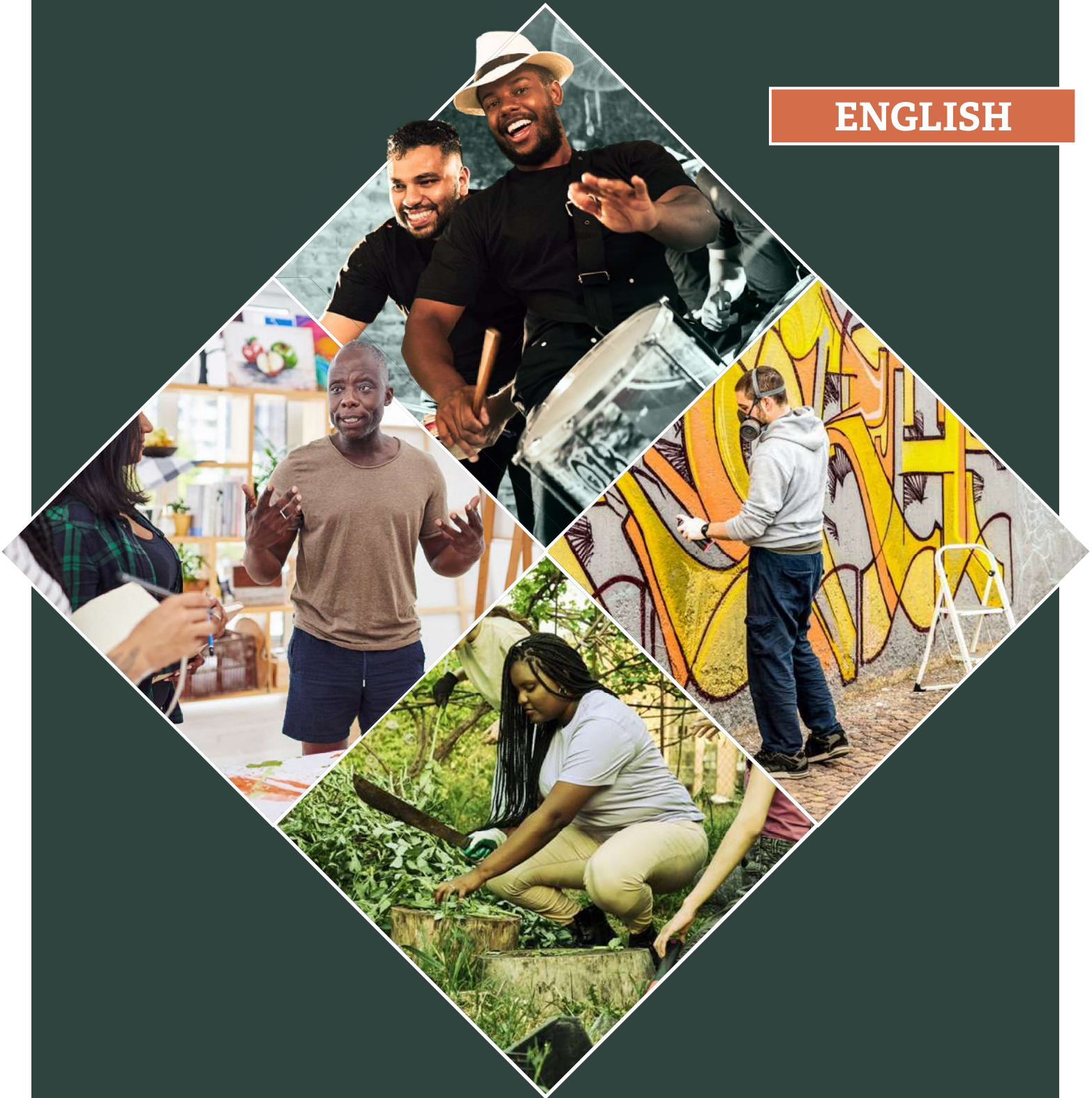




Investing in Folklife in  
Communities of Color

**ENGLISH**



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## Program Guidelines



## IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Round 1 Online Form Open	Round 1 Deadline	Round 2 Invitations
Wednesday, January 15, 2025	Wednesday, March 19, 2025, 11:59pm ET	Thursday, June 5, 2025

Round 2 Deadline	Walking Together Grantees Notified	Award Year
Monday, July 21, 2025	October 2025	January 1 – December 31, 2026



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## 1. ACCESSIBILITY

These guidelines are available in .PDF format and as an accessible Word file at [usregionalarts.org/walkingtogether](https://usregionalarts.org/walkingtogether). Guidelines are available in English and Spanish.

