



Application Ranking Guide – Veterans Initiative in the Arts

This document is intended to act as a guide to assist applicants in composing successful applications to the **Veterans Initiative in the Arts** grant program.

A peer panel reviews all applications and work samples in a multi-step process that involves assigning numerical ranks to each application. The 6-point ranking system below is utilized and panelists' ranks are averaged to obtain the final score.

For each of the following rankings, the description refers to the contents of the application submitted, including work samples and attachments.

6	Exemplary	Meets all of the review criteria to the highest degree possible
5	Strong	Meets all of the review criteria in a significant manner
4	Good	Meets the majority of the review criteria; however, areas of the application need improvement, development or clarification
3	Marginal	Does not meet the majority of the review criteria in a significant manner
2	Weak	Significant inadequacies in addressing review criteria
1	Ineligible	Inappropriate for CAC support. Incomplete applications, applications with significant ineligible expenses, and proposals that do not meet program requirements are deemed ineligible.

Below, the qualities of exemplary applications (Ranked 6) in the **Veterans Initiative in the Arts** program are outlined, and the areas of the application in which those criteria will be assessed are identified.

Review Criteria #1: Project Design and Implementation: Project design indicates realistic timeline, appropriate budget, clear artistic and community-based objectives, and achievable outcomes. Design articulates methods to evaluate and measure success, collect and analyze data, and document activities. Design demonstrates depth of participant involvement, strength and appropriateness of marketing and outreach plans; and engagement or support of target audience.

Qualities of Exemplary Applications:

- Voice of the veteran/military community to be served is evident in the project design.
- Application identifies opportunities for recurring engagement of veteran/military community members in planning, execution, and/or evaluation of project.
- Project activities and timeline are clearly articulated and support the realization of specific, community-driven needs or priorities.
- Resources, including time and funds, are effectively allocated, and project budget is realistic and complete.
- Application clearly articulates intended project outcomes and methods for evaluating success.
- Applicant maps robust plan for community outreach and promotion, and documentation of program impact.
- If project partners are involved, distinct roles and responsibilities are articulated.

Areas of Assessment:

- Project Description
- Project Budget
- Partnership Description (if applicable)
- Communication and Documentation

Review Criteria #2: Artistic Merit: Artists involved in the project demonstrate skills, expertise, and experiences that are central to the outcomes of the project design. California artists are engaged at every stage of project design and implementation.

Qualities of Exemplary Applications:

- Artistic personnel are highly skilled and accomplished in their craft.
- Artistic personnel demonstrate experience and capacity in executing similar projects with target community.
- If an arts healing practice is involved, personnel demonstrate experience and qualifications.
- The work and processes of the artistic personnel are appropriate to the community and the intended outcomes of the project.

Areas of Assessment:

- Artistic personnel biographies
- Work samples

Review Criteria #3: Community Impact: Project demonstrates reach and/or depth of engagement in an identified community. Project responds to a need or set of priorities

identified with the community to be served. Project implementation and evaluation involve significant community participation in accordance with the identified project outcomes.

Qualities of Exemplary Applications:

- Application clearly identifies a target community of veterans, active military, and/or their families.
- The needs and contexts of the specific community being served guide the development of project outcomes and activities.
- Applicant organization and artistic personnel demonstrate deep connection to and experience working with target community.
- If project partners are involved, articulation of intended impact on target community.
- Organization uses ongoing evaluation to assess programmatic strengths and areas for growth.
- Program design uses evaluation data to inform the development of the project.

Areas of Assessment:

- Project Description
- Community Description
- Partnership Description (if applicable)
- Organizational history and mission statements

Review Criteria #4: Management and Leadership: Ability of applicant organization to implement proposed project is clearly demonstrated by qualifications of project's team, viability of project budget, and overall fiscal and managerial health of applicant and any partnering organizations.

Qualities of Exemplary Applications:

- Organizational leadership has significant experience in facilitating similar projects.
- Organizational mission aligns with project goals.
- Staff and board membership are diverse and representative of the project constituents, including the target community.
- Organization demonstrates strong fiscal health.
- Application, including project narrative and budget, are complete and free from error.

Areas of Assessment:

- Staff and board biographies
- Organizational history and mission
- DataArts Funder Report
- Completeness and accuracy of overall application