



# **Evolving Futures Grants**

2026 Application Guidelines

*Project Brief, Proposal Meetings & Application*

# Table of Contents

- 1 [From our Executive Director](#)
- 2 [Goals for Evolving Futures Grants](#)
- 3 [Before Reading Further: First Steps for All Applicants](#)
- 4 [Eligibility: Criteria for Organizations](#)
- 5 [Ineligibility: Criteria for Organizations](#)
- 6 [Eligibility: Criteria for Projects](#)
- 6 [Eligibility: Grant Types and Amounts](#)
- 8 [Ineligibility: Criteria for Projects](#)
- 9 [Maximum Grant Requests](#)
- 10 [Eligibility: Review of Financial Health](#)
- 11 [Grant Deadlines, Grant Periods, and Notification Dates](#)
- 12 [Application Process Map](#)
- 13 [Submitting the Project Brief](#)
- 14 [Initial Proposal Meeting](#)
- 15 [Submitting the Evolving Futures Application](#)
- 16 [Application Form Contents and Required Uploads](#)
  - 16 [Application Page 1 – Applicant Overview](#)
  - 16 [Application Page 2 – Project Overview & Timeline](#)
  - 17 [Application Page 3 – Narrative Questions \(for Planning grants\)](#)
  - 18 [Application Page 3 – Narrative Questions \(for Implementation grants\)](#)
  - 19 [Application Page 3 – Project Collaborators](#)
  - 20 [Application Page 4 and 5 – Additional Income and Project Budget](#)
  - 21 [Application Page 6 – Site and Planning Samples](#)
- 22 [Peer Review Panel Meeting and Application Scoring](#)
- 23 [Evaluative Criteria](#)
- 24 [Contact Us](#)

## Accessibility

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage is committed to providing accessibility to all applicants.

Staff members at The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage are available to offer guidance throughout the process and can assist applicants who require special accommodation.

Some translation services may be available. For accessibility accommodations, please contact [\*\*apply@pewcenterarts.org\*\*](mailto:apply@pewcenterarts.org) or call 267.350.4900 for assistance.

## From our Executive Director:

Dear Colleagues and Center Constituents,

On behalf of The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, it is my pleasure to introduce our 2026 Evolving Futures program guidelines. While our Creative Project Grants support ambitious programmatic ideas, this funding track allows organizations to address business model changes designed to strengthen their operations.

The Center introduced Evolving Futures in its 2024 cycle as it became evident that many of the sector's structural challenges were exacerbated during the pandemic years. Those initial Implementation grants were awarded to a cohort of the region's organizations that demonstrated readiness to undertake major change.

In an early assessment of the Evolving Futures program, the Center recognized that organizations need to align resources and perform research in order to make important decisions about their futures. We introduced a new category of Planning grants in 2025 to assist in this early-stage preparatory work.

I'm proud to share that in 2026, both Implementation and Planning grants have returned. Our sector continues to navigate new challenges and a shifting funding landscape; the Center continues its commitment to supporting the vitality of the cultural sector in Greater Philadelphia.

We hope these guidelines make clear the goals and process for Evolving Futures grants, now in their third cycle. Center staff and I look forward to connecting with many of you about your ideas in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CV', with a stylized loop and a trailing line.

**Christina Vassallo**  
**Executive Director**

## Goals for Evolving Futures Grants

The Center offers Evolving Futures grants to eligible previous grantees in an effort to acknowledge the challenges facing the cultural sector and the critical need to evolve traditional business models.

Our aim is to provide risk-capital to constituents to help them envision, re-think, adapt, and significantly transform their operations as they pursue future sustainability.

# *Before Reading Further:*

## First Steps for All Prospective Applicants

**All prospective applicants' first steps are to—**

- ➔ **Read Goals for Evolving Futures Grants and our eligibility criteria** to consider whether an Evolving Futures grant is the right fit for your organization at this time.
- ➔ **Submit an Inquiry form** by March 16, 2026 to let us know you're interested in applying for an Evolving Futures grant.
- ➔ **Upload financial documents** by March 16, 2026 to the “My Financials” tab of the Center's digital application portal. Take this step after completing the Inquiry form.

