

Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grants Guidelines

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grants program provides one-time grants of up to \$5,000 for recent unexpected medical, dental, and mental health emergencies to artists in financial need* who are creating in the visual arts, film/video/electronic/digital arts, and choreography.

NEW: Previous recipients of a Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grants may apply again, after five years have elapsed from their first grant award date

**To be eligible to apply, your average adjusted gross income for the last two years you've filed tax returns must be no greater than \$80,000 (\$160,000 for joint filers).*

Please note:

- Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grants are not for lost wages, living expenses, or medical care for individuals other than the artist. [Visit NYFA's Emergency Resources page](#) for a regularly-updated list of emergency resources.
- The need for emergency funding far outpaces available funds. An application to this grant program is not a guarantee of a grant award. In each cycle, we will distribute approximately \$150,000 in total funding. Learn more about the review and decision-making process at the bottom of this page.

Questions? Check out the [Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grants homepage](#) for more information!

GRANT TIMELINES

NYFA is pleased to announce that the Rauschenberg Emergency Grants will continue to be offered through at least June 2026.

Cycle 32

Application Opens: Tuesday, August 12 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, September 9 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: October 24, 2025

For emergencies occurring February 1, 2025 and later.

Cycle 33

Application Opens: Tuesday, October 7 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, November 4 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: December 19, 2025

For emergencies occurring April 1, 2025 and later.

Cycle 34

Application Opens: Tuesday, December 9 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, January 6 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: February 20, 2026

For emergencies occurring June 1, 2025 and later.

Cycle 35

Application Opens: Tuesday, February 10 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, March 10 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: April 23, 2026

For emergencies occurring August 1, 2025 and later.

Cycle 36

Application Opens: Tuesday, April 14 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, May 12 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: June 29, 2026

For emergencies occurring October 1, 2025 and later.

**Please note that the application form on Submittable will automatically close & stop accepting applications at this time.*

Cycles continue on a bimonthly basis through at least June 2026. Please check back on this page or [sign up for our newsletter](#) for updates.

WHO CAN APPLY

There are three eligibility criteria in this program: Individual, Artistic, and Emergency. You need to meet all three areas, as of the cycle's deadline, to apply.

Individual Eligibility

- Applicants must be a generative artist creating work in visual arts, film/video/digital/electronic arts (not a performer), or choreography
- Applicants must be 21 years or older on the cycle's deadline
- Applicants must reside in the United States, the District of Columbia, a Tribal Nation, or a U.S. Territory

- Applicants must be an artist in need, having an adjusted gross income of \$80,000 or lower for an individual, or \$160,000 for joint filers, averaged over the last two federal tax returns
- Applicants' medical emergency and treatment must occur in the U.S. (including D.C., Tribal Nations and U.S. Territories)
- Applicants must not have received a Rauschenberg Medical or Dancer Emergency Grant within the last five years (since their original grant award date)
- Applicants must not be enrolled in any degree-seeking program
- Applicants must demonstrate current and ongoing activity in their artistic discipline (defined below)

Artistic Eligibility

Applicants must be artists with a demonstrated commitment to the eligible artform(s). You need to create original work in at least one of the eligible disciplines, AND have recent and sustained artistic activity. If the work in the eligible discipline is tangential, incidental or infrequent, it is not eligible.

Recent and sustained is defined as activity over the course of at least the last five years, since 2020, with multiple opportunities for the public to experience your work during this time (at least one opportunity annually). This can be through exhibits/screenings/performances/activities in art spaces, galleries, local businesses, art houses/film series, public art installations, public spaces, museums, fairs/festivals, community projects, and/or residencies with public-facing components. Works in progress are eligible; student exhibits, performances, and other activities are not, nor are publications/papers/interviews in print or online. We do not accept portfolios/work samples. Reduced activity during the pandemic (2020/21) or for another period of up to 12 months due to medical or personal reasons is acceptable if, in such cases, you are able to demonstrate public activity prior to 2020.

Work that is created for online distribution and consumption is eligible IF it is a creative work, and was actively marketed to the public for showing at a specific date and time. If self-produced online presentations or sales of your work are your sole platform, such as Instagram or YouTube, or your work is only available on-demand, we cannot consider your application eligible.

Eligible Artistic Disciplines

Only artists creating work in visual arts, film/video/electronic/digital arts or choreography may apply to this grant program. The applicant must be the primary maker of the creative work – the individual with final creative control. For film/video, only the publicly named director and/or producer or credited co-maker are eligible; they must be the individual with the primary day-to-day responsibility for creating the work in its entirety. Performing artists in film/video or

television/live performance, performing arts recorded digitally, and performances/writing distributed online are not eligible. Editors, cinematographers, assistant/line/field producers, television producers, screenwriters, television/film performers and crew members, dance performers, et al are not eligible.

Works which are intended for commercial or mass production, or are work-for-hire projects, are not eligible to be considered in the required artistic history. These include television shows, graphic and fashion design, commissions, and industrial films.

