



Winter 2019  
Responsive Grant Process  
Information for Applicants

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**PERFORMING ARTS APPLICANTS**

January 1, 2019

# Cullen Foundation Overview

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- ✓ Cullen Foundation is an independent, private foundation dedicated to enhancing education for students in grades pre-K to 12 and advancing theatre and performing arts to positively impact residents of Erie County, New York
- ✓ We were created by the late John S. “Jack” Cullen whose estate provided the funding for the foundation.

# Deck/Guide Purpose

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The purpose of this deck is to review and clarify components related to our *Performing Arts Responsive Grant Process* including:

- ✓ Eligibility and guidelines
- ✓ LOI and Application, including financial requirements
- ✓ Tips for submitting quality requests

Basic eligibility is detailed at [www.thecullenfoundation.org](http://www.thecullenfoundation.org). Please review the criteria carefully.

# Goals of the Responsive Grant Process

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## Through our “responsive grant process”, we seek to:

- ✓ Create a rigorous yet thoughtful and user-friendly process that aligns with our investment strategy
- ✓ Gain a better understanding of your organization
- ✓ Learn about the needs of the people you serve and the good work you do

## Cullen Foundation intends to:

- ✓ Make the process clear, timely, and concise
- ✓ Hear the voice of our applicants throughout the process
- ✓ Have accessible and helpful staff to support the process
- ✓ Invest in strong organizations that align with and help fulfill our mission

# We Remain Focused on Requests that Align with our Priorities

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**In Performing Arts, our priority is organizations with a primary focus/mission on community performances.**

Organizations we support span music, dance, singers, and theatre where we place particular emphasis on the American musical.

# Types of Support for Performing Arts Organizations

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Four types of support are available:

1. Program support
2. General operating
3. Capital (building and/or equipment)
4. Capacity building

Applicants can apply for one, two or three years of funding

For past Cullen grantees seeking less than \$7,500/year, a new expedited application option is available -- “Action Grant” -- piloting in 2019.

# Cullen is Piloting a New Grant Option for Smaller Requests from Past Grantees

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The new “Action Grant” program is designed for past Cullen grantees seeking up to \$7,500/year. Visit our website for more details.

## **Eligibility for the Action Grant category:**

- Must be past Cullen grantees (since 2015)
- Must be in good standing with Cullen
- Must not have an open grant with Cullen

## **Some Features of the Action Grant category:**

- May apply for up to \$7,500/year; guideline of suggested request by revenue size
- Streamlined, one-step application process (i.e. no LOI).
- Applications accepted on rolling basis; processed within six (6) weeks of receipt; fund disbursement expedited
- Requests can be made for one to three years of funding
- All other Cullen eligibility requirements and criteria must be met

# Cullen Staff can Assist with Questions Regarding Eligibility, Fit and Categories of Support

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If you need assistance determining your organization's status, proposal ideas/options, etc. contact us:

## **General questions, eligibility, and portal-related questions**

Heather Jason

[HJason@thecullenfoundation.org](mailto:HJason@thecullenfoundation.org) or 716-800-4278

## **Questions about outcomes**

Nick Schifano

[NSchifano@thecullenfoundation.org](mailto:NSchifano@thecullenfoundation.org) or 716-247-5316

## **Eligibility and proposal idea/vetting potential proposal ideas**

Florine Luhr

[FLuhr@thecullenfoundation.org](mailto:FLuhr@thecullenfoundation.org) or 716-800-4265



# Grant Application Basics

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- ✓ Be realistic in the amount requested, particularly as it relates to your revenues
- ✓ Our deadlines are clear: there are no special reminders or extensions given for LOI and Application deadlines.
- ✓ Proofread the grant before you submit it. Poorly written submissions are difficult to read, reflect negatively on your organization, and may affect the Request's outcome.
- ✓ We read all grant applications – expect a lot of questions.
- ✓ We may ask you for additional information leading up to or after your site visit. Following-up is the Applicant's responsibility and should be done within 48 hours of the site visit/request from Cullen staff.
- ✓ ***We strongly recommend you review the “Grant Writing Tips” on our website to understand what we expect from strong grant applications.***