To request accommodations, including additional language translation, reach out to [walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org) or call 667-401-2587. Please request accommodation at least 10 business days before the application due date so we can best serve your needs.

## 2. WHAT IS WALKING TOGETHER?

**Walking Together: Investing in Folklife in Communities of Color** is a national funding program managed by the six [U.S. regional arts organizations](#) (RAOs). Walking Together supports folklife and traditional arts rooted in communities of color by investing in artists/practitioners and the community organizations that support them.

Walking Together is led by the values of relationship-building and [trust-based grantmaking](#). It also works to strengthen collaboration between artists, communities, and the RAOs, laying the groundwork for systemic change in the arts funding landscape.

## AWARDS

Six traditional artists/practitioners in each RAO region (36 nationwide) will receive \$15,000 unrestricted awards to recognize and support their community-rooted traditional arts practice.

### [How Could I Spend Walking Together Funding?](#)

One organization/collective in each state/jurisdiction (56 nationwide) will receive a \$50,000 award, with limited restrictions, to recognize and support the work they do to care for their communities' traditions and traditional artists.

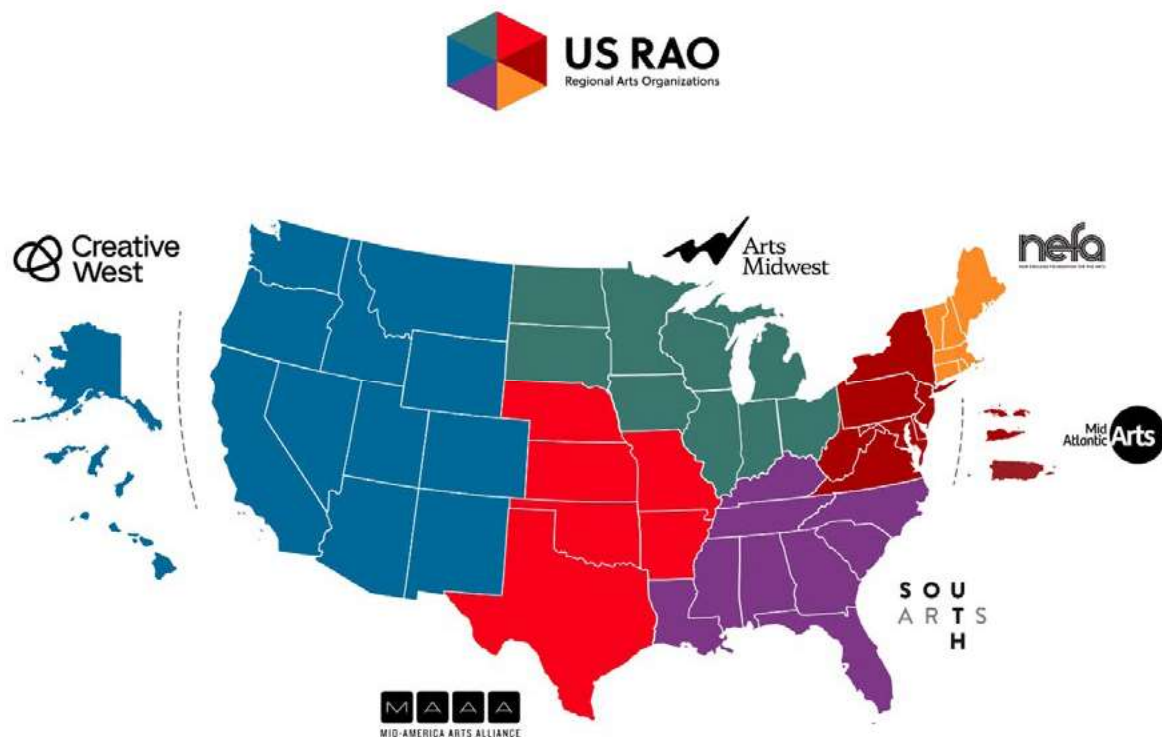
### 3. CONTACT US

Walking Together advisors at your [regional arts organization](#) are available to help. We recommend you get in touch at least 5 business days before the due date, so we have time to answer your questions.

