

Program Guidelines 2021 – 2022

APPLICATION DEADLINES

My engagement is taking place	Deadline to apply	Certification and invitation letters due	Decision Notification by
Dec. 15, 2021 – Dec. 14, 2022	September 9, 2021 11:59 PM ET	Sept. 16, 2021	Nov. 29, 2021
March 15, 2022 – March 14, 2023	December 1, 2021 11:59 PM ET	Dec. 8, 2021	Feb. 28, 2021
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	March 30, 2022 11:59 PM ET	April 6, 2022	June 20, 2022

ACCESSIBILITY

These guidelines are available in a PDF or Word file at www.midatlanticarts.org.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Support for the presentation and touring of performing artists is central to the work of Mid Atlantic Arts. 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

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

Travel Track

Mid Atlantic Arts will accept applications to the USArtists International program that seek travel funding to perform internationally at eligible engagements. 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 Mid Atlantic Arts 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 eligible international festival engagements have decided to offer the festival virtually can 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 funds 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 prioritize artist health and safety. Grantees will not be penalized by Mid Atlantic Arts 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. The State Department also provides [destination-specific guidance for travelers](#).**

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 an 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/programming, administration, or management of the festival or performing arts market for which they seek funding;
- be in good standing with Mid Atlantic Arts, 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.

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 curated;

- be organized primarily by a non-U.S.-based organization that is both financially and curatorially responsible for the festival;
- **not** require a registration, application, performance, or any other type of fee or amount paid by performers exceeding USD \$250;
- 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 provide artists with 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. Each application allows an artist/ensemble to seek support for up to three eligible festival or performing arts market engagements as long as the artists/ensemble will not travel back to 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 the eligibility criteria for festivals. Fringe festival engagements are only eligible for consideration if all 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 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

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 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;
- the artists seeking support are a collective; only one artist-or-ensemble entity is permitted on a single application;
- 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, and/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;
 - present artists/ensembles in a showcase lasting less than 20 minutes, or in a workshop format;
 - or consist primarily of activities other than public performances; that might include workshops, training or conference sessions, competitions, fundraisers, and primarily academic or curricular programs.

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 voices, traditions, aesthetics, and/or art forms that have been historically underrepresented 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' strategic vision to promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and access, priority consideration will be given to exemplary applications that meet the review criteria, elevate artists and traditions that have been underrepresented in the organization's funding history, and promote 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 \$12,000. Applicants can request \$1000 to \$18,000. 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 in technology needs (hardware or software); and performance space rental 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 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 GRANTEES/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

APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND REQUIRED MATERIALS

Applications must be submitted on or before the published deadlines at 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time through the [Mid Atlantic Arts grant portal](#).

The USAI online application includes:

1. **Application Summary**
2. **Festival and/or Market Information**
3. **Two Work Samples and Description:** Please see the [this FAQ](#) for details on how to prepare your work samples, which should be submitted as links.
4. **Application Narrative**
5. **Biographies of the Principal Artist(s)**
6. **Participant List**
7. **Budget Detail:** Please see the [Online Application Budget instructions](#) for information on how to prepare your application budget.

The following two requirements must be included for an application to be complete:

8. **Signed letter(s) of invitation or signed contract(s) from each festival(s) or market(s).** Letters and contracts must be provided in English and on festival or market letterhead, and **must** include:
 - a. a description of all financial or in-kind support offered by the festival or market, such as hotels, flights, ground transportation, or per diems
 - 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 added to the grant application portal by:

- **September 16, 2021** for applications submitted September 9, 2021
- **December 8, 2021** for applications submitted December 1, 2021
- **April 6, 2022** for applications submitted March 30, 2022

9. **Certification** is a final step in the submission of the online application.
 - Each application must be certified by the authorizing official of the artist/ensemble by the application deadline. Applicants with 501(c)(3) status will be prompted to certify before submitting their application.
 - If the applicant is using a fiscal sponsor, **both** the artist/ensemble and the authorizing official for the fiscal sponsor must certify the application. After the artist/ensemble has certified and submitted by the deadline, the application will be sent to the fiscal sponsor for their certification. Fiscal sponsors must certify the application no later than one week after the application deadline.

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 45 – 60 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 the online portal 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 Mid Atlantic Arts staff.

RESOURCES

In addition to the USAI budget guide and work-sample preparation guide mentioned above, Mid Atlantic Arts 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 with questions.

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 in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and The Andrew W. Mellon 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.

USArtists International is supported by:

