

Rauschenberg Dancer Emergency Grants Guidelines

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Rauschenberg Dancer Emergency Grants program provides one-time grants of up to \$3,000 to professional dancers in need, who are in dire financial emergency. You must demonstrate an urgent and critical need for emergency support in your application, and live in the United States, the District of Columbia, a Tribal Nation, or a U.S. Territory. This program is made possible through the support of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

“Dire financial emergencies“ include the lack or imminent endangerment of essentials such as housing, medicine/healthcare, utilities, and food. This grant program aims to provide dancers with greater stability to move forward by covering up to three months of essential expenses, recognizing the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the dance sector, as well as other recent career interruptions including illness or injury.

Please note: the need far outpaces available funds; an application is not a guarantee of a grant. In each cycle we will distribute approximately \$65,000 in total funding. Learn more about the review and decision-making process at the bottom of this page.

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

GRANT TIMELINES

NYFA is pleased to announce that the Rauschenberg Emergency Grants will continue to be offered through at least January 2026.

Cycle 20

Application Opens: Tuesday, September 9 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, October 7 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: November 14, 2025

Cycle 21

Application Opens: Tuesday, November 4 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, December 2 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: January 9, 2026

Cycle 22

Application Opens: Tuesday, January 6 at 10:00 AM ET

Application Closes: Tuesday, February 10 at 5:00 PM ET*

Applicants Notified: March 20, 2026

Cycle 23

Application Opens: Tuesday, March 3 at 10:00 AM ET
Application Closes: Tuesday, March 31 at 5:00 PM ET*
Applicants Notified: May 1, 2026

Cycle 24

Application Opens: Tuesday, April 21 at 10:00 AM ET
Application Closes: Tuesday, May 19 at 5:00 PM ET*
Applicants Notified: June 26, 2026

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

Cycles continue on a bimonthly basis through at least June 2026. 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

- Applicants must be 21 years or older
- Applicants must reside in the United States, the District of Columbia, a Tribal Nation, or a U.S. Territory
- Applicants must 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.
- Applicants cannot be enrolled in any degree-seeking program.
- Applicants must not have received a Rauschenberg Medical or Dancer Emergency Grant within the last five years (since their original grant award date)

- Applicants must demonstrate current and ongoing activity as a professional dancer (defined below).

Artistic Eligibility

- Applicants must be a professional dancer. You need to have been working as a paid, live dance performer for at least the last five years (since 2020), in any stage/performance style, including aerial, ballet, hip-hop, jazz, modern, tap and traditional/folk. You may apply if you perform in a variety of settings (for instance: ticketed stage performances, free street festivals, and music videos), as long as you have performed in live, public-facing performances regularly since 2020 (at least one paid engagement annually).
- You do not need to be a full-time dancer, or receive your primary income through your dance performance.
- Reduced activity during the pandemic (2020/21) or for another 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 2020.
- Performances in educational/academic settings, social dance, competitive settings, clubs or other commercial settings, exotic dance, commercials, and industrials cannot be considered in this history of performing.
- Self-produced online presentation, and/or performances shared solely through personal websites, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook or other online platforms are not eligible.
- If you perform your own work live, your resume needs to clearly indicate that you were BOTH the choreographer and dancer.

Emergency Eligibility

- Applicants must be experiencing a dire financial emergency that has occurred within approximately the last six months. This is defined as the lack or imminent endangerment of essentials such as housing, medicine/healthcare, utilities, food and/or transportation. Your expenses must be direct, out-of-pocket expenses for you individually.
- The dire financial emergency needs to be the result of a loss or lack of current/recent (in the last six months) work as a paid dancer because of circumstances beyond your control. Common circumstances include canceled performances, cutbacks or cancellations of dance engagement contracts, loss of touring opportunities, illness or injury, and ongoing shutdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact.
- The expenses for which you are requesting funds must be incurred and paid within the U.S. (including D.C., Tribal Nations and U.S Territories).

