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ArtsWave invites artists to apply for 2026 Inspire Artist Grants, which funds projects that foster truth and innovation.

September 29, 2025 — ArtsWave, the Cincinnati region's engine for the arts, is actively seeking applications for Inspire Artist Grants through October 27. The artists selected for this year's program will create projects across artistic genres that authentically reflect the lived Black and Brown experience. Any artist who can authentically create such work is encouraged to apply, regardless of personal background.

Now in its sixth year, the program is made possible by a partnership with ArtsWave, the City of Cincinnati, Duke Energy, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Over the past six years, this grant program has explored important themes, including truth, reconciliation, inspiration, innovation and healing. Last year's program awarded funding to 26 local artists, culminating in a visual art exhibition, film festival and live performances at the Contemporary Arts Center.

The Inspire Artist Grant will provide resources for the creation of inspiring artwork and career development for under-represented artists in the Greater Cincinnati Region. Emerging artists may apply for up to \$5,000 for a project, while practicing artists may apply for up to \$10,000.

Artists must present a project idea that can be highlighted at Showcase in July 2026 at the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center and participate in artist cohort activities throughout the development of their project. Social Impact projects that occur in the community may also be considered.

Projects will be selected based on eligibility guidelines and how they advance ArtsWave's Blueprint for Collective Action, including the powerful goals of bridging cultural divides, promoting understanding and empathy, deepening roots in the region, and improving neighborhoods. The application deadline is 5 p.m. on October 27.

Artists can find eligibility guidelines, program requirements, grant support, including writing resources and coaching, and Inspire Artist Grants application instructions at

artswave.org/apply. A grant overview will be presented on Zoom on Thursday, October 2, 2025 at 12:00 p.m. Register at artswave.com/apply.

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About ArtsWave

ArtsWave fuels the Cincinnati region's arts, supporting 150+ organizations, projects and artists each year. Since 1927, it has been the primary way the region funds the arts, raising millions annually from tens of thousands of individuals, businesses and foundations to drive a more vibrant economy and connected community. Through the Blueprint for Collective Action, ArtsWave strategically makes investments that maximize the arts' impact across the region. **To learn more and give, visit artswave.org.**