

Department of
Environment and Planning
Commissioner Daniel Castle, AICP

Erie County
2025 Cultural Funding
Applicant Briefing

February 21, 2024 | 6:00pm | Squeaky Wheel

February 22, 2024 | 6:00pm | West Falls Center for the Arts

Presentation will be recorded. Recording will be available on Erie County's YouTube page.





Agenda

1. Welcome & Announcements

Thomas E. Baines, ESQ. Deputy Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, Erie County Dept. of Environment & Planning

2. Application and Changes

- **2024 Summary & 2025 Overview**

Matthew Clohessy, Chair, Erie County Arts & Cultural Advisory Board

- **Live Demo**

Mariely Ortiz, Senior Planner, Dept. of Environment & Planning

3. Closing & Questions





**Arts
Services
INC**

Arts Services can help!

ASI can provide general grant preparation guidance and best practices.

Please contact them early in the process if you want assistance.

Contact:

Jen Swan-Kilpatrick

(716) 833-3004 x510

Jen@asiwny.org

Holly Grant

(716) 833-3004 x512

holly@asiwny.org

www.asiwny.org



Erie County Cultural Plan

Erie County has embarked upon a cultural planning process that will be developed through the fall of 2024.

The goal of this project is to promote, encourage, and increase support for the region’s artistic and cultural assets—shaping a shared future that is sustainably resilient, inclusive, and equitable.

Public input will be sought through the spring and summer – keep an eye out for announcements!



