



Healing Arts Chicago Call for Artists | 2026-2027

A joint initiative of the Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events (DCASE) and Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) in partnership with City Colleges of Chicago

Virtual Information Session
Zoom | Tuesday, September 9, 2025 | Noon



Contents

- **Overview**
- **Lead Partners**
- **Goals & Outcomes**
- **Arts-Focused Community Healthcare Worker Certification**
- **Program Curriculum, Timeline & Roles**
- **Apprenticeship Award**
- **Artist Eligibility, Scope of Work & Deliverables**
- **HAC Artist Experiences**
- **How to Apply**
- **Selection Criteria & Process**
- **Q&A**



Overview

Healing Arts Chicago (HAC) offers free arts services to support mental health and wellness at the City of Chicago's Mental Health Centers throughout the year. It positions the healing arts as a vital, community-centered tool in substance use recovery, harm reduction, and mental health.

The program explores career pathways for artists centered in healing modalities and trauma-informed care through training, certification, and artist apprenticeships. Selected artists are trained as community health workers to offer creative wellness strategies to clients served at the City's seven mental health clinics, as well as to provide arts services in community contexts, leading outreach and engagement activities consistent with those provided by other CDPH community health workers.

Bronzeville East 43rd Street Health Hub
4314 S. Cottage Grove

Englewood West 63rd Street Health Hub
641 W. 63rd Street

Greater Lawn West 55th Street Health Hub
4150 W. 55th Street

Lawndale South Western Avenue Health Clinic
1105 S. Western Ave.

North Park North Pulaski Health Clinic
5801 N. Pulaski Rd.

Pilsen South Ashland Health Hub
1713 S. Ashland Ave.

Roseland East 115th Street Health Hub
200 E. 115th St.



Lead Partners

- **Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE)** – Lead project administrator supporting overall program design and implementation
- **Department of Public Health (CDPH)** – Core project collaborator and co-program design support; lead administration at City mental health centers
- **City Colleges of Chicago (CCC)** – Providing training and certification of artist cohort
- **Cohort Coordinator** – Providing key support and oversight for the artist cohort throughout the education, apprenticeship, and service elements of the two-year commitment



Program Outcomes & Goals

- Demonstrate how arts and creativity can be used as a community wellness strategy through quantitative and qualitative data.
- Develop career pathways for creative workers concerned with public health, building a pipeline from training/certification to job placement.
- Build connections between communities and neighborhood health centers aiming to bring improvement to client experiences and holistic care.



Program Timeline – 2026

- **December/January 2026:** After December enrollment, the CHW Program begins during Malcolm X's Spring term in January (initial coursework); Artists begin working with HAC Leadership team to understand placements, connect with CDPH clinicians, develop programming, and build outreach strategies.
- **Summer 2026:** Artists move into CDPH sites and soft launch arts services/programming; Artists participate in the annual Arts x Health Summit (late summer 2026).
- **Fall 2026:** Artists continue second semester coursework and officially begin apprenticeships and arts services.
- **Winter 2026:** Artists complete CHW certification and Malcolm X coursework.



Program Timeline – 2027

- Artists lead full, four, 8-10-week sessions of arts services in CDPH clinics and community contexts, in addition to participating in outreach activities and the annual Arts x Health Summit in late summer 2027.
 - Session 1 – January to March
 - Session 2 – April to June
 - Session 3 – July to September
 - Session 4 – October to December

Throughout, artists will be contracted for approximately 924 hours of work per year, or 77 hours per month on average.

Hours will be tracked across categories including educational requirements, clinic site time (arts services, administration, planning, coordination with Clinical Buddies and clinic staff and reporting), community outreach and engagement, and arts services delivered in community contexts.



Arts-Focused CHW Certification

Certification + Field Placement (Apprenticeship)

- Year-long certification and apprenticeship model provides an investment in student success and the development of real-world skills through on-the-job training.
- In addition to a livable wage and access to a high demand career, benefits include mentoring, coaching support, and quality instruction.

