



Southwest Virginia & Northeast Tennessee Regional Tradition Bearers Fellowship

OVERVIEW

The Southwest Virginia & Northeast Tennessee Regional Tradition Bearers Fellowship is an initiative of the Greater Bristol Folk Arts & Culture Team, with support from Mid Atlantic Arts' Central Appalachia Living Traditions (CALT) program.

The Greater Bristol Folk Arts & Culture Team promotes and supports folk arts and culture in the greater Bristol community by providing targeted resources and support to area organizations, artists, and artist collectives with the goal of dramatically impacting the sustainability and awareness of traditional practice, cultural knowledge, and improving economic development and regional vitality.

This fellowship is designed to support regional tradition bearers in their respective creative community practices, by providing financial support, professional development, and public presentation opportunities.

The program plans to support up to 8 regional tradition bearers, and each fellow will be awarded a stipend of \$4,000 and be offered in-kind professional development assistance.

ELIGIBILITY

Regional tradition bearers residing in the following areas of Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee are eligible and encouraged to apply:

- Southwest Virginia cities & counties: Bland, Bristol, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Galax, Grayson, Lee, Norton, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, Wythe
- Northeast Tennessee counties: Sullivan, Washington, Carter, Johnson, Hawkins, Unicoi

The majority of grantees will be selected from Virginia.

The fellowships are aimed at tradition bearers who are working to sustain and innovate folk arts and culture within their communities in the categories of music, dance, arts and crafts,

foodways, and other community-based cultural traditions. The folk and the traditional arts refer to art and creative practices that are based in and reflective of the knowledge, practices, and creativity of cultural communities. According to the National Endowment for the Arts:

“Community members may share a common ethnic heritage, cultural mores, language, religion, occupation, or geographic region. These vital and constantly reinvigorated artistic traditions are shaped by values and standards of excellence that are passed from generation to generation, most often within family and community, through demonstration, conversation, and practice.”

Awardees may include, but are not limited to:

- Traditional Music and Dance – Traditional musicians, singers, and dancers who have made significant and long-term contributions to sustaining and supporting the musical heritage of their respective communities
- Folk and Traditional Arts and Crafts – Traditional arts and crafts practitioners whose work is connected to a community- and/or place-based tradition rather than a fine art practice; examples include luthiers, textile producers, quilters, folk artists, woodcarvers, potters, basket makers, traditional artisans, jewelry makers, etc. who have made significant and long-term contributions to sustaining and supporting the folk arts and culture of their respective communities
- Foodways – Traditional home cooks and bakers, seed savers, farmers, community elders, keepers of recipes and traditional foodways knowledge, hunters, and foragers who have made significant and long-term contributions to sustaining and supporting the foodways of their respective communities
- Community Traditions – Including but not limited to traditional storytellers, herbalists, birth workers, and those whose practice is related to community- and/or place-based tradition

FUNDING

Each fellow will be awarded a stipend of \$4,000. The stipend will be paid out at 90% at the time of the award (\$3,600) and 10% (\$400) at the conclusion of the award period (May 15, 2023–March 15, 2024).

The Greater Bristol Folk Arts & Culture Team has additional funds available to support professional development for fellows. Grantees can receive assistance with a variety of general business aspects, such as building a website, creating professional headshots, writing an artist statement and/or resume, creating product shots, consulting on pricing strategies, recording time, connecting to other professional resources and practitioners, etc.

Please email BristolAnchorCommunity@gmail.com if you have any questions about the type of professional development activities we can support.

REQUIREMENTS

Between May 15, 2023–March 15, 2024 fellows will work on their specialized music, dance, arts and crafts, foodways, or community-based cultural traditions. Fellows will be encouraged to work with members of the Greater Bristol Folk Arts & Culture Team to develop their business and/or skill for sustainability. Additional learning, products, and/or projects completed during the year will be highlighted by the team and Mid Atlantic Arts' Central Appalachia Living Traditions program.

Fellows will also be invited to share their music, craft, foodways, or community-based cultural tradition at the Richmond Folk Festival on October 14-15, 2023.

In addition, fellows will be required to do the following:

- Present/host/participate in at least one public event in or near your home community – the Greater Bristol Folk Arts & Culture Team is available to help promote/document your event.
- Provide a simple final report, along with photo and/or video documentation by March 15, 2024. The report will be no more than two pages long and will include the following elements, as relevant:
 - Details about their public presentation
 - How they used the monetary award to advance their practice
 - How this fellowship impacted their work and community
 - What is optimal for sustaining their work and cultural tradition moving forward

Photos and videos will become part of the Central Appalachia Living Traditions (CALT) archive and may be used on the webpage and social media of CALT and other partner organizations. The grantee may also be invited to write a blog entry about the project for use on the CALT website.

Fellows may be invited to participate in a wrap-up celebration event and showcase at the Birthplace of Country Music Museum.

GRANT TIMELINE AND REVIEW CRITERIA

- **February 21, 2023:** Greater Bristol Folk Arts & Culture Team announces Southwest Virginia & Northeast Tennessee Regional Tradition Bearer Fellowships funding opportunity.
- **April 14, 2023:** Fellowship applications due.
- **May 15, 2023:** Awardees announced.
- **May 15, 2023–March 15, 2024:** Fellowship period.
- **October 14-15, 2023:** Bristol and tradition bearer fellows highlighted at Richmond Folk Festival.
- **March 15, 2024:** Fellowship final report due. Fellowships will be considered complete once the grantee has submitted the final report, including any photographs and/or recordings.

Applications for Southwest Virginia & Northeast Tennessee Regional Tradition Bearers Fellowships will be reviewed by a core group of panelists who are serving on the Bristol Folk Arts & Culture Team.

Applications will be scored on:

- Artistic Merit (40%)
- Fellowship Potential for Success (40%)
- Community Participation & Impact (20%)

For questions about the process, please email BristolAnchorCommunity@gmail.com.

DETAILS OF REIMBURSEMENT

The fellowship will be paid out at 90% (\$3,600) at the time of the award and 10% (\$400) at the conclusion of the award period.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI)

This funding opportunity has been designed to serve tradition bearers in a targeted region that includes rural residents, high-poverty areas, and historically underserved or marginalized communities. While historical and emerging cultural traditions are rich, the cash resources and institutional networks are limited. As a focus of this program, applications are designed with equity, diversity, access and inclusion top of mind. We encourage diversity not only in social, cultural, or economic background, but also in creative practice itself. Application materials are available in Spanish upon request.

HOW TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS

You can access the application directly [HERE](#).

QUESTIONS?

Please email BristolAnchorCommunity@gmail.com if you have any questions about eligibility, requirements, award activities, or the application process.