

Application ID

2025-3800

Application Type

General Support Program

ARIZONA MASTERWORKS CHORALE INC

Primary Contact

Bob Altizer

Organization Name

ARIZONA MASTERWORKS CHORALE INC

Applicant Information

Background/About

Complete this section in your Organization Profile. It will auto-populate to this application.

Since 1979, AMC has enriched our community through exceptional performances of classical and contemporary choral music. We continually strive to “Make Music Better.”

With the 2020-2021 season suspended because of COVID, AMC revamped artistic and business operations, resuming performances in November 2021 under Music Director Scott Youngs. We’ve since grown our artistry and repertoire, and delivered four seasons of innovative and diverse programming, bringing many new works to Phoenix under the banner of “The AMC Experience, the exquisite beauty of sound and poetry.” In collaborations with the Arts at Ascension (artistic), the Global Academy of Phoenix (educational), and Circle the City (community), and other performing organizations and individual artists, AMC continues to grow as an important contributor to arts in Phoenix.

In 2025, AMC reaffirmed its Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Representation policy, published in June 2021. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone with whom we interact, and will act to ensure diversity, equality, equity, and inclusion in all we do and to achieve broad representation from our community in the Chorale.

What is your organization's Mission Statement?

Complete this section in your Organization Profile. It will auto-populate to this application.

Our mission is to inspire and enrich our community through the power of choral music.

What is your organization's Vision Statement?

Complete this section in your Organization Profile. It will auto-populate to this application.

Our vision is to be known as a premier performing ensemble in Arizona.

Upload bios of 1) Artistic/Program Director or equivalent and 2) Executive Director/CEO or equivalent, and 3) Board Chair. Include position descriptions.

Combine into one document for upload.

[AMC_Bios_for_POAC.pdf](#)

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Total Files: 1

Use this space to clarify or give context to the attachment

Biographies of Bob Altizer, AMC Board President, and Scott Youngs, AMC Music Director

What is the estimated percentage of your organization's programs and services that take place within Phoenix city limits?

90%

What is the estimated percentage of your organization's programs and services that take place within Phoenix city limits?

Primary Programs/Events (past three years of programs, events, and services)

Upload a list of *all* programs/events/services produced by your organization during the past two fiscal years and the current fiscal year. Include dates and locations.

Applicants have the option of completing and filling out the provided [Programming Form](#)

[POAC_FY26_Application_Programming_Form.pdf](#)

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Use this space to clarify or give context to the attachment.

Describes events, including concerts, collaborations, and outreach visits over recent seasons.

Are you applying with a fiscal sponsor? Fiscal Sponsors must have an IRS 501(c)3 non-profit organization designation.

No

Artistic/Cultural Value

Highlight upcoming programming that is exciting to the organization. Explain why that programming is particularly unique, innovative, and/or exceptional for the city of Phoenix.

AMC focuses on performing music that is seldom performed heard in the Phoenix area, balanced with performances of well-known choral "Masterworks." Our plans for the upcoming 2025-26 season reflect that mission:

"The Fourth Annual Arts at Ascension Messiah Sing-Along" (November 2025) A free, family-friendly fun afternoon of great music where audience members are invited to sing along with the choruses of Handel's "Messiah," the ultimate Christmas oratorio. The event features soloists and choristers from AMC, the choirs of the Ascension Lutheran congregation and North Scottsdale United Methodist Church, and the renowned Women's Orchestra of Arizona.

"A Festival of Holiday Song" (December 2025) A celebration of the season featuring several seldom-heard works like Respighi's "Laud to the Nativity," Leo Sowerby's "Four Carols," and Kirke Mechem's "The Seven Joys of Christmas," plus traditional favorites, and an audience carol sing-along.

"The Road to the Isles" (Winter 2026) A concert including Phoenix-based Celtic harp and Irish dance performers, featuring haunting and inspiring music from Albiōn and Iernē (Great Britain and Ireland). Highlights will include selections from "The Celtic Choirbook" by Carsten Gurlitz.

"The Peacemakers" (Spring 2026) The Arizona premiere of a 21st Century oratorio by Sir Karl Jenkins. In the words of the composer: "The Peacemakers is dedicated to the memory of all those who lost their lives during armed conflict: in particular, innocent civilians. It was written with the hope of looking forward to a century of peace. But, sadly, nothing much has changed." The work features texts from Gandhi, Martin Luther King, the Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, Anne Frank, and Mother Teresa, as well as words from the Bible and the Qur'an. We will invite other area chorales to collaborate, and will include Phoenix-based Featured Artists as supplementary choristers, vocal soloists, and instrumentalists.

