

# MINNESOTA STATE ARTS BOARD

## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

The Arts Board has specific *conflict of interest* requirements set down in administrative rules, statute, and board policy; these requirements are posted and followed for each grant review. The three areas of concern are:

1. As noted in the agency's enabling legislation, Chapter 129D.04, "no member of an advisory committee shall serve on a committee to which the member has an application pending for a grant, loan, or other form of assistance from the board or its predecessor."
2. According to Arts Board Administrative rules, "A conflict of interest exists when a member of an advisory panel is affiliated with an applicant whose application is before the panel for review." Affiliation includes:
  - a. receipt of direct financial benefit from the applicant organization or proposal being reviewed;
  - b. serving as an employee or governing board member of an applicant organization being reviewed;
  - c. serving with or without payment as a consultant to an applicant being reviewed;  
or
  - d. familial relationship with an applicant or a staff or board member of an applicant organization.
3. Grant Application Reviewers should declare a personal conflict if they feel unduly biased, have a deep personal affiliation with the applicant, or have a significant adversarial relationship in which they feel their judgment may be impaired.

Once declared, Reviewers may not reconsider a conflict of interest. You can declare a conflict of interest in communications prior to the grant review with Arts Board staff or from home using WebGrants.

Reviewers should be aware that when they are invited to serve, the Arts Board will review all possible conflicts of interest for the two years prior to the scheduled grant review as well as during the fiscal year of their appointment. Declaring a conflict does not mean that a Reviewer cannot serve; it simply means that the Reviewer may not vote on any application(s) where a conflict of interest exists.

Conflict of interest violations include failing to declare associations with applicants, lobbying on behalf of any grant application in which a Reviewer has a biased interest, and failing to refrain from providing notes and voting on such applications. Reviewers acting in violation of statute and administrative rules will be asked to resign.

The program officer who oversees the grant review shall have authority to determine the existence and effect of a conflict of interest.