

CAUSEFLOW GRANTS

Monthly Funder Pipeline Report

Prepared for Plains Arts Council · May 2026

ORGANIZATION	Plains Arts Council
ANNUAL BUDGET	\$850,000
GEOGRAPHY	Kansas · Nebraska · Oklahoma (80-county service area)
PROGRAMS	Artist residencies · Youth arts education · Touring performance series
PRIMARY MISSION	Strengthening rural arts communities across the Central Plains
REPORT PERIOD	May 1 – May 31, 2026

This report identifies foundations most likely to fund Plains Arts Council based on demonstrated giving patterns, geographic focus, and program alignment. Matches are drawn from analysis of IRS Form 990-PF filings, foundation websites, and current RFP databases.

SAMPLE REPORT · Illustrative example based on representative funder patterns. All foundations described in this document are fictional composites created for demonstration purposes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This month at a glance

Eight foundations were identified this month with fit scores above 70/100 for Plains Arts Council, drawn from a screened pool of 217 funders matching your geographic and subject-area criteria. Three are rated 85+ and warrant priority pursuit. Two have application deadlines within the next 60 days.

The pipeline this month skews toward family foundations with rural Midwest focus — a function of recent 990-PF filings showing renewed funding interest in arts access programs outside metropolitan areas. We've also flagged one federal opportunity (NEA Challenge America) that closes June 27.

8 Qualified matches	3 Priority (85+ fit)	2 Deadlines <60 days	\$1.2M Total opportunity (est.)
-------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------	---

METHODOLOGY

Our pipeline engine screens roughly 130,000 active US private foundations from IRS 990-PF data, plus federal opportunities from Grants.gov and state-level grant feeds. Funders are scored on five dimensions:

- **Geographic alignment.** Does the funder demonstrably give in your service area?
- **Subject alignment.** Does their stated and actual giving overlap with your programs?
- **Size alignment.** Do their typical grants match your reasonable ask range?
- **Eligibility fit.** Do you meet their stated criteria (501c3 status, location, etc.)?
- **Application openness.** Are they currently accepting applications, or invitation-only?

PRIORITY MATCHES

Pursue this quarter

Three foundations score above 85/100 fit for Plains Arts Council. All three demonstrate consistent funding of rural arts organizations in the Central Plains, with grant sizes that match your reasonable ask range.

The Greenfield Family Foundation

FIT SCORE

92

Kansas City, MO · KS, NE, IA, MO

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$15,000 – \$50,000	\$2.4M	LOI then full proposal	Rolling (review quarterly)

WHY IT'S A FIT

Greenfield's 990-PF filings from 2022-2024 show consistent funding of rural arts education in your exact four-state region. Five of their last 30 grants went to organizations under \$2M in budget, three specifically to arts councils serving multi-county areas. Their stated priority of 'access to arts and culture in underserved communities' maps directly to Plains Arts Council's tri-state mission. The two-stage LOI process means you can test interest with low effort.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Cottonwood Arts Alliance (KS) — \$22,500 for youth music programming
- Three Rivers Cultural Trust (NE) — \$35,000 for touring artist series
- Heartland Folk Arts Initiative (IA) — \$40,000 general operating support

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Submit a 2-page LOI by July 15 (next quarterly review). Lead with the touring performance series — closest match to their recent funding pattern.

The Calder-Whitmore Foundation

Omaha, NE · NE, KS, SD, IA

FIT SCORE

88

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$10,000 – \$30,000	\$1.8M	Online portal, full application	August 15, 2026

WHY IT'S A FIT

Calder-Whitmore is a smaller family foundation but exceptionally well-aligned: their 2024 grant docket shows 11 of 14 grants went to arts organizations in counties with populations under 50,000. Their funding cycle is heavily weighted toward youth arts education, which is Plains Arts Council's strongest program. Average grant size has trended upward over the past three years (from \$12K to \$24K avg), suggesting an opening for larger asks.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Sandhills Youth Arts (NE) — \$28,000 for after-school arts programming
- Rural Stage Project (KS) — \$18,500 for teaching artist stipends
- Frontier Community Music (SD) — \$25,000 multi-year commitment

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Open application August 15. Suggested ask: \$25,000 for youth arts education program. Highlight your county reach and teaching artist model — both align with their funded patterns.

