



William B. Pratt Endowment Guidelines

Traditional and Folk Arts in Montana

Honoring Montana's Heritage: Preserving Stories, Traditions, and Cultures for Future Generations

About the Donor: This fund was established by William B. Pratt who has a life-long interest in Traditional and Folk arts, with experience as a musician working in the folk tradition and as a living history and production artisan in forged iron. This fund also honors his work in documentary and industrial film/video production, fostering community video efforts, and his extensive experience in grants administration, the development of arts and nonprofit organizations, and fostering philanthropy in the state.

The William B. Pratt Endowment Fund is a legacy gift to the people of Montana to help them tell and share stories – especially the untold ones – about Montana's arts, culture and history and to learn about the traditional art forms and cultures of this unique state.

The Traditional and Folks Arts Program provides support to build awareness, involvement, and the preservation of Traditional and Folk Arts in Montana.

Traditional Arts are creative expressions that originate within a distinct and identifiable group, such as those defined by ethnicity, tribe, geography, language, religion, or occupation. These arts can also emerge within familial traditions. They are deeply connected to the group's identity, reflecting the values, beliefs, and aesthetics of the community from which they arise. Often passed down through generations, traditional arts serve as symbols of heritage, conveying a group's cultural values both internally and to the outside world.

Traditional arts include Indigenous Traditional Arts. Traditional Indigenous art refers to creative works that originate from the cultural practices, beliefs, and values of Native American tribes in Montana. These arts are deeply rooted in the history, customs, and spiritual traditions of the specific tribes, passed down through generations. These art forms serve as powerful expressions of identity, heritage, and connection to the land, preserving the cultural narratives of Montana's Indigenous peoples.

Folk Art refers to artistic creations that are deeply rooted in cultural traditions but often reflect an idiosyncratic style unique to the individual artist. Unlike art created within formalized institutions, folk art is grounded in personal statements or visions that express the artist's connection to their community, heritage, or personal experience. It is often crafted using traditional methods, passed down informally, and reflects a direct link to the artist's way of life, beliefs, and environment.

Traditional and Folk arts forms may include:

- Fine handcraft
- Decorative arts
- Dance
- Poetry
- Instrumental and vocal music
- Storytelling and oral literature
- Foodways
- Local architecture

Eligibility:

- Grants will be made exclusively to support public projects that support Montana Traditional and Folk arts. Projects must include an educational component that highlights the art form and its cultural significance.
- Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) Organizations and governments including local, state, and tribal governments. Individual artists and other entities may apply under a fiscal sponsorship.
- Each organization may submit one application per year. However, organizations serving as fiscal sponsors for one or more artists may submit multiple applications, including an application for the organization's own programmatic purposes.
- Applications are encouraged that involve professional artists who are women, tribal members, rurally based, or are from populations that can be considered underserved.
- Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact MCF staff to discuss their project prior to applying.

Eligible Project:

- Exhibits, performances, apprenticeships, festivals, community celebrations, in-school and after school community learning programs, and print or audio/visual documentation, which involve recognized Traditional and Folk artists.
- Eligible costs include fees, honoraria, and associated program costs for the involvement of recognized Artists.
- Projects must involve Living Traditional or Folk Artists.
 - Living traditional art refers to cultural expressions that are actively practiced and passed down within communities, maintaining a connection to their historical roots while evolving with contemporary influences.
- Projects requesting funding for festivals or event must use that funding for the educational component of the festival or event (performance, lectures, demonstrations etc.) as opposed to the marketing or commercial elements of the event and specify when and where (community and venue) event will take place.
- Capital expenditures: Funding the involvement of artists is of primary interest. However, funding of temporary exhibit design or preparation costs, materials, stabilization, and construction may be considered, especially if it involved other costs such as insurance for exhibit objects or materials relating to the exhibit, e.g., signage, brochure, audio-video presentations, etc.
- Cooperative projects or initiatives that are within the intent of the programs purpose and aim to improve the field of Traditional and Folks Arts, may be considered on a case-by-case basis. These projects or initiatives may include the creation of local, regional or statewide traditional arts associations, offering technical or business assistance for traditional artists, or encouraging arts organizations to offer traditional arts programming.

Ineligible Project and Request

- General Operating Support
- Non-traditional art forms, such as contemporary art
- "Folkloric" or interpretive programs by artists not from the culture to be presented, historical and oral historical programs, or reenactments.

Traditional Indigenous Art and Indigenous Involvement: The Fund has a goal of making a minimum of 25% of the grant distribution for the benefit traditional indigenous art directly involving indigenous artists.

- For projects involving Indigenous traditional artists, applicants must attach documentation that they are enrolled members of a federally recognized tribe in Montana, i.e. those represented on the seven Indian reservations in the state or the Little Shell Chippewa Tribe.
- If a project conducted by non-Indigenous organizations involves Indigenous artist/organizations/communities or cultures, the applicant must describe how those community representatives are being consulted and involved and, when possible, document involvement through letters of support; or address why they are not involved.

Grant Amounts: Grants will range from \$500 to \$2,000. Small grants requests less than \$750 can apply using a simplified application form. Partial funding may be awarded.

Matching requirements: All grants must be matched dollar-for-dollar in cash or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. Applicants are encouraged to seek multiple funding sources.

A waiver of the dollar-for-dollar match requirement is available for applicants where the match requirement is a barrier to apply. Please contact Elisa Fiaschetti at elisa@mtcf.org for additional information.

Application Process

- Qualified applicants can apply online at MTCF.org.
- Only online applications will be accepted. Please contact us if you have accessibility challenges with an online application process.
- Applicants should be prepared to answer the following questions:
 - From which culture, community, tribe, ethnic, or occupational group does this traditional art form originate?
 - What are the traditional art forms practiced by this group, and what purpose do they serve beyond aesthetics?
 - Who are the recognized practitioners of this art form, and how is their expertise demonstrated? How and from whom did the artist learn this art form?
 - Describe the public event or outreach component of this project aimed at educating the public about the art form and its cultural significance.

Review Process: The William B Pratt Endowment Traditional and Folk Arts program awards grants on a competitive basis. Funding is limited. A grant review committee will score and evaluate each application and make award recommendations.

Reporting: A project report will be due within one year of receiving funds. Project reports must be received before additional grants are made.