2024 Summary

**121 Arts & Cultural Orgs
awarded**

\$8,295,721 in funding

6.4% increase over 2023 adopted

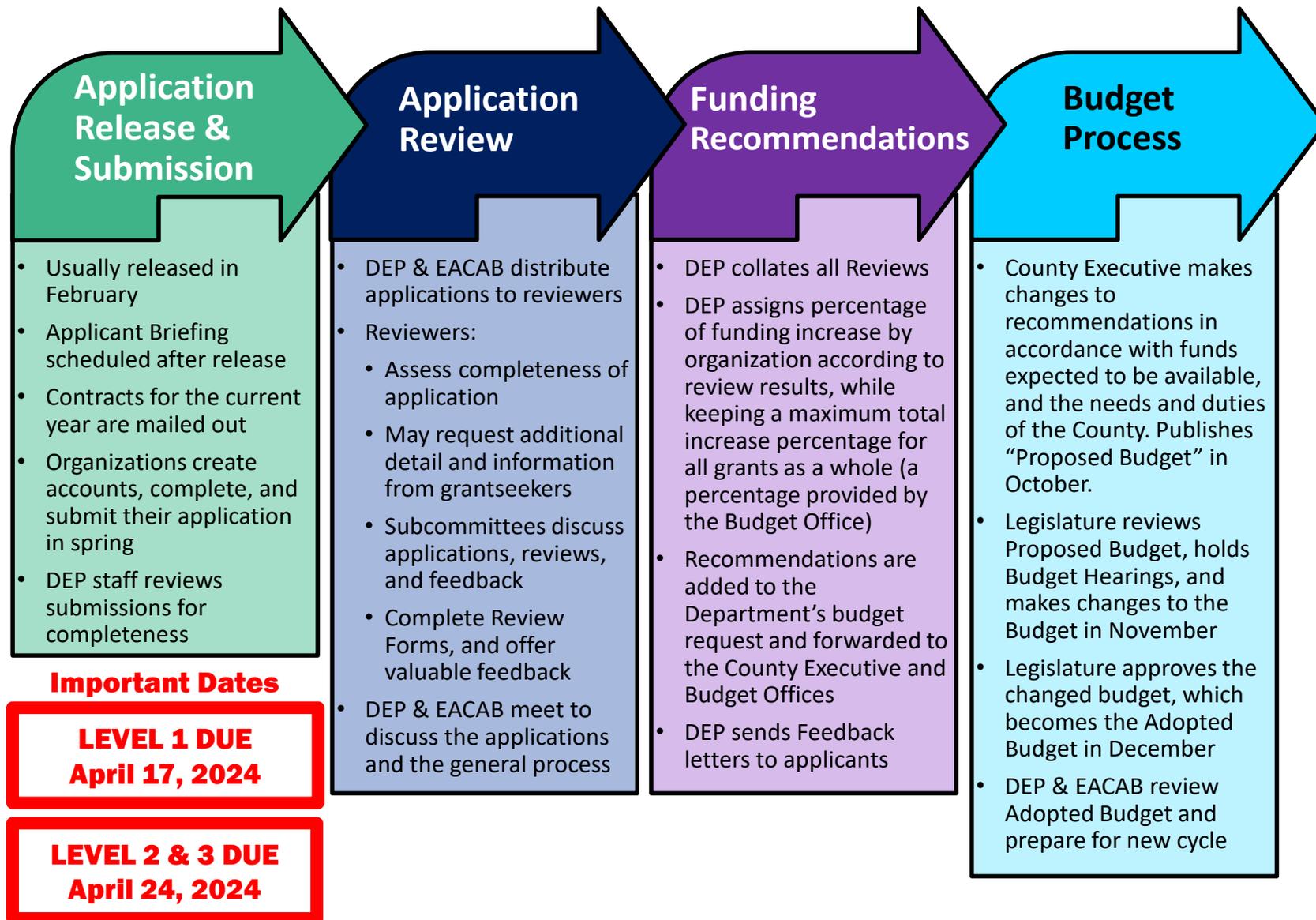
Mean \$69,131 *(up from \$67,000)*

Median \$11,250 *(up from \$10,000)*

Mode \$3,000 *(up from \$2,500)*



Funding Cycle



EACAB & DEP Staff

The application review process engages the 15 member EACAB along with DEP Planners
BOARD



Gina Burkhardt



Connie
Campanaro



Matthew
Clohessy, Chair



Anne Conable



Mary Craig



Jason Daniels



Russell Davidson



Kathryn Franco



Grace Golando



Patricia Johnson



Lisa LaTrovato



Purnima Mohan



Kelley Omel



Glenn Spencer



Gretchen
Wylegala

STAFF



Thomas Baines,
Dty Commissioner



Sarah Gatti,
Principal Planner



Tim German,
Planner



Dave Hall,
Senior Planner



Emily Moll,
Planner



Mariely Ortiz,
Senior Planner



Briana Zuchowski,
Assistant Planner



EACAB & DEP Staff review

- Do NOT evaluate art or the programming content (but may comment on it)
- Annual check-ups of organizations in the areas of:
 - Governance
 - Management and planning
 - Fiscal health
 - Community impact
 - Alignment of programming with mission
 - Recognition of Erie County
 - Demonstrated ability to be equitable, diverse, and inclusive in their work
- Independent reviews lead to stronger, more competitive, sustainable organizations
- Provide feedback letters to organizations that underscore both strengths and weaknesses, and where improvement is advised



Scoring

- **Financial Health**
 - Data
 - Narrative Responses
 - Attachments B thru D

- **Governance**
 - Data
 - Narrative Responses
 - Attachments F thru H

- **Management & Planning**
 - Data
 - Narrative Responses
 - Attachment I

- **Services & Programs**
 - Data
 - Narrative Responses

-
- **Prior Grantees** (50% weight)
 - Funding Acknowledgement
 - Feedback Response

(50% weight)

- **Bonus** - e.g., above and beyond efforts, more diligence or preparedness than expected for organization size, etc. Primarily from "Additional Info" section.
- **Deductions** - e.g., late, incomplete, unresponsive, etc.

