



Commissioning Projects

Encouraging the creation of new work is a North Carolina Arts Council priority. In the Program Support category, both performing arts and visual arts organizations can apply for commissioning projects.

For all commissioning projects, the evaluation will center primarily around the selected artist(s), so this information is pivotal to the proposal's success. But aside from the strength of the artist's work, the panel will look at the choice of artist in relation to your other programming - does it make sense? does it stretch your organization in some way? – as well as artist diversity, artist compensation, and opportunities for audiences to engage with the artist during the project.

Engagement activities are an often-neglected part of commissioning projects. While the main event of the project is the creation and presentation of the new work, you should look for opportunities for the public to interact with the artist: for instance, with a visual artist during the creation of an installation, or a composer before or after a rehearsal. Some organizations combine a residency with the commission to provide additional opportunities for different groups to explore the creative process with the artist. And, after the unveiling or initial performance, there are multiple interpretive avenues – lectures, workshops, digital media, etc. — that can open up new ways of understanding the work and how it came to be made.

Performing Arts Commissions

The following information should be included when proposing a performing arts commissioning project:

- Information on all planned performances
- Work samples from the commissioned artist and from the group that will premiere the work

Visual Arts Commissions

Proposals for commissions of visual artwork will be enhanced by the following details:

- Permanent or temporary intent of the commission
- Duration of the exhibition, if it's a temporary installation
- Plans for ongoing care of the artwork, maintenance of the site, and continuous public access, if it's permanent
- Site plans, as appropriate
- Timetable for the project
- Plans for documentation
- Work samples appropriate to the proposed commission