# Eligibility: Criteria for Organizations

## Evolving Futures Grants

*Applicants may choose between Creative Project grants and Evolving Futures grants but can only apply for one grant in the 2026 cycle.*

### **Organizations applying for Evolving Futures funds must—**

- Have received a panel-adjudicated Creative Project grant from the Center between 2015–2025.
- Have board support and adequate paid, professional staff to realize the project.
- Provide three years of financial audits/reviews to determine financial eligibility for funding.
- Not be in a current (or have a planned) leadership transition.
- Not be managed by current employees of The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, The Pew Charitable Trusts, or the Barnes Foundation; members of such employees' households; or people closely related to such employees through blood, marriage, or domestic partnership.

# Ineligibility: Criteria for Organizations

## Evolving Futures Grants

Your organization is ineligible for an Evolving Futures grant if any of the following is true:

- ☐ **You have not received a Creative Project grant from the Center between 2015–2025.**
  - *Only prior recipients of panel-adjudicated Center grants may apply for Evolving Futures funding.*
- ☐ **Your organization no longer has at least \$150k in annual expenses, or you no longer primarily serve public audiences.**
  - *Evolving Futures grant applicants must meet these criteria.*
- ☐ **You have previously received an Evolving Futures grant.**
  - *At present, recipients of 2024 Implementation grants are ineligible for a Planning Grant or a second Implementation grant. The Evolving Futures funding stream provides risk capital rather than funds to sustain modified operations.*
  - *Implementation grants are not immediately available to 2025 Planning Grants recipients.*
- ☐ **You intend to apply for a Creative Project grant.**
  - *Applicants may choose between Creative Project grants and Evolving Futures grants but can only apply for one grant in the 2026 cycle. Consult with Center staff if you are having trouble deciding what type of grant you should apply for.*
- ☐ **You are an academic institution or non-arts or non-history organization.**
  - *Evolving Future grants are only open to organizations whose primary mission and defining purpose is the presentation and interpretation of art or public history programs for public audiences. (Independent cost-centers within universities whose mission is to present and interpret art or public history may be eligible in specific cases. Please [contact us](#) for details.)*
- ☐ **You are a fiscally sponsored organization.**
  - *Evolving Futures grants are only open to 501(c)3 organizations.*

# Eligibility: Criteria for Projects

## Grant Types and Amounts

Evolving Futures grants are offered in two categories: **Planning** and **Implementation**.

These grants provide risk-capital to assist you in making major shifts to the way your organization will operate in the future.

Organizations applying for Evolving Futures grants will be asked to describe the "what/why/how and with whom" of the work proposed; the projected outcomes; their institutional commitment to business model change; and their own contributions of finances and staff-time toward achieving stated goals.

### PLANNING GRANTS

Evolving Futures Planning grants support increasing organizational readiness to make a change to the core operational/business model through research, design, and preparatory work to identify and clarify the needed model change. *Such explorations include—*

- Work with qualified consultants to shape your vision for business model change.
- Research and strategic planning focused on identifying key strategies for business model change as a path towards greater organizational viability.
- Feasibility studies.

**Planning grants are available up to \$60,000 for single organizations.**

*Maximum allowable grant requests are based on an organization's annual expenses.*

See [\*\*Maximum Grant Requests\*\*](#), for detail.



## IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Evolving Futures Implementation grants support actionable plans, resulting from preparatory work, to make an identified change to the core operational/business model.

Readiness, exploratory research, and organization-wide commitment to change should precede your application for an Evolving Futures Implementation grant. *Examples of implementation projects include but are not limited to—*

- Formalized strategic alliances.
- Mergers, including with for-profit entities.
- Business evolution that commits to bold, new, more inclusive, and equitable models for the field.

*Please note: When workforce adaptation/staff restructuring is part of a proposal, the applicant should reflect a commitment to multiple perspectives and inclusive practices in program design, development, and impact.*

### **Multi-Organization Implementation Grants**

Some applicants may decide that their evolutions would be best served by co-applying.

