



FISCAL 2010 HELPFUL HINTS

DEADLINE: MONDAY, March 23, 2009. The Department will make no exceptions to this deadline.

- Supplemental materials are due in the DCA offices by 6:00 pm on March 23.
- The Application form must be submitted online by 11:59 pm on March 23.

SECTIONS:

General Tips
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GENERAL TIPS

- **Be sure you have carefully read the Guidelines to determine your eligibility.**
- **Refer to the Instructions throughout the course of completing this application.**
- **Respond promptly and completely to any requests for additional information.**
It is essential that you comply with any requests for documentation, especially if there is material that is missing from your Application, within the given deadline.
- **Keep DCA informed of changes to key contact information.**
If, after you submit your Application, there are significant changes in administrative personnel, address or phone numbers, please inform us in writing so we are able to contact you.
- **Keep DCA informed of your organization's activities.**
Be sure to include DCA's Program Services Unit on your mailing list so that we routinely receive information about your activities and are aware of site visit opportunities.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

- **Printing the Budget Section**
For proper formatting of this page, please take note of the browser you are using and the page setup. Safari fully supports printing the Budget section. Internet Explorer 7 and Firefox will properly format the page, but only if it is printed in the Landscape page setting. Internet Explorer 6 does not support printing the Budget section.

To orient the page to print in the Landscape setting, click on the Budget Overview button. Go to File or Print in the browser's toolbar. Select Page Setup. In the Orientation section, select Landscape.
- **Printing via Print Preview of Final Review and Submit**
Internet Explorer 7 and Safari are the only browsers that fully support printing the entire application using the Print Preview button at the top of the Final Review and Submit page.
- **Remember to enroll.**
Before you can begin the online Application, you must enroll using the Federal Employee Identification Number unique to your organization. The link to Enrollment can be found on the Application homepage, beneath the LOG IN button.

- **Check your junk mail for the email with your password/login authorization.**
After enrolling, a login authorization will be sent to you via email. This is your password. Check your email for this message; it may be caught in your junk mail folder. To avoid this, set your preferences to accept messages from the sender donotreply@culture.nyc.gov.
- **How to determine what version of Internet Explorer you are using?**
In your browser window go to Help | About Internet Explorer. Note that if you are using Internet Explorer 6 you may need to upgrade your browser to Internet Explorer 7 to have full functionality of the help text and printing.
- **How do I upgrade my browser from Internet Explorer 6 to Internet Explorer 7?**
To upgrade your browser from Internet Explorer 6 to Internet Explorer 7 please follow this link for download and install instructions:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/downloads/ie/getitnow.mspx>

Take note that upgrading your browser *may* take upwards of 20 minutes to complete.
- **Save frequently!**
We can't emphasize this enough. Save every 10 minutes. You must use the SAVE or arrow buttons at the bottom of the page to save your information. If you navigate using the sidebar, any unsaved information will be lost.
- **Fill out each and every field.**
Be sure to enter information into all the fields you can see. If a field doesn't apply to you, type "N/A" or "0" as appropriate.
- **Log out using the Logout button.**
If you close the browser using the browser's X button, you will be locked out of the Application for 20 minutes. Please log out using the Logout button in the upper right corner of the webpage.

DCA CRITERIA

- **DCA funded projects must have a public service component.**
The definition of public varies according to the applicant. The Application asks each organization to clearly define its audience and how services are being delivered to them. In general, each project must have public access.
- **New applicants are welcome to apply.**
In FY09, DCA funded a substantial number of new applicants. New applicants are reviewed on the same criteria and application materials as returning applicants. Check the Guidelines to be sure your organization is eligible to apply.
- **Impact is important.**
Applications should describe the impact of the proposed activities. DCA funds projects with both depth and breadth of service, and does not place more weight on one than on the other. For instance, DCA funds concerts in city parks that reach thousands of people for only several hours, but also funds arts programs that reach 10 students twice a week over the course of a semester.
- **Request funding for Project support.**
DCA requires that organizations ask for funding for specific projects, not for general operating support. However, while applicants request funds for and are evaluated on their public services, funds received from DCA can be used to cover any organizational costs other than capital expenditures or government advocacy efforts.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

- **Remember that this is a competitive, application-driven process.**

DCA funding panels make recommendations based on the comparative strengths of the applications submitted. Be sure your Application and Supplemental materials clearly represent your organization.

