



CREATIVE ECONOMY FUND

A Program Providing In-Kind Rental Fee Reduction at Mesa Arts Center

Guidelines and Application Form for 2025-26 Support

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

**May 2, 2025
5:00 pm**

For questions related to this application, please contact **Sarah Goedicke** at sarah.goedicke@mesaartscenter.com or 480.644.6607.

City of Mesa, Department of Arts and Culture

2025-2026 CREATIVE ECONOMY FUND

MESA ARTS CENTER RENTAL FEE REDUCTION PROGRAM

As part of a larger initiative to continue activating Downtown Mesa, increase the growing number and variety of offerings at Mesa Arts Center (MAC), and continue building an environment of creativity and discovery downtown, the CREATIVE ECONOMY FUND in-kind grant program is being continued for a 15th and final year. **This will be the final year for the Creative Economy Fund.**

The intent of this program is to:

1. Reduce cost pressures for professional and semi-professional organizations who use or wish to use MAC venues;
2. Help bring new cultural offerings to the Mesa and East Valley communities; and
3. Encourage new organizations to present or produce an event at MAC in order to form new partnerships and relationships across cultural organizations in the region.

Mesa Arts Center's CREATIVE ECONOMY FUND will support reduced rental fees at Mesa Arts Center for non-profit organizations presenting an arts project, event, activity, workshop, or a series of any of the above. Organizations may submit only one application for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The Creative Economy Fund will be discontinued after the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

PROJECT SUPPORT

Applicants may submit proposals requesting reduction of rental fees for the use of Mesa Arts Center theaters, Studios, or Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum lecture hall or courtyard for the purpose of presenting quality arts programs for Mesa and the region. The proposed projects must take place between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026.

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A concert or series of concerts
- A theater, dance, or spoken word production
- A collaborative or interactive community art project
- Workshop(s) or class(es) in the visual or performing arts
- A multidisciplinary project

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be a **non-profit, Arizona-based** 501(c)(3) organization. While arts and culture organizations are strongly encouraged to apply, other non-profit organizations that are offering arts programming to the public are also welcome to apply.

Please note: If you apply to both the Creative Economy Fund program *and* the Arts at the Center program (a MAC Foundation program) and are awarded both, you will need to choose to receive one or the other but cannot accept both. You will **not be eligible to receive support through both programs**. For more information on the Arts at the Center program, go to <https://www.mesaartscenter.com/index.php/get-involved/mac-foundation>.

Applicants who received an award for the 2024-2025 fiscal year and are applying for the 2025-2026 fiscal year must include, as part of the project for which they are applying, a community engagement, education, or audience development activity and are strongly encouraged to expand on previous efforts of these kinds. We require this so that the support provided through the Creative Economy enables growth of the organization's audiences and/or increases value to the community.

Examples of activities that fulfill this requirement include, but are not limited to:

- Workshops
- Audience talk-backs
- Lecture-demonstrations
- School or community-based performances or outreach activities
- Discount ticket offers
- Ticket giveaways to low-income or underserved audiences
- Special promotions that reach new audiences

This is by no means an exhaustive list. Creativity in responding to this requirement is encouraged, and a thoughtful plan will increase the likelihood of receiving support.

REQUIREMENTS

Amounts requested for rental fee reduction may not exceed the total amount being paid in facility rental fees. Fee reduction awarded to any one organization will not exceed \$5,000, and for most applicants is unlikely to exceed \$2,500.

The amount requested can cover **base rental fees only (cost for facility use)**. Production, front-of-house, or ticketing fees **will not be eligible** for funding but must be shown as expenses in the project budget. Marketing services will not be provided as part of this support, but all projects taking place at Mesa Arts Center will be included as calendar listings on MAC's website and promoted on our digital marquees.

As a requirement of the application, you must discuss calendar availability and cost estimates with Mesa Arts Center's Event Services Team at 480-644-6589 or Rentals@mesaartscenter.com and request a production cost estimate prior to developing your budget and submitting your application. You are also required to attach a copy of your event estimate from Event Services in your application. We recommend applicants reach out to Event Services a minimum of two weeks before the application due date. Please do not wait until the final week for submission to contact Event Services, as staff are unavailable to do last minute calculations. Once you know your project and have selected prospective dates, contact them immediately.

The events held at the Mesa Arts Center through the Creative Economy Fund **cannot be fundraising events or promoted as such** by the presenting/producing organization, whether for your own or another organization or cause. **Organizations funded agree to acknowledge support from Mesa Arts Center in programs and other means that are feasible and appropriate, such as curtain speeches.** Recipients must clear any use of the MAC logo or any unusual recognition of this award with MAC staff.

Recommended acknowledgement language: “This [presentation] is made possible in part by City of Mesa’s Arts & Culture Department and Mesa Arts Center.”

FINAL REPORT

Each applicant awarded support by the City of Mesa Department of Arts and Culture Creative Economy Fund must provide the City with a follow-up report and a financial report showing all income and expenses and describing how the project met the stated applicant objectives and the criteria below. The Final Report is due by July 31, 2026.

REVIEW PROCESS

All applications are reviewed by a citizen panel of three to five individuals representing Mesa’s Museum & Cultural Advisory Board, Mesa Arts Foundation, downtown businesses, arts enthusiasts, and community partners.

REVIEW CRITERIA

1. Quality of the artistic work to be presented and/or the past artistic work of the applicant organization or its presentations.
2. Length or scope of the engagement or activity, and any indication of interest or intention to develop an ongoing relationship with the Mesa Arts Center.
3. Extent to which the project provides new or different experiences to the community, meets a community need, or provides an experience or cultural opportunity in which the community has indicated an interest/need/desire.
4. Quality and likely impact of any proposed education, outreach/engagement programs, or audience development activities. (This does not apply to first-time applicants).
5. Soundness of the plan for the proposed project and the likelihood of success. Ability of the organization to meet the stated objectives of the project, as stated in the application.

