The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) is a mayoral agency charged with the administration of city funds in support of arts and culture throughout the five boroughs of New York City. The Cultural Development Fund (CDF) is DCLA's competitive, peer-evaluated grant process that supports a broad, multidisciplinary group of diverse NYC-based nonprofit organizations for their arts and cultural services and is managed by the agency's Program Services Unit.

For questions or requests regarding accessibility or accommodations, please contact Sara Cobb, DCLA's Disability Service Facilitator, at disabilityfacilitator@culture.nyc.gov. We encourage you to contact the Disability Service Facilitator by **June 13, 2023** so that there will be ample time prior to the deadline to discuss and respond to your inquiries or request for an accommodation.

The online CDF application can be accessed on the Renewing webpage of our website.

The renewal application is for organizations that are currently in a multi-year grant cycle.

CDF RENEWAL APPLICATION DEADLINE:
Tuesday, June 27, 2023, 5:00PM (ET)
No Exceptions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONTENTS

FY24 CDF AND REFORMS

What changes have been made for FY24?

We've redesigned and modernized our CDF renewal application and related renewal application materials:

- The renewal application is now a single form, available via the Salesforce platform. This means all supplemental materials will be submitted online via the same form.
- Multiple users can work on the form simultaneously (just not in the same section, at the same time).
- Instructions are embedded in each section.
- Character counts have been increased for many narrative questions.

Downloadable renewal application and budget worksheets are now available for the first time to allow renewal applicants to work on their submissions offline.

Are the CDF Reforms still in the pilot phase?

We learned a lot in our first year of rolling out the CDF Reforms, and we continue to self-evaluate and hear feedback from the field via calls with Programs staff, surveys, and other exchanges.

What are the CDF Reforms that were made?

We conducted a full evaluation of the CDF award process that led to a range of new, equity-based reforms in FY23 which we continue to carry through. The reforms included revisions to our process in order to implement equity-driven changes that reduce bias and increase access in our grantmaking process.

Read more about our CDF Reforms online here.

RENEWAL APPLICATION

What is Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24)?

Fiscal Year 2024, or FY24, is our agency's fiscal year. It is the year July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Can I propose a different project in my renewal application?

You must propose one project for support in your FY24 renewal application. Your proposed project will form the scope of service in the agreement between you and DCLA. Your FY24 project proposal does not need to be identical to your organization's FY23 CDF-funded programming. However, it should be similar in scope and must comply with all eligibility requirements.

When will my renewal application be reviewed and when will I be notified of the outcome?

The renewal application deadline is Tuesday, June 27, 5:00PM (ET). We will review each renewal application for completion over several weeks after the deadline. Upon approval of completeness for renewal applications—and in tandem with completing our panel process for FY24 competitive applications—the adopted FY24 CDF budget will be allocated to both renewal and awarded competitive (peer panel reviewed) applications. Outcomes will be announced as soon as possible. For reference, the FY23 outcomes were announced in November 2022.

What is the renewal application platform for FY24 and how do I access it?

Our grant portal is powered by Salesforce. You will be able to submit your entire renewal application responses as well as your accompanying documents in one online form.

You must keep a current organizational profile in our grant portal. Further instructions on how to update organizational information—as well as how to add new users to your account—are available in our Registration Guide for Online Applicants.

How can I find out my assigned program officer?

You can review your previous grant award notification or email cdfhelpdesk@culture.nyc.gov.

How do I get to the "User Management" section or the place to start working on my renewal application?

After logging into the system for the first time you will be brought to your user profile details. Please ensure that you've updated the required fields and click "Save" at the bottom of the page. If you do not see the save button, scroll down. Once you click "Save," the system will bring you to the home page where you will see your dashboard. When you arrive at the home page dashboard you will be able to view the "User Management" tab and will also see the "Start Application" button.

How do I represent a user on my profile as an Executive Director?

Log into your grant portal account. You must be logged in as a Primary User. Before you go into the application, navigate to the User Management section. Edit or add a person who you would like to designate the Executive Director.

In that user's profile, click on the "Executive Director" or "Executive Director/Co-Director" box in the bottom left corner of their profile. Clicking on the box will designate that user to be listed as an Executive Director in your application (you might have to scroll down). The user's professional title does not have to be Executive Director. You can select up to two people to be an Executive Director/Co-Director.

For more instructions, refer to our Registration Guide, pages 19–25.

Can I change my organization's name?

No. When you save your Organization Details by clicking "Create New Organization," the fields become read-only and cannot be edited. The Organization Name, AKA name, and EIN field are locked. If you must make updates to any of the locked fields, contact your program officer or the CDF help desk email for assistance. You may edit your website address, street address, and phone number in the application form itself.

Why isn't there an option to select an Executive Director in my Organization Information section in the application?

If you do not have the option to select your Executive Director in the online application, then a person has not yet been designated an Executive Director under your User Management section. Follow the instructions above.

Why can't I save my user profile information?

When saving your user profile information in the User Management section, be sure that you have completed all required fields. Note that the system does not allow for special characters such as ampersands ("&"; type out "and" instead). Enter your phone number without any formatting such as dashes, periods, or parentheses. Also type directly into the fields rather than cutting and pasting into the field.

