



# Local Cultural Council

## FY20 Direct Grant Guidelines

### Issued August 2019

For the following communities:

Arlington Cultural Council	New Marlborough Cultural Council
Belmont Cultural Council	North Andover Cultural Council
Boston Cultural Council	Northampton Cultural Council
Bridgewater Cultural Council	Northfield Cultural Council
Chelsea Cultural Council	Plymouth Cultural Council
Chicopee Cultural Council	Pittsfield Cultural Council
Dennis Arts and Culture Council	Princeton Cultural Council
Duxbury Cultural Council	Rochester Cultural Council
East Bridgewater Cultural Council	Salem Cultural Council
Easthampton Cultural Council	Scituate Cultural Council
Everett Cultural Council	Sharon Cultural Council
Fairhaven Cultural Council	Sheffield Cultural Council
Fitchburg Cultural Council	Shrewsbury Cultural Council
Foxborough Cultural Council	South Hadley Cultural Council
Framingham Cultural Council	Spencer Cultural Council
Great Barrington Cultural Council	Stoughton Cultural Council
Hull Cultural Council	Stow Cultural Council
Lancaster Cultural Council	Sudbury Cultural Council
Leominster Cultural Council	Winchester Cultural Council
Lynn Cultural Council	Wales Cultural Council
Lawrence Cultural Council	Walpole Cultural Council
Marion Cultural Council	Watertown Cultural Council
Mendon Cultural Council	Webster Cultural Council
Medford Cultural Council	Westfield Cultural Council
Merrimac Cultural Council	West Bridgewater
Millbury Cultural Council	Uxbridge Cultural Council
Montague Cultural Council	
Needham Cultural Council	

--	--

## Background and Overview

In the FY20 grant cycle, the Mass Cultural Council is offering to all cultural councils the ability to pay grantees through a direct grant, eliminating the requirement that grants made with Mass Cultural Council funds be reimbursement based. The Direct Grant option authorizes municipalities the ability to make grant money available in full and up front to grant recipients.

If an LCC chooses to pay grantees using the Direct Grant, they must follow the payment process outlined here in the *FY20 Direct Grant Guidelines*. All other LCCs and their applicants should continue to adhere to the standard [LCC Program Guidelines](#).

The goal of allowing councils to give direct grants is twofold: to enhance LCC programming opportunities by imposing less financial hardship on potential grant recipients, and to simplify the payment process for municipalities and councils.

## Grant Cycle Instructions

---

The application instructions, eligibility, grant restrictions, grant review process, denial letters, reconsideration process, grant provisions and the Annual Report submission remain unchanged for the Direct Grant option. Participating LCCs should read the standard [LCC Program Guidelines](#) for additional information.

## Award Letter and Grant Acceptance Form

Once the LCC has sent denial letters, the reconsideration period has passed, and the LCC has successfully submitted its Annual Report to the Mass Cultural Council, it can notify selected grantees. LCCs who are providing direct grants **must** attach a copy of the [Grant Agreement Form](#) to their approval letter.

Using the Grant Agreement Form, the grantee will provide payment information and accept the terms and conditions of the grant. **Because the payment process has changed, the council's award letters must reflect this new payment process.** You can view a [Sample Direct Grant Approval Letter](#) at our website.

## Grant Payment Requirements

In order to receive grant funds, the recipient **must submit a completed Grant Agreement Form**, which is provided by the council. The form serves the dual purpose of stating performance terms and conditions as well as a payment authorization.

Payment may be made either directly to the applicant or to third party vendors who will provide goods, materials or services to the applicant. In either case, the LCC must retain a copy of the documentation provided by the applicant as part of the council's records.

The grantee will also be asked to **complete a W-9 Form** which will be attached to the Agreement Form. It is a step necessary to receive a municipal payment. If grant funds are to be paid directly to a **3rd party vendor**, the vendor must fill out the form and return it to the LCC. In each case, the LCC will forward the W-9 to the appropriate municipal fiscal officer, typically the city auditor or town accountant.

