



**Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.**  
**Arts & Culture Initiative**  
*At the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo*

## **Grant Guidelines**

In August 2025, the Arts & Culture Initiative offers 2 opportunities:

1. Combined Capacity-building and General Operating funds for organizations with at least 1 full-time (or 1 FTE) staff member to help organizations build the solid foundation necessary to pursue an ambitious Mission and Vision;
2. General Operating Micro Grants for organizations with less than 1 full-time equivalent staff member to execute immediate programming.

It is highly recommended that potential applicants for the Capacity-Building and General Operating opportunity participate in one training session prior to completing the grant application. Applicants will have the opportunity to learn more about capacity-building. Virtual Training information is available [here](#).

### Eligibility

- Small to mid-sized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that have arts and culture as core to their mission. Exceptions may be made for the core mission in rural communities with limited independent arts and cultural organizations.  
*Exceptions must be granted by the Community Foundation in writing. Please write to Yuki at [yukinr@crgb.org](mailto:yukinr@crgb.org) to explain the unique circumstances in your rural community by August 29.*
- Applicant organizations must be physically located in and/or operate in one or more of nine counties – Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, Wyoming.
- Applicant organizations must have had an operating budget of no more than \$500,000 in their most recently completed fiscal year.  
*NOTE: We look at the operating expenses when determining the operating budget size of an organization.*

- While organizations undergoing significant capital projects resulting in significantly reduced programming are eligible to apply, organizations with fully active programming will be prioritized.
- The 13 organizations named by Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation receiving direct, yearly funding are not eligible.
- Fiscal sponsorships are acceptable; the fiscal sponsor does not need to meet above criteria but the applicant organization does.

The Community Foundation will not consider funding for:

- Higher education scholarships
- Religious purposes
- Projects exclusively for residents of other counties than the nine listed above.
- Schools not registered with the New York State Education Department
- Attendance at or sponsorship of fundraising events for organizations
- Any partisan political activity. Funds from the Community Foundation cannot be used to support or oppose a candidate for political office.
- Projects and activities that have occurred. The Community Foundation will not, except in extraordinary cases, provide payment or reimbursement for expenses incurred prior to the funding decision being communicated to the applicant.

Additional Information

- The Community Foundation reserves the right to conduct an independent evaluation of grant expenditures for up to four years. The grantee agrees to provide the information necessary to complete such an evaluation. Failure to submit requested information in a timely fashion may obligate the grantee to refund the grant.
- The use of grant funds for purposes not pre-approved by the Community Foundation or not supported through required documentation will result in a request that those grant funds be returned to the Community Foundation. The failure of an applicant to properly close out a grant in a timely manner will be a factor when considering new grants.
- The Community Foundation embraces the benefits of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In its grantmaking decisions, the Community Foundation supports organizations, projects, and programs that share its belief that no person in the United States shall on the basis of the Protected Characteristics, or any other improper criterion, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under its programs or activities.