

3/26/2020

# Important Information for Current Awardees

If your organization has an open award and your Arts Endowment-supported project has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, there are several options available to help you right now. Note that is not an exclusive list as each situation is unique. The entire Arts Endowment staff is here to help your organization in these difficult days. We will work with you to arrive at the best solution for your organization's particular situation. Finally, while your discipline specialist or discipline director can help you work through your options, the Arts Endowment's Office of Grants Management is the only office authorized to make changes to your award.

## **1. When can we request our grant funds?**

You may draw down your grant funds at any time. In all cases, your requests must reflect allowable project-related expenses already incurred (a reimbursement) and/or expenses expected to be incurred within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the request (an advance.) All costs must be incurred within the approved period of performance.

## **2. Can we redirect our grant funds to certain approved project costs?**

You may transfer among direct cost line items in your approved budget without prior written approval from us. This means if your approved budget included salaries/wages or artist fees in your budget, you can direct your grant award money toward those costs. You must maintain documentation of all costs charged to the award.

## **3. Can we close out our award early?**

**You may be able to close out your award early even if you only completed a portion of your approved project prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

If your organization has already incurred enough costs to cover the amount of your Arts Endowment award plus the required cost share/match, you may close out your award early. This is possible even if you have not accomplished everything that you planned. Reduction of the scope of the project is allowable. This enables you to request all of your grant funds and submit your final reports even if some of your project activities are postponed or canceled.

**Example:** Your approved project was for the design of a new downtown arts park. Since the start of your period of performance, you have conducted community charettes, engaged consultants, and produced online educational materials. The costs of these activities total more than the amount of your Arts Endowment award plus the required one-to-one cost share/match. You may close out your award now without completing the final design plans.

**You may be able to close out your award early even if you had to cancel your main project activity.**

If your main project activity was canceled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you may still be able to close out your award early. Look back at your approved project budget and activities. Did you have planning costs? Did you hire artists? Do you have administrative costs? In addition, you may now charge costs related to the cancellation of events, travel, or other activities necessary and reasonable for the performance of the award to your award. If the total of your incurred regular project costs plus the cancellation costs equal or exceed the amount of your Arts Endowment award plus the required cost share/match, you may close out your award early with a reduced project scope.

**Example:** Your period of performance began on January 1, 2020, and the production of a new musical originally scheduled for May 2020 has been postponed indefinitely. The costs of the rehearsal period and set/lighting/costume design costs incurred since January 1, 2020, plus the costs related to cancelling the production total more than the amount of your Arts Endowment award plus the required cost share/match. You may close out your award now without the actual production.

**4. Can we request an extension of our project's period of performance?**

You may extend your project's period of performance if your approved project activity has been rescheduled, or you intend to reschedule to a later date. This allows you to shift the project to a later time period and maintains the availability of your award funds.

**Example:** Your film festival was rescheduled from April 2020 to November 2020, but your original period of performance was to end on June 30, 2020. You may request to extend the period of performance to include the new project period end date.

**5. Can we change the scope of our project?**

If you didn't start your project activities or know you will not be able to complete any of your approved project activities, you may request to change your project. Your new project cannot be for just anything new as your project must still meet federal and agency requirements.

If you choose this option, we urge you to consider focusing the new project activities on planning for the future. Your new project could include planning for a future production, festival, conference, residency program, exhibition, or educational program, etc. It could be to develop a new strategic plan for your organization. Your new budget could include staff costs, artist fees, and administrative costs (rent/utilities/supplies, etc.) related to these planning activities. If you think you would need to request a scope change, please contact your Arts Endowment specialist to discuss potential alternate projects.

**Example:** Your approved project was a residential 2020 summer choral camp for kids, but it has been canceled and won't be rescheduled. You may be able to change the scope of your project to a planning project to prepare for the summer 2021 camp.

## **6. We're not sure what to do right now. Do we have to make changes right away?**

If your Arts Endowment award has a period of performance that doesn't end for several months, you have time to assess your situation and make necessary changes at a later date. You may request a change to your project at any time during the period of performance. Your funds are obligated to your particular award and remain available to you as long as you are in compliance with your award.

Example: Your project was an ongoing lecture series featuring famous authors. The project's period of performance is from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020. Events scheduled for fall 2020 might not be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, so you have time to wait and see what happens. Should you need to change your project in the fall, you could still utilize the other options outlined above.

## **7. My question isn't answered here. How do I contact someone?**

Our staff, while working remotely for the next several weeks, is available to you via phone or email, as usual to discuss your particular situation. You find the staff directory here: <https://www.arts.gov/staff>. We welcome your calls and emails.