[Find your RAO by looking for your state or jurisdiction here.](#) Then find your RAO your Walking Together advisor in this chart:

Arts Midwest	Creative West	Mid-America Arts Alliance	Mid Atlantic Arts	New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA)	South Arts
Crystal Price <a href="mailto:walkingtogether@artsmidwest.org">walkingtogether@artsmidwest.org</a>	Ashanti McGee <a href="mailto:ashanti.m@wearecreativewest.org">ashanti.m@wearecreativewest.org</a>	Christine Bial <a href="mailto:walkingtogether@maaa.org">walkingtogether@maaa.org</a>	Ellie Dassler & Joel Chapman <a href="mailto:walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org">walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org</a> 667-401-2587	Adrienne Petrillo <a href="mailto:apetrillo@nefa.org">apetrillo@nefa.org</a> & Saejin Yoo <a href="mailto:syoo@nefa.org">syoo@nefa.org</a>	Taylor Burden <a href="mailto:tburden@southarts.org">tburden@southarts.org</a>


See [Self-Nomination Resources](#) for webinars and other opportunities to meet RAO staff.



## 4. WHAT IS FOLKLIFE?

Often called the “art of everyday life,” folklife includes art forms and other creative expressions that reflect the aesthetics, practices, values, and beliefs of community groups, such as families, geographic communities, heritage groups, and more. We also call these “traditional arts.”

Traditional arts are often passed down from generation to generation, rather than learned in institutional or academic settings. All traditions are connected to the history of the communities that practice them, but they are not just art forms of the past. Instead, they are “living traditions” that adapt to remain relevant in a changing world, including new and emerging traditions. Individuals and communities use traditional arts to build collective power, engage in healing, and strengthen their identity.



Folklife goes by many names, including: tradition, traditional art, heritage, crafts, ways of life, foodways, cultural preservation, rituals, living traditions, artesanías, community expression, and many more.

The people who practice, sustain, and steward these traditions may call themselves “folk artists” or “traditional artists,” but they may not call themselves “artists” at all. They may instead be practitioners, tradition bearers, community elders, knowledge keepers, cultural advocates/activists, cooks/bakers, craftspeople, artisans, griots, farmers, mentors, dancers, storytellers, and others. Even more people work for organizations that support these individuals.

You may use a different word for yourself and your work. See [“Who is Walking Together For?”](#) for more details.



## 5. WHO IS WALKING TOGETHER FOR?

Walking Together serves traditional artists/practitioners and organizations that show a deep commitment to sustaining folklife rooted in communities of color, including but not limited to Alaska Native, Arab, Asian, Black/African American, Caribbean, Indigenous/Native American, Latine/a/o, Middle Eastern/North African, Native Hawai’ian, and/or Native Pacific Islander communities.

We especially encourage applications from artists/practitioners and organizations that have been most underserved, under-resourced, and under-supported by other arts funding programs.

To receive a Walking Together grant, you must:

### FOR INDIVIDUALS

- ◆ Be a traditional artist, folklife practitioner, keeper, archiver, or documenter of traditional knowledge rooted in communities of color, including:
  - Visual arts such as crafts
  - Performing arts such as traditional music, dance, or storytelling
  - Food and/or medicine traditions such as traditional agriculture, recipes/food preparation, or hunting/foraging
  - Community history or oral history to share with future generations and/or larger audiences
- ◆ Create work that fits our definition of “[traditional art](#)” in your process and/or finished products
  - For example, you may use traditional skills/techniques to create work that fits traditional aesthetics. But you may also use those traditional techniques to create contemporary work, or represent your community’s traditional aesthetics and knowledge with modern techniques.



