



Almost Real Things

Nexus: Application Walkthrough for Individuals

Here's our step-by-step guide to the Nexus Grant application!

Blue Text: Questions requiring a complex answer or attached document—**these questions determine your score**

Red Text: Our tips/simplification

Your application may have different questions than this guide. Some sections might be missing based on how you answer.

SET UP AN ACCOUNT WITH SUBMITTABLE

- You have to apply using Submittable: <https://thelongcenter.submittable.com/signup>
 - Sign-in if you already have an account *OR* Sign-Up to create a new account
- After you are signed in, you can access the Nexus application through this link: <https://thelongcenter.submittable.com/submit>

GETTING STARTED

- Scroll down and choose to submit your application in Spanish (first option) or English (second option)
 - Click Apply

ORGANIZATION EIN OR UEI

- Search for your EIN/UEI by typing in the box
 - **This is common if you are applying as an organization or 501(c)3**
 - **If you are an individual or do not have or know your EIN/UEI, choose “Skip and continue to application”**
-

ELIGIBILITY QUIZ

These questions do not affect your application score but they will determine if you're eligible to apply. Once you have taken this, you will no longer see it in your application.

- Do you have a delinquent status with the City of Austin Economic Development Department?
 - Are your annual expenses greater than \$150,000?
 - This is your budget as it relates to your artistic practice or creative business. Is it more than \$150k a year?
 - Are you currently receiving city funding in the fiscal year you're applying?
 - Are you a city of Austin employee?
 - Do you have a minimum of one year operating or event production history in the Austin Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)?
 - Have you been creating art and/or producing creative projects in Austin for at least a year?
 - Is 51 or more percent of your creative activity production history within the 10 Austin Council Districts or extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ)?
 - Do over half of your events/art/creative projects happen in Austin?
 - Will your proposed activities occur within the 10 Austin Council Districts or extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ)?
 - Will your activities occur between June 1, 2024 and September 30, 2024?
 - Will your proposed activities be open and accessible to tourists?
 - Did you start your non-profit/professional creative practice on or before April 1, 2023?
 - Do you understand that it is not the City or Create Austin's responsibility to advise on how a grant award might impact my individual tax situation?
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SECTION 1: CONTACT DETAILS AND ACTIVITY INFORMATION

These are all personal questions that are used for demographics and to contact you. Your personal information will not be made public. Your answers here do not affect your application score.

- Which of the following describes your applicant type?
 - An individual or collaborating individuals aged 18 or older
 - A creative business
 - A 501(c) nonprofit organization
- Activity Name
 - What is the name of the activity or event that you want to use this grant for?
- What name would you like listed on public facing materials associated with your activity?*
- Select the option that best describes the artistic discipline of the project/organization*
 - Choose an option from the dropdown menu
- Applicant Contact Name
- Applicant's Job Title
 - If you're an individual, you might write "Artist," "Photographer," etc.
 - If you're an organization or business, you might write "Founder" or "CEO"
- Applicant's Phone Number
- Applicant's Email Address
- Do you have a Band name, Artist name, Doing Business As Name, or Trade Name?
 - If you're an individual, you might have an Artist name different from your legal name
 - If you're an organization or business, you might have a DBA
- Do you have a professional website or social media accounts?
 - If you click YES, a new question will appear so that you can copy and paste your links
- Enter the Applicant's Residential Address

- This might be your home address or studio/business address
 - Select the district in which the applicant is headquartered (this could be your residential address)*
 - [Visit the Austin City Council District map](#) to find your Council District.
 - Click the link, then click the button labeled 'I want to' at the top left of the map. Then select 'Find my Council District'. Finally, input your address on the left side of the page. *Please click on "Address Search Tips" to ensure a correct result.*
 - Which Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) County are you located in? Enter your address to ensure it is located within the Austin-Round Rock MSA using the lookup tool.
 - Use the [lookup tool](#) to help find your county. Enter your address in the text box on the upper left-hand side of your screen. As you type your address it will auto fill with address options. Select your address. You will see a box populate on the left-hand side of your screen. The last row will list your county.
 - Is your mailing address the same as your residential address? *
 - If you choose NO, you will need to fill out an alternative address
 - Are you applying with a Fiscal Sponsor?*
 - If you choose YES, you will need to fill out more information
 - More information [here](#)
 - How did you hear about this opportunity?
 - You can check more than one box
 - If you choose OTHER, you can write in your answer
 - Select all of the grant programs you applied to last year, regardless of if you were awarded.
 - Live Music Fund
 - Nexus
 - Elevate
 - Thrive
 - Heritage Preservation
 - None of the above
 - Did you apply to any other grants? This will not affect your score.
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SECTION 2: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

