



Creative Impact Cohort

2025-2026

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County's Creative Impact Cohort (CIC) builds capacity for local artists of all disciplines by providing financial support for projects developed and implemented by artists in all phases of their career living in Cumberland County. This cohort-styled program supports individual artists with awards of up to \$4,000 for a 6-month project period.

Artists selected for grant funding will be required to participate in monthly meetings with Arts Council grant staff and fellow grantees to support project success and enhance professional growth. Meetings will include topics such as: marketing and self-promotion, project management (process monitoring and budget maintenance), business skills for artists, documentation and portfolio development, connection to artist network.

PROGRAM GOALS

The Arts Council has designed this program to address a need for artistic development in Cumberland County. Overall program goals include:

- Foster artistic & professional excellence through structured development leading a network of well rounded artists representing Cumberland County
- Build a collaborative community of artists working together and supporting each others work across various disciplines
- Increase public engagement with local artists and their work

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS MUST

- Live in Cumberland County, NC
- Work in an artistic discipline including but not limited to Visual Arts, Literature, Music, Theatre/Performance, Dance, Film/Video, and Interdisciplinary
- Commit to participating in all required development activities
- Not be under a current grant contract with the Arts Council
- Be 18 years or older

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

As a recipient of the CIC Grant, artists will complete the following.

- **Project Development:** Grantees will create or complete an artistic project or body of work

- **Professional Engagement:** Participation in regular meetings Arts Council grant staff and fellow grantee artists
- **Final Presentation:** Public showcase of completed work by the conclusion of the grant period
- **Documentation:** Comprehensive documentation of process and outcomes

As part of the grant program meetings, artists will receive:

- Monetary stipend
- Support services such as:
 - Capacity support for documentation and presentation of program
 - Networking opportunities with arts professionals
 - Guidance on long-term artistic development
- Presence on Arts Council website
- Social media promotion
- Inclusion in Arts Council newsletter
- Addition in the the Arts Council's list of vetted Cumberland County artists

WHAT PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

- Presentation of new artistic work in any artistic medium
- Teaching artist led workshops with the applicant being the teaching artist

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

- Artist fees (up to 25% of award)
- Project materials and supplies
- Equipment
- Studio/rehearsal/performance space rental
- Documentation costs
- Professional services directly related to the project
- Marketing/outreach expenses (no more than 10% of award)

NON FUNDABLE ACTIVITY INCLUDE:

- Projects not taking place in Cumberland County
- Projects promoting particular religious dogma or faith
- Academic projects that fulfill degree requirements
- Projects that overlap with other previously or currently funded Arts Council programs
- Motivational speaking engagements
- Therapy-based programs

WHAT ARE THE EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR ARTIST APPLICANTS?

Creative Impact Cohort evaluation panels are comprised of community members with a wide variety of experience in the arts, project management, education, and finance. The Committee uses the following criteria, which align with the Arts Council Mission Statement, to evaluate the strength of a CIC application and makes a formal recommendation for funding to the Arts Council's Board:

- Artistic Excellence – 50 points (10 points each)
 - Work samples show high artistic, cultural, and/or historical merit.
 - Artistic Resume highlights past experience in artistic discipline detailed in the project narrative.
 - Project uses local professional artists or cultural professionals.
 - Project narrative shows high artistic, cultural, and/or historical merit.
 - Project benefits the artist's professional growth.
- Project Merit – 30 points (10 points each)
 - Budget is feasible and matches the artist's experience.
 - Goals are clearly articulated and attainable.
 - Marketing strategies are clear and effective.
- Project Impact – 20 points (10 points each)
 - Project represents the racial, cultural, and/or location diversity of Cumberland County.
 - Project addresses a need in Cumberland County.