



2026 Global Grantmaking Guidelines

Our Global Grantmaking program invests in charitable organizations worldwide, large or small, new or established, that demonstrate a significant impact on music career mobility and the creation of more music makers across the lifespan of learning.

The NAMM Foundation has awarded \$20 million in nonprofit and music research grants over the past two decades to support music-making and workforce development projects in all music industry segments.

- ✓ Fretted Instruments
- ✓ Percussion
- ✓ Electronic & Recording
- ✓ Printed & Digital Music
- ✓ Keyboard
- ✓ Pro Audio & Lighting
- ✓ Band/Orchestra (wind, brass, strings, large/small ensembles)
- ✓ Other Genres

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is divided into two rounds. Round 1 is a full application and will be reviewed based on the criteria listed in these guidelines. If your organization is advanced to Round 2, this will be an opportunity for the Foundation staff to get to know your organization better, fill in any information gaps, and will include a virtual site visit. While some additional documentation may be requested, you will not be required to provide a second full grant application.

WHAT WE FUND

We award grants to high-impact organizations across the globe that create more music makers by eliminating barriers for underrepresented communities and groups of people in two areas:

- Participatory Music Making
- Career Mobility in Music

Within these given priorities, we offer three grant tracks:

- Music Program Grants
- General Operating Grants for Music Organizations
- Music Research Grants

Please consult with The NAMM Foundation team if you are unsure whether the Music Program or General Operating grant track is right for your organization. Sharon Bryant, Senior Program Officer, sharonb@namm.org

Music Program Grants (US organizations only):

- ✓ Programs that create more music makers across the lifespan and/or more music professionals in the workforce.
- ✓ Must be a US-based music organization with IRS 501(c)(3) status. Programs can benefit countries outside the US.
- ✓ High-quality, hands-on, and relevant music-making, music-training, and/or workforce development initiatives that are, or will be, a permanent part of an organization's annual programming and serve, or will serve, an established cohort of participants that engage with the program regularly.
- ✓ While we acknowledge the value of one-time music exposure programs and concerts, such as assemblies, field trips, and masterclasses, we do not fund these types of events.
- ✓ Programs can be new or established and must demonstrate current, or intended, positive impact on eliminating barriers to music making, music learning, and/or music career pathways that prioritize historically underserved communities or groups of people.
- ✓ Programs can serve any age group.
- ✓ Programs representing all musical genres are welcome to apply.
- ✓ Applicants are not required to be music organizations, but programs must be music focused.
- ✓ Demonstration of broad financial support for proposed program is encouraged.
- ✓ Regranting programs are not eligible.

General Operating Grants for Music Organizations (US organizations only):

- ✓ Unrestricted grants for music organizations whose entire mission and program delivery aligns with one, or both, of the NAMM Foundation's two funding priorities: Participatory Music Making and Career Mobility.
- ✓ Must be a US-based music organization with IRS 501(c)(3) status. Programs can benefit countries outside the US.
- ✓ Must benefit historically underrepresented communities or groups of people.
- ✓ Demonstrate strong management practices in the areas of board and staff leadership, strategic planning, and fiscal management, etc.
- ✓ Demonstrate high programmatic standards.
- ✓ Regranting organizations are not eligible.

Music Research Grants (US organizations only):

- ✓ Research that improves practices and increases public/private resources for music education, music creation and workforce development in the United States.
- ✓ Principal investigators with a strong research track record.
- ✓ Does not duplicate existing research.
- ✓ Government agencies are not eligible.
- ✓ Non-US organizations are not eligible for Music Research Grants.
- ✓ Grants are not given to individuals.
- ✓ K-12 schools (public or private) and institutes of higher education are only eligible to apply under the research grant track.

International Grantseekers:

- ✓ Music associations or service organizations outside the US with IRS 501(c)(3) equivalency that support advocacy initiatives or programs in the areas of Participatory Music Making and or Career Mobility in their home countries.
- ✓ International grants cannot be re-granted to other charities, individuals, or organizations.
- ✓ All documentation must be translated into English.
- ✓ Please contact the foundation to determine if your organization meets equivalency standards.

