

Creative Control Grants

With support from the City of Lawrence, Lawrence Music Alliance is excited to offer our inaugural Creative Control Grants for 2026

About Creative Control Grants

Lawrence Music Alliance is proud to offer our first direct funding support to music community members through Creative Control Grants in three different categories: **Tour Support**, **Equipment Grants**, and **Recording Grants**. Funding aims to support important needs identified through the 2024 Lawrence Music Census and developed through community input and feedback from the industry experts. Creative Control grants are funded through economic development partner funding by the City of Lawrence, and residents of Douglas County, KS over the age of 18 are eligible to apply.

Applicant should be prepared to clearly outline a plan for the use of grant funds, detail how proposals relate to overall goals around creative or economic success and provide an overview of the artist or creative business career and output to date.

Applicants may submit in all three categories. However, funding allocations will prioritize the broadest funding support across a range of applicants, project approaches, disciplines, genres and creative practices. Applicants should only apply for one grant category per creative project e.g. multiple band members should not apply for funding towards the same project in the any single category. Applications are accepted via Google Forms and **the deadline to apply is Monday December 7th at 11:59PM CT**.

Questions can be directed to lawrencemusicalliance@gmail.com and responses will be returned within 1 business day, up until Friday December 4th at 12 noon CT.

All information, guidelines and application form link is available at https://www.lawrencemusicalliance.com/creativecontrolgrants

GRANT CATEGORIES

Tour Support	To support stated needs of a wide range of artists who play outside of Lawrence, increasing their income, expanding audience reach, and acting as artist ambassadors for Lawrence, KS. Up to 15 grants of $300 will be awarded to artists planning to tour outside of the Lawrence and Kansas City region between January 1st and June 30th, 2027. Awardees will be required to attend a Touring Cohort training session in January 2027.
Equipment Grants	To enhance the quality of the creative output of Lawrence artists, increase professional capacity, and allow artists to purchase the equipment they need to advance their artistic practice. Up to 10 grants of $800 will be awarded to artists or other music entities (venues, educators, arts organizations) to purchase or repair equipment that supports their creative practice. Equipment must be purchased or repaired with a local music retail (see below) and applicants must submit a completed LMA Music Equipment Quote form as part of their application.
Recording Grants	To increase the creative output of the Lawrence music scene, supporting increased activity and attention from fans, industry, media and concertgoers. Up to 10 grants of $800 will be awarded to artists to support the costs associated in recording, producing or releasing new original recordings in 2027. Grant awardees will be required to attend a Recording Grant Cohort training session in January 2027.

TIMELINE

- Applications Open: Friday November 20th, 2026
- Deadline for questions via email: Friday Dec 4th, 2026 at 12 noon CT
- Application Deadline: Monday December 7th, 2026 at 11:59PM CT
- Review Period: Tuesday Dec 8th - Tuesday December 29th, 2026
- Applicant Notification: Wednesday December 30th, 2026
- Public Award Announcement: Tuesday January 5th, 2027

Other important grant dates:

- Touring Grant Cohort Training: Sunday January 10th, 12PM - 3PM
  required for successful Touring Grant recipients
- Recording Grant Cohort Training: Sunday January 17th, 1PM - 4PM
  required for successful Recording Grant recipients
- Equipment Grants: Equipment or repairs must be processed and paid by January 31st, 2027

CREATIVE CONTROL GRANT CATEGORY #1: TOUR SUPPORT

Up to 15 grants of $300 will be awarded to artists planning to tour outside of the Lawrence and Kansas City region between January 1st and June 30th, 2027. Awardees will be required to attend a Touring Cohort training session in January 2027.

Why Touring?

According to the Lawrence Music Census (2024), Lawrence creatives play 9,663 concerts outside of Lawrence each year. The average gig pay is $101. 64% of respondents to the 2024 Lawrence Music Census believe that grants to develop regional creative networks would be helpful, and 60% favored music export funding or tour support.