Once the Local Cultural Council receives a completed and signed Grant Acceptance Form, a minimum of two council members sign the form. The LCC will then forward a copy of the executed agreement, which will serve as an invoice, to the municipal fiscal officer so that funds can be authorized and released to the grantee through the **local vendor warrant process**.

LCCs should review grant agreements as they arrive and forward copies to the municipal fiscal officer as soon as possible to ensure timely release of funds to grantees. LCC should communicate with local their fiscal officer early to verify that funds can be released within four weeks of receiving a payment request from the LCC.

**Grant recipients have one year from the date** of the approval letter to complete their program as approved. If the program is not completed, the grantee is responsible for returning the grant funds, in full, to the Local Cultural Council. Those funds will then be available for the next grant cycle.

## **Final Reports**

A [Final Report](#) is due to the council **within two weeks** of completing their funded program. Grantees should send Final Reports to the LCC. Local Councils may require grantees to submit additional materials with their Final Report, but if so, those requirements must be stated in the Award Letter.

If the council is not satisfied that the project was completed as per the Agreement Form, the council must contact the grantee with their concerns and allow the grantee the opportunity to respond. If it is still possible, two council members and the grantee may work out a compromise solution, which should be finalized in writing (email or hard copy). If a compromise cannot be reached, the council must convene a quorum of LCC members to vote on whether to formally request repayment of funds in accordance with the agreement.

Grantees that do not repay the grant funds to the Local Cultural Council will jeopardize future funding. Councils have the leeway to state in their agreement letter, the penalties that will occur if grant funds are not repaid.

Local Cultural Councils should request repayment in writing and make a good faith effort to secure the funds. If the grantee is not responsive, the council should institute the penalties as outlined in the grant agreement letter.

Please review [these instructions](#) that will give you detailed instructions on how to administer the Direct Grant option.

## **Grant Cycle Timeline for Direct Grant payment option**

### **August**

- LCCs that want to participate in the direct grant option must submit their intent to the Mass Cultural Council by August 1
- LCCs publicize the grant program locally.
- Mass Cultural Council notifies LCCs of their allocation amounts.
- Councils meet with Municipal Fiscal Officer to determine new grant amount for fiscal year.

### **September**

- LCCs post council priorities on their council profiles by September 1.
- LCCs update their contact information.
- FY20 Grant Cycle opens September 1.
- Councils meet with Municipal Fiscal Officer to determine new grant amount for fiscal year.

### **October**

- Grant applications due to LCCs by October 15.
- LCC Account Form due to Mass Cultural Council by October 15 (Section 1 of Annual Report).
- LCCs determine the total amount available for granting by October 15 (Section 2 of Annual Report).

### **November – December**

- LCCs receive panel books from Mass Cultural Council.
- LCCs conduct their grant cycle voting meetings.
- LCCs send disapproval notifications immediately following voting meeting.
- LCCs handle any reconsideration requests.
- LCCs enter grant decisions and grant cycle voting meeting into the online office.
- The previous year's grantees submit any final requests for payment and Final Reports. (one year from approval letter, November – January).

### **January**

- Council Program final reports due January 15.
- LCCs submit annual report to Mass Cultural Council by January 15.
- Mass Cultural Council transfers funds to LCCs once Annual Report is completed.
- LCCs send approval notifications including grant acceptance forms once Annual Report is Completed.
- LCCs provide municipality with funding list.
- LCC publicizes grant awards.

- LCCs begin processing direct grant payments.

### **Spring**

- LCCs begin to review Final Reports from grantees.
- LCCs ensure grant recipients acknowledge Mass Cultural Council and LCC funding.
- LCCs hold grant receptions and invite Mass Cultural Council program staff and elected officials.
- LCCs conduct their community input process.
- LCCs update priorities based on community input.
- LCCs present the programs and individuals they have funded to the municipality.