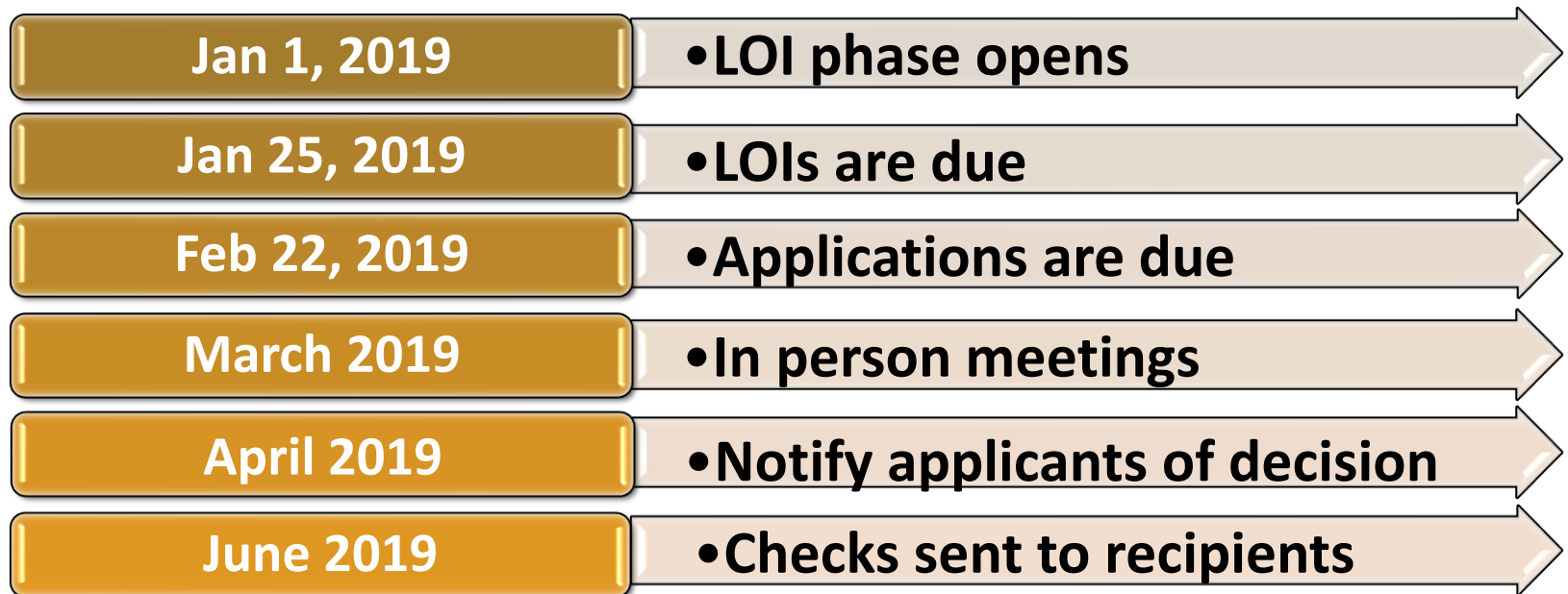
# This is a Competitive Process

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- ✓ We screen and make declinations through the LOI.
- ✓ Multi-year grants are rare and made **only when we believe the multi-year nature of the request is essential to the project's success.**
- ✓ Receiving the maximum \$100,000/year request amount is **uncommon and occurs when we feel unique strategic alignment** between our mission and your program's mission and outcomes.
- ✓ The **fiscal health, sustainability and impact** of your organization are important factors in our decision-making. Understand the relevance of these factors when making your request.

# Key Dates – Winter 2019 Cycle

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**If you chose to apply for an “Action Grant”, the process is a one-step/one-stage process and applications are accepted on a rolling basis.**

# Allow Ample Time for LOI & Application Completion and Plan your Submission Timeline

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**Nearly 85% of applicants spend at least 10 hours on the application portion**

- ✓ All submissions must be deemed complete by Cullen staff prior to the 5 pm deadline.
- ✓ We strongly advise submitting at least 2-3 days in advance so that staff can review and verify completion accurately and sufficiently.
- ✓ If information is missing (i.e. if the submission is incomplete), it will be sent back to the applicant to be completed in its entirety prior to the 5 pm deadline. If the necessary changes are not made and the application is not resubmitted to our site by 5 pm, the application will not be accepted.

# We Qualify Requests through the LOI Process (not applicable for Action Grant category)

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The LOI is our introduction to your project and determines eligibility.

