



INDIANA ARTS
COMMISSION

Indiana Arts Commission

Creative Convergence

Guidelines For Fiscal Year 2026 (Spring)

Program Overview

What is Creative Convergence: Indiana Arts Commission partners with the Indiana Communities Institute (ICI) at Ball State to offer Creative Convergence, a team-based workshop and funding opportunity aimed at building out the arts in selected communities. Teams consist of 3-4 participants who learn how to work together to advance arts and creativity in the community through training and a funded project.

Who Can Apply:

Communities must submit a team of 3-4 members, including:

- One representative from government, economic development, neighborhood or community development, or the business community
- One representative from an arts or civic organization
- One local artist or creative

Key Dates:

Application Deadline – February 20, 2026

In-Person Workshop – March 31-April 1, 2026 (in Fishers, IN)

Early Action Grant Proposal Deadline – May 1, 2026

Grant Period – May 15, 2026 – May 30, 2027

Final Report – June 15, 2027

Who to Contact: Anne Johansson, Community Services Manager, ajohansson@iac.in.gov

Program Details

Program Goal: Build Community Capacity Through Arts and Collaboration

Creative Convergence equips community leaders, organizational representatives, and artists/creatives to:

- Embed arts and creativity into community and economic development strategies
- Collaborate effectively across sectors
- Engage residents in meaningful, inclusive ways

Program Outcomes

- In every Indiana county, people and communities have access to arts experiences.§
- Indiana's arts providers have expanded opportunities to enhance the quality of life in their communities.§
- There is broad recognition of arts and creativity's value for Indiana.§

[§ IAC 2024 – 2028 Long-Term Strategic Framework Impact](#)

About Us

The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) is an agency of state government, and its funding comes from the Indiana General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

A core component to the Indiana Arts Commission's commitment to investing in the state's vibrant and rich arts and culture sector are grants, which support people and communities through arts organizations and arts projects.

Program Contacts

This program is conducted by the Indiana Arts Commission and the Indiana Communities Institute.

The following information outlines primary contacts for the grant program:

- **For questions about application, eligibility, and guidelines:** Contact Anne Johansson, ajohansson@iac.in.gov or 317-618-1522
- **For help or technical assistance with the Online Grant System:** Austin Hendricks, auhendricks@iac.in.gov or 317-450-6717
- **For accessibility accommodations or questions about accessibility at an organization or for a project:** Contact the Indiana Arts Commission, accessibility@iac.in.gov or (317) 232-1269
- **To apply:** [Access the application](#). Only applications submitted online will be accepted, except in the case of ADA accessibility accommodations.

The program consists of:

- A free two-day in-person workshop **March 31-April 1, 2026**, with a focus on community engagement and economic development in and through the arts.
- \$1,000 stipend for each team to cover travel to the workshop and accommodation.
- A post-workshop project grant of up to \$5,000 for an eligible arts and community project within their respective communities.
- Optional partnership with [CreatINg Places](#) program for additional funding through crowdgranting platform Patronicity.
- Ongoing mentoring and coaching calls for grantees by ICI and IAC staff.

**Dates to Know – Creative Convergence Application Cycle
(Grant Period May 15, 2026 – May 30, 2027)**

Milestone	Date	Details
Workshop Application Opens	January 14, 2026	Application available in IAC online system
Informational Webinar	January 20, 2026, 1:00 PM ET	Register here for online webinar introducing Creative Convergence.
Workshop Application Deadline	February 20, 2026 (11:59 PM ET)	All materials must be submitted by this time
Notification of Selection	March 4, 2026	Applicants notified of cohort acceptance
Creative Convergence Workshop	March 31-April 1, 2026	In-person workshop on community engagement and economic development in and through the arts
Project Development Webinar	April 7, 2026	Virtual session to support proposal development
Coaching Calls	April 13-24, 2026	One-on-one sessions with IAC staff to strengthen project plans
Final Proposal Due	May 1, 2026	Submission of full project proposal for funding consideration
Award Notification	May 8, 2026	Teams notified of funding decision
Grant Period Begins	May 15, 2026	Projects may begin implementation (funds may take 90 days to arrive)
Grantee Cohort Coaching	Tuesday, July 14, 2026, 1:00 PM ET	Virtual
Grantee Cohort Coaching	Tuesday, November 10, 2026, 1:00 PM ET	Virtual
Grant Cohort Coaching	Tuesday, March 9, 2027, 1:00 PM ET	Virtual
Grant Period Ends	May 30, 2027	All funded activities must be completed by this date
Final Grant Report Due	June 15, 2027 (11:59 PM ET)	

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants*

Communities must submit a team of 3–4 members, including at minimum:

- One representative from government, economic development, neighborhood or community development, or the business community
- One representative from an arts or civic organization
- One local artist or creative

*IAC staff may follow up to request documentation or additional information and will make the final determination on eligibility.

