

Grant Title: Corridors of Opportunity Creative Spaces Initiative (CSI)

Summary: City of Charlotte issuing grants to support permanent, affordable workspaces for local creatives

Department: Economic Development

Issued by: City of Charlotte Corridors of Opportunity

Issue Date: 08/13/2024

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: September 9, 2024

OVERVIEW OF GUIDELINES

This document includes the following sections. Review all sections and linked documents before submitting an application:

1. Introduction
2. Grant goals
3. Scope and strategies
4. Metrics and reporting
5. Grant guidelines
6. Grant application requirements
7. Evaluation criteria
8. Budget and funding
9. Project timeline
10. Terms and conditions
11. Questions

1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Charlotte is committed to fostering a vibrant community by supporting local creatives and providing them with resources they need to thrive. Our mission is to offer access to affordable spaces for creating and experiencing arts and culture. Affordable and accessible spaces for artists and creatives have a positive impact on local communities by:

- Acting as a catalyst for community and economic development
- Creating viable commercial and business ventures
- Providing services and resources for artists and creative entrepreneurs
- Bridging the gap between arts and culture programming and community members

The [Arts and Culture Plan](#) completed in 2023 highlights the disparity between the number of arts and cultural facilities in the Corridors of Opportunity compared to other parts of Charlotte. Out of nearly 1,000 cultural assets in Charlotte, only 30 are in the six Corridors of Opportunity, while 50 are located in Uptown Charlotte alone.

On April 10, 2023, the Charlotte City Council approved \$500,000 to support permanent workspaces for local creatives. Permanent spaces are defined as those not intended for one-time use. Projects such as pop-ups, festivals, or events do not qualify.

2. GRANT GOALS

The City of Charlotte is pleased to accept applications for the Corridors of Opportunity Creative Spaces Initiative Grant. These funds may be used to supplement rents and program costs for creative entrepreneur spaces located in the Corridors of Opportunity. The CSI Grant aims to:

- Expand financial support for artists and creative entrepreneurs in the Corridors of Opportunity.
- Increase the number of affordable spaces for studio work, production, practice, performance, or gallery exhibits in the Corridors.
- Bolster knowledge, networks, and public policies that enhance artists' work and their contributions to communities and the economy.

3. SCOPE AND STRATEGIES

To achieve the goal of enhancing access to arts and culture, the following scope and strategies may be employed:

- Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.
- Convert vacant or underutilized spaces into creative workspaces.
- Partner with property owners to renovate, incorporate, or operate creative art spaces for practice, rehearsal, creation, display, and experience.
- Reimagine non-traditional spaces to increase visibility and access to arts and culture programming in the Corridors (e.g., libraries, schools, houses of faith, building lobbies).

4. METRICS AND REPORTING

The following metrics and reporting requirements will be implemented to ensure transparency and accountability:

- **Number of Artists/Creatives Served:** Minimum of 10. This is not a direct grant for individual artists.
- **Visitor Engagement:** Report on metrics such as the number of visitors, sales, or events, as applicable.

- **Space Utilization:** Provide details on the square footage of the project space and, if relevant, include information on rent rates.
- **Reporting Frequency:** The frequency for reporting on the above metrics will be established prior to contract execution and will be detailed in the contract.

5. GRANT GUIDELINES

The Creative Space Initiative (CSI) aims to support and expand affordable creative workspaces located in the Corridors of Opportunity. Grant funds will be available to organizations, property owners, or businesses to supplement rents and program costs for creative entrepreneur studio spaces.