These are all personal questions that are used for demographics. Your personal information will not be made public. If you do not want to answer these questions, choose “Prefer not to answer.” Your answers here do not affect your application score.

- **Preferred Pronouns**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **What language is most spoken at home?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **Select your gender identity**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **What is your primary race or ethnicity?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **What is your age?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **Do you identify as a member of the disability community? For this question, family, doctors, therapists, teachers, counselors, and other service providers are not considered part of the disability community unless they are living with disabilities themselves.**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **Are you a veteran of the United States Armed Services?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **Do you operate or are applying on behalf of a legally formed business entity or nonprofit organization?**
 - **Select YES if you are filling out this application for a legally formed organization or 501(c)3**
 - Additional questions will appear

ECONOMIC SITUATION

- **How often have you moved residences since 2015?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
- **How long have you been banking with a financial institution?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu

- **What is your healthcare coverage?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
 - **How did you primarily secure funding for startup?**
 - Select answer from drop down menu
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SECTION 3: SCORED PROGRAM QUESTIONS

REMEMBER: We highly recommend working on these questions outside of Submittable in a separate document (like this one!). Submittable will save your application automatically, but you should also choose “Save Draft” at the bottom when you are finished.

These questions are SCORED. You can see the number of points next to each question.

1. First-Time Applicant - Up to 10 Points

- In the last 5 years (2019-2024), how many City of Austin Economic Development Department Cultural Arts Division Grants (Thrive, Elevate, Nexus, Core, Community Initiatives, Capacity Building, or Cultural Heritage Festivals Program) have you received? This does not include other City of Austin Economic Development Department Grants.
 - Select from the drop-down menu
 - **The City is prioritizing individuals and groups that have not received grants before**

2. Key Constituencies & Creative Mission - Up to 15 Points (2,000 characters)

- Identify your key constituencies. How do you serve them through your artistic goals, creative mission, and experience producing public events?

SIMPLIFIED: [Grant Writing Presentation](#) (slides 16–26). Use these five questions and prompts to form your answer. (From last year’s Nexus application so the question is worded differently.)

1. Who are your key constituencies?
 - a. Who is your audience?

- b. **Why is this your audience?**
 - c. **What artists/collaborators/organizations are you involved with?**
 - d. *REMEMBER: The city will prioritize community groups that are*
 - i. *At immediate risk of cultural erasure and displacement within Austin*
 - ii. *Have been institutionally marginalized and under-funded by the City of Austin Cultural Arts Division.*
- 2. **What is your mission/creative mission?**
 - a. **What is the reason why you do what you do?**
 - b. **Why did you start creating/start your business?**
 - c. **What are your goals?**
- 3. **How do you serve your key constituencies?**
 - a. **What have you done/what do you do to serve your audience?**
 - i. **Examples of past events, experience and collaborators you've worked with**
 - ii. **Projects currently in the works**
 - b. **How you engage with your community**

3. Cultural Leadership - Up to 15 Points (2,000 characters)

- **Who holds decision-making power in your creative practice and how do you/they represent your key constituencies?**
 - Include the name, role and description of each of the following that apply:
 - You, the individual artist applicant
 - Executive and Creative Leadership
 - Advisory Board
 - Creative Advisors/Collaborators
 - Answer *why and how* they represent your key constituencies

SIMPLIFIED: Best practices to respond to this question in our article, [“How to Approach the Nexus Grant Application Questions”](#)

4. Cultural Activities - Up to 10 points (2,000 characters)

- **What are your proposed public activities?**
 - Include a description of your proposed activities/event (who, what, when, where)

- Include your goals for your activities. What impact would it have? How are you focusing on equity?
- Include how your key constituencies are involved in the process of your activities?