Multiple organizations may submit a single application to propose a significant strategic alliance.

Consult with Center staff to see if this category is appropriate for your proposed project.

**Implementation grants are available up to \$400,000 for single organizations.**

*The maximum amount of grant funds you may request is based on your organization's annual expenses. See [Maximum Grant Requests](#) for detail.*

# Ineligibility: Criteria for Projects

**Evolving Futures grants should define the major transformation that you plan for your business operations. These grants are not designed as support for—**

- Financial stabilization or rescue.
- Adjustment to or expansion of existing operations to continue with current model.
- Expansion of current programs.
- Debt service or retirement funding.
- Endowment funds.
- Acquisition of real estate and major renovations to existing property.

***The Center reserves the right to determine eligibility in all instances.***

*Evolving Futures projects may not include key personnel who are current employees of The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, the Barnes Foundation, or The Pew Charitable Trusts; members of such employees' households; or people closely related to such employees through blood, marriage, or domestic partnership.*

# Maximum Grant Requests

## Maximum Allowable Grant Request

The amount of grant funds you may request will be based on 1) a discussion with Center staff about your project budget; and 2) your organization’s annual expenses.

All Evolving Futures Grants awards include an additional 20% for unrestricted general operating support.

**Planning grants** are available up to **\$60,000** for single organizations.

**Implementation grants** are available up to **\$400,000** for single organizations. If co-applying in the *multi-organization* category, the total combined request may not exceed \$600k.

*The amount of grant funds you may request for Implementation grants is based on your organization’s annual expenses as follows:*

Annual Expenses	Maximum Allowable Grant Request
\$150,000 – 300,000	\$80,000
\$300,000 – 1 million	\$200,000
\$1 – 5 million	\$300,000
Over \$5 million	\$400,000

## When will I know how much I can apply for?

Should you be invited to proceed to the next stage of the process, the Center intends to inform you of your maximum allowable funding request on May 28, 2026. Notification of your maximum grant request may be delayed, dependent on your timely response to questions that may arise during your organization's financial review. (See page 10, [Eligibility: Review of Financial Health](#).)

*All grant requests are subject to review and approval by Center staff.*

**Applicants are encouraged to begin the Center’s financial eligibility review process as early as possible—but no later than March 16, 2026**—to assure that the Center may communicate your maximum grant request in a timely manner.

See the [next page](#) for details.

# Eligibility: Review of Financial Health

**The Center conducts financial reviews of all applicants. Eligibility for an *Evolving Futures* grant is contingent upon sound finances and evidence of organizational stability.**

Financial reviews occur concurrently with the first phase of the application process (*Project Brief* and *Initial Proposal Meeting*). Financial audits or reviews, prepared by an independent CPA (from outside of your organization) or public accounting firm, must be uploaded to the Center’s digital portal no later than March 16, 2026. Analysis may take up to six weeks depending on 1) the availability of your FY24 financial reports; 2) the complexity of your organization’s financial situation; and 3) your response time when we make inquiries.

Our goal is to inform your organization of the outcome of the financial review in a timely manner (*by May 28, 2026*). To help us meet this goal, please begin our financial review process as early as possible—but no later than March 16, 2026.

## How to begin the Center’s financial review process

Applicants must first complete the [Inquiry form](#), then proceed to the Application portal at <https://apply.pewcenterarts.org/>. Log in, then navigate to the “*My Financials*” tab to upload financial reports. If you have questions or trouble accessing the system, please contact [apply@pewcenterarts.org](mailto:apply@pewcenterarts.org).

## Financial Report Submission Requirements

All applicants must submit official financial reports for the **three most recent years available**. The oldest acceptable report is fiscal year 2022 (FY22).

### ***Acceptable Reports***

Financial reports must be prepared by an independent CPA (from outside of your organization) or public accounting firm and must be one of the following:

- Audited financial reports
- Reviewed financial reports

## How the Center determines financial eligibility

All financial reports will first be analyzed by financial professionals hired by the Center. Financial ratios are assessed to determine organizational health and sustainability, with a focus on positive or improving trends across three years.

