

The KFW Grantmaking Process

Here is a quick review of how it works!

KFW staff are here to help you: Don't hesitate to contact KFW staff if you have any questions about the application or grant review process. We don't participate in the funding decision-making, so we are here to facilitate strong applications from feminist artists arts groups and organizations who believe in the power of art to create social change for women and girls across the state. We know that when women and girls advance, so does Kentucky.

The Application Arrives: KFW typically receives an average of 75-120 applications per AE grant cycle, and 45 -75 applications per AMA grant cycle. Every application received is given careful attention. The KFW Program Officer reads each application, writes a short summary, ensures the application is complete, and prepares the applications to be sent to the independent peer grant reviewers. KFW staff does not review applications for their merits or make funding recommendations or decisions. Our job is to make sure every application is as complete as possible.

Grant Review Begins: KFW staff identifies panels of independent grant reviewers, whose work constitutes the heart of the grantmaking process. Each grant review panel consists of three reviewers — ideally, two from Kentucky and one from out-of-state — who are all highly qualified artists and activists from a range of disciplines, including literary, visual, performing, and media arts. Once these panels have been assembled, the applications are divided among them, according to the art form chosen on the application: literary, performing, visual, and media. The reviewers' task is to carefully read, assess, and rank the applications and corresponding work samples, in preparation for the in-person grant review meeting. Grant reviewers agree to abide by confidentiality and conflict-of-interest statements to ensure the fairness of the decision-making process.

The Grant Review Meetings: Each panel assembles for a face-to-face meeting at the KFW office. Reviewers have already sent in their preliminary rankings, which are used to begin the discussion. Although KFW staff is present to observe and take notes, the recommendations about which applications will receive funding and how much they will receive are made solely by our expert grant reviewers. Discussion is often lively and decisions are difficult to make, because there are so many worthy applications and grant funds are limited. The criteria that appear on the application forms (e.g., "artwork in sample is strong, highly original, and reflects feminism and social change; applicant's understanding and practice of feminism; and understanding of the relationship between art and social change," etc.) are the same criteria that guide reviewers in making their tough decisions about their final funding recommendations.

Recommendations: Once the panels have agreed on their recommendations, the recommendations are forwarded to KFW’s board for final approval of the grant funds. Please keep in mind that KFW is unable to fund fully most applications. Many applicants receive less than they requested. KFW staff works hard to provide each grant applicant constructive comments, taken directly from the deliberations of the reviewers to help her/him understand the final decision.

Notification: For Art Meets Activism grants, applicants typically receive notification by early June. For Artist Enrichment grants, applicants typically receive notification by early December.

Typical Timeline:

	AMA	AE
Application Deadline:	First week of March	First week of September
Notification Sent:	Early June	Early December
Checks sent:	End of June	End of December