



**SERVICE
FIRST,
NOW!**

COP Information Session

March 2026

Office of Arts and Culture

Glenn Ayars

Assistant Director

Office of Arts and Culture

Julia Hosch Singh

Cultural Programs Manager

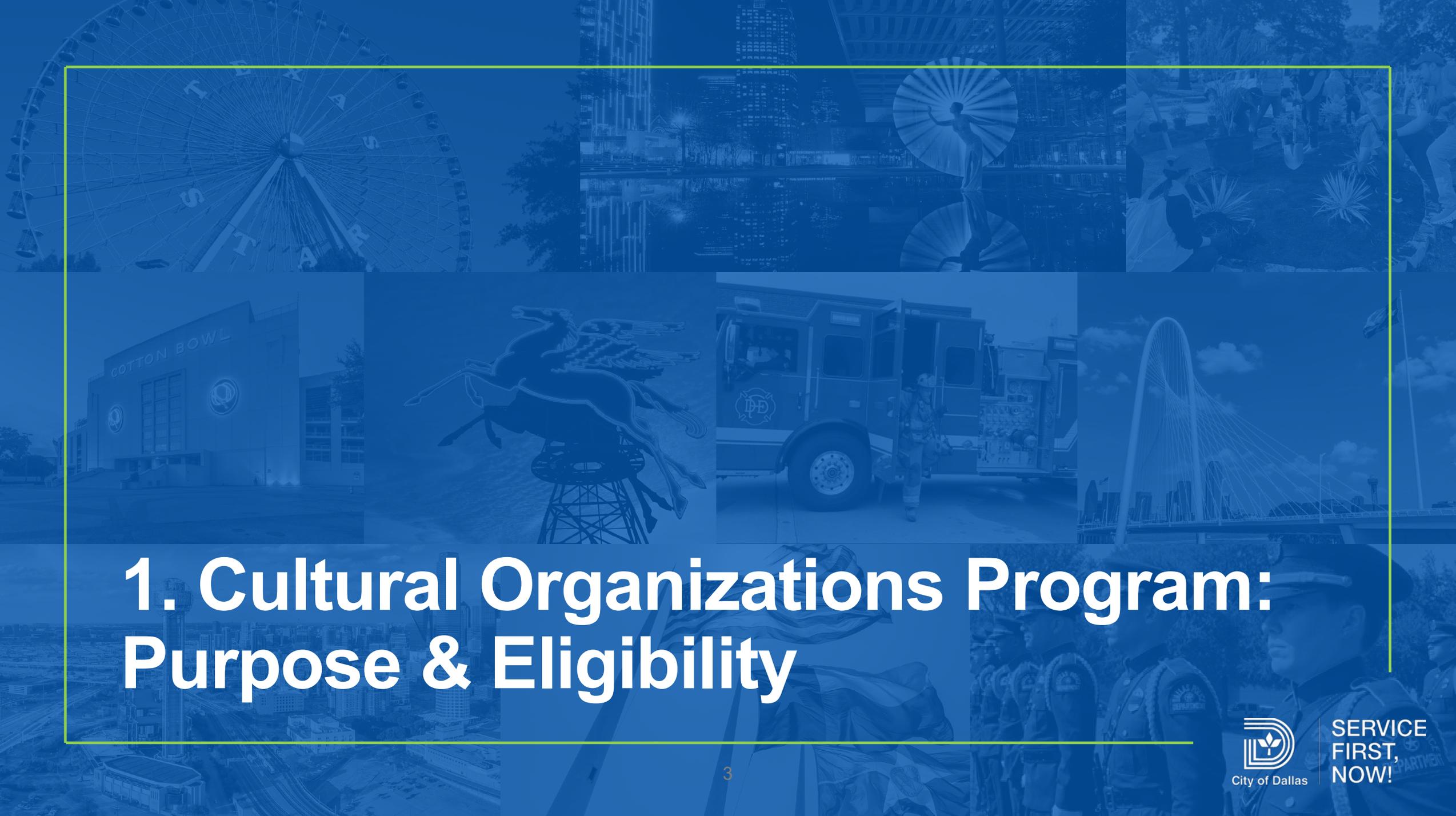
Office of Arts and Culture



Presentation Overview



1. **Cultural Organizations Program (COP): Purpose and Eligibility**
2. **Application Overview: Components and Timeline**
3. **Changes for FY 2026-27**
4. **Scoring**
5. **Welcome New Applicants! Application Tips**