Go down this list  
and check if each  
item applies to you/  
your organization.  
If yes, Walking  
Together is for you!

- ◆ Be active in sustaining your community's traditions as a connector, mentor, learner, advocate, and/or leader

For example, you may be an elder or a young, emerging leader who shows a commitment to growing your practice and passing it on to others.

- ◆ Demonstrate a history of actively practicing your traditional art form(s) and engaging with your community for at least 3 years
- ◆ Live in one of the 56 U.S. states and jurisdictions served by the [RAOs](#), or federally-recognized Native nations that share this geography
- ◆ Be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or permanent resident

## FOR ORGANIZATIONS AND COLLECTIVES

- ◆ Be accountable to and predominantly serve communities of color
- ◆ Support folklife rooted in communities of color in your mission and activities, such as:
  - Platform, exhibit, or present traditional artists in your community and/or for larger audiences
  - Provide economic benefits and/or other resources for traditional artists
  - Support education and training in traditional art forms
  - Serve as an important community space for gathering to practice traditions
  - Document traditions and artists to share with future generations and/or larger audiences
- ◆ Demonstrate a history of supporting the folklife and traditional artists/practitioners in your community for at least 3 years



◆ Be one of the following:

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
  - [Fiscal sponsorship](#) is allowed, although also not required
- Unit of state or local government
- State- or federally-recognized Tribal government
- Educational institution such as a university department
- Business such as a limited liability corporation (LLC), S-corp, etc.
- Examples may include: arts organizations, artist collectives, cultural advocacy organizations, community centers, education organizations, social service organizations, media production companies, or faith-based organizations with significant arts and culture activities
- Nonprofit status is not required for this program
- Be located in one of the 56 U.S. states and jurisdictions served by the [RAOs](#), or federally-recognized Native nations that share this geography
- Have an average operating budget of less than \$500,000 per year over the last 3 years
- Not have received [ArtsHERE](#) or [Cultural Sustainability](#) funding from your RAO

All applicants must comply with the [Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990](#), when applicable.

## 6. HOW CAN I APPLY?

Walking Together has a two-step application process:

### Round 1:

**Self-Nominations:** A short form about you/your work. Submitting a Self-Nomination shows that you're interested in applying for Walking Together. The form includes two narrative questions, a Community Support sample, and recommended two other work samples. There are three options for completing the form: online, recorded audio, or by mail. See [Self-Nomination Form](#) for more detail.

- Self-Nomination form available: **Wednesday, January 15, 2025**
- Self-Nomination form due: **Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 11:59pm ET.**

In each RAO region, a diverse panel including folklorists, cultural workers, artists/practitioners, and culture bearers, will review Round 1 self nominations. They will recommend a small pool of applicants, which the RAOs will invite for Round 2.

### Round 2:

**Invited Applications:** A more detailed form about your history, current work, future plans, and potential impact of Walking Together funding. Only a few artists and organizations will be invited to complete a full application. Those invited will receive a small stipend.

- Round 2 applicants invited by: **Thursday, June 5, 2025**
- Round 2 applications due: **Monday, July 21, 2025**

## ONLINE PORTAL: REGISTRATION

To complete a Round 1 Self-Nomination form online, visit our application portal at [midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com](https://midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com). Complete the following steps to access the form:

1. Choose the type of applicant that fits you:
  - “[Registered Non-Profit Organization](#)” if your organization is a registered 501(c)(3)
  - “[U.S. State and Local Governments or Federally Recognized Tribal Governments](#)”
  - “[Other Organization/Group](#)” for all other types of collectives, including businesses and state-recognized Tribes
  - “[Individual Artist](#)” for artists and practitioners
2. Once registered, log in, go to your Home page, and click on “Funding Opportunities.”
3. Find Walking Together and click “Apply Now.”
4. Click “Save” to start your application.

