

## Project Grant Review Criteria & Scoring Rubric (FY2027)

Project Grant applications are evaluated using **four criteria** that align directly with the application's narrative questions and required materials:

1. **Impact**
2. **Engagement**
3. **Feasibility**
4. **Artistic Excellence**

Each criterion is scored on a **0–5 scale**, for a total possible score of **20 points**. Scores guide funding recommendations, which are ultimately made as **Fund** or **Do Not Fund** decisions by the South Dakota Arts Council Board.

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### Scoring Overview

- **Each criterion:** 0–5 points
- **Total possible score:** 20 points
- **Minimum scoring threshold: 10 points**  
Applications scoring below this threshold are not eligible for funding consideration.
- Panelists provide:
  - A numerical score for each criterion
  - An overall **Fund / Do Not Fund** recommendation

*Panelists should score each criterion independently, based only on the information provided in the corresponding application section and materials.*

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### 1. Impact (0–5 points)

#### Aligned Application Section:

#### Impact (Question 2)

*Why are you doing this project? What will it mean for you and your community?*

Applicants also describe anticipated results (e.g., activities, works created, artists involved, participants or audience reached).

#### Definition:

The significance of the project for the applicant and the community, including its public benefit and anticipated outcomes.

#### Scoring Guide:

- **5 – Strong Impact**

Clearly articulates why the project matters and demonstrates meaningful benefit for both the applicant and the community, with realistic and relevant anticipated results.

- **3 – Moderate Impact**

Impact is described but lacks specificity, depth, or a clear connection to outcomes.

- **1 – Minimal Impact**

Impact is vague, unclear, or primarily personal with limited public relevance.

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## **2. Engagement (0–5 points)**

### **Aligned Application Section:**

#### **Engagement (Question 3)**

*Who are you serving, and how will you reach and involve them?*

#### **Definition:**

How effectively the applicant identifies, reaches, and involves intended audiences or participants.

#### **Scoring Guide:**

- **5 – Strong Engagement**

Clearly identifies intended audiences or participants, outlines thoughtful outreach strategies, and meaningfully addresses accessibility and inclusion.

- **3 – Moderate Engagement**

Audience and engagement strategies are present but underdeveloped or generic.

- **1 – Minimal Engagement**

Intended audience is unclear or engagement strategies are missing or ineffective.

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## **3. Feasibility (0–5 points)**

### **Aligned Application Section:**

#### **Feasibility (Question 4)**

*How will you carry out this project with the people, time, and budget you have?*

#### **Definition:**

The applicant's ability to successfully carry out the project with available resources.

#### **Scoring Guide:**

- **5 – Strong Feasibility**

Project plan is clear and realistic; staffing, partnerships, timeline, and budget strongly support successful completion.

- **3 – Moderate Feasibility**

Plan is generally sound but includes minor gaps, limited detail, or small inconsistencies.

- **1 – Low Feasibility**

Significant concerns about the applicant's ability to complete the project as proposed.

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#### **4. Artistic Excellence (0–5 points)**

##### **Aligned Application Sections & Materials:**

- **Project Summary (Question 1)** — artistic concept and contributors
- **Required artistic work samples**
- Optional supporting materials (bios, résumés, press)

##### **Definition:**

The artistic quality of the proposed work, as demonstrated through past work and the project's artistic vision.

##### **Scoring Guide:**

- **5 – High Artistic Excellence**

Work samples demonstrate strong artistic skill, clarity of vision, and alignment with the proposed project.

- **3 – Moderate Artistic Excellence**

Artistic quality is evident but uneven, or the connection between past work and the proposed project is unclear.

- **1 – Low Artistic Excellence**

Artistic quality is not sufficiently demonstrated for funding consideration.

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#### **Funding Recommendation**

After scoring all four criteria, panelists make an overall recommendation:

- **Fund**

Application meets or exceeds the scoring threshold and demonstrates sufficient impact, engagement, feasibility, and artistic excellence.

- **Do Not Fund**

Application does not meet the scoring threshold or raises significant concerns in one or more criteria.

Panel scores and recommendations are **advisory**. Final funding decisions are made by the **South Dakota Arts Council Board**.