

Overview and Eligibility

The Valley Arts Initiative is a grant program designed to increase public understanding of and access to artistic activities of local organizations. Each year the SCVF receives a Wisconsin Arts Board award and matches this award with funds from foundations or individual donors.

Grant funds must be used for artistic activity that occurs within or benefits the St. Croix Valley, to organizations located in Washington and Chisago counties in Minnesota and Pierce, Polk, Burnett and St. Croix counties in Wisconsin.

To be eligible, the applicant must be a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Applicants may also designate a 501(c)(3) organization as a fiscal sponsor. Applicants must also have no outstanding final reports due to the SCVF for previous arts grants.

Funding Categories and Program Goals

In recognition of the rich variety of St. Croix Valley arts activity, proposals are accepted in the following categories:

1. *Arts with a Public Impact*: Supporting projects that have a positive impact on St. Croix Valley residents, enriching the region's quality of life. Specifically, the Foundation seeks to:
 - Bring a wider audience to understanding, experiencing or appreciating an artistic or cultural experience.
 - Use art as a means to make connections, generate dialogue or stimulate action around a specific issue.
2. *Arts in Healthcare and Social Service*: Recognizing the power of the arts for serving patients and clients of healthcare and social service organizations.
3. *Arts Ecosystem*: The Foundation seeks to support initiatives that support a larger and more engaged audience for the arts in the St. Croix Valley. Examples of this type of activity could include marketing initiatives or capacity building.

Funding Criteria

The Foundation reviews proposals using the following criteria:

1. Artistic Excellence and Leadership
 - The project demonstrates artistic excellence through qualified artists and staff.
 - The project idea and applicant organization itself demonstrate artistic leadership.
2. Impact and Community Benefit
 - The proposal explains the target population and/or intended audience and demonstrates a clear need for the project.
 - The project has an artistic impact on the community or the region as a whole.
 - The project has a broader impact on the community or the region as a whole beyond artistic or entertainment value.
 - The project will benefit organizations located in the SCVF's service area.

3. Management and Fiscal Responsibility

- There is a clearly defined plan and achievable goals, activities and timelines.
- The project includes a marketing plan to reach its intended audience.
- The proposal describes a plan to measure whether the project meets its goals.
- The budget is realistic, the project is financially feasible, and budget details are provided.

Preference to projects that have not received a grant award from the SCVF previously is considered during the ranking process. The review panel will make an effort to ensure available funds are awarded to organizations throughout our service area.

Eligible Expenses

Grant funds must be expended within one year from the date of the award. Grants cannot be used for uniforms or for expenses already incurred by the applicant.

Grant Range

Grants range from \$250 up to \$5,000. Proposals may be awarded partial funding.

Proposal Limits

An organization is limited to one proposal for each SCVF grant program, including the Valley Arts Initiative. An applicant may submit a proposal for a different SCVF grant program during the same grant cycle if they are eligible.

Decision-Making Process

A panel reviews proposals in a public meeting. Applicants are invited and encouraged to attend, but attendance will not affect the decision on your organization's proposal. Decisions in all grant programs follow an established review process and are made according to a conflict of interest policy.

Questions: Contact Angie Pilgrim, Grants and Programs Officer, St. Croix Valley Foundation, 715-386-9490