

Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE)

Year of Chicago Theatre

Microgrant Program Guidelines

Equity, Access and Inclusion Projects

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 5, 2019 at 5 PM Central Standard Time

The City of Chicago, in partnership with the League of Chicago Theatres, has designated 2019 as the Year of Chicago Theatre (YOCT). The initiative aims to increase awareness and visibility of the Chicago theatre community, and strengthen its capacity through co-branding, special events, strategic partnerships, and programs which aim to further access, equity and inclusion.

As part of the YOCT program, DCASE will provide microgrants to help support projects which increase diversity and access in Chicago's theatre sector. This includes productions, performances or initiatives taking place on the south, southwest and west sides of the city, engaging specific underserved audiences, devising theatrical works in collaboration with Chicago residents, and building the capacity of creators and culturally specific organizations.

Microgrants will range in size from \$500 - \$5,000 and are intended to support projects or components of projects with budgets less than \$5,000. We anticipate making 15 – 20 grants with an average grant size of \$2,500. If you would like to request a grant for a larger scale project, please do so through the DCASE CityArts Program (Application deadline February 28, 2019). For more information about CityArts, please visit: www.chicagoculturalgrants.org.

The Year of Chicago Theatre Microgrant program is supported in part by a grant from The Joyce Foundation.

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DCASE Contact Information

Please direct all Microgrant Program inquiries to:

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Eligible projects include:

- Programs and productions that tell diverse stories for diverse audiences, engaging across race, ethnicity, class, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation
- Marketing and/ or audience initiatives that seek to expand or engage new audiences to attended productions in traditionally underrepresented areas with a specific focus on the south, southwest and west sides
- Professional development programs that support the next generation of leaders of color and/ or support capacity building amongst culturally specific theatres
- Minor space/ production projects that help to transform spaces on the south, southwest, and west sides into performance venues
- Programs that seek to expose youth in traditionally underserved communities to the magic of Chicago theatre

Cultural Grants Program Priorities

All DCASE grants are intended to further four Cultural Grants Program Priorities:

Priority 1 - Innovation: DCASE defines innovation as a project, product, process, creation, collaboration, initiative or program component that is NEW or drastically reimagined, leading to developments including: new artistic forms or formats, new methods of delivering art, presenting art in new/unexpected physical locations, replicable models for artistic development or programming, and much more.

Priority 2 - Community Engagement: DCASE defines Community Engagement as artistic or educational programming/activities that encourage partnerships with multiple touch points among individuals and entities to identify and achieve shared goals and objectives. We are looking to support organizations that work to address local needs through deep interaction with Chicago residents and specific communities, to increase creative access, awareness and appreciation in every neighborhood.

Priority 3 - Diversity & Equity: One of the core values of DCASE is Diversity & Equity. We believe in the power of the arts to build community, inspire social change and bring fresh perspective to difficult and complex issues—including issues of race, ethnicity, class, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Priority 4 – Collaboration: As another core value of DCASE, we view collaboration as the backbone needed for long-term impact and citywide transformation. We are looking to support organizations striving towards unique collaborations across disciplines, sizes, and sectors.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply for a Year of Chicago Theatre Microgrant, organizations must meet the following:

- Be a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization incorporated in the State of Illinois for at least 12 months prior to applying (must have been incorporated as of January 2018).
- Have a strong history of delivering high-quality arts programming.
- Be a resident company in the city of Chicago with a valid street address (P.O. Boxes will not be accepted).
- Primarily serve the residents of the city of Chicago (demonstrate that, on average, half of all programming occurs within the city of Chicago limits).
- Be planning programming/activities open and available to the public.
- Collaborations and/or consortiums of organizations may apply, provided that the lead applicant meets all other eligibility criteria.

Funding Restrictions

DCASE Microgrant funds cannot be used to support:

- Organizations with primary office addresses located outside of the city of Chicago
- For-profit organizations.
- Religious institutions.
- Public high schools, public elementary schools or school districts.
- Athletic teams, social organizations, fraternal organizations.
- Individuals.
- Past grantees that have not completed the required Final Report for their funded project.
- Recipients of 2019 CityArts Project Grants.

DCASE is unable to pay grant funds to any organization with outstanding, existing debt with the City of Chicago. Please pay off or clear up any debt (parking tickets, water bills, etc.) prior to applying for a grant.

Timeline *All dates are subject to change.***

Event	Dates
Application opens	February 25, 2019
Application deadline	Friday, April 5, 2019 5:00 PM CST - No Extensions will be Granted
Notification of Results	July 2019
Contracting period	July – August 2019
Payments disbursed	October 2019

General Instructions/Key Points

- **Grant Payment:** Grants will be made in a single, one-time payment following the successful completion of the grant agreement.
- **Grant Period:** All grant funds must be expended or deposited by the grantee during the grant term of **January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019**, but it is allowable for the DCASE-funded portion of the project to take place any time during the grant period of **January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2020**. Grantees are likely to receive payment in October of 2019, but funds can also be used to reimburse the organization for expenses incurred earlier in 2019.
- **Recipients of Other DCASE Support:** DCASE supports local arts and culture organizations in a variety of ways including residencies, performance opportunities, exhibitions, subsidized space/venue rental, etc. Organizations receiving other forms of DCASE support remain eligible to apply; however priority will be given to those not receiving other DCASE support.
- **Demographics and Geographic Dispersion of Grantees:** DCASE's Cultural Grants Program strives for an equitable distribution of artistic services across the city's Wards. Grant reviewers will take geographic access into account during the review process, taking note of organizations specifically serving residents of Wards which have been historically underserved with little access to arts and culture activities or resources.

