Example Panelist Comments from FY18

APS

Artistic Quality
The extent to which an artistic activity demonstrates quality through one or more of the following considerations: artistic intent, inquiry, competency, authenticity, process or impact.

“Excellent project proposal! The evidence you provided clearly exemplifies the highly competent artists who you are working with.”

“Your application is well organized and written. I am concerned, however, that the application lacks any firm evidence of artistic intent, inquiry, competency, authenticity, process or impact. Please consider using additional evaluative tools including surveys, rubrics, or benchmarking in order to provide metrics as part of a complete application.”

“The list of awards and reviews is convincing evidence of artistic quality as is the sample audio and the qualifications of the participating artists.”

Community Engagement
The extent to which the applicant can demonstrate: (1) an active, two-way and ongoing relationship between the applicant and the community in the planning, participation and evaluation of the proposed project; (2) efforts towards community inclusion such as ensuring fair access and a diversity in participants including individuals with disabilities and other underserved populations.

“I see clear evidence that the applicant is providing a wonderful experience for the community. However, I do not see any elements where the community is participating in active conversation with your organization. Sharing a performance with a community is wonderful, but it is a one-way experience. Inclusion of community partners in the planning or evaluation of your product is important for a two-way relationship to happen.”

“Wonderful use of community forums to help guide your programming choices! Knowing what your community needs and attempting to provide for that need is the relationship we are looking for. Please be mindful of grammar and punctuation; don’t let a misspelled word or poor syntax detract from the good work you are doing! Could you provide additional comments on your inclusion efforts of diverse populations? What kind of physical accommodations are/could be provided?”

Project Management
The extent to which the applicant organization can demonstrate the ability to successfully design and implement the project through effective planning, financial management, staffing and evaluation.

The extent to which the applicant:

“Your project proposal is great! Could you talk about how you will gauge success? What impact are you looking
to achieve? Are you looking to involve huge numbers of people or create a special experience for a few and
how will you measure that (survey, number of participants, etc.)? Your budget seems within reason and you
give a clear outline of financial statement and staffing.”

“I am happy to see this kind of work happening in your community. Could you be more specific on the
budget outline? I see several predictions, but not sure how those numbers were determined. Your timeline is
appropriate to the project as are your evaluative tools.”

“It seems that the timeline is very compact for the scope of the project. You only leave about 45 days from
start to finish, is that enough? I’m happy to see several well-thought-out evaluation tools including use of exit
surveys. Please go into more detail on staffing for the events. You have a nice description of current staff and
their roles, do you have them operate in the same capacity for the events?”

AOS I/II
Organizational Excellence
The extent to which the applicant organization can demonstrate sound fiscal management and administrative
policies and a demonstrable commitment to continuous improvement, preservation and development of the art
form.

“The organization’s board members plan a selection of a wide range of theatrical offerings, consulting
with staff and a team of resident artists. They problem-solve budget issues with increased grant writing and
donor support.”

“The application presents a solid artistic organization with a mission to serve their community. The
strategic plan represents a realistic look at what can be accomplished in the near future with reasonable and
achievable goals.”

“Application presents a strong organization committed to fostering the arts in its community and in
Indiana. Their board seems to represent a diverse and engaged group, and their financials present appropriate
costs for their staff size and level of activities, with revenue coming in from a variety of sources.

“The application presents reasonable and attainable goals for the future, and I am excited by their efforts
to continue connect with its public and foster the arts more in their community. This shows long-term planning
and solid management, which would be the foundation for this organization to sustain itself for years to
come.”

“In looking at the financials statement, the numbers show a healthy operation but more details and
explanations as to how you track your expenses and revenues would make this strong application even
stronger. As for organizational planning, the application presents a proposal for clear, achievable outcomes
with appropriate processes and tools in place to determine success.”

“The projected budget looks unrealistic – they’re looking to almost double their income from the previous
year, but do not provide an explanation on how they plan to make that happen. What is the strategy to
increase the membership and subscription from 450 to a projected 7,000 people? Without an explanation, this
doesn’t look realistic.”
Community Engagement
The extent to which the applicant can demonstrate: (1) an active, two-way and ongoing relationship between the applicant and the community in the planning, participation and evaluation of the proposed project; (2) efforts towards community inclusion such as ensuring fair access and a diversity in participants including individuals with disabilities and other underserved populations.

“For many other organizations applying towards this grant, it should be noted that your organization’s community engagement definition/focus is one to be admired. You are gathering and connecting with multiple organizations and progressively striving towards betterment of each community. They are thinking outside the box to pursue community businesses which will further promote not only their own organizational mission, but build connections with community members in the surrounding historic neighborhood.”

The connection with outside organizations is also interesting and telling of their efforts to branch out to individuals in the community. It is apparent that they are continuously striving to add new ventures with other community and non-profit organizations, but it may be in their best effort is to further explain how certain productions will enhance the organization. How is this going to change or make your organization unique or different than organizations pursuing the same or similar values? Addition of this will provide a well-rounded presentation in community engagement.”

“Application clearly understands the importance of a strong community engagement effort to succeed in its mission and as an organization. I was impressed with your group’s efforts to work with the schools to develop this free programs that directly address their curricular needs”

“Your efforts for inclusion and accessibility are also worthy of note.”

A suggestion might be to create a community advisory board that is reflective of your community and could assist in furthering your impact in that community. This would further the bonds of engagement and provide some added opportunities to expand your support base.”

Arts Education
The extent to which the applicant can demonstrate strategies designed to transfer specific training, skills, abilities and/or knowledge in the arts through publicly recognized standards (e.g. workshop leader has appropriate experience; education standards are integrated if a school-based activity.)

“The applicant’s application does an excellent job at defining the activities that will take place. Could you better define the evaluation process you will employ? Is there a particular outcome you are looking for? If so, how will you know you have achieved it?”

“I’m concerned that those implementing the project, the volunteers, are not appropriately trained. Could you go into additional detail on the process you used to choose your volunteers? Are they specifically trained? The evaluative tools you plan to employ are wonderful, however, I would like to see a better description of the outcomes and impacts of your activities.”
Artistic Quality

The applicant’s narrative, activities, support materials, and overall application demonstrates a high level of intentional commitment to the art form. That commitment can be demonstrated through a variety of tactics such as artistic intent, inquiry, competency, authenticity, process or impact.

“The applicant’s narrative does a fine job of conveying the commitment to their art form. The supplemental materials, however, doesn’t convey that same level. Be sure to provide materials that shows your organization in the best possible way. Try not to let technology inhibit your ability to tell your story.”

“Please be more specific as to the tactics used to demonstrate the quality of your work. You state that you serve over 1000 people each month, can you tell us how you determine that number, is that number part of your strategic goals, is that a meaningful impact you are making? Tell a broader story that includes a clear narrative and rational as to why you believe your work is achieving the goals stated in IAC’s rubric for artistic quality.”