1. Cultural Organizations Program: Purpose & Eligibility

Purpose: Cultural Organizations Program 2026-27

- The Cultural Organizations Program (COP) is the organizational support program of the Office of Arts and Culture.
- The current 2025-26 COP:
 - Provides year-round support for selected organizations over \$100K in revenue;
 - Funds organizations from the City of Dallas General Fund and the Hotel Occupancy Tax; and
 - Supports 65 cultural organizations in FY 2025 – 26
- The COP application is on a three-year cycle. There are two types of application: Year 2 (application for returning organizations) and Full (application for new organizations). **The 2026-27 application for both will support programming from October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027.**
- **If accepted to the COP program, all COP organizations must: present, operate, and document a season of artistic and cultural experiences for Dallas residents and visitors.**

COP Eligibility

To be COP-eligible, organizations must:

- Hold **501(c)(3)** Non-Profit Public Charity designation from at least three years prior (*as of April 10, 2023 or earlier*), be in good standing with the IRS, and authorized to do business in TX
- Have a three-year operational history as an **arts or cultural organization**
- Hold a physical administrative **office in the City of Dallas** (*no P.O. Box*)
- Have a **minimum operational budget of \$100,000** based on prior year's actual revenue, as recorded in 990
- Obtain and maintain during the contract term all necessary licenses, permits, and insurance required by law and by the City of Dallas
- Employ a minimum of **one paid part-time Director/Manager staff member (W2)**
- Must produce an **annual season of programs, exhibitions, and/or performances for the public** in the City of Dallas.
- Host programming and operations primarily **within the City of Dallas** (*minimum of 50%*)
- Comply with all regulations of federal grant recipients
- Have a Board-approved **Safe Workplace Policy**

A note about Terms: Year 2 Application v. Full Application

Year 2 Application

- The Year 2 Application is the correct application for returning applicants, funded in the FY 2025-26 year. Welcome back!
- To select the “Year 2 Application,” create a COP application on the portal. In the “Main Application” form, select “funded in 2025-26.” The correct questions will appear.

Full Application

- New applicants: Welcome!
- We consider those submitting a COP application for the first time OR who have applied for COP in the past but were not funded in FY 2025-26 as “new applicants.”
- New applicants should notify OAC of intent to apply by March 24, 2026.
- New applicants will complete a Full Application, which includes mandatory video and Q&A sessions.
- To select the “Full Application,” create a COP application on the portal. In the “Main Application” form, select “not funded in FY 2025-26.” The correct questions will appear.



2. Components and Timeline

Year 2 AND Full Application Include:

- Main Application includes:
 - Proposal for 2026-27
 - Core Programming
 - Access and Impact survey* (in a different file in the same portal!)
 - Required Materials
 - 2026-27 Projection Matrix
 - 990
 - Board Roster
 - Safe Workplace Policy
- Optional Materials
 - Strategic Plan
 - Employee Handbook
 - Board Handbook
- Supplemental Materials
- Certification

Full Application Also Includes:

- New applicant profile
- New applicant video
- Panel review process & Q&A
(May 14, 2026)

Timeline

- March 3, 2026 – Application Opens
- March 24, 2026 – Deadline for new organizations to notify intent to apply
- April 10, 2026 – COP application closes at 11:59 p.m.
- May 14, 2026 – Q&A Sessions for new organizations only
- June – September – Funding recommendations made by Allocations Committee
- October 2025 – Recommendations approved by City Council



3. For RETURNING Applicants: Changes for 2026-27

Changes for 2026-27

Because of current organization feedback, we are in the second year of a three-year cycle.

