



## Arts & Culture Incentive

The Town of Ashland is pleased to offer designated arts & culture businesses located within the Ashland Arts & Culture District of the Town the opportunity to apply for an Arts & Culture Incentive. The purpose of the incentive program is to assist designated arts and culture businesses in meeting their mission while also accomplishing Town objectives identified in the Town's [Strategic Plan](#) through provision of arts and culture programming. This program will also be used as an incentive to attract additional arts & culture businesses into the district. This program will be administered by Town staff.

### **Background:**

As described in Section 6-117 of the Ashland Town Code the Arts & Culture District was established to, "increase awareness and support for arts and culture in Ashland, specifically within the area designated as Ashland's Arts and Cultural District. The Town believes that the creation of an arts and culture district will enable arts and cultural organizations within the district the ability to partner and build alliances to enable more effective promotion, cooperation, and collaboration. The town further believes that the establishment of an arts and cultural district will encourage the growth of arts and cultural organizations as well as complimentary businesses, thus increasing the overall economic activity of this geographic area and other neighboring areas of the town which would, in turn, benefit the welfare of the citizens throughout Ashland."

As described in Section 6-119 of the Ashland Town Code a qualified arts organization, "shall mean a business for profit or not-for-profit organization physically located within the district which, by determination of the administrator, positively contributes to the spectrum of arts and cultural activities and venues available to the public by presenting live performances of theatre, dance, music or other imaginative work and/or producing or exhibiting physical works created by, or under the direction of one or more artists, which are intended for unique production or limited reproduction. Museums or historic sites, the primary mission of which is education, history, or historic preservation, may also qualify as qualified arts organizations. Theatres, including movie theatres, art galleries, dance studios, music venues, performance spaces, art schools and academies, including culinary arts schools and academies, are examples of qualified arts organizations."

**Selection:** The Town of Ashland accepts applications for arts & culture incentives throughout the year. Qualified Arts & Culture Businesses should thoroughly fill out the application and submit as early as possible as funding is limited and given out on a first come, first serve basis. The two primary criteria used will be 1. Whether the business is a designated arts and culture business in the district, and 2. The extent to which the application meets other Town goals as identified in the Strategic Plan through implementation of new arts and culture programming. See the Project Checklist at the end of this document.

**Guidelines:**

1. Business must be designated arts and culture businesses located within the Town of Ashland arts and culture district. Applicants must be current on all Town taxes, and have a current business license as of the date of the application. The applicant may be the business owner or operator. Non-profit organizations are not eligible.
2. Incentives are intended to be awarded prior to the project's initiation, and the funds may cover the entire cost of the proposed project. Incentive reviewers will respond to all complete applications within two business days. This program will exist annually until all funds allocated to it in the annual budget are expended or the program is suspended by the Town. The Town's fiscal year is July 1 to June 30.
3. The completed application must be submitted to [mmiller@ashlandva.gov](mailto:mmiller@ashlandva.gov) and approved by, the Town's designated incentive reviewer. Any changes made to the details of the application after it has been approved must be submitted *before* completion of the changes. Changes are subject to approval, and may jeopardize the incentive.
4. The applicant will be paid upon approval of the application and processing by the Town.
5. Projects must comply with all local, state and federal rules. If necessary, appropriate permits must be obtained.
6. The program is not intended to fund routine operations. The program is intended to incentivize designated arts and culture businesses to creatively meet Town goals as identified in the Strategic Plan.
7. Proof of project or program completion must be submitted within one hundred twenty (120) days of the receipt of incentive funds, or no later than June 30, whichever occurs first. An extension may be granted if the incentive reviewer is contacted prior to the deadline.
8. Incentives will be awarded up to \$4,000 per business. Businesses may only receive one incentive per fiscal year. The Town reserves the right to adjust the program and its funding at its discretion.

**Project Checklist:**

Does the proposed project comply with all relevant local, state and federal rules?

Does the program address a specific Town Strategic Plan goal?

How will the incentive benefit the designated arts and culture business?