



Culture connects

Sharon Chalk Festival



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Agenda

1. Agency Overview
2. Local Cultural Council Program Overview
3. Eligibility (Applicant and Project)
4. Grant Criteria
5. Grant Cycle Timeline
6. Process Overview
7. Tips, Resources
8. Q & A



Fall River, Art at the Narrows

Agency Overview

- [Mass Cultural Council](#) is your state arts agency. Its mission, along with its Local and Tribal Cultural Council (LCC / TCC) partners, is to advance the Commonwealth's creative and cultural sector by celebrating traditions and talents, championing its collective needs, and equitably investing public resources.
- Funded by appropriations from the State Legislature, gaming revenue and the [National Endowment for the Arts](#).
- **Funds are distributed through:**
 - Direct grants to individuals and organizations
 - An annual allocation to municipalities and tribes for their LCCs and TCCs, who regrant the funds and put on their own council programs

Local & Tribal Cultural Council Programs

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

- 329 LCCs serve all 351 MA cities and towns
- 4 Tribal Cultural Councils
- 2,500 volunteers serve as LCC members statewide

The LCC/TCC Programs empowers communities to make their own cultural funding decisions with guidance and support from Mass Cultural Council.

How LCC/TCC 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
- TCC allocations are a percentage of the overall LCC allocation

Check out the [LCC Program's history](#) and [key milestones](#)

Eligibility: Applicant

- Applicants must reside in or be based in Massachusetts.
- Applicants must show that a public benefit results from their project.
- **LCC/TCCs may accept applications from:**
 - Individuals (sole proprietors)
 - Incorporated non-profit organizations
 - Incorporated for-profit organizations (Corps, LLCs, etc.)
 - Unincorporated groups
 - Tribal, federal, state, and municipal government entities
 - Religious organizations (see guidelines)



Lowell Folk Festival

Eligibility: Project

What types of projects are eligible?

- Grant funds received from an LCC/TCC may not be used to purchase alcoholic beverages of any kind.

Grant Amounts

- Vary and are determined by each LCC/TCC. The minimum is generally \$250; typical range is between \$500-\$750.

Project Timeline

- 18-month window from July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027. (unless otherwise noted by the LCC)



Billerica Farmer's Market

Grant Criteria

LCC/TCCs use the first three criteria (meaning must-haves) listed below to review all funding decisions:

1. Arts, Humanities, and Sciences
2. Public Benefit
3. Non-Discrimination
4. Local Criteria

Guidelines and Priorities are different.

- Applicants must meet all eligibility and criteria requirements.



Youth Program, Sustainable Center for
Agricultural Preservation and Education in
Truro

Grant Criteria: Arts/Humanities/Sciences

LCC/TCC funds may only be used to support programs in the arts, humanities, and sciences in MA.

Arts refer to creating work in the crafts and performing visual, media, folk, design, literary, and interdisciplinary arts. They also include the presentation, preservation, and education of works in these disciplines.

Humanities are types of learning that deal with human values and aspirations, human thought and culture, language, and creativity. Examples include, but are not limited to, history, social studies, philosophy, criticism, and literature.

Sciences are limited to its cultural, interpretive, and educational expression and refers to types of learning that deal with nature, science, and technology in ways that explain how they relate to people's lives.

Grant Criteria: Public Benefit

LCC/TCC funds must support activities that contribute to the cultural vitality of the community rather than benefit any private individual or group.

FYI:

- A key public benefit component is advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.
- Subject to LCC/TCC interpretation



Malden MACfest (Council Program)

Grant Criteria: Non-Discrimination

LCC/TCC-funded projects must abide by Anti-Discrimination laws.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that persons with disabilities have equal access to public programs or services as the general public.

LCC/TCC-funded projects must consider access for persons with disabilities, including the facility, event location, and the program's content.

FYI:

- Check out the NEA's [Accessibility Planning and Resource Guide for Cultural Administrators](#) for additional information about accessible programming.

Grant Criteria: Local Criteria

LCC/TCCs publish local criteria on their [Council Profile](#).

- Local Priorities help applicants identify what LCC/TCCs are looking to fund
- Local Guidelines are local application instructions or restrictions.

