



# Alan Cooper Leadership in the Arts Award

## Program Guidelines 2022

**Nomination due date: May 26, 2022**

Alan W. Cooper served as Executive Director of Mid Atlantic Arts for twenty-three years, from 1994 to 2017. Under Cooper's Leadership, Mid Atlantic Arts established a reputation for excellence, integrity, and innovative programs and services that extend beyond the mid-Atlantic region to national and international communities. Cooper nurtured a true partnership among the region's State Arts Agencies and the nation's Regional Arts Organizations. His belief in the importance of public-private partnerships and international cultural exchange was reflected in the programs he developed and fostered, and his commitment to diverse creative expression and belief in the arts as an agent of change made him a champion of the arts throughout his career.

Established in 2017, the Alan Cooper Leadership in the Arts Award celebrates leaders who continue Cooper's legacy of creating responsive and innovative opportunities for artists, arts organizations, and audiences.

## REVIEW CRITERIA

The Alan Cooper Leadership in the Arts Award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated visionary leadership in the arts, leaving a meaningful impact on those they have served. Through their work in the arts, recipients of the Leadership Award will have:

- Demonstrated a history of deep engagement with their community.
- Created equitable outcomes for communities and populations that face historic and systemic barriers to full participation in society and the arts – examples may include: expanding access for audiences and artists, opening doors for underrepresented voices, fairly distributing resources, and many others.
- Though not required for eligibility, Mid Atlantic Arts is particularly interested in recognizing leaders who have made significant advances in the areas of public-private partnerships and international cultural exchange.

*Mid Atlantic Arts acknowledges that long-standing systems and practices within the arts sector have led to significant barriers to equitable access and investment for individuals and across communities. Nominations are strongly encouraged for leaders whose work has positively impacted communities and populations identifying as Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color, LGBTQIA2S+, Persons with Disabilities, Persons whose primary language is not English, and/or are from rural and remote communities.*

## ELIGIBILITY

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE AWARD

Leadership takes many forms and is practiced at all career levels: from emerging leaders to late-career leaders. It is the ability to create, give voice to, and execute a vision and purpose while empowering others and fostering the exchange of ideas. Leadership is not measured in years, budget, or scale; but is expressed by the depth and the breadth of an individual's impact on their community, be it local, regional, or beyond.

- Eligible nominees' work will have served communities in one or more of Mid Atlantic Arts' nine partner jurisdictions of Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Virginia, and West Virginia; though impact may extend from the mid-Atlantic region to national or international communities.
- We strongly encourage the nomination of arts leaders who identify as Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color, LGBTQIA2S+, Persons with Disabilities, Persons whose primary language is not English, and/or are from rural and remote communities.
- Nominations are encouraged for active arts leaders from all career stages (early-, mid-, and late-career) and from all areas or disciplines in the arts industry.
- Eligible nominees must be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States.
- Mid Atlantic Arts recognizes the value of partnership and collaboration in leadership and welcomes the nomination of shared leadership/co-leaders. Please note that nominations of co-leaders must be completed as a single nomination submission.

### WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE AWARD

- Current Mid Atlantic Arts board members and staff members, and their families, are not eligible for the award and are not permitted to submit nomination materials.
- Elected officials and political appointees are not eligible for the award.
- Previous Leadership Award recipients are not eligible for nomination.
- Self-nominations are not eligible.
- Nominations received after the nomination deadline (May 26, 2022) will be deemed ineligible.

## SELECTION and NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Mid Atlantic Arts administers the nomination, review, and selection process for the award. Nominations will be reviewed by Mid Atlantic Arts and a diverse panel of experienced arts professionals. As discussed in the *Review Criteria* above, nomination review will be based on nominees' demonstrated impact through their:

- Visionary leadership
- Deep community engagement
- Equitable outcomes
- (optional) Public-private partnerships and international cultural exchange

Mid Atlantic Arts staff will notify the award recipient in summer 2022. Provided the recipient's acceptance, staff will confirm their status as the 2022 awardee. The recipient of the 2022 Alan Cooper Leadership in the Arts Award will be recognized in fall 2022 at an event celebrating their work and achievements. Additionally, the award recipient will receive a \$5,000 cash award.

Mid Atlantic Arts reserves the right to withhold presentation of the award.

# SUBMITTING A NOMINATION

## NOMINATION PROCEDURES

Nominations must be submitted no later than May 26, 2022. Nomination materials must include:

- Nominee's bio
- Nomination statement
- Optional letter of support

Nominators may submit nomination materials by completing an online nomination form here through Mid Atlantic Arts' SmartSimple application portal: <https://midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com>

*(see more information at the end of this document for guidance on using this new system)*

## NOMINATION MATERIALS

Nominations will be evaluated based on consideration of the submitted nomination materials. Materials may be submitted as written, audio, or video formats. Please note that nominations of co-leaders must be completed as a single nomination submission and that materials should discuss the nominees' work and histories that are relevant to the collaborative leadership for which they are nominated.

