

Fall 2026 Spotlight Facility Usage Program Guidelines

Cultural Resources Department



PURPOSE

The Spotlight Facility Usage Program will provide a subsidy for non-profit organizations to purchase rental space at a free or discounted rate from the Otis S. Johnson Cultural Arts Center. Subsidy amounts are based on an organization's operating budget. Organizations will receive rental space along with audio/visual, technical, and administrative support staff. The Cultural Affairs Commission Spotlight Subcommittee will evaluate applications to determine eligibility requirements and give priority to programming that is most beneficial to the community.

PRIORITIES

Projects must include measurable performance outcomes and must align with the City's efforts to:

- Expand art and culture to new audiences and participants.
- Engage, develop, and inspire underserved communities and populations.
- Enrich the quality of life in Savannah.

Projects can encompass a variety of artistic disciplines and a range of program formats, including theatre productions, musical ensembles, dance performances, literary programs, and culturally based projects. Priority is given to projects that:

- Actively engage the community.
- Have a realistic implementation plan.
- Provide multiple levels of community engagement (planning, performing opportunities, technical/arts administration training, audience/participant, etc.).
- Show the diversity of participating performers and artists.
- Provide unique and appropriate programs for a variety of diverse audiences.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants and applicant fiscal sponsors must meet the following requirements to be considered for receiving the rental subsidy:

- Be a legally formed non-profit (not-for-profit) entity registered in the state of Georgia, whose mission includes serving and/or improving the community.
- Be located within the corporate city limits of Savannah and/or provide the majority of the non-profit's services in Savannah.
- The primary organization's point of contact must reside within the greater Savannah area.
- Be able to meet all insurance coverage requirements.
- Be able to meet all security coverage requirements.
- Have successfully completed the requirements of current and past contracts with the City (if applicable).
- Non-Profit Fiscal Sponsors: Organizations or individuals without non-profit status may partner with a non-profit organization willing to serve as the non-profit fiscal sponsor. A non-profit fiscal sponsor must meet the above requirements and serve as the official applicant and financial

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(fiscal/fiduciary) entity for the project. If approved, the City’s contract will be with the non-profit fiscal sponsor, which will receive, administer, and be responsible for project implementation on behalf of the individuals/organizations carrying out the project. The subsidy amount will be based on a board-certified budget for the project.

FACILITY USE ALLOWANCE SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

- Rental of Ben Tucker or Studio Theatre at a free or reduced rental price with included administrative and technical services.
- Free or reduced rental prices are based on an organization’s total operating budget from the organization’s most recent fiscal year IRS 990 form, or in the case of a large parent or fiscal-sponsor organization, a board-certified project budget financial statement.

Organization Budget	Hourly rate
Under \$50,000	\$0/hour
\$50,001 - \$150,000	\$25/hour
\$150,001 - \$250,000	\$50/hour

- Package includes:
 - Up to 14 hours in the Ben Tucker Theater or Studio Theater including all load-in, rehearsals, technical rehearsals, performance(s), and load-out
 - 1 audio/visual technician
 - 1 front desk staff
 - 1 SCAC manager
 - 1 cleaning crew
 - Use of the concession area
- Organizations must provide required insurance, security, box office, front-of-house staff, and additional audio/visual technical staff as needed.
- Newly formed non-profit organizations must have obtained their IRS non-profit status prior to application submission.
- Projects are awarded on a competitive basis, and past support does not guarantee investment.
- The project must be free of admission charges.
- All marketing materials must include the Cultural Resources Department logo and must be submitted via email to the Cultural Resources Department for approval prior to distribution.
- Acknowledgement of the Spotlight program is required in media and press releases.
- Organizations are required to invite the Cultural Affairs Commission, the Mayor, and Aldermen to the program.
- Organizations must provide photographic documentation of the program within 5 business days of the program’s completion.
- Organizations are encouraged, but not required, to track program outcomes, which will measure the success and demographics of the programming through audience and participant surveys. Organizations will be expected to share this information with the Cultural Resources Department within 5 business days of the program’s completion.

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- Organizations must not engage in any activities during the Spotlight program’s contracted services that could be construed as endorsing or opposing any political candidate or party, or participating in any political campaign, including but not limited to, allowing elected officials to make campaign speeches or engage in campaign activities at the proposed services.

