

Give Us Some Credit!

Acknowledgement Requirements and Promotional Toolkit for MCACA Grant Recipients



Photo credit: Frankenmuth High School

Congratulations on the receipt of your grant award!

We hope the following pages will remind you of the importance of promoting your state supported project to the taxpayers in your community, your legislators, your media partners and your organization's own membership.

Inside you will find, not only what is required in terms of promoting the MCACA grant award, but also some ideas on other steps you can take to thank those responsible for arts and cultural funding, enhance awareness of your project activities, and perhaps even leverage additional future support.



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PROMOTION

As an organization receiving a grant award from the State of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), you are required to live up to the terms and stipulations of your grant agreement. Part of that agreement is the use of the MCACA logo in your publications related to the funded activity, website, broadcast promotions etc. A high-resolution logo can be found at: <https://puremi.ch/2LPFbs5>

You are also required to notify/thank your state legislators and the Governor of your MCACA award and supply a copy of those letters (or e-mails etc.). Please return all copies with your signed grant agreement.

If your grant award includes federal support through the National Endowment for the Arts, this will be indicated in your grant agreement. The NEA requires you acknowledge their support by also including their logo in your publications. The NEA logo is also on our website or at: <https://www.arts.gov/grants/manage-your-award/nea-logo>.

Grant recipients must prominently display the Council name and logo in printed and electronic materials. Any online presence, such as websites and social media accounts, should include a hyperlink to the MCACA home page. Support credit must also be included in broadcast promotion, as follows: "This activity is supported by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs." When no printed material is used, verbal acknowledgment shall be given prior to each presentation. Samples of printing, photographs, advertising, and program materials prepared for this activity must be part of your final report.

But the MCACA logo is only one way you can promote state government support of your project. Many people throughout the state are unaware of the long-term impact your programs have on the quality of life in your community. This impact extends beyond a quality arts or cultural experience, it also includes employee retention, business retention, cultural tourism, and various other forms of economic impact, such as the educational impact your organization has on your community. Crediting MCACA in as many places as possible and explaining who we are helps your community understand the state government investment and the impact of public funding on the arts.

Here are a few steps you can take to help better inform your entire community of the impact MCACA has on their daily lives:

- Invite a MCACA Council Member or MCACA Executive Director/Program officer to speak at one of your important events or functions. Invite the press to that event.
- Write an opinion/editorial piece for your local newspaper or social media site etc. on the importance of state arts and cultural funding to programs in your community, especially the impact arts have on the economy and education. MCACA alerts the media, statewide, when grant awards are announced, but you may have better luck if you personally encourage them to do a story about your grant award.

- Contact your local Arts Council or MCACA Regional Regranting Agency, about your grant. There may be an opportunity to get your message out in newsletters other than your own.
- Announce your award in your newsletter and explain to your members the significance of MCACA support.
- Speak at a service organization function (such as Rotary, etc) regarding the impact of arts and culture funding.
- Contact your local board of education. Explain your programs and MCACA funding to them. Be sure to include their impact on your local schools. Encourage your school board or school superintendent to contact MCACA about other educational funding opportunities. Your local schools may also have a newsletter they mail to parents or to all residents in your district. You may want to do an article for them about the educational impact of your MCACA supported project.
- Encourage local media to attend your events. If they can't make it to your event, report back to them and encourage them to do a follow-up story, and share with them the impact of your MCACA grant.
- Schedule your state senator or representative to announce your grant award at an event or performance and speak to the audience.

OTHER IMPORTANT STEPS

Almost as important as informing your community about your MCACA grant award, is thanking your elected officials. Without their support at budget/appropriation time of the year, your grant award is not possible. The following are just a few steps you can take to ensure that your elected officials know their work is appreciated. A sample thank you letter is on page 7. You can find your legislator at www.legislature.mi.gov.

- Contact the Governor's office to thank them for support of MCACA appropriation and thus the receipt of your grant.
- Visit your area's Senator and House Representative "just to say thanks." Let them know how you feel about receiving a MCACA grant award.
- Encourage your board members, community business leaders and even your audience or those who benefit directly to contact legislators to say "thanks" as well.
- In your letter to legislators, you could list the private and/or corporate support used as matching funds. Who they are and how MCACA dollars have helped leverage those monies can be very important to legislators.
- Invite them to all of your events. At one of these events, you may want to publicly thank them or recognize them for their support. Give them an opportunity to speak to your audience.

- Make certain your elected officials are on your mailing list for newsletters, etc.
- When you are working on your grant award article for your newsletter or other media, call your legislator's offices and get a quote from them on the importance of arts & culture and state support for your grant and its impact.

ONLINE TIPS

As mentioned earlier, the agreement includes use of the MCACA logo in your publications related to the funded activity, website, broadcast promotions etc. These are other steps your organization can take to strengthen the case you make to funders and review panels alike:

Websites:

More and more often in the review of grant applications, funder, staff or review panelists....

