**Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council**
105 22nd Avenue NE, Suite A., Waseca, MN 56093
(800) 298-1254, plrac@hickorytech.net, www.plrac.org

**FY 2024 Youth Scholarship Program**

All Grades: Application Deadline: November 1, 2023
Review date: November 16, 2023

## Youth Scholarship Guidelines for Grades 7-12 and Grades 3-6

### A. Youth Scholarship Policy Information

Students must live in the 9-county region that Prairie Lakes serves including: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan Counties for a minimum of six months prior to application, and do not intend to relocate outside the 9-county region during the duration of the scholarship project. Students must be a U.S. citizen or an individual who has attained permanent resident status in the United States.

The **Youth Scholarship of $300 for grades 7-12 and $200 for grades 3-6**, will provide select students the opportunity to study their chosen art with a practicing professional artist by taking lessons over a period of months. Projects can take place January 1 through September 1, 2024. These activities must be within the state of Minnesota only. **Artistic areas include dance, literature, media arts, music, theater, visual art, folk and traditional art.**

These scholarships are competitive. They are not based on financial need but rather for students that are active and excelling in their art form; and are being rewarded for their goals, ambitions, and achievement. The on-going learning component of the lessons, classes, etc. is an important factor. Lessons can be conducted in-person or online via Skype, Zoom, or other live platforms.

**Prairie Lakes values an equitable, diverse, and inclusive community and this is reflected in our policies and program for youth.** We encourage Black, Indigenous and Students of Color to apply, also those who have a disability. We are committed to countering systemic inequities that exclude individuals and communities from access to the arts based on race, gender, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, class, age, and geography. If you need assistance in the application process, please contact the PLRAC office and we would be happy to assist you.

Students in grades 7-12 must be participating with an instructor, an organization or arts discipline for at least two years in order to be eligible. Students in grades 3-6 must be participating for at least one year to be eligible. The scholarship can be used to take lessons or pay fees to a private instructor or a non-profit arts organization serving youth. Examples include: Area Art Centers, Dance Conservatory of Southern MN, Mankato Area Youth Symphony Orchestra, Mankato Ballet Company, Mankato Children's Chorus, Mankato Suzuki School of Music, New Ulm Suzuki School of Music, other youth dance or music organizations, or art centers and groups which offer art classes to youth, etc. Students may **not** use this scholarship to participate in a school or organization band or choir trip, or other arts or music trips.

### B. Grant Deadline, Questions and Review Criteria

The application for all grades is due November 1, 2022. There is only one deadline per year. Students should remember to answer their application questions with several sentences in a paragraph answer. In general, students scored higher in the review process if they provided more detailed answers to the questions and had more years of experience in their art form. The complete list of the criteria for both grade levels is available to view or download within the online application.

The Prairie Lakes Board considers three criteria for grades 7-12. The maximum points for category A. Years of Experience are 4 points, B. Student's Answers to the Questions is 8 points and C. Instructor Recommendation is

4 points; for total points of 16 maximum for grades 7-12.

The Prairie Lakes Board considers two criteria for grades 3-6. The maximum points for category A. Student's Answers to the Questions is 8 points and B. Instructor Recommendation is 4 points; for total points of 12 maximum for grades 3-6.

**C. How to Apply:  Online Grant Process.**

1. Go to our website [www.plrac.org](www.plrac.org) and click on the **Applicant Login** button on the home page and the Youth Scholarship Grants Program page. Also, on this page you will see a link to a document, which is a Tutorial for students explaining how to set up an account, apply for a grant, etc.

2. If you have applied for a scholarship online in the past, log in with the same email address and password. If you forgot your password, you can reset it from the login page. If you would like Prairie Lakes staff to copy your scholarship application from last year into a new application for the current year, please contact our office at [plrac@hickorytech.net](plrac@hickorytech.net) or (800) 298-1254.

3. New applicants need to register online.  If the student is a first-time applicant, an online account will need to be created using an email address and a password.
   a. Follow all directions in the registration process for "individual artist". (Example: **enter N/A** in the EIN/Tax Identification Number field.)
   b. Students will need to complete all *required fields, including a Salutation (Mr., Miss, or Ms.). In the Business Title field **enter "Student"**.
   c. After you choose "yes" as the Executive Officer you can click the "Next" button to skip the next screen requesting additional Executive Officer information. (Extra Executive Officer information is collected only from organizations that apply, not individuals.)
   d. When the registration process is completed, you will be directed to your own dashboard and the "Apply" page.
   e. Important: The email address you use to register with will be your user login to get back into the system. You will need this login and password you create for any future applications or follow-up materials. All automated communication for your scholarship will also come to this email address, so be sure to add [administrator@grantinterface.com](administrator@grantinterface.com) to your safe sender's email list. Once the registration process is completed and an account has been established, the application process can begin.

