



Local Cultural Council Webinar:

FY27 Member Training: Guidelines

Communities Team



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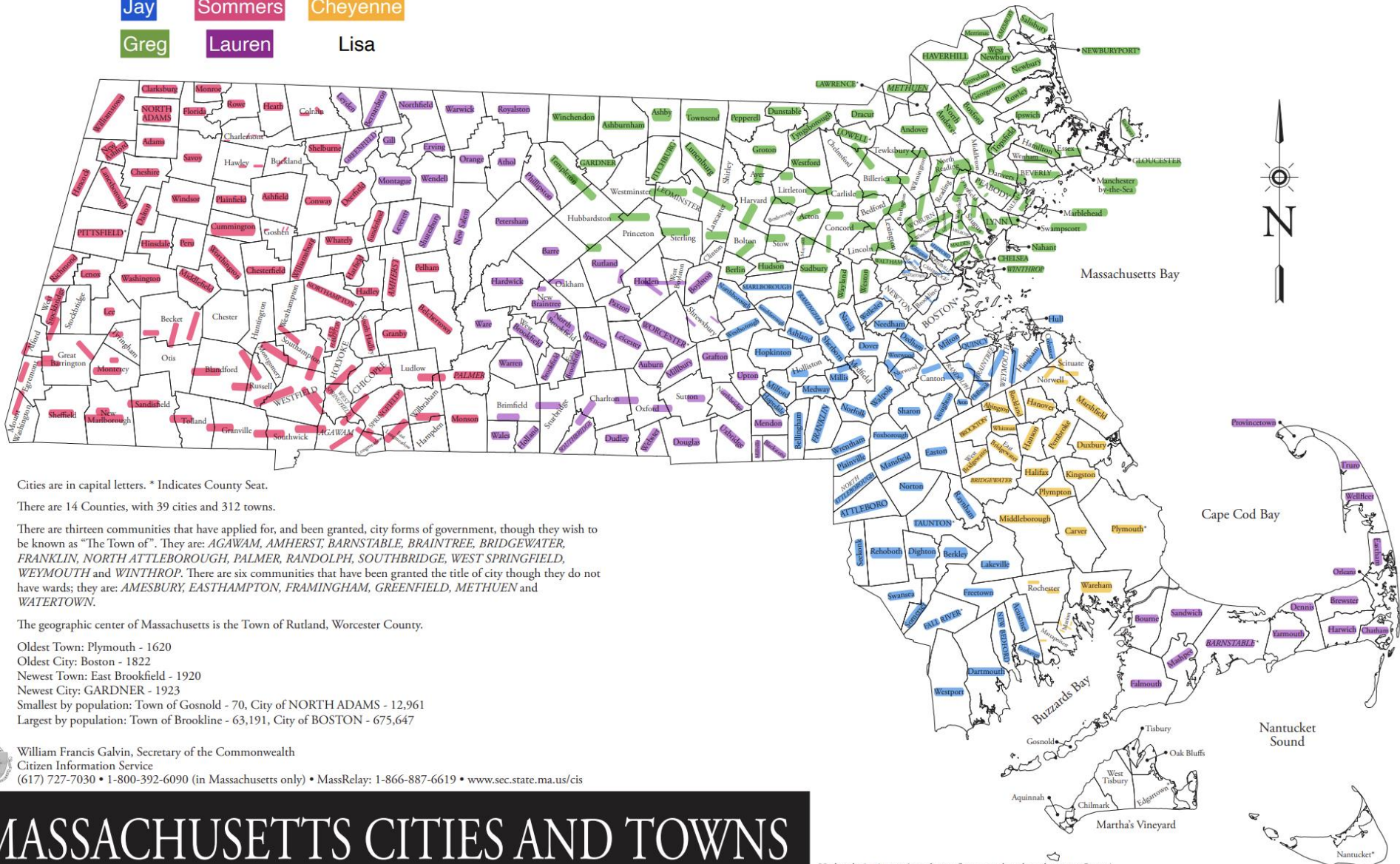


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Regional Transitions

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Agenda

LCC Program Overview

- LCC Responsibilities
- New LCC Members
- LCC Responsibilities
- LCC Grant Cycle Timeline
- Member Basics
- Funds Management

Before applications open

- Community Input
- Local Guidelines & Priorities
- Reporting Requirements
- Public Communications

After applications open

- Applicant & Project Eligibility
- Grant Criteria
- Laws Affecting LCC Meetings
- Grantmaking Process
- Grant Decisions Process

Beyond Expectations

- Relationships with your community & municipality

Additional Resources

LCC Program Overview

The Local Cultural Council Program remains the most extensive volunteer-run cultural funding program in the nation!

