

# Program Guidelines 2020 – 2021

## APPLICATION DEADLINES

- **October 1, 2020** by 11:59 PM Eastern for projects taking place between January 5, 2021 and June 30, 2022. Certification Sheets and letters of invitation due by October 8, 2020.
- **March 31, 2021** by 11:59 PM Eastern for projects taking place between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. Certification Sheets and letters of invitation due by April 7, 2021.

## ACCESSIBILITY

This publication is available in .PDF format and as an accessible Word file at [www.midatlanticarts.org](http://www.midatlanticarts.org).

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Support for the presentation and touring of performing artists is central to the work of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation (MAAF). The USArtists International program (USAI) supports performances by U.S. artists at impactful international festivals and performing arts marketplaces outside the United States and its territories. The program supports the engagements of exemplary solo artists and ensembles across all performing arts disciplines including dance, music, theater, multidisciplinary work, and folk/traditional arts.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

USArtists International is designed to encourage the presence of U.S. performing artists on international stages and in the global arts community; to support engagements that develop and expand both the careers and artistic goals of U.S. performers by providing connections with presenters, curators, and fellow artists; and to promote justice in the arts community by elevating the diverse voices contributing to the vibrant array of creative expression in the United States.

## COVID-19

MAAF seeks to serve artists and arts organizations with flexibility as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact countries globally.

### Travel Track

MAAF will accept applications to the USArtists International program that seek travel funding to perform internationally and otherwise meet the eligibility requirements outlined in these guidelines; please note that two application deadlines will occur: October 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021.

Application budgets should include only eligible, travel-specific expenses.\* See Grant Amounts and Eligible Expenses below for further details. Panel scoring will continue to only include the reviewable criteria detailed below; application scoring will not incorporate the likelihood of a performance due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control. **Applicants should communicate with MAAF staff about any changes to an engagement after an application is submitted.** Due to the involvement of federal funds, any news about festival postponement, cancellation, or live performances becoming virtual should be discussed with staff.

### Virtual Track

Artists and ensembles whose otherwise eligible international festival engagements have already determined that an in-person festival is impossible and have decided to offer the festival virtually are also permitted to apply for funding. Application budgets should include only eligible, virtual-specific expenses.\* See Grant Amounts and Eligible Expenses below for further details. Grantees that are awarded grants for travel and are later unable to travel may shift to the virtual track with staff approval. Revisions to the submitted budget will be required in this case. Please contact staff if you have any questions about virtual track eligibility.

\*Please note that applicants applying to the travel or virtual USAI track of this program are permitted to apply for up to three engagements; a mix of travel and virtual engagements is permitted, and applicants can submit both eligible travel and virtual expenses in that case.

USArtists International and Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation prioritize artist health and safety. Grantees will not be penalized by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation if they cannot or choose not to perform at a festival for which they have received a grant. Should a grantee be unable to travel for any reason, options regarding grant funds are subject to federal guidance from the National Endowment for the Arts. Grantees that choose to travel do so at their own risk. **Whether the engagement for which you are seeking funding is planned for an international destination or virtually, please check and abide by [all recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and official health sources in the country of destination.**

## PROGRAM FUNDING

USAI continues the important tradition in the United States of the public and private sectors working collaboratively to support the arts. USAI is a program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Support for grantees in New York City is provided by the Howard Gilman Foundation. Support for grantees traveling to the Baltic States, Central Asia, Central, East and Southeast Europe, Mongolia, and Russia is provided by Trust for Mutual Understanding. Applications are submitted to Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation.

## PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Applications to USAI must meet eligibility criteria in **each of the following three areas** to be eligible for the program:

1. Applicant Eligibility
2. Festival/Performing Arts Market Eligibility
3. Engagement Eligibility

### 1. ARTIST ELIGIBILITY

#### Eligible applicants must:

- be a dance, music, or theater ensemble or individual artist, that work at a professional level; festivals and/or curators cannot apply on behalf of U.S. artists;
- be designated by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, **OR** apply using a U.S.-based fiscal sponsor that is designated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization;
- currently reside in the United States or its territories;
- be invited to perform at a impactful international festival or performing arts market that meets the eligibility guidelines below;
- not have received a USAI grant within the calendar year, regardless of when the festival(s) or market(s) take place\*;
- not be involved in the curation, administration, or management of the festival or performing arts market for which they seek funding;
- be in good standing with Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, with no overdue or outstanding required reports and/or grant documents;
- and meet residency requirements: USAI funding is only available to performances in which at least half of the **performers** are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. For all projects with international collaborators or accompaniment, at least half of the performers must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents and the lead creative artist must also be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.