Available Funds

The total funding available for this one-time grant opportunity is \$500,000. Grants will be awarded through a competitive selection process based on the needs of each organization and the strength of the application. Individual grants will not exceed \$500,000 per organization.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the grant, applicants must:

- Be organizations, property owners, or businesses seeking to sustain or establish permanent creative space within the Corridors of Opportunity.
- Submit a comprehensive proposal that includes:
 - Project scope
 - Budget allocation
 - Timeline
 - Projected artist engagement

6. GRANT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Submission Submit a grant proposal (no more than 10 pages) including:

- Cover Letter
- Organizational Overview
- Project Narrative
- Implementation/Operations Plan
- Budget
- Sustainability Plan

Submission Guidelines

- Provide a clear and detailed budget aligned with the project narrative and grant request amount.
- Include a clear and feasible sustainability plan for program operations after this funding is exhausted.
- Describe how the project aligns with the [Arts and Culture Plan](#), Priority 4: Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

Required Documents

- **For Nonprofit Organizations:**
 - Completed Online Application
 - Board of Directors Roster
 - Organizational Chart
 - Most recent independent financial audit
 - Documentation of 501(c)(3) status
 - Documentation of required insurance coverage
 - Owner Consent Form (if applicant is not the property owner)
- **For Business Entities:**
 - Completed Online Application
 - Organizational Documentation (e.g., articles of incorporation, LLC operating agreement)
 - Documentation of required insurance coverage
 - Owner Consent Form (if applicant is not the property owner)

Insurance Requirements

Estimated insurance costs are listed below. These amounts may be adjusted based on final project details:

- General Liability: \$1,000,000
- Auto and Workers' Compensation: \$1,000,000
- Fidelity Bond: \$25,000

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Application Evaluation Criteria

- Projects must be located in the Corridors of Opportunity.
- Proposed timeline must commence by December 31, 2024, with all funds expended by December 31, 2026.
- Financial cost and sustainability.
- Organization's experience and ability to meet program goals and objectives.
- Appropriateness of the project space for the proposed use. The project must meet all zoning and building code requirements.
- Project understanding and approach.
- Project readiness.
- Impact on the community and Corridors.

8. BUDGET AND FUNDING

Budget Information

- The City of Charlotte has allocated \$500,000 for this program.
- The City anticipates awarding no more than five grants in this cycle.
- Grant requests are accepted through September 9, 2024, at 5:00 PM EST.

Funding Sources

- Grant awards are funded through federal ARPA funds.
- All organizations receiving CSI funding must provide evidence of up-to-date and compliant SAM.gov registration and UEI number before the grant award and payment release.
- Organizations expending \$750,000 or more in federal funds annually (from all sources, including CSI) must obtain a Single Audit.

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs include:

- Supplementing rents for creative entrepreneur and/or artists
- Program costs associated with managing and operating the space including administrative, accounting, legal, or marketing expenses
- Insurance and utilities to operate the space
- Converting vacant or underutilized spaces into creative workspaces. The space must be operational by December 31, 2024.

- Property improvements that make the space better suited for the project including light renovations; parking and access; ventilation; security; lighting or signage. The space must be operational by December 31, 2024.
- Reimagining non-traditional spaces (e.g., libraries, schools) to enhance access to arts and culture

Funds cannot be used for personnel costs or employee salaries.

9. PROJECT TIMELINE

Key Milestones

- Application Release Date: Tuesday, August 13, 2024
- Q&A Webinar: Friday, August 26, 2024, at 11:00 AM
- Application Closes: Monday, September 9, 2024, at 5:00 PM EST
- Grant Recipients Announced: Monday, September 23, 2024
- Project Kick-Off: No later than December 31, 2024
- Project Completion: December 31, 2026

Project Schedule

- Applicants should provide a proposed timeline for project completion, including key milestones and deliverables.

10. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Contract Terms

- Review the sample City of Charlotte contract and list any exceptions in the Contract Exceptions form.
- Standard contract terms will apply. Awardees must submit documentation of required insurance.
- Awardees and projects must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

Confidentiality

- All information provided in response to this grant opportunity will be treated as confidential and used solely for evaluating proposals.

11. QUESTIONS

For inquiries about the project, contact: corridorsofopportunity@charlottenc.gov

The map below shows Charlotte's Corridors of Opportunity Areas of Influence. To be eligible for program funds, projects must be located in or demonstrably serve artists and creative workers in these areas. Visit [Charlotte's Corridor Map](#) and select "Corridors of Opportunity Areas of Influence" on the Layer List to view the map.

