

EMERGING ARTISTS GRANT PROGRAM

A partnership program of the Durham Arts Council, Orange County Arts Commission, Chatham Arts Council, and Person County Arts Council.

Funded by The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, the F.M. Kirby Foundation, the Durham Arts Council Annual Fund, the Anika James Foundation, the Kelley Katzenmeyer Fund for Emerging Artists, Partner Arts Councils and individual donations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Applications are open now through January 3, 2027
- Apply through the Submittable platform, linked on the DAC website: durhamarts.org/eap
- Info Sessions held over Teams October 29, November 4, & December 1. Each session covers the same material. Slides and session registration are on the DAC website. Attendance is not mandatory. FAQs on the DAC website are updated, as relevant.
- Contact Director of Artist Services, Amanda Miller with questions: amiller@durhamarts.org or (919)560-2720

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Emerging Artists Program (EAP) is a project grant program that provides financial support to developing or established professionals by funding a project pivotal to the advancement of their careers as artists.

- Up to $1500 of support to individual artists for career development projects
- The project must help the artist take their career forward and take place between April 1, 2027 - March 30, 2028
- A pivotal project answers the questions, “why now?” and “why this?”



ELIGIBILITY

- Open to individual artists in any art form, not ensembles or groups, though projects can include other artists
- Must have lived in Durham, Orange, Chatham, Person or Granville Counties, NC, for at least one year prior to the application deadline - since January 3, 2026 or earlier
- At least 18 years of age
- Not enrolled in a degree program at the time of the application deadline
- Not a recipient of a 2025-2026 Emerging Artist Grant and not DAC Staff or Board



WHAT IS “EMERGING”?

An Emerging Artist is simply moving from one point to another to build their career.

The “emergence” can be about the business of art...
(“I need a plane ticket to get to my audition”)

... Or the creation of art
(“I need to rebuild my wood fired kiln”)

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY “CAREER”?

- Career is defined by long term commitment to mastering the skills of your art form and developing a voice

- One path is not more convincing than another – you can be self-taught, have an MFA or learn from your grandmother

- Making your living with your art is not required to be considered a professional

REVIEW PROCESS

- 10 Application Categories: Craft, Dance, Film/Video, Literature, Multidisciplinary Performing, Music, Painting/Drawing/Printmaking/Mixed Media, Photography, Sculpture/Installation, Theatre
- 2-3 Reviewers per category read and score each application - Reviewers are typically past grant recipients and all are artists/experts in their respective review category
- All Reviewers and a DAC Board Member Panel Chair meet to determine a final slate of recommended awards - Artist Services Staff are present but do not contribute to the final decision of awards
- Panel Chair & Staff present the recommended slate to the DAC Board of Directors for approval by vote
- March 2027: Notifications are sent to all applicants, and staff can provide feedback

CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

10 POINTS	10 POINTS	10 POINTS
Strength of the artist's work and commitment of artist	Feasibility of project	Impact on the artist's career, as they define it in their career goals

Timeline: Project should happen between April 1, 2027 - March 31, 2028

$36,000 available funds, making about 24 total awards

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR PIVOTAL PROJECT

No matter the project, define the relationship of it to your career goals

Past projects that have been funded include:

- Producing, Promoting, or Presenting your work, including marketing
- Travel for career-related opportunities
- Rental of equipment, facilities, or services for the presentation or creation of new work
- Purchase of essential supplies or equipment
- Training, such as master classes or educational residencies (not toward a degree)

STEP 2: PICK YOUR CATEGORY

The application is your chance to tell a Reviewer in your field (a fellow artist!) who you are – as an artist and as a project manager

Think like a Reviewer: “If I am an artist in X field, and I am reading an application for a career-impacting project, what would I be looking for?”

Who would you want to read your application?

Consider your work samples

Still unsure? Align the category with your CAREER, and be prepared to explain how your project supports that



STEP 3: GATHER YOUR MATERIALS

Apply online via the Submittable platform linked on the DAC website: durhamarts.org/eap - create an account if you don't already have one

Review application requirements online ahead of applying, and draft your application as you go

One application per person

- Your work samples
- Your career goals
- Your resume

Help the reader understand you as an artist.

- Project description
- Project timeline
- Project budget

Help the reader understand your ability to manage the project.

STEP 4: DRAFT - ELEMENTS OF THE APP.

