



Special Presenter Initiatives

Program Guidelines 2025-2026

Application deadline: March 13, 2025

Project Period: July 1, 2025- June 30, 2026

ACCESSIBILITY

This publication is available in .PDF format and as an accessible Word file at <https://www.midatlanticarts.org/opportunity/special-presenter-initiatives/>

To request accommodation during any phase of your application process, reach out to Program Director, Performing Arts and Accessibility Coordinator Sarah Lewitus at slewitus@midatlanticarts.org or call 410-539-6656 X 110.

ABOUT SPECIAL PRESENTER INITIATIVES

Mid Atlantic Arts, in partnership with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCAH), the Delaware Division of the Arts (DDOA), the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP), the Virgin Islands Council on the Arts (VICA), and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History (WVDCH), offers a special funding initiative to support the presentation of professional performing artists/ensembles at small and mid-size arts and community organizations within these jurisdictions.

Presenters based in partner states/jurisdictions listed above can receive up to 50% subsidy for the presentation of an artist/company (including artistic compensation, housing, per diem and travel) plus support for other eligible project expenses.

Mid Atlantic Arts is committed to supporting diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible programming in our region. Projects that demonstrate clear mission impact, strong artistry, well-rounded community and artist engagements, and thoughtful and inclusive efforts to engage audiences systemically underserved by the arts are encouraged to apply.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a Special Presenter Initiatives grant award, presenters* must:

- be based in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, West Virginia, and the Native nations that share this geography;
- be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or be a unit of state or local government or Federally recognized Indian tribal government;
- demonstrate organizational administrative capacity** to complete all required project components;
- be in good standing with Mid Atlantic Arts at the time of application, with no overdue or outstanding required reports and/or grant documents;
- not be a State/Jurisdictional Arts Agency, considering the adjudication role Agencies play in the selection process for this program

**For this program, Mid Atlantic Arts defines “presenter” as an organization that financially compensates an artist/company that is a separate entity from the presenter for performance(s) and engagement activities in the presenter’s community. Producing organizations that solely create artistic work or assemble artists to perform as ensembles for performances are not eligible to apply.*

***Presenters do **not** need to have a history of engaging professional touring artists as an ongoing and/or significant part of their organization’s activity to receive Special Presenter Initiatives support; organizations without a history of presenting touring artists will be asked to describe their administrative plan for engaging the artist/company within their existing staff structure and among other organizational priorities.*

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS PER PRESENTER

- Presenters based in **Delaware, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands** may submit applications for a **maximum of two** Special Presenter Initiatives projects per annual application cycle
- Presenters based in **Washington, DC and West Virginia** may submit applications for a **maximum of one** Special Presenter Initiatives project per annual application cycle

ARTIST/COMPANY REQUIREMENTS

The artist can be based anywhere across the U.S. or around the world, including those based in the same state or jurisdiction as any of the applicant presenter. Mid Atlantic Arts does not offer an artist roster for this program; the presenter will independently decide the artist they propose to engage.

Eligibility restrictions related to Artist/Company support through Special Presenter Initiatives:

- Artists on Mid Atlantic Arts’ active Performing Arts Global Exchange (PAGE) or Mid Atlantic Tours rosters are not eligible for presentation support through Special Presenter Initiatives. See midatlanticarts.org for active program rosters.
- Presenters applying for support through the current grant round of Special Presenter

Initiatives cannot apply to Mid Atlantic Arts' ArtsCONNECT or Folk & Traditional Arts Community Projects Grant programs for funding to support the same artists and engagements.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

The presenter is required to include the following activities in their engagement:

- At least one in-person or virtual* performance with the artist that is open to the general public; **and**
- At least one community engagement activity. These may include exhibitions, lecture/demonstrations, master classes, panel discussions, pre- or post-performance artist question and answer sessions, residencies, workshops, and interactive engagements over digital platforms

**Mid Atlantic Arts defines a virtual performance as an online, public presentation of work by an artist or group of artists that is streamed live or pre-recorded.*

Proposed activities must meet the following requirements:

- All eligible activities must take place during the project period (July 1, 2025- June 30, 2026)
- Fundraising events, either as part of the public performance or community engagement activity, are not eligible for support
- Performances that primarily serve a non-public audience (such as K-12 schools, university classes, summer camps, senior centers, etc.) are not considered public performances, although they may be one of the community engagement activities that comprise a Special Presenter Initiatives project

APPLICATION PROCESS

APPLICATION PORTAL

All presenters requesting Special Presenter Initiatives support must apply through Mid Atlantic Arts' online grant portal for funding consideration. The web portal can be accessed by visiting [midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com](https://www.midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com).

