



Sudbury Cultural Council

Frequently Asked Questions

The Sudbury Cultural Council supports arts, humanities, and cultural programming that benefits the Sudbury community. The FAQs below are intended to help applicants understand the grant process and prepare strong applications



QUICK START

Applying for a Sudbury Cultural Council Grant

Everything you need to know to get started.

KEY DATES

- Applications Open**
September 1
- Application Deadline**
Statewide deadline in October
- Funding Decisions**
Mid-January
- Grant Payments**
Spring (after required paperwork is completed)

BEFORE YOU APPLY

Make sure you have:

- ☐ A confirmed venue
- ☐ A confirmed event date (during the upcoming calendar year)
- ☐ A project that benefits the Sudbury community
- ☐ A budget (minimum request: \$250)
- ☐ A plan for promoting your event or activity

HELPFUL LINKS

- Apply Online**
[Massachusetts Cultural Council Application Portal](#)
- Sudbury Priorities & Guidelines**
[Sudbury Cultural Council Page](#)
- Questions?**
culturalcouncil@sudbury.ma.us



TIP: The strongest applications clearly explain:

- What the project is
- Why it benefits Sudbury
- How you will measure success
- Who it serves
- How you will promote it



Thank you for supporting arts, humanities, and culture in Sudbury!

When are applications due? How should they be completed?

Cultural Council applications open on September 1 each year. All applications must be submitted through the [Massachusetts Cultural Council \(MCC\) online application portal](#) by the statewide October deadline. Applicants will

no longer be able to submit an LCC application in GMS beyond the posted deadline. Late applications (including applications left in "draft" status) cannot be evaluated for funding.

What criteria are used to make grant decisions?

Proposals are evaluated using the Priorities and Guidelines on the Sudbury page of the MCC [website](#).

These Priorities and Guidelines are based on suggestions and feedback from Sudbury community members, collected via an annual community survey.

Applications must meet the following minimum requirements:

- a confirmed venue;
- a confirmed date(s) in the upcoming calendar year;
- a qualifying discipline (arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences);
- a clear benefit to Sudbury residents and the Sudbury community;
- a minimum grant proposal of \$250.

Grant proposals that do not meet these minimum criteria will not be approved.

The SCC may also consider:

- Quality of the proposed activity
- Innovation and creativity
- Evidence of planning
- Qualifications of presenters, artists, or facilitators
- Track record of the sponsoring organization
- Accessibility
- Clarity of the proposal

School-related proposals must be for enrichment activities, not programs, supplies, or salaries that should be part of the school budget.

Other Sources of support:

- Applicants are encouraged to identify other sources of support for their projects.
- Demonstrating additional funding helps show that the project is not solely dependent on SCC funding.
- Applicants may also seek funding from other local cultural councils when appropriate.

Are repeat proposals considered?

The SCC carefully reviews repeat requests and encourages applicants to refresh or expand project ideas from previous years.

What are some tips for writing Mass Cultural Council proposals?

Strong proposals clearly describe the program, including the names, fees, and qualifications of the individuals leading the activity. Applicants are encouraged to highlight collaboration within the Sudbury community. The considerations below reflect questions included in the online application.

Project Description

- What is the project? Clearly state how the funds received from this grant will be spent.
- Provide dates, times, and locations for the event.
- Submit a letter from your venue confirming your project date and time with your grant materials.
- How many people will be involved and how many do you anticipate serving?
- What makes this project unique?
- Can you demonstrate community support for the project?
- If the project serves an underserved population, how will participants be identified or selected?
- How will you reach your intended audience? What are your plans for promotion and outreach? For example, emailing a membership list, newsletter ads, social media, postings through local libraries, community centers, etc.

Planning

- Who is involved in planning this project (list specific names, organizations and what they contribute to the project).
- Who is responsible for overseeing the project?
- Does the community it will serve support this project?