■ **You can repeat the points you've already made.**

SIMPLIFIED: Remember this is your IDEAL activity or event. It is okay if your venue or date changes.

5. Creative Collaboration - Up to 10 points (2,000 characters)

- **Provide the name(s) of creative collaborator(s) and their role(s) producing your proposed activities.**
 - **Think about the artists, musicians, venue, sponsors, staff and volunteers involved.**
 - **Reiterate how they represent your key constituencies**

6. Accessibility - Up to 10 points (2,000 characters)

- **Describe the specialized accommodations and/or programming for individuals with disabilities that you intend to provide at your proposed activities, if any.**
 - Include specific services you will provide outside of what is already provided.
 - Include the name(s) of who you may hire or partner with to provide those services

PRO TIP: An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) resource guide can be found at <https://atxgo.org/ada-toolkit>. Refer to the "Access Resources in Central Texas" PDF to find local vendors who provide accessibility services.

7. Language Accessibility - Up to 10 points (2,000 characters)

- **Describe the specialized language access accommodations or programming for limited or non-English speaking communities that you intend to provide at your proposed activities, if any.**
 - Include specific services you will provide outside of what is already provided.

- Include the name(s) of who you may hire or partner with to provide those services

SIMPLIFIED: Community Engagement Presentation (slides 8-12). Think about who might be left out of your event and how you can include them.

8. Marketing - Up to 10 points (2,000 characters)

- **Describe how you will market your proposed activities.**
 - Include what marketing platforms will you use to promote your event(s)
 - Include how your marketing strategy will reach and include
 - Your key constituencies
 - New audiences within the [City of Austin's Priority Key Constituencies](#)
 - Search “key constituencies”
 - Audience members with disabilities and/or audience members whose primary language is not English
 - **You can reiterate your answers from Questions 6 + 7**
 - Tourists
 - **PRO TIP: Find out what the City suggests in the [Cultural Arts Funding Additional Program Details](#). Search “tourism” to find the section “Attracting Cultural Tourism.”**

9. Budget - Up to 10 points

- **Complete the budget table with ways you will use this grant to produce your proposed activities.**
 - Use Column B to fill out how you will spend the \$5,000
 - **The total must equal \$5,000**
 - Use Column C to explain the specifics of these amounts
 - **For example, if \$1,000 of the grant will be used for marketing then your description might explain: \$500 will be used for advertising on social media platforms and radio. \$500 will be used for designing and printing flyers in English and Spanish**
 - **There is no character limit in this column so be specific**
 - **It is expected that your event may cost more than \$5,000 total. You should include any additional expenses that you will contribute or that will be donated in your description as well.**

- Your budget should be reflective of this application
 - **Don't forget to include explanations to execute your marketing strategy (from Question 8) and specialized accommodations (from Questions 6 +7)**

SIMPLIFIED: Budget Presentation (slides 13-24), Budget Brainstorm Activity [English](#) / [Spanish](#) (from last year's Nexus so the question is slightly different.

PRO TIP: You should pay yourself! This will be reflected in the Admin column. It is also very important that you pay artists.

SECTION 4: REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

All documentation and application information are required at the time your application is submitted. You should have a minimum of 3 documents attached.

Work Samples

- **Upload 3 Applicant Work Samples**
 - Your samples should demonstrate your past experience or events.
 - These may include:
 - Bios of key artists and creative decision makers.
 - Artwork samples, promotional materials, programs, season brochures, newsletters, etc.
 - Links to videos, audio clips. Video and audio clips should not be more than 5 minutes TOTAL. Panelists will be instructed to only review 5 minutes of video/audio samples.
 - Website or social media pages.
 - **We HIGHLY RECOMMEND using the work sample template.**
 - **Make a copy or download the Work Sample template and fill in slides 2-4.**
 - **Do not add additional slides to the template.**
 - **Do not include more than one work sample, shared folder link, or website per slide.**

SECTION 5: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND ATTESTATIONS

You must click YES or ACCEPT to all of the following questions.

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT

- Save your draft first!
- Double-check your attached documents
- Is the application filled out correctly?
 - Did you follow the rules?
 - Are you sure?