

Connecticut Arts Foundation: FAQs Simplified Guide

Application Review Process

The Connecticut Arts Foundation ensures a **fair, transparent, and equitable** review process for all applications . Applications are evaluated by a panel of arts professionals, who follow strict conflict-of-interest and confidentiality policies.

The process involves four main stages:

1. **Eligibility Review:** Staff confirm that the application meets basic requirements and is complete. Ineligible applications are not advanced to the panel.
2. **Independent Panel Review:** Eligible applications are scored independently by panelists using a standardized rubric.
3. **Panel Discussion and Scoring:** Panelists meet to discuss applications with significant score differences and ensure consistent criteria application .
4. **Five Finalists are selected from the applicant pool.** These finalists will then be in-person interviewed and have a studio visit prior to final selection.
5. **Funding Recommendations and Final Approval:** The panel recommends applications for funding, which are then subject to final approval by the Foundation. All funding decisions are final.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications are assessed using the same five criteria and scoring system (p. 1):

- **Artistic Excellence:** The quality, originality, and strength of the work samples provided.
- **Artistic Merit:** The clarity of the artist's goals and intent for the proposed project or practice.
- **Impact on Development:** How the grant will support the artist's professional growth, sustainability, or advancement.
- **Feasibility and Readiness:** The likelihood of successfully carrying out the proposed work within the grant period.
- **Budget and Use of Funds:** The clarity and reasonableness of how the grant funds will be used.

Equity and Confidentiality

- **Equity:** Panelists are instructed to be mindful of personal bias, recognize diverse artistic practices, and evaluate applications on their merit; personal characteristics are not considered.
- **Confidentiality:** All reviews and discussions are confidential. Applicants will not be contacted by panelists unless they are a finalist for consideration. Applicants will not have access to their individual scores.

Tips for Strengthening Your Application

- **Work Samples:** Submit fewer strong, high-quality samples that demonstrate technical skill and consistency .
- **Clarity:** Clearly describe your artistic intent and goals, using specific language and avoiding jargon.
- **Impact:** Be specific about what the grant will enable you to do, focusing on impact rather than need.
- **Realism:** Present a realistic plan and budget that matches the scope of the grant amount.
- **Feedback:** Ask a trusted peer to review your materials before submission.

Note for Emerging Artists

You are evaluated in the context of your career stage; extensive exhibition history or formal credentials are not required. Panelists look for intent, care, commitment, and a clear description of your artistic motivations.