Malcolm X College Community Health Worker Program

- Educates students to enter the field as knowledgeable and culturally competent CHWs.
- Equips graduates with the skills to provide compassionate and holistic care to facilitate improved health outcomes for community residents.
- Prepares certificate seekers to serve as a liaison between the healthcare system and the community with a focus on community and arts centered techniques.

Program Curriculum

Coursework

Required courses are taken over the year alongside field placement.

- CHW 120: Community and Public Health (3 cr)
- CHW 121: Intro to Community Health Work (3 cr)
- Community Health Worker Arts and Health
- CHW 125: Nutrition, Movement, and Health Basics (3 cr)
- CHW 130: Mental Health Care (3 cr)
- Mental Health First Aid
- CHW 132: Field Placement (4 cr)

Learning Outcomes

- Communicate with a diverse patient population using effective oral and written communication
- Understand the fundamentals of epidemiology
- Identify the role nutrition plays in health
- Understand common mental health issues
- Understand the foundations of arts in health as a field and practice
- Identify, understand, and practice creative wellness strategies in different arts modalities (visual, literary, performing arts/embodiment)



Program Roles

- **Leadership Team:** Staff from DCASE, CDPH and Cohort Coordinator provide overall project management
- **Clinic Directors:** Facilitate entry into clinical spaces and help foster relationships for frontline teams; supports on site navigation; operational lead and clinical lead
- **Healthcare & Artist Teams:** Artist and health teams, including **Clinical Buddies**, working together at seven City mental health clinics to plan client services and clinic offerings
- **Cohort Coordinator:** Consultant to supporting efforts around curriculum resources and learning, data gathering/tracking, and documentation
- **Creative Producer:** Consultant to help guide HAC teams in creation of the annual Arts x Health x Wellness Summit
- **Advisory Committee:** Community residents, arts, and healthcare workers and leaders who act as advising team to artist/healthcare teams and ambassadors to spread the word on events and programming
- **Community Partners:** Organizations and program sites that host HAC artists to lead arts services or other engagement activities



Community Advisory

Advisory members advise on the program and shape strategy. The advisory includes a members with collective experience (professional or personal) spanning arts, culture, healthcare, public health, community building, and/or organizing. Their bios are available on the website.

Advisory responsibilities include:

- Engaging as co-listeners and co-designers. Share ideas, questions, and potential data sets/sources to help build a sound pilot model.
- Supporting assessments and refinements of the program design
- Offering big picture questions and thoughts about the potential directions for the arts & health pilot.
- Sharing the artist opportunity with their community networks
- Serving as project advisors, meeting periodically with the arts/health teams to hear learnings, offering feedback, strategize challenge areas
- Offering informal mentorship to artist cohort



Apprenticeship Award

Up to 10 artists engaged in healing practices will be selected

- Creatives engaged with or have developed an interest in healing as part of their practice.
- Includes both artists with and without health-related certifications, licenses, and/or degrees. Artists must have a healing component in their creative practice.
- Bilingual artists are strongly encouraged to apply.

Artists awarded \$70,000 covering the artist's salary and benefits

- Awards are commensurate with City Colleges' requirements for full-time sponsored apprenticeships with local healthcare organizations and companies.

Additional benefits for artists include:

- Fully funded tuition package from City Colleges.
- Materials and supplies budget to support programming at mental health clinics and in community contexts.



Artist Eligibility | Part 1

Artists must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for the program:

- Be a resident of the City of Chicago, Illinois with a valid street address (no PO boxes). A Driver's License, State I.D., or Chicago CityKey showing Chicago address must be provided. No other proof of Chicago residency will be accepted. Chicago must be the home base and geographic focus for applicants.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Demonstrate evidence of a high school degree, GED, or comparable. You will be required to submit your high school transcript, or transcripts for coursework completed above the high school level.
- Be a US Citizen, providing either a birth certificate or a passport (this is a requirement of the educational funding sources).
- Include an artist resume/CV with at least two years of professional experience as an arts maker, educator, and/or facilitator.
- Have or be able to secure general liability insurance at the time of contracting.



