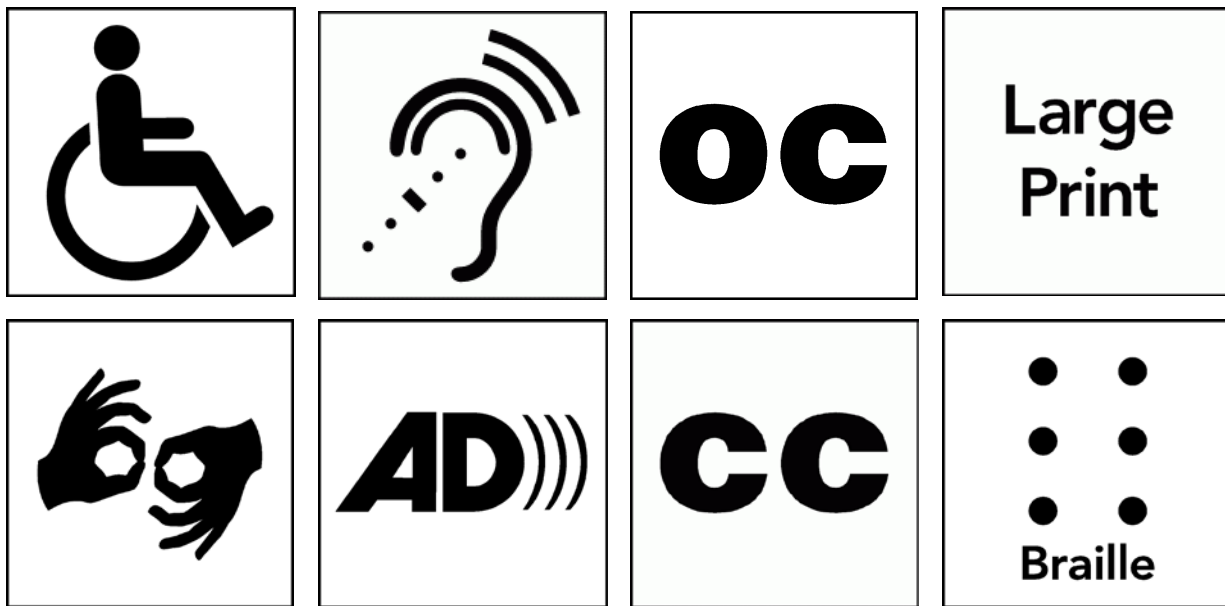


ADA Access Improvement Grants for Metro Arts Organizations

2010 Grant Guidelines and Application



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MN Relay Service, dial 711 or 800-627-3529



To request alternative formats of this information such as Braille, large print, e-mail, audio tape or computer disk, contact VSA arts of Minnesota.

WHO IS VSA ARTS OF MINNESOTA

VSA arts of Minnesota is a statewide nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to create a community where people with disabilities can learn through, participate in and access the arts.

VSA arts of Minnesota is an affiliate of VSA, an international nonprofit organization affiliated with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Programs include:

1. **Arts in Education** programs bring artists with and without disabilities into classrooms and community settings to work with young people with disabilities.
2. **Professional Development** opportunities are available for audio describers, ASL interpreters, arts organization staffs, teachers and artists.
3. **Cultural Access** efforts enable arts organizations to be more accessible to people with disabilities through ADA Access Improvement Grants; Access to Performing Arts publicity; building access surveys; ADA Access Plans; and other accessibility assistance.
4. **Arts and Disability Awareness** programs include art exhibits, print and e-mail newsletters, an accessible website, annual Arts Access Awards and media contacts.

VSA arts of Minnesota Grant and Award programs include:

FOR ARTS ORGANIZATIONS:

ADA Access Improvement Grants for Metro Arts Organizations — to make improvements to their programs, equipment or facilities that will enhance access for people with disabilities.

Access to Performing Arts Grants — to help pay for ASL interpreter and Audio Describer fees, and to help subsidize ticket prices paid by ASL/AD patrons (partly funded by COMPAS).

FOR ARTISTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Career Advancement Grants – \$1250 to help emerging artists take steps that will advance their careers in the arts (funded by the Jerome Foundation).

FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Cash awards and opportunities for performances, publication and exhibits are available to **Young Soloists, Young Playwrights, Young Writers, Visual Artists** (All Kids Can, Collaborative Postcards, Accelerate and others) and **VSA arts Apprentices** (Williamstown Theatre Festival). For updates and deadlines on these programs, go to www.vsaartsmn.org.

OTHER ACCESSIBILITY FUNDING & RESOURCES

The **Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC)** serves arts organizations in Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties in Minnesota. In addition to funding these ADA Access Improvement Grants, MRAC has other grant programs. One specifically related to accessibility is the **Emergency ADA Access Fund**, which funds up to \$600 for unforeseen project or program costs to facilitate access for persons with disabilities. For more information, call 651-645-0402, e-mail mrac@mrac.org or go to www.mrac.org

Local and regional Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) resources include:

ADA Minnesota: Cindy Tarshish, 1600 University Ave. W., #16, St. Paul, MN 55104
651-603-2015, TTY 651-603-2001, 888-630-9793; cindy@mcil-mn.org; www.adaminnesota.org

Great Lakes ADA Center: (Chicago), 800-949-4232 (V/TTY), www.adagreatlakes.org

ADA.gov: all Americans with Disabilities Act regulations, www.ada.gov

ADA Access Improvement Grants for Metro Arts Organizations

2010 Grant Guidelines and Application

In 2010 and 2011, **ADA Access Improvement Grants for Metro Arts Organizations** are available to Minnesota nonprofit arts organizations in Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties with annual budgets under \$4,460,000. (This excludes Group 1 organizations funded by the Minnesota State Arts Board.) The grants are administered by VSA arts of Minnesota for the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC), with funds provided by the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Maximum grant award	\$15,000
Grant Deadline, Round 1:	March 12, 2010
Grant Deadline, Round 2:	May 21, 2010

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PART I – GUIDELINES

ADA Access Improvement Grants for Metro Arts Organizations

Program Description

The ADA Access Improvement Grants for Metro Arts Organizations program provides funds of up to \$15,000 for nonprofit arts organizations to make improvements to their programs, projects, equipment, or facilities that will enhance access for people with disabilities. Grants awarded shall include a requirement for reporting measurable outcomes of projects funded.

Such activities must:

- 1) advance the mission of your group, and
- 2) have the potential for significant or long-term impact in involving more people with disabilities as participants or patrons in your programs.

ADA Access Improvement Grant applications must show evidence that thorough planning has taken place. For example, in the narrative portion of the application, you will be asked to define your project and how its goals were developed (through your organization’s ADA Access Plan, discussion by your board, advisory group, patrons, staff, consultant, service organization, state or local agency, etc.). Indicate how you will alert the public to the accessibility improvements you are making; identify specific grant expenditures and vendors submitting estimates or bids; state what follow-through will be involved for the following year.

Program Requirements

- The proposed improvement must have the potential for significant or long-term impact in involving more people with disabilities as participants or patrons in your programs.
- For every four dollars requested, you must match or raise at least one dollar from a source other than this grant. For example:

<u>Grant Request:</u>	<u>Cash Match must be at least:</u>
\$5,000	\$1,250
\$10,000	\$2,500
\$15,000	\$3,750

Match sources may include general operating funds, past surpluses, other grants, donations, earned income or revenue you plan to raise specifically for this project. Please indicate which sources are already in-hand, committed or tentative.

- The cash match may not come from other State of Minnesota government money (MRAC Capital Grant or State Arts Board grant).

- In-kind donations may be noted in your narrative or budget notes, but may not be used to supply the cash match (see definition, page 9).
- Your request may not be part of a larger capital campaign unless (A) the total project will be completed within one year of the Start Date, and (B) you receive written approval from VSA arts of Minnesota before applying.
- **(2010 applicants)** The organization must either have an ADA Access Plan in effect or have plans to adopt one by December 31, 2010.
- **(2011 applicants)** The organization must have an ADA Access Plan in effect.
- Call VSA arts of Minnesota staff at 612-332-3888 if you have any questions about eligible expenses.
- Grantees must give credit for this funding by stating: "This activity is funded, in part, by the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008."
- Applicants must project anticipated measurable outcomes and, in a final report, state the actual outcomes achieved.
- A grantee may have only one ADA Access Improvement Grant at one time.
- A group may submit one application in 2010 and one in 2011 (assuming a successful grantee's final report has been submitted).