Describe the development process of your programming (events, workshops, performances, etc.). Who is involved in the programming development process?

AMC's Music Director, Scott Youngs, leads our program development, in consultation with AMC's Board of Directors. In his planning, Scott seeks out unique and challenging works that reflect AMC's goal of introducing our audience to "the sheer beauty of sound and poetry" in our performances. He selects many pieces that are rarely if ever performed in the Phoenix area, many from contemporary composers, introducing our audience to a world of choral music that exists beyond the well-known "Masterworks" of the choral repertoire. We balance those challenging pieces with some well-known works from AMC's extensive library of over 400 titles.

Scott encourages and challenges singers to grow artistically and improve their skills by singing choral works that are increasingly complex and require effort to learn. AMC provides singers with marked scores and rehearsal tracks through the AMC website so they can spend time learning their parts on their own, away from weekly ensemble rehearsals. Under Scott's leadership, AMC has experienced tremendous artistic growth, and the beauty and musicality of our performances has attracted more talented singers to our ensemble.

Scott also listens to Chorale members when planning our programs. For example, our upcoming May 2025 concert, "Sing! Get Happy!" is a mixture of works that are lighter in character, including choral arrangements of well-known songs from the Beatles and Barry Manilow, show tunes, a collection of English folk songs arranged by Ralph Vaughn Williams, and a 21st century composition that shows the amazing capabilities of the human voice, Jake Runestad's "Nyon, Nyon." This concert reflects input from singers who suggested a lighter but still challenging concert to balance out the demands of the formidable music from our past performances.

How does your organization support local artists and culture workers through opportunities, fair wages, promotion, and/or professional development?

AMC supports local artists and culture workers in a variety of ways. In the 2023-24 season over 80% of our expenditures (\$29.9K of \$37K) went to our paid musical staff and local Featured Artists. We contract with talented professional singers to serve as section leaders and pay them an hourly stipend (\$35) that's competitive in the market. We also pay fair and competitive wages to our Music Director (\$900/month) and Collaborative Pianist (\$150/service). Our music staff are independent contractors engaged on season-long agreements and are vetted through USIC I-9 and IRS W-2 forms. Featured Artists (soloists, instrumentalists, actors, etc.) are engaged by similar per-production contracts. All qualifying contractors receive 1099-NEC statements each calendar year.

AMC choristers have the opportunity to perform vocal solos or provide instrumental accompaniment during our performances. For example: one of our members was soprano soloist in "Gesù Bambino" in our performance of Warren Cohen's "The First Nowell" and another who is an actor narrated "Jingle Bells Through the Ages," both at Christmas 2024; another, who is a flautist and well as a singer, played flute on "Walk In My Shoes" by André Thomas at our March 2025 concert.

We contract with local professional singers and musicians from throughout the Valley as supplementary choristers and Featured Artists to accompany and enhance our performances. We engaged four excellent local soloists to sing arias at our Messiah Sing Along concert in November 2024: soprano Nina Cole Gargulio, alto Holly Sheppard, tenor Paul Nicosia, and bass Derek James Stull. We hired a local percussionist, Douglas Burton, to accompany Warren Cohen's arrangement of "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day," at our December 2024 Holiday concert. We plan to hire the same percussionist to accompany at least one of our pieces in our upcoming concert, "Sing! Get Happy!" in May 2025.

Support Materials

Upload support materials that really encapsulate the recent programming of the organization.

Video Upload

Make sure to wait until file upload is finished before submitting your application.

Video Library



I_Am_Not_Yours.mp4

Video Link (YouTube video ID or URL)

Be sure to test your video link prior to submitting. The video will not show on your application, but will be hyperlinked in the PDF version of your application.

<https://vimeo.com/1068313961?share=copy#t=0>

Description for Video Submission

"I Am Not Yours" by David N. Childs, from a poem by Sara Teasdale
Recorded live, November 17, 2024 at All Saint's Episcopal Church, Phoenix AZ

Image Upload

Accepted files: pdf, jpeg, jpg, gif, or png.