4. You will see the Applicant Dashboard with a horizontal toolbar above the "Applicant Dashboard" title. The horizontal toolbar includes brown words that will highlight in tan when you scroll across them.
   Tip: Clicking on the home icon anytime on the toolbar will bring you back to the Applicant Dashboard.
   a. Click on **Apply**, on the horizontal toolbar.
   b. Several different Grant Programs will be listed, and you will select FY 2024 ACH Youth Scholarship, and click on **Apply** under that section.

5. Start completing your application online by clicking into the appropriate Grant category.
   a. We recommend that you write your answers in a Word document first; and then copy and paste them into the appropriate fields in the application. A Word document of application questions can be downloaded from within the online application or from our website [www.plrac.org](www.plrac.org), on the Youth Scholarship Grant Program page.
   b. Keep in mind that formatting such as bold, italics, bulleting, etc. do not transfer to the online application form. You cannot add any formatting to your online answers. When working in Word, periodically do a character count to ensure your answer does not exceed the character limit for each question.

c. Review the Grant Guidelines and Application Questions that are on the Youth Scholarship Grant Program page of the Prairie Lakes website www.plrac.org or within the online application for your Youth Scholarship.

d. The online application form allows you to save your work and come back to it later. The "Save" button is located at the bottom of the page. It is recommended that you save your work often, even while continuing to work on it, so as not to lose any work. Always save before exiting the online grant system, as any work you have done or any files you have uploaded may not have automatically saved. You are required to use the Save button at the bottom of the application to finalize the uploading of a document into the application.

e. We recommend that you create a separate file folder in your computer, labeled for each application. In this folder store your word draft, downloads of the questions from the grant application process, support documents, etc.

6. Submit the application online and include: Supporting materials which are essential to the project (i.e., online Instructor Recommendation Form submitted by your instructor*.).
   a. Answer all required questions on the grant application. There are different questions that students in grades 7-12 answer and students in grades 3-6 answer. Each section is clearly identified. You will be able to see all the questions and go in and out of the application as you collect answers and complete. If you are missing answers to required fields, you will not be able to submit.

   b. When you log back in to continue working, your draft application will be located at the bottom of your dashboard, under your contact information. Click on the blue "Edit Application" link.

   c. There will be a field within the application where you will send your instructor an email requesting that they complete the online Recommendation Form. You will be able to see the status of their online Recommendation Form from your dashboard. When the Form has been submitted you will see "1/1" like the example below. If it has not been submitted, you will see "0/1". Contact the PLRAC office if you need further assistance or if your instructor does not use email.



   d. When you have your application questions complete and your Recommendation Form has been submitted by your instructor, scroll to the bottom of the form and click on the blue "Submit Application" button. You will receive an automated submission verification email from the online system to the address that your account was created with. Once you have submitted your application you will no longer be able to edit your answers. You will, however, still be able to view your application online.

   e. If you would like to save a PDF version of your application on your own computer, scroll to the top of your application form and click on the "Application Packet" button located on the right side of the window, under your contact information. This can be done anytime throughout the application process.

7. Applicants are encouraged to call the Prairie Lakes office at 1-800-298-1254 or email plrac@hickorytech.net with questions. Do not hesitate to contact us, we would be happy to assist you.
   a. **Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the deadline date, November 1st.**

   b. Applications received after the deadlines are ineligible. There are no exceptions to this policy.

c. The application records the date of submission so make sure that you meet the deadline date for submission online.

d. Contact our office if you would like staff to review your application in its draft form within the online grant system. We are able to view your application as you are completing it.

e. A Final Report is required at the completion of the scholarship. The Final Report for all grades is due September 15, 2024.

8. <u>An online Instructor Recommendation Form is required for the applicant to be eligible.</u>
It is required that an instructor submits an online Recommendation Form for your application. You will enter your instructor's email address in the specific field to request that they complete the online Recommendation Form on your behalf. <u>There are different online Recommendation Forms for students in grades 7-12 and students in grades 3-6.</u> Each is clearly identified in the application. Click on the "Compose Email" button and write your instructor a note telling them that they will receive an additional email from Prairie Lakes' online system that will include a link to your online Recommendation Form. Click "Send" when you have completed your note.

You will be able to see the status of their online Recommendation Form from your dashboard. However, you will <u>not</u> be able to view your instructor's responses. <u>Contact the PLRAC office if you need further assistance or if your instructor does not use email</u>.

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9. <u>Accessibility of Programs and Materials.</u>

<u>If any of the information in the guidelines is unclear, contact the Prairie Lakes office at (800) 298-1254, (507) 833-8721 or plrac@hickorytech.net.</u>

Upon request, Prairie Lakes grant application materials will be made available in an alternate format such as **large print**, computer flash drive, or on audiotape. Please call the Prairie Lakes office in Waseca at 1-800-298-1254. For TTY, contact the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529.