Council Profiles include:

- LCC/TCC mission, objective, contact information, or social media profiles
- Local criteria
- Grant payment type (reimbursement or direct)
- Funded FY26 applications (includes a project description and grant amount)

FYI:

- Applicants should reach out to the LCC/TCC regarding their local criteria

Grant Cycle Timeline

- **September 1** – Application opened
- **September 1** - Councils updated Council Priorities and contact information
- **October 15 @ 11:59 PM ET** – Application closes
- **November – December**
 - LCC/TCCs hold voting meetings to review applications
 - LCC/TCCs **send denial letters** to applicants not funded
 - Applicants **can request reconsideration**
- **January 15, 2027** – Councils file annual report
- **January – March** – LCC/TCCs send decision **approval** notifications to applicants –
- **FYI** - Grant **modification/extension** process

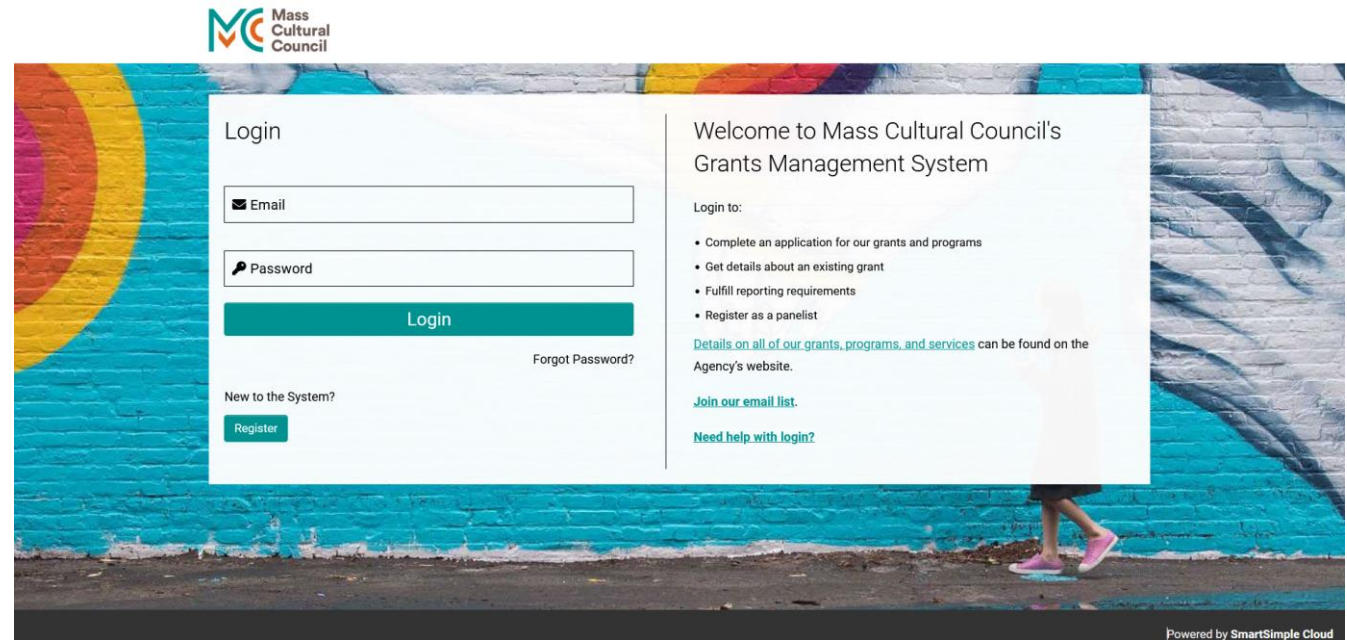


Templeton 250th celebration

Application Process Overview

- Watch a [walk-through video](#) on completing the online application
- [Link to application portal.](#)
- [Read the priorities and guidelines of the LCC](#)

LCC Application Process Review



Mass Cultural Council

Login

Email

Password

Login

Forgot Password?

New to the System?

Register

Welcome to Mass Cultural Council's Grants Management System

Login to:

- Complete an application for our grants and programs
- Get details about an existing grant
- Fulfill reporting requirements
- Register as a panelist

[Details on all of our grants, programs, and services](#) can be found on the Agency's website.

[Join our email list.](#)

[Need help with login?](#)

Powered by SmartSimple Cloud

Grants Management System (GMS) Login Page

Tips & Resources

Tips

- Start early & do your research
- Reach out to LCC/TCC Members or Mass Cultural Staff
- Reach out to potential partners and host venues
- Create a realistic budget

Resources

- [LCC Program Guidelines](#)
- [TCC Program Guidelines](#)
- [Local Council Guidelines & Priorities](#)
- [Applicant FAQs](#)

Check out the [Programs At-a-Glance](#) page for our upcoming programs.

Consider serving as an LCC/TCC member at your Local Cultural Council



Little Theatre of Fall River Production of "Anastasia"

FY27 Funding Opportunities

- Programs At-a-Glance
 - <https://massculturalcouncil.org/programs-at-a-glance//>
- Grants for Creative Individuals
 - Opens September 10, closes October 27.
 - Info Session: September 22, 2026
 - \$5,000 unrestricted grants.
 - This program aims to equitably advance creative expression throughout the Commonwealth with unrestricted grants to Massachusetts artists, culture bearers, and creative individuals.
- Creative Experiences – March 2027



Native Artisan Market & Festival,
Aquinnah Cultural Center



Questions?

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