ADA Access Improvement Grant 2010 Deadlines

<u>Application Deadline</u>	<u>Panel Review</u>	<u>Award Notification</u>	<u>Earliest Project Start Date</u>
ROUND 1 5 p.m. Friday March 12, 2010	Thurs.-Fri. April 15-16, 2010	Tuesday April 27, 2010	Wednesday April 28, 2010
ROUND 2 5 p.m. Friday May 21, 2010	Thurs.-Fri June 17-18, 2010	Wednesday June 30, 2010	Thursday July 1, 2010

Eligibility

To ensure eligibility, all applicants are encouraged to read these guidelines thoroughly and attend an application informational meeting.

Who does this program fund?

- Incorporated nonprofit arts groups located in the Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area with annualized operating expenses less than \$4,460,000 and at least a two-year history of programs/services.

About nonprofit and tax-exempt status: groups must be incorporated as a nonprofit in Minnesota to be eligible for this program. If you are incorporated as a nonprofit but do not have IRS tax-exempt status, you must apply using a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization as a fiscal sponsor (see definition, page 9). For-profit organizations may not apply.

- Nonprofit non-arts organizations with annualized arts programming expenses may be eligible if:
 - They have independent and sustained arts programs (see definition, page 9), and
 - They can demonstrate clearly that the sustained arts program serves people with disabilities (see definition, page 9) in the community and that their proposed project is primarily intended to increase the participation by people with disabilities in their programs.

(For example, a Community Education office may serve as fiscal sponsor for an “independent and sustained” community arts group that meets all other eligibility requirements.)

Non-arts organizations must get written approval of eligibility from VSA arts of Minnesota before applying.

Who does this program NOT fund?

- Applicant groups located outside the seven-county metro area.
- Group 1 organizations funded by the Minnesota State Arts Board.
- For-profit organizations.
- Individuals
- Educational institutions or projects that take place as part of Pre-K–16 general education activities. This exclusion includes public, private, alternative, charter and home schools.
- **(For 2011 applications)** 2010 ADA Access Improvement grant recipients who have not fulfilled final reporting requirements.

What might this program fund?

ADA Access Improvement Grants may be used for projects such as the examples listed below. This list is intended to help you understand the grant program’s purpose; it is not a complete list of eligible projects.

- Purchase, installation and maintenance of equipment for audio description, captioning, assistive listening, Braille, recorded audio described art gallery tours, etc. (**NOTE:** the Guthrie Theater Access Office loans portable audio description equipment and can make Braille copies at minimal cost.)

- Purchase of computer hardware and software with accessibility features for patrons or staff with vision, hearing, tactile or other disabilities.
- Facility improvements such as ramps, elevators, lifts, signage, and accessible seating areas to increase accessibility for patrons, performers, staff or artists.
- Hiring American Sign Language interpreters, DeafBlind tactile interpreters, Deaf coaches, audio describers or captioners for performances, meetings, rehearsals and special events. (**NOTE:** the grant is intended to help groups reach, involve, build, and maintain an audience who will use these services – not just to provide money to pay for these services IF someone shows up).
- Hiring consultants to advise or train the organization on accessibility-related planning, advisory committees, customer service, website design, etc.
- Paying costs for staff, board, volunteers or the organization’s accessibility coordinator (the point person on addressing Americans with Disabilities Act compliance) to attend conferences that will help the organization address specific accessibility needs.
- Developing collaborations with specific artists or groups of individuals with disabilities.

What does this program NOT fund?

- The cost of ASL interpreting, audio description or Braille for one show.
- Purchase of land or buildings, endowments, debt reduction or cash reserves.
- Costs for fund-raising events.
- Activities that engage in political lobbying, serve the religious socialization of participants or discriminate against persons or groups.

Before You Apply – Technical Assistance

For application questions or to have your application reviewed prior to submission, contact Jon Skaalen, program coordinator, access@vsaartsmn.org or jon@vsaartsmn.org or 612-332-3888 ext. 2, voice/tty.