# Grant Deadlines for 2026 Evolving Futures Grants

## Application Process Deadlines

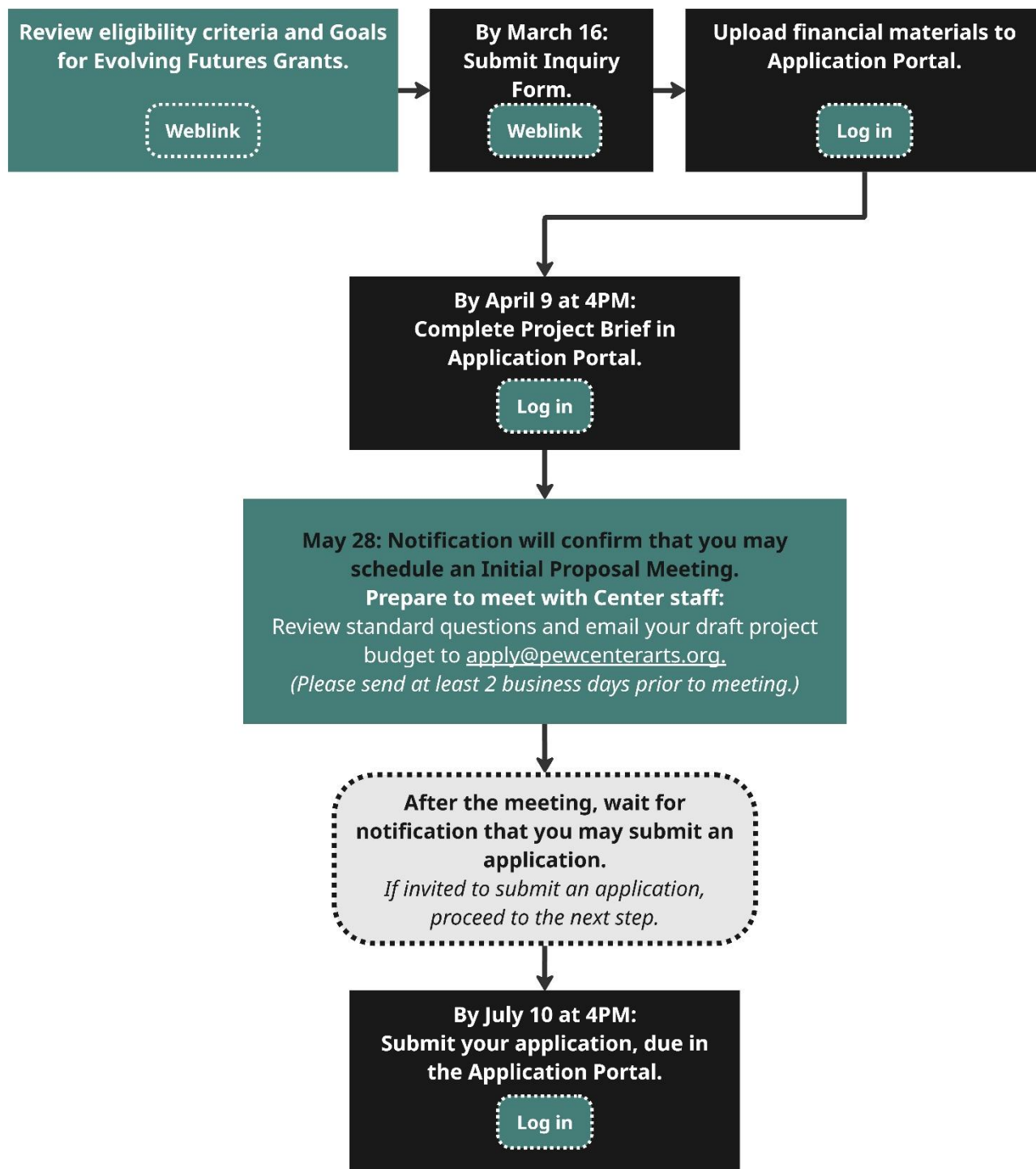
- ☐ **By March 16, 2026:** Your [Inquiry Form](#) must be completed, and [required financial materials](#) must be uploaded to the Center's application portal.
- ☐ **April 9, 2026, at 4 p.m., EST:** Project Brief is due in the application portal.
- ☐ **May 28, 2026:** Applicants will be notified about whether they are invited to schedule a meeting with Center staff.
- ☐ **Mid-June, 2026,** following required meeting(s) with Center Staff: Applicants will be notified about whether they may proceed to the full application.
- ☐ **July 10, 2026, at 4 p.m., EST:** The full application is due.

