

CITY HALL PLAZA ENGAGEMENT GRANT

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

As the epicenter of the City of Boston, City Hall Plaza is a place where all Boston residents, visitors, and newcomers have access to participate in arts and cultural events. The goal of City Hall Plaza is to create a space for convening, inspiration, and celebration that uplifts the community, highlights history, and influences the future of Boston's cultural ecosystem.

City Hall Plaza, formally known as Scollay Square, was a thriving community intersection filled with artists, activists, sports legends, and many venues. In the 1950's the intersection was rebuilt but left many people without a space to be, work, or create. Similarly, today many community organizations and independent artists are experiencing an immense feeling of loss due to building closures, infrastructure changes, and limited public activity due to COVID-19. The recent closures of venues such as Great Scott, Milky Way, and Makeshift Boston have left an increasing number of Boston communities and artists without a space to program or attend performances, cultural gatherings, or citywide activities. This has led to many artists and cultural workers leaving Boston or significantly downsizing successful programs that serve several neighborhoods.

To honor the communal grief that the arts and culture sector is facing and respond to those most impacted by space inequity, the Mayor's Office of Arts & Culture (MOAC) will provide grants for programs and events to be held at City Hall Plaza. Through the City Hall Plaza Engagement Grant, MOAC aims to highlight programming that uplifts Boston's diverse communities, responds to the current arts and culture climate, and restores the use of City Hall Plaza as a core space for people within the arts and culture sector.

THE BASICS

Grant Manager Name and Contact Information Billy Dean Thomas

billydean.thomas@boston.gov

Funding Source: American Rescue Plan Act, Boston Planning and Development Public Impact Contribution Funds

Size of grants: Up to \$100,000 (4 tiers outlined further below)

Application Due Date: January 9, 2025 11:59pm

Reporting Requirements: Number of Attendees & Photo/Video documentation of the events

ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY



- Applicants must be an individual, non-profit organization, collective, or fiscally sponsored group working in partnership with community partners

SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection process for the City Hall Plaza Engagement Grant is guided by the following core values:

- **Vision:** Programming that elevates arts, culture, and/or creative expression
- **Commitment to Equity:** City Hall Plaza is a space for everyone and our goal is to provide funding for programs on the plaza to support communities that were disproportionately affected and impacted by COVID 19.
- **Need for Space:** All programs will demonstrate the need for additional cultural spaces in Boston due to the loss of space or inability to afford space.
- **Cultural Relevance:** All programs should engage with the current social, cultural, or civic climate that uplifts Boston's arts and cultural sector.
- **Community partnerships:** All programs should center partnerships with community members, artists and key stakeholders toward a shared vision of uplifting Boston's arts and culture sector.
- **Location:** City Hall Plaza will highlight organizations and artists who are located in the Greater Boston Area, communities residing east I-495 in Massachusetts, and/or national partners who have had a longstanding relationship with Boston communities ([reference map](#)).

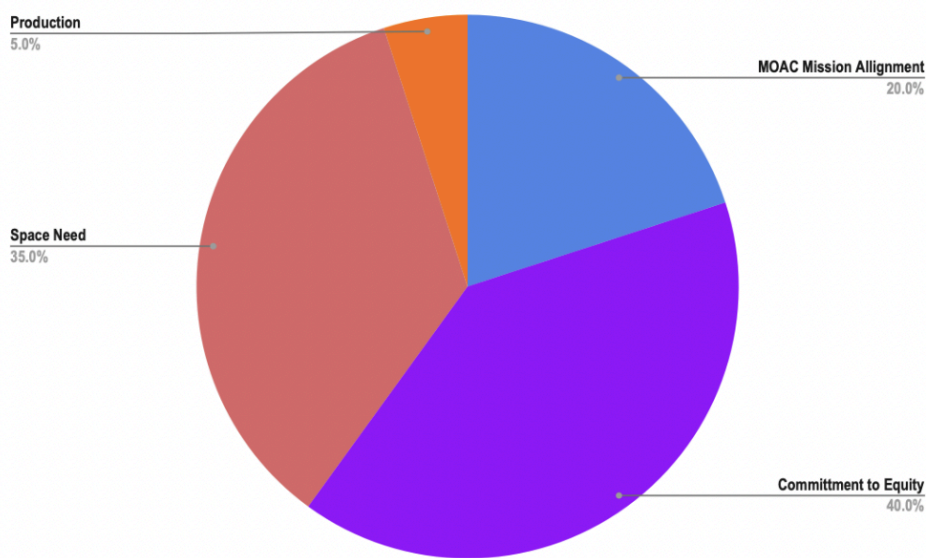
FUNDING STRUCTURE

The funding is divided into four tiers to include a range of arts and cultural programs or events. The amount of funding allocated to each tier is informed by the budget and scale of the proposed idea. The City Hall Plaza Engagement Grant prioritizes applicants with an annual budget size of less than \$100,000 a year. However we still encourage individuals and organizations with larger annual budgets to apply. If the proposed idea is aligned with the core values of the grant you may be selected for a MOAC sponsorship (see below for more info on a MOAC sponsorship). In some cases MOAC will make suggestions and offer a recommended amount based on our capacity to fund or sponsor programs. All programs and events funded by the CHP Engagement Grant will be sponsored by MOAC and must be free and open to the public.




Tier One: \$15,000 or less	Budgets under \$15,000 will fund programmatic costs, such as performing artists fees, photographers/videographers, graphic designers and social media campaigns
Tier Two: \$15,000-\$30,000	Budgets over \$15,000 will fund programmatic costs listed in tier one as well as additional partnerships, contractors or production companies during the planning and development stages.

Tier Three: \$30,000-60,000	Budgets above \$30,000 will fund general programming costs listed in tier one as well as production costs of small to medium size festivals, a recurring series of programs, or cultural markets. At this tier we request at least one community partnership during the planning, development, or production stages.
Tier Four \$60,000-\$100,000	Budgets above \$60,000 will fund programmatic costs of tier three as well as programs that require larger scale production or a standing residency on the plaza with events offered throughout the year. This tier must also include a partnership with a production company as well as individual artists to collaborate during the planning, development, or production stages. This grant amount will be awarded to no more than two applicants total.



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE (MOAC) SPONSORSHIP

A MOAC Grantee sponsorship will be offered to applicants who are proposing activations that align with the core values of the CHP Engagement Grant. With this sponsorship you will be given in kind promotional support on our social channels and offered a waiver to cover City Hall Plaza space fees.

Accessibility (City of Boston Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities)  All events held at City Hall Plaza are required to be accessible for persons with disabilities under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The new plaza design integrates accessibility into the foundation of the space and for the first time, all primary entrances to City Hall are universally accessible. All applicants must consider physical and programmatic accessibility in their planning and budgeting process. Additional accommodations are available upon request to any person who requires alternately formatted materials, auxiliary aids, or other accommodations.

NEXT STEPS

1. Applications will be reviewed by the CHP Engagement Grant Review committee.
2. Qualifying applicants will be invited for a second round interview. During the interview we will discuss the following:
 - a. Vision + Program budget
 - b. Staffing & Permitting
3. After the second round interview applicants will be notified of the status of their application and awarded amount.
4. If awarded the City Hall Plaza Engagement Grant, recipients will need to sign a grant agreement and obtain the necessary permits for their program and/or event. The Director



of City Hall Plaza Engagement will be able to answer questions and guide you through the permitting process.

5. If there are major changes to your proposed programs once awarded, applicants must inform the Director of City Hall Plaza Engagement immediately and allow for at least 30 days to adjust accordingly.