

The EM Grant

EM Grants provide up to **\$1500** for students to enact their unique ideas and collaborations. Our grants fund innovative and impactful projects and help students develop skills critical to their success: communicating a vision, creating a production plan, developing a marketing strategy, and balancing budgets. The competitive application process is modeled on real-world grants, and students are coached through every step, from first draft to final pitch, by the EM Team. For more information and to start the application process, [set an appointment with](#) the EM Team

Fall '25 EM Grant - [Apply Here!](#)

The EM Grants are competitive and applications are reviewed twice yearly. Each applicant must complete every step of the application process (see below) and submit the grant application according to the following timeline for Fall 2025.

- Applicants must be enrolled full-time at NEC in order to be eligible for the EM Grant.
- Applicants must meet with the EM Team a minimum of one time (Advising Appointment) prior to the application deadline to review their project ideas, written application, and budget.

DATES

- Meet with EM: Minimum of one meeting to discuss project.
- Application due: October 24th, 2025 @ 11:59pm ET - [Apply Here](#)
- Finalists invited to present their live 3-minute pitch. Finalist pitches will take place on October 30, 2025. Finalists will be notified of the time/place via email.
- Projects that received funding through the Fall '25 EM Grant must be completed by June 1st, 2026.

ELIGIBILITY

- You must be a current NEC student to apply for an Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grant.
- Graduating students (e.g. December, May) are eligible to apply for an Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grant in the grant period immediately preceding their graduation date.
- If you are collaborating on a project with another NEC student, only one application needs to be submitted. Your application must include the names of the other NEC student collaborators.
- NEC Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grants are not limited to activities based in Boston. Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grants will not fund traditional competitions or summer festival activities (funds for student competitions are available through the Provost's Office).
- You may apply for multiple grants as long as the applications are submitted during different grant periods and for different projects.
- You may not pay yourself using grant funding.

Guide to Crafting Your Application

The online application consists of a series of questions to be answered with 100 – 300 word statements. Your submission should be original, concise, and speak to each detail of your project.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Your answers to the following questions should give the committee a full understanding of what you plan to accomplish.

1. Describe the project you wish to undertake, focusing on the related activities, events, and/or products.
2. Who are your partners and/or collaborators and how will they be involved?
3. What makes your project entrepreneurial?

MARKETING AND DOCUMENTATION PLAN

The marketing and documentation of your project weighs heavily on the committee's decision. Make sure you understand the environment in which you are producing your project. Analyze your anticipated audience, and define the ways in which you plan to publicize your project to attract this specific audience. The definition of an audience ranges from the patrons at a concert, to students for an educational endeavor, or customers for a product.

1. Please share an analysis of the market and/or community you are entering, and how your project will provide value to this market.
2. Who is your target audience? Who will be engaged by this project?
3. How will you publicize your project?

GOALS AND IMPACT

In this section, articulate the broad goals for your project and the concrete impact you anticipate as a result of the activities associated with your project. The three goals should be short – one to two sentences. Project Impact - What benefits and/or growth will your audience experience as a result of being involved with your project. How is your project adding value to their lives?

TIMELINE

Outline your process by noting the tasks that will be done each day/week leading up to your project. This can include anything from booking a venue, creating a rehearsal schedule, planning a social media campaign, meeting with collaborators, etc.

BUDGET

Use the budget template from the EM office to indicate your avenues of income and expense. Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate other potential sources of income, such as ticket sales, program fees, donations, other grants, or your own financial contribution, etc. Note: You are able to pay your collaborators a stipend, however, are not allowed to write in a fee for your own work.

[EM Grant Budget Template](#)

Questions? [Email EM](#)

Application Overview

PURPOSE

NEC's Entrepreneurial Musicianship (EM) Grant program empowers students to explore and execute their unique programmatic ideas. Our grants fund innovative, impactful projects that help students learn important career skills as they develop their musicianship.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grant projects must have a component that is outwardly focused and beneficial to others. Potential models for projects include but are by no means limited to: (1) developing interdisciplinary partnerships, (2) launching music business ventures, (3) exploring unique recital or concert formats, or (4) using technology to enhance the study and appreciation of music.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grant applications will be reviewed by a panel of NEC faculty, staff, and previous student grant awardees. Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- A thorough explanation of how the project is entrepreneurial
- A clear statement of the project's intended benefit to others
- The feasibility of the project timeline
- The breadth and detail of the budget and marketing plan
- The extent to which your budget is viable, with preference given to applications that demonstrate more than one source of funding (e.g. ticket revenue, donations, other grants etc...).
- When applicable, insight into the future sustainability of the project.

AWARDS

Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grants typically range from \$500 - \$1500 per project. The Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grant awards are funded through the reimbursement of receipts documenting actual project costs. Original receipts and invoices must be submitted; copies will not be accepted. The project cost receipts must total an amount that is equivalent to or less than the grant award. Awards can be processed as an advance or retroactively as a reimbursement.

APPLICATION PROCESS

In order for your application to be considered, you must complete each of the following items, including the meetings with the Entrepreneurial Musicianship Department.

1. Meet twice with the EM Team to discuss your project idea before submitting your application. These can be in the form of Advising Appointments or at the optional Info Sessions. Schedule an appointment with [Ryan Mewhorter](#) at your earliest convenience.
2. Connect and meet with the EM Team to discuss and edit your application draft.
3. Submit your final application, according to the deadline outlined above.
4. EM Grant finalists will be required to give a short presentation before a review panel, comprised of NEC staff, faculty and students. The presentation must not exceed three minutes, and should focus on the broad picture and goals of your project (aka 'elevator pitch'). Meet with the EM Team once your application has been accepted to craft and practice this short presentation.
5. Give your presentation at the review panel meeting. Following the presentation, the review panel will be allotted ten minutes to ask questions. You should be prepared to defend your program budget and marketing plan.

GRANT PROCESS

- If awarded a grant, you will be matched with at least one EM Advisor to work with throughout the duration of your project. Regular meetings with the advisor are required. While ideally held in person, these meetings can occur over the phone or via video conferencing (e.g. Skype).
- Grant recipients will be required to submit at least one update for the EM Department's website during the course of their project. The schedule and guidelines for submission should be discussed with your EM Advisor at the outset of and throughout your project.
- You will also be required to document your experience through a video and/or photo journal and reflective report. Detailed documentation guidelines will be made available to all grant recipients.

Disbursement Information

- EM Grant is awarded via 2 Stipends:
 - Stipend #1: 50% of funding awarded after you sign Grant Agreement Letter
 - Stipend #2: 50% of funding awarded upon your project's completion and submission of all post-project Documentation Requirements submitted via the EM Grant Exit Form (written summary report, photos/videos, and estimated/actual budget).
- The grants/stipends are considered prizes for IRS reporting purposes. Individual recipients of prize money will be responsible for the tax implications of their winnings.
- Note that prize payments are treated as income by NEC and the IRS, regardless of whether the payment is made to an individual or company. Non-U.S Citizens are taxed on their prize money up front at a rate of 30%, which is withheld from their prize checks.
- For grant projects with multiple team members, grant stipends will be awarded to the primary applicant listed on the grant application, who will be responsible for distributing the funding as allocated in the grant application.
- For grants awarded to 501(c)3 organizations (only available for Grow Your Art and EM Alumni Award), the following information must be provided within the appropriate fields

of the grant application in order for the grant to be paid to an organization rather than individual: Organization Name, Tax ID, completed Questionnaire, and W9.