2026 Grants for Advancing Local Arts Agencies
Guidelines

Vision
Salt Lake County's arts and culture organizations are thriving, connected, and equipped to access and utilize community resources—contributing to a vibrant, inclusive arts and culture landscape in every neighborhood.

Dates

Application Opens: Wednesday, April 1, 2026
This is the same date as the Tier II grant application. The Grants for Advancing Local Arts Agencies (GALAA) application will be additional questions within the Tier I grant application for those applying under the Local Arts Agency discipline.

Application Closes: Friday, May 29, 5:00 PM MST, 2026
This is the same deadline as for the Tier II grant application.

Local Arts Agency
A Local Arts Agency (LAA) is a municipally designated agency or nonprofit corporation responsible for supporting local arts and cultural activities within their community including presenting, grant making, planning, placemaking activities, community development through arts and culture, marketing and public relations, exhibitions, and other programs associated with artists and arts organizations in a community.

While many organizations may conduct programming on behalf of a community or geographic designation, a LAA is distinct in the relationship it holds with a municipality. This distinction is central to the LAA discipline, as it reflects a partnership-level commitment to delivering community-responsive programming with goals and priorities that align with overall municipal goals.

Program
The Salt Lake County Zoo, Arts & Parks (ZAP) Grants for Advancing Local Arts Agencies (GALAA) program provides one-time supplemental funding, on top of Tier II LAA funding, to support capacity-building projects that strengthen an LAA's organizational, programmatic, financial, or operational infrastructure, as well as projects that enhance or expand meaningful community engagement.

Awards range from $2,500–$15,000 and are intended to help LAAs build sustainable practices that improve services that positively impact in their communities. Projects that include committed partnerships will be prioritized.

GALAA funding is intended to support ONE-TIME project-based requests.

Goal
1. To see our LAAs thrive and build trusted relationships within the LAA community accomplished through increased collaboration and coordination amongst County arts council.
2. Support the organizational, programmatic, financial, and operational needs of the LAA community.
3. Increase or strengthen LAA community participation, diversification, reach, engagement, and/or impact.

Possible Projects
It is understood that capacity building efforts will look different for each LAA as community needs differ from one municipality to the next. Any proposed project must describe/articulate how investment in the effort will result in organizational capacity growth and increasing or strengthening audience participation. Funding may be used for projects of up to three years in length. Funding will be distributed as 60% upon signed contract and the final 40% after review of final report.

Below is not an exhaustive list of possible projects, but examples of the types of requests that will be considered.

Consulting Services	Projects	Capacity Building Efforts	Promotion and Marketing
• Board training/development • Community research to identify gaps • Program evaluation and documentation • Cultural district feasibility research	• Community engagement programs/activities • Development of new project to address community programming gaps • Temporary public art projects.	• Leadership development and training • Hire part-time staff • Additional training for staff or board	• Translation or interpreting services • Targeted marketing efforts to address audience gaps

Final Reporting
If applying for GALAA funding, and the combined Tier II and GALAA request falls within one of the Additional Financial Reporting categories, you must submit the additional required documentation as part of your Tier II Grant Application. Please refer to the ZAP Grant Manual for details (page 7).

Upon completion of the approved project, LAA will have to submit a final report. The report will include information on how funds were spent as well as how well the project achieved stated intended

outcomes. Finaly payment of remaining 40% of award will be disbursed upon receipt and approval of final report.

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for this program an applicant must:
1. Meet all Tier II eligibility criteria.
2. Be a current ZAP Tier II grant recipient.
3. Be the officially designated local arts agency for their municipality as demonstrated by the Local Arts Agency Designation Form.
   a. The LAA Designation form must be uploaded as part of the Tier II application process.
   b. LAA orgs can use either an existing Designation Form (i.e. Utah Division of Arts & Museums Local Arts Agency Designation Agreement) or the Salt Lake County Zoo, Arts & Parks form as proof of official designation.
   c. The relationship with a municipality may be formal or informal.
4. Meet a 1:1 cash match.
   a. The match can be met through a combination of various sources.
   b. Match cannot be met through in-kind sources.
   c. Match cannot be met using ZAP funding.
5. Complete the supplementary GALAA application form.
   a. Each LAA within Salt Lake County can submit ONE application request annually.
   b. If the application is not accepted in one year, the same project may be considered for a future application cycle.
   c. Applicants who have not previously receive GALAA funding will be prioritized.

