

Mark Ryder Original Choreography Grant Program Guidelines FY 2026

General Information

The Howard County Arts Council (HCAC) is a private, nonprofit 501c3 organization established to enrich and serve our community by fostering the arts, artists, and arts organizations. HCAC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors whose members are elected to two terms.

Mark Ryder was an established dancer, choreographer and leader in the dance community. He danced alongside Martha Graham in the 1940s until founding the Dance Drama Duo, later called the Dance Drama Company, with Emily Frankel. Mr. Ryder went on to teach dance in the 1960s at Goddard College in Vermont before becoming chairman of the dance department for two years at University of Maryland, College Park in 1974, and retired from teaching in 1988. After moving to Howard County in 1975, Mr. Ryder also became very involved in choreographing local productions in his community. He passed away in July 2006 and is survived by his wife and family who wish to honor his legacy by offering an annual competitive grant award in the minimum amount of \$500 to choreographers through the Howard County Arts Council. Mr. Ryder believed individual expression is the most important part of the creative process for both choreographer and dancer and that more is learned through being a part of the process and actively participating in it than by simply being taught the movements or viewing the final product.

HCAC Responsibilities

- Develop procedures for submission and funding of proposals.
- Review and evaluate proposals for grants funds.
- Select recipients and grant awards.

The Mark Ryder Original Choreography Grant will honor his vision/philosophy. HCAC staff is available to provide technical assistance in completing grant applications. Call 410-313-2787.

Purpose of the Grants Program

- The Mark Ryder Original Choreography Grant Program was established, at the bequest of his family, to recognize individual creative expression and to provide financial assistance to choreographers to create a **new original** work. Re-interpretation of an existing work is NOT considered an original work.
- To broaden opportunities for artists and encourage and sustain their pursuit of artistic excellence.
- If the project is realized, the applicant is encouraged, not required, to present the work in Howard County, live or recorded.

Qualifications of Applicants

- Artist(s) must be 18 years or older

- Artists/applicants must have established residence and be living in the central Maryland counties of Howard, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll or Baltimore City for 6 months prior to application deadline and must maintain residence for the duration of the grant period. Proof of residency may be requested.
- Individuals enrolled in high school or any undergraduate classes or programs during FY25 are ineligible to apply.
- Choreographer(s) must provide evidence of their professional achievements within the field of choreography
- Collaborating choreographers interested in applying together must file and sign one joint application for a single artist grant, as well as provide resumes for both collaborators.
- Previous recipients are eligible to apply once in a 3-year period.
- In addition to the above criteria, please be aware that the use of copyright material is strictly prohibited. Copyright law protects a work, in whatever medium, unless it has been placed in the public domain. Owners of copyrights hold exclusive right to the reproduction and distribution of their work; therefore, unauthorized use and distribution of copyrighted works is illegal.

While the intent of the grant program is to support individual artistic endeavors, dance companies may apply if the following criteria are met:

- Dance companies may apply for funds; however, grant funds must be used to pay the choreographer for creating a new work. Proof of payment will be required. The company is responsible for supplying all required supplemental materials relating to the choreographer in addition to required company materials.
- K-12 school or college dance companies are ineligible to apply. Independent 501(c)3 groups in residence are eligible.
- Dance companies who apply must be a non-profit 501(c)3 and provide proof thereof.

Grant funds must be used specifically towards creating new, original choreography. A grant carries no commitment for future support beyond the terms outlined in this application.

Applications

- Applications must be submitted on the grant application form.
- Applications and supplemental written materials must be typewritten.
- Applicants must submit the application **by June 19, 2025 at 4PM. (APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 9, 2025).**
- Late applications will be rejected and incomplete applications will be returned.
- All required attachments and supplemental information must be included. DO NOT include materials other than those required, DO NOT send your only copy.
- While great care is taken by HCAC in the handling of submitted materials, HCAC is not responsible for the loss of materials.
- Please direct all questions regarding preparation of these forms to HCAC at 410-313-2787.

Deadline

The deadline for submission is June 19, 2025 at 4PM(APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 9, 2025).. Applications MUST be received NO LATER than October 9, 2025 at 4PM.

Review Process & Notification

An Artistic Review Panel made up of regional dance professionals will review applications and make its recommendation to the HCAC Committee on Grants. The Committee then presents its recommendation to the HCAC Board of Directors. Applicants will be notified by mail to the disposition of the application after a final vote by the HCAC Board of Directors. All decisions of the HCAC Board of Directors are final.

Applicants will be notified in writing as early as November 12, 2025 as to the disposition of their application.

