

Minutes

Grants + Funding Committee Meeting

Monday, August 18, 2025

1:00 – 3:00 pm

Metro Southeast Building

Antioch Conference Room

1417 Murfreesboro Pike,

Nashville, TN 37217



Committee Members Present: Heather Lefkowitz (Chair), Tim Jester, Jilah Kalil, Ashley Bachelder, Interim Executive Director (ex-officio)

Committee Members Absent: Shawn Knight & Dawana Wade

Metro Arts Staff Present: Capri Harston, Darius Barati & Vivian Foxx

A. Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome

Chair Lefkowitz called the meeting to order. The roll call was taken by Vivian Foxx. A quorum was present.

B. Public Comment

No public comments were submitted online or presented in person.

C. Approval of Minutes: July 14, 2025

A motion was made to approve July 14, 2025, minutes by Commissioner Jester and seconded by Commissioner Kalil. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Discussion Items

1. FY25 Updates: Staff Report

Ashley Bachelder provided a report on the FY25 grant cycle, which is ended and in the closeout phase. Grant closeout reports have been submitted by 88 of 90 operating grantees; 75 have been approved by staff.

For Thrive closeouts: 74 of 75 have been submitted; 59 have been approved.

Staff approval includes confirming all information is complete and that the expenditures report accounts for the full grant budget. Requests for corrections are issued as needed, the majority of which are about expenditure alignment.

2. FY26 Updates: Staff Report

Ashley Bachelder provided an update on the FY26 grant cycle. The grant application period was from July 16 – August 15. Metro Arts staff offered a number of in-person drop-in sessions at

libraries and the Nashville Farmers Market, plus daily one-on-one virtual help sessions for applicants seeking assistance. Staff logged over 100 appointments with applicants. The application deadline was August 15, 2025. A record-breaking 381 applications were received, including 106 General Operating Support applications and 275 Thrive applications. This represents a 23% increase from the previous cycle. Additionally, 47 applications were received for grant panelists.

Ashley provided an information overview of the applicants, including the breakdown between budget categories, artistic discipline, and first time/returner status for Operating; and individual/organization type, artistic discipline, and first time/returner status for Thrive.

Ashley reviewed the upcoming tasks and projected calendar. The next steps will include technical review and panel review of applications.

3. Legislation: RS2025-1426 (CALN Criteria)

Ashley provided a brief update about the process for the Community Arts Leaders of Nashville (CALN) internship criteria to obtain Metro Council approval, similar to grant criteria.

The Commission approved the criteria and guidelines at a previous meeting. The legislation will now go to Metro Council committee on August 18 and 19, and Council on August 19.

CALN will now report to the Grants + Funding Committee. Applications for host sites, students, and mentors will open in the coming weeks.

4. Audit Implementation Plan

Ashley presented a draft Grant Manual/Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that is under development, as a response to audit recommendations and also to serve as a training and resource document for future grant cycles.

The manual outlines grant cycle procedures including steps, requirements and considerations for application submissions, technical review, panelist guidelines, commission approval, award notifications, contracts/invoices, and closeout.

E. New Business

No new business items were introduced. Commissioners agreed to prioritize preparation for the upcoming allocation meeting in September.

Next Meeting: **Monday, September 22, 2025, from 12:00 – 2:00 pm** (extended to 3:00 pm if needed) to review allocation recommendations. Ashley shared that she will provide a detailed meeting packet by September 17, 2025.

F. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.