- 333 local, regional, and tribal cultural councils serving all 351 MA cities and towns
- 2,400 volunteers serve as LCC members statewide

The LCC Program promotes local autonomy and decision-making. LCCs work with their municipalities to make decisions, Mass Cultural Council makes suggestions and provides guidance and support.

How LCC allocation amounts are determined:

- The state legislature provides the Agency with its annual budget in August
- The Agency plans its program budget which is approved by the Governing Council
- LCC allocations are based on the state's local aid formulas (based on population and equalized property values to provide low-income communities with relatively larger allocations).

*The [Program Background section](#) has more information about the Agency's programs and services, the LCC Program's history, establishing regional councils, and allocation calculations.

*Local Cultural Council Guidelines can be found here: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/documents/lccguidelines.pdf>

Where to find LCC Guidelines

Local Cultural Council Guidelines
can be found here:

http://massculturalcouncil.org/documents/lcc_guidelines.pdf



Local Cultural Council
Program Guidelines

Revised July 2026



Artists

Youth

Communities

Organizations

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Home / Communities / Local Cultural Council Program / LCC Toolkit / **Guidelines**

LCC Toolkit

Guidelines, Templates & Forms

Program Guidelines

- **LCC Program Guidelines (PDF)**

New LCC Members

1. Sworn-in by appointing authority
2. Take the [Conflict of Interest Training](#)
3. Take the [LCC Members Basics Training](#)
(recommended, not mandatory)
4. Orientation from your respective LCC
(recommended)
5. Create LCC Member Account on Grants Management System



Members from Wellfleet Cultural Council

Creating an LCC Account on the Grants Management System (Smart Simple)

1. A unique link is used to register for an LCC account
2. Do not sign up through the Smart Simple. (This is only for grant-seekers)
3. A current LCC member can create your account through their own profile
4. Reach out to your Program Officer for help

[LCC Account Registration Link](#)

A screenshot of the Mass Cultural Council's Grants Management System login page. The page has a teal header with the logo. The main content area is divided into two sections. The left section, titled 'Login', contains fields for 'Email' (with the address 'jay.wong@mass.gov') and 'Password' (masked with dots), a 'Login' button, a 'Forgot Password?' link, and a 'New to the System?' section with a 'Register' button. The right section, titled 'Welcome to Mass Cultural Council's Grants Management System', lists login options: 'Complete an application for our grants and programs', 'Get details about an existing grant', 'Fulfill reporting requirements', and 'Register as a reviewer'. It also includes links for 'Details on all of our grants, programs, and services', 'Join our email list', and 'Need help with login?'. A large red 'X' is superimposed over the 'Register' button and the 'New to the System?' section, indicating that registration through this page is not the correct method.

LCC Grant Cycle Timeline

March – August

- Collect community input to inform local criteria
- Recruit/reappoint members

August

- Prepare all members on the upcoming cycle
- Submit New Cycle Report in GMS by **August 28, 2026**
- Mass Cultural Council notifies LCCs/municipalities of their [FY27 LCC allocation](#) and sends out account forms

September

- FY27 Grant Cycle opens **September 1, 2026**
- Mass Cultural Council hosts statewide [Applicant Info Session on September 10](#)
- Meet with municipal fiscal officer to confirm LCC financials
- Advertise grant program
- Provide applicant support/address inquiries
- Conduct outreach to reach new applicants

LCC Grant Cycle Timeline, Cont.

October

- Submit Financial Report in GMS by **October 8, 2026**
- LCC application closes **October 15, 2026**
- Hold preliminary meetings (voting meeting prep)

October – January 2027

- Hold voting meetings to deliberate evaluations
- Enter decisions in GMS (denials due by 12/31)
- Submit Grant Decisions Report (due by **January 15, 2027**). LCCs begin receiving allocations after completing annual reporting
- Send approval letters

February – July 2027

- Publicize grant awards
- Process direct grant contracts and reimbursement forms as they arrive
- Hold grant receptions
- Solicit community input for FY28
- Recruit new members

Member Basics

LCCs must:

- Have 5-22 members
- Elect a chair, co-chair, secretary, and treasurer annually

LCC members:

- Should demonstrate an interest in the arts, humanities, or sciences
- Have three-year terms (staggered)
- Can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms (must remain off the LCC for one year before serving additional terms; can serve as an Ex-Officio member)

Keep in Mind:

- [Building Capacity & Sustainability](#)
- Residency & Age Restrictions (the [Working with Youth section](#) has tips and strategies on recruiting youth members)

*The [Memberships section](#) includes roles and responsibilities, recruitment tips, and best practices for transitioning members.