- 1) Will go to the organization web page to:
 - a. Get a feel for the organization ... so keep your website current
 - b. Look for the state arts agency, and other important funder's logo and
 - c. Look for organizational and financial information
 - i. The organization's annual report
 - ii. Audit
 - iii. Strategic plan etc.
- 2) Will go to the Guidestar website to review the 990 form and to also see if the organization is taking full advantage of the tools available there. On Guidestar, Organizations can include:
 - a. An annual report
 - b. Leadership information
 - c. Board list
 - d. News
 - e. Links to samples of work
 - f. Program information
 - g. A list of needs looking for funding (especially important in an era of crowd-funding)

If you don't have this information on your own website, at least have it on the Guidestar page. Also, be sure to utilize the free page offer from Travel Michigan www.michigan.org.

Social Media:

If you do not already, your organization should be taking full advantage of social media. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest provide a free mechanism for promotion and engagement.

Seek out a network where your primary audience is already gathered and that supports the type of content you can provide. Regularly update your account with photos, videos and information on your program and activities. Acknowledge important funders, provide enticing behind the scenes, ask question and educate your community. Identify influences in your topic area and expand your reach.

Explore additional platforms to create niche communities and engage additional audiences.

Writing a News Release

According to the Michigan Press Association, five points are important to a good news release: Who, What, Where, Why and When. If possible a sixth, "How", should be included. Here are some helpful tips for writing an effective news release:

Tips

- Include the above points in the first sentence of your story to makes your reader want to know more about the story.
- After the lead, get into the important details of the story. Employ the "inverted pyramid" style of writing: each succeeding paragraph after the lead sentence is of declining importance. It permits the editor to pick up the important facts of the story in the first few lines.
- Use short words, short sentences and short paragraphs. Two sentences make a paragraph in a good news story.
- Be brief. Almost every news release can be written on one maybe two double spaced pages.
- Always give the exact date in the news release. Specify the month (e.g. October 10) rather than saying "next month."
- List addresses as well as the name of the meeting place. Remember, you are writing for people who may not know your organization.
- Using figures? Spell out one to nine, use numerals from 10 up. Don't begin a sentence with a number.
- Forget adjectives.
- Never guess. Check every point of your release for accuracy, especially on times, places and names.
- Be brave. Don't be afraid to suggest something new if you honestly believe you have a workable idea.
- Be prompt in meeting deadlines. If copy has to be in the hands of the editor by 2 p.m. Wednesday, do it.
- Be sure to check with the editor concerning their photo policies. Always include a caption stating who, what, where, why and when.

Sample News Release:

For Immediate Release
(YOUR CONTACT NAME)

(YOUR ORGANIZATION has been awarded a grant of (\$XX) from the State of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA). The grant was awarded through the MCACA peer review process and was one of [REDACTED] applications to compete for MCACA fiscal year 2021 funding.

(A QUOTE FROM YOUR LEGISLATOR: You may want to draft a quote for their approval that discusses the importance of state support for arts and culture in general and the quality of life or educational opportunities in your community etc.)

Organizations receiving a MCACA grant award are required to match those funds with other public and private dollars. Local support of the project included (YOU SHOULD LIST YOUR CORPORATE, FOUNDATION AND BUSINESS SPONSORS HERE, and ESPECIALLY IF THE MEDIA OUTLET WAS ONE OF YOUR SPONSORS. (YOUR ORGANIZATION) also receives significant volunteer support from the community. (YOU MAY WANT TO LIST SOME OF THE VOLUNTEERS OR IN-KIND SUPPORT HERE. REMEMBER, NAMES SELL PAPERS.)

(INSERT PROJECT DESCRIPTION: COMMUNITY IMPACT, INDIVIDUALS SERVED AND PRIVATE DOLLARS LEVERAGED)

The MCACA peer review process allows for each grant application to be competitively considered by a panel of in-state and out-of-state arts and culture professionals. This ensures the taxpayers, who support this project through legislative appropriations, and all other visitors or residents in Michigan will have access to the highest quality arts and cultural experiences.

A complete list of grant awards around the state is available by contacting MCACA at (517) 241-4011, or by visiting the MCACA website at www.michigan.gov/arts.

Sample "Thank You" Letter:

The Honorable
(Governor/Senator/Representative)
Address

Dear Governor/Senator/Representative:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the recent grant award of \$XX from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs. It is because of your continued support of MCACA that we are able to provide our community with a quality cultural event.

Your support will allow us to (Summarize your project here. Include the audience it will serve and other benefits to your community.)

As you know, a grant from MCACA must be matched with other dollars. The grant has helped us leverage \$XX of support from (list your financial supporters. In particular list foundations, corporations, local businesses as well as private individuals.)

We would also like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend a (performance, exhibition, class etc.,) so you can see first-hand what we do and how vital state support is to our efforts. To RSVP or to receive more information about this event, please contact (name) at (phone #, fax, email, website). We hope you will give a few opening remarks etc.

We promise to keep you informed of our efforts (through our newsletter/regular news releases etc.)

Thank you again.

Executive Director/Board President