The Special Presenter Initiatives application can be previewed and downloaded in Microsoft Word and PDF formats at this link: <https://www.midatlanticarts.org/opportunity/special-presenter-initiatives/>

The following required materials are uploaded with the online application:

- Countersigned letter of intent between the presenter and the proposed artist. The letter must include the following:
 - Specific dates of the engagement
 - Negotiated artist fee for proposed project, inclusive of performance and community engagement activities

- The title of the works to be performed (if known)
- If the presenter forms part of local or state government: one copy of a letter on letterhead, signed by an authorizing official, confirming the applicant’s status as a unit of local or state government.

ARTIST CONSENT

We highly encourage applicant organizations to share the specific plans and activities of a proposal with the artist and the artist representative for the purpose of transparency. Please plan your timing to share the information accordingly.

ELIGIBLE REQUESTS

A presenter may request the following:

- A fee subsidy up to 50% of the negotiated artist fee for the engagement, but not to exceed \$2,000.00 USD (Not to exceed \$5,000.00 USD for presenters based in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico) and no less than \$750.00 USD;
- Other eligible expenses of no more than \$2,000.00 USD to support direct project expenses including, but not limited to, program staff salary, direct technical personnel fees, audience development, marketing and promotional expenses, project-specific purchases or consulting related to increasing access for artists with disabilities, staff, audiences or community members, technical and equipment rental expenses for virtual or in-person engagements, artist travel/lodging expenses, and/or expenses related to public health measures for in-person engagements

Funding requests must meet the following requirements:

- Funding awarded by Mid Atlantic Arts is restricted to the specific, direct costs of the project, as detailed above, and may not be used for indirect costs, including funding for the presenter capacity support amount
- Grants must be matched on a 1:1 basis. The match may not include Federal funds whether they are received directly from a Federal agency or indirectly, such as through a state agency or other entity. In addition, the Mid Atlantic Arts grant and the required match may not be used to match any other directly or indirectly received Federal funds

DEADLINES

- ***Application deadline: Thursday, March 13, 2025***

APPLICATION ADJUDICATION

A panel composed of experienced performing arts professionals will review applications and make recommendations for support using the following criteria. All criteria will be reviewed through the lens of Mid Atlantic Arts’ mission, vision and guiding principles, available at midatlanticarts.org. All criteria have equal weight.

Mission Impact

The project demonstrates artistic merit by fulfilling a clearly defined mission of the applicant organization, with feasible planning and significant potential for impact.

Artistry

The project demonstrates artistic excellence as defined by its rigor in artistic practice as well as richness and depth in exploration of ideas and social relevance.

Community Benefit

The project offers meaningful and equitable exchanges between the artist, the presenter, and local communities through its planned activities.

Access

The project engages in thoughtful efforts and partnerships that help cultivate diverse audiences and alleviate barriers of participation for individuals representing communities that have been systemically underserved by the arts. Barriers of participation may include those due to age, class, disability status, gender, geographic location, race, sexual orientation, or other factors.

ADJUDICATION DETAILS

Applications will be adjudicated based on the four criteria above. Special Presenter Initiatives funding decisions will be made based on average application score.

Presenter applicants will be assessed in part on the risk of noncompliance with Federal statutes, regulations and the terms and conditions as provided by the applicant's Certification and Statement of Assurances in the submitted application and the results of previous audits including adherence to Single Audit requirements as set forth by Federal statutes.

AWARD NOTIFICATION

All applicants will be notified by email on the status of their proposals by the end of May, 2025.

If awarded, 100% of the grant amount is paid by ACH transfer or, if necessary, by check to the grantee (or fiscal sponsor, if applicable) approximately 45 – 60 days prior to the engagement following the review and signing of a grant award agreement.

A final report for a funded project is due no later than 30 days after the project completion date. The final report, made available in the online grant portal at the time the grant is awarded, requires a brief description of the completed project along with an accounting of expenditures of the funded activities. Final report instructions are provided as part of the grant award documents.

QUESTIONS?

Contact Sarah Lewitus, Program Officer, Performing Arts & Accessibility Coordinator at

slewitus@midatlanticarts.org or 410-539-6656 x 110.

The Special Presenter Initiatives program is made possible through the support of the National Endowment for the Arts' Regional Touring Program with additional support for engagements in Delaware provided by the Delaware Division of the Arts.