Beverly Cultural Council

Funds Management

Key Terms: LCC Monies, Encumbered, Unencumbered, Unspent Funds

- All LCC monies must be in one municipal account, separate from all other monies administered by the City/Town

How can LCC state allocations be spent?

- 75% Grantmaking
- 20% Council Program
- 5% Administrative Expenses

Local Funds (e.g., fundraising)

- Regardless of the source, all LCC monies must be used to support programs in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences in Massachusetts

*The [Managing Funds section](#) includes guidance on establishing clear financial processes and other best practices. The [Resources for Municipalities](#) page includes the Municipal Guide to Managing LCC Funds.

Community Input

LCCs must collect community input at least once every three years.

Goal:

- Engage with community members to collect diverse viewpoints about the community's interests and needs.
- Establish local priorities and guidelines.

Community input can be gathered by:

- Hosting events, programs, or meetings to convene the community.
- Paper or online surveys.

*The [Community Input section](#) has additional resources, including guidance on planning, managing, and evaluating community input meetings.

New Bedford Cultural Council

Community Input Survey

We want to hear from YOU!

Help shape your local council's priorities





Mass Cultural Council

Scan the code above to open our survey!

For more information, contact newbedfordcc@gmail.com

Local Guidelines & Priorities

LCCs should develop funding guidelines and priorities informed by community input.

Local Guidelines communicate the local application instructions or restrictions.

- Limit the dollar amount awarded to any one applicant?
- Limit the number of applications that any one applicant can submit?

Local Priorities help LCCs to support projects that best meet their community's needs.

- Prioritize applicants who offer programs and/or events in your local community?
- Prioritize funding for historically under-funded communities, including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities, individuals with disabilities, low-income communities, and individual artists?

*The [Local Guidelines & Priorities section](#) includes a development framework based on community input and priority examples.

Grants Management System (GMS) Homepage

 You are viewing the system as **Cristian Recinos**



[Home](#)

[Funding Opportunities](#)



Welcome Cristian Recinos



Council Profile

Update your council's address, email, website, "About" section, contact person, and member list.



My Profile

Update your own profile and if you've applied for grants, view them here.



Change Password

Change the password for your user account.

Annual Report

The Annual Report consists of the three sections below - each with their own due date. When you open a section there are instructions at the top of the page that explain how to complete that piece of reporting. During the new fiscal year, as each piece of reporting becomes available, you will see the current/new record as well as prior/completed records.



1. New Cycle Report

Due date: August 28, 2026 -
Submit your Local Guidelines &
Priorities



2. Financial Report

Due date: October 8, 2026



3. Grant Decision Report

Due date: January 15, 2027

Reporting Requirements

NEW CYCLE REPORT

Due August 28th

- Confirm contact info
- Update member list
- Update local criteria
- Select grant disbursement
- Published on the [Find Your LCC page](#)
- [Video walkthrough](#)

FINANCIAL REPORT

Due October 8th

- MCC sends account form to your municipal accountant in August
- Meet with your municipal accountant in September
- Enter info from the account form into GMS

GRANT DECISIONS REPORT

Due January 15th

- Date of voting meeting
- Council program
- Decisions (how much LCC is granting out for FY27)
- [Video Walkthrough](#)

Compliance: Before allocations are released, Agency staff confirm that all reporting requirements have been met and that allocations have been appropriately encumbered.

Public Communications

LCCs must:

1. Promote local awareness of their programs and funded programs.
2. Inform the public of the availability of funds, location of applications, program guidelines, and submission deadlines.
3. Publicize local priorities and guidelines and LCC contact information; promote the grant cycle (as early as August).
4. Communicate with all applicants regarding grant decisions.
5. Publicize grant awards.
6. Logos.

*The [Publicity section](#) has additional strategies and tactics relating to these responsibilities.



Somerville Arts Council

Applicant & Project Eligibility

Statewide application deadline is **October 15, 2026, at 11:59pm**

Project/Program Eligibility:

- Types of Grants
- Grant Amounts
- Timeline

Applicant Eligibility:

- Individuals (sole proprietors)
- Non-profit organizations
- For-profit organizations
- Unincorporated groups
- Tribal, federal, state, and municipal government entities

*These are the [FAQs](#) from applicants, and the [Applicant Outreach & Engagement section](#) has outreach strategies to attract potential applicants.

Grant Reviewing Criteria

These criteria must be followed in reviewing all funding decisions and are equally important. LCCs may develop local review criteria and decide how to weigh their importance.

