



# Grant Application Summary Form Improving Arts Education in Schools

## Improving Arts Education in Schools

### *Request for Applications*

**Due Date: March 8, 2019**

*Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) seeks proposals from community-based arts organizations, schools and school districts in Oregon that wish to improve existing in-school K-12 arts education programs. Grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000 per year for two years will be awarded to up to 15 applicants. Total grant funding available is \$600,000 over two years.*

The arts are an integral part of a well-rounded education. The benefits of arts education are well-documented, varied and wide-ranging, reflecting the diversity of available arts education opportunities. More information on the importance of arts education can be found here:

[How the Arts Advance Student Learning](#). Worcel, Keyes, Naegele (2017).

[Arts Education Navigator: Facts & Figures](#). Americans for the Arts (2012).

Concerned with the lack of equitable access to high-quality arts education across Oregon, The Oregon Community Foundation launched the Studio to School Initiative in 2014. Through Studio to School, 18 partnerships between arts organizations and schools/school districts worked collaboratively to develop high-quality, equitable and sustainable arts education programs. The Studio to School Initiative is now in its fifth and final year.

Based on the work of the Studio to School project teams, a set of guiding statements were developed describing what it takes to develop, implement, and sustain community-supported arts education programming, regardless of school or community context. These principles are deeply rooted in the experiences of the project teams and build on existing research about high-quality arts education.

### **The Studio to School principles for the pursuit of high-quality, equitable and sustainable arts education are:**

1. Develop a shared vision for arts education programming through an inclusive and ongoing planning process
2. Foster mutual commitment and responsibility in collaborations between arts organizations and schools
3. Understand and respond to evolving community contexts, including histories, strengths and needs
4. Engage and support experienced and skilled arts educators
5. Provide varied, relevant and high-quality opportunities for students to engage in arts learning

6. Cultivate a school environment in which arts learning can thrive
7. Build appreciation and support for arts education in schools and communities

Not all arts education programs will embody all principles at all times, but high-quality programs will embody most of the principles, most of the time. Although the principles are presented here as a numbered list, they are deeply interconnected and not necessarily linear. Central to the principles is the desire for all students to have the opportunity to learn in and through the arts.

## **Scope of Applications**

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To further promote equitable access to high-quality arts education in Oregon, OCF seeks proposals from community-based arts organizations, schools, and school districts to improve aspects of existing K-12 arts education programming that embody one or more of the Studio to School principles.

Preference will be given to programs that serve K-12 students from low-income families, those in rural communities, or from communities of color. OCF is especially interested in supporting existing relationships between arts organizations and schools or school districts, and in supporting programs that have promising plans for sustainability beyond the grant period (e.g., ongoing school or community investment).

Proposals should outline how applicants will strengthen the delivery and sustainability of existing arts education programs. Proposals should include:

- Detail about arts education programming and students served – What existing program do you wish to strengthen? What students are served by the program?
- Interest in improvement and principles of focus – Why do you wish to work on this program? What are the greatest opportunities for improvement? What 1-2 Studio to School principles are the most relevant to your proposal?
- Anticipated lessons learned and outcomes – What do you hope to learn or expect to accomplish by working on this program? How would strengthening this program increase equitable access to arts education?

Strong proposals will:

- Focus on existing programming that is ready for improvement or expansion
- Build on existing resources and programming both in schools and in the community
- Focus primarily on sequential arts instruction (as opposed to exposure/enrichment activities or arts integration)
- Demonstrate commitment of time and resources to building sustainable partnerships between key stakeholders (nonprofits, public schools, educational service districts, etc.)

- Demonstrate a strong commitment by administrative leadership at the school and district level
- Include plans for community engagement
- Include additional cash and in-kind support
- Compensate artists appropriately as professionals

## **Eligibility**

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Grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000 per year will be awarded for two years to community-based arts organizations and/or schools or school districts for improvement of existing arts education programs.

Organization and school/district eligibility:

- Schools and 501(c)3 nonprofit arts organizations can apply, however:
  - Individual schools are only eligible to apply in conjunction with one or more 501(c)3 nonprofit community arts organizations.
  - Proposals across multiple schools, districts, or ESD's may apply with or without nonprofit partners.
  - Partnerships must be confirmed at the time of application; any partner may serve as the lead applicant to administer the grant.
- Nonprofit community arts organizations should have existing programming and a strong background delivering quality arts education programming for youth.
- Schools should be able to demonstrate existing support for arts education such as through dedicated arts specialists on staff, teaching artists, residencies, or other in-school activities.
- Current Studio to School Initiative grantees are not eligible unless their proposal represents significant expansion beyond their initial Studio to School grant activities.

