

# **New Bedford accepting applications for program supporting privately owned cultural facilities**

The City is accepting applications from privately owned, nonprofit cultural facilities that are seeking support for capital investments to revitalize their buildings, equipment, and outdoor spaces.

Arts & Culture is a vital segment of New Bedford's economy and community that has huge impacts on quality of life and job creation, with significant potential growth opportunities for existing and emerging cultural enterprises.

The support program utilizes funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Following an initial Expression of Interest process, the formal application for funding is now available to all eligible cultural institutions, including those that didn't initially seek feedback.

"Cultural facilities support small businesses and neighborhoods across the City, and help drive our local economy," Mayor Jon Mitchell said. "We look forward to helping eligible applicants upgrade their buildings and grounds."

Applicants must be nonprofit organizations that own or operate a privately owned cultural facility in New Bedford. For the purposes of this program, cultural facilities are defined as art galleries, museums, and performing arts venues that are regularly open to the public at well-publicized times throughout the year.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a negative fiscal impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, or propose

improvements that are responsive to related health impacts.

Capital investments seeking financial support can include building stabilization; roof repair; improved outdoor spaces; audio-visual equipment that enables “hybrid” events, such as remote participation in live events; renovations that increase or improve occupancy; and more.

Release of funding to selected applicants will be contingent on meeting a minimum match requirement, which will be no less than 25% of total project costs. The applicant’s operating costs and funding from other ARPA-funded programs may not be used as matching funds.

Currently, the minimum grant award is \$40,000 and the maximum is \$400,000. This means that that total project cost must be at least \$62,500, including matching funds.

As ARPA represents a one-time infusion of federal funds, financial support will be steered toward one-time items, rather than the creation of new programs or the expansion of existing services that would involve future spending obligations. Requests for funding to cover general operating expenses will not be considered.

Email questions about the application to: [ARPA@newbedford-ma.gov](mailto:ARPA@newbedford-ma.gov).

All responses are to be submitted electronically to: [ARPA@newbedford-ma.gov](mailto:ARPA@newbedford-ma.gov), with the name of your organization and “Cultural Facilities Application” in the subject line.

Eligible operators of privately owned cultural facilities can view and download application details on the City’s ARPA website: [www.newbedford-ma.gov/arpa](http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/arpa).