

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 work in the visual arts, digital/electronic arts, video/film, and choreography.

**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.

**Exceptions are possible for Medicare/Medicaid recipients. See more in [How Emergency Expenses Work](#).*

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

GRANT TIMELINES

Cycle 37

Application Opens: Tuesday, June 16 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, July 14 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: September 4, 2026

For emergencies occurring December 1, 2025 and later.

Cycle 38

Application Opens: Tuesday, August 18 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, September 15 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: November 9, 2026

For emergencies occurring February 1, 2026 and later.

Cycle 39

Application Opens: Tuesday, October 20 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, November 17 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: December 23, 2026

For emergencies occurring April 1, 2025 and later.

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

Cycles will continue on a recurring basis. 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

- Be a generative artist creating work in Choreography, Digital/Electronic Arts, Video/Film, or Visual Arts
- Be 21 years or older on the cycle's deadline
- Reside in the United States, the District of Columbia, a Tribal Nation, or a U.S. Territory
- 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
- Not have received a Rauschenberg Medical or Dancer Emergency Grant within the last five years (since their original grant award date)
- Not be enrolled in any degree-seeking program
- 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 over the course of at least the last five years. If the work in the eligible discipline is tangential, incidental, or infrequent, it is not eligible.

Recent and sustained artistic activity is defined as at least one opportunity annually over the past five years (2021 to present) for the public to experience your work in an eligible discipline or disciplines.

Eligible events/opportunities:

- Public showings of your work such as exhibitions, presentations, installations, screenings, or performances in art spaces, galleries, local businesses, art houses/film series, public art installations, public spaces, museums, fairs/festivals
- Public/community projects such as public art, murals, or community-based projects with public components
- Participation in residencies with public-facing components/presentations

- Public showings of works-in-progress are eligible
- Work being acquired for a public permanent collections can count as a public-facing activity for the year in which the purchase/acquisition took place

Ineligible events/opportunities:

- Student exhibits, performances, and other activities while enrolled in a degree-seeking program
- Publications/papers/interviews in print or online
- Works which are intended for commercial or mass production, or are work-for-hire projects including, but not limited to: television shows, webcasts and podcasts, graphic and fashion design, commissions, and industrial films
- Lectures/workshops are not eligible unless they include an opportunity for participants to view your actual work (not photos/reproductions, etc.)

Please note:

- Reduced activity for a 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 2021.
- 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.
- Portfolios/work samples are not considered and are not requested.

Eligible Artistic Disciplines

Only artists creating work in Choreography, Digital/Electronic Arts, Video/Film, and Visual Arts may apply to this grant program. The applicant must be the primary maker of the creative work – the individual with final creative control.

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..This category accepts work where choreography, organized movement, or embodied performance is a central element. It welcomes work in all choreographic styles, including but not limited to: contemporary, modern, ballet, hip-hop and street styles, tap, traditional and cultural dance forms, circus, improvisation-based work, and multi-genre or interdisciplinary performances where movement is primary. Choreography performed solely within an

instructional/training setting; for competitions; or for music videos, TV, and commercial films is not eligible

Digital/Electronic Arts

This category accepts work in which technology is an essential element of the work's creation, presentation, or understanding. Examples include: works created or displayed on computers or other electronic media; work created with computer models such as sculptural works or algorithmic art; interactive installations including immersive virtual environments; internet projects; hypertext documents; other image, text, audio, or video works rooted in technology. This category also includes work that critically engages with artificial intelligence (AI).

Video/Film

This category accepts work in video or any work in which video or video techniques are pivotal, if not exclusive. Works initially shot on film cameras are also eligible, as well as filmed material that has been transferred to the computer for editing and processing.

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.

Visual Arts

This category includes Craft/Sculpture, Painting, Photography, and Printmaking/Drawing/Book Arts.

- **Craft/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.

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. The only exceptions for chronic conditions are:

- Extenuating circumstances which cause an unexpected and severe worsening of the condition.
- A recent diagnosis of a condition which requires long-term treatment, such as cancer or multiple sclerosis; expenses for initial exams/diagnosis, any emergency surgery, and other urgently-needed treatment to stabilize the condition.

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 Cycle’s timeline information.