Midwestern Cultural Endowment

FIT SCORE

86

Topeka, KS · KS, OK (with preference for KS)

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$5,000 – \$20,000	\$890K	Single-stage application, 5 pages	June 27, 2026

WHY IT'S A FIT

MCE is small but their concentration of giving inside Kansas (and secondarily Oklahoma) puts Plains Arts Council squarely in their footprint. They have funded the same type of multi-county arts service organization three times in the past four years. Notable: their board includes two former rural arts council directors, suggesting deep mission alignment beyond what's stated publicly.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Flint Hills Arts Network (KS) — \$15,000 general operating
- Western Plains Arts Council (KS) — \$18,000 for artist residencies
- Red Earth Cultural Coalition (OK) — \$12,000 program support

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Tight deadline (June 27). Recommend pursuing for artist residency program — strongest match. Suggested ask: \$18,000.

STRONG MATCHES

Pursue this year

Five additional funders score 70-84/100. All are credible fits but with either longer deadlines, smaller typical grant sizes, or specific program restrictions worth weighing.

The Helena B. Rourke Foundation

Wichita, KS · KS only

FIT SCORE

82

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$3,000 – \$12,000	\$420K	Letter of inquiry, then invited proposal	October 31, 2026

WHY IT'S A FIT

Rourke is small but funds almost exclusively in rural Kansas, where Plains Arts Council does the majority of its work. Their grants skew toward general operating support — rare and valuable. The smaller grant size is the limiting factor on fit score, not alignment.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Smoky Valley Arts (KS) — \$10,000 general operating
- Prairie Heritage Foundation (KS) — \$8,500 for performance series
- Sunflower Arts Council (KS) — \$12,000 general operating

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Submit LOI in September for October cycle. Ask: \$10,000 general operating support. Strong odds, modest dollars.

Open Country Fund

Lincoln, NE · NE, IA, SD, ND

FIT SCORE

78

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$8,000 – \$25,000	\$1.1M	Full proposal, 8 pages	September 15, 2026

WHY IT'S A FIT

Open Country funds rural-serving nonprofits across the Northern Plains. Plains Arts Council's Nebraska service area is in their footprint, but the Kansas and Oklahoma work falls outside. Grant size and structure are strong fits; the geographic limitation caps the relevance.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Nebraska Folk Arts Alliance — \$22,000 for documentation project
- Great Plains Storytelling Initiative — \$15,000 program support
- Sandhills Community Theatre — \$18,500 for capacity building

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Frame the ask around Nebraska-specific programming. Don't represent the full tri-state mission — focus the proposal on what falls inside their geo. Suggested ask: \$18,000.

The Wallace Rural Arts Initiative

St. Louis, MO · 13-state Midwest region

FIT SCORE

76

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$25,000 – \$75,000	\$3.2M	Invitation-only after LOI screen	By invitation only — cultivation required

WHY IT'S A FIT

Wallace has the largest grant size in this batch and clearly funds organizations like Plains Arts Council — three of their last 20 grants went to comparable multi-state rural arts councils. The challenge is access: they screen heavily before invitation, and they prioritize organizations with existing program officer relationships. High-value but high-effort opening.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Mountain Plains Arts Network — \$65,000 multi-year
- Heartland Cultural Coalition — \$50,000 program support
- Tri-State Arts Service Organization — \$45,000 capacity building

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Long play. Submit LOI by August, but parallel-track relationship building. Ask board if anyone has connection to their program staff. Don't expect funding in year one — this is a 12-18 month cultivation.

The Bennett Brothers Foundation

FIT SCORE

73

Tulsa, OK · OK, KS, AR (preference for OK)

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$5,000 – \$15,000	\$680K	Online portal, 4-page application	July 31, 2026

WHY IT'S A FIT

Bennett Brothers covers Plains Arts Council's Oklahoma service area, which is your hardest-to-fund geography. Their stated arts focus is moderate (about 30% of giving), but they have funded comparable rural arts councils twice in three years. Fit score is dragged down by their preference for Oklahoma-headquartered orgs, which you are not.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Red Dirt Arts Coalition (OK) — \$12,000 program support
- Cherokee Hills Cultural Trust (OK) — \$14,500 youth programming
- Southwest Kansas Arts Council — \$8,000 general operating

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Apply by July 31. Frame ask specifically around Oklahoma programming — emphasize service to Oklahoma counties. Suggested ask: \$10,000.