View the [map of our application process](#) on the following page  
for specific steps.

## Grant Periods and Notification Dates

- **By October 31, 2026:** Organizations that submit a full Application will be notified of the status of their funding proposal.
- **November 1, 2026:** Grant period begins. Project expenses that are part of your approved project budget may be allocated to grant funds as of this date.
- **Mid-December 2026:** The Center announces all grant recipients publicly.
- **November 1, 2027:** Grant period for Planning grants concludes.
- **November 1, 2028:** Grant period for Implementation grants concludes.

# Application Process Map



# Submitting the Project Brief

Evolving Futures grants are designed to support planning for and implementation of critical changes to core operational/business models. The *Project Brief* is your opportunity to outline your plans for re-thinking, adapting, and transforming your business model for future sustainability.

Prospective applicants who meet the Center's [initial eligibility criteria](#) for Evolving Futures grants and who complete the Inquiry Form may submit a Project Brief.

Log in to the Center's [Application Portal](#) and look for the “*Start Project Brief*” button. For help accessing the portal, email [apply@pewcenterarts.org](mailto:apply@pewcenterarts.org).

## Project Brief Form Contents

*Applicants are asked to provide—*

- Organization name, founding year, and county
- Contact information of the primary applicant and the project director  
*(This may be the same person.)*
- Project title *(Provide a title to help us reference your application.)*
- The dates the project will start and end *(See page 11 for the 2026 grant periods.)*
- Your organization's mission statement *(in 175 words or fewer)*
- **Answers to the following three narrative questions**  
*(in one combined answer of 1000 words or fewer):*
  1. *What is the critical operational change you have identified, and how have you identified it?*
  2. *Where are you in the process of this operational change?*
  3. *How do you plan to go forward at this stage?*

## How are Project Briefs evaluated?

Project Briefs will be reviewed and approved by the Center's Executive Director in consultation with Center program staff. Outside expertise may be enlisted to evaluate Project Briefs if needed.

**Organizations whose Project Briefs are approved will be invited to meet with staff.**

See the [next page](#) for detail about this meeting.

# Initial Proposal Meeting

**Applicants with project plans that align with the goals of Evolving Futures grants will receive an email inviting them to schedule a meeting with the Center’s Executive Director and Program Staff.**

Your **Executive/Managing Director** and a **Board member** must attend. This meeting is part of the process to assess your organization’s readiness for and commitment to business model change.

*If your project moves forward to the full application, additional meetings with Center staff will be scheduled as needed.*

## Preparing for the Meeting

Along with the invitation to meet, the Center will provide you with a list of **standard questions** asked of all Evolving Futures applicants that will inform the meeting discussion. This list is meant to enable your project team time to reflect upon responses prior to the meeting.

We will also request a high-level **draft of your proposed project budget**. The budget draft should show total project costs organized by expense category. (See [Project Budget](#) for what expense categories to include.)

During the meeting, Center staff will discuss your draft budget, as well as the amount of grant funds you would like to request. (See [Maximum Grant Requests](#).)

Please send your [budget draft](#) to [apply@pewcenterarts.org](mailto:apply@pewcenterarts.org) at least **two business days** before your meeting.



# Submitting the Evolving Futures Application

**Following their *Initial Proposal Meeting*, applicants will be notified in mid-June about whether they may proceed to the application stage.**

The application form for Evolving Futures will become available in the Center's [Application Portal](#) in June 2026 by invitation.