Selection Criteria & Process

Applications will be reviewed by the ZAP Tier II Advisory Board LAA Discipline Subcommittee.

Please be aware that this program has limited funds and annually will award grant funding from one to five projects. The goal is that awarded funds will have a meaningful impact on the organization.

The LAA Subcommittee will prioritize GALAA requests that leverage partnerships to carry out proposed projects. While partnerships may take many forms depending on the project, they should clearly demonstrate the LAA's commitment to maximizing reach and impact through shared resources, support, outreach, or other collaborative approaches. These partnerships should extend beyond financial contributions or in-kind support.

In addition, priority will be given to projects that clearly demonstrate need and articulate how ZAP funding is essential to the successful execution of the project.

Timelines & Dates

Guidelines Available:	Monday, March 2
Application Available:	Wednesday, April 1
Application Deadline:	Friday, May 29, 5:00 PM MST
Review Process:	June-September

Notification:	October
Contracting Process:	November-December
1st 60% Payment Distribution:	Upon contract execution
Final 40% Payment Distribution:	Upon approval of final report

---

FAQs

- **On what kinds of projects can we use these funds?**
    - Consulting services:
        - Board training and development
        - Community research to identify programming and services gaps
        - Program evaluation and documentation
    - Projects:
        - Community engagement activities
        - Development of a new project to address community programming gaps
        - Cultural district projects
        - Temporary public art projects
    - Capacity Building Efforts
        - Leadership development and training
        - Hire a part-time staff person
        - Additional training for staff or board
    - Promotion and Marketing
        - Translation or interpreting services
        - Targeted marketing efforts to address audience or community gaps

- **Can you provide consultant referrals?**
    - Unfortunately, ZAP cannot make recommendations or referrals. However, you may want to check out Utah Nonprofit Associations list of vendors or connect with other ZAP grantees to find vendors with whom grantees have had a good working experience. Additionally, the State of Utah has a list of approved services providers: https://statecontracts.utah.gov/Home/Search.

- **What can and cannot be supported by these funds?**
    - This grant funding will follow the same eligibility criteria as Tier II regarding allowable and unallowable expenses. Because the funding comes from the same source, the same restrictions and requirements apply.

- **I still have more questions, who do I contact?**
    - Please feel free to reach out to Kelsey Ellis, Impact Program Manager at kmellis@saltlakecounty.gov with additional questions.

2026 Grants for Advancing Local Arts Agencies

Application Questions

- **Amount Requested:**

- **If funded at less than requested or if not selected for funding, will you still complete this project?**
    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o Explain/Comments

- **Please select the type of project for which you are requesting funding:**
    - o Consulting Services
    - o Projects / Programming
    - o Capacity Building
    - o Promotion / Marketing
    - o Other

- **Please describe the project timeline:** Provide a brief outline of the timeline for this project which should include the start and end dates and any milestones or projected event dates.

- **Project Description & Target Audience.** Describe the proposed project for which you are requesting funding. Include the primary activities and key partners (if applicable). Who is the intended target audience, and how will they engage with the project?

- **Community Impact & Intended Outcomes.** Explain the need for this project and its intended impact. How does this project add value to your community or fill an identified gap? What outcomes do you expect, such as expanded audience reach, strengthened community connections, or increased organizational capacity?

- **Will you hire a consultant or vendor to lead or support this project? If so, how will you select the vendor? It is not required to hire an external party, but if you do, we would like to know your selection process.**

- **How have you involved the community or gotten feedback from those who this project would impact? (This should include municipal leadership, other community groups, etc.)**

- **List any partnerships you will utilize for this project. Those requests which utilize a partnership approach will be prioritized. This may include other LAAs, other nonprofits**

(arts and culture or other), community groups, and municipal dept/division, etc. These partnerships should extend beyond financial contributions or in-kind support.

