

Virtual Engagement Guide

This document is intended as a guide for grantees of ArtsCONNECT, Mid Atlantic Tours, Jazz Touring Network, Folk and Traditional Arts Touring Network, Performing Arts Global Exchange (PAGE), and Southern Exposure: Performing Arts of Latin America (SEPALA).

INTRODUCTION

As arts presenting organizations evolve in response to a changing landscape, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation will continue to take a flexible approach to our program policies during this time. While we believe that live, in-person performances are hard to replace, we are also open to adaptive approaches that will ensure continued access to these arts experiences. Therefore, we are glad to announce the following policy for virtual engagements as an option for our grantees to fulfill their public performance and community engagement activity requirements.

MAAF 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.

MAAF VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Virtual engagements for MAAF funded projects must adhere to the following requirements:

- The virtual engagement must 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](#)).
- As long as the online presentation of the project meets **all other requirements of the grant** (proposed content, adjacent community engagement activities, budget, etc.), no action or approval is required for your organization to move forward. If the project or project budget departs significantly from the original proposal due to the switch to a virtual engagement, grantees should contact the program officer 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.

RESOURCES FOR VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENTS

MAAF is not an expert on how to present virtual engagements. We hope this list of external resources can help guide your decisions. We encourage you to do additional research and connect with your presenter peers for virtual engagement ideas.

- Looking Glass Creative: [Online Event Resources](#) (Link opens in a new window)
- RespectAbility: [Ensuring Virtual Events Are Accessible for All](#) (Link opens in a new window)
- National Endowment for the Arts Office of Accessibility: [Resources to Help Ensure Accessibility of Your Virtual Events for People with Disabilities](#) (Link opens in a new window)
- Maryland State Arts Council: [The Future of Maryland's Arts Sector: Best Practices for Digital Engagement](#) (Link opens in a new window)
- The Alliance of Performing Arts Conferences: [The Legal Landscape of Live Streaming](#) (Link opens in a new window)
- The Space: [Live Streaming For The Arts: Lo-Fi And Low Cost Options](#) (Link opens in a new window)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is official approval from MAAF required to transition our engagement to a virtual format?

Presenters are required to notify MAAF 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?

No, not at this time.

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 MAAF 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 and Mid Atlantic Tours, contact Haowen Wang, Program Officer Performing Arts haowen@midatlanticarts.org

For Jazz Touring Network and Folk and Traditional Arts Touring Network, contact Jess Porter, Program Officer Performing Arts at jess@midatlanticarts.org

For PAGE and SEPALA, contact Robyn Busch, Program Officer International at robyn@midatlanticarts.org