Please review the definitions for the eligible disciplines:

Choreography

- All choreographic styles, including mixed-media or multi-genre performance works in which choreography and/or organized movement is primary. Choreography performed solely within an instructional/training setting; for competitions; or for music videos, TV, and commercial films is not eligible.

Visual Arts

- **Crafts/Sculpture:** All forms of craft, including ceramics, glass, wood, metal, fiber, textiles, and mixed media. This category accepts work in all forms of sculpture, including kinetic works and installations.
- **Painting:** Painting of any kind upon any surface.
- **Photography:** Work in traditional and experimental photography or any work in which photography or photographic techniques are pivotal, if not exclusive.
- **Printmaking/Drawing/Book Arts:** Work in visual media other than painting, including artist's books, aquatints, collages, engravings, etchings, lithographs, monotypes, prints, serigraphs, woodcuts, and drawings.

Film/Video/Electronic/Digital Arts

Film/video directors and producers of independent work are eligible to apply. The applicant must be the primary maker of the creative work – the individual with final creative control. For film/video, only the publicly named director and/or producer or credited co-maker are eligible; they must be the individual with the primary day-to-day responsibility for creating the work in its entirety. Performing artists in film/video or television/live performance, performing arts recorded digitally, and performances/writing distributed online are not eligible. Editors, cinematographers, assistant/line/field producers, television producers, screenwriters, television/film

performers and crew members, dance performers, et al are not eligible. Also not eligible are television shows, graphic and fashion design, commissions and industrial films.

- **Film/Video:** Any work in which film/video or film techniques are pivotal, if not exclusive. This category also accepts work that has been initially shot with a film camera. Filmed material that has been transferred to a digital format for editing and processing is acceptable.
- **Electronic/Digital Arts:** Work in which technology is an essential element of the work's creation, presentation, or understanding. Examples include: work created on video whether manipulated or not, works created or displayed on computers or other electronic media; work created with computer models such as sculptural works; interactive installations including immersive virtual environments; internet projects; hypertext documents; other image, text, audio, or video works rooted in technology

Emergency Eligibility

In this program, an emergency is a one-time, unexpected, non-chronic condition as a result of illness, violence, an accident or triggering event, or sudden medical event, that requires treatment to ensure your health or life, and which without treatment has extreme impact on your daily life and ability to carry out/return to your creative practice.

In each cycle, we can consider emergencies that have occurred within approximately the last six months. The earliest date for an eligible emergency is listed in the Cycles information. The medical emergency and treatment must occur in the U.S. (including D.C., Tribal Nations and U.S. Territories).

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications are open to artists in need creating original, independent work in the visual arts, film/video/electronic/digital arts, or choreography, who are seeking support for a medical, dental or mental health-related emergency. Only generative artists—the creator of the original work—may apply.

What to Submit

When you fill out your application, you will need to:

- Provide your contact information

- Describe the onset and nature of your medical/dental/mental health emergency (maximum 100 words)
- Provide the onset date of the emergency
- Request a grant amount, up to \$5,000
- List the specific expenses for which you are requesting funding (maximum 50 words)
- Describe the impact of the emergency on your creative practice (maximum 150 words)
- Describe the economic severity of your condition (maximum 150 words)
- Describe the severity of your medical/dental/mental health condition (maximum 150 words)
- Provide your annual adjusted gross income (averaged from your two most recent federal tax returns)
- Complete a checklist to describe your access to resources
- Complete a checklist to describe the medical severity of your condition
- Include as much valid documentation confirming condition/diagnosis and proof of expense as possible, such as:
 - Invoices (invoices should include date of service and type of service; name of provider and amount paid/payable).
 - Documentation should be from a care provider and be on official letterhead.
 - If you haven't yet received a diagnosis or treatment, and/or your documentation isn't on hand, provide as much information about your condition as possible, including estimates of treatment costs in your local area, if possible
 - Do not send images such as photographs and x-rays.
 - If you do not yet have documentation, you may provide your own estimate of expenses.
- Submit a resume/bio/CV which shows recent and sustained artistic practice over the course of at least the last five years, since 2020, in an eligible discipline or disciplines.
 - List specific events/opportunities for the public to experience your work over this time (at least once annually), including the year, location (city or town and venue), and title.
 - These can include exhibits/screenings/performances/activities in art spaces, galleries, local businesses, art houses/film series, public art installations, public spaces, museums, fairs/festivals, community projects, and/or residencies with public-facing components.
 - Works-in-progress are eligible; student exhibits, performances, and other activities are not. We do not accept portfolios/work samples. Reduced activity/online-streaming activity during the pandemic (2020/21) or for another period of up to 12 months due to medical or personal reasons is acceptable if, in such cases, you are able to demonstrate public activity prior to 2020.

- Work that is created for online distribution and consumption is eligible IF it is a creative work, and was actively marketed to the public for showing at a specific date and time. If self-produced online presentations or sales of your work are your sole platform, such as Instagram or YouTube, or your work is only available on-demand, we cannot consider your application eligible.
- If you are a choreographer and perform your own work live, your resume needs to clearly indicate that you were BOTH the choreographer and dancer.
- Certify that the information in the application is true.