NEW: While eligible medical emergencies may occur anywhere in the world, the treatment is only eligible to be covered if it occurs within the U.S. (including D.C., Tribal Nations, and U.S. Territories), within two weeks of the incident/injury/onset.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications are open to artists in need who are creating original, independent work in the visual arts, digital/electronic arts, video/film, 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 the following information:

- **Contact Information**
 - Name and contact details for the lead applicant
 - Applications can be filled out by a proxy, if needed. A proxy is someone who fills out an application on behalf of the applicant.
- **Artist Information**

- Artistic Discipline
- Artist Website
- Artist Resume/Bio/CV
 - Your resume/bio/CV must list recent and sustained artistic practice over the course of at least the last five years, since 2021, 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: Year, Location (city or town and venue), Title of Work, and your role (if you are a choreographer and perform your own work live, your resume/bio/CV needs to clearly indicate that you were BOTH the choreographer and dancer. If you work in film/video, indicate your position (director, producer, etc.).)
- **Medical Emergency Information**
 - Type of Emergency (Medical, Dental, and/or Mental Health)
 - Date of Medical Emergency Onset
 - Amount of Request
 - Requests must be equal to or less than the amount of existing/projected medical bills, up to \$5,000.
 - List the specific expenses for which you are requesting funding (maximum 50 words)
 - Describe the onset and nature of your medical/dental/mental health emergency (maximum 100 words)
 - Describe the impact of the emergency on your creative practice (maximum 150 words)
 - Describe the severity of your medical/dental/mental health condition (maximum 150 words)
 - Describe the economic severity of your condition (maximum 150 words)
 - Complete a checklist to describe the medical severity of your condition
 - Complete a checklist to describe your access to resources
- **Verification of Condition & Medical Expenses**
 - Upload a PDF attachment providing as much specific information as possible about your diagnosis/condition, and your out-of-pocket expenses, either what you've paid, what you owe, or what your treatment plan is projected to cost.
 - Your PDF attachment(s) can include:
 - Diagnosis/results from your medical provider, confirming your emergency condition
 - Invoices (invoices should include date of service and type of service; name of provider and amount paid/payable).
 - Receipt(s) for prescriptions and/or transportation to/from treatment

- A treatment plan for future care, listing your projected out-of-pocket expenses
- Statement from your provider or insurance company with estimates of what insurance will cover and what you will owe
- If this request is for, or includes, future treatment, if possible attach a letter (on letterhead/email from the provider), describing the type, number, frequency of future treatment(s), schedule of treatment(s), and the projected cost to you.
- If you do not yet have documentation, you may provide your own estimate of expenses.
 - Provide your annual adjusted gross income (averaged from your two most recent federal tax returns)
- **Certify that the information in the application is true.**

How Emergency Expenses Work

Funds may be requested for:

- Related, eligible expenses incurred for up to 12 months from the date of the emergency. For example, if an emergency occurred on December 1, 2025, you can request funds for eligible expenses through December 1, 2026.
- Expenses which you have already incurred, or will incur; which you have already paid for or have not.
- Your own out-of-pocket expenses, whether or not you have insurance.

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 which include documentation of treatment received 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 Emergency Expenses

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 Emergency Expenses

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, dentures/bridges, 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.

Medicare/Medicaid

Artists who are otherwise eligible, but whose direct medical expenses are covered by Medicare/Medicaid, often struggle with covering living expenses while they are ill/injured/recovering and unable to work. These artists may apply for up to \$5,000 in documented living expenses in lieu of medical expenses.

Eligible expenses:

- Rent/utilities/phone/wifi
- Food/food delivery
- Laundry/laundry services
- Toiletries/personal items
- Transportation

- Over the counter medications/medical supplies
- Non-medical insurance premiums (dental, liability, property)

Expenses must be documented via bills/invoices/receipts. Only expenses incurred during the documented treatment/recovery period are eligible.

Ineligible expenses:

- Art supplies/equipment
- Credit card debt
- Student loan debt
- Mortgage/HOA payments
- Other non-essential-living expenses

In such cases, artists must submit documentation of Medicare/Medicaid coverage, a budget of requested expenses, and documentation of medical/dental/mental health emergency within the application form.

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.

NYFA regularly revisits its grant guidelines and eligibility requirements to improve clarity and accessibility and reduce unintentional bias. We invite feedback and suggestions that we can consider within the parameters of the program funder's goals and NYFA's required processes.

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 are 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 are placed into a lottery for the final awards.

NYFA reserves the right to undertake additional steps to verify information prior to making grant awards and payments.

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

The NYFA Grants team will host a live, virtual information session over Zoom designed to help applicants build a strong application on July 7th at 2 PM ET. The one-hour session will include an overview of the program, a summary of eligibility requirements, tips for filling out the application, and a live Q&A.

Registration is required for the live info session. Please sign up below.

- **RMEG Information Session:** Tuesday, July 7 at 2PM ET [[Register Here](#)]

Links to recorded information sessions will be uploaded onto the [Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grants homepage](#).

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.