



NEW MEXICO ARTS & THE MILITARY

2026 MINI GRANTS

Call For Proposals



Cover Images:

(Top Left) 2025 Mini Grant Awardee: Otero Arts Veterans Arts Showcase - Alamogordo, NM

(Top Right) 2025 Mini Grant Awardee: CENTER, Visual Storytelling Lab - Santa Fe. Image: Peter Evan Costas - *The Mess Hall*, Silver Gelatin

(Bottom Left) 2025 Mini Grant Awardee: Otero Arts Veterans Showcase - Alamogordo, NM

(Bottom Center) 2025 Mini Grant Awardee: SouthWest Writers - Anthology Albuquerque, NM

(Bottom Right) 2025 Mini Grant Awardee: Groove Art Center, Family Arts Classes - Albuquerque, NM

Arts & The Military Mini Grants 2026 Call for Proposals

Background:

The Arts & The Military Initiative is rooted in New Mexico Arts' mission to ensure the arts are central to the lives of New Mexicans. New Mexico has 141,558 veterans residing in the state with military retirees in all 33 counties. 8.8% of the adults in the state are veterans, a higher percentage than neighboring states and the 12th largest veteran-to-adult population in the United States. New Mexico is home to 11,458 veterans who are between the ages of 18 and 34 years old, 31,371 are age 35 to 54. In 21 New Mexico Counties, 50% of the veterans who reside there are over the age of 65.

Active-Duty service members including National Guard numbers 22,106, stationed at one of 5 military bases in New Mexico. The number of spouses of active-duty service members adds another 7,921 adults. There are also 13,132 children of active-duty service members living in New Mexico bringing the total count of active-duty connected individuals to 43,159.

New Mexico Arts & The Military Program Goals

1. Create more opportunities for military and veteran audiences – including active-duty service members, reservists, National Guard members, veterans, their families and caregivers, and others – to meaningfully engage with the arts.
2. Build capacity among New Mexico organizations to offer arts programs for military-connected participants.

Applicant Eligibility:

- Organizations must be New Mexico domiciled or registered as foreign entities authorized to do business in the State of New Mexico, providing services in New Mexico, and including Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (3) tax exempt, New Mexico nonprofit organizations, units of government, schools, colleges, universities, and Indian tribal government entities.
- Organizations receiving New Mexico Arts funding in other grant programs are eligible to apply.

NEW! ADVANCE REVIEW

Advance review of your application is **required** if: your organization is a **new applicant** or did not receive funding for a prior application to the Mini Grant program. Failure to submit application for advance review will **disqualify your final application**. The Advance Review deadline is **Sept 22, 2025**.

Please Note: Organizations that have received a mini grant in the past are encouraged to submit their application for advance review if pursuing any new project ideas.

Amount:

Applicants can request \$2,500. No matching funds are required but your organization may commit additional funds to the activity. Selected proposals will receive the full amount requested.

Timeline:

- Advance Review of Application due **September 22, 2025.** *(see eligibility requirements above)*
- Mini Grant Application Final Deadline: **5pm (MST) November 7, 2025.**
- Award Notification: December 2, 2025.
- Project Activities should occur between January 2026 and June 15, 2026.
- The Final Report and Invoice must be submitted to New Mexico Arts by June 15, 2026.

Type of Activity Supported:

Activities that support military and veteran audiences – including active-duty service members, reservists, National Guard members, veterans, their families and caregivers, and others) living in New Mexico, or training to build organizational capacity to offer arts programs for military-connected participants, which are to be integrated into nonprofit arts programming in the State of New Mexico. Projects can be new or ongoing but cannot end before the submission of an application. Examples of projects can include:

Learning-Based Arts Projects

- Classes, workshops, lectures (frequency and duration may vary)
- Online/virtual learning-based arts programs

Capacity Building Projects

Projects that increase an organization's capacity to provide arts experiences and programming to military-connected audiences, including but not limited to:

- Professional development opportunities
- Contracted consultant services
- Research, development, and program evaluation expenses

What Expenses Are Allowable?