How Emergency Expenses Work

You may request funds for related, eligible expenses incurred for up to 12 months from the date of the emergency. For example, if an emergency occurred on November 15, 2024, you can request funds for eligible expenses through November 14, 2025. Funds may be requested for expenses which you have already incurred, or will incur; which you have already paid for or have not. Whether or not you have insurance, you can request funds for your own out-of-pocket expenses. If you have not yet received a diagnosis or treatment because of lack of funding or the timing of this application, you may still apply. If you haven't yet received a diagnosis or treatment, and/or your documentation isn't on hand, provide as much information about your condition as possible, including estimates of treatment costs in your local area, if possible. If you receive a grant, you will be required to submit copies of paid bills/receipts for all funded expenses. You may also be required to submit a copy of your two most recently filed tax returns, demonstrating your adjusted gross income.

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to, these out of pocket costs to the artist:

- Provider (hospital/doctor/dentist/clinic) bills, including co-pays
- Tests/diagnostics/assessments/consultations to determine necessary treatment
- Physical/occupational therapy, acupuncture, chiropractic
- Prescription drugs specifically for the emergency medical condition
- Emergency dental work
- Transportation expenses to/from appointments/treatments

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Non-emergency medical conditions
- Ongoing medical/psychological/psychiatric treatment
- Wellness visits, regular check-ups, annual exams or procedures
- Standard vision care or eyeglasses, or hearing aids, or medical equipment (unless required as a direct result of an emergency injury/surgery/condition)
- Elective procedures
- Insurance purchase/premiums

- Herbal/supplement/dietary/experimental treatments
- Any non-medical expenses, even if the result of an emergency

Grants cannot be requested for treatment, prescriptions, or other expenses related to a chronic condition, or a progressive/age-related condition such as arthritis or cataracts, unless there are extenuating circumstances which cause an unexpected and severe worsening of the condition. Example: A recent traumatic incident triggered a flareup of an existing mental health condition.

Chronic diseases are defined broadly as conditions that last one year or more and require ongoing medical, dental, or mental health attention or limit activities of daily living or both.

NYFA reserves the right to determine eligible and reasonable expenses to support through this grant program.

Funds go directly to the artist, not a medical provider, unless there is a specific reason to do otherwise, with pre-approval from NYFA. Grant awards are routinely paid via direct deposit.

REVIEW PROCESS

Due to the large number of qualified applications and the limited amount of funds, NYFA uses a two-step award process.

1. Applications are reviewed by NYFA Grants Staff for eligibility and completeness. Eligible applications will be then assessed by an outside panel based on the criterion:
 - Demonstrated need.
 - Severity of the medical/dental/mental health condition.
 - Economic severity of the condition.
 - The potential impact of funding on the artist's ability to continue/return to their creative practice.
2. Following the panel review, the top scoring application is automatically funded; the remaining top tier of applications based on scores is placed into a lottery for the final awards.

Please note, this is a very competitive program, and an application is not a guarantee of support.

A Note on Privacy

We take the privacy of applicants and recipients seriously. The names of recipients of emergency grants are not published on our website or in our 990 or other financial documents.

All reviewers sign confidentiality agreements, and the medical documentation and financial information such as tax returns is kept confidential and only seen by staff.

Accessibility Statement

NYFA is committed to supporting artists from every background, and at all stages in their creative careers. We strongly encourage artists of color, LGBTQ+ artists, artists with disabilities, and artists living outside of the New York area to apply.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be in English (though they may be translated by someone other than the applicant) and can be completed by a proxy if needed.

All applications, including support materials, should be submitted online via Submittable.* First-time users will need to register with Submittable to access the application portal.

[APPLY HERE](#)

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted and no exceptions will be made. We strongly recommend that applicants complete their applications in advance of the deadline to avoid potential technical problems.

Applicants will receive an automatic response from Submittable once their application has been successfully received.

**We understand that under certain conditions, it may be easier for an artist to submit a paper application, or receive assistance with an online application. Please contact emergencyfunds@nyfa.org or 212.366.6900 ext. 239 to request assistance or an accommodation. We request that requests for accommodation be made as soon as possible, preferably two weeks prior to the deadline, to allow adequate time for staff to support you in submitting an application on time.*

Information Sessions

Please see a [recording here](#) of a live information session held by the NYFA Grants team in August 2025. This information session covers program guidelines, the application, as well as live audience questions.

CONTACT

For questions, please contact Mollie Quinlan-Hayes at emergencyfunds@nyfa.org or 212.366.6900 ext. 239. Inquiries to the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation will be forwarded directly to emergencyfunds@nyfa.org.

The Rauschenberg Emergency Grants are made possible by the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Robert Rauschenberg was committed to assisting fellow artists in need of emergency medical aid, ultimately establishing the nonprofit foundation Change, Inc. in 1970. In this spirit, this program is designed to serve artists in financial need who otherwise may delay critical treatment or incur substantial and perhaps overwhelming debt. We recognize the urgency of caring for and helping one another and, while artists are famously self-sufficient, we encourage you to ask for support when needed.