



EXPANDED ACCESS TO ARTS AND CULTURE

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

2026 Cycle Three -
General Operating Support Grants

WWW.FRESNO.GOV/EAAC

I. Measure P and the Cultural Arts Plan

The Fresno Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Transactions and Use Tax, commonly known as “[Measure P](#)”, went into effect in 2021. The Measure P Ordinance (Sec. 7-1506(b)(4)) outlines the requirements for the Expanded Access to Arts and Culture (EAAC) Grant Program, including the development of the City of Fresno Cultural Arts Plan. The [Cultural Arts Plan](#) was adopted by the Fresno City Council in August 2023 and cast the following vision:

“Cultural Arts in Fresno will be recognized, prioritized, inclusive, accessible and continue to reflect, celebrate and connect the community.”

Additionally, Measure P required the establishment of the Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission (Commission). The EAAC Grant shall be implemented by the Commission in partnership with the Fresno Arts Council, or its successor local arts agency. The Commission shall ensure that grant applications are reviewed in a transparent, competitive process.

II. Grant Guidelines

The [EAAC Grant Guidelines](#) were adopted by the Fresno City Council on June 18, 2026. The guidelines outline eligibility, priorities and other related requirements. All potential applicants are strongly encouraged to review the guidelines when developing their proposals. The Grant Guidelines refer to Core Operating Support and General Operating Support interchangeably.

III. Available Funding

The City of Fresno has appropriated **\$3,249,100** of Measure P funding for EAAC Cycle Three **General Operating Support grants**. Organizations may apply for between **\$50,000** to **\$350,000** based on annual total revenue and proportionate share requirements. See [Grant Guidelines](#) for additional details.

Proportionate Share

Funding recommendations shall consider the proportion of an organization’s operations, programs, services, and activities that benefit residents within, or visitors to, the [City of Fresno sphere of influence](#), consistent with Fresno Municipal Code Section 7-1506(b)(4)(D). See [Grant Guidelines](#) for additional details.

IV. Funding Priorities

Consistent with Section 7-1506(b)(4) of the Fresno Municipal Code and the City of Fresno Cultural Arts Plan, funding recommendations shall prioritize organizations and programs that support and expand access to arts and cultural programming for Fresno residents and visitors.

In evaluating applications, consideration shall be given to the extent to which the proposal demonstrates how funding will:

1. Advance the goals, recommendations and strategies outlined in the City of Fresno Cultural Arts Plan;
2. Advance Measure P funding priorities;
3. Support organizational stability;
4. Expand access to arts and cultural opportunities for Fresno residents and visitors

The scope of work, budget, schedule and evaluation plan will also be taken into consideration in accordance with the scoring rubric (see [Grant Guidelines](#), page 20).

No single factor shall be determinative, and funding recommendations shall be based on the totality of information contained in the application and evaluation process.

V. Diverse Set of Programs

This Expanded Access to Arts and Culture Grant Program awards shall allow for a diverse set of programs with different program sizes and reach, consistent with the requirements of Section 7-1506(b)(4) of the Fresno Municipal Code.

In developing funding recommendations, the City, Application Review Committee (ARC), and Parks, Recreation and Arts Commission, shall ensure that applications recommended for award reflect a diverse set of programs with different program sizes and reach.

VI. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for grant funding, all applicants must meet **all criteria** below:

1. Be an active nonprofit charitable organization that:

Meets the definition of a charitable organization that is tax exempt under 26 USCA 501(c)(3) as described in section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as amended), **and**

Applicants seeking funding for **General Operating Support** must be an **arts or cultural organization** (Section 71506(b)4(D)) as demonstrated by [National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities \(NTEE\) code](#) assigned by the IRS, organizational articles of incorporation, bylaws, mission statement, a resolution certified by the Secretary, or another state or federal designation. NTEE code(s) can be verified using the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) Exempt Organizations [Business Master File Extract](#); available for download at <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/exempt-organizations-business-master-file-extract-eo-bmf>

2. Support and expand access to arts and cultural programming.
3. Be in “good standing” with:
 - [Internal Revenue Service \(IRS\)](#):
 - Provide Letter of Determination
 - Demonstrate Active Exemption (not in revocation status).
 - [California Franchise Tax Board](#):
 - Provide self-serve entity status letter demonstrating good standing and exemption status.
 - [California Secretary of State](#):
 - Provide a certificate which demonstrates “active” status and “good standing”.
 - City of Fresno:
 - Not in debarment status
4. Primary place of business is physically located within the City of Fresno limits (A P.O. box does not meet this requirement).
5. Serve City of Fresno residents or visitors.
6. Organizations that have not completed reporting for funding **cycle one** must submit a written justification and/or corrective action plan to resolve unresolved reporting to be considered eligible for cycle three. A template will be provided.

