Grant Panelist Information (FY22)
the who, what, when, where, why and how to Guide

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What is the Indiana Arts Commission?

The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) is a state agency funded by the Indiana General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts. Our mission is to positively impact the cultural, economic and educational climate of Indiana by providing responsible leadership for and public stewardship of artistic resources for all of our state's citizens and communities. Our vision is arts everywhere, every day, for everyone in Indiana.
Learn more about IAC >

What is the Regional Arts Partnership?

Representing eleven regions in our state, Regional Arts Partners (RAP) work alongside the Indiana Arts Commission to promote and expand participation in the arts in Indiana and help award national and state allocated funds in the areas of Arts Project Support and Arts Organization Support, Levels I and II. Partners, like the IAC, convene panels in their region. These panelists have strong awareness of the applicants and, more importantly, the cultural needs of the people living in that community. Funding recommendations made at the local level are reviewed and approved by the Indiana Arts Commission. Local decision making enhances the sense of investment in, and pride for, the arts at the local level.
Learn more about the RAP >

Why be a grant panelist?

As a panelist, you will:

- **Make new connections with artists, organizations, and colleagues**
- **Learn about clever ideas, innovative projects, and the folks making things happen**
- **Develop grant making skills**
- **Be part of decision-making for public funds**

What does a panelist do?

Prior to panel day, grant panelists evaluate, score, and comment on all assigned grant applications, and then convene with their panel colleagues to publicly review each application and determine final scores.

As a panelist, you will:

- **Participate in panelist orientation/training to learn about the program and panel process**
- **Review the list of applicants provided by your program manager and complete a Conflict of Interest form** – If you have a conflict, inform your program manager as soon as possible
- **Read and Score _ALL_ assigned applications _BEFORE_ the public panel meeting (online)**
- **Follow the IAC Evaluation Process set up in the online system**
- **Participate in the public panel meeting to discuss each application**
- **Provide feedback to help improve the application(s) and overall process**
- **Agree not to share applicant information with anyone.**

How long does it take?

Everyone is different, *but* below are some averages. To ballpark, if you're evaluating 15 applications, total time could be around 20-25 hours, not including travel.

- **Orientation training:**   **½ - 1 hr**
- **Application evaluation:**
  - **Arts Projects Support   1 hr/application**
  - **Arts Organization Support   .5 hr/application**
- **Panel day:**   **2.5 hrs** (.5 pre-meeting + 1.5 evaluation + .5 wrap-up)

How do I prepare for panel day?

Before panel day, you will use the online system to evaluate (comment and score) all applications assigned to you. You will pay special attention to those you are assigned as a first or second reader (see "Panel Day" for detail).

- **Participate in panelist orientation** – this will teach you about the program, process, and how to navigate the online system.
- **Review the Application List, fill out a Conflict of Interest form (which will be shared by your program manager. Some have an online form, others the paper form)** – if you have a conflict, let your program manager know as soon as possible.
- **Once conflicts are determined, you will receive an updated Application list (example) with reader assignments.**
- **Allow ample time to review applications** (takes about an hour each). AOS applications will not take as long for FY22 – we estimate around .5 hours or less.

- **Remember to provide constructive comments on applications**, both online and on panel day. These comments are super important to the applicant so be sure to provide comments to help them.
- **Access and evaluate applications through the IAC online system ([tutorial here](#))**.
- **Listen to past panels for further assistance** – [Arts Project Support](#) / [Arts Organization Support](#) (not relevant for FY22)
- **Check out these example** [APS panelist comments](#)
- **Sometimes panelists like to print evaluation criteria rating sheets**: [APS](#) only this year
- **Check out our resources to help you:**
  - **Watch** the [Community Engagement for Organizations](#) video
  - **Learn about Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) in two ways:**
    - Check out the Community Engagement and IDEA **webpage [here](#)**.
    - Watch the **IDEA video** [here](#)
- **Review the program guidelines** for [APS](#) and/or [AOS](#)

How do I evaluate Arts Project Support (APS) applications?

You know you need to evaluate APS applications, but what exactly does that mean?

The IAC's evaluation criteria and guidance are provided for you directly in the online system. You review the applicable area and score or evaluate based upon the extent to which the applicant addresses that criteria. Use your experience, best judgement, and IAC guidance to determine the score.

- Score using provided evaluation criteria only (need is not a criteria)
- **Only evaluate what's provided, including links (do not use outside information)**
- Do not compare applications. Smaller organizations should be evaluated based upon their own merit and not compared to larger organizations to which they cannot compete.
- Use Chrome, Firefox, or Safari – they work best with the online system
- When scoring, extremely low scores are relatively uncommon – this means the response or application is severely lacking in addressing the criteria/criterion.
  - Be sure to provide comments to substantiate the low score.
- Click to download a copy of the criteria for [APS](#) (also linked in the evaluation form)

How do I evaluate Arts Organization Support (AOS) applications?

You know you need to evaluate AOS applications, but what exactly does that mean?

If you've been an IAC panelist before, you'll notice the evaluation process is very different this year. Luckily, clear guidance is provided for you directly in the online system. When it comes to evaluating, just use your experience, best judgement, and IAC guidance to evaluate and provide your assessment of each application.

- Assess each application based upon the system provided. Evaluation will be for two distinct areas: Organizational Resiliency and Merit. Each has its own review process which is clear and easy to follow.

- Be sure to provide constructive comments. If there's a concern, specifically state the concern and what information you recommend IAC collect to address that concern. (More detail in the form).
- Only evaluate what's provided, including links (do not use outside information)
- Do not compare applications. Smaller organizations should be evaluated based upon their own merit and not compared to larger organizations to which they cannot compete.
- Use Chrome, Firefox, or Safari – they work best with the online system

What do I need for Panel Day?

If you're a panelist for a Regional Arts Partner of the Indiana Arts Commission, you will receive instructions directly from your program manager or regional director. This includes the panel application list, date and time of the online panel, and other instructions for you to be successful on panel day.

What happens on Panel Day?

You will be asked to arrive at least 30 minutes before the public review meeting starts. When we say "public", we mean the panel is open to the public. Applicants are invited to attend the public review session, which is recorded, however they are not allowed to interact with the panel. Panelists convene so that each application is thoroughly reviewed by the diverse perspectives that comprise the full panel.

- **Arrive about 30 minutes before the public portion of the online meeting starts** (e.g., if the public meeting is at 10:30am, you will be asked to arrive at 10am)
- **Public meetings are recorded and posted online or available upon request.**
- **Applicants are encouraged to attend and observe, but cannot speak, lobby or offer clarification. Do not address the audience.**
- **Remember to keep your comments constructive, respectful and to the criteria.**

APS Panel review works like this
1. A panel chair will facilitate the conversation and introduce each new application and reader.
2. Staff is there to answer questions and provide application or policy clarification
3. The first reader will begin an application review by reporting their assessment and rationale.
4. The second reader offers any **new or opposing** perspectives.
5. Discussion opens to the full panel.
6. Scores are finalized.

Panel repeats the process until all applications have been reviewed and scored.
If a panelist has a conflict of interest, he or she will be excused from the room while the application is discussed. This panelist does not score the application.

AOS Panel review works like this (FY22)
1. The panel chair will facilitate the meeting. The Regional Arts Partner (RAP)/Program manager will provide assistance along with IAC staff, as needed.
2. Panelists will first evaluate the application pool for Organizational Resilience and then for the optional Merit portion.

3. Organizational Resilience requires the panel to come to consensus for each application (*yes* to fund, *no* to not fund, or *yes to fund with* their recommended modifications). A summary report will be provided at the beginning of discussion to help guide the conversation.
4. The RAP/Program Manager will record the panel's recommendation for each application.
5. Merit Award evaluation will be discussion-based around the pre-panel evaluation results which will be shared on screen in high to low score order. Panelists will discuss their favorites and why and will have the opportunity to change/finalize their scores after the discussion.

If a panelist has a conflict of interest, he or she will be excused from the discussion. This panelist does not evaluate or discuss the application. Ideally, the panel will be conflict free of any applicant in the pool.

Questions

Contact your Program Manager or…

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