Funding from New Mexico Arts & the Military Grants can be used toward the following expenses:

- Artistic, administrative, and technical fees
- Consultant and facilitator fees
- Consumable supplies
- Marketing expenses
- Rental fees
- Artist travel fees

New Mexico Arts cannot fund:

- Any events or activities already listed as part of another organization's application
- Projects or organizations (including fiscal agents) outside of the State of New Mexico
- Investment or contingency funding (i.e., accounts earning interest)
- Direct aid to individuals, including fellowships, scholarships, cash prizes, or awards
- Projects that have already occurred
- Projects in which school, college, or university course credit is the primary purpose
- Projects whose main purpose is recreational
- Cost of parties, receptions, fund-raising events, and other social functions
- Grant writing, solicitation of gifts/services, and donor appreciation programs
- Any food except when food is part of a per diem
- Deficit reduction or negotiated indirect costs
- Projects in which commissions/ acquisitions of permanent works of visual art are the primary purpose
- Permanent acquisitions (i.e., buildings or land)
- Capital Improvements, new construction, renovation, or conservation
- Capital supplies & equipment such as copy machines, musical instruments, electronic equipment, computers, etc.
- Requests that fund other divisions, foundations, or employees and contractors of the Department of Cultural Affairs or members of the New Mexico Arts Commission

Proposal requirements and submission:

- In a PDF document or PDF fillable form, provide a clear and concise overview of your proposed project (**maximum 2 pages**).

(*Select one*) Does the project create new or additional opportunities for military audiences to meaningfully engage with the arts or does the project build capacity for your organization to offer arts programs in the future for military audiences?

Overview of Proposed Project to include:

- List your organization's mission statement and provide a brief summary of past or current organizational activities.
 - Describe your proposed Arts & the Military project goal(s).
 - How many *military-connected* individuals do you estimate will benefit from your proposed programs or services? **NEW!**
 - Describe how you intend to reach primary audience or describe existing relationships with military connected audiences.
 - What is the timeline for planned activities and where will they take place?
 - List key project artists or staff with their relevant experience and roles in relation to the proposed project. List any community partners? What are their roles?
 - Provide a project budget showing how New Mexico Arts funds will be used and any other project funding (please review eligible listed above).
 - How will you measure the success of your project?
- Submit a completed NM W-9 form. Available [here](#): See example: [New Mexico Arts W9 Example](#)
 - Email application to Kevin Lenkner at kevin.lenkner@dca.nm.gov by 5 p.m. (MST), **November 7, 2025**.

Selection Criteria:

Proposals will be selected by New Mexico Arts based on the following criteria:

1. Does the project create new or additional opportunities for military audiences to meaningfully engage with the arts.
Or
Does the project build capacity for your organization to offer arts programs in the future for military audiences.
2. Feasibility of activity or service within the timeline and organizational capacity.
3. Audience/participant recruiting and promotion strategies.
4. Appropriateness of budget.
5. Plan for evaluation that addresses specific measures of success and how they are documented.

The number of proposals selected will be limited by the funds available. **A short final report and invoice will be submitted to New Mexico Arts by June 15, 2026.**

Resources:

The National Initiative for Arts & Health Across The Military:

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/the-national-initiative-for-arts-health-across-the-military>

Non-discrimination:

New Mexico Arts complies with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations concerning civil and human rights and must assure that programs, grants, and employment practices are free of any discrimination based on race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age.

Accessibility:

For accessibility questions, request for accommodation, or to receive an alternate format of this call for proposals please contact New Mexico Arts & The Military Coordinator, Kevin Lenkner.

Legal Scope of Work Disclosure:

The Agency recognizes the need for arts programming and services targeted to military-connected communities.

Scope of Work

- I. Coordinate and deliver arts services to military veterans and related audiences (including active-duty service members, reservists, National Guard members, veterans, their families and caregivers, and others) living in New Mexico, or offer training to build organizational capacity to offer arts programs for military-connected participants, which are to be integrated into nonprofit arts programming in the State of New Mexico.

- II. Contractor should use the Agency's Arts & The Military logo (if applicable) and the Agency's logo (if applicable) in all Visual Publicity as space allows.
- III. Program activities must be completed before June 15, 2026.
- IV. Final report and invoice submitted to the Agency by June 15, 2026.

New Mexico Arts Mini Grant Program Contact:

Kevin Lenkner

Program Coordinator, New Mexico Arts & The Military

New Mexico Arts | Department of Cultural Affairs

Kevin.Lenkner@dca.nm.gov

505-412-5791 (voice only) 800-659-8331 (TTY Relay)