Program eligibility:

- Programming must include substantive in-school components. Proposals that only take place out of school time will not be eligible.
- While your programming may serve additional ages or grade levels, this grant opportunity requires some focus that will improve programs for students in grades 6-8.
- Types of eligible programming include: literary arts and creative writing instruction, music, visual arts, theater, dance & movement, film & video production, and traditional/folk arts.

## **Expectations**

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Grant funding can be used for a range of activities that support program improvement using the Studio to School principles.

#### Example Activities:

- Efforts to support the artistic and/or teaching practices of arts educators such as through professional development or communities of practice (principle 4)
- Developing a long-term or big-picture plan for arts education in the school or community, including budgeting (principles 1 & 2)
- Developing a deeper or more formalized relationship between arts organizations and schools, such as through more in-depth communication or memorandum of understanding (principles 1 & 2)
- Training in advocacy for arts organization and school leaders (principles 1 & 7)
- Conducting needs assessments of school communities to identify strengths and opportunities for improved arts education (principles 1 & 3)
- Professional development in equity, diversity and inclusion, trauma informed practice, or other trainings that support greater understanding of students and the broader community for arts organization and school leaders, arts educators, etc. (principle 3)
- Purchase, development or improvement of curriculum to be more inclusive or responsive to students in the community (principles 3 & 5)
- Efforts to identify and engage more diverse arts educators (principles 3 & 4)
- Efforts to identify and mediate existing barriers for equitable participation in arts education programming. Specific projects designed to bring more diverse students into programming (principles 3 & 5)
- Broader or deeper efforts to engage families and other community members directly in arts education (principles 3 & 7)
- Efforts to improve the ways in which arts educators are recruited, supported and retained (principle 4)
- Providing small group or individual music instruction by professional musicians to students who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford it (principles 4 & 5)
- Improvements in scaffolding or sequencing of available arts education such as by better connecting programming across schools or within a single school to ensure that students receive a fuller, more robust arts education opportunities (principle 5)
- Integration of arts education more deeply into existing school curriculum such as through arts integration of robust STEAM or arts-focused CTE programming (principle 5)
- Acquisition or repair and maintenance of high-quality supplies/materials/instruments/technologies (principle 6)
- Improvements to physical art-making, exhibition or performance spaces (principle 6 & 7)
- Efforts to make the arts more visible in a school or community such as by reframing the schools' focus or identity (principle 6 & 7)

- Develop or implement community-engaged arts programming such as through community events or creating collaborative, permanent arts installations (principle 7)

This list is not exhaustive but meant to illustrate some possibilities. In many cases, examples embody more than one principle, which reflects how interconnected the principles are. All proposed projects should ultimately lead to improved experiences for students, and therefore relate to principle 5 – “Provide varied, relevant and high-quality opportunities for students to engage in arts learning.”

In addition, grant funding can be used to cover fees for teaching artists and consultants, arts materials and supplies, training for teachers and teaching artists, and other expenses associated with improving the quality of existing arts education programs. Project budgets may include time for key program staff to participate in OCF evaluation and technical assistance as additional funds for these purposes are not available.

Each proposal will need to identify a Project Facilitator that will serve as the primary contact for the Oregon Community Foundation throughout the funded project.

Technical assistance, including reflection guidance and materials (including more background information about the principles themselves and a rubric to support reflection) will be provided by OCF in fall 2019, as projects begin.

OCF will conduct an evaluation of this grantmaking effort that is appropriate given the scope and nature of the proposals selected. We anticipate requiring that funded programs complete annual reports and make key people available to participate in one or more telephone interviews with OCF staff during the grant period. Participation in evaluation-related activities is required and will be considered as part of the renewal process.

## **Application and Additional Information**

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The application summary form, narrative questions and required documentation can be found on the OCF website here: [Application link](#)

Completed applications must be received by OCF by **5pm on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019**. Funding decisions will be made in May 2019.

For additional information, please contact:

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