This application will require responses to narrative questions, an explicated budget, work samples, and uploads of supplementary PDFs. See *following page, [Application Form Contents and Required Uploads](#), for what is required on each page of the application.*

# Application Form Contents and Required Uploads

*The following pages represent the content of the online application form.  
(Available June 2026)*

## Application Page 1 – Applicant Overview

***This page asks you to provide—***

- Organization name, founding year, and county
- Organization mission statement *(in 175 words or fewer)*
- Numbers of full-time employees and annual public attendees
- Total annual expenses for fiscal years 2025–2023
- Staff and board list **(PDF upload)**  
*Upload a list of your organization's professional staff and board members.*
- Contact information of the person responsible for the application

## Application Page 2 – Project Overview & Timeline

***This page asks you to share the following about your proposed project:***

- Project title  
*(A title will help us to reference your application.)*
- A project summary *(in 100 words or fewer)*
- The project timeline  
*(A table will be provided for you to populate with concise descriptions of key activities, timeframes, and staff associated with each stage of the project.)*
- The dates that the project will start and end  
*(See page 11 for the 2026 grant periods.)*
- The amount of grant funds you are requesting

# Application Form Contents and Required Uploads

*(continued)*

## Application Page 3 – Narrative Questions for PLANNING GRANTS

*This page asks you to answer narrative questions and to describe project personnel.*

**Answer the following questions for the Planning grant category.**

Word limits are indicated in parentheses. *(Please do not feel obligated to use the full allowable word count.)*

- **What is the critical operational issue that you want to address and why? (200 words)**
- **In light of this issue, what is the possible business model change that you wish to explore further? What is the planning process (preparatory assessment and/or feasibility studies, research, strategic planning, or other) that you will undertake? Will stakeholders and/or constituents participate in this process? If so, in what way(s)? (350 words)**
- **Who are your partners/collaborators for this work? What are their roles? (300 words)**  
*The answer to this question should correlate with the letters of commitment and background narratives for project collaborators that you provide. See page 19.*
- **How are the changes that you will explore be specific to the current identity, mission, goals, and needs of your organization? (200 words)**
- **Is your board aware of and in support of this exploration? Will they participate in the planning process? (100 words)**
- **Letter of Commitment from Board Chair (PDF upload)**  
*Upload a succinct letter stating your governing board's commitment for the full term of the project, authored by the Board Chair.*

# Application Form Contents and Required Uploads

*(continued)*

## Application Page 3 – Narrative Questions for IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

*This page asks you to answer narrative questions and to describe project personnel.*

**Answer the following questions for the **Implementation grant** category.**

Word limits are indicated in parentheses. *(Please do not feel obligated to use the full allowable word count.)*

- *What critical operational challenge have you identified in your organization? How is this challenge affecting your future sustainability? (200 words)*
- *What preparatory research and planning have provided the basis for defining how you will address this challenge and move your organization into the future? (175 words)*
- *What specific change(s) to your business model do you propose? Will they impact your mission, and if so, how? (350 words)*
- *Describe the scope and phases of work that you will undertake to effect this change. What have you already set in motion? What resources will your organization contribute to the process (financial and/or other)? (300 words)*
- *Please describe the nature of your board and stakeholders' commitment to this evolution. (100 words)*
  - **Letter of Commitment from Board Chair (PDF upload)**  
*Upload a succinct letter stating your governing board's commitment for the full term of the project, authored by the Board Chair.*
- *Who will be your partners/collaborators in this work? In what ways has this effort been enriched by a diversity of perspectives and voices? (200 words)*
- *What roles and responsibilities will each collaborating partner/consultant/participant take on? (300 words)* *The answer to this question should correlate with the background narratives and letters of commitment from project collaborators that you provide. See page 19.*
- *What are the specific goals and outcomes of this work, and what do you expect to achieve over the life of the grant? (250 words)*
- *How will you evaluate the success of this evolution? Please be specific. (250 words)*
- *Projecting forward five years, what outcomes do you envision benefiting your audiences and community? (175 words)*

# Application Form Contents and Required Uploads

(continued)

## Application Page 3 – Project Collaborator Letters of Commitment and Background Narratives

A table is provided in the application form to list each project collaborator that you identify within your responses to the narrative questions. For each collaborator, you will be asked to provide—

