



Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship

Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship Round 14 (2026-2028) Guidelines & Application Instructions

Application opens: Thursday, May 14, 2026

Deadline to submit eligibility: Sunday, June 14, 2026 11:59 pm (required)

Access to full application: Thursday, June 25, 2026

Application deadline: Sunday, August 2, 2026, 11:59 pm

Apply at indyarts.grantplatform.com

About the Program

The Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship is funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. and administered by the Indy Arts Council. This is Round 14 of the Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship. **The fellowship awards \$12,000 to 50 arts administrators and artists in music, dance, theatre, literature, and visual arts to pursue personal renewal.**

Since its first cohort in 1999, the program has infused \$5+ million into more than 500 central Indiana artists and arts professionals with the belief that the entire community will benefit when individuals in the creative community are refreshed and inspired to continue their work.

NEW in 2026: The application opens May 14, and applicants must submit eligibility information by June 14, 11:59 pm. Indy Arts Council staff will confirm each applicant's eligibility on June 25. Eligible applicants will have access to the full application, due August 2, 11:59 pm

Questions? grants@indyarts.org

Program web page: indyarts.org/grants/creative-renewal-arts-fellowship/

Fellowship Activities

Creative Renewal Arts Fellows pursue activities that refresh and reconnect them to their creativity, well-being, and/or their goals. Because “renewal” looks differently for everyone, fellowship activities vary drastically from person to person.

In the past, fellowship activities have included:

- Travel to explore new ideas, cultures, art forms
- Pursuit of new or familiar avenues of artistic expression
- Genealogical research and heritage pilgrimage
- Wellness or artistic retreats
- Spiritual practice and guidance
- Personal training, nutrition and health support
- ...and so much more.

This is not a project grant for artistic production. *This fellowship is not focused on creative output or work*, rather for artists and arts administrators to take a break and invest in themselves!

Fellowship activities must occur between November 2026 and May 30, 2028. Fellowship activities may be conducted anywhere. Funds may be used for any expenses for the proposed activities including travel, housing, services, equipment and more. Fellowship funds may not be used for tuition at degree-granting institutions. Fellows will be responsible for making all arrangements and/or purchases for fellowship activities.

Fellows are encouraged to participate in celebrations and gatherings during the fellowship period, including:

- **Induction Ceremony:** At the beginning of the fellowship, Indy Arts Council will host a special celebration event to honor each new fellow together with their family and friends.
- **Cohort Gatherings:** Four times during the fellowship, Indy Arts Council will host optional gatherings for fellows to build community, share experiences, and reinforce renewing practices close to home. In the past, these experiences have included a sound bath, a cohort dinner, a reflective hike, and a storytelling workshop.
- **Retrospective Exhibition:** When the fellowship ends, each fellow will contribute a small amount of artwork, writing, photos or other artifacts to a group exhibition that celebrates their renewal experience.

Application & Program Timeline

Thursday, May 14, 2026	Application opens
Monday, May 18, 12:00 pm	Virtual workshop: About the Program and Eligibility (Optional. Register here.)
Sunday, June 14, 2026 11:59 pm	Deadline to submit eligibility (required)
Thursday, June 25	Eligibility notification and access to full application
Thursday, July 9, 6:30 pm	Virtual workshop: Planning Advice and Application Tips (Optional. Details will be sent to eligible applicants.)
Sunday July 12, 11:59 pm	Application draft review deadline (optional)
Monday, July 27, 6:30-8:00 pm	In-person workshop: Planning Advice and Application Tips (Optional. Details will be sent to eligible applicants.)
Friday, July 31, 4:30 pm	Last day staff will be available for questions before the weekend application deadline
Sunday, August 2, 11:59 pm	Application deadline
August - October	Panel review process
Early November	Notification and announcement of fellowship awards
November 2026 - May 30, 2028	Fellowship period
Summer 2028	Retrospective exhibition

Eligibility Process

All applicants must submit the eligibility section of the application via indyarts.grantplatform.com by Sunday, June 14, 2026 11:59 pm.

In this step, applicants will confirm that they meet the eligibility guidelines, submit a resume or CV, submit work samples (if applying as an individual artist), and provide a very brief summary of their proposed activities.

All applicants will be notified of their eligibility status by email no later than June 25. Eligible applicants will have access to complete the full application at that time.

Applicants are encouraged to attend the optional virtual workshop: About the Program and Eligibility on Monday, May 18, 12:00 pm ([register here](#)). This workshop will be recorded and posted here: indyarts.org/grants/creative-renewal-arts-fellowship/

Eligibility Guidelines

The guidelines below are used to evaluate each individual's eligibility for this fellowship. Applicants must clearly demonstrate each point.