Artist Eligibility | Part 2

To be considered for the apprenticeship program, artists must demonstrate the following expectations and commitments:

- At least two (2) years of professional arts experience with a focus on community integrated artistic creation, instruction, and/or facilitation.
- A developed creative practice in one or more creative disciplines such as visual arts, literary arts, and/or embodied/performing arts.
- An interest and/or background in health and/or healing modalities as a component of their creative practice.
- Availability to enroll at Malcolm X College in December 2025 and start community health worker certification training in January 2026.
- A commitment to the apprenticeship and completion of the community health worker certification. *If an artist already has comparable health credentials, revised training arrangements may be made.*



Scope of Work

Selected artists will be contracted from January 2026 to December 2027, for approximately 924 total hours per year, or 77 hours per month. During this time, artists will be responsible for the following:

Year 1

- Completion of yearlong community health worker certification program
- Full-time apprenticeship placement at one of seven City mental health clinics, and delivery of arts services in community contexts with external program partners, as needed
- Support of marketing and community outreach and engagement efforts to increase awareness of the HAC program and services
- Participation in planning, research, evaluation, and execution of the annual Arts x Health Summit, which takes place each year
- Compliance with data collection, documentation, and reporting requirement



Scope of Work

Year 2

- Full-time apprenticeship placement at one of seven City mental health clinics
 - Commitment to 15-20 contact hours weekly with clients using creative wellness strategies from visual arts, literary arts, and/or embodied/performing arts
 - Commitment to 10-15 hours per week for preparation, rotations outside of artists' primary clinic placements (i.e., short visiting artist series or popup workshop experiences), and administrative processes including data reporting, evaluation, outreach, planning with health/clinician team.
- Support of marketing and community outreach and engagement efforts to increase awareness of the HAC program and services
- Participation in planning, research, evaluation, and execution of the annual Arts x Health Summit
- Compliance with data collection, documentation, and reporting requirement
- Should an artist be interested in continuing their educational training and fulfill the requirements of the program, Malcolm X will offer the opportunity for HAC artists to continue on to become Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSS) or Certified Peer Recovery Specialists (CPRS)

Artists are not restricted from holding other forms of employment. However, artists must be available for the required number of training and apprenticeship hours including administrative duties (77 hours per month on average).



Artist Deliverables

- Completion of community health worker certification
- Preparation and implementation of session activity plans with City clinicians as part of the field placement
- Preparation and implementation of program marketing and community outreach to support individual artist programming and overall program visibility
- Meetings with clinic mentor/supervisor
- Attendance at monthly cohort and site team meetings
- Collaborating with other artists in this cohort, the HAC leadership team, and the creative producer; artists will help create and produce creative public event(s), including the Arts x Health Summit



HAC Artist Experiences

- Intros to current HAC artists.
- What expectations did you have at the time of applying to where you are now?
- What impact has the program had on your practice?

★ How to Apply | Residency & Citizenship

- **Proof of Chicago residency** with an ID that shows your current, physical address. Any of the following will be accepted:
 - Driver's License
 - State ID
 - Chicago CityKey
 - Note: any ID submitted must be a current, valid ID. Expired IDs will not be accepted.
- **Proof of U.S. Citizenship.** Any of the following will be accepted:
 - Birth Certificate issued by a U.S. State, or by the U.S. Department of State
 - U.S. Passport
 - Certificate of Citizenship
 - Naturalization Certificate

This documentation is required by the funding source for the tuition reimbursement and educational stipends.

★ How to Apply | LOI, Resume/CV, Curriculum

- A **maximum two (2) page letter of interest (LOI)** (PDF, 11 or 12 pt font) that clearly states:
 - Why you are interested in the art and health aspects of this apprenticeship program and the anticipated impact it could have on your future as a working artist.
 - A description of your history as an artist centered in themes and/or modalities of healing, creative therapies, and/or trauma-informed strategies, either formally or informally.
 - Examples of your past projects and teaching/facilitation style using visual arts, literary arts, and/or embodied/performing arts.
 - Your approach to working with communities as an artist.
- A **two (2) page resume or curriculum vitae** (PDF) including evidence of high school degree, GED, or comparable.
- A **curriculum sample** that demonstrates your facilitation philosophy and practice. Lesson plans can be from classes, workshops, or other group-based events that feature group facilitation, processing, and/or learning. (PDF)