- Collaborator name and project role
- A brief background narrative for each collaborator (of 75 words or fewer)  
*Background narratives should include aspects of the collaborator’s history of practice that relate directly to your Evolving Futures project content. Include major achievements as relevant, but please avoid testimonials and lists of awards, etc.*
- Letter of Commitment (PDF upload)  
*Upload a one-page letter of commitment (PDF) from each collaborator. The letter should describe the following: detailed scope of work, fees for project involvement, and time frame for work. These letters are most effective when submitted on the participant's letterhead and signed by hand. Alternatively, the letters should be clearly sourced from the participant's email address.*

# Application Form Contents and Required Uploads

*(continued)*

## Application Page 4 – Additional Income

**This page provides a table to detail any additional income that your organization plans to put toward your total project budget. Include grants and contributions, cash allocations, and earned income.**

The Center does not require matching funds, though additional income to fund your project is welcome and can be seen as a further indicator of the organization's commitment to the project.

## Application Page 5 – Project Budget

**This page provides a table to itemize project expenditures by expense category. If you have additional project income, you will be asked to break it out from the expenses you are allocating to Center grant funds.**

*Budget expense categories include the following:*

- Consulting/Training/Other Personnel Fees
- Related Staff Salaries and Costs\*
- Travel and Subsistence/Housing
- Other Direct Costs

## PROVIDE BUDGET NOTES

Panelists reviewing your application will study your budget. For each line-item in your budget, please use the "*Budget Notes*" field to detail context and to demonstrate how you calculated budget amounts. This information will help panelists to follow the logic of your budgeting.

### **\* Important note on Related Staff Salaries and Costs**

Existing staff salaries may be included proportionate to the essential project work performed. The percentage of time spent on the project should be included in the **Budget Notes**.

New staff salary line-items must also be accompanied by **Budget Notes** describing how your organization will sustain these salaries, as needed, beyond the term of the grant.

When combined, existing and new salary lines may not exceed 25% of the full grant request.

# Application Form Contents and Required Uploads

## Site and Planning Samples

Strong samples will complement your proposal and assist the panel in understanding and contextualizing your goals. We encourage applicants to discuss these samples with Center staff before submitting an application.

### Application Page 6 – Site and Planning Samples

*This page asks you to—*

- Upload **five separate images** of your organization/venue(s) that are relevant to your project. Include views of the exterior as well as interiors where the public encounters your work. *One of the five images may be replaced with a video, should a filmed walkthrough of your organization/venue be helpful to panelists.*
- *As relevant to your project:* You may upload a maximum of **three supplementary PDFs** (for example, summaries of strategic plans, past evaluations, and feasibility studies).

*The total combined page-count of the PDFs may not exceed 15 pages.*

*Executive summaries are preferred over lengthy documents in all cases.*

- *For each sample you will be given space to—*
  1. **Describe why the sample is relevant to the project** (*in 75 words or fewer*).  
*Please use this space to connect-the-dots between your samples and your answers to the narrative questions.*
  2. **Provide context for the sample** (*in 75 words or fewer*).  
*(For example, the location where the sample takes place and what activities are pictured)*

**The following are not acceptable samples:**

- Promotional audio or video, trailers, samplers or montages
- Filmed interviews
- Reviews, press, or marketing collateral

Have questions or trouble choosing samples? We're here to guide you.  
Contact us by emailing [apply@pewcenterarts.org](mailto:apply@pewcenterarts.org).

# Peer Review Panel Meeting and Application Scoring

## Peer Review Panel

All applications are reviewed—and all grants are determined—by a diverse panel of arts and culture practitioners. Currently, all panelists come from outside of the Center's funding region. The choice to work with panelists from outside the region reflects the Center's commitment to bringing a field-wide lens to the discussion and to introducing peer practitioners to the important work of this cultural community.