- **Applicants can propose up to five projects. Projects are defined by their activities and audiences.**
Applicants can propose from one to five projects. A project is a cultural activity that serves a public defined by the applicant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to define the activity and the public. If activities are related but serve different publics, you may want to consider separating the activities into multiple projects. Multiple activities should be grouped into a project if they are similar. For example, Organization A has a reading series that takes place the first night of every month; that would be one project with twelve dates. A second project might be an exhibition series that happens for three months twice a year. A third project might be the education program associated with the exhibition series. A concert that happens once a year would be a fourth project.
- **Be sure your project occurs within the City's Fiscal Year 2010 (July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010).**
If your project overlaps fiscal years, or if your organization operates on a different Fiscal Year than DCA, you may apply for the portion of a project that falls within the City's Fiscal 2010 as long as these activities contain a public service component. The Application should clearly indicate that funding is requested for one portion of a larger program.
- **Be sure that both the online portion and hard-copy portion are complete.**
Remember that the online Application form and Supplemental materials must be completed and submitted separately. Supplemental material may be mailed before the Application form has been submitted. The Application Checklist, with the list of required Supplemental materials, can be found on DCA's website. Organizations should be sure to print and save the email confirmation received when the online Application form is submitted. Be sure to complete work on the online form so that there is ample time to review the form before submission. The system will reject incomplete submissions and error message(s) will indicate any issues preventing submission. Keep a copy of all Application materials for your files.
- **Background materials are reviewed by DCA staff.**
The panel does not review CDs, DVDs, or VHS tapes during their deliberation. You may include a work sample with the background materials in your application, if you choose, which the staff will review and report on as appropriate.
- **All Supplemental materials must fit into an envelope approximately 12"x15."**
This includes all the materials listed in the Application Checklist.
- **Borough selection should be based on the activities for which support is being requested.**
DCA funds many organizations that are located in one borough but have programming in another, or programming in several or all boroughs in NYC (but only within the five boroughs). DCA advises organizations to take a look at the programs they wish to be funded, and to choose the borough that makes the most sense – either where a majority of the activities takes place, the geographic location where the highest number of people are served, or where the greatest project costs are incurred.
- **Discipline selection is determined by the applicant organization.**
The discipline chosen by the applicant determines which panel will review the Application. We ask organizations to review the projects in the Application, and choose the single discipline that makes the most sense in terms of panel review. This could mean choosing the discipline in which the organization is best known, the discipline that corresponds to the project with the largest number of people served, or where the project with the largest budget occurs.
- **Applicants may request no more than 50% of the total project costs.**
There is no specific formula we recommend in order for you to determine the amount of the organization's request. DCA support will be limited to no more than 50% of the project budget and generally does not approach that level. The most competitive applications submit requests that take into consideration scope of service, the size of the organization's operating budget and significant resources from other sources. Organizations are seldom funded at 100% of their request. However, organizations that do receive CDF awards will be held accountable for all the projects proposed in the Application regardless of the amount of the award.
- **DCA will perform completeness checks and notify organizations of completeness.**

Be sure to follow the Application checklist when preparing the Application packet. Completeness of the Application is one criterion panelists use to evaluate applicants. All organizations will be notified of any missing Supplemental materials and will be given five business days to turn in specified or requested missing items prior to the panel meetings. Any missing items not submitted by this date will not be considered in panel review, and these Applications will be marked as incomplete.

- **Changes to projects will not be accepted during the panel review period.**
Once funded, organizations are required to notify DCA if there is any change to the project's scope of service. DCA must approve any alterations to a project before it can issue payment. If any changes in project scope occur after some or all payment is received, organizations should still notify DCA of that change.

PANEL REVIEW PROCESS

- **The cultural budget of the organization helps determines panel placement.**
Most applicants' operating budgets are their cultural budgets. However, multi-service, religious or educational organizations may have separate cultural budgets. The cultural budget determines panel placement in addition to discipline and borough designations.
- **Panelists are artists, arts professionals, members of Boards, and City officials.**
Keen familiarity with the cultural sector in New York City and a conversant, thoughtful approach to the funding process are just some of the traits we seek in the panelists we choose. Panelists generally do not serve more than two consecutive years. DCA welcomes panelist nominations from the field. Nominations must include a current resume of the nominee and must be submitted using our panelist nomination form, which can be found on DCA's website. Feel free to nominate yourself.
- **DCA funding history is a component of the panel review.**

FUNDING LEVELS/MULTI-YEAR AWARDS

- **Specific funding levels that are possible for award recipients are listed in the Guidelines.**
DCA determines the amount of funding allotted to each panel once all Applications are submitted. The funding available to each panel is based on many factors, including the number of applicants, aggregate prior year support, population, operating budgets, and other factors, and so are dependent upon assessing data from the applicant pool.
- **Organizations will be notified of panel recommendations after the start of Fiscal 2010.**
Notification will be sent to applicants via mail and email once DCA's budget is confirmed. Organizations must sign and return their grant Agreement and necessary paperwork obligating them to the services proposed before any payment can be made.
- **Applicants with FY07 operating incomes over \$250,000 will be reviewed for a multi-year award.**
Multi-year awardees receive the panel's recommendation annually for the duration of their grant, assuming the agency's budget remains stable and the organization fulfills its reporting requirements. Once the grant period is over, that organization will be required to reapply. This year, all applicants in the over \$250,000 budget category that submit an Application in FY10 are submitting an Application for multi-year funding. This covers the years FY10, FY11, and FY12.

REPORTING

- **Reports are due after the activities are completed.**
Final reports and final payment requests are due upon completion of the services outlined in the grant Agreement, and no later than August 2, 2010.

CITY COUNCIL SUPPORT

- **Applicants receiving City Council member items must apply to DCA and must adhere to the March 23 deadline .**
- **City Council member items for cultural organizations are often allocated through DCA.**
DCA strongly encourages all applicants to keep their elected and appointed representatives in City government informed of their activities. City Council members may continue to allocate money for applicants. These member items must be for the same projects for which the applicant applies to DCA. If awarded, member item money allocations are combined with CDF awards in one Agreement.
- **City Council and Borough President Representatives participate in funding recommendations.**
The City Council and the Borough Presidents have been active participants in the funding reform process and have representatives on our panels. In addition, they recommend panelists from the cultural community.

SITE VISITS

- **DCA does site visits to funded organizations.**
DCA Program Specialists conduct site visits as often as possible and, when applicable, reference these site visits at panel meetings. If an organization would like for a DCA staff person to make a site visit please call a member of the Program Services staff to invite him or her to an event.
- **Panelists do not make site visits.**
Site visits are conducted by DCA Program Specialists.