



Central Appalachia Living Traditions Experiences Grants

Program Guidelines 2026-2027

Application Opens	Application Deadline	Decision Notification By	Funded Projects Take Place
Wednesday, December 3, 2025	Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 11:59pm ET	Thursday, June 18, 2026	July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

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ACCESSIBILITY

These guidelines are available in .PDF format and as an accessible Word file at midatlanticarts.org.

To request accommodations during your application process, reach out to Program Associate, Folk & Traditional Arts, Joel Chapman at jchapman@midatlanticarts.org or 667-401-2488 x 117. Please request accommodation **at least 10 business days** before the application due date so we can best serve your needs.

CONTACT US

Our Folk & Traditional Arts staff are available to discuss your project and help you build a strong application. We recommend you get in touch **more than 48 hours** before the due date, so we have time to answer your questions. We'd love to discuss your application with you!

- Ellie Dassler, Program Director, Folk & Traditional Arts: edassler@midatlanticarts.org or 667-401-2587 x 115
- Joel Chapman, Program Associate, Folk & Traditional Arts: jchapman@midatlanticarts.org or 667-401-2488 x 117

See [Application Support Resources](#) for webinars and office hours.

ABOUT FOLK & TRADITIONAL ARTS

Often defined as the “art of everyday life,” folk and traditional arts reflect the aesthetics, practices, values, and beliefs of community groups, such as families, geographic communities, occupational groups, ethnic heritage groups, faith communities, and more.

Traditional arts are often learned orally or by observation and imitation, rather than in institutional or academic settings. All traditions are connected to the history of the communities that practice them, but they are not just art forms of the past. Instead, they are “living traditions” that adapt to remain relevant in a changing world. Individuals and communities use traditional arts to build collective power, engage in healing, and strengthen their identity.

Central Appalachia is home to diverse folk and traditional cultures. Examples include blues, folk, and old-time music; basketmaking; instrument building; woodworking; quilting; weaving and spinning; cultural traditions of new immigrant communities; diverse gardening and foodways traditions; and much more.

ABOUT CENTRAL APPALACHIA LIVING TRADITIONS

Central Appalachia Living Traditions (CALT) is a multi-part program that invests in communities, seeds new folk and traditional arts experiences, and honors under-recognized practitioners of Central Appalachian traditions. CALT serves the counties of Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). For a full list of eligible counties, see [Eligibility](#).

ABOUT CALT EXPERIENCES GRANTS

CALT Experiences grants fund projects and events in Appalachian counties of Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia that bring community members together around folk and traditional arts practice and traditional knowledge. Funded projects will meet at least one of the following CALT Experiences goals.

CALT EXPERIENCES GOALS:

- Encourage broad public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of living traditions.
- Grow and share artistic skills and cultural knowledge within communities.
- Diversify and expand the types of folk arts activities available throughout the region.

Non-profit organizations and folk and traditional artists/practitioners may apply for \$1,000 - \$10,000. No match is required. The majority of project activities must take place in ARC-designated counties.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Hands-on learning experiences
- Workshops where traditional art forms are taught or demonstrated to the public or a group of peer practitioners
- Public art projects
- Exhibitions of folk and traditional art
- Performance projects or series
- Film/video creation and/or screening
- Podcasts and radio broadcasts
- Fieldwork and documentation projects with a significant public-facing component, such as community meetings, presentations, or accessible digital archives

Fundraisers or benefits are not eligible projects for this program.

We will prioritize funding projects that engage multi-generational participants and/or serve under-resourced or marginalized communities, including the most geographically removed counties in the region.