INVESTMENT AVAILABILITY AND RESTRICTIONS

- 2026 Spotlight Facility Use Program dates (Fall):
 - Thursday, October 1st – Saturday, October 3rd
 - Thursday, October 15th – Saturday, October 17th
 - Thursday, November 5th – Saturday, November 7th
- Organizations may receive the Spotlight Facility Use Program once per year.
- Priority is given to first-time applicants.
- Availability and frequency of allocated dates/times are subject to change.
- Performance dates are Fridays and Saturdays only, no performances on Thursdays.
- Thursdays are reserved for rehearsals only.
- All rehearsals must be scheduled for the same week as performances.
- Recommended performance times are Friday evening, Saturday matinee, and/or Saturday evening.
- Additional rental times in excess of the allotted Spotlight Facility Use Program will be paid by the organization at the standard non-profit rental rate at the time of service.
- Additional staff will be paid for by the organization.
- Arts & Cultural Enrichment (ACE) program recipients are not eligible for the Spotlight program.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

- Insurance and Certificate of Insurance Requirements
 - Commercial General Liability (including Special Events Coverage):

Limits (or higher)

General Aggregate	\$1,000,000
Products-Completed Operations Aggregate	\$1,000,000
Each Occurrence Limit	\$1,000,000
Personal Injury Limit	\$500,000
Damage to Premises Rented to You	\$500,000 – Any One Event
Medical Expenses	\$5,000 – Any One Event

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- Required policy and certificate of insurance (COI) wording must provide a Waiver of Subrogation in favor of the Otis S. Johnson Cultural Arts Center, Otis S. Johnson Cultural Arts Center Staff, and Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, its agents and/or employees.
- Workers' Compensation and Employers' Liability
 - Required for all employees, volunteers, and others under the applicant organization's direction and supervision.

Limits (or higher)

Part A: Workers' Compensation	Statutory
Part B: Bodily Injury by Accident	\$500,000 Each Accident
Bodily Injury by Disease	\$500,000 Policy Limit
Bodily Injury by Disease	\$500,000 Each Employee

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SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

- All rentals/events held at the Otis S. Johnson Cultural Arts Center are required to provide security.
- Security is not a requirement during rehearsals.
- Security is required during times when the event is open to the public.
- Minimum security requirements:
 - 1 security person per event.
 - Security must be from a licensed and insured company.
 - Security is required to be on-site at the Otis S. Johnson Cultural Arts Center a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the event's start time.
 - Security must remain until all members of the public have left the facility.

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APPLICATION PERIOD

- Applications open at 8 AM on Wednesday, January 14th, 2026, and will close on Monday, June 1st, 2026, at 5:00 PM or until all dates are awarded, whichever occurs first.
- Applications are available in the Neighborly system.
- Notice of award to organizations will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. The Spotlight program is awarded on a rolling basis.
- Spotlight Facility Use Program application information can be found on the City of Savannah website at: <https://www.savannahga.gov/1436/Investment-Programs>
- Spotlight applicants are encouraged to simultaneously apply for the Weave-A-Dream program.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

All applications are reviewed for eligibility, accuracy, and completeness prior to being submitted to the Cultural Affairs Commission Spotlight Facility Use Subcommittee. The Subcommittee is comprised of Cultural Affairs Commissioners who review proposals in accordance with established criteria and identify services for facility use allocations. If approved, the applicant will be notified and scheduled to meet with Cultural Resources staff to discuss the next steps.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

- Projects must be implemented during the time awarded after the application has been approved and the contract has been signed by all required parties.

Application Assistance

The Cultural Resources Department is available to answer questions and to provide periodic information sessions to review the Spotlight Facility Use Program and application process with interested applicants. Please contact the Cultural Resources Department at 912-651-6783 or SCACcontracts@savannahga.gov for more information.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- Complete all sections of the application thoughtfully, thoroughly, and accurately.
- Pay attention to word limits and ensure answers are clear and concise.
- Organizations are encouraged to provide support documents of past performances (photos, videos, scripts, artist lists, advertising, etc.).
- Be sure to scan and upload copies of the organization's legal documents as required.

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REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- Organization By-laws and Mission Statement
- Board of Directors List
- Letter/Certificate of Incorporation (State of Georgia)
- Proof of Tax-Exempt Status (IRS Letter of Determination)
- Most recent FY IRS 990 form or Board-Certified Program Budget
 - Non-profit Fiscal Sponsors must supply both an IRS 990 form and a Board-Certified Program-Budget for the sponsored program.
 - Newly Formed Non-profit Organizations without a current IRS 990 form must provide a Board-Certified Annual Budget for the current fiscal year.
- Misc. (photos, videos, scripts, artist lists, advertising, etc.)