1. The applicant must have lived and/or primarily worked in any of these counties for a minimum of **two consecutive years** at the date of application: Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Morgan or Shelby County. Applicants must live and/or primarily work within this 9-county area for the entire 18-month fellowship (except for any duration of program-related travel).
2. The applicant must either be a professional artist or an arts administrator who has been working in the arts for **at least five years** (not necessarily consecutive years, in the same position, with the same organization, or with the same art form). At the time of application, artists must be actively pursuing a career in the arts and arts administrators must be working full-time in a nonprofit arts organization. This career experience should be demonstrated in the applicant's resume.
3. The applicant must have generated the **majority of their income over the past two years** through work in one or more of these disciplines: dance, theater, media arts (film, video, digital arts, photography), music, literature, visual arts, folk arts, or multi-disciplinary art forms, either as a professional artist or as a full-time employee at an arts nonprofit. This should be reasonably demonstrated in the applicant's resume and work samples (if applying as an artist).
4. Past Creative Renewal Arts Fellows from Round 1 through Round 10 (1999 - 2017) are eligible to apply in this round. However, applicants from Round 11 (2020 - 2022), Round 12 (2022 - 2024) and Round 13 (2024 - 2026) are not eligible to apply in this round. Individuals may receive a maximum of two Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship awards.

Applicants will apply in either the professional artist category or arts administrator category. If applying as an arts administrator (or you are an artist employed full-time by an arts nonprofit):

- Preference will be given to applicants who have worked in their current institution for four years or more.
- There is no limit to the number of individuals that may apply from a single organization; however, no more than two individuals from any one organization will be awarded fellowships.
- If your proposed fellowship activities require a leave of absence from work, you will be asked to provide authorization from your employer prior to applying. It is expected that fellows who take a leave of absence will continue their work in the arts sector upon completion of fellowship activities. Applicants will provide a signed leave of absence form in the full application.

Application Process

Eligible applicants will have access to the full application in indyarts.grantplatform.com on June 25. **Applications are due Sunday, August 2, 2026, 11:59 pm.**

Application Content

In the full application, applicants will submit a detailed proposal including information about their need for renewal, a clear explanation of their proposed fellowship activities, and why these activities will be personally impactful.

This is an online, written application form submitted through indyarts.grantplatform.com. If you prefer an alternate format (i.e. dictated responses, video responses, other languages), please reach out and we'll do our best to accommodate.

Application Assistance

- **Workshops - Planning Advice and Application Tips:** Eligible applicants are encouraged to attend one of these optional workshops. Both workshops will cover the same content. Details will be sent on June 25.
 - Thursday, July 9, 6:30 pm, Zoom
 - Monday, July 27, 6:30-8:00 pm, location TBA (Indianapolis)
- **Draft Review:** Applicants may submit their full application early by Sunday, July 12, 11:59 pm for feedback from Indy Arts Council staff. Applicants may continue editing their application until the deadline.
- **Application Questions:** Email grants@indyarts.org with specific questions or request an online meeting with program staff.

Review & Selection Process

This is a highly competitive opportunity. Fellowships will be awarded to eligible applicants who best meet the selection criteria. Applications are assessed by Arts Council staff and out-of-state panelists. The recommendations from the panelists go to the Arts Council Board of Directors for final approval. A variety of art careers and art forms will be represented in the awards.

Applicants will be evaluated according to the following selection criteria:

- Alignment with the intention of the Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship
- A clearly described need for renewal at this point in the applicant's life and arts career
- A clear explanation of how the applicant's proposed fellowship activities would renew them personally and/or professionally
- A realistic, clear and detailed plan for the fellowship activities

Fellowship Award Details

Please be aware of the following requirements of all Creative Renewal Arts Fellows including:

- **Contract:** Fellows will complete an award agreement via DocuSign stipulating the rights and obligations of each party.
- **Payment schedule:** The \$12,000 award is made in two payments: The first fellowship payment (\$10,000) will be made upon receipt of a signed fellowship agreement and all required paperwork. The final payment (\$2,000) will be made upon submission and approval of a final report.
- **Indy Arts Council marketing and publicity:** Fellows will submit a headshot and bio to be used in a public announcement and other informational material about the program.
- **Taxable income:** Grants are taxable income for individuals, including this fellowship. All taxes and reporting of taxes are the responsibility of the fellowship recipient. Fellows will submit an IRS form W-9 and Indy Arts Council will issue a IRS form 1099 income statement.
- **Reporting:** A final report is due by the end of the fellowship period. Fellows will submit narrative reflections from their fellowship, photos of their activities, and feedback about the program.
- **Gatherings:** Indy Arts Council hosts optional gatherings throughout the fellowship for fellows to connect with each other.

- **Fellowship catalog:** At the end of the fellowship period, Indy Arts Council produces public digital or print materials that document each fellow's experiences.
- **Retrospective:** At the end of the fellowship period, Indy Arts Council produces a retrospective exhibition featuring a small amount of each fellow's artwork, photos, reflections, or artifacts related to their renewal experience.

Program Contact

Questions concerning the Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship which are not answered in this document should be directed to grants@indyarts.org or to:

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