



## Virtual Engagement Guide

This guide outlines Virtual Engagement policies for grantees of ArtsCONNECT, Mid Atlantic Tours, Jazz Touring Network, Performing Arts Global Exchange (PAGE), and other grantees whose funded projects are taking place in the United States and based in live/ time-based art or performance.

### Introduction

Acknowledging the performing arts' ongoing reality of utilizing virtual platforms for performance and other engagement, Mid Atlantic Arts will continue to take a flexible approach to our program policies for grantees through June 30, 2024 (timeline may be extended). While we believe that live, in-person performances are hard to replace, we also acknowledge that adaptive virtual approaches will ensure continued access to arts experiences. In some cases, engaging virtually may be preferential over in-person—for example, to increase access for audiences and/or artists across geographies and for people with disabilities.

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

### Mid Atlantic Arts Virtual Engagement Requirements

Virtual engagements for Mid Atlantic Arts funded projects must adhere to the following requirements:

- The virtual engagement must have been proposed as virtual in the application OR remain in substantial alignment with the intent of the original project.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires that any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Additional resources for making your virtual event accessible are available from the National Endowment for the Arts ([Resources to Help Ensure Accessibility of Your Virtual Events for People with Disabilities](#)) and the non-profit service organization, RespectAbility ([Ensuring Virtual Events Are Accessible for All](#)).
- The virtual engagement must meet all other requirements of the grant (proposed content, adjacent community engagement activities, budget, etc.)

If all three of the above requirements are met, no action or approval is required for your organization to move forward with a virtual engagement, whether the virtual engagement was conceptualized at the time of application or if the virtual engagement is an adaptation of what was originally conceived of as an in-person event.

If the virtual engagement is a pivot from an in-person event and the project or project budget departs significantly from the original proposal, grantees should contact the Program Director for your grant

program for further guidance. While presented performances may be streamed live or pre-recorded for online presentation it is strongly encouraged that all virtual engagements include an element of live interaction between the artist(s) and audience or community. Live interactions may include, but are not limited to, a Q&A session, talkback, lecture, or demonstration.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Is official approval from Mid Atlantic Arts required to transition our engagement to a virtual format?

Presenters are required to notify Mid Atlantic Arts if:

- Eligible expenses change significantly from those outlined in their original budget due to a transition to a virtual engagement, OR
- The parameters of the project (proposed content, adjacent community engagement activities, etc.) differ significantly from the original grant proposal

### Can our organization use grant funds to purchase equipment to facilitate digital presentation of events?

If your grant award includes support for additional eligible expenses, that support can be used to fund direct project expenses, including equipment necessary to advance the specific needs of the funded project. All Mid Atlantic Arts funding must be matched on a 1:1 basis with non-Federal funds. Grant funds may not be used to purchase equipment that is not directly related to the project. Reach out to the Program Director managing your program if you have any questions about eligible expenses.

### Are we required to use a specific online platform for virtual engagements?

No, it is up to the presenting organization to select an appropriate platform for online presentation.

### Can our organization use Mid Atlantic Arts grant funds to pay for licensing fees?

Yes, presenters may use grant funds for artist fees as well as any related licensing fees. If the project or project budget departs significantly from the original proposal, please contact the program officer for your grant program for further guidance.

## Further Questions?

For ArtsCONNECT, Special Presenter Initiatives, and Mid Atlantic Tours, contact Sarah Lewitus, Program Director, Performing Arts & Accessibility Coordinator, at [slewitus@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:slewitus@midatlanticarts.org).

For PAGE, contact Robyn Busch, Senior Program Director, International at [robyn@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:robyn@midatlanticarts.org)

For Folk and Traditional Arts programs, contact Program Director, Folk and Traditional Arts Emily Hilliard at [emily@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:emily@midatlanticarts.org)

For New Jersey State Council on the Arts Individual Artist Fellowships, contact Jackie Domenus, Program Associate, NJ Fellowships at [jdomenus@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:jdomenus@midatlanticarts.org)

For Jazz Touring Network, contact Theresa Colvin at [theresa@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:theresa@midatlanticarts.org).