# COMMISSION ON THE ARTS
## Special Project Grant for the City of Ames
## Summer 2026: April 1 – October 31, 2026

## PURPOSE

The Commission on the Arts (COTA) offers a special project grant program for opportunities and circumstances that cannot be anticipated within COTA's annual grant process. No project may be funded through the special project grant program if it has been denied in the annual COTA process, or if the event or program has been funded through the annual grant process, unless there have been specific modifications to the original, funded proposal.

## GRANT PERIOD AND DEADLINES

| **Special Project Grant Period:** | **Summer 2026** |
|---|---|
| If project occurs between: | April 1, 2026 – October 31, 2026 |
| Date of the Workshop: | January 5, 2026 |
| Applications due: | January 26, 2026 |
| Date of the Hearings: | February 2, 2026 |
| COTA Recommendations: | March 2, 2026 |
| Final Accounting/Evaluation Report Due: | November 20, 2026 |

## GUIDELINES

Non-profit arts organizations that meet the criteria established by COTA (must have a tax-exemption number, or be applying for one) are eligible to apply for special project grants in the arts. The grants will be made on the basis of competitive evaluation among the proposals received during the grant period.

The following guidelines are to assist you in the application process.

### Definitions of Eligible Organizations

1. Be located in Ames.
2. Not a for-profit or governmental entity.
3. Have by-laws or other documentation which identify its major responsibility as meeting specific arts goals.
4. Be federally tax exempt, or affiliated with a federally tax exempt organization.
5. Those which do not discriminate, in accordance with law, on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

### Criteria for Funding

1. Need for financial support
2. Efforts to obtain funding from other sources

3. Fiscal responsibility and accountability
4. How the Ames community would be served and arts awareness would be furthered
5. Nature of audience to be served/benefitted

## Not Eligible for Funding

Applications will not be considered for:

1. Capital improvements
2. Permanent supplies and equipment
3. Ongoing wages, salaries, and benefit expenses for permanent employees
4. Out-of-state travel by organization members
5. Replacement of available local funds
6. Previous year's or projected deficits
7. Hospitality expenses (e.g. Receptions)
8. Tuition assistance for academic study and continuing education
9. Activities that restrict participation on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion, physical disability, mental disability, or that require the purchase of private memberships
10. Project requests not submitted on required forms, not received by published deadlines, or not falling within the current grant period
11. Organizations which fail to submit previous final reports
12. Organizations which do not have specific arts goals as their major responsibility

## REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must show some reasonable cash support from other sources. Where appropriate, greater priority is given to those projects that offset part of their costs with admission or workshop fees or contributions. Applications are viewed more favorably when the match is at least 25% from the sponsoring organization. COTA reserves the right to question the financial need of applicants who ignore earned income potential. Recognized exceptions may include, but are not limited to: events that are difficult to ticket, events for which admission cannot be charged because such practice is against board-stated policies, promotional activities striving to develop new audiences, or those presenting financial hardship for attendees.

Donations of goods and services may be noted on the application at the organization's discretion, but may not totally replace required cash support noted above.

All special project grant applications must have the approval of the applicant organization and be authorized by an officer of that organization.

Supporting materials are not required, but a one- or two-page narrative should be submitted as necessary for a clear explanation of the proposed project.

## WORKSHOP

A workshop will be held to assist in completing the application See page 1 for the workshop date. COTA strongly encourages attendance at the workshop.

## HEARINGS

See page 1 for hearing dates. Hearings for Special Project Grants provide organizations with time to explain their use of COTA funds and to answer questions of COTA. Organizations must have a representative present for their hearings.

## FUNDING

**For Summer 2026, up to $2,500** is available for each award. The intention is to fund as many projects as possible. Organizations submitting more than one application per granting period should prioritize the requests.

Please read the application instructions and fill out the form neatly and completely. If you have questions, call the City Manager's Office at (515) 239-5101. Mail to the address given on the grant request form. The application may be submitted electronically in PDF format to COTA@cityofames.org. We look forward to receiving your request and to helping you in your arts project.

### Responsibilities and Obligations of Grantees

The contribution of Local Option Tax funds provided by the City of Ames through the Commission on the Arts should be acknowledged on all printed materials produced to support a COTA-funded activity: ***"With support of the City of Ames Commission on the Arts."***

## FINAL REPORTS

All grantees must submit financial and narrative reports that indicate the project was completed. Electronic PDF format submission, with a scanned signature, is preferred and should be submitted to COTA@cityofames.org. Organizations failing to submit the final report will not be eligible to apply for special grants in the future.