What is my budget category?

Your budget category was determined during your FY23 application using your FY20 operating income. Review the Renewal Application Guidelines for the different budget categories.

Regardless of whether your operating income has increased or decreased since your last competitive application, your budget category will remain the same throughout your multi-year award.

My organization is small. Can my proposed project budget be the same as my organizational budget?

Yes. We understand that your project proposal may reflect your organization's entire activities and operating budget. While your proposed project and organizational operating budgets may be identical, we cannot fund more than 75% of your proposed project budget.

What if a required question in the renewal application doesn't apply to me?

Most of the renewal application questions are relevant to applying organizations. If a narrative question is required and it does not apply to you, type in "N/A." For a budget or number field that does not apply, enter "0".

If I'm using a fiscal sponsor, should they fill out my renewal application?

No, your fiscal sponsor should not fill out your organization's renewal application. You should complete your renewal application in its entirety. If you have a fiscal sponsor, you must include in your renewal application a letter from it indicating that it has agreed to act as a fiscal sponsor for your FY24 CDF application. This letter must be dated January 1, 2023, or later. Refer to our Renewal Application Guidelines for more information.

If we don't have an Executive Director, who should be listed in that role?

The person listed should be the person who is authorized as an executive and signatory at your organization, as reflected in your official documentation inclusive of the 990.

You must assign at least one person in your Account Profile as your Executive Director. Their name will only be available to select in the "Executive Director Information" section of the online application if they are registered. You can designate up to two people as Executive Directors.

Is there a way to show pre-pandemic program attendance numbers in the renewal application?

The renewal application includes a Previous Activities section. This section allows for a list of activities that organizations have completed since 2021. Organizations will have the opportunity to demonstrate previous activities that have occurred during, but not before, the pandemic.

There is also an opportunity in the application to describe the lasting impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on your organization.

What type of programming is public? Do public programs include exhibitions or only concerts and lectures?

The fundamental requirement for all proposed projects is that they represent a cultural activity of recognized quality that is offered to the public. Funded services can be as different as the organizations providing them, but they will all have a common commitment to public service and public participation in arts and culture.

Proposed projects can also be offered in person or via a digital platform. They can serve the general public or a target/focused audience that is a subset of the general public, such as artists, students, older adults. Exhibitions, concerts, lectures, workshops, performances, and community-based arts activities are just a few examples of the types of arts and cultural programming that would be eligible. Refer to our Renewal Application Guidelines for more information and a complete list of the priority areas of focus DCLA has identified for its support.

When describing my Previous Activities in the Organizational Accountability section, what timeframe should I use?

List activities that demonstrate programming relevant to your proposed project and your programmatic track record. You can enter up to 12 activities that have taken place between July 1, 2021 to the date of your application submission.

Where is the "Action" section to edit or delete one of my Previous Activities in the Organizational Accountability section?

Use the scroll function located just below your Previous Activities list to find the "Action" section. It is in the last column to the right of the listed activity.

Does my proposed project have to be free to count as providing public access?

No, it does not. Free activities are not required for this grant. If you intend to charge for your activity, answer the questions in the application identifying how much, who pays, and if you offer reduced payment methods.

Your proposed project should be accessible to the public, even if it is a segment of the public (like students, older adults, artist residency, etc.). Any costs associated with participation should be appropriate for the target audience and activity.

One of the ways that you can demonstrate Public Service and Impact—one of the criteria used to evaluate your project proposal—includes describing efforts to reduce financial barriers with relative affordability by using discount programs, scholarships, sliding scale prices, or other subsidies.

Can you explain the difference between direct and indirect recipients?

This will be dependent on your proposed project. For direct recipients, estimate the number of people directly served by your project. Recipients include either audience members or participants for each activity depending upon the focus of the activity.

If this number is significantly different from the number of people served by a similar activity listed in your Previous Activities, use the Project Description to explain the reasons for growth or contraction in the number served.

Indirect recipients are audiences other than the direct recipients of your project. For example, if your education program serving high-school students has a culminating event attended by friends and family, the latter are the indirect recipients of your project. Not all types of programming will have indirect recipients.

How many proposed projects can I include in my application?

You may only submit one project in your narrative proposal. It should be similar in scope to your FY23 awarded proposal.

What a single project includes can be as varied as the organizations applying for CDF funding. Proposed projects can be a single event or service, an entire season of events or services, a central service with related auxiliary services or several related services. Importantly, the scope of the proposed project should be detailed and responsive to the evaluative criteria and reflect the budget and DCLA request amount.

Your proposed project can be focused on one program or event that you plan to offer, or it can include multiple components. There should be an organizing principle that frames your project. Review the instructions in the application form, and our Renewal Application Guidelines for more information.

Where do I enter my proposed project description?

Navigate to the "Project Summary" page in the Public Service and Impact section of the application. When there, click the "Add Project" button at the bottom of the screen. This will take you to the Project Details page, where there are several questions about your project, including the 5000-character project description. Click "Next" to continue throughout the section.

What should my DCLA Project Request Amount be based on?

