

**City of Scranton**  
**American Rescue Plan Act**

**Notice of Funding Availability**  
**2.36 Aid to Other Impacted Industries: Local Arts Community**  
**Grant Guidelines**

**ALN 21.027**

**BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION**

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) into law. The \$1.9 trillion Fiscal Recovery Funds package is intended to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, including public health and economic impacts. The City of Scranton has received a total of \$68.746M to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its economic impacts.

The mission of the city's specific ARPA program is to give people access to resources, rebuild the infrastructure systems that impact their everyday lives, and foster real equitable wealth generation that targets the needs of Scranton residents. This mission statement is also accompanied by six (6) guiding principles:

1. **Recovery:** Use funds equitably to guide residents, businesses, nonprofits & local government out of the economic downturn and onto a path of financial recovery
2. **Response:** Enhance city health & emergency response capabilities
3. **Alignment:** Integrate ARPA Funds with ACT 47 Exit Plan Goals, long-term financial and tax strategies, & comprehensive economic development planning
4. **Sustainability:** Avoid one-time items and programs that incur unsustainable operational, maintenance, or other long-term legacy costs
5. **Leverage:** Tackle large infrastructure needs for a safer, healthier city
6. **Transparency:** Accountability, communication, collaboration

Scranton City Council approved ARPA funding to be made available as grants to community organizations, nonprofits, small business, and other impacted entities that have faced economic hardship resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency. Below is a summary of the program, as well as eligibility requirements and documentation required for submission.

**DEFINITION OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED**

In accordance with the City's mission to offer equitable recovery and investment resources to the community, grant applications for beneficiary awards will be reviewed and prioritized based on the target populations the beneficiary traditionally serves. According to a median household income study by race/ethnicity, it was found that the median income for Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino households is lower than the White and Asian households located in the city. Higher prioritization

and consideration will be given to those beneficiaries that traditionally serve the economically disadvantaged populations within the city.

Additionally, the City's programs are intended to provide resources and aid to both Impacted and Disproportionately Impacted communities. According to the Treasury's guidance, a moderate-income household at or below 65% of the Area Median Income for the County, or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines is considered to be Impacted. A low-income household at or below 40% of the Area Median Income for the County, or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or a household located within a Qualified Census Tract, or receives services provided by Tribal governments, is considered to be Disproportionately Impacted. Similarly, higher prioritization and consideration will be given to those beneficiaries that traditionally serve the disproportionately impacted communities in the city.



**Local Arts Community Recovery Grants:**

**Types of Grants Available:** Beneficiary awards for eligible local arts organizations

**Grant Amounts Available:** Up to \$45,000 per eligible applicant

**Total Program Funding:** \$500,000

In accordance with the Scranton ARPA mission, the City is seeking negative economic impact grant applications from eligible local art community organizations. The city conducted an analysis of the local arts community impacts utilizing recent economic reports and data gathered from The Institute. When analyzing the loss in employment data over the pandemic period, it was found that specific local arts industries (listed below) sustained greater than an 8% loss. This loss in employment meets the minimum requirements for being designated as "other impacted entities" as defined by Treasury. As such, the city has designed this program to provide economic relief to recover from these losses for the following industries:

- NAICS Code: 711510 - Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers
- NAICS Code: 711110 - Theater Companies and Dinner Theaters
- NAICS Code: 711130 - Musical Groups and Artists
- NAICS Code: 711120 - Dance Companies

To qualify, the local arts organization must meet the minimum eligibility requirements below and submit a competitive grant application to the city.

## **GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

The City's ARPA grant programs are designed to support residents, organizations, programs, and activities that benefit City of Scranton residents and community. Below are general eligibility requirements that all organizations must meet:

- Organization must be one of the four eligible NAICs codes as listed above and currently in operation.

- Organization must be physically located in the City of Scranton OR provide evidence that the organization directly serves the residents/community of Scranton.
- Organization must have been operational prior to the start of the pandemic (March 2020) and provide evidence to that effect.
- Organization must provide evidence of number of employees prior to the start of the Pandemic.
- Organization must be in good standing and registered with the City Single Tax Office as well as current with local taxes and trash fees.
- Organization must have no current unpaid code enforcement liens or violations of any state, federal or local laws.
- Organization must be current on all taxes including payroll, sales, unemployment, property, State, and Federal.
- No owners, including all managing members and/or officers, have been convicted of financial crimes within the past three (3) years.
- During the period beginning on March 1, 2020 and ending at the time the application is submitted, the applicant has not received alternate Federal, State, or local grant funding to cover these same costs and/or impacts.

