

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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What does USArtists International (“USAI”) fund?

USAI provides engagement support grants of up to \$15,000 to artists and ensembles in music, dance, and theater invited to perform abroad at significant international festivals and performing arts markets. Grants can cover travel expenses and artist fees for eligible engagements. See the [program guidelines](#) on our website to learn about program eligibility and eligible grant expenses.

In an effort to serve artists/ensembles with flexibility as the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact countries globally, USArtists International will accept applications to support virtual engagements in addition to the live/travel track (traditional). The two tracks have different eligible expenses. See the program guidelines for full details.

Who are your grantees?

You can review USArtists International grantees through the [Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation grantee database](#). Grantees are announced after each round by [press release](#). The most recent round of grantees is also on the USAI section of our website. USAI is open to performing artists and ensembles nationwide. Grants have been awarded to U.S. artists located in 38 states, territories, and the District of Columbia. USAI grantees represent the excellence of the performing arts nationwide, including emerging and established artists, working in a variety of disciplines and subgenres of the performing arts.

Where do your grantees perform with USArtists International support?

We are proud to support artist engagements worldwide and have helped fund performances at festivals and performing arts markets in 91 countries on six continents since 2006. In program year 2020, USArtists International funded U.S. artists performing in 47 countries. We compile the names of festivals and performing arts markets included in applications in the [Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation International Festival Database](#).

Who funds USArtists International?

USArtists International is a program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation in partnership with the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), [The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#), [The Howard Gilman Foundation](#) and the [Trust for Mutual Understanding](#).

How many grants does USArtists International award each year?

Grant awards fluctuate annually based on program funding and applicant pools. In the 2020 program year, USArtists International awarded 83 grants totaling approximately \$794,000. As the only program of its kind nationwide, USAI has awarded nearly \$8 million to U.S. artists in support of their performances abroad at significant international festivals and performing arts markets.

Am I/we eligible for USArtists International?

Full eligibility details are available in the [program guidelines](#) on our website. Grants are awarded to artists or ensembles with 501(c)(3) nonprofit status or those who apply using a fiscal sponsor.

We/I don't have 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. Can I still apply?

Yes, but you must apply using a fiscal sponsor. USArtists International guidelines require applicants without 501(c)(3) nonprofit status to apply using a US-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit fiscal sponsor. Nonprofit organizations serving as fiscal sponsors must provide this service as part of their regular operations and this service must be available to any artist that meets the respective organizations' published criteria for fiscal sponsorship. To learn more about how fiscal sponsorship works, and securing a fiscal sponsor, visit [Grantspace: Fiscal Sponsorship](#), [National Network of Fiscal Sponsors](#), and [Fiscal Sponsor Directory](#). Do not let fiscal sponsorship scare you off from applying. Please email us if you have any questions.

Do we need to have an invitation to perform at a festival or performing arts market abroad in order to apply for USArtists International?

Yes. To apply, you must provide a written invitation from the festival or performing arts market that meets program guidelines. We compile the names of eligible festivals and performing arts markets included in past applications within the [Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation International Festival Database](#). Please note that this is not a full list of every international festival and performing arts market eligible for the program.

Is my festival engagement eligible for USArtists International?

Full engagement eligibility details are available under the “Festival/Performing Arts Market Eligibility” section in the [program guidelines](#) on our website.

My engagement abroad is not part of an international festival or performing arts market. Can I apply for USArtists International funding?

Congrats on your performance abroad! Unfortunately, no, due to limited funding, this would not be eligible for USAI funding. USAI only supports eligible performances at international festivals and performing arts markets.

We have been invited to perform at a festival but it is not within the eligible project window for the next round. Can we still apply?

No. Applications must meet [program guidelines](#) to be eligible for funding. Each grant deadline has at least a full calendar year project window in which the engagement(s) must occur. If you know about an engagement in advance, you can potentially apply for multiple deadlines if you are not selected for a grant on your first attempt. The deadlines for the program are available in the program guidelines on our [website](#).

When are the deadlines for USArtists International?

Deadlines for each program year are announced each summer. In 2020 – 2021, there will be two deadlines: October 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021. See the [program guidelines](#) on our website to learn more about the specific deadline dates and project windows.

How do you select grantees?

USArtists International is a competitive grant program that uses a peer-panel review process. Panelists read all eligible applications and score and comment on how well an application meets program criteria. The program criteria used by panelists to evaluate applications is included in the program guidelines under the section “Application Review Criteria.” These are the only criteria that panelists use to score applications. Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation requires that panelists follow scoring instructions that reflect their interpretation of USArtists International’s evaluation criteria and recuse themselves from conflicts of interest.

Who are your panelists?