Additional Eligibility Requirements:

All applicants must be in good standing with all of the following: the State of Indiana; the Indiana Arts Commission; the applicant's Regional Arts Partner; and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Evaluation Criteria and Review Process

Evaluation Criteria for Participation in the Program

Applications to participate in the Creative Convergence program will be reviewed according to evaluation criteria included below. The selection process will prioritize broad geographic representation of communities in the cohort.

Team Cohesion and Continuity (50%)

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates

- existing collaboration among team members and shared goals
- a clear plan for maintaining team functionality and managing team member turnover (e.g., succession planning, organizational support, or backup participants).

Community Engagement and Benefit (50%)

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates

- a track record of inclusive, arts-based community engagement or a compelling plan to initiate such efforts to benefit the community
- community benefit and impact goals.

[Access the evaluation criteria for applications to the program.](#)

[Access the scoring rubric that will be used by application reviewers.](#)

Early Action Grant Details

The **Creative Convergence Early Action Grant Program** allows the workshop team to apply lessons learned in the Creative Convergence Workshop to a project that benefits **both** creatives and the community.

Communities selected for this cohort, and who participate in the workshop, are eligible to request up to \$5,000 and will receive the full amount requested. No matching funds are required. Grants will be paid in full at the beginning of the grant period provided the applicant is in good standing and supply required information in a timely manner.

Funds will be disbursed in one payment at the beginning of the grant period. Please note, it may take up to 90 days to receive grant payments after the contract is signed and received.

As part of Creative Convergence, communities may also choose to partner with the CreatINg Places program to leverage additional project funding and community engagement through Patronicity's crowdgranting model.

How we define "project" is varied and is shaped by your community and its needs and assets.

Projects contain the following:

- Need or Opportunity
- Community Stakeholders & Engagement
- Arts and Creativity
- Creative Interventions

Creatives need to benefit from the project in some direct way, either as a project implementation team member and/or by being compensated for work.

Your community's lead organization is the applicant of record and funding recipient. Your Creative Convergence team members form the nexus of project management – everything from identifying need, to community engagement, to planning and executing project activities, to evaluation and reporting.

Application Checklist for the Early Action Grant Program

1. **Identify who will be responsible for accessing the IAC's [online grant portal](#)** to submit the proposal, Next Steps Form, and final grant report.
2. **Identify who will be responsible for signing the grant contract** and receiving, managing, and dispersing funds for the project. (Must be the community team lead organization unless an alternative is approved by IAC staff).
3. **Develop the Project Proposal Components.** Having an understanding of the project proposal components in advance will help you answer application questions. The application is located in the IAC's online grant management system.

Project Proposal Components

1. The community need or opportunity your team wants to address.
2. The change you hope to make as a result of your project and who will benefit.

3. Describe your project team including their name, email, affiliation, and why you selected them.
4. Beyond your team, which people or groups will you work with to better understand the need or opportunity?
 - a. Why did you select these particular people or groups?
 - b. What role will these particular people or groups have in your project?
5. What are the ways you plan to engage your community throughout the project?
6. What's your project budget (income, expenses, and in-kind, if applicable)? Be sure to include the grant request in the income section.
7. How will you evaluate how well your project addressed the need or opportunity?

How to Submit Your Proposal for the Early Action Grant Program

1. Log in to the [IAC's online grant portal](#) complete the project proposal application, and submit when finished.
 - a. IAC staff will review your project proposal and may be in touch to request revisions.
 - b. IAC will notify you when your project is approved for funding.
2. Log in to the IAC's online grant portal to accept the award.
3. Sign your grant contract electronically via DocuSign.
4. Start your project!

Grant Recipient Requirements

Final Report Requirements

Grantees are required to submit a report on their funded activity(ies) at the end of the grant period. This report includes:

- What occurred and the outcomes as a result of the funding (narrative/multiple choice)
- Grant funding primary impact and future project plans (multiple choice)
- A participant quote that captures the project experience
- Address(es) where the activity(ies) occurred
- Number of participants who are adults, children, artists, and broadcast/online participants (as applicable)
- Participants by age and distinct groups
- Photo and/or video documentation of the project
- Feedback on the training program for your project design and implementation
- Actual cash income, actual cash expenses, and in-kind contributions. A detail of expenditures and additional funds leveraged will be required.

Final grant reports submitted after the due date may be subject to penalty. Read the [Not in Good Standing policy](#).

Additional Requirements

IAC grants come with additional requirements such as acknowledgement of public funding. [Consult Requirements and Policies for Indiana Arts Commission Grantees for additional information.](#)

To Apply for Creative Convergence

Access the workshop application at

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=indianaarts>

Application Submission Deadline: February 20, 2026 by 11:59 PM ET

Only communities who apply and are accepted for the Creative Convergence program and complete the two-day training are eligible to submit a proposal for a Creative Convergence Early Action Grant.