★ How to Apply | Work Samples

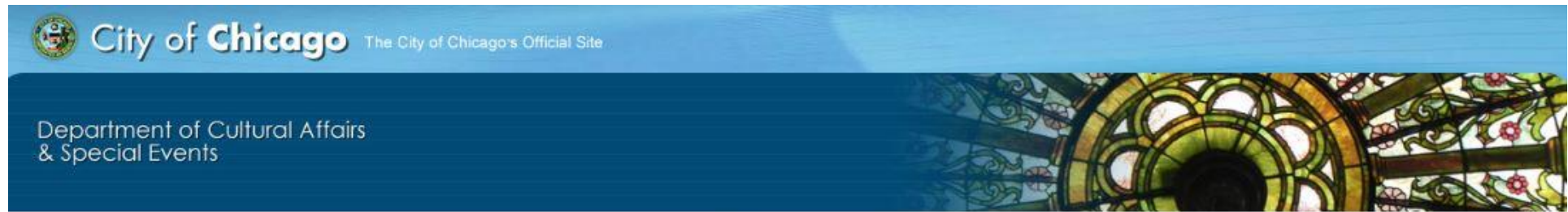
- **Work samples** (from the past 5 years) that reflect your artist approach with an emphasis on themes of health, trauma, healing, and/or community wellness and vibrancy.
 - Please follow the guidelines for various artistic disciplines:
 - **Film & Media Arts, Performing Arts (Theater/Dance), Music:** Up to five minutes of video or sound recordings.
 - **Literary Arts:** No more than 10 pages of literary samples.
 - **Visual Arts/Design:** 8-10 Images.
 - If your work is **Multi-Disciplinary**, you are welcome to submit a combination of work samples, being aware of these size, length, and number restrictions.
 - *For example, you may submit a 2.5 minute video and five images, but you may not submit a maximum length (five minute) video and the maximum number (10) of images.*
 - *Reviewers will be instructed not to review materials beyond the limits listed above.*

CyberGrants includes space to provide an **annotated list** detailing your Work Samples. Please make sure to include the title, creative discipline, year completed, media and dimensions (if applicable), location (if site-specific), and client or commissioning entity for each corresponding artwork (if applicable).

CyberGrants also provides a space to provide **details about accessing, reviewing work**. If media links are submitted, please include one to two (1-2) sentences to describe the context and beginning/end timestamps for what you would like reviewers to focus on, and any necessary passwords.

★ How to Apply | CyberGrants

<https://www.cybergrants.com/dcase/2025HealingArtsChicago>



Please Log In

* indicates required field

E-mail Address:

Password:

☐ Show password

First time user?
Register to create your account.

[Forgot your password?](#)

Please note that you must have cookies and JavaScript enabled in order to successfully log in.

IMPORTANT: If you are having trouble logging in, please clear your cache. If you are unsure how to clear your cache, please click [here](#).

OR

This (pointing to the login form)