- 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 information.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications are open to professional dancers in need who are experiencing a dire financial emergency due to their loss or lack of current/recent live performance work, because of circumstances outside of their control.

What to Submit

When you fill out your application, you will need to:

- Provide your contact information
- Complete a checklist to describe the economic severity of your emergency situation
- Provide your annual income (averaged over the last two years)
- Summarize your typical professional dance activity in the past, any change in that activity over the last six months and your current level of paid dance work (maximum 100 words)
- Describe your dire financial emergency as clearly and thoroughly as possible (maximum 200 words)
 - What is your urgent and critical need for financial support?
 - What circumstances led to your current financial emergency?
- Describe one step you will take towards stability, if you receive the grant. (Maximum 150 words)
- List the expenses for which you are requesting this grant. For recurring expenses, you may request up to three months of funding within the eligible time period.
- Upload a current resume/bio/CV which demonstrates recent and sustained activity as a professional dancer in live, public-facing performances since 2020:
 - List your engagements as a paid, live dance performer for at least the last five years, in any stage/performance style, including aerial, ballet, hip-hop, jazz, modern, tap and traditional/folk. List the production/event name, your role/position, the year, and the location (venue if any, city and state). If you perform your own work live, your resume needs to clearly indicate that you were BOTH the choreographer and dancer.
 - Your resume may list all of your performance work (for instance, ticketed stage performances, free street festivals and music videos), but you should specifically list/highlight/notate your live, public-facing performances since 2020, at least

one paid engagement annually. Inactivity, or online/streaming activity, during COVID (2020-21), and during the last six months, is allowable. Reduced activity during the pandemic (2020/21) or for another 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 2020.

- Performances in educational/academic settings, social dance, competitive settings, clubs and other commercial settings, exotic dance, commercials, and industrials cannot be considered in this history of performing. Self-produced online presentation, and/or performances shared solely through personal websites, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook or other online platforms are not eligible.
- We do not accept work samples or URLs/links.
- Certify that the information in the application is true.

How Emergency Expenses Work

You may request up to \$3,000 for eligible essential expenses, for up to a three-month consecutive period, ranging from six months before the grant deadline through six months after the grant deadline. Expenses can be already paid by you, can be owed, or can be coming up in the near future.

NYFA reserves the right to determine eligible and reasonable expenses to support through this grant program.

Eligible expenses include:

- Rental housing (deposits, rent)
- Utilities
- Food
- Medical/dental/mental healthcare and insurance premiums
- Transportation (car payments, insurance, ride shares/taxis, mass transit)
- Other essential expenses which you can specify

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Mortgage payments
- Expenses related to other family members (i.e. food, healthcare, child/parent-care)
- Non-essential expenses including credit card debt or student loans
- Purchases of vehicles or other equipment

NYFA reserves the right to determine eligible and reasonable expenses to support.

While housing and utilities expenses may be requested for your general household, other eligible expenses may only be requested for your own individual purposes. If you receive a grant, you will be required to certify your use of the funds for the expenses itemized in your application.

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 checked by NYFA Grants Staff for eligibility and completeness. Eligible and complete applications will be then reviewed by an outside panel and assessed using the following criterion: Economic Urgency.
2. Following the panel review, the top scoring application is automatically funded; the remaining top tier of applications based on scores is placed into a lottery for the final awards.

Please note, available funds are limited to approximately \$65,000 in each grant cycle, and the demand for emergency funding is high. Applying for a grant does not guarantee receiving one.

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

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 financial information such as tax returns is kept confidential 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 East and West coasts 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

Please see a [recording here](#) of a live information session held by the NYFA Grants team in August 2025. This information session covers program guidelines, the application, as well as live audience questions.

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 aid, ultimately establishing the nonprofit foundation Change, Inc. in 1970.

Recognizing the particularly extreme impact the pandemic and its ongoing effect has had on dancers, the Rauschenberg Dancer Emergency Grants have been created.