**Panelists are organizational leaders in arts and heritage institutions and are chosen for their expertise in the areas of practice reflected in the applicant pool.**

*Panelists' names appear on our website once grants are publicly announced. [Visit our website](#) for examples of past application panelists. **Staff of The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, the Barnes Foundation, and of The Pew Charitable Trusts do not serve as panelists and do not determine grant recipients.***

## Panel Meeting and Application Scoring

The Peer Review Panel meets over 1–2 days for group discussion and to score applications. The panel chair leads the discussion focusing on the Center's evaluative criteria. *(See the next page for Evolving Futures evaluative criteria.)*

Center staff members facilitate the meetings but do not participate in discussion or final evaluations.

Applications are reviewed one-by-one and on their own merits and are not compared to other applications.

After each application is discussed, panelists assign scores using the ranking scale below.

## Ranking Scale

<b>5.0</b>	Outstanding in relation to all the evaluative criteria
<b>4.0 – 4.9</b>	Very good to excellent in relation to the majority of the evaluative criteria
<b>3.0 – 3.9</b>	Fair to competent: meets some evaluative criteria
<b>2.0 – 2.9</b>	Insufficient competence: does not meet a sufficient number of evaluative criteria
<b>1.0 – 1.9</b>	Does not meet the criteria for funding



# Evolving Futures Evaluative Criteria

For **Planning grants**, panelists provide two scores, one each for **Excellence** and **Potential Impact/Ability to Meet Stated Goals**.

For **Implementation grants**, panelists provide three scores, one each for **Excellence**, **Readiness to Implement Process**, and **Impact/Ability to Meet Stated Goals**.

Panelists are given the following list of “**indicators**” to align their discussion and scoring with the Center’s evaluative criteria.

## PLANNING GRANT INDICATORS

Indicators of **Excellence** and **Potential Impact/Ability to Meet Stated Goals**:

- The business model change that the applicant wishes to explore is substantive and transformational.
- The proposed planning process (preparatory assessment and/or feasibility studies, research, strategic planning, or other) is clear and likely to result in actionable outcomes.
- Roles for partners, collaborators, and stakeholders are defined and distinct from one another.
- Potential changes to the current identity, mission, goals, and needs of the organization are identified.
- The board supports and will participate in the exploration.

## IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS INDICATORS

Indicators of **Excellence**, **Readiness to Implement Process**, and **Impact/Ability to Meet Stated Goals**.

- The critical operational challenge and the effect of the proposed business model change on future sustainability are clearly identified.
- Preparatory research and planning have readied the organization to address the critical operational challenge and support the project goals.
- Specific business model changes to be undertaken and their impact on mission have been clearly identified.
- The commitment of the board and stakeholders to the change is clearly described.
- Partners and collaborators are defined and appropriately diverse.
- The roles and responsibilities of collaborators are clearly defined.
- The scope and phases of work are clear and actionable. Appropriate resources from the organization will be contributed to the process.
- Goals and expected outcomes and achievements are identified and achievable.
- Evaluation plan is defined and an appropriate means to measure success.
- Long-term outcomes to benefit audiences and community are envisioned and realistic.

# Contact Us

Contact us by emailing [apply@pewcenterarts.org](mailto:apply@pewcenterarts.org).

Center staff members are available to answer questions and offer guidance to any applicant throughout the process, upon request.

## Center Program Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Christina Vassallo** (*she/her*)

INTERIM DIRECTOR OF PROJECT GRANT PROGRAMS

**Luis Croquer** (*he/him*)

PROGRAM OFFICERS

**Zach Blackwood** (*he/him*)

*Community Connection and Audience Participation*

**Murph Henderson** (*she/her*)

*Performance and Program Administration*

**Alec Unkovic** (*he/him*)

*Visual Art and Creative Practices*

PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

**Alfiatul (Alfi) Nurdin** (*she/they/dia*)

**Jordan Garlic** (*she/her*)

## Program Modifications

As of their release date in February 2026, these guidelines represent the complete instructions for the Evolving Futures grant application process. Initial eligibility criteria for all applicants appears online at <https://www.pewcenterarts.org/apply>. The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage and The Pew Charitable Trusts reserve the right to change and/or modify these guidelines at any future time in response to experience gained from operations, input from applicants and recipients, external evaluations, and the community. Prospective applicants will be alerted to updates to the guidelines in a timely manner.