\*Artist(s)/ensembles that received a USAI grant in 2020 are permitted to apply to USAI on October 1, 2020, as the award date will fall in early January 2021; artist(s)/ensembles that receive a grant from the October 1, 2020 round will not be eligible to apply on March 31, 2021.

Applicants will be assessed in part on the risk of noncompliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions as provided by the applicant's Certification and Statement of Assurances in the submitted application and the results of previous audits including adherence to Single Audit requirements as set forth by Federal statutes.

## 2. FESTIVAL/PERFORMING ARTS MARKET ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible festivals must:

- be sponsored or organized primarily by a non-U.S. based organization;
- be curated;
- not require a registration, application, performance, or any other type of fee or amount paid by performers exceeding USD \$250.00;
- be international in scope with performers representing at least two countries outside the host country, or have a U.S. theme with representation from at least three U.S. ensembles and/or solo performers;
- be open and marketed to the general public;
- and provide the applicant with a **signed** letter of invitation or **signed** contract to perform at the festival, stating the details of the festival's financial or in-kind contributions towards eligible project expenses as identified in the USAI guidelines under Grant Amounts and Eligible Expenses.

### Eligible Performing Arts Markets must:

- meet all festival eligibility requirements listed above with the exception that they do not need to be open and marketed to the general public and that they may charge artists for showcase participation. Please also see the definition of Performing Arts Markets in the Definitions section below.

## 3. ENGAGEMENT ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible engagements must:

- pay artists or artists must receive in-kind contributions *towards eligible project expenses* as defined in the USAI guidelines under Grant Amounts and Eligible Expenses;
- and be at least 20 minutes in duration, which may be comprised of single or multiple works or excerpts from longer pieces.

**Multiple Engagements:** Artists/ensembles are limited to one application per program deadline, but may submit an application seeking support for performances at up to three festivals and/or markets as long as the artists/ensembles will not travel to and from the U.S. between engagements. Applicants must provide separate **signed** letters of invitation or **signed** contracts for each festival and/or market.

## DEFINITIONS

**Festivals:** For the purposes of USAI, a festival is defined as an event, primarily focused on the arts, consisting of live public performances by multiple international performing artists/ensembles in dance, music, or theater that takes place within a continuous period of three months or less. A festival must demonstrate a consistently high level of activity for its entire duration, including public performances and/or ancillary activities, such as workshops, lecture/demonstrations, public presentations, etc.

**Fringe Festivals:** USAI seeks to fund engagements that are artistically and financially beneficial for artists, and many fringe-festival engagements require substantial fees from or significant financial risk borne by performers. Because of this, most fringe engagements are ineligible for grant support at this time. However, engagements that are part of fringe festivals may be eligible for USAI support if the engagement meets all of the eligibility criteria for festivals. Fringe festival engagements are only eligible for consideration if all of the following are true:

- the fringe festival venue is curated;
- artists/ensembles are not self-produced or self-selected;

- artists/ensembles receive support from the festival towards eligible expenses or a percentage of box office revenue;
- and artist/ensembles are not required to pay **any type of fee** or amount exceeding USD \$250.00 in order to participate.

Artists who wish to apply for a fringe festival engagement and are unsure if it is eligible should contact Robyn Busch, Program Officer, International, at [robyn@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:robyn@midatlanticarts.org)

**Performing Arts Markets:** For the purposes of USAI, a performing arts market is defined as a curated or juried event with a maximum duration of two weeks featuring showcases of performing artists marketed primarily to performing arts industry professionals and in some cases, general audiences. The intent of a performing arts market is to provide artists and performing arts industry professionals with opportunities to develop and deepen professional relationships. Performing arts markets are frequently accompanied by panels, symposia, and workshops related to the marketing and promotion of the performing arts for industry professionals. Applicants with questions regarding performing arts markets should contact [robyn@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:robyn@midatlanticarts.org) to verify eligibility.

## RESTRICTIONS

**Under these guidelines, an application is not eligible if:**

- artists/ensembles have been awarded a USAI grant within the calendar year, regardless of when the festival(s) or market(s) occur\*;
- at least half of *performers* are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents;
- applicants are student or youth ensembles, amateur groups, or groups comprised of participants from instructional programs (such as bands, music, or dance artists/ensembles of academic institutions);
- applicant is a for-profit entity, either individuals or ensembles;
- applicant or member of applicant ensemble is involved in festival or market curation, administration, or management of the festival or market for which they seek funding;
- or applicant is seeking funding for festivals or markets that:
  - take place within the United States or its territories of American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands;
  - are not curated, or where artists/ensembles must produce their own performances, e.g. artists/ensembles that are self-selected, rent a venue, or receive no contribution towards the eligible expenses or a percentage of box office income from the festival or market;
  - require artists/ensembles to pay **any type of fee** in order to participate, including application or registration fees beyond the allowable limit of USD \$250.00;
  - present artists/ensembles in a showcase less than 20 minutes in duration or workshop format;
  - or consists primarily of activities other than public performances; that might include workshops, training or conference sessions, competitions, and primarily academic or curricular programs.

