



Equity in Arts Learning

FOR COLORADO YOUTH

GUIDELINES

2025-2026

Funding Opportunity

Equity in Arts Learning for Colorado Youth (EAL) seeks to increase access to arts education for historically marginalized youth. Grants of \$10,000-\$25,000 are available to support projects that bring professional artists and culture bearers into educational settings to lead programming with youth ages 4-21. Projects supported by EAL will exemplify the value of arts education, encouraging ongoing community support.

Goals of this Initiative:

1. Strengthen regional efforts to improve sustained **access to arts education** for historically marginalized and minoritized youth (including youth who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual), a person with a disability, and/or living in a rural community).
2. Provide opportunities for **youth ages 4-21 to work with professional artists in an educational setting**, especially youth who have limited or no access to high quality, sustained arts learning.
3. **Heighten awareness of the impact** of arts education, so that resources both financial and curricular increase state-wide, leading to more equitable access to arts education for youth.

Applicant Qualifications

Applicant must be a Colorado-based nonprofit organization, or a PK-12 school.

1. School applicants must engage an artist or arts organization as a partner.
2. Organizational applicants must:
 - a. Be engaged with a school partner or have a strong history of working with youth
 - b. Be registered with Colorado Secretary of State with an address in Colorado
 - c. Have a Colorado-based staff person who will be actively engaged in the project

Funded projects may take place at schools (during the school day or after school), community centers, libraries, nonprofit arts sites, and other locations that are highly accessible to youth.

Project Design

Projects may involve any arts & culture discipline or genre, such as theater, dance, music, visual arts, media arts, literary arts, folk and traditional arts, or interdisciplinary art forms. Arts integration projects (connecting an art form with another subject area) are encouraged. Projects should:

1. Take place over a period of time that allows for depth of learning and relationship building. *Ideally, projects take place over the course of six weeks or longer.*
2. Center the identities and needs of youth. *Youth should be consulted in the project's design and be able to influence the project's evolution along the way.*
3. Fill a clear gap in the school or community. *The rationale for the project should be informed by the stated needs of the student and community.*
4. Engage experienced artists and culture bearers. *Teaching artists should have a successful record of working with youth, and whose identities reflect the youth participants.*
5. Be highly accessible to youth participants. *A fee may not be charged for participation, and it must take place in a setting that youth are able to easily get to.*
6. Allow for time and resources to measure and communicate the project's value and impact. *Evaluation results will be collectively shared.*

Examples of projects:

- *An artist residency in which students create a mural reflecting their school culture.*
- *A visiting musician works with youth at a local community center to create songs expressing their cultural identities.*
- *A media artist supports youth in creating a podcast featuring interviews with community elders.*
- *Youth write and produce a one-act play with guidance from a theater teaching artist using vignettes from their daily lives.*

The following are not eligible for EAL funding:

- Programs that charge a fee to participants
- PK-12 staff salaries (Teacher stipends are allowable)
- General operating costs unrelated to the proposed project
- Capital improvement projects

Application Timeline

Letters of Intent accepted **September 26, 2024 – November 22, 2024**

Invitations to Apply – Sent by January 20, 2025

Full Application Due – **February 21, 2025**

Award Notifications – Mid/Late April, 2025

Projects Take Place – **July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026**

Final Report Due – Thirty days after completion of project, and no later than **July 31, 2026**

***For more information and virtual open office hours,
visit our landing page [HERE](#).***

LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) CRITERIA

Profile info

- Applicant Name (Name of School, Nonprofit Organization)
- Name of person submitting LOI, administrator contact info (if school)
- Email
- Best phone number
- Title of project
- Estimated budget

Narrative

1. Please describe the project. What are the goals, and what are the needs/gaps you are addressing? What activities will take place? *500 word limit*
2. Who are the partners (nonprofit arts & culture organization, teaching artist, school)? Describe your history of collaboration with these partners. *250 word limit*
3. What community(ies) will your project serve? *250 word limit*
4. In what city/county will the program take place, and school district if applicable? *Drop down - counties list.*
5. What is the project budget estimate for the project and roughly how many students/youth will that allow you to support? *Fillable field*

If selected to submit a full application, applicants will be required to submit a full budget, a narrative describing the program and its goals more specifically, and applicable letters of commitment (e.g., from the partnering school, artist or non-profit arts organization).

FULL APPLICATION CRITERIA

- Applicant Name (name of School or Organization)
- Name of person submitting LOI, administrator contact info (if school)
- Email
- Best phone number
- Title of project
- Arts Discipline(s) (drop down, select multiple, other field)
- Youth grades/ages served (ECE, K-5, 6-8, 9-12, 18-21 - select all that apply)

Narrative

1. Provide a summary of the project request. Include the goals and objectives, activities, and timeline. Is this a new or existing program? If existing, how many years has it been offered?
2. What gaps in arts education in your community are being addressed, and how will the project make access to arts learning more equitable?
3. How have youth informed the project design, and how will they continue to be involved in co-creation during the project?
4. Where will the program take place? Describe how this location supports equity/access to your community.
5. Is there a selection process for students to participate? If so, what are the guidelines for participation?
6. Please provide demographic descriptions that apply to the *youth involved in the project*:
 - Do the youth served attend a Title I School? y/n
 - Do youth served live in a rural community? y/n
 - What percent identify as BIPOC? (fill in)
 - What percent identify as having a disability? (fill in)
 - What percent identify as LGBTQIA+ Youth? (fill in)
 - What percent live in a Low-to-Moderate Income Community? (fill in)
7. What evaluation methods will you use to assess the success of the program (e.g., surveys, interviews with students, public-facing programs)? How will you know that you have been successful in achieving your goals?
8. How will you document youth learning? Do you have opportunities to communicate success stories to your community? If so, please describe.

Attachments

All applicants:

- Project budget (this will link to a sample budget with the format we want them to use with expenses AND sources of confirmed and/or pending revenue)
- Artist Qualifications: Include Teaching Artist biography, resume/CV, and/or links to past projects

School Applicants:

- Letter of Commitment from the partnering artist or arts organization

Nonprofit Organization Applicants:

- Letter of Commitment from the school, partnering artist(s)
- Organization budget for current FY
- Financials/audit from most recent prior fiscal year (profit and loss, balance sheet)