All applicants are **encouraged to include audience engagement/audience development activities** as part of their project, which will be considered in rating criteria number 4 above.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please fill out the application form and provide the required additional documents as listed in the application below.

Ways to apply:

ONLINE AT:

<https://www.mesaaz.gov/things-to-do/arts-culture/creative-economy-fund>

BY EMAIL TO:

Sarah.Goedicke@mesaartscenter.com

APPLICATION DEADLINE, REVIEW PROCESS AND NOTIFICATION

QUESTIONS?

Contact us if you have any questions about the application by calling or emailing Sarah Goedicke at 480.644.6607 or Sarah.Goedicke@MesaArtsCenter.com. Sarah will answer your question or set up a meeting to discuss your application and provide any needed guidance on the process. **Staff will not advise on application content.**

May 2, 2025 (by 5:00 p.m.)

Application due date

May 5-16, 2025

Applications reviewed by a community panel; recommendations made to Museum & Cultural Advisory Board

May 22, 2025

Recommendations are reviewed and endorsed by the Museum and Cultural Advisory Board

By June 3, 2025

Applicants are notified of the outcome of their application

June 30, 2026

Projects must be completed

July 31, 2026

2025-2026 Final Report due

QUESTIONS? Contact Sarah Goedicke at Sarah.Goedicke@mesaartscenter.com or 480-644-6607

As a reminder, the Creative Economy Fund will discontinue after the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

CREATIVE ECONOMY FUND APPLICATION FORM

Applicant Organization:

Organization Address:

Name of Individual Completing Application: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Name of Organization Principal Executive:

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Organization web site:

Signature of Authorizing Official (Board Chair or CEO):

Please enclose the following items:

- Applicant organization's **501(c)(3) determination letter;**
- Document (**one-page max.**) including mission and organization description/history;
- Budget detailing project **expenses and income**, including requested Creative Economy Fund portion of rental fee;
- Copy of event estimate from Event Services
- Copy of organization's w9 form (used for contract and billing with Event Services)
- Organization's annual operating budget
- Resumes or bios for key artistic personnel for the project; and
- The completed application form with all required attachments listed above.

Optional: A **maximum of five (5) pages** of reviews, articles or information on proposed project/artistic works that will support the quality of the organization's artistic work or the quality of the proposed project. If more than five pages are provided, only the first five will be presented to the community panel.

Incomplete applications will not be considered for awards and staff will not follow up on incomplete applications. Please make sure all items listed above are included in the application.

Handwritten applications will not be accepted; all applications must be in a digital format such as Word Doc or PDF

Please respond to the following questions, using a **maximum of 250 words** for each question. Please read the question carefully to be sure you are providing the needed information and **use the allotted word count wisely to provide a full answer.**

1. **Please describe the project for which you are applying for support.** What are the activities and programs that the public will experience? Is there anything notable or new in the project?
2. **What is the number and scope of performances, workshops, classes, festival days, or other activities that are part of the project?** Where and when will they take place? If there are multiple programs for which support is requested, please list them chronologically.
3. **What are the objectives of your organization in presenting this project?** What will it accomplish or what benefits will it bring to the audience and/or community? What makes it important to audiences, or a valuable experience for those participating in the presentation of the work?
4. **Describe how your organization will work to ensure the quality of this presentation or project.** What aspects of the project will help deliver that quality outcome (e.g. playwright, composer, choreography, artistic personnel, etc.), and how might the organization's prior work indicate future quality?

5. **Does this project meet a perceived community need, or fulfill a proven interest in our community? What indicators, observations, or evidence can you provide that this is the case?** You may wish to share audience input or feedback, information about how the project content is determined, analysis of past audience attendance or other factors that indicate community interest. Or does the project provide audiences a new experience? If so, please share how it is different than other offerings of its type currently available.

6. **Please describe any audience development, community engagement, education or outreach activities that are planned as a part of this project.** Describe initiatives to reach new audiences, services to students or underserved audiences, educational/enrichment activities, participatory workshops or master classes, or any other efforts that build or deepen audience relationships, attendance, or awareness.

7. **Do your performers or participating artists have to pay to be a part of your organization or project?** If so, what are those fees, and are scholarships or aid offered to those who have financial need? If not, **are the artists volunteers in the project, or do they receive payment?**

8. **Are there any challenges to your organization in presenting this project—logistical, human resources, financial?** If so, please share your plan for addressing those challenges. Does your organization have the proven ability to present this project based on past history?

We have spoken to MAC Event Services to review venue-related costs. _____ Yes _____ No

We have applied for support to the Arts at the Center Program. _____ Yes _____ No

Our organization has performed/presented at a MAC venue in the past. _____ Yes _____ No

Our requested Creative Economy Fund Grant amount is \$ _____

Number of people who will be served directly by this project (audience): _____

Number of total people who will participate in producing this project: _____

Number of paid artists participating in implementing this project: _____

Number of unpaid artists participating in implementing this project: _____

Please attach the following items to your application:

- 501(c)(3) determination letter;
- One page (max.) with mission and organization description/history;
- Budget detailing project expenses and income, including requested Creative Economy Fund portion of rental fee;
- Copy of event estimate from Event Services
- Copy of w9 form (used for contract and billing with Event Services)
- Annual operating budget
- Resumes or bios for key artistic personnel for the project; and
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