



Community Access & Participation (CAP) 2026-27 Grant Guidelines

PROGRAM TIMELINE

- **Application Opens:** January 29, 2026
- **Application Workshops & Staff Appointments:** February 2026
- **Application Deadline:** February 27, 2026 at 11:59 PM (Pacific Time)
- **Application Review:** March-April 2026
- **Award Notifications:** May 2026
- **Contracting:** June-July 2026
- **CAP Grant Period:** July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Community Access & Participation (CAP) program provides annual, project-specific funding to Santa Monica–based nonprofit arts and culture organizations to increase public access to high-quality arts and cultural programs for residents and visitors.

CAP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible, applicants must:

- **Be a resident Santa Monica arts or cultural organization** at the time of application.
A resident organization is defined as one whose primary administrative office is located within Santa Monica city limits.
- **Hold 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.**
- **Have completed and submitted a Form 990** for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- **Submit a financial audit** if the organization’s annual operating budget exceeds \$2 million.
- **Comply with all applicable federal laws**, including the Fair Labor Standards Act; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (as amended); and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Applicants may not discriminate in hiring or program delivery based on race, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, HIV status, political affiliation or beliefs, or sexual orientation.
- **Be in good standing with all previous City of Santa Monica grants**, including submission of all required final reports.

Proposed CAP projects must:

- **Occur between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027.**
- **Increase public access** to high-quality arts and cultural programming for Santa Monica residents and visitors.
- **Take place within the City of Santa Monica** and be meaningfully offered to City residents.

Not Eligible for Funding:

- City agencies or other governmental bodies
- Organizations that receive more than 25% of their total funding (including in-kind support) from the City of Santa Monica
- Capital improvement projects or equipment purchases
- Deficit reduction projects
- Fundraisers or events that are not open to the public

HOW TO APPLY

- Applications must be submitted **online via [Survey Monkey Apply](#)** by **February 27, 2026** by 11:59 PM.
- Survey Monkey Apply FAQ's can be found [here](#).
- We strongly recommend drafting responses in a separate document before copying them into the online form. Download [sample questions to begin your application draft](#).
- Applicants are encouraged to submit at least three days before the deadline. Staff can only assist with troubleshooting if issues are brought to our attention early in the application period. Staff will not be available after 4:00 PM on the deadline day to assist with submissions.
- For questions or technical issues, email artsgrants@santamonica.gov.

APPLICATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

- **Application Workshop: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 11:00 AM**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82182804621>
Cultural Affairs staff will host an online workshop to walk applicants through the guidelines, application requirements, and review process, and to answer any questions.
- **Office Hours:** [Book a 20-minute one-on-one online appointment](#) with Cultural Affairs staff to discuss application, guidelines and process.

REVIEW PROCESS

CAP applications will be reviewed through a non-scored review that evaluates whether the proposed project meets CAP eligibility requirements and advances the program's purpose of increasing public access to arts and culture in Santa Monica.

Reviewers consider:

- Eligibility and completeness of the application
- Clarity and feasibility of the proposed project
- Community access and benefit to Santa Monica residents
- Alignment with the goals of the CAP program
- Available program funds

GRANT REQUESTS / AWARD AMOUNTS

CAP grant awards vary by organization and project, generally ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000, with a maximum award of \$5,000. Award amounts are determined based on organizational budget size and total program funds available.

GRANTEE PAYMENT & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Grantees may invoice for 75% of their award upon contract execution.
- The final 25% is paid at the end of the grant period, upon submission of a final invoice and final report.
- Grantees who do not submit their final report by the deadline may be deemed ineligible for future City of Santa Monica funding.

CONTRACTING & GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

Following final approval, the City will issue a grant agreement to each award recipient. Grantees must complete the contracting process and submit all required documentation before payment can be issued.

Required Contract Documents

- Grantees must submit the following:
- Proof of Insurance
- Proof of a current Santa Monica Business License
- Updated W-9 form
- Levine Act Form

Ongoing Grantee Responsibilities

- Credit the City of Santa Monica in all promotional materials related to the funded program.
- Notify Cultural Affairs staff in advance of all funded events or program activities.