NEA Challenge America

FIT SCORE

71

Federal (Washington, DC) · National

TYPICAL GRANT	ANNUAL GIVING	APPLICATION	NEXT DEADLINE
\$10,000 (fixed grants)	\$2.5M across program	grants.gov submission	June 27, 2026

WHY IT'S A FIT

The only federal opportunity in this batch. Challenge America specifically supports organizations serving underserved communities, including rural areas. Fixed \$10,000 grants make it predictable but capped. Plains Arts Council's geographic reach and youth programming align well with their stated priorities. Strong indirect benefit: NEA funding signals legitimacy to other funders.

RECENT COMPARABLE GRANTS

- Numerous rural arts councils funded annually — broad portfolio
- Specific recent grantees not disclosed in this format
- Median grantee budget: \$400K – \$1.5M (matches your range)

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP

Tight deadline (June 27). \$10,000 fixed grant for a defined project — recommend the touring artist series, which has clearest 'underserved community' framing. Strong odds given fit; manageable application effort.

WATCH LIST

Monitoring for future cycles

These funders scored 60-69 — not strong enough to recommend pursuit now, but worth watching. Most are on watch because their funding patterns are evolving, board composition has recently shifted, or they have not yet opened a new application cycle.

Foundation	Geo	Fit	Why on watch
The Sundberg Family Trust	MN, IA, NE	68	New trustee with arts background; expecting program expansion in 2026-27.
Prairie Heritage Foundation	KS, OK	66	Currently invitation-only; tracking for any shift to open application.
The Marston Cultural Trust	Multi-state Midwest	64	Strong subject fit but no rural grants in 36 months. Worth checking quarterly.
Westbridge Arts Endowment	KS, MO	62	Small but growing endowment; recent 990 shows 40% giving increase.
The Ada B. Lockwood Foundation	NE only	61	Limited geographic overlap; flagging in case NE work expands.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggested action plan for May–August

Date	Action	Notes
June 27	Submit NEA Challenge America application	Tight federal deadline. Touring artist series framing. Estimated 6-8 hours from draft to submission. We'll handle the writing — you provide program details and budget.
June 27	Submit Midwestern Cultural Endowment application	Single-stage, 5-page application. Strong fit (86) and tight deadline justify prioritizing. Ask: \$18,000 for artist residency program.
July 15	Submit Greenfield Family Foundation LOI	Top-rated match (92). Two-page LOI for quarterly review. Lead with touring performance series.

July 31	Submit Bennett Brothers application	Oklahoma-focused framing. \$10,000 ask. Modest effort, reasonable odds.
August 15	Submit Calder-Whitmore application	Second-priority match (88). Full application via portal. Ask: \$25,000 for youth arts education.
Aug-Sep	Cultivation: Wallace Rural Arts Initiative	Begin relationship-building. Board outreach for connections. LOI in September.
September	Submit Open Country Fund proposal	Nebraska-specific framing. Ask: \$18,000.
September	Submit Rourke Foundation LOI	Smaller dollars but strong fit. Kansas-only framing.

PROJECTED OUTCOMES

If all eight applications in this pipeline are pursued with strong execution, we estimate a realistic funded outcome of \$45,000–\$95,000 over the next 12 months. This range reflects typical conversion rates (25-40% on well-matched applications) applied to the suggested ask sizes. Stronger relationships built through the Wallace cultivation track may add an additional \$40,000-\$65,000 in year two.

This is a forward-looking estimate, not a guarantee. Funding decisions belong to each foundation. What we guarantee is sharp, well-targeted, well-researched submissions delivered on schedule.

CAUSEFLOW GRANTS

Questions about this report?

Every Pro-tier subscriber receives a monthly Pipeline Report like this one, refined and re-ranked each cycle based on new 990-PF filings, RFP openings, and outcomes from your active applications.

Once you decide which funders to pursue, Causeflow Grants writes the applications, reports, and supporting materials. You review, refine, and approve. We handle the production.

CONTACT

Lucas Stockwell, Founder

lucas@causeflowgrants.com

causeflowgrants.com

Sample report prepared May 2026. All foundations and grants described are fictional composites for illustrative purposes. Your actual pipeline will be built from real IRS 990-PF data, current foundation websites, and federal/state grant databases, scored against your organization's specific profile.