### 1) Bio (written, up to 500 words)

Submit a copy of the nominee's current bio. A nominee's resume will also be accepted if a bio is not available. For nominations of co-leaders, submit a bio for each leader.

### 2) Nomination Statement (written, up to 2000 words; audio/video, up to ten minutes)

Through your responses to the prompts below, please share what sets the nominee and their work apart.

- What are the nominee's most notable accomplishments as a visionary leader? Describe the nominee's vision to realize a better future for the arts and for their community, and how they have achieved that vision. *If applicable*, discuss the innovations, new models of practice, and/or risks involved.
- How has the nominee demonstrated commitment to their community through deep engagement?
- Discuss how the nominee has created opportunities and equitable outcomes in service to communities and populations that face historic and systemic barriers to full participation in society and the arts.
- Is there anything else you would like to share that demonstrates how the nominee has made a difference?
- *If applicable*, describe the nominee's work in the areas of public-private partnerships in the arts and international cultural exchange.

For nominations of co-leaders: Respond to each of the above prompts as they relate to the collaborative leadership of the nominees – in other words, the responses should only discuss the nominees' work and histories that are relevant to the collaborative leadership for which they are nominated.

### 3) Optional Letter of Support (written, up to one page; audio/video, up to five minutes)

Nominators may provide one letter of support offering testimony to the nominee's impact. It is strongly encouraged that a letter of support come from the perspective of someone who has been impacted by the nominee's work, such as from a community member, and that they share how the nominee's work made a difference for them or their community (for example, see *Nomination Statement* above).

## Optional Demographic Data Survey

As part of our broader goals to promote equity in the field, Mid Atlantic Arts seeks program participants that reflect the diversity of the mid-Atlantic region. To measure our effectiveness to reach arts leaders from across the region and across all backgrounds, all nominators and nominees are invited to participate in a brief anonymous survey. This information will help us address inequities in the award process, understand who we are reaching, and understand how we can serve all communities in the region more effectively. Please know that participation in this anonymous survey is optional and survey responses will not be associated with nominations.

In this survey, nominators and nominees will be invited to self-identify age, professional level, gender, LGBTQIA2S+ identity, racial and ethnic heritage, disability status, and to share how you learned about the award opportunity. Survey responses are anonymous, will not be shared with the panel, and will only be used by Mid Atlantic Arts staff for program evaluation. Please consider completing this survey by clicking the link below or copy-and-pasting the URL into your web browser. The survey will also be accessible through the SmartSimple nomination form. Please also consider sharing this survey with your nominee – you may do so by sending them the same survey link.

Demographic Data Survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/nrNgZVKz4w>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q:** Is an individual eligible even if they are not a CEO or an executive director?

**A:** Yes. Leaders exist throughout the industry, not just at the executive level. Furthermore, leaders work in a wide variety of areas including programming, performing, community organizing, presenting, fundraising, education, operations, communications, and marketing, among others. Nominations will be evaluated based on the impact of nominees' accomplishments, not on tenure or job title.

**Q:** Are arts leaders from for-profit organizations eligible for the award?

**A:** Yes, so long as they meet all other eligibility requirements.

**Q:** Is a letter of support from a colleague within the nominee's organization eligible?

**A:** While a letter from an individual within the nominee's organization would not disqualify the nomination, it is recommended that a letter of support come from a colleague outside the nominee's organization affiliation (as a reminder, a letter of support is not required for a nomination to be eligible).

**Q:** Am I allowed to provide links to additional information in the bio, nomination statement, or letter of support?

**A:** No. Panelists will only review the bio, nomination statement, and (optional) letter of support as written; links provided within these materials will not be reviewed.

## New! SMARTSIMPLE ONLINE PORTAL

Follow the steps below to complete your nomination:

1. Go to <https://midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com>
2. Login with an existing account, or click the “Register” button to create a new account from the list of applicant types. We strongly recommend registering with a personal email address that is not associated with another organization which may apply for funding in the future. If you prefer to register using a work email address associated with your organization, it is recommended that you register with the appropriate government or organization applicant type.
3. Once logged in, click **Nominations** under the **Available Applications** section.
4. Click **Apply Now** under the Alan Cooper Leadership in the Arts Award Opportunity Detail section.
5. *Before you begin entering information, click the **Save Draft** button at the bottom of the page to save a copy of the application draft to your account.*
6. Complete the information in each tab, and upload materials as necessary.
7. Once you have completed the nomination, click the **Submit** button at the bottom of the page.
8. You will receive a submission confirmation email along with a copy of your nomination for your records.

Submission of a nomination indicates that you have completed all required fields in the online form and that all information is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge, but does not guarantee eligibility or that all guideline requirements have been met.

## QUESTIONS?

Contact Bo Plantz directly:

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- phone: 410-539-6656 x 102

*This publication is available in PDF format and as a Word (.docx) file.*