SECTION A: Applicant Information

Name & pronouns, Mailing Address (including COUNTY), Contact Info, Website & Social Media, Demographics

- Applicants should have resided in Durham, Chatham, Orange, Person, or Granville counties for at least one year from the application deadline (since January 3, 2026)

SECTION B: Grant Details

- Amount Requested, up to $1500
- Description of your career goals (250 words) - relate these to your project!
  - What are you trying to achieve? This is the setup for your narrative
- Project Narrative upload (generally 1-2 pages)
  - What are you going to do? Include a timeline and/or steps of the project process - who, what, where, when, how, and why
    - Project must take place between April 1, 2027 - March 31, 2028
  - What is the impact of this project on your career? *Why this and why now?* - connect back to your career goals

STEP 4 CONTINUED

SECTION B: Grant Details continued

- OPTIONAL link to audio or video narrative, no more than 3 minutes
- Project Start & End Dates
- Budget Upload, up to 2 files (itemized budget + expense quotes or budget narrative, etc. - any context needed to better understand your itemized budget)
    - Itemize project expenses and income, including grant amount requested. Income should equal expense. Additional income is only required if expenses exceed the grant amount
    - Suggested format:
        - Expense
            - Item 1 - $ Amount
            - Item 2 - $ Amount
            - Item 3 - $ Amount
            - TOTAL EXPENSE $ Amount
        - Income
            - Source 1 - $ Amount *one of these must be the grant amount requested
            - Source 2 - $ Amount
            - Source 3 - $ Amount
            - TOTAL INCOME $ Amount

STEP 4 CONTINUED

SECTION B: Grant Details continued - sample budget

Expense

Description	Amount
Travel (train tix & rental car)	$900
Food/Lodging (4 days)	$950
Conference Registration	$600
Supplies (5 copies of manuscript for critique sessions)	$100
TOTAL EXPENSE	**$2,550**

Income

Description	Amount
DAC EAP Grant Request	$1500
Conference Scholarship	$900
Personal Funds	$150
TOTAL INCOME	**$2,550**

Numbers should be realistic - show your research!

STEP 4 CONTINUED

Section C: Artist Portfolio/Attachments

- Artist Bio (limit 200 words)
- Resume Upload
  - Include arts education, employment, exhibitions/performances, publications, commissions, awards and honors
- Work Samples Upload
  - Up to 20 files total - review application for specific category requirements. Choose a coherent body of work relevant to the project
  - Samples must be of the artist's work only! If other artists are involved, credit them and explain their involvement, as well as your role in the collaboration
  - Work must have been completed within the past three years
- Description of Work Samples Upload
  - A list of work samples uploaded and any important context (collaborations, relation to project, etc.) - review application for specific category requirements

STEP 4 CONTINUED

Section C: Artist Portfolio/Attachments continued

- Letters of Support (Optional)
  - Up to 3 letters relevant to artistic career development - *is this someone who can speak to your work as an artist and this project opportunity?* Consider their expertise

Section D: Confirmation & Certification

- Application checklist
- Certification of truth, eligibility, and understanding of final reporting requirements - due April 30, 2028



STEP 5: REVIEW & SUBMIT

Have someone review your application, especially narrative and budget

TIPS

Write under the word limit, as able.



Curate your work samples - don't leave the reviewer confused.

Support your budget with vendor quotes/estimates.

Keep your project focused, rather than broad.

Take the time to explain the impact of the project on your career – *this is often a deal breaker if your application gets to the final round.*

FINAL REPORTS

Due April 30, 2028

- Section A: Grantee Contact Info
- Section B: Report Narratives
  - Description of how the project was completed - timeline, success, pivots, etc.
  - Description of how the project assisted in reaching career goals
  - Description of how the grant helped complete the project
  - A quote regarding the importance of this kind of funding for artists
  - Budget actuals - income and expense
- Section C: Publicity & Documentation
  - Upload of up to 10 publicity materials related to project
  - Upload of artwork samples from project
- Section D: Certification & Submit



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

We hope that completing this application will develop your skills to

- describe your work and your vision
- build a coherent budget
- curate work samples

These skills will help you to write strong proposals for commissions, residencies, grants and jobs in the future

Grantees are often recruited to be reviewers for future grants

OTHER RESOURCES

DurhamArtsNetwork.org



- Durham Arts Network is a free online directory for artists, arts businesses and arts organizations in Durham and adjacent counties.
- DAC started the directory to make it easier for the community to find artists and artists to find each other.
- Please set up your free profile!

Artist Support Grant - opens Summer 2027

Creative Spaces Grants - rolling deadlines throughout the year



LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR APPLICATION!
DEADLINE JANUARY 3, 2027.

You can email Amanda Miller with questions
amiller@durhamarts.org

THANK YOU!

The Emerging Artists Program is supported by:

The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation

DURHAM ARTS COUNCIL

FMKF F.M. KIRBY FOUNDATION

Granville Arts

ORANGE COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

Anika James Foundation — Measure your life in love

PERSON COUNTY arts COUNCIL

CHATHAM ARTS COUNCIL

Kelly Katzenmeyer Fund