

BFA Boston Foundation for Architecture

2010 GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Our annual grants support educational programs intended to increase public awareness of the importance of good design in the environments in which we live, work, play and learn. Anyone interested in proposing or enhancing an educational program related to architecture, engineering or the community-development process is invited to apply.

Who may apply for these grants?

Anyone with a good idea is encouraged to apply. Typical applicants include schoolteachers, community groups, nonprofit organizations, arts centers, museums and community service centers, as well as individuals or organizations operating in non-traditional educational settings.

When is the application deadline?

Applications must be received by the Foundation by 4:00 pm, August 6, 2010.

Who is the target audience?

We fund programs that serve Massachusetts audiences in all age groups. Programs for K–12 schoolchildren are of special interest, as are programs which can be replicated and which maximize the number of people served. We are also interested in programs that target underserved audiences which are culturally, economically, ethnically, racially or otherwise diverse.

What is funded?

Grants awarded this year will support 2011 programs. We fund programs that will elevate public awareness and understanding of architecture or engineering or the planning, design and construction process in general, and programs that engage people in all walks of life in the planning and design process. We are also especially interested in programs that underscore the significance to society of sustainable/green/environmentally sensitive design.

To broaden the impact of our funding, we seek programs that might have a ripple effect on other educators, administrators, communities or organizations. You don't necessarily have to develop a new program — thoughtfully redesigning or repackaging an existing program appropriate for your audience is fine.

Previously funded programs include design-related classroom curriculum ideas and projects, community programs and training programs. Descriptions of programs funded in recent years are found at bfragrants.org. We welcome applications related to successful past programs, and collaborations with other individuals or organizations such as Learning By Design in Massachusetts.

What is not funded?

We do not fund design fees, capital expenditures, endowment-building programs, the purchase of public art, archival projects, research projects, website development, software purchases, fellowships for professional travel or an organization's operating costs, although administrative costs related to the specific program may be included in the proposal.

How large are the grants?

Typically, grants range in size from \$500 to \$7,500. The total amount granted in any year has ranged from \$35,000 to \$60,000.

How will applications be judged?

Responsiveness to funding goals: Your proposed program should elevate public awareness and understanding of architecture, engineering or the planning, design and construction process. Ideally, your proposed program should be replicable, maximize the number of people served and should also increase awareness of the importance of sustainable/environmentally sensitive design.

Target audience: Your proposed program should clearly benefit Massachusetts audiences. Identify the intended audience in your application. It is helpful to know if the program serves currently underserved communities or challenges audiences by introducing them to locations or ideas that are new.

Public impact: Your proposal should be substantive. It should strive to have real impact and lasting value for its intended audience.

Leadership: Your proposed program should be administered by individuals with appropriate and related experience.

Program balance: Your proposed program should have a budget. The budget should be clear and included with the application. We fund programs that are defined by a clear and appropriate balance of cost and value for the number of individuals served. A budget worksheet is available at bfagrants.org. While you are not required to use this worksheet, we encourage you to review the categories and structure your budget similarly. Include as much detail as necessary for someone unfamiliar with the program to understand the expenses.

How do you apply for a grant?

Submit the following materials on a CD or via email:

- the completed ‘Grant Application Summary’
- a cover letter signed by the person who will run the program and, if appropriate, the director/principal of your organization/institution
- a typed outline (no more than two double-spaced pages) that begins with a clear, concise description of the proposed program and is followed by five paragraphs that describe specifically how your program responds to the five criteria listed above. In the ‘Target audience’ section, include the likely age, number and characteristics of people being served. In the ‘Public impact’ section, describe any tangible products that might result (written curriculum, drawings, audio or video recordings, publications, etc.)
- the program budget, the amount being requested from us and details on any other funding you may have for this program (Other funding is encouraged but not necessary.)
- a resume/bio of the individual(s) who will lead or administer this program
- describe clearly your program’s relationship to collaborators such as Learning By Design in Massachusetts or other initiatives that work closely with educators in design-related programming
- at least one letter of reference or support is recommended
- reference contact information for each collaborating organization (if any)
- background material you think will help us understand your program (press clips, previous audience/student comments, pictures, etc.). Please be selective and limit these materials to a maximum of five pages.

Helpful hints

Don't cloud your application with fluff, buzzwords or excessive theory—stick to the fundamentals described in our listing of funding criteria above.

Do your research—if a similar program exists or another organization has resources that might support or add capacity to your program, consider partnering with them or engaging the other group to help expand the reach of the program.

Don't apply for personal fellowships, scholarships, travel grants or similar support—we are not geared to provide such assistance.

Visit our website (bfagrants.org/grants) to see what we have funded recently.

If in doubt and you wish to float an idea contact us at bfa@architects.org or 617-951-1433 x233.

When will grant announcements be made?

All applicants will be notified in writing of the results of this year's grant-making decisions by December 15, 2010.

Questions? Comments?

Contact Ann Fienman at bfa@architects.org or 617-951-1433 x233.

Who are we?

The Boston Foundation for Architecture is a public charity established in 1984 by the Boston Society of Architects/AIA through which architects, their colleagues in the building industry and other donors support public education programs related to the built and natural environments. The volunteer trustees distribute funds annually in accordance with the Foundation's goals and community needs as they correspond to those goals.

What are the reporting requirements?

Grant recipients are expected to provide brief reports on the use of grant funds by January 15, 2012. Digital reports/images are encouraged so we can post them online.

Recent grant recipients

Among the recipients of BFA grants in recent years are Learning By Design in Massachusetts, Boston By Foot, Preservation Worcester, Institute of Contemporary Art, Discovery Museum/Acton, Boston Children's Museum, Hancock Shaker Village, Southeastern Massachusetts Arts Collaborative, Girls Inc. of Worcester, Citizen Schools, Boston Museum Project, Attleboro Public Schools, Hanover High School, Danforth Museum of Art, Rafael Hernandez School/Roxbury, Nueva Esperanza/Holyoke., Garfield Middle School/Revere, Stonehurst-Robert Treat Paine Estate, Gate of Heaven School/South Boston, Artists for Humanity,/Boston, Freetown-Lakeville Middle School, Boston Architectural College, Hawthorne Youth and Community Center/Roxbury, and United Teen Equality Center/Lowell. For lists of our grants since 1998, visit bfagrants.org/grants.