Key questions include:

- ✓ Need
- ✓ Purpose

Regardless of your organization's size, **reviewed or audited financials are a mandatory requirement of our process:**

- ✓ From most recently completed fiscal year (2018; or 2017 if year-end is 12/31/18)
- ✓ Must be prepared by a CPA
- ✓ This is Cullen's requirement and is **not related to NYS requirements**
- ✓ Know that there is a cost for obtaining reviewed/audited financials; it's your decision to apply and thereby incur this cost. There are no refunds or awards made for incurring this cost regardless of the application's outcome.

A successful LOI will qualify your organization for the Application phase.

# We do further Due Diligence, Analysis and Learning through the Application

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The application seeks finer details of your project to understand:

- Who's being served/audience members
- Project outcomes of the project and the measurement of those outcomes
- Organizational strength
  - ✓ Board commitment and involvement
  - ✓ Personnel
  - ✓ Sustainability
- Fiscal health
  - ✓ Budgets (organizational and project based)
  - ✓ Revenue sources and uses
  - ✓ Strength and diversity of support

# A Vital Part of our Process is the “Application Review Session” which is Conducted after we’ve Reviewed your LOI and Application

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- ✓ Each organization completing a full application receives an hour-long in-person meeting from Cullen staff and oftentimes Trustees. (Note the need for this meeting for the Action Grant category may be waived).
- ✓ This is Cullen’s opportunity to ask specific questions related to your project and organization. **Discussion around our questions will consume most of the site visit.**
- ✓ This is your organization’s opportunity to demonstrate the strengths of and need for your project.
- ✓ We recommend that leadership teams (AD and ED), including relevant board members, attend and participate.
- ✓ Please plan accordingly for the meeting and be prepared for multiple questions.

# Financial Information you Submit must be Complete and include Audited/Reviewed Financial Statements

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## 1. Organization's Budget

- You may use an existing budget here

## 2. Project Budget

- Provide enough detail that expenses and revenues are clear to us
- Be specific and note the expenses/costs for which you're requesting Cullen's support
- Be aware that Cullen prefers to fund a portion of a project, and not be the sole funder; this is important to sustainability

## 3. Budget Narrative

- Provide background on details such as: why costs are increasing or decreasing; what funding sources were used in the past for certain items

## 4. Other Grants

- Provide info on additional sources for the project; the current year is most relevant – you need not provide historical info.



# Example of an Informative Budget

## Program or Project Budget

<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Amount Committed</u>	<u>Amount Pending*</u>
<u>Support</u>	-	-
Government grants	\$	\$
Foundations	\$	\$
Corporations	\$	\$
Individual contributions	\$	\$
Membership income	\$	\$
Fundraising events and products	\$	\$
In-kind support	\$	\$
Investment income	\$	\$
<u>Revenue</u>	-	-
Earned income	\$	\$
Other (specify)	\$	\$

## Program/Project Expenses

<u>Expense Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>%FT/PT</u>
Salaries, wages and benefits by individual (indicate FT or PT)	\$	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	\$	
Insurance and/or other taxes	\$	
Consultant and professional fees	\$	
Travel	\$	
Equipment	\$	
Supplies	\$	
Printing/copying	\$	
Phone and fax	\$	
Postage and delivery	\$	
Rent and utilities	\$	
In-kind expenses	\$	
Depreciation	\$	
Other	\$	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		
Difference (Income less Expense)	\$	

# Performing Arts Focus Area - Notes

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Include details most relevant to helping us understand your organization:

- ✓ Who is served and who benefits?
- ✓ How is the organization different from its peers?
- ✓ What are the project's outcomes?

Cullen does not fund the following types of programs:

- ✓ Arts in education programs
- ✓ Programs that benefit an individual school
- ✓ Sponsorships (galas, fundraising events, conferences, travel opportunities)
- ✓ Programs and events with a performing arts component that are hosted by organizations that are not members of the performing arts sector
- ✓ Activities of organizations serving primarily their own membership

# Application Portal - Foundant

- We utilize *Foundant*
- All LOIs, applications, contracts and reports are submitted online

Create an Account  
from the “Application  
Process” page on our  
website

## Create New Account

If you already have an Account, click the 'Cancel Account Creation' button to go to the Logon page

⚠ Using the browser's back button will delete your registration information.

ℹ This registration process has multiple steps you must complete before you can apply.

Fields with an asterisk (\*) are required.

