



Sudbury Cultural Council Frequently Asked Questions

When are applications due? How should they be completed?

Cultural Council applications open on September 1 each year, and all applicants must submit completed applications by the statewide deadline in October. Late applications are not accepted. All applications must be submitted online through the Mass Cultural Council online application portal, accessed via the Mass Cultural Council (MCC) [website](#).

What criteria are used to make grant decisions?

Proposals are evaluated based on the criteria outlined in the Priorities and Guidelines on the Sudbury page of the MCC [website](#). These Priorities and Guidelines are based on suggestions and feedback from Sudbury community members, collected via an annual community survey.

The minimum standards applicants must meet are:

- a confirmed venue;
- a confirmed date(s) in the upcoming calendar year;
- a qualifying discipline (arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences);
- a clear benefit to Sudbury residents and the Sudbury community;
- a minimum grant proposal of \$250.

Grant proposals that do not meet these minimum criteria will not be approved.

The Sudbury Cultural Council (SCC) may also evaluate the innovative nature of the proposal, the quality of the activity, evidence of planning, qualifications of the individual(s) who will lead the program/activity/event, track record of the sponsoring group, accessibility, and clarity of the proposal. School-related proposals must be for enrichment activities, not programs, supplies, or salaries that should be part of the school budget.

Proposals should include other sources of support to show that the project is not solely dependent on SCC funding. If relevant, applicants may also apply for funding from other local cultural councils.

Are repeat proposals considered?

The SCC carefully scrutinizes repeat requests and encourages applicants to reinvigorate project ideas from previous programs.

What are some tips for writing Mass Cultural Council proposals?

Programs must be described in detail with the names, artist fees, and qualifications of the individual(s) leading the activity. Please indicate collaboration within the Sudbury community. The considerations below include questions asked in the online application.

Project Description

- What is the project? Clearly state how the funds received from this grant will be spent.
- Provide dates, times, and locations for the event.

- Submit a letter from your venue confirming your project date and time with your grant materials.
- How many people are involved and how many do you anticipate will be served?
- What makes this project unique?
- Can you demonstrate community support for the project?
- If targeted participants include an underserved population, then how will these participants be selected?
- How will you reach your intended audience? What are your plans for promotion and outreach?

Planning

- Who is involved in the planning process for this project (list specific names, organizations and what they contribute to the project).
- Who is responsible for overseeing the project?
- Does the community it will serve support this project?

Funding

- Amount requested should meet the minimum award of \$250 (per MCC guidelines).
- Detailed Budget: Include all out-of-pocket costs and in-kind donations (i.e. free use of space or donated services) in your budget statement. Include all expenses including space rental, project supplies and fees.
- Do you have matching funds for the project? Grant committees look kindly upon those that are not solely dependent on their funds.
- If the project is only partially funded, can it be modified and completed successfully?

Evaluation

- How will you know if the project has successfully accomplished its goal? State how you plan to evaluate the project (i.e., audience survey, attendance, evaluations).

It is always encouraged to get feedback from another person. Ask someone to read a draft of your grant application before submitting.

What is the process for approval?

The SCC meets one to several times, depending on the number of applications after the October deadline, to discuss each application individually. Applicants are informed in writing by mid-January as to the disposition of their application. Those who have been denied funding have a two-week period in which to appeal the decision.

Is there a minimum or maximum grant award?

Per MCC guidelines, the LCC program awards a minimum grant of \$250. The Sudbury Cultural Council does not specify a maximum award, though grants typically average between \$400-\$500. For reference, applicants can review the grants awarded in the most recent grant cycle on the [Sudbury MCC site](#).

Who qualifies to apply for funding?

Massachusetts-based individuals, artists, nonprofit community groups and organizations, cultural institutions, libraries, and schools with a cultural project or field trip that has a public benefit component may apply. Programs initiated by Sudbury-based groups and residents for the benefit of the Sudbury area are prioritized.

We encourage you to review the FAQ on the Mass Cultural Council [website](#) for more details on who can apply for a grant.

How do approved grantees receive their grant monies?

The SCC provides direct grant funding to grantees in lieu of reimbursement-based granting. "Direct granting" means the SCC supplies funds for a project with no requirement for repayment, so long as the funds are used for

the purposes intended for the time period required. With this kind of grant, grantees are not required to submit receipts for subsequent reimbursement. We find this enhances and encourages more programming opportunities by imposing less financial hardship on potential grantees, and simplifies the payment process for our municipality and council.

The SCC's grant money generally arrives in the early Spring of the grant year. These funds are received, held by, and disbursed from the Town of Sudbury. Once these funds are available, the SCC submits both the SCC Direct Grant Agreements and the W9 forms to the Town of Sudbury. Shortly thereafter, grant checks are mailed to the address on the submitted W9. (The SCC does NOT keep copies of any W-9 forms.)

Simply:

- Grantee receives their grant packet which includes:
 - An Approval Letter
 - Grant Agreement
 - W-9 Taxpayer ID form
 - Final Report form
- Grantee completes and signs the Grant Agreement & W-9, and returns both to the SCC within two weeks.
- SCC forwards all Grant Agreements & W-9s to the Town of Sudbury for payment.
- The Town of Sudbury processes paperwork usually within two weeks of receiving the funds from the MCC, and paperwork from our SCC grantees.
- The Town of Sudbury sends payments directly to the grantees. Payment is sent to the address on the W-9.

Applicants can learn more about the direct grant process, including documentation that will be sent after receiving an award, on the MCC grant cycle page about [reimbursement and direct grants](#).

ATTRIBUTION: Importantly, grantees must acknowledge the source of funding in all printed and online materials by using the MCC and SCC logos (provided to grantees by the SCC after approval) and using the following credit line: "This program is supported in part by a grant from the Sudbury Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency."

What is the contact for further questions?

We encourage applicants to carefully read the extensive resources on the MCC [Local Cultural Council's website](#) and the Priorities and Guidelines on the Sudbury Cultural Council [page](#) on that site. Applicants can contact the SCC with proposal-specific questions at culturalcouncil@sudbury.ma.us.