural Infrastructure applications will be subject to a comprehensive evaluation process, undergoing a review by the City's Technical Review Committee, followed by an assessment by a designated group of city staff. The City of Lynchburg Office of Economic Development & Tourism will utilize the recommendations of the review committee, but in all cases will retain sole discretion for the grant amounts awarded.

The application review process will take approximately 6 weeks.

Program Fund Terms and Amounts

The maximum awards are: \$10,000 for the General Arts and Cultural Program and no more than 50% of the yearly Amusement Tax Collection for the JRAC Cultural Infrastructure Program. Multiple organizations or individuals may apply separately for funding for the same project. The amount awarded will be based on the criteria described in the program guidelines, to include but not limited to the scope of the project, the greatest public benefit, the greatest economic impact, collaboration,

and percentage of total project funding. The District geographically includes the Central Business District, Fifth Street from Jefferson Street to Taylor Street to include the Old City Cemetery, Legacy Museum and Madison House for the Arts; Rivermont Avenue from 5th Street to Bedford Avenue; the Pierce Street Renaissance Historic District; and properties that include Point of Honor. An organization or individual can only apply to one grant or the other.

Project Fund Administration

Recipients of funds will be required to sign a Program Disbursement Agreement that may include an audit of awarded expenditure. Recipients will be required to acknowledge the City of Lynchburg and the James River Arts & Cultural District in all promotional materials. All applicants must provide a final report specific to the funded project. **All final reports must be completed and returned to the Lynchburg Office of Economic Development & Tourism no later than 45 days after completion of the project.** Additional information is provided in the Notice of Award and Program Disbursement Agreement. **All projects should be completed within 12 months of the award notification date.**

Amusement Tax

Every business or organization that charges admission to an activity or event shall impose a 7% tax on the total amount charged for admission. The fees for admission taxes imposed by the city code and collected by qualified arts organizations in the Arts & Cultural District are redistributed through the Arts & Cultural District Program to promote and market the district and to improve aesthetic or infrastructure. In order to be eligible for project funds, organizations should contact the Commissioner of the Revenue's office to determine if they are required to pay the City's amusement tax and to obtain the necessary remittal forms which are due on or before the 20th of the following month. Learn more at <http://www.lynchburgva.gov/amusement-tax>.