\*Artist(s)/ensembles that received a USAI grant in 2020 are permitted to apply to USAI on October 1, 2020, as the award date will fall in early January 2021; artist(s)/ensembles that receive a grant from the October 1, 2020 round will not be eligible to apply on March 31, 2021.

Please note that if a festival or market engages a U.S. organization to select ensembles and solo artists for participation, each selected artist/ensemble or its fiscal sponsor, if applicable, must submit an application—not the U.S. organization responsible for selecting the artist/ensemble. The panel will review each application separately.

## APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

Panels composed of specialists in the fields of dance, music, theater, and a lay panelist will review

applications and make recommendations for support. Panels will reflect wide geographic, ethnic, and racial representation as well as diverse aesthetic and cultural points of view. Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Artistic Merit:

- Potential impact of the engagement on the applicant's professional/artistic career
- Potential impact of festival or market, including suitability of engagement venue and scheduled performances
- Potential for historically underrepresented voices, traditions, aesthetics, and/or art forms to gain exposure

Artistic Excellence:

- Applicant's creativity, execution, and artistic rigor (as demonstrated in work samples)
- Applicant's impact on their field, locally and/or nationally
- Applicant's alignment of artistic goals and career trajectory

Additionally, USAI seeks to ensure that the breadth of America's creative expression is represented abroad. In alignment with Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation's strategic vision to promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and access, priority consideration will be given to exemplary applications that meet the review criteria and elevate historically underrepresented artists, traditions, and justice for all communities. USAI works to promote the range of United States performing arts abroad and strives to support America's aesthetic, geographic, gender, and racial diversity.

## GRANT AMOUNTS AND ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Grants will seldom cover the applicant's eligible expenses in their entirety and generally range from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Grant requests may not be less than \$1,000 and may not exceed \$15,000. Eligible expenses supported through both travel and virtual USAI engagements are performance fees, agents' fees related to participation in the international engagement, registration/application fees up to \$250, and fiscal sponsor administration fees, if applicable. Travel-specific or virtual-specific engagements can include the following additional expenses, respectively.

Applicants planning to travel internationally for their engagement can also include travel, housing, per diem, shipping, and visa fees as eligible expenses in the budget section.

Applicants planning to perform virtually can also include up to \$2500.00 in technology needs (hardware or software) as eligible expenses in the budget section.

**Please note that application budgets should include *either* eligible travel-specific expenses or eligible virtual-specific expenses, unless both travel and virtual engagements are included on the same application.**

Expenses not listed in the USAI budget are not eligible for support. Funding awarded by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation is restricted to the specific, direct costs of the project, as detailed above, and may not be used for indirect costs.

USAI will only support airfare equivalent to economy class rates, purchased no less than 14 days prior to departure date. Any foreign air travel funded through USAI must be done on an approved U.S. flag air carrier as part of the Fly America Act, or a foreign air carrier under an air transport agreement with the United States, when these services are available. Tickets purchased through U.S. carriers but ultimately operated by a foreign carrier through a codeshare agreement would comply with the Fly America Act. Fly America Act guidelines can be found at: [Fly America Act](#).

## ELIGIBLE GRANTEE/FISCAL SPONSORS

All grants made through USAI will only be awarded to U.S. dance, music, or theater ensembles and individual artists designated as nonprofit organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or to fiscal sponsors with 501(c)(3) nonprofit status acting on behalf of the artist(s)/ensembles.

Nonprofit organizations should engage in fiscal sponsorship only if their executive leadership and boards of directors are fully aware of the obligations and liabilities they legally assume as fiscal sponsors. Nonprofit organizations serving as fiscal sponsors must provide this service as a part of their regular operations, and this service must be available to any artist that meets the respective organizations' published criteria for fiscal sponsorship.

- Fiscal sponsors that are willing to assume full responsibility for the grant may sponsor one or more organization that does not yet have its own nonprofit Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 501(c)(3) status but that otherwise meets the criteria for eligibility.
- The fiscal sponsor will be legally, financially, administratively, and programmatically responsible for the award. As the official grantee, the fiscal sponsor must submit all documentation, final reports, and any amendment request that would affect the terms and conditions of the award.