LCC funds must:

1. Be used to support the creative and cultural sector through the broadest sense of our definitions for the Arts, Humanities, and Sciences.
2. Support activities that contribute to the cultural vitality of the community rather than benefit a private individual or group.
3. Abide by Anti-Discrimination laws (including the Americans with Disabilities Act*).
4. Follow local guidelines and priorities (if any).

*The [Accessibility Compliance Tools for Grantees](#) and our [Access Policy](#) includes information on accessible programming; [Accessibility 101 for LCC webinar](#).

Laws Affecting LCC Meetings

Conflict of Interest Law

The [Conflict of Interest section](#) contains many specific examples of common situations in which LCC members may find themselves and how to navigate them.

- Disclosure Form
- Exemption Form
- Abstention

Open Meeting Law

The [Meetings Section](#) guides LCCs in complying with the Open Meeting Law and techniques for running meetings.

- [Meeting Notices](#) (Agendas)
- [Meeting Minutes](#)
- Having a quorum outside of LCC meetings (i.e., Town Festival event)
- Email Dos & Don'ts

Public Records Law

The LCC Guidelines document (Appendix C) includes recordkeeping guidance.

- Record Keeping
- Public Records Requests

Grantmaking Process

FYI:

- Applicants submit directly to specific LCCs using the online application in GMS.
- Paper or mailed applications cannot be accepted.
- Grants should not be made under \$250.

Application Evaluating Steps:

1. Voting meeting prep ([Webinar link](#))
2. Establish criteria/evaluative process
3. Review applications and make awards ([Webinar link](#))
4. Communicate with applicants
5. Evaluate the grantmaking process

*The [Evaluating Grants section](#) elaborates on each of these steps further.

Grant Decisions Process

Denials:

- Enter denials into GMS by 12/31.
- **Reconsideration Period:** LCCs must allow for a 15-day reconsideration period before notifying approved applicants.

Approval Letters:

- Applicants receive a general notification in GMS immediately after LCCs complete their Grant Decisions Report.
- LCCs must then send grantees a full approval letter outside GMS, which includes the details of their award and grant disbursement forms.

Post Award Notifications:

- Grantee Deadline
- Disbursement Process ([Reimbursement vs. Direct-Granting](#))
- Grant Extension/Modification Requests

*The [Grant Decisions section](#) includes approval letter templates.

Beyond Expectations

- The [Council Program section](#) includes planning guidance, requirements, restrictions (e.g., conflict of interest procedures), and other details to consider.
- The [Grantee Receptions section](#) includes planning guidance for these events.
- The [Advocacy section](#) includes strategies for advocating for arts and culture at local, regional, and state levels.
- The [Fundraising section](#) includes guidance and tips on generating local funds.



Walpole Cultural Council

Relationships with your Community and Municipality!

COMMUNITIES

- Stewards of local culture
- Your voices and decision-making are important!
- Economic and social impact
- Accessibility & equity
- Visionaries in shaping arts and culture in your community

MUNICIPALITY

- **Appointing Authorities:** Member Recruitment
- **Accounting:** Timely grant payments!
- **Clerk's Office:** Training, meeting agenda/minutes
- **Town Administrators:** Misc. (social media, fundraising, events, transition to direct-granting, etc.)
- **Municipal Boards/Depts:** Outreach

Additional Resources

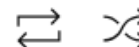
Upcoming Webinars:

- [LCC/TCC Applicant Info Session](#) on **September 10, 2026 @ 6pm.**
 - This webinar will walk potential applicants through the LCC/TCC application process.
- [Municipal & Tribal Financial Reporting Webinar](#) on **September 15, 2026 @ 12pm.**
 - The webinar will be for the Municipal Fiscal Officers and Tribal Government Accountants who received the LCC/TCC Account Form from us.
- [LCCs/TCCs Financial Reporting Webinar](#) on **September 15, 2026 @ 6pm.**
 - The webinar is for LCC/TCC treasurers who will be submitting the Financial Report.

*The [Guidelines & Forms section](#) includes program guidelines, templates, and other commonly used forms.

LCC Program Tutorials

MassCulturalCouncil - 8 / 14



Local Cultural Council Grants Available!

MassCulturalCouncil



LCC Applicant Info Session (FY25)

MassCulturalCouncil



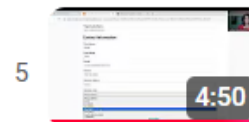
LCC Applicant Application Walk-through (FY25)

MassCulturalCouncil



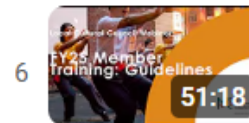
LCC Member Training: New Cycle Report

MassCulturalCouncil



LCC Member Training: How to Update Your Online Member...

MassCulturalCouncil



LCC Member Training: General (FY25)

MassCulturalCouncil



Thank you!

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