

2023-24 Application Questions

Q: Can we submit an application in both Comprehensive Organizational Support and Impact Funding?

A: No, organizations can submit only one application per funding cycle (see page 4 of the Guidelines).

Q: What does “cultural sector” mean?

A: “Cultural organizations” and/or “cultural sector” means, collectively, organizations whose primary purpose is to advance and/or preserve arts, culture, heritage, and/or science, and who provide public programming in these areas.

Q: How do we know if our organization counts as a cultural organization?

A: Refer to the definitions of Arts, Culture, Heritage, and Science organizations on page 3 of the Guidelines or on the Definitions page of our website. Your organization will need to demonstrate its primary purpose in sharing your mission and responding to the “about your organization” section in your application. If there are applications in which eligibility is unclear, staff will forward these applications to the Tacoma Creates Advisory Board, who will review these cases and make eligibility decisions.

Q: Can you help connect first time applicants to fiscal sponsor organizations?

A: Yes, we can help with some connections, though it is up to the potential fiscal sponsor organization to accept or decline requests for fiscal sponsorship. You can find more information about fiscal sponsorship in the Impact Funding

Q: Can a neighborhood council act as fiscal sponsor?

A: Most neighborhood councils are not currently 501(c)(3) organizations, so they don’t meet the criteria for fiscal sponsorship. However, if your neighborhood council does have 501(c)(3) status, they could be an option.

Q: If you are waiting 501(c)(3) approval can you still apply?

A: Yes, if you can document that the application is in process, we can accept that for the application. The IRS approval would need to be in place by June in order for us to be able to write a contract with a July 1 start date.

Q: Can the budget match for Impact Funding come from outside the organization, and what are examples of matching funds?

A: Yes, the budget match most often comes from outside the organization's existing resources, though you can include your organization's "cash on hand" as part of your match. Cash match sources can include "earned income" such as tickets, tuition, or merchandise sales, and "contributed income" such as donations from individuals or grants from other funders. You can also include the value of donated resources such as volunteer time and "goods or services" that are provided to your organization for free or at a reduced cost. Please refer to the budget information on pages 19-21 of the Impact Funding.

Q: What if the majority of our match comes from donations and volunteers?

A: Generally speaking, having a plan for some cash resources makes for a stronger budget, but it's not a requirement, and a match that is mostly from donated sources is okay. If you can back up the donations budget with any letters of commitment, for example, a letter from the owner/director of the venue that will be providing you a performance or workshop space for free, that is a great way to demonstrate confirmed resources from the community.

Q: Can organizations receive feedback about how they did on last year's application?

A: Yes, absolutely. Feel free to make an appointment via Calendly at <https://calendly.com/tacomacreates/> or email tacomacreates@cityoftacoma.org.

Q: Is there a word version of the application?

A: We have created "application worksheets" for both funding categories: Impact Funding application worksheet, Comprehensive Organizational Support application worksheet. They are not exact replicas of the online application form, but they do contain all of the core questions and lists of documents that will need to be gathered.

Q: Are Impact Funding applicants able to apply for funding for TPL or TPS programming?

A: Yes! See the appendix sections on pages 25 and 28 of the Impact Funding application guidelines for more information about these opportunities.

Q: Would a youth club be considered an exclusive or private program?

A: Is the club initially open to all youth who are the appropriate age/experience level? If so, then it's completely fine to have a club or a class that becomes "closed" after an initial registration period.

Q: Can galas and fundraising events be a part of an organization's general operating budget?

A: Absolutely. Tacoma Creates funds cannot be used to support fundraising events (see page 5 of the application guidelines), and you could not list Tacoma Creates as a funder/sponsor of any event with a primary purpose of raising funds. Organizations that receive Tacoma Creates funds can still produce fundraising events using other resources.

Q: What were the four key changes in the Equity & Access portion of the application and guidelines?