Review Criteria

Microgrant proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Quality of Proposed Project:** The proposed project possesses rigor, curiosity, originality, and strategic risk-taking alongside quality, meaningful opportunities to tell diverse stories for diverse audiences
- **Feasibility of Proposed Project:** The applicant presents a logical and feasible plan that can be fully executed within a specified timeframe. The applicant demonstrates an ability to plan for and execute programs of this caliber.
- **Alignment with Cultural Grants Program Priorities:** In addition to Diversity & Equity, the application also addresses one or more of the following Cultural Grants Program priorities: Innovation, Community Engagement, and Collaboration.
- **Alignment with Year of Chicago Theatre:** Project has potential to positively impact the theatre sector in Chicago by increasing awareness and visibility of the Chicago theatre community, and/or strengthening its capacity through co-branding, special events, strategic partnerships, and programs which aim to further access, equity and inclusion.
- **Positive impact for people and neighborhoods:** Prioritizing work in south, southwest and west side neighborhoods that have limited opportunities to participate in arts and culture activities. We value both projects that have a wide and expansive reach and those that provide deep, enriching experiences for participants.

What You Need to Apply

- **Responses to Narrative Questions** – Provide details about your organization’s project.
- **Proof of 501(c)(3) Status** – Submit a copy of the MOST RECENT first page of the official letter from the Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, designating the organization as tax-exempt.
- **Board of Directors List** – A one-page list including professional affiliations (i.e., place of employment and job title)
- **Key Personnel Biographies** – A one-to-two page document containing brief paragraph descriptions of the key people who will lead your project. Biographical information should be brief but should focus on achievements, activities, awards, publications, education, etc. For the purposes of this requirement, “personnel” should be defined broadly to include volunteers and independent contractors that are responsible for leading the project.
- **A Recent Work Sample** – A recent and relevant work sample and a description of this work and how it relates to your organization’s project. Applicants may upload JPG images or PDFs OR provide URLs or web links to video or audio recordings or images. Work samples do not need to be professionally produced to demonstrate vibrant programming or artistic excellence. Below are guidelines as to the size/length and number of samples that are appropriate given your discipline:
 - Dance/Theater/Music/Performance/Film: Up to 5 minutes of video or sound recordings
 - Literary or Curriculum Examples: 10 pages
 - Visual Arts: 6-8 images
 - Architecture, Art Service Organizations, Design, Interdisciplinary, Media, Curatorial Arts: Any combination of the above, as appropriate
- **Financial Information**
 - An approved projected budget for the current fiscal year (FY19).
 - Financial Statements from the most recently completed fiscal year (FY17 or FY18, depending on fiscal year end date).
 - Organizational budget of less than \$300,000: Please submit a copy of your Federal Form 990, 990EZ, or 990N e-Postcard.
 - Organizational Budget over \$300,000: Please submit Federal Form 990 or your audited financial statements.
- **Project Budget** – A budget for the proposed project identifying all expenses as well as any other avenues of income/support, whether secured or potential.
- **Letters from collaborators (Optional, only if applicable)**– If the project includes working with another organization, or a specific artist, consultant, contractor, etc., please submit

letters of support or commitment from these project partners as an indication of their awareness of the proposal.

- **Supplementary Information (Optional)** – Materials that contribute to the overall narrative of the application or are appropriate to your organization and discipline. These may include critical reviews, letters of support, resumes of artists involved with your organization, promotional materials, public relations materials, etc. Please do not submit more than three supplemental materials.

How To Apply

TO APPLY: Beginning on Monday, February 25, 2019 the online Microgrant Program application will be available by following this link:

<https://www.cybergrants.com/dcase/grants/2019MicrograntsProgram>

Applicants must apply through our online application system, CyberGrants. Please read and follow all directions and guidelines to ensure that your application is complete and accurate before submitting. You can save your work and return to complete the application at any time before the deadline on **Friday, April 5, 2019 at 5:00 PM CST.**

Although you may type your responses to application questions directly into the online application, it is a good idea to draft your answers in a separate document or word processing software, then cut, paste, and edit as you complete the application. This will prevent any loss of work due to internet connectivity or other technical issues encountered. After drafting in a word processing document, copy and paste your narrative response into a text editor like notepad or word pad before pasting them into CyberGrants.

We strongly recommend that you begin your application well before the due date to familiarize yourself with the CyberGrants software system and to address any application components about which you may need further clarification.

We also strongly recommend submitting your application earlier than the stated deadline. **Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted or reviewed.**

Previous applicants can log in using their previously created login information. (Please review organization information first and make any updates, i.e. addresses, staff, etc.) New applicants will be required to register and create an account prior to accessing the application.