Application Information Meetings

VSA arts of Minnesota will offer several information meetings to address the process and criteria specific to this new grant program. You are encouraged to attend to ask questions and discuss project ideas with arts colleagues. (Questions, ideas and grant requests received in the first two 2010 grant rounds will be considered in making revisions for the 2011 grant rounds.) For dates, times and locations of these information meetings, contact VSA arts of Minnesota at 612-332-3888 v/tty, email access@vsaartsmn.org or go to www.vsaartsmn.org.

What Happens After You Apply

- **Eligibility review** – VSA arts of Minnesota staff reviews all applications for eligibility. Errors may reduce the size of your award or make the application ineligible. Late and incomplete applications are ineligible.
- **Panel review meeting** – A peer review panel reviews all eligible applications. In the spirit of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, the panel meeting is open to the public. Applicants will be notified of the meeting and are welcome to attend to enhance their understanding of the application review process and to hear the panelists' comments directly. If you need communication accommodations (e.g., ASL interpreter), please contact VSA arts of Minnesota at least a week before the panel meeting, which is conducted in a fragrance-free setting.
- **Open records** – Because the ADA Access Improvement program re-grants public funds, submitted applications are public information. VSA arts of Minnesota will maintain a library of these grant applications and recorded panel discussions, which future applicants may review.
- **Board approval** – The panel submits its recommendations to the VSA arts of Minnesota board of directors, which makes the final decisions on funding.
- **Notification** – Approximately 15 days after the panel review, applicants will receive a letter and/or email notifying them of the board's decision. A list of funded applications will be posted on the VSA arts of Minnesota and MRAC websites. If you want more insight on your application's review, you may call the grant program coordinator for feedback.
- **Appeal procedure** – The board's funding decisions may be appealed solely on alleged procedural errors. There is no right of appeal based on the size of the grant awarded or on disagreements with the review panel's assessment of your application. Appellants must request an appeal in writing within 30 days of notification of the board decision. For a copy of the appeal process, contact VSA arts of Minnesota at 612-332-3888 or access@vsaartsmn.org.

Definitions

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – a federal law adopted in 1990 that makes access to cultural programs and services for persons with disabilities a civil right. The law and regulations are found at www.ada.gov.

ADA Access Plan – an organization's plan to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In the spirit of that law, VSA arts of Minnesota believes that the receipt of public money obligates grant recipients to ensure that people with disabilities can fully participate in and enjoy arts activities. An ADA Access Plan is one approach to understanding how a group can become more accessible. It serves to assess the accessibility of an organization's programs, services and

facilities and define strategies for improvement. These strategies may include bringing an organization or facility into compliance with the ADA or state or local building codes. An Arts Accessibility Planning Guide published by MRAC may be downloaded from www.mrac.org or www.vsaartsmn.org. Sample ADA Access Plans for arts organizations are available from VSA arts of Minnesota.

Person with a Disability – The ADA definition of disability (available from VSA arts of Minnesota) basically considers a person of any age to have a disability if a physical or mental impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities – such as hearing, seeing, walking, breathing or speaking. People with disabilities have traditionally not had access to the arts for reasons of physical or program access, economics or transportation, and generally do not see their lives, culture or experiences reflected through the arts. Thus, this grant program intends to make the arts more accessible to people who are blind or of low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing, or have mobility impairments, chemical sensitivity, mental illness, or other cognitive and physical disabilities.

A Fiscal Sponsor – a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that receives grant monies and manages the financial aspects of the project on behalf of a group that does not have tax-exempt status. A fiscal sponsor must be based in Minnesota; it may be an arts or social services organization, school, city or government agency.

In-kind – non-cash donations of goods and services for which your group would otherwise have to pay. In-kind goods and services may be noted in your grant application, but may not be used for determining cash match amounts.

An “independent and sustained arts program” in a non-arts, nonprofit organization – has 1) a separate advisory board overseeing the arts programming, 2) a separate arts program Income and Expenses Statement, and 3) ongoing programming with at least a two-year history of arts activities.

Project Start Date – the point at which commitments may be made that set the project in motion (e.g., payment of professional fees, completion of contracts, equipment purchases). ADA Access Improvement Grant funds may not be used for projects to which you have made a financial commitment before the published earliest project start date.