### Organization Information

Organization Name\*

EIN / Tax Identification Number\*

Please enter in the following format: 12-1234567

Web Site

Telephone Number\*

Please enter in following format: ###.###.####

Fax Number

Please enter in following format: ###-###-####

Address 1\*

Address 2

City\*

State Abbreviation\*

Zip Code\*

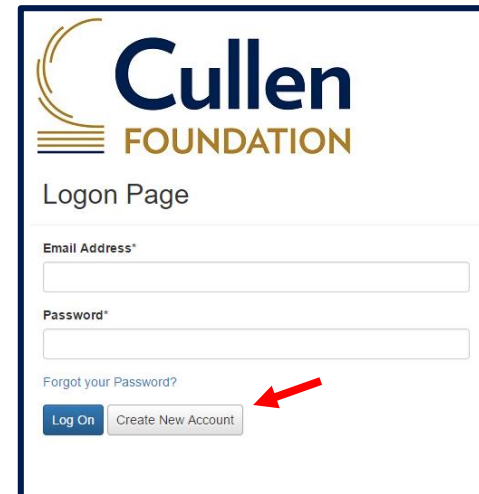
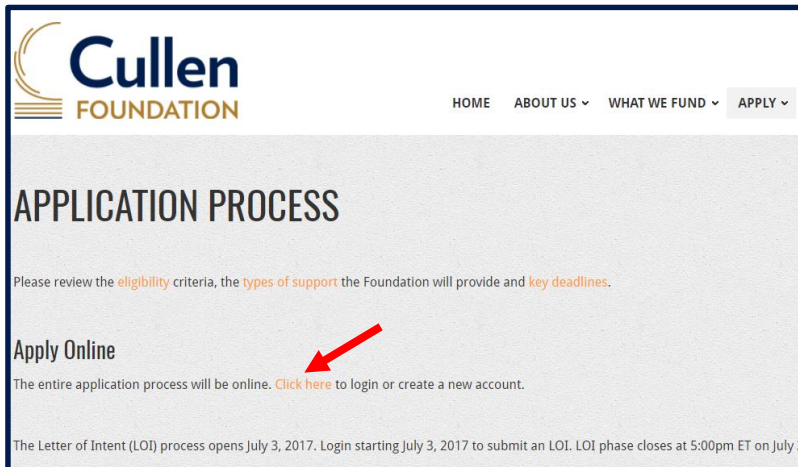
Country

# Create an Account & Begin

- ✓ If you do not already have an account with us, you will create one.
- ✓ If you are a returning applicant, please use your existing account.

From the “Apply” page on our website, click the link under “Apply Online”

Then hit “Create a New Account” on the login page; you’ll enter a user name (email) and create a password



# Utilize Foundant to Manage your Request

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Your Foundant “Dashboard” is where you will manage your Request and all follow-up items with Cullen Foundation (contract, reports, etc.)

- ✓ Login to Foundant; you’ll be on the “*Applicant Dashboard*” -- hit “*Apply*” on the top of the page; choose *Education* or *Performing Arts* to begin your LOI.
- ✓ Work on the LOI and save your work as you go. You may want to write your application in *MS Word* and copy and paste it into Foundant.
- ✓ You can start your Application once your LOI is submitted and approved by Cullen staff.
- ✓ Be aware that many questions have word count limits.

# Summary of Tips for Applicants

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- ✓ Submit the proper financial information – **you must have reviewed or fully audited financial statements from 2017 or 2018 to apply.**
- ✓ Be sure the *Project Budget* is comprehensive; consider using the *Budget Narrative*
- ✓ Avoid jargon and explain your project clearly -- succinct responses are encouraged; proofread multiple times before submitting.
- ✓ Review the grant writing tips on our website.
- ✓ Contact us with any issues you experience or questions—the earlier the better
- ✓ Do not wait until the last day to submit!
- ✓ Be prepared for questions from us at your application review meeting; and have the right people in attendance.

# If you have Questions during the Process, Please Contact us

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## Staff can provide guidance along-the-way regarding:

<b>Eligibility</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>Project fit</b>	<b>Foundant</b>
<b>Financial requirements</b>	<b>Other relevant questions</b>

**Phone: 716-800-4280**

**Address: 250 Delaware Avenue, Suite 820, Buffalo NY 14202**

<b>General questions and portal related questions</b>	Heather Jason	HJason@thecullenfoundation.org
<b>Questions about Outcomes</b>	Nick Schifano	NSchifano@thecullenfoundation.org
<b>Eligibility and proposal idea/ vetting questions</b>	Florine Luhr	FLuhr@thecullenfoundation.org

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