ELIGIBILITY

To receive a CALT Experiences grant, you must be:

- An individual traditional artist/practitioner **OR**
- A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, unit of state or local government, or federally recognized Tribal government
 - Units of government must provide a document on official letterhead to confirm your status as a government entity.
 - Fiscal sponsorship is not allowed for this program.
- Located in a county designated by the [Appalachian Regional Commission](#) in Ohio, Virginia, or West Virginia. Eligible counties include:
 - **Ohio:** Adams, Ashtabula, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Carroll, Clermont, Columbiana, Coshocton, Gallia, Guernsey, Harrison, Highland, Hocking, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Mahoning, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Trumbull, Tuscarawas, Vinton, and Washington
 - **Virginia:** Alleghany, Bath, Bland, Botetourt, Buchanan, Carroll, Craig, Dickenson, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Henry, Highland, Lee, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, Rockbridge, Russell, Scott, Smyth,

- Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe, as well as the independent cities of Bristol, Buena Vista, Covington, Galax, Lexington, Martinsville, Norton, and Radford
 - **West Virginia:** Barbour, Berkeley, Boone, Braxton, Brooke, Cabell, Calhoun, Clay, Doddridge, Fayette, Gilmer, Grant, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hancock, Hardy, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Kanawha, Lewis, Lincoln, Logan, Marion, Marshall, Mason, McDowell, Mercer, Mineral, Mingo, Monongalia, Monroe, Morgan, Nicholas, Ohio, Pendleton, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Preston, Putnam, Raleigh, Randolph, Ritchie, Roane, Summers, Taylor, Tucker, Tyler, Upshur, Wayne, Webster, Wetzell, Wirt, Wood, and Wyoming
- In good standing with Mid Atlantic Arts, with no overdue or outstanding required reports and/or grant documents.

REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS

To apply, visit our online application portal at midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com. The application includes applicant information, narrative questions, work samples, and budget. Applications are due by **11:59pm ET on Wednesday, March 18, 2026**.

APPLICATION NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

You will answer the following questions in your application. Word limits are just suggestions—you do not need to use all available space in your responses.

1. **Project Summary** (50 word limit): In one or two sentences, clearly describe the project you would like us to support, who the project will serve, and why the project is important.
If your project is chosen for funding, this is what Mid Atlantic Arts will use in web, social media, and other content describing your project.
2. **Project Description** (350 word limit): Describe the project you would like us to support. Be as specific as possible about the activities that will take place during the project period. Tell us about the venue(s) and target audiences.
3. **Traditional Art Form** (350 word limit): Describe the tradition/art form(s) that your project will engage. What is the role/history of the art form in your community? Why is support for this tradition important?
4. **Program Goals** (250 word limit): Choose at least one of these [CALT Experiences goals](#) and describe how your project will achieve it:
 - Encourage broad public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of living traditions.
 - Grow and share artistic skills and cultural knowledge within communities.
 - Diversify and expand the types of folk arts activities available throughout the region.
5. **Project Personnel** (350 word limit): Tell us about you, your organization, featured artists/practitioners, and any major partners that will be involved in the project. Briefly describe what makes them a good fit for this project.
6. **Project Timeline** (250 word limit): Provide a proposed timeline for all project activities. Be as specific as possible.
7. **Community Collaboration** (250 word limit): How will you center collaboration with the community and featured artists/practitioners throughout this project, including in project design, execution, and evaluation?

8. **Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion** (350 word limit): Who do you consider the target participants for this project, including artists/communities whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, race and ethnicity, economics, disability, or other factors? How will you make sure your project is accessible to them, in terms of physical, financial, and/or language access (when applicable)?
9. **Evaluation** (250 word limit): How will you define success for this project? How will you evaluate whether the project is successful?

WORK SAMPLES

Work samples are a critical part of your application. Panelists will consider your work samples carefully, to help them understand the traditions and activities your project will engage.

Be selective. Work samples should be recent, concise, and as relevant to the project as possible. Panelists will spend no more than 15 minutes per application reviewing work samples.

For example, if you are proposing:

- **A performance:** Submit samples of the engaged artists' work.
- **An exhibit:** Submit an exhibit plan and examples of the works and information in the exhibit.
- **An educational or training program:** Submit a sample of work by the artists/teachers and/or a curriculum plan.
- **A media project (film, radio, or podcast):** Submit a sample of previous work by key partners and a sample of the subject you will portray
- **A fieldwork project:** Submit a fieldwork plan, a sample of previous work by the fieldworkers, letter(s) of support from the community, and/or an example of similar past work.
- Other possible work samples may show your/your organization's programmatic experience and ability to carry out the project.