Conflict of Interest

To ensure that all HCAC review panels are free from conflicts of interest and the appearance of such conflicts, panelists are required to disclose any current or prospective affiliations they or their immediate family members have with an actual or potential applicant. "Affiliations" applies to employment, board memberships, independent contractual relationships, substantial contributor relationships, or other financial relationships. In addition, panelists are required to disclose any past or current adversarial relationships with actual or potential applicants. HCAC panel and board members are not permitted to participate in discussions or votes relating to any applicant with whom they have an affiliation relating to any applicants competing with that applicant.

Fraud and Misrepresentation

If awarded, the grant funds shall be used only for purposes outlined in grantee's grant application on file with HCAC. Grantee certifies that all of the information and representations contained in the application are and remain true and complete in all material respects. Should it come to the attention of HCAC that any materials submitted by the grantee are fraudulent or misrepresentative in any manner, this agreement is null and void and the grantee acknowledges that any remaining grant funds not yet disbursed are forfeited and that the grantee is responsible for reimbursing HCAC for funds already disbursed.

Reporting

At the end of the granting period, a final report on the use of the approved funds for the project must be filed with the HCAC. In addition, the

recipient must submit a DVD demonstrating the progress or completion of the new original choreography.

Attribution

If a grant is awarded, all programs and publicity generated for the project, including brochures, news releases, programs and other materials must give credit to the Mark Ryder Original Choreography Grant Program and the Howard County Arts Council. When no printed information is used, oral credit must be given.

Changes

Grant recipients must notify HCAC in writing immediately if a significant change is made in the project. Should it come to the attention of HCAC that any materials submitted by the grantee are fraudulent or misrepresentative in any manner, the grant agreement is null and void and the grantee is responsible for reimbursing HCAC the full amount of the grant award. **HCAC reserves the right, at the discretion of the Committee on Grants and the Board of Directors, to deny or request the return of the grant award if a significant change is made to project once a grant has been awarded.** Unused funds must be returned to HCAC.

Grant Funds

The monies awarded for the grant must be used specifically towards creating **new, original** choreography. A grant carries no commitment for future support beyond the terms outlined in this application. For companies hiring an outside choreographer, grant funds can be used towards choreography fees only.

If awarded, grant funds will be disbursed **after November 12, 2025**. The Artistic Review Panel is not required to award all of the monies that are available and reserves the right to forward any un-awarded monies to the following year's fund.

Artistic Review Panel

A peer group, made up of arts professionals, is appointed to assist the Arts Council in its decision-making. Sebastian Ryder, family member of Mark Ryder, may serve on the Panel at her convenience. The Artistic Review Panel's function is to review applications, make funding recommendations to the HCAC Board of Directors, and offer policy recommendations.

Review Criteria

The review of grants is based on the following criteria:

- Artistic merit

- Originality (of choreography)
- Evidence of artistic and professional growth
- Clarity of proposal
- Ability of the applicant to carry out the project, based on the level of professional commitment as demonstrated in submitted application and supplemental materials.

Disclosure

As a private 501(c)3 that receives public funds, HCAC is committed to provide equal opportunity in all facets of its operation without regard to race, sex, age, color, religion, or national origin. HCAC also affirms its policy of equal opportunity for individuals with physical or developmental handicaps.

- HCAC complies with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that no persons on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to the arts.
- HCAC complies with Title IV, Section 1681, of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 6101, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of age or sex.
- HCAC complies with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which states that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to the arts.

Appeals Process

The Howard County Arts Council takes care during the entire grants review process to be as thorough as possible to ensure a fair and equitable process. Therefore, simple dissatisfaction with the denial of an award or with the amount of the award is not sufficient reason for appeal. Reconsideration of a grant award will take place only if there has been a procedural impropriety or error. This means one of the following:

- A decision based on review criteria other than those stated in the guidelines.
- A decision based on a recommendation of a panelist with undisclosed conflict of interest.
- A decision based on material provided to panelists and/or HCAC Board members that was substantially incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete despite the applicant having provided the staff with correct, accurate, and complete application information by the application due date.

Dissatisfaction with the denial of an award or with the amount of the award is not sufficient reason for appeal.

Given this information, should an applicant feel there is legitimate reason for appeal, the applicant must write a letter to the HCAC Executive Director stating the grounds for appeal within fifteen (15) days of the postmark date of the notification. The Committee on Grants will review

the appeal and make a recommendation. Based on that recommendation, the Board of Directors will make a final decision. The applicant will receive written notification on the determination of the appeal within 45 days of the receipt of the letter of appeal.