Score	Descriptor	Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses
9	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong (model and standard for field or discipline with essentially no weaknesses)
8	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
7	Excellent	Very strong with some minor weaknesses
6	Very Good	Strong with numerous minor weaknesses
5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
4	Satisfactory	Strong but at least one major weakness
3	Fair	Some strengths but with some moderate weaknesses
2	Marginal	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
1	Poor	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
0	Concerning	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses



Tips/Best Practices

- Don't be repetitive
- Stick to the answer appropriate to the question
- Be consistent (don't contradict yourself)
- Help us see your vision for 2025
- Please submit legible documents (if you need assistance – please see our new Resource document on the website)
- Submit MOST RECENT ADOPTED/SUBMITTED documents requested (e.g., tax filings, etc.)
- Submit FINAL (not draft) documents (if in the process of updating – submit most recently adopted document, and include ADDITIONAL INFORMATION on updating status)
- Maximum consecutive term limits on Board appointments
- Proactive diversification of board members, staff, contractors, vendors, artists, and audiences
- Funding diversification and continuous development of revenue sources
- Review recording of this briefing on Erie County's YouTube page for FAQs
- Review the directions carefully



2025 Changes

- Application/Process
 - Clarification/rephrasing of some questions
 - Ensure at least two separate contacts
 - Naming of fiscal years (“prior”, “most recent”, “current”, “next”)
 - Indicate diversity of the leadership of companies hired
 - Submit proposed budget for grant
 - Funds must be used for organization’s OWN expenses
 - Compare year to year grant and actual expenses
 - Remember to include your CHAR 500 with your tax filing
 - Board of Directors Competencies
 - One table for Board diversity information
 - Quick summary of independent vs. interested directors
 - Visual separators for easier readability



Request Structure

LEVEL	MAX . GRANT REQUEST	MAX. % OF ACTUAL OPERATING EXPENSES
1	≤\$50,000	≤20%
2	>\$50,000 up to \$200,000	≤20%
3	>\$200,000	Funding requests exceeding 20% of your Actual Operating Expenses are discouraged and will be scored lower

- An organization may complete and submit a lower level application, as long as the percentage and grant amount are within the thresholds as listed above, i.e., maximum actual operating expenses may be waived for small grant amounts



Eligibility

- Located and provide services in Erie County
- Be a 501(c)(3) organization with tax exempt status (at least 1 year)
 - Must be registered with the NYS Charities Bureau (if exempt, organization must know exempt status)
 - Must be able to provide a copy of a SUBMITTED IRS tax filing
- Have at least **ONE** of the following descriptions of a Cultural Organization as a **PRIMARY** mission of the organization:
 - An organization that operates on a countywide or recognizable community level, which by the nature of its cultural activities and/or collections, is unique, distinctive, and of significant quality
 - An organization that provides visitors with access to programs and displays of the performing, visual, literary and media arts, and/or to exhibits and collections, which preserve and interpret our cultural, natural and scientific heritage
 - An organization that particularly serves the cultural needs of significant segments of the County population, thereby contributing to the quality of life in Buffalo and Erie County



Application Levels

erie.gov/cultural/application

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Your organization meets <u>Eligibility</u> criteria		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant request is not more than \$50,000 Request does not exceed 20% of most recent FY Actual Operating Expenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant request is more than \$50,000 but not more than \$200,000 Request does not exceed 20% of most recent FY Actual Operating Expenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant request is more than \$200,000 Funding requests exceeding 20% of most recent FY Actual Operating Expenses are discouraged and will be scored lower
ITEMS REQUIRED		
Application Level 1	Application Level 2	Application Level 3
A. Examples of Recognition of County Funding (<i>N/A for NEW applicants</i>)	A. Examples of Recognition of County Funding	A. Examples of Recognition of County Funding
B. Management Prepared or CPA Compiled Financial Statements	B. Independent CPA Reviewed Financial Statements*	B. Independent CPA Audited Financial Statements**
C. Financial Worksheet - Level 1	C. Financial Worksheet - Level 2	C. Financial Worksheet - Level 3
D. Tax Filing	D. Tax Filing	D. Tax Filing
F. Bylaws	F. Bylaws	F. Bylaws
G. Conflict of Interest Policy with completed Disclosure forms for all board and Key Persons	G. Conflict of Interest Policy with completed Disclosure forms for all board and Key Persons	G. Conflict of Interest Policy with completed Disclosure forms for all board and Key Persons
H. Whistleblower Policy	H. Whistleblower Policy	H. Whistleblower Policy
N/A	I. Strategic Plan	I. Strategic Plan