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

Below is a list of required documentation for every application:

- Evidence of number of employees at the end of calendar year 2019. Evidence may include an employee roster from Quarter 4 of 2019, signed by the organizations CEO/President/Owner.
- Copy of 2019 tax returns to provide evidence of being in operation prior to the pandemic.
- Evidence of product/services meeting one of the four NAICS codes identified above (Website, mission statement, organization description, etc.).
- Proof of current operating address (Copy of most recent mortgage/lease statement, utility bill, license to provide service, etc.).
- Current copy of an IRS W-9 Tax Form.
- Copy of IRS letter or certificate, verifying tax-exempt status (if applicable).
- Completion of a conflict-of-interest disclosure form.
- Completion of a duplication of benefit form.
- Completion of a debarment/suspension certificate.
- Proof of insurance.

## **INELIGIBLE COSTS**

The following are ineligible costs that awarded beneficiaries cannot use awarded funds to cover:

- Loss that bears no relation or is grossly disproportionate to the type or extent of harm experienced due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Contributions to rainy day funds, financial reserves, or similar funds.
- Payment of interest or principal on outstanding debt instruments.
- Inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization and/or those that promote or inhibit religious interest.

- Lobbying, support of candidates for public office, or other political activities.
- Funding for organizations that do not serve City of Scranton residents.
- Funding for programs, capital expenditures, or losses that have already applied for and been awarded funding through alternate federal, state, or local sources. A duplication of benefits will not be allowed.
- Expenses reimbursed or eligible for reimbursement through any other contract or agreement with the City, including but not limited to the City's Small Business and Nonprofit Assistance programs previously administered, or CARES Act funding.

## **GRANT PERIOD AND APPLICATION PROCESS**

This grant program will open on February 29, 2024, and remain open for application until April 12, 2024].

The City of Scranton ARPA grant program applications will be available through the City's website at [www.scrantonpa.gov](http://www.scrantonpa.gov) and its Neighborly grant application portal. The grant program will close promptly at 11:59 p.m. on Fri., April 12, 2024. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Applications must be fully completed, with all required documentation as listed above before they will be reviewed by the city. Incomplete applications may be subject to rejection.

City and ARPA advisory staff are available to answer questions about the application requirements or the funding process. Please contact Christopher Hughes at [chughes@scrantonpa.gov](mailto:chughes@scrantonpa.gov) with questions.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

City staff will review grant applications for completeness and eligibility. Applicants may be asked to revise proposals or provide additional information throughout the process. Complete and eligible applications will then be reviewed by a review panel according to the review criteria below. Final award allocations may be based on the total number of applicants, completeness of applications, eligibility, and need. No cash match is required.

Review panel members may consider the following factors in their evaluation:

- Organization is an eligible entity.
- Quality of the organization's application and documentation evidence submitted.
- Organization's location within the city. Organizations located in QCT areas may be given higher priority for funding.
- Impact of COVID-19 is clear and demonstrated in the applicant's application narrative.
- If the applicant has received alternate funding from other federal or state sources for the same request.
- Other factors as deemed appropriate by the panel members.

## **APPLICATION TIMELINE**

The City anticipates the following schedule for reviewing submitted applications for this program and determining funding awards:

February 29, 2024  
March 7, 2024  
April 12, 2024  
April 12 – May 17, 2024  
May 31, 2024  
June 7, 2024

Release of application  
Information Session and Assistance  
Deadline for application submissions  
Application review period  
Award determinations  
City staff begin drafting grant agreements

## **AGREEMENT, AFFIDAVIT, WAIVER, AND RELEASE FORM**

Grant awards will be made in the form of an agreement executed between the applicant and the City. All organizations offered a grant who choose to accept the grant will be required to sign a non-negotiable affidavit, waiver, and release form prior to payment being made. The affidavit will require the applicant to declare that all information contained in the application is true and correct and can be used as admissible evidence in any legal proceeding against the company if the City attempted to recoup any grant funds provided under false pretenses. Additional information may be required at the City's discretion, based on the usage of funds.

## **EXIT REPORT**

An Exit Report will be required at the end of each grant agreement. Awardees must submit the Exit Report to the Office of Community Development with 30 days of receiving grant funds. Failure to submit an Exit Report may result in disqualification from future grant cycles.

## **PROGRAM CONTACT**

Please contact Christopher Hughes with all inquiries regarding the City of Scranton American Rescue Plan Act Grant Program Application via email at [chughes@scrantonpa.gov](mailto:chughes@scrantonpa.gov).