Grant Size Range:

Grants from The NAMM Foundation can range between \$5,000-\$25,000, depending on the size and scope of the request. The Foundation may give grants above or below this range.

Eligibility:

The NAMM Foundation funds organizations that are large and small, established, and new based in the US and around the world. We make most of our grants to organizations in the US that are 501(c)(3) public charities, but also to music associations and umbrella organizations outside the United States that have 501(c)(3) status or approved international equivalency.

From time to time, the foundation may provide funding outside of its published guidelines. These grants are made by invitation only.

Grants are typically awarded to organizations and programs that:

- ✓ Have a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) designation or approved international equivalent.
- ✓ Meet one or more of the foundation's funding priorities.
- ✓ Prioritize historically underserved communities and groups of people.
- ✓ Demonstrate measurable goals and outcomes.
- ✓ Demonstrate excellent programmatic standards.
- ✓ Demonstrate strong organizational and fiscal management.
- ✓ Align with one or more music product industry segments: Band/Orchestra (wind, brass, strings, large/small ensembles); Fretted Instruments; Percussion; Electronic & Recording; Printed and Digital Music; Keyboard; Pro Audio & Lighting; Other.

What Global Grantmaking Does Not Fund?

- ✓ Grants for individuals.
- ✓ Endowments, fundraisers, capital campaigns, annual appeals.
- ✓ Conferences.
- ✓ Deficit financing.
- ✓ Purchase of tickets, ads, sponsorships, parties, conferences, fairs, fundraiser events.
- ✓ K-12 school districts, public, private, independent, charter schools, are ONLY eligible for research grants.
- ✓ Higher education institutions are ONLY eligible for research grants.
- ✓ Publications.
- ✓ Legal services.

- ✓ Cash regranting.
- ✓ Scholarships.
- ✓ Government agencies.
- ✓ Private foundations.
- ✓ Political candidates or lobbying organizations.
- ✓ Programs or organizations that discriminate based on race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, veteran status, disability or other characteristics protected by law.

Criteria Used to Evaluate Proposals:

- ✓ The degree to which the proposal directly addresses and furthers The NAMM Foundation's funding priorities.
- ✓ The significance of the problem or need addressed by the proposed program or organization, as demonstrated in the narrative.
- ✓ The overall quality of the proposal and whether the organization has made a convincing case that funding will facilitate impactful service delivery to constituents.
- ✓ Well-designed evaluation plan.
- ✓ The stability of the organization regarding board, leadership, strategic planning, program design, and fiscal management and outlook.
- ✓ The organization's track record and/or and unique role in providing service to its specific constituencies.
- ✓ The reasonableness of the prepared budget.

Dependency Test:

The Foundation recognizes that being overly reliant on one funding source to consistently cover a significant portion of costs can create a dependency risk for an organization. Recognizing this, the Foundation discourages proposals that are more than 15% of an organization's operating expenses. During the Phase 1 review process, the Foundation conducts a dependency test for each applicant organization. This test aims to identify organizations that are at or above the 15% threshold. This does not necessarily affect the Foundation's decision to fund the proposed work, but the Foundation might recommend an adjusted grant amount.

IMPORTANT 2025 DATES:

Music Program and General Operating Grants (Non-US applicants should contact the Foundation to determine eligibility).

- ✓ March 3: Application Live
- ✓ March 5 and March 19 (9:30 am PT): Virtual information sessions
- ✓ April 4: Round 1 Application Due
- ✓ June 6: Invitation to advance to Round 2 Application
 - Round 2 applicants will be invited for a virtual site visit with the Foundation staff.
- ✓ July 1: Round 2 Application Due
- ✓ Sept 30: Award Notification

Music Research Grants

- ✓ March 5 and March 19 (9:30 am PT): Virtual information sessions
- ✓ April 1: Application Live
- ✓ June 6: Round 1 Application Due
- ✓ Aug 8: Invitation to advance to Round 2 Application
 - Round 2 applicants will be invited for a virtual site visit with the Foundation staff.
- ✓ Aug 29: Round 2 Application Due
- ✓ Sept 30: Award Notification