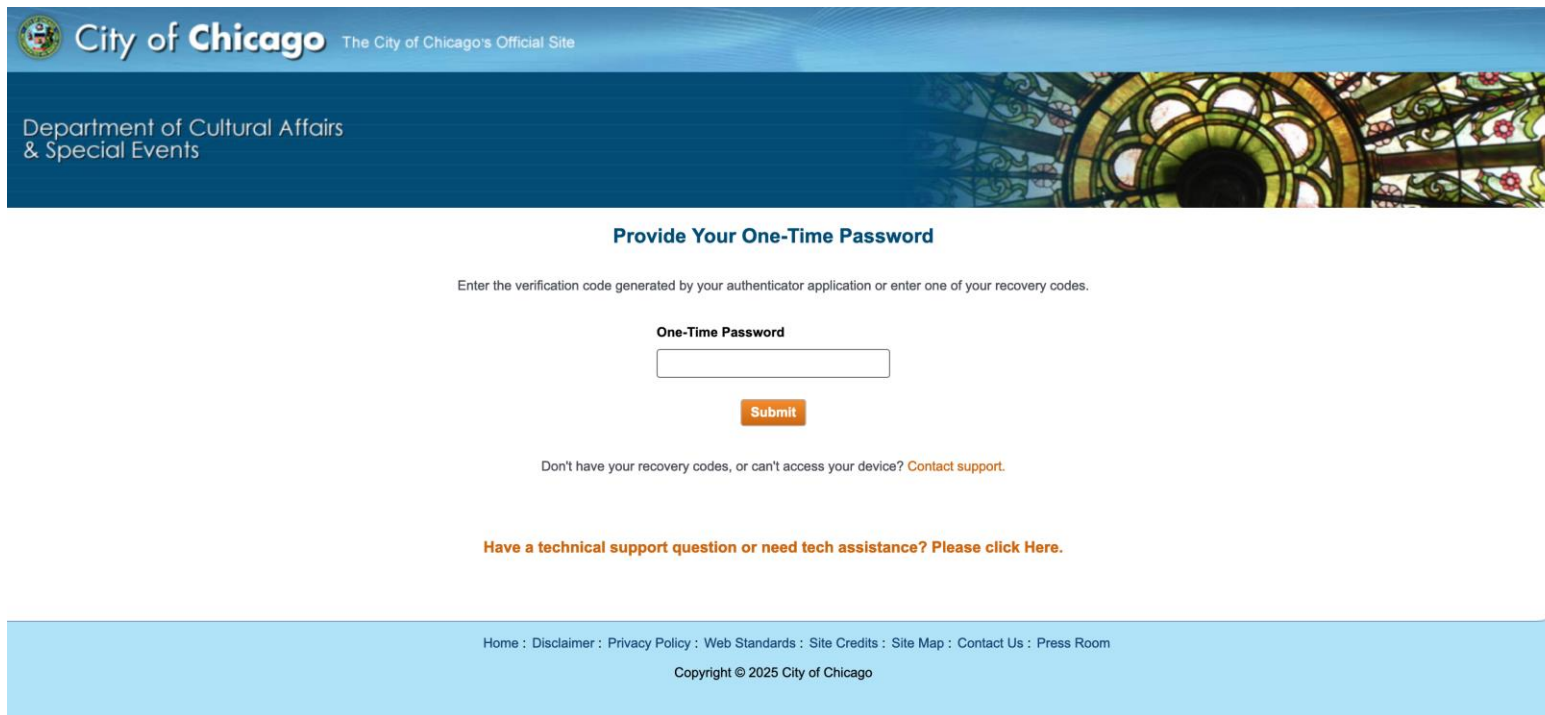
This (pointing to the registration section)

If you are creating a new account, follow the instructions on the following pages, especially for "Organization" where you will use your "Last name, First Name" for the entry.

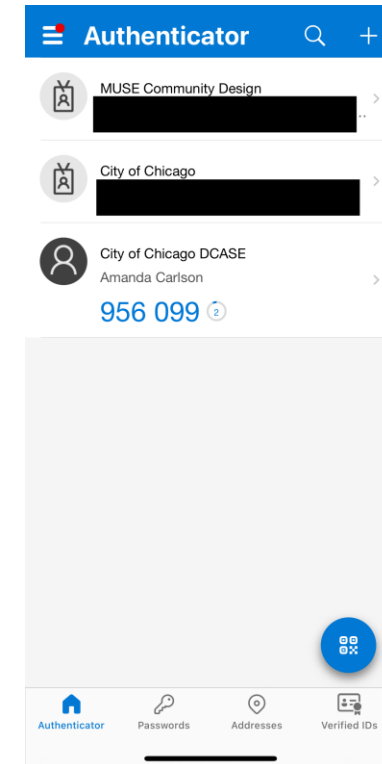
Skip the bottom section (instructions are in red),

Have a technical support question or need tech assistance? Please click [Here](#).