Purpose

Grants in this category are intended to support tour dates by Lawrence artists outside of Lawrence, Douglas County and greater KC Metro Region (see eligibility details below). Evidence of confirmed bookings are required, and expenses can include gas, hotels, vehicle rental, equipment rental, personnel, marketing or advertising.

Goal

To support stated needs of a wide range of artists who play outside of Lawrence, increasing their income, expanding audience reach, and acting as artist ambassadors for Lawrence, KS.

Eligibility

To be eligible, an applicant must:

- Be a resident of Douglas County, Kansas over the age of 18.
- Provide evidence of at least 3 confirmed tour dates in counties outside of Douglas, Shawnee, Johnson, Wyandotte (KS) and Jackson, Clay, Platte (MO) between January 1st, 2027 and July 1st, 2027. Accepted forms of evidence includes venue booking email confirmations, ticket links, tour posters, and online event promotions

Successful applicants must complete the following:

- Attend a required Touring Cohort training session for grantees:
  Location: Lawrence Public Library Meeting Room C
  Date: Sunday, January 10, 2027
  Time: 12:00pm - 3:00pm
- Submit a final report within 30 days of final tour date during the grant period.
- Recognize Lawrence Music Alliance and the City of Lawrence in promotional materials.

Application

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CREATIVE CONTROL GRANT CATEGORY #2: EQUIPMENT GRANT

Up to 10 grants of $800 will be awarded to artists or other music entities (venues, educators, arts organizations) to purchase or repair equipment that supports their creative practice.

Equipment must be purchased with a local music retail (see below) and applicants must submit a completed LMA Music Equipment Quote form as part of their application.

Why Equipment?

In our 2024 Music Census, 67% of creatives in Lawrence cited increasing cost of living as the top concern to their creative career, while 91% of respondents cited low or uncertain pay as their biggest challenge. Economic circumstances have not improved for many since then, and high cost of living can make it hard to afford new creative or musical equipment. Musicians, recording engineers and live venues all need equipment to write, perform, and release new music. Our equipment grants aim to address this, while also supporting music stores in the local economy.

Purpose

Funds awarded through our Equipment Grants are designed to support artists investing in instruments, recording equipment, or other technology that enhances their ability to create music or perform live. Equipment grants are also open to venues, photographers, videographers and other media with demonstrable creative output that supports the local music industry.

Lawrence creatives spend 47% of their annual creative expenses with local businesses. Funds in this category are administered in partnership with our local music retailers, keeping their economic impact on our doorstep and supporting employers in our music ecosystem.

Goal

To enhance the quality of the creative output of Lawrence artists, increase professional capacity, and allow artists to purchase the equipment they need to advance their artistic practice.

Eligibility

To be eligible, an applicant must:

- Be a resident of Douglas County, Kansas over the age of 18.
- Provide detail on the proposed equipment to be purchased:
    - Describe the need for the equipment, how it will be used in the artist's creative practice and impact on the artists' quality of work, e.g. increasing capacity or efficiency in creative output.
- Submit an LMA Music Equipment Quote form signed by authorized staff member from an approved local vendor (see below).

Successful applicants must complete the following:

- Purchase within 30 days of receipt of funds.
- Recognize Lawrence Music Alliance and the City of Lawrence grant funds as appropriate.

Application

Applications are accepted via Google Forms and **the deadline to apply is Monday December 7th at 11:59PM CT.**

Application link and all relevant materials are available at
https://www.lawrencemusicalliance.com/creativecontrolgrants

Local Music Retail partners

Grant funds must be expended with one of our local retail partners. Each retailer is prepared and available to discuss music equipment purchase needs and support documentation via the LMA Music Equipment Quote form, which must accompany each grant application.