VII. How to Apply

1. All applicants are required to complete an **eligibility screening**. Eligibility screenings must be completed by **August 15, 2026, by 3:00 p.m.** The eligibility screening may be accessed by visiting:

<https://cityoffresnoparcsdept.submittable.com/submit>
2. Fiscal sponsors applying to sponsor more than five (5) applicants are required to complete a pre-qualification process prior to applying. To begin the pre-qualification process, fiscal sponsors shall complete the eligibility screening linked in step one. A link to the fiscal sponsor pre-qualification

form will be issued via Submittable. The pre-qualification form and all documents associated with pre-qualification shall be submitted no later than **August 15, 2026, by 3:00 p.m.**

3. Eligible applicants will be provided with a link to complete the grant application after their eligibility screening is completed.
4. Applications must be submitted [via submittable](#) by **September 30, 2026, by 3:00 p.m.**
5. A recent IRS Form 990 or IRS Letter of Determination certifying your organization's nonprofit status will be due at the time of application.
6. Hard copies and late applications will not be accepted.

VIII. Application Review and Scoring

For detailed Application Review and scoring procedures, please review the **Application Review and Scoring Handbook** included in the [Grant Guidelines](#) as Attachment B.

IX. Transparent and Competitive Review Process

Consistent with Fresno Municipal Code Section 7-1506(b)(4), the Expanded Access to Arts and Culture Grant Program shall be administered through a transparent and competitive review process.

Application requirements, eligibility criteria, evaluation procedures, scoring criteria, funding recommendations, public meeting notices, and appeal procedures shall be made publicly available in accordance with applicable law and City policies.

Applications shall be reviewed in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Application Review and Scoring Handbook by qualified reviewers selected through a process designed to promote fairness, impartiality, and consistency. Individuals participating in this review process shall comply with applicable conflict of interest requirements, no contact provisions, and recusal procedures.

Funding recommendations should be developed based on the established evaluation criteria and should be presented through public meetings and public reports as required by law.

X. Contact

For questions, please contact: ExpandedArts@fresno.gov. Questions will be accepted, in writing, **only up to five (5) working days** prior to the proposal date to allow the City, if necessary, to issue an addendum to all proposers stating revisions, deletions, or additions to be made to the Grant Solicitation as a result of any questions. If questions arise after the deadline, please contact the designated

PARCS Contact at the email address above, but the City will not guarantee a response.

All questions must be submitted, in writing via the email above. Responses to the questions received will be posted on the [City of Fresno website](#) for all potential applicants to access. The City will not be responsible for verbal responses made by parties other than the ExpandedArts@fresno.gov.

XI. Grant Application Timeline and Key Milestones

The table below outlines key milestones in the grant application submittal and review process. For other key milestones related to the Application Review Committee (ARC) formation, visit the Expanded Access to Arts and Culture [website](#).

| Estimated Date | Key Milestones |
|---------------------------------|--|
| June 30, 2026 | Release Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) |
| Late July 2026 | Applicant Technical Assistance Workshop(s) and Fiscal Sponsor Meet & Greet |
| August 15, 2026 | Eligibility Screening due by 3:00 p.m. |
| August 15, 2026 | Fiscal Sponsor Pre-Qualification Request due by 3:00 p.m. |
| September 30, 2026 | Grant Applications due by 3:00 p.m. |
| October 1, 2026 | Technical review of grant applications begins |
| Estimated November 2026 | Preliminary Scoring Period Begins |
| Estimated December 2026 | Preliminary Scoring Period Ends; Preliminary scores due |
| Estimated January 2027 | Public Scoring Meetings held |
| Estimated January 2027 | Notice of Intent to Award and Appeal Notices Published (10-day) |
| Estimated January-February 2027 | Award recommendations presented to the Parks, Recreation and Arts Commission |
| Estimated early 2027 | Award recommendations and appeals presented to the Fresno City Council |

XII. Debarment

An organization may be debarred from bidding or proposing upon or being awarded any contract with the City, or from being a subcontractor or supplier at any tier upon such contract, in accordance with the procedures in Fresno Municipal Code Section 4-104 adopted by Council on May 17, 2018. The initial period of any such debarment shall not be less than one year and may be permanent depending on the violation. A Bidder may request a hearing, in accordance with Fresno Municipal Code Section 4-104, upon receipt of a notice of proposed debarment from the City Manager or designee. A copy of the ordinance may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office, 2600 Fresno Street, Fresno, California 93721.