## SELF-NOMINATION FORM OPTIONS

The Self-Nomination form will be available **Wednesday, January 15 - Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 11:59pm ET.**

There are several choices for completing the form. Choose one of the following options to apply:

1. **WRITTEN ONLINE:** Type your responses in the space provided on the online form at [midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com](https://midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com). See [Self-Nomination Form](#) to preview question.



**2. AUDIO ONLINE:** Instead of answering written questions, you may record spoken responses and share the audio in the online form. You must answer all questions in the same recording.

Your recording should be no longer than 5 minutes. Recordings should include minimal editing and instead focus on answering the questions. An audio recording of you answering each question, recorded on a cell phone or computer app, is more than enough! We recommend .MP3 or .WAV format. If you have questions about how to record, format or share your responses, email [walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org) or call 667-401-2587.

If you submit audio responses, you should also share a [Community Support Sample](#) and other [Work Samples](#) in the appropriate section of the online form.

**3. WRITTEN BY MAIL:** Printed hard copies of the Self-Nomination form are available upon request, in limited quantities. Hard copies are first-come, first-served. To request a printed Self-Nomination form, please email [walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org) or call 667-401-2587.

You may submit your printed Self-Nomination by mail or email a scanned copy. **Your form must be postmarked or received by email by Wednesday March 19, 2025.**

Mail Self-Nominations to:

**Mid Atlantic Arts**

c/o Joel Chapman

201 N. Charles St.

Ste. 401

Baltimore, MD 21201

We will accept Self-Nominations in: English and Spanish.

Guidelines are available in each language at [usregionalarts.org/walkingtogether](https://usregionalarts.org/walkingtogether). For questions about language accessibility, please contact [walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org) or call 667-401-2587.

## 7. SELF-NOMINATION FORM

Word limits are just suggestions—you do not need to use all available space in your responses. If you choose to submit an audio response, you must answer both questions in the same 5-minute recording. [Self-Nomination Form Options.](#)

### FOR INDIVIDUALS:

**1. Artist/Practitioner Statement:** Tell us about you. What traditions/traditional art forms do you practice? How did you learn? Why are they important to you? (400 words)

**2. Community Sustainability Statement:** How does your practice connect to your community? Why are you and your work important to your community? Share an example of how you help your traditions continue to thrive in the future. (400 words)

### FOR ORGANIZATIONS:

**1. Organization Statement:** Tell us about your organization. Share a brief history and explain what your organization does to care for traditions and traditional artists. Why is this work important to your organization? (400 words)

**2. Community Sustainability Statement:** Why is your organization and its work important to your community? Share an example of how your organization helps your community's traditions continue to thrive in the future. (400 words)

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT SAMPLE

In addition to answering the Self-Nomination form questions, you must submit an example of community support for your work. We recommend submitting your Community Support Sample in



.PDF format. Submit **only one** Community Support Sample.

Examples:

- A letter of support from a mentor, mentee, other artist, or community leader.
- A partnership letter from a community member or other organization describing a successful collaboration.
- A description of a successful program that exemplifies your work/mission and shows evidence of community involvement.

## WORK SAMPLES

You may submit work samples to complement your application and help reviewers get to know your work. Other work samples are not required, but strongly encouraged! They help reviewers understand your community's traditions, you/your organization's work, and your connection to community.

Reviewers will spend about 5 minutes reviewing your work samples, so be selective. **Only choose 2-3 total samples to share.** If you have questions about how to choose the right work samples, reach out to your Walking Together advisor.

For example, you may want to submit:

### FOR INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS/PRACTITIONERS:

- A link to your personal website or social media that showcases you and your work.
- A link or photo of a local news feature that recognizes you and your work.
- For visual/craft artists: A photo or video of you working/your process, and/or a photo of finished

work you are proud of.

- For musicians, dancers, storytellers, or other performing artists: A short video of you performing or audio you have recorded.
- For food practitioners, herbalists, and keepers of other traditional life knowledge: A photo or video of you working/your process, and/or a photo of a completed dish, salve, garden plot, etc.