Please reach out if you have questions about how to pick the right work samples for your application.

WORK SAMPLE SPECIFICATIONS:

- **For audio and video samples:** 3 per application
 - Each sample should be no longer than 3 minutes. If your clip is longer, indicate in the description which 3-minute portion panelists should view. If you do not specify, reviewers will view only the first 3 minutes.
 - Make samples available online on YouTube, Vimeo, Soundcloud, Spotify, Instagram, etc. Provide the URL for panelists to access the sample and the password, if needed.
- **For image work samples:** 5 per application
 - We recommend photos in .JPEG/JPG or .PNG format.
- **For document work samples:** 3 per application.
 - We recommend documents in .PDF format.

PROJECT BUDGET

You may request \$1,000 – \$10,000 for your CALT Experiences grant.

At least 85% (\$8,500) of CALT Experiences funds must be used for specific, direct project costs. Up to 15% (\$1,500) may be used for indirect costs in support of your or your organization's day-to-day needs. Use of funding for indirect costs is encouraged, but not required.

DIRECT EXPENSES MAY INCLUDE:

- Program staff salaries
- Technical personnel fees
- Artist/practitioner fees, travel, and lodging
- Audience development, marketing, and promotion expenses
- Expenses related to accessibility, such as American Sign Language interpretation, physical access accommodations, or translation
- Technical and other equipment rental
- Expenses related to public health measures for in-person engagements

INDIRECT EXPENSES MAY INCLUDE:

- Ongoing overhead such as rent and utilities
- Administrative expenses such as management or accounting staff salaries

There is **no match requirement** for this grant program.

Your budget is **not** shared with the panelists and does **not** contribute to your application score. Instead, staff will review your budget to make sure it follows the program requirements and request revisions as needed.

REVIEW CRITERIA

A diverse panel of folk and traditional arts specialists, including folklorists, cultural workers, artists, and culture bearers, will review applications based on the below criteria and provide program feedback.

Make sure your application shows evidence of each criterion in your narrative and/or work samples. Work samples should complement your written responses and show reviewers extra evidence of the criteria.

1. **Traditional Art Form (20 points):** The project's featured tradition/art form(s) is important and relevant to the community it engages.
2. **Project Personnel (10 points):** The staff and featured artists are experienced and appropriate for the project, as defined by their community, audience(s), outside recognition, or some combination of the three.
3. **Program Goals (20 points):** The project clearly addresses at least one of the three [CALT Experiences goals](#).
4. **Community Collaboration (20 points):** The project puts collaboration with the community and featured artists at the center, including in project design, execution, and evaluation.
5. **Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion (20 points):** The project thoughtfully serves and reaches artists/communities, including those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, race and ethnicity, economics, disability, or other factors. The project defines a clear plan for accessibility accommodations.

6. **Evaluation (10 points):** There is a clear plan for how to define “success” for your project, and how you will measure it.

GRANT AWARD LIMITATIONS

At least 85% (\$8,500) of CALT Experiences funds must be used for specific, direct project costs. Up to 15% (\$1,500) may be used for indirect costs. Fundraisers or benefits are not eligible projects for this program. Fiscal sponsorship is not allowed for this program.

You may not apply for a Central Appalachia Living Traditions Experiences grant in the same year as either of the following Mid Atlantic Arts grant programs:

- [Folk & Traditional Arts Community Projects](#)
- [Mid Atlantic Presenters Initiatives](#)

Please contact us with any questions about which program is right for you.

GRANT PAYMENTS

If awarded, your grant payment will be sent 30 – 45 days prior to your project start date, as long as Mid Atlantic Arts has received and approved all necessary award documents. For projects starting in July and August 2026, the payment will be sent 14 – 21 days after we have received and approved all necessary materials.