Funding

- Requests must meet the minimum award of \$250 (per MCC guidelines).
- Detailed Budget:
 - Include all project expenses, including artist fees, space rental, supplies, and marketing costs.
 - Please also include any in-kind contributions, such as donated services or free use of space.
- Do you have matching funds or other sources of support for the project? Projects that are not solely dependent on SCC funding are generally viewed favorably.
- If the project is only partially funded, can it be modified and completed successfully?

Evaluation

- How will you measure the success of your project? Examples may include attendance, audience surveys, participant feedback, or other evaluation methods.

It is always encouraged to get feedback from another person. Ask someone to read a draft of your grant application before submitting.

APPROVAL PROCESS

What is the process for approval?

After the October application deadline, SCC members review each application individually. Depending on the number of applications received, the SCC may meet one or more times to discuss proposals and make funding

decisions. Applicants are notified via email through the application system of funding decisions by mid-January. Applicants whose proposals are not funded have a two-week period in which to appeal the decision.

SCC Grant Timeline

Key dates in the Sudbury Cultural Council grant process



☆ Thank you for supporting arts, humanities, and culture in Sudbury!

Is there a minimum or maximum grant award?

Per Massachusetts Cultural Council guidelines, Local Cultural Council grants must request a minimum of \$250. The Sudbury Cultural Council does not establish a maximum grant amount. In recent years, grants have typically averaged between \$400 and \$500. Applicants may review awards from recent grant cycles on the [Sudbury page of the Massachusetts Cultural Council website](#).

Who qualifies to apply for funding?

The following may apply:

- Massachusetts-based individuals
- Artists
- Nonprofit organizations
- Community groups
- Cultural institutions
- Libraries
- Schools

Projects must include a public benefit component.

Programs initiated by Sudbury-based organizations and residents that benefit the Sudbury community are prioritized.

For additional eligibility information, please review the [Massachusetts Cultural Council FAQ and application resources](#).

How do approved grantees receive funding?

The SCC uses a direct grant model rather than a reimbursement model. This means approved applicants receive grant funds directly and are not required to pay expenses up front and seek reimbursement later. As long as funds are used for the approved project, recipients are not required to submit receipts for reimbursement. SCC believes this approach reduces financial barriers and makes cultural programming more accessible.

The SCC's grant money generally arrives in the early Spring of the grant year. These funds are received, held by, and disbursed from the Town of Sudbury. Once these funds are available, the SCC submits both the SCC Direct Grant Agreements and the W9 forms to the Town of Sudbury. Shortly thereafter, grant checks are mailed to the address on the submitted W9. (The SCC does NOT keep copies of any W-9 forms.)

Funding Process at a Glance:

- Grantee receives their grant packet which includes:
 - An Approval Letter
 - Grant Agreement
 - W-9 Taxpayer ID form
 - Final Report form (due upon completion of your project)
- Grantee completes and signs the Grant Agreement & W-9, and returns both to the SCC within two weeks.
- SCC forwards all Grant Agreements & W-9s to the Town of Sudbury for payment.
- The Town of Sudbury processes paperwork usually within two weeks of receiving the funds from the MCC, and paperwork from our SCC grantees.
- The Town of Sudbury sends payments directly to the grantees. Payment is sent to the address on the W-9.

Applicants can learn more about the direct grant process, including documentation that will be sent after receiving an award, on the MCC grant cycle page about [reimbursement and direct grants](#).

How should SCC funding be acknowledged? Importantly, grantees must acknowledge the source of funding in all printed and online materials by using the MCC and SCC logos (provided to grantees by the SCC after approval) and using the following credit line: "This program is supported in part by a grant from the Sudbury Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency."

What if I need to make changes to my project after approval? If you need to make changes to your project, such as location or date, after it is approved, you must put the request for change at least six weeks in advance, in writing, to the Sudbury Cultural Council for approval.

Still have questions?

Applicants are encouraged to review the resources available on the [Massachusetts Cultural Council website](#), as well as the SCC Priorities and Guidelines available on the [Sudbury Cultural Council](#) page.

If you have proposal-specific questions, please contact the SCC at: culturalcouncil@sudbury.ma.us