#### **FOR ORGANIZATIONS:**

- A link to a website or social media that showcases your organization and its work.
- A link or photo of a local news feature that recognizes your organization and its work.
- A photo or video of a successful community event, such as a class/workshop, performance, demonstration, talk, meal, or meeting.
- Audio or video excerpts that your organization has produced and that you are proud of.

#### **WORK SAMPLE SPECIFICATIONS:**

- For audio and video: 2 per application
  - Each sample should be no longer than 3 minutes. If your clip is longer, indicate in the description which 3-minute portion we should view. If you do not specify, reviewers will view only the first 3 minutes.
  - Make samples available online on YouTube, Vimeo, Soundcloud, Spotify, etc. Provide the URL for reviewers to access the sample and the password, if needed.
- For photos: 3 per application
  - We recommend photos in .JPEG/JPG or .PNG format.

- For documents: 2 per application.
  - Each document should be 1 page long.
  - We recommend documents in .PDF format.
- For website/social media links: 2 per application.

## 8. HOW WILL YOU REVIEW SELF-NOMINATIONS?

In each RAO region, a diverse panel including folklorists, cultural workers, artists/practitioners, and culture bearers, will review Round 1 Self-Nominations. They will review applications based on the three criteria below.

Make sure your Self-Nomination form shows evidence of all three criteria, through your written/recorded responses, Community Support sample, and other work samples.

**1. Artist/Organization Commitment:** The artist/practitioner/organization shows a history of deep commitment to their traditions. They understand the history, context, and living importance of their traditions and how to represent those traditions well. (20 points)

**2. Future Sustainability:** Through their work, the artist/practitioner/organization helps to strengthen the sustainability of their traditions into the future. This may include creating, teaching, sharing, presenting, or advocating for their traditions within their community and/or beyond. (40 points)

**3. Community Support:** The artist/practitioner/organization is deeply embedded in their community. Other community members or organizations recognize them as a leader, resource, or steward for their traditions. This includes a demonstrated history of successful leadership and/or collaboration with other community members or organizations. (40 points)

## 9. HOW COULD I USE WALKING TOGETHER FUNDING?

Walking Together grants to individual artists/practitioners, state/local/Tribal governments, and non-profit organizations are **unrestricted**. They are meant to help you grow your work and support your community's traditions into the future. This means that you do not have to use Walking Together funds for a specific project. How you spend the funds is up to you!

For businesses such as LLCs/S-corps, funds **must** be spent in direct support of your work to create, teach, share, present, or support community traditions.

Some examples of how you could use Walking Together funds include:

- Supplies or materials for your work or for other artists you partner with
- Space to create, practice, or meet around your traditions (new space or making improvements to existing space)
- A learning opportunity to grow your cultural skills/knowledge
- A teaching opportunity to share your skills/knowledge
- Improving communications, marketing, or web/social media presence to share about your work
- Compensating artists for their participation in your events/activities
- Compensating your organization's volunteers or staff
- Documenting or recording your work/your community to share with future generations and/or larger audiences
- Technology needed to support your work, such as improving internet access

For businesses/LLCs, there may be more specific requirements for how to use Walking Together funding. Please reach out to your [Walking Together advisor](#) with any questions.

## 10. GRANT LIMITATIONS

Your organization may not receive a Walking Together grant if it already received funding through the [ArtsHERE](#) or [Cultural Sustainability](#) initiatives. If you have questions about how this restriction may apply to you, please contact your RAO advisor.

There may be additional granting limitations that apply to your RAO region. [Contact your Walking Together advisor](#) to learn more.

## 11. GRANT PAYMENTS, TAXES, AND REQUIREMENTS

[Mid Atlantic Arts](#) will issue all grant payments nationwide. If awarded, you will receive your payment within 45 days of when Mid Atlantic Arts has received and approved all necessary award documents.

Walking Together funding is taxable income, unless your organization is tax-exempt. All Walking Together grantees are responsible for reporting grant funds to the Internal [Revenue Service \(IRS\)](#). Individual artists and businesses who receive Walking Together grants will be responsible for all related taxes. Mid Atlantic Arts will provide tax support resources and can work with you to address your needs.