★ How to Apply | CyberGrants



The screenshot shows the City of Chicago's official website header with the logo and text "City of Chicago The City of Chicago's Official Site" and "Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events". Below the header, the main content area is titled "Provide Your One-Time Password". It instructs the user to "Enter the verification code generated by your authenticator application or enter one of your recovery codes." There is a text input field labeled "One-Time Password" and a "Submit" button. Below the input field, there is a link: "Don't have your recovery codes, or can't access your device? [Contact support.](#)". At the bottom of the main content area, there is a link: "Have a technical support question or need tech assistance? [Please click Here.](#)". The footer contains links: "Home : Disclaimer : Privacy Policy : Web Standards : Site Credits : Site Map : Contact Us : Press Room" and "Copyright © 2025 City of Chicago".



Two-factor authentication is now required in CyberGrants. This will require you to download an app to your phone, or download a set of codes. You will receive these instructions when you set it up.

How to Apply | CyberGrants

Please note that the 2025 Healing Arts Chicago application period will close on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 5:00 PM CT.

Welcome, Amanda Carlson!

The organization you are currently associated with is Carlson, Amanda.

Reminder: Your "organization" is the account applying for this program.

For this application, this account should be listed as "Last Name, First Name." If you work with an arts organization but do not yet have an applicant record for yourself as an individual [click here to add a new organization to your account](#).

The 2025 Healing Arts Chicago application consists of six (6) sections, each of which must be completed for your proposal to be considered.

1. Contact information.
2. Artist information.
3. Demographics.
4. Attachments.
5. Work sample.
6. Statement of Assurances.

Once submitted, all applications are immediately submitted to City of Chicago DCASE.

We recommend that you [familiarize yourself with the online application](#) before you begin. To create a new application, click the **"Start a New Application"** link at the bottom of this page. You may also save your applications now and return to work on them later. To continue work on an unsubmitted application, click the "Continue" link next to the application's Project Title. To view an application previously submitted to City of Chicago DCASE, click the "View" link next to the appropriate Project Title. To avoid errors, please do not use formatted text (such as italics or bold print) or special characters, such as quotation marks (") or asterisks (*) in your narrative. If transferring information from another document, please "paste as plain text." for best results.

Each page will have a timeline like the one below to help you monitor your progress. The line and text will indicate your current position within the application process.

Support: Should you have technical questions while completing this application, please use the "Have a Question?" link located at the bottom of every page to find answers to commonly asked questions, or to contact the Cybergrants support team.

CyberGrants sometimes experiences technical difficulties close to the deadline. If you experience difficulties or system errors, please try these troubleshooting options:

- Double check that all of your narrative responses are within the character limit, including spaces.
- Remove any special formatting such as italics or bold from your narrative.
- Remove any non alpha/numeric characters from your narrative responses. For example replace bullets with a dash or hyphen.
- Remove any quotation marks or apostrophes.
- Copy and paste your narrative response into a text editor like notepad or word pad before pasting them into CyberGrants.
- If you still experience the error, please do Find and Replace on the apostrophes and commas in a text editor like Wordpad to ensure that the formatting from your original font has been removed.

Welcome Page

Contact Information

Artist Information

Demographics

Attachments

Work Samples

Statement of Assurances

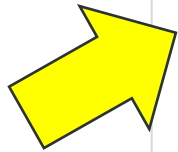
The option to start a new application will be at the bottom of this page.

★ How to Apply | CyberGrants

This toolbar takes you through the application.

You can navigate to whatever page you need.

Just make sure to hit "Save."



[Logout](#)

[Welcome Page](#) [Contact Information](#) [Artist Information](#) **Demographics** [Attachments](#) [Work Samples](#) [Statement of Assurances](#)

Demographics

* indicates required field

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events is committed to the equal distribution of arts funding to the diverse populations and cultures of Chicago. As such, we are hoping to understand as much as possible about the people we are serving through this grant program. The information on this page is collected to monitor our progress in achieving this goal. It is used for statistical and data measurement purposes. It may be reported to other City departments and interested constituents hoping to understand our applicant pool and the demographics of those served by our programs.

*** Applicant's Ward**
Please select the Chicago Ward where you reside (that corresponds to your primary place of residence.) To determine Ward information, please use the following link: [Ward Look Up](#)

*** Applicant's Neighborhood/Community Area**
Please select the neighborhood/community area where you reside.

*** Race/Ethnicity**

*** Gender**

*** Applicant Age**

*** Applicant Income**
What is your annual household income?

*** Are you a City of Chicago Employee or Elected City Official?**
City of Chicago employees and elected officials are not eligible for this program.