FINAL REPORTS

If awarded, a final report will be due 30 days after your project end date, no later than July 30, 2027. The final report will be available in our [online portal](#) when your grant is awarded and is available to preview below. The report includes questions about project information, project activity locations, project narrative, expenses and income, and documentation of funder crediting.

FINAL REPORT QUESTIONS

PROJECT INFORMATION

- Activity Start Date
- Activity End Date
- Number of artists engaged by the project
- Total number of days project activities took place in your community
- Number of activities that took place in your community
- Total number of adults attending the activities
- Total number of youth (0-18 years of age) attending the activities

PROJECT ACTIVITY LOCATION

Provide venue names and addresses for each location that project activities took place.

NARRATIVE

1. Describe the project supported by your grant, including specific activities in which you were engaged. How did your project match and/or differ from what you described in your application?
2. How did your project align with the CALT Experiences [program goals](#)?
3. How did your project serve artists/communities whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, race and ethnicity, economics, disability, or other factors?

4. Did you identify any additional goals that you consider important to the success of your project? If so, how did the project achieve those goals?
5. Please share a story that illustrates the impact of your project for your organization, the artists/practitioners involved, the participants, audience, and/or the larger community. Highlight any outcomes that facilitated a more sustainable local ecosystem for folk arts and culture.
6. If you used any CALT Experiences grant funds for indirect expenses, please tell us about how this flexibility impacted you and what general types of expenses funds supported.
7. We welcome your feedback. Is there anything you would like to share about how we can improve this grant program?

EXPENSE AND INCOME

List the actual direct project expenses and, if applicable, indirect expenses supported by your CALT Experiences grant.

DOCUMENTATION AND CREDITING

Submit at least two high quality photographs of project activities, including an explanation of each image and the photographer's name.

- You may choose to give Mid Atlantic Arts permission to use these images in online and print publications and/or fundraising materials (optional).
- You may also choose to share additional multimedia documentation of your project in the form of a web address and links to, for example, a YouTube video of a grant-funded performance, a publicly-accessible digital archive of grant-funded fieldwork materials, or the final version of a grant-funded film/broadcast.

You must also attach a program, website, screenshot, flyer, poster, or press release to demonstrate that your project credited Mid Atlantic Arts for support, as required by the grant.

READ MORE ABOUT CENTRAL APPALACHIA LIVING TRADITIONS EXPERIENCES GRANTS [HERE](#).

Application Support Resources

We encourage you to reach out to our Folk & Traditional Arts staff for a personalized conversation about your application. There are also several public opportunities to meet us and ask questions.

WEBINARS

ACCESSIBILITY: We will provide CART translation/live captioning in English for all webinars and post a recording with English and Spanish captions on the [Mid Atlantic Arts website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

To request other accommodations, or if you have any questions about webinars, please contact Program Associate, Folk & Traditional Arts, Joel Chapman at jchapman@midatlanticarts.org or 667-401-2488 x 117. Please request accommodation **at least 5 business days** before the webinar.

Tuesday, January 8, 2026 @ 2:00 PM ET: CALT Experiences Grants: The Basics

- **Register:** https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VVWJW34OQWyVBm-J--l2og

OFFICE HOURS

Our Folk & Traditional Arts staff are available to answer quick questions without an appointment at our weekly office hours:

- **Wednesdays @ 1:00pm ET:** Jan. 14, Jan. 21, Feb. 4, Feb. 11, Feb 18, Feb. 25, Mar. 4, Mar. 11, Mar. 18
- **Join Office Hours via Zoom:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85894149405>

No registration is required. You will enter a Zoom waiting room and staff will see you in order of joining.

If the above times don't work for you, reach out for a conversation on your schedule:

- Ellie Dassler, Program Director, Folk & Traditional Arts: edassler@midatlanticarts.org or 667-401-2587 x 115
- Joel Chapman, Program Associate, Folk & Traditional Arts: jchapman@midatlanticarts.org or 667-401-2488 x 117