*NOTE: NYS changed the maximum threshold for CPA Review from \$750K to \$1M for Fiscal Years Starting after 7/1/21

**NOTE: NYS changed the minimum threshold for CPA Audit from \$750K to \$1M for Fiscal Years Starting after 7/1/21



Applicable to all levels

- Grants are for General Operating Support, limited to current operating expenses including salaries, program costs, fringe benefits, rents, utilities, office supplies, and equipment. Grant funds may NOT be used for or applied toward any capital project or improvement, nor as a set-off against accounts receivable. No funds received shall be used for any service provided or activity performed outside Erie County. The organization shall NOT delegate any duties or assign any of its rights under the grant. The funds are for the organization's own, direct operational expenses and shall not be re-granted or otherwise used for other purposes.
- PLEASE NOTE THAT FUNDING REQUESTS ARE NOT GUARANTEED. All applications will continue to be reviewed based on their financial management, governance, and programming, with funding distributed in accordance with available funds for the 2025 calendar year



Application–Attachments

LETTER	DOCUMENT	DESCRIPTION	LEVEL
A	Examples	<p>A document with examples of Acknowledgement of County Funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Acknowledgement Samples may be a screenshot of your website, digital or physical copies/pictures of posters, event invitations, flyers, newsletters, plaques, links to videos with audio acknowledgement, etc. All samples should be clear on where they can be found or when/where they were performed. Save all visuals/links of the examples in one PDF file. 	ALL (N/A for New Applicants)
B	Financial Statements	<p>Copy of your organization’s Annual/Financial Report for the most recently completed fiscal year.</p> <p>NYS FINANCIAL REPORT by OPERATING BUDGET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≤\$250,000 - Annual Report/ Unaudited Report/Annual Budget >\$250,000 - <\$1,000,000 - Report w/ CPA Review (FY starting after 7/1/21) ≥\$1,000,000 - Report w/ CPA Audit (FY starting after 7/1/21) 	ALL
C	Financial Worksheet	<p>A provided Excel file, identical to prior fillable PDF financial information, detailing revenues and expenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be downloaded, completed, submitted as a PDF from erie.gov/cultural Required for all levels 	ALL
D	Tax Filing	<p>A copy of your organization's most recently submitted 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N</p>	ALL



Application–Attachments

LETTER	DOCUMENT	DESCRIPTION	LEVEL
F	Bylaws	Copy of your organization’s current bylaws	ALL
G	Conflict of Interest Policy with Disclosure forms	Conflict of Interest Policy per NYS Not-For-Profit Corporation Law §715-a, with a blank Declarations/Disclosure form, and copies of signature pages of all current Key Persons’ Declarations/Disclosure form. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A template is available at erie.gov/cultural 	ALL
H	Whistleblower Policy	Upload your organization’s Whistleblower Policy per NYS Not-For-Profit Corporation Law §715-B. NOTE: An active Whistleblower Policy is required of all applicants regardless of budget size or number of employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A template is available at erie.gov/cultural 	ALL
I	Strategic Plan	Copy of your organization’s Strategic Plan	2, 3
Z	Optional: Additional Attachment	You may submit an additional attachment with information you'd like to share with the Board, whether providing further details on application questions or on topics not addressed in the application. May be narrative and/or images.	ALL



*Time
for
LIVE DEMO*



QUESTIONS?

CONTACTS

Mariely Ortiz, Senior Planner (716) 858-1916
Mariely.Ortiz@erie.gov

NOTE: 000 2/28 thru 3/8; during these dates please contact:

Sarah Gatti, Principal Planner (716) 858-6014
Sarah.Gatti@erie.gov

Website erie.gov/cultural

THANK YOU

Briefing recording will be available on Erie County's YouTube page.