★ How to Apply | CyberGrants

Logout

Welcome Page

Contact Information

Artist Information

Demographics

Work Samples

Statement of Assurances

Attachments

* indicates required field

Please attach the following materials in PDF format.

IMPORTANT: If files are not uploaded in PDF format or otherwise cannot be opened by the online application platform, the files will not be considered for review.

To create a PDF:

1. Open the file you wish to convert to a PDF
2. Click the **File** button
3. Select **Save As**
4. Select **PDF**
5. Choose where you want to save it
6. Upload file

Alternative Option: If you do not have the functionality to create a PDF on your computer, another option is to download the CutePDF Writer by following the instructions on this website: <http://www.cutepdf.com/products/cutepdf/writer.asp>.

* Proof of Chicago Residency

Please scan the appropriate document. Provide current Driver's License, State I.D., or Chicago CityKey showing a Chicago street address. The ID cannot be expired. This is a critical component of the application, as it determines eligibility.

Upload File

* Proof of U.S. Citizenship

Please upload proof of U.S. citizenship. Any of the following will be accepted: Birth Certificate issued by a U.S. State, or by the U.S. Department of State; U.S. Passport; Certificate of Citizenship; or Naturalization Certificate.

Upload File

Read through the extra instructions. They provide guidance.



How to Apply | Tips

- Prepare your application in a separate document. Copy and paste responses into CyberGrants.
- Follow the instructions about format. Links to account-based file sharing websites like Dropbox or Google cannot be accepted.
- Give your work context. Use the annotated list to help reviewers understand the work samples.
- Submit your application early. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted or reviewed.
- Reach out with questions. CulturalResources@cityofchicago.org is where you can go for help, or attend the in-person info session on Sept. 23 at Malcolm X. Details and registration are at [Chicago.gov/HealingArts](https://chicago.gov/HealingArts).



Selection Process

Applicants will be vetted by a committee of stakeholders, including representatives from DCASE, CDPH, artist and healthcare professionals, and community members with collective experience (professional or personal) spanning arts, culture, healthcare, public health, community building, and/or organizing.

Finalists will be invited to interview in early November. Full instructions, including questions and any materials to prepare, will be shared at that time.

Applicants should hold November 19 & 20 for interviews.



Selection Criteria

- **Artistic Merit:** Artistic merit and professional qualifications demonstrating past work and/or interest in arts and healing and/or trauma informed strategies (10 points)
- **Quality of Applicant's Facilitation Approach:** Approach to group facilitation and/or creative learning experiences possesses rigor, curiosity, originality, intention, and values participation and collaboration. (10 points)
- **Presence of a Care Aesthetic:** Demonstrates approaches to, and an interest in, weaving care and healing into their artistic practice as a response to trauma and violence. (5 points)
- **Potential Impact on Applicant:** The program's potential to positively impact the applicant's work/career. (5 points)
- **Public Benefit:** The applicant demonstrates potential to positively impact Chicago's communities. (5 points)
- **Equity:** A commitment to equity and access, as demonstrated through past work and leadership. (5 points)



Selection Timeline

Event	Dates
Application Opens	Saturday, August 30, 2025
Virtual Information Session	Tuesday, September 9, noon - 1 p.m. Register to attend.
Virtual Information Session	Thursday, September 18, 6 - 7 p.m. Register to attend.
In-person Information Session	Tuesday, September 23, 5 – 6:30 p.m. Malcolm X College Conference Room 1106 Register to attend.
Application Closes	Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 5 p.m.
Finalist Interviews Applicants should hold these days in their calendars.	Tuesday, November 19, 2025, & Wednesday, November 20, 2025
Artists Selected, Malcolm X Enrollment	December 2025
Artist Apprenticeship and Coursework Begin	January 2026
Contract Term	January 2026 - December 2027

Questions

  **Thank You**

CulturalResources@cityofchicago.org