Mass Street Music
14th & Mass. St.
(785) 843-3535, info@massstreetmusic.com
www.massstreetmusic.com

Richards Music Co.
15 E. 8th St.,
(785) 842-0021, richardsmusic@sunflower.com
www.richardsmusicstore.com

Supersonic Music
1029 Massachusetts St.,
(785) 749-3700, www.supersonicmusic.com

Guitarma
726 Massachusetts Street,
(785) 856-0552, Howdy@GuitarmaLFK.com
www.guitarmalfk.com

Beautiful Music Violin Shop
925 Iowa St, Suite i,
(785) 856-8755, beautifulmusicvnshop@gmail.com
www.beautifulmusicviolinshop.com

CREATIVE CONTROL GRANT CATEGORY #3: RECORDING GRANT

Up to 10 grants of $800 will be awarded to artists to support the costs associated in recording, producing or releasing new original recordings in 2027. Grant awardees will be required to attend a Recording Grant Cohort training session in January 2027.

Why Recording?

The generation of new, original recordings is important in any healthy music scene. New music recordings and releases are an important driver of live events, media and marketing, and increased income. 42% of eligible songwriters do not claim royalties on their work, and 76% of creatives report “none” or “very little” income generated by recordings.

Documentation must reference specific songs (chord sheets or lyrics), album tracklists and credits, release plans, studio booking confirmations, demos, PRO work registration, album or CD design, as relevant.

Purpose

This grant is designed to assist in the generation of new, original music recordings to be released commercially. Preference is given to projects created in local recording studios, but home studio recordings are allowed.

Goal

To increase the creative output of the Lawrence music scene, supporting increased activity and attention from fans, industry, media and concertgoers.

Eligibility

To be eligible, an applicant must:

- Be a resident of Douglas County, KS over the age of 18.
- Provide a documented plan for the recording and release of studio work(s):
    - Supporting documentation must reference specific works to be released and can include chord sheets or lyrics, demo or rough mix recordings, album track lists and credits, release plans, digital distribution documentation, studio booking confirmations, PRO work registration, album or CD design, as relevant.
- **Recordings wholly or partly generated by AI tools are not allowed.** Application must detail the human personnel involved in the creation of the music, including performers, engineers, producers, and support team in marketing and promotion.

Successful applicants must complete the following:

- Attend a required Recording Grant Cohort training session for grantees:
  Location: Lawrence Public Library Meeting Room B
  Date: Sunday, January 17, 2027
  Time: 1:00pm - 4:00pm
- Recognize Lawrence Music Alliance and the City of Lawrence in promotional materials, packaging or marketing/social media materials, as appropriate.

APPLICATION

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Grant Review Process

Grants will be evaluated by a review panel of community members familiar with music practices, and expertise in the relevant grant categories, e.g. tour or equipment.

Scoring Criteria

Artistry

Successful applicants will demonstrate consistent commitment to their art and creative practice as evidenced by education, training, performance history, professional releases, or other creative output. Regardless of career stage or commercial success, evidence of a sustained focus and commitment to a creative practice for a minimum of three years should be demonstrated to establish sufficient dedication to artistry.

Impact to creative practice

Successful applicants will clearly demonstrate an understanding of their current stage of creative practice and describe the impact of grant funding towards their strategic goals. Artists are free to define personal goals in terms of economic or commercial success, or artistic goals for projects or a body of work. Impact of grant funds should be articulated in terms of current or future challenges or barriers, and clearly outline a plan towards desired outcomes or results.

Ability to complete project

Successful grant applications will provide a clear outline of how goals will be achieved, strategies and action plans to implement projects, past examples of similar projects or initiatives (where appropriate), and discussion of challenges or obstacles and how they will be addressed. Selected applicants will demonstrate an understanding of resources, partners or collaborators to support the successful implementation of the project or solution supported by grant funds.

Questions

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Lawrence Music Alliance is a division of Creative Impact Alliance, Inc., a registered 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization funded in part by an economic development funding partnership with the City of Lawrence, Kansas.