If you need assistance finding a fiscal sponsor, please visit our website or contact [robyn@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:robyn@midatlanticarts.org)

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND REQUIRED MATERIALS

Applications must be submitted on or before the published deadlines at 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time. To access the USAI online application system, visit: [Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation](#).

The USAI online application consists of the following:

1. **Application Summary**
2. **Festival and/or Market Information**
3. **Application Narrative**
4. **Biographies of the Principal Artist(s)**
5. **Participant List**
6. **Budget Detail:** Please see the [Online Application Budget instructions](#) for information on how to prepare your application budget.

The following required materials are uploaded as attachments to the USAI online application:

7. **Two Work Samples and Description:** Please see the [Work Sample FAQ](#) for information on how to prepare your work samples. Links to work samples will be accepted.
8. **Signed letter(s) of invitation or signed contract(s) from the festival(s) or market(s) in English** must be provided on festival or market letterhead and **must** include:
  - a. a description of all financial support offered by the festival or market, including in-kind contributions towards *eligible* project expenses as identified in the guidelines under Grant Amounts and Eligible Expenses
  - b. **if providing an artists' performance fee, the amount**
  - c. performance dates, if known
  - d. number of performances, if known

*Please note that festivals must have confirmed dates; due to the involvement of federal funds, applications to tentatively scheduled or yet unscheduled festivals are not eligible.*

If the signed letters of invitation or signed contracts are not available at the time the application is submitted, they may be sent via email by:

- **October 8, 2020** for applications submitted October 1, 2020.
- **April 7, 2021** for applications submitted March 31, 2021.

Applications are not complete without a signed letter of invitation or signed contract that includes the required information by the prescribed deadlines. Applications seeking support for multiple

festival or market engagements must include a signed letter of invitation or signed contract for each engagement by the prescribed deadline in order to be considered complete. Incomplete applications will not be considered for support.

Applications are incomplete until MAAF has received the certification sheet via email:

- 9. The Certification Sheet** is automatically e-mailed to applicants upon submission of the online application. It must be signed by the authorizing official of the artist/ensemble, if the applicant is a 501(c)(3) organization. If using a fiscal sponsor, **both** the artist/ensemble and the authorizing official of the fiscal sponsor must sign the same Certification Sheet where indicated. The Certification Sheet must be submitted no later than one week after the application deadline for which you have submitted an application. Email attachments should be sent in PDF format to [usai@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:usai@midatlanticarts.org).

Please Note: Although the application and required materials are submitted online, your application is not complete until Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation has received your signed Certification Sheet and signed letter(s) of invitation or contract(s) as instructed in these guidelines.

## AWARD NOTIFICATION

**Deadline:**

October 1, 2020

March 31, 2021

**Applicants notified of grant status by:**

December 18, 2020 (award date in early January 2021)

June 21, 2021

## AWARD PAYMENTS AND FINAL REPORTS

If awarded, 90% of the grant amount will be sent by check to the grantee (or fiscal sponsor, if applicable) approximately 90 days prior to the engagement following the review and signing of a grant award agreement sent via email. A final report for the funded project is required no later than 30 days after the project completion date. The final report, made available in eGRANT at the time the grant is awarded, requires brief descriptions of the completed project, evidence of funder crediting, and an accounting of expenditures of the funded activities. Final report instructions are included with grant award documents when grantees are notified of the award. The final 10% of the grant amount will be sent by check to the grantee (or fiscal sponsor, if applicable) once the final report has been reviewed and approved by MAAF staff.

## RESOURCES

In addition to the USAI budget guide and work-sample preparation guide mentioned above, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation website includes a number of resources:

- A [frequently-asked-questions document](#)
- A regular schedule of [webinars](#), as well as recordings of past webinars
- Links to [fiscal sponsorship resources](#)
- A [database](#) of dance, music, and theater festivals and a [frequently-asked-questions page](#) about its use. Please note that this database includes festivals submitted in applications; inclusion of a festival in the database does not necessarily mean the festival meets eligibility requirements, nor is the database comprehensive—exclusion of a festival does not mean it is not eligible.
- Whether the engagement for which you are seeking funding happens at an international destination or virtually, please check and abide by [all recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).
- You are welcome to contact Program Officer, International Robyn Busch at [Robyn@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:Robyn@midatlanticarts.org) or Program Associate, International Leah Harrison at

[Leah@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:Leah@midatlanticarts.org) with questions.

USArtists International is supported by:

