



Arts & Clean Energy Awareness Grant Guidelines

a program of the **Community Arts
Partnership of Tompkins County**

Robin Schwartz, Program & Grant Director

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www.artspartner.org

Guidelines, Application and Budget Form

on CAP's grant page [here](#)

Application Deadline:

11:59 PM Eastern Time, Sunday, May 17, 2026

About

The Arts and Clean Energy Awareness Grant supports the creation of new art with a community engagement element (visual art, murals, performing art, literary art, storytelling, or film) in Tompkins County under the theme *Our Common Clean Energy Future*. The goal is to fund new art that will promote an awareness of clean energy and empower residents to reduce their energy use and carbon footprint.

These grants are made possible by Cornell Cooperative Extension's [Smart Energy Choices](#) program—the Regional Clean Energy Hub for the Southern Tier—and are administered locally by the Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County.

Applicant Eligibility

Artists of all disciplines and stages of their careers who are 18 years or older and currently residing in Tompkins County are eligible to apply. Applicants may also be public school art teachers in conjunction with a student collaborative project. Tompkins County not for profits or municipalities are also invited to apply.

Funding Guidelines

Applicants can request grant funding of up to \$3,750. At least three awards of up to \$3,750 awards will be made. Funding can support any expenses directly related to artwork creation and public engagement including artist fees.

Project Eligibility

Projects must include both the creation of original art and engagement with the public in Tompkins County. Artwork creation and public engagement must conclude by September 30, 2026.

Artwork Eligibility

Created artwork must have a theme of a clean energy future and applications must include a plan to raise awareness of [Smart Energy Choices](#) and clean energy concepts. Created artwork must be made accessible to the public and can be installed, performed, or given to Smart Energy Choices to use for educational and outreach purposes.

Artwork must be the artist's original art and can be in a variety of media such as music, poetry, storytelling, dance, murals, print, fabric, ceramics, sculpture, and more.

Examples of raising awareness of Smart Energy Choices/Clean Energy Concepts:

- Public engagement during public art creation, which would include sharing information about smart energy choices
- A performance or other event in coordination with Smart Energy staff where Smart Energy Choices is spotlighted (e.g. Smart Energy educators speak briefly as part of the event)
- Including Smart Energy Choices logo or contact information on physical art pieces
- Local media coverage of the art, which could include quotes from Smart Energy Choices staff and Smart Energy Choices contact information
- Creating art that will be given to Smart Energy Choices for their use for educational and outreach purposes such as:
 - Sculpture or pottery that could be used as a raffle prize or to embellish Smart Energy Choices outreach initiatives.
 - An artistic portable exhibit that illustrates concepts related to clean energy
 - Knit clothing or themed quilt that could be used as a prize or display

Artists retain full copyright of created work. Smart Energy Choices will be granted a non-commercial, non-exclusive, perpetual, and non-transferable license to reproduce, copy, distribute, and display, the created work for educational and promotional purposes in support of the Clean Energy Awareness Program.

Community Engagement Eligibility

Projects must involve community engagement and a promotion plan, including details on how you will track/measure public participation, e.g. in the creation of artwork, attendance at a gathering, social media views, etc.

When possible, artists creating or performances should coordinate with Smart Energy Choices staff for speaking or other educational activities. Where applicable, artists should include the Smart Energy Choices branding and logo in promotion efforts. Awardees will be provided with Smart Energy Choices staff contact information, branding, and logo.

Examples of community engagement and tracking:

- For in-person events, use attendance sheets

- Social media posts by artist tracked by platform
- Use of QR codes in artwork display directing people to the Smart Energy Choices webpage

Funding Criteria

Grants will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- **Artistic & Programmatic Merit.** What is the artistic vision for the work? You should include information about the work's stylistic and thematic qualities, number of pieces (if visual art), desired impact of the project on the community, and integration of Smart Energy Choices and clean energy concepts into the artwork. The review panel will assess both the quality of the proposed project and the artist's previous work.
- **Community Engagement.** How will you engage the local community in the project? How does your project raise awareness of Smart Energy Choices and clean energy concepts? Projects that reflect the varied backgrounds and experiences of our region, welcome in people from all walks of life, and have strong plans for engaging residents in [state-designated disadvantaged communities](#) or low-and moderate-income residents in the region are especially encouraged.
- **Managerial & Fiscal Competence.** How have you demonstrated an ability to manage time and resources so that the project will be successful? You will be asked about previous experiences with handling outside funding and successfully completing a similar project or creating a new body of work.

Applicant Process and Timeline

The application deadline is 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Sunday, May 17, 2026.

Applications must be submitted via email to Robin Schwartz, Program & Grant Director, at programs@artspartner.org. A completed application consists of the following:

- Application (found at grant page link above)
- Excel budget (found at the grant page link above)
- Artist Work Samples: see application for details.

Grant Assistance

For questions, please contact Robin Schwartz, CAP's Program & Grant Director at programs@artspartner.org (ideally, at least a week before the deadline).

Funding Process

An independent grant panel comprised of community members and Cornell Cooperative Extension staff will evaluate and score applications based on the criteria above. Community Arts Partnership staff do not make any evaluative decisions or make

recommendations to the grant panel. Assistance or recommendations made to an applicant by the CAP staff does not guarantee funding and may not reflect panelist decisions.

Funding Notification & Distribution of Funds

All applicants will receive funding notification via email by the beginning of June 2026. Funded applicants must return a signed acceptance agreement before funds can be distributed. Awardees must attend a 1-hour orientation meeting at a date and location to be determined to go over the goals and guidelines.

About Smart Energy Choices

[Smart Energy Choices](#) is a collaboration of Cornell Cooperative Extension associations serving eight counties in the Southern Tier region: Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga and Tompkins. It is funded in part by [NYSERDA's Regional Clean Energy Hub Program](#).

About The Community Arts Partnership

The Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County provides grants, services, and programs to artists and audiences. CAP connects artists and audiences through the Greater Ithaca Art Trail, Ithaca Artist Market, Spring Writes Literary Festival, and the CAP ArtSpace Gallery. CAP provides grants, a professional development workshop series, and other resources for artists. For more information on the Community Arts Partnership and its programs and services, visit www.artspartner.org.

Application Instructions

Send the following as attachments

to Robin Schwartz at programs@artspartner.org

- **Application** (Find link to CAP Grant Page at top of this document) Answer questions 1-17 using up to 5 pages. **Send as word .doc**
- **Excel Budget form** ((Find on CAP's website on the Grants page. Link at top of this document)) **Send as .excel**
- **Work samples** **pdfs, links, or images.**

Received Receipt

CAP staff will send a “received” response to your e-mail. If you do not get that response, please e-mail again to ensure your materials were received.