Review your FY23 Award letter for the CDF baseline amount committed to renew. Until the City's Budget is adopted and DCLA funds reconciled, we cannot know your exact actual award amount for FY24. The amount will be based on the CDF baseline award amount for FY23, listed in your award letter. However, it remains contingent upon the outcome of the budget adoption process and may vary from what was awarded in Fiscal 2023.

In an effort to preclude your organization from having to prepare an addendum prior to entering into an FY24 CDF grant agreement, we advise you to request CDF funds at the maximum panel award for your budget category. Add any additional Member Items that you anticipate on top of that.

You must include a request amount as part of the proposed project budget. Request amounts should reflect a reasonable investment in the proposed project that makes sense within the context of your organizational

budget. We cannot fund more than 75% of the total cost of a project. Do not request $0. Review the Renewal Application Guidelines for more information.

Can I be considered for Language Access Fund (LAF) or Disability Forward Fund (DFF)?

Not every renewal application will qualify to be considered for LAF or DFF. If you do not qualify for LAF or DFF and if you do not include a description of LAF or DFF activities in your project narrative, you must click "No" and type "N/A" under the "CreateNYC Initiatives" section of the CDF Application.

If you would like to be considered for LAF or DFF funding, you must include a description of how you meet the fund's goals in your project proposal narrative. Review our Renewal Application Guidelines for more information.

What kind of activities are eligible for LAF or DFF? How do I be considered?

Proposed projects that demonstrate one or more of the outlined goals for LAF or DFF are eligible to be considered for funding. For more information about the objectives and outlined goals of the funds, review our Renewal Application Guidelines.

To be considered for either of the funds, click on "Yes" under the respective fund in the "CreateNYC Initiatives" section of the online application. You must also include a description of how you meet the fund's goals in your project proposal narrative.

If we applied for City Council discretionary funding in February 2023, do we still have to submit an FY24 CDF renewal application?

If you applied for City Council discretionary funding—which includes both Member Items and City Council Initiatives—and anticipate or want to have that funding administered by the Department of Cultural Affairs — yes, you must have applied directly to the City Council by their February deadline AND you must submit a complete an eligible FY24 CDF renewal application.

Note that there are differences between the Member Items and City Council Initiatives. Proposed projects for Member Items **must be the same** as your CDF proposed project. City Council Initiative funding projects **must not overlap** with your CDF project. For details about City Council discretionary funding, review the Renewal Application Guidelines.

FUNDING

When should I expect to receive my funding?

Our ongoing goal is to process grant awards as quickly as possible. We work as efficiently as possible and note changes that we can implement in future years. It is unlikely that funding will be distributed any sooner than in the past. FY24 grantees should expect to receive their CDF notification email in late fall 2023 and initial payments will be released in the weeks after that.

How will my organization's funding amount be determined?

Review your FY23 Award letter for the CDF baseline amount committed to renew. Until the City's Budget is adopted and DCLA funds reconciled, we cannot know your exact actual award amount for Fiscal 2024.

The amount will be based on the CDF baseline award amount for FY23, listed in your award letter. Additional funds—including Member Items, Language Access Fund, Disability Forward fund, and any other fund—may be additionally available and added to your baseline depending on agency priorities after budget adoption.

All award amounts remain contingent upon the outcome of the budget adoption process and may vary from what was awarded in Fiscal 2023. All awards will be adjusted to available funding.

Since I'm currently in a multi-year award, when will I need to submit a competitive application for panel review?

Review your FY23 Award letter to determine whether you received a two- or three-year award. If you are currently in a two--year award (2023–2024), you will submit a competitive application for FY25 towards the beginning of calendar year 2024. If you are currently in a three-year award (2023–2025), you will submit a competitive application for FY26 towards the beginning of calendar year 2025.

In both cases, if awarded during the future panel review process, you would receive a CDF grant with a three-year commitment.

What if my budget category changes during my multi-year award?

Our multi-year award provides committed funds over two or three years to help stabilize grantees. The baseline award is the amount committed to the awarded organization whether its operating income goes up or down over the three years. The committed baseline amount will not change during the multi-year period.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

What resources do you offer to prepare me for my FY24 CDF renewal application?

- Review the Renewing webpage to see the updated Guidelines and related materials
- Register your organization's CDF account and all relevant contacts to receive important communication from DCLA during the application period
- Use the downloadable FY24 Renewal Application and Budget Worksheets to draft your answers in advance
- Watch a pre-recorded FY24 Application Webinar online. It was designed for applicants preparing to submit applications for competitive panel review but covers information that applies to your renewal application as well.
- Sign up to attend the Office Hour session if you have questions after watching the webinar and reading all of the FAQs.
- Email your program officer with any remaining questions you have
- If you do not know who your program officer is connect with the Programs Unit via email at cdfhelpdesk@culture.nyc.gov
- For technical issues you encounter, submit a CDF Technical Incident Support Form for assistance

COMMENTS

How can I share my feedback with DCLA on my experience with the CDF process?

Once you submit your application you will be emailed a link to a short survey. Prior to then please send your comments and feedback to cdfhelpdesk@culture.nyc.gov.