Each panel consists of five performing arts professionals from across the country, including artists, presenters, curators, previous grantees, scholars and one lay person, as required by the National Endowment for the Arts. Panelists are leaders in the performing arts who have demonstrated excellence and broad knowledge of the field. They reflect the range of diversities that USArtists International supports: geographic, aesthetic, racial, ethnic, gender, and career stage. Serving on a USArtists International panel reflects a commitment to international exchange and to sustaining the careers of U.S. performing artists. Panelist and grantee names are announced in [press releases](#) following the completion of each grants round. You can also see [recent panelists](#) listed on our website.

How can my application be reviewed more favorably by the panel?

The program criteria by which panelists evaluate applications is included in the [program guidelines](#) under the section “Application Review Criteria.” These are the only criteria that panelists use to score applications. Familiarizing yourself with the objectives of the program and the review criteria may be helpful in providing evidence that your application strongly meets review criteria. See the [program guidelines](#) on our website for application review criteria.

We have multiple eligible festival engagements. Which should we include in our application?

Each application can include up to three eligible festival or performing arts markets as long as the engagements and travel are consecutive and no return trip to the United States is scheduled between engagements. Which eligible engagement(s) you include in the application is your decision. Familiarizing yourself with the objectives of the program and the review criteria may be helpful in selecting the engagements that most strongly meet review criteria. Panelists are not instructed to favor or disadvantage applications based on the number of eligible engagements. See the section “Application Review Criteria” in the [program guidelines](#) on our website for application review criteria. These are the only criteria that panelists use to score applications.

We only have one eligible engagement. Will it be held against us that we don’t have more?

No. Panelists are not instructed to favor or disadvantage applications based on the number of eligible engagements. Many applications and funded projects have only one eligible engagement. Each application can include up to three eligible festivals or performing arts markets as long as the travel is consecutive and no return trip to the United States is scheduled between engagements. Which eligible engagement(s) you include in the application is your decision. Familiarizing yourself with the objectives of the program and the review criteria may be helpful in selecting the engagements that most strongly meet review criteria. Panelists are not instructed to favor or disadvantage applications based on the number of eligible engagements. See the section “Application Review Criteria” in the [program guidelines](#) on our website for application review criteria. These are the only criteria that panelists use to score applications.

We applied and didn’t receive a USArtists International grant. If we apply again, will it be held against us?

No. Panelists change each round and will not know the status of previous applications or awards unless you include these details in your application. As long as your application is eligible, you can continue to reapply. The program criteria with which panelists evaluate applications is included in the [program guidelines](#) under the section “Application Review Criteria.” See the [program guidelines](#) on our website to learn about program eligibility.

We received a USArtists International grant in the past. If we apply again, will it be held against us or work in our favor?

Neither. Panelists change each round and will not know the status of previous applications or awards unless you include these details in your application. The program criteria by which panelists evaluate applications is included in the [program guidelines](#) under the section “Application Review Criteria.” These are the only criteria that panelists use to score applications. Review criteria do not include any language to favor or disadvantage previous grantees or repeat applicants.

We have been invited back to a festival for which we received USArtists International support in the past. If we apply again, will it be held against us or work in our favor?

If you are applying for funding to support an engagement at a festival for which you previously received support through USAI, you will need to provide a compelling reason and statement for the return engagement as part of your application. The program criteria with which panelists evaluate applications is included in the [program guidelines](#) under the section “Application Review Criteria.” These are the only criteria that panelists use to score applications. Review criteria do not include any language to favor or disadvantage previous grantees attending the same festival.

Do you fund residencies or other activities abroad?

Due to limited funds, not at this time. Grants can only support travel expenses and artist fees directly related to the performances at eligible festivals and performing arts markets. We recognize and appreciate that many applicants performing abroad may participate in ancillary activities such as workshops, residencies, presentations or other international exchange activities; however, these activities cannot be supported with USArtists International funding. On our website, see "Eligible Grant Expenses" in the [program guidelines](#) and USAI budget instructions for additional information.

Can we see the application?

The online application will be available [here](#) in advance of the program deadlines.

Are there any changes to USArtists International as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes. USArtists International will accept applications in the traditional travel track and in a new virtual track (the same application is used for both tracks). Please review the full [program guidelines](#) for details of both tracks.

Can I apply for both virtual-track and track-track engagements?

Yes. Applicants can include up to three engagements on a single application, and those engagements can include a combination of virtual and travel engagements.

If I'm applying for a virtual engagement, can the performance be pre-recorded or does it have to be live?

Both pre-recorded and live streamed performances are eligible for funding.

Does a pre-recorded performance have to be recorded specifically for the funded engagement?

No.

Can my virtual engagement include a combination of newly recorded and archival footage?

Yes.