XIII. Communication During the Application Review Process

Beginning on the application submission deadline and continuing through final grant awards approval, applicants, fiscal sponsors, board members, employees, consultants, volunteers, and representatives of applicant organizations shall not communicate with ARC Members or Commission members regarding any pending application except through processes expressly authorized by the Grant Guidelines or requested by PARCS staff.

Nothing in this section prohibits attendance at public meetings, participation during public comment periods, or communications unrelated to a pending grant application.

All requests for information, clarification, or interpretation regarding grant applications shall be directed solely to PARCS staff.

Violation of this section may result in disqualification of the application.

XIV. Regulated Communications

The Regulated Communications in City Procurement Process Ordinance (Article 6, Chapter 4 of the Fresno Municipal Code) became effective April 29, 2004. With certain specified exceptions, the Ordinance provides that no Respondent, Bidder, or Proposer shall initiate, engage in, or continue any communication to or with any City elected official concerning or touching upon any matter which is the subject of this competitive procurement process. Any Respondent, Bidder, Proposer, or elected official (as the case may be) who initiates, engages in, continues in, or receives any regulated communication shall file the written disclosure required by the Regulated Communications in City Procurement Process Ordinance. Any Respondent, Bidder, or Proposer violating the Regulated Communications in City Procurement Process Ordinance may be disqualified from participating in this procurement process and/or determined to be non-responsible. Additionally, the City may set aside the award of a contract, prior to its execution, to a party found to have violated the Ordinance.

The full text of Fresno Municipal Code, Chapter 4, Article 6 may be viewed at: https://library.municode.com/ca/fresno/codes/code_of_ordinances

XV. Public Records

The proposals received shall become the property of the City of Fresno and are subject to public disclosure. Those parts of a proposal which are defined by the Proposer as business or trade secrets as that term is defined in California Civil Code, Section 3426.1, and are reasonably marked "Trade Secrets", "Confidential", or "Proprietary", and labeled as such within the application shall only be disclosed to the public if such disclosure is required or permitted under the California Public Records Act or otherwise by law. Proposers who indiscriminately and without justification identify most, or all, of their proposal as exempt from disclosure may not be considered for award. Proposals, excluding confidential information, will be available for review in accordance with Public Records Act law after posting staff recommendations.

XVI. Confidentiality And Non-Disclosure

The City of Fresno recognizes that the proposals may include proprietary or confidential information. The City will take every reasonable precaution in protecting such information if it is clearly identified as proprietary or confidential on the page on which it appears. However, the City is subject to the California Public Records Act and must disclose records as required by the Act.

XVII. Indemnification

To the furthest extent allowed by law, Proposer shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend the City and each of its officers, officials, employees, agents, and volunteers from any and all loss, liability, fines, penalties, forfeitures, costs and damages (whether in contract, tort or strict liability, including but not limited to personal injury, death at any time and property damage) incurred by the City, Proposer or any other person, and from any and all claims, demands and actions in law or equity (including reasonable attorney's fees, litigation expenses and cost to enforce this indemnification agreement), arising or alleged to have arisen directly or indirectly the submission of the proposal. Proposer's obligations under the preceding sentence shall apply regardless of whether the City or any of its officers, officials, employees, agents, or volunteers are negligent, but shall not apply to any loss, liability, fines, penalties, forfeitures, costs or damages caused solely by the gross negligence, or caused by the willful misconduct, of the City or any of its officers, officials, employees, agents, or volunteers.

This section shall survive termination or expiration of the NOFO solicitation and Agreement.

XVIII. Applicant Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

The Proposer may become involved in situations where conflict of interest could occur due to individual or organizational activities that occur within the City. The Proposer must provide a statement addressing the potential, if any, for conflict of interest and indicate plans, if applicable, to address potential conflict of interest. This section will be reviewed by City Counsel for compliance with conflict of interest as part of the review process. The Proposer shall comply with all federal, state and local conflict of interest laws, statutes and regulations.

XIX. Accessibility and Non-Discrimination

The City of Fresno is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its programs, services or benefits on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability as afforded by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended. Services of an interpreter and additional accommodations such as assistive listening devices can be made available. Requests for accommodations should be made more than five working days but no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting or deadline. Please contact (559) 621-7529 for accommodation requests.

XX. Reservation of Rights

The City reserves the right to reject applications that fail to meet eligibility requirements, are incomplete, are determined to be non-responsive, or otherwise fail to satisfy the requirements of the NOFO and Grant Guidelines.

XXI. Funding Subject to Appropriation

Grant awards are contingent upon the availability of Measure P revenues and annual appropriations adopted by the Fresno City Council consistent with Measure P Ordinance.

XXII. No Guarantee of Award

Submission of an application, completion of eligibility requirements or receipt of a favorable score does not Guarantee Funding.

The City retains sole discretion regarding grant award recommendations and final funding decisions, subject to approval by the appropriate City bodies.

XXIII. Grant Agreement Required

Any grant award shall be contingent upon execution of a grant agreement in a form approved by the City Attorney.

No grant funds shall be disbursed until all required agreements, certifications, insurance documents, and other conditions of award have been satisfied.

Failure to execute a grant agreement within the timeframe established by the City may result in withdrawal of the award and reallocation of funds.

XXIV. Record Retention, Monitoring and Audit

Grant recipients shall maintain complete and accurate financial and programmatic records relating to the use of grant funds.

Such records shall be retained for a minimum of five (5) years following completion of the grant-funded activities or final closeout of the grant, whichever occurs later.

The City, its authorized representatives, and any governmental agency with jurisdiction shall have the right to inspect, review, copy, and audit records relating to the grant upon reasonable notice.

Failure to maintain required records or cooperate with monitoring activities may result in repayment obligations, suspension of funding or disqualification from future funding opportunities.

XXV. Conflict of Interest and Reviewer Recusal

All ARC members, Commission Members, City Staff, consultants and other individuals participating in the evaluation, scoring, recommendation, or approval of grant applications shall disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

Any individuals with a conflict of interest shall recuse themselves from reviewing, discussing, scoring, evaluating, recommending, or otherwise participating in decisions affecting the application giving rise to the conflict.

The City reserves the right to determine whether a conflict exists and take appropriate action to preserve the integrity of the review process.

XXVI. Fiscal Sponsor Responsibilities

Where an application is submitted through a fiscal sponsor, the fiscal sponsor shall be responsible for receipt and administration of grant funds, compliance with grant requirements, reporting obligations, and financial accountability.

The city may require additional documentation from fiscal sponsors to verify organizational capacity and compliance with applicable laws and grant requirements.

Any grant agreement shall be executed by the fiscal sponsor.

XXVII. Appeals Process

An applicant may appeal a funding recommendation only on the grounds that the City failed to follow the procedures established in the Grant Guidelines, Application Review and Scoring Handbook or this NOFO.

Appeals should not be based upon disagreement with evaluation scores, funding recommendations, or the exercise of discretion by reviewers.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to PARCS within ten (10) calendar days following publication of the Notice of Intent to Award.

The written appeal shall identify the specific procedural error alleged and include all supporting documentation.

Appeals shall be reviewed by an independent external administrative hearing officer, whose determination shall be final. The hearing officer's review will be limited to the written appeal and the grant program record. An appeal will be granted only if the hearing officer determines that a material procedural error occurred and that the error substantially affected the outcome of the matter being appealed.

The filing of an appeal will not delay or suspend the grant review, recommendation, approval, or award process. The hearing officer's written determination is final and binding.

XXVIII. Definition of Primary Place of Business

For purposes of this NOFO, "Primary Place of Business" means a physical location within the City of Fresno from which the applicant regularly conducts organizational operations and activities.

Applicants may be required to provide documentation demonstrating occupancy, ownership, or lawful use of the location, including leases, utility bills, business records, or other evidence acceptable to the City. Post office boxes, virtual offices, mail forwarding services, and temporary locations shall not satisfy this requirement.