**There is no formal final report or final submitted budget requirement for this program.** If awarded, you must participate in a grantee impact survey and a recorded conversation with a U.S. RAO representative during your award year (January 1 – December 31, 2026). You may choose to give permission to the RAOs to use recorded data in external communications about Walking Together. If you do not give us permission, interview and survey data will be kept for internal program evaluation purposes only.

## 12. WEBINARS AND OFFICE HOURS

Each RAO has a Walking Together advisor to answer your questions and help with your Self-Nomination. We encourage you to get in touch with us early and often! There are also several public opportunities to meet us and ask questions.

[Find your RAO by looking for your state or jurisdiction here.](#) Then find your Walking Together advisor in this chart:

Arts Midwest	Creative West	Mid-America Arts Alliance	Mid Atlantic Arts	New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA)	South Arts
Crystal Price <a href="mailto:walkingtogether@artsmidwest.org">walkingtogether@artsmidwest.org</a>	Ashanti McGee <a href="mailto:ashanti.m@wearecreativewest.org">ashanti.m@wearecreativewest.org</a>	Christine Bial <a href="mailto:walkingtogether@maaaa.org">walkingtogether@maaaa.org</a>	Ellie Dassler & Joel Chapman <a href="mailto:walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org">walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org</a> 667-401-2587	Adrienne Petrillo <a href="mailto:apetrillo@nefa.org">apetrillo@nefa.org</a> & Saejin Yoo <a href="mailto:syoo@nefa.org">syoo@nefa.org</a>	Taylor Burden <a href="mailto:tburden@southarts.org">tburden@southarts.org</a>

## WEBINARS

**Accessibility:** We will provide live captioning in English for all webinars unless otherwise specified. To request other accommodations, or if you have any questions about webinars, please contact [walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org](mailto:walkingtogether@midatlanticarts.org) or 667-401-2587. Please request accommodation at least 5 business days before the webinar.

Captioned recordings of webinars will be available on the U.S. RAO website and Mid Atlantic Arts YouTube channel.

### January 30, 2025,

**3:30pm ET/12:30pm PT: For Organizations** (English)

- Register: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_XyQmUJpSCqvjBbu8RkQaA\\_](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_XyQmUJpSCqvjBbu8RkQaA_)

### February 4,

**7:00pm ET/4:00pm PT: For Artists/Practitioners** (English)

- Register: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_bjVrFC3uSC05Cw9QCeQ\\_gQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bjVrFC3uSC05Cw9QCeQ_gQ)

### February 11,

**3:30pm ET/12:30pm PT: For Organizations and Artists** (Spanish)

- Register: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_6vljvub-Ty05lp\\_DQrDAcA#](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6vljvub-Ty05lp_DQrDAcA#)
- Live captioning for this webinar will be in Spanish.

## OFFICE HOURS

Find your region below to join your advisor's office hours for personalized support without an appointment. If these times don't work for you, reach out for a conversation on your schedule. We hope to hear from you soon!

Arts Midwest	Creative West	Mid-America Arts Alliance	Mid Atlantic Arts	New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA)	South Arts
<b>Mon. Feb. 10,</b> 3:00-4:00pm CT <a href="#">Register</a>  <b>Thurs. Feb. 27,</b> 12:00-1:00pm CT <a href="#">Register</a>  <b>Wed. March 12,</b> 4:00-5:00pm CT <a href="#">Register</a>	<b>Mondays</b> 1:00-2:00pm PT Jan. 20–March 17  <a href="#">Join Zoom</a>	<b>Mondays</b> 3:30-5:30pm CT February 10, 24, March 3, 10 <a href="#">Register</a>	<b>Wednesdays</b> 1:00-2:00pm ET  Jan. 22, 29 Feb. 12, 19, 26 March 5, 12, 19 <a href="#">Join Zoom</a>	<b>Tuesdays</b> 1:00-3:00pm ET  Jan. 28 Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 March 4, 11 <a href="#">Register</a>	<b>Mondays</b> 10:30-11:30 ET Jan. 20 – March 17  <a href="#">Register</a>