For YEAR 2 applicants, changes to expect include:

- Access and Impact survey for 20 points, found in a separate document from the main application
- Different admin scoring – READ GUIDELINES CAREFULLY
 - Projection matrix is non-optional
 - Contract compliance from last year given more weight
 - Points for “operational management,” which includes dropping in a board handbook, employee handbook, and safe workplace policies
- NO video necessary, no Q&A, and significantly shorter questions



4. For RETURNING Applicants: Scoring and Tips

Year 2 Application: Scoring, out of 80 points

- **Access & Impact Survey: 20 points: NEW (ish)**
 - **New this year: “Partially” option, and explanation available**
- **Artistic and Cultural Services: 20 points**
 - **10 points for scope of work: NEW**
 - Full points if SOW includes approximately the same number and types of services (or more) as presented in FY 2025-26
 - **10 points for Projection Matrix: NEW (ish)**
 - Full points if matrix is fully completed
- **Contract Compliance**
 - 8 points for monthly reports turned in on time (2 freebies)
 - 4 points for turning in your audit or 990 on time
 - **4 points for panelist participation: NEW (ish)**
 - **4 points for using OAC’s logo correctly: NEW**
- **Financial Stewardship**
 - 4 points days cash on hand
 - 4 points fundraising percentages
 - 4 points organization board give or get
 - 4 points employee pay
 - **4 points operational management documents: NEW**

Red text indicates new or changed items for 2026-27

Tips for Returning Applicants

- Office hours are recommended for individual questions (faster response than email).
- “Core programming” means to include programs that are annual, repeated programs or events for your organization that fit your organization’s mission. It does not need to include one-off programs/special events or fundraisers.
- Please ensure that all parts of the application are each complete, then **press the green “SUBMIT” button at the *top* of the application.**
- Please ensure that the person listed in the Certification section of the application is reachable this summer during the scoring process, in case the OAC has questions about your application.
- Save your application before submitting! Click the down area next to the name of the form. Then click “Print Form.” See example below:

2026-27 Main Application ▾

Save Draft

Mark Complete

Close

When you are ready to submit this step, please click the **Print Form** button at the bottom of the page.

- You can save this form as a draft at any time by clicking “Save Draft” at the bottom of the page.
- When you have completed all required items, please click the “Mark Complete” button at the bottom of the page.

NOTE: When you have completed all required steps, be sure to click “Submit” on the next page.



5. New applicants, WELCOME! Scoring and Tips

FULL Application: Scoring, out of 130 points

- **Review Panel Scoring***: 70 points
 - 35 points for Public Benefit
 - 20 points for Access & Impact
 - 20 points for Organizational Capacity
- **Artistic and Cultural Services: 20 points**
 - 10 points for scope of work
 - 10 points for Projection Matrix
 - Full points if matrix is fully completed
- **Contract Compliance: 20 points**
 - 8 points for prior contract compliance (*ArtsActivate or Community Arts Program*)
 - 4 points for Guideline Quiz
 - 4 points for Letter of Recommendation
 - 4 points for Financial Reporting (*turning in a 990 to the IRS on time in the past year*)
- **Financial Stewardship: 20 points**
 - 4 points days cash on hand
 - 4 points fundraising percentages
 - 4 points organization board give or get
 - 4 points employee pay
 - 4 points operational management documents

**Page 14 of the Guidelines specifically describe all points that reviewers will consider in the 70 points awarded by panel. OAC strongly recommends reviewing these points before drafting your application, to ensure that your organization gives the panel all the information they need when scoring your application.*

Tips for New Applicants

- The video is a required part of the application, and it tends to slow the portal. Upload your video or provide the link early and reach out to OAC staff with technical problems before the deadline.
- Questions on the quiz? You may retake it as many times as necessary to receive a score of 100%.
- Remember that your organization may be new to panelists: it is your responsibility to educate audiences about your organization/art form. The supplemental section is a great place for information like this.
- Mark May 14th on your calendars now! We do not have make-up sessions for Q&A sessions.
- If you are not funded this year, remember that you are always welcome to apply again.
- Office hours are recommended for individual questions.
- “Core programming” means to include programs that are annual, repeated programs or events for your organization that fit your organization’s mission. It does not need to include one-off programs/special events or fundraisers.
- Please ensure that all parts of the application are each complete, then **press the green “SUBMIT” button at the *top* of the application.**
- Please ensure that the person listed in the Certification section of the application is reachable this summer during the scoring process, in case the OAC has questions about your application.
- Save your application before submitting! Click the down area next to the name of the form. Then click “Print Form.” See example below:

2026-27 Main Application ▾

Save Draft **Mark Complete** Close

When you are ready to submit this step, please click the **Print Form** button at the bottom of the page.

- You can save this form as a draft at any time by clicking “Save Draft” at the bottom of the page.
- When you have completed all required items, please click the “Mark Complete” button at the bottom of the page.

NOTE: When you have completed all required steps, be sure to click “Submit” on the next page.



Thank you