A: 1) We added a definition for BIPOC (see page 8 of the Guidelines); 2) we added a question in the application that asks about the percentage of your organization's leadership that identify as BIPOC; 3) we updated the Organizational Diversity Chart in the application to be inclusive of more aspects of identity (and also decreased the categories of team members to include in this chart); 4) we added a point within the Equity and Access review criteria about whether organizational leadership includes a significant number of individuals that identify as BIPOC.

Q: Our organization's budget is currently in the audit process, and we don't know if it will be ready by the deadline. What can we do for that section of the application?

A: There are three alternative options that we can accept – please see page 15 of the Comprehensive Organizational Support guidelines.

Q: Is there additional funding for Beyond the Bell / Club Beyond in the Comprehensive Organizational Support category if an organization would like to expand to more schools?

A: In the Comprehensive Organizational Support category, there is no additional funding for offering classes as part of the Beyond the Bell / Club Beyond program – it's something that organizations can choose to do as part of their overall Tacoma Creates proposal/contract.

Q: How do letters of commitment from partners support align with the review criteria?

A: Letters of commitment are a great thing to get from organizational partners that are co-producing or co-hosting any of your key programs. Depending on the project, this may help you demonstrate your community engagement, your work to broaden your organization's reach, your alignment with other community priorities, your solid planning efforts, and your capacity to make the work happen.

Q: The guidelines say you can't fund education programs at a college... but what if we have a program at a college that is open to the public?

A: If you are working with a college/university as a venue for a program that's open to anyone to attend, that's completely okay. What we can't fund is a program that is exclusively for students enrolled at that college or university.

Q: What organizations have served as fiscal sponsors for Tacoma Creates contracts in the past?

A: Organizations that have previously served as fiscal sponsors include: Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Foss Waterway Seaport, Pierce County Aids Foundation, Shunpike, and Tacoma Neighborhoods Together. If you are interested in seeing a current list of organizations who could potentially serve as a fiscal sponsor for your organization, you can review that list [here](#). This list is not exhaustive, and you are welcome to work with any non-profit organization that meets the eligibility criteria for your application situation.

Q: Can neighborhood councils have any organization as a fiscal sponsor?

A: No. Interested neighborhood councils can only apply with fiscal sponsors that are 501(c)(3) organizations in Tacoma and meet the primary purpose of advancing or preserving arts, culture, heritage, and/or science.

Q: Can science-based events occurring at schools be funded by Tacoma Creates?

A: Yes, Tacoma Creates-funded science organizations may offer education programs in partnership with Tacoma Public Schools as part of their Tacoma Creates proposal/contract.

Q: Can a neighborhood council propose more than one event in their application?

A: Of course! Any organization applying in the Impact Funding category has the option of proposing a one-time event or multiple programs. If proposing multiple events happening throughout the year, you will indicate that in your application, and the funding can be used to cover costs for all proposed events throughout the program year.

Q: Do the Review Panels use the City of Tacoma's Equity Index in their review of Tacoma Creates applications?

A: Not directly, but the Equity Index has informed some elements of the overall Review Criteria, which you can find in the published Application Guidelines.

Q: Can Tacoma Creates funds support individual artists interested in Tacoma Public Library programming?

A: Tacoma Creates cannot directly fund individual artists. That said, non-profit arts, culture, heritage, and science organizations that receive Tacoma Creates funds may use their funding to pay individual artists involved in their proposed programs and events.

Q: Do organizations need to report on changes to their proposed program budget?

A: No. In the Tacoma Creates final report, funded organizations will need to demonstrate how they allocated their Tacoma Creates funding during the program year, but they do not need to report on any program budget changes unless it impacts their ability to deliver the programming outlined in their contract.

Q: For both the Organizational Budget, and Attendance History – are you requesting this info on a calendar year basis, or for the timeframe of the grant (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)?

A: In both cases, we are looking for information about your organization's most recently completed fiscal year – so use whichever time frame matches your organization's accounting processes (usually it would be either January – December 2022, or July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022).

Q: On the application question about attendance, do you want attendance at all of our programs, including those sponsored by Tacoma Creates? Or Tacoma Creates programs only?

A: You can include attendance at all of your public programs. The intent of the attendance question is to give the review panelists a sense of the scope of your overall operations.