- **Include the projected budget for the proposed project.** *This will be a table in the application form.*
    - Budget Description

2026 Grants for Advancing Local Arts Agencies

Review & Scoring Criteria

Criterion 1: Community Impact and Value

This criterion evaluates the organization's ability to create meaningful, accessible, and relevant benefits for the communities it serves through its programs, services, and use of public funding.

What reviewers are looking for
Reviewers should assess how well the organization understands its community, responds to community needs or interests, and delivers tangible cultural, educational, social, or environmental value. Consideration should be given to broad reach and demonstrated outcomes or benefits.

Anchored Scoring Guidance
4 – Exceptional
The organization delivers clear, significant, and well-documented community impact. Programs are highly responsive to community needs, broadly accessible, and demonstrate strong public value. The organization shows evidence of outcomes, community trust, and sustained benefit.

3 – Strong
The organization provides meaningful community benefits and demonstrates a solid understanding of its audience or community. Programs are accessible and valued, though impact measurement or depth of engagement may vary.

2 – Adequate
The organization offers some community benefit, but impact is limited, narrowly focused, or not clearly articulated. Accessibility, relevance, or outcomes may be underdeveloped.

1 – Weak
The organization's community impact is unclear or minimal. Programs do not demonstrate clear public value, meaningful engagement, or responsiveness to community needs.

Criterion 2: Partnership and Collaboration

This criterion evaluates how effectively the organization builds, maintains, and leverages partnerships to strengthen its work, extend its reach, and contribute to a connected arts, culture, or botanical ecosystem.

What reviewers are looking for
Reviewers should assess the extent to which the organization demonstrates intentional, meaningful, and reciprocal partnerships. This may include collaborations with artists, cultural organizations, community groups, educational institutions, public agencies, or other stakeholders that enhance program quality, resource sharing, and collective impact.

Anchored Scoring Guidance
4 – Exceptional
The organization demonstrates a strong track record of intentional, equitable, and mutually beneficial partnerships. Collaborations are clearly integrated into governance, programming, and resource use, resulting in shared leadership, increased capacity, and measurable benefits for partners and the broader community.

3 – Strong
The organization actively engages in partnerships that meaningfully support its mission and programs. Collaborations are well-defined and contribute to program quality or reach, though opportunities for deeper integration or reciprocity may exist.

2 – Adequate
The organization participates in partnerships, but they are limited in scope, informal, or primarily transactional. Collaboration exists but plays a modest or inconsistent role in advancing organizational goals.

1 – Weak
The organization shows minimal evidence of partnership or collaboration. Relationships, if present, are unclear, underdeveloped, or do not meaningfully contribute to the organization's work or outcomes.

Criterion 3: Demonstrated Need and Financially Sound
This criterion evaluates how clearly and convincingly the organization demonstrates financial, organizational, or programmatic need for ZAP funding and how the requested support will address that need.

What reviewers are looking for
Reviewers should assess whether the organization provides a clear rationale for the funding request, supported by financial information, organizational context, or programmatic challenges. Consider how well the proposed use of funds responds to identified needs and whether the request is appropriate in scale, timing, and purpose.

Anchored Scoring Guidance
4 – Exceptional
The organization presents a compelling, well-documented case for need. Financial and organizational context clearly supports the request, and the proposed use of funds is specific, strategic, and directly addresses identified challenges or opportunities in a meaningful way.

3 – Strong
The organization demonstrates a clear need for funding and explains how the request will support its work. The rationale is sound and appropriate, though some aspects of documentation or specificity may be limited.

2 – Adequate

The organization identifies a general need for funding, but the connection between the stated need and the proposed use of funds is vague, incomplete, or weakly supported.

1 – Weak

The organization does not clearly demonstrate need. The funding request lacks justification, context, or alignment with stated challenges or priorities.