[POAC_FY26_-_CTC_Outreach.jpg](#)
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[POAC_FY26_-_Coming_Home.jpg](#)
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[POAC_FY26_-_MSA24_Audience.jpg](#)
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Description for Image Submission

Photos from The Arizona Masterworks Chorale events:

- 1) Third Annual Messiah Sing-Along (November 2024)
- 2) Outreach concert at Circle the City Downtown Respite Center (December 2024)
- 3) In concert: "Coming Home: Songs of Return and Restoration" (March 2025)

Community Significance

What community does your organization engage? Include demographic information, if available, or describe the community as specifically as possible.

The Arizona Masterworks Chorale, Inc. (AMC) is committed to performing the finest choral music at the highest artistic level, emphasizing classic and contemporary works rarely performed in the Phoenix area. We seek to make that music accessible to both choral music enthusiasts, and those who have yet to discover the sound and poetry of choral music in exquisite performances.

Our concert audience includes persons of all ages, from very young children to senior citizens. While we have not conducted a formal demographic study of our audience, our observations are that, like many community choruses, our audiences skew slightly older.

Our Chorale membership comprises 24 Phoenix-area singers, both volunteers and paid section leaders, ranging in age from early 20s to late 70s, from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. Some of our singers have degrees in music and experience as professional musicians; others are talented and enthusiastic amateur singers who love choral music and the challenge of developing the vocal skills necessary to sing complex works at a high level. In the 2024-25 season we added three new choristers in their 20s. Volunteer choristers are all "members of the corporation" at AMC, Inc., and vote on board membership and other matters concerning the Chorale.

In recent seasons we've actively sought outreach partners with whom we could engage and share our music, including the Global Academy of Phoenix (GAP), a predominantly Hispanic minority Title I Baccalaureate school in Maryvale, and Circle the City (CTC), a provider of medical services ("treat, heal, thrive") to the unhoused population in the greater Phoenix area. We've performed outreach concerts at both partners' campuses and will continue working with them in 2025-26.

What strategies does your organization rely on to engage your intended community?

AMC seeks to share our art with members of our diverse community by making our concerts accessible to as many people as possible, by performing at a venue that is centrally located, easy to access, and ADA compliant.

Despite financial challenges and rising costs, we have held the line on ticket prices at \$15 for seniors and students and \$20 general admission, both online and at the box office, and we admit children under 12 for free. For the past two seasons, AMC has had a “Community Special” program, offering \$10 advance purchase tickets, available to our partners and venue communities. We sell these tickets online two weeks before the event, and our singers sell paper tickets to their friends and family. We absorb card fees for box office purchases on the day of an event and use up-to-date electronic check-ins for online buyers.

We primarily use our website, an email newsletter, and word of mouth to spread the word about our concerts, and we provide press kits to encourage our community and artistic partners to spread the word as well. We have used social media such as Facebook and Instagram in the past, and plan to increase our social media presence in the future, likely by utilizing the services of a social media-savvy intern from one of our local colleges.

AMC wants our membership to be diverse and inclusive, as expressed in our DEIR (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Representation) policy, posted on our website. Our volunteer members pay annual dues of \$125 to support AMC, and cover their own wardrobe expenses, but we work with individual singers with financial challenges so they can be fully a part of our ensemble. For example, we have waived singer dues for in-kind services provided to AMC, such as graphic design, music library management, and website maintenance. We also strive to be inclusive by accommodating singers who have physical limitations that prohibit them from standing for long periods of time, or who wear masks in rehearsal and concert because of their immune-compromised status.

Describe how your existing partnerships and collaborations with other arts and cultural entities, nonprofits, businesses, and/or schools strengthen your ability to carry out your mission.

There is strength in numbers, and AMC's collaborations with artistic partners have allowed us to perform choral works we would not have been able to do on our own, leading to some of our most successful concerts.

Since 2022, AMC has been a part of The Arts at Ascension (TA3), an artistic collaboration between AMC, the Women's Orchestra of Arizona (WOA) and the congregation of Ascension Lutheran Church (ALC), dedicated to the production of high-quality artistic programs in the Valley. Through TA3, AMC and WOA have presented an annual "Messiah Sing-Along" for the last three years. This free concert (with donations accepted) invites fans of Handel's legendary oratorio "Messiah" to sing along with AMC and the WOA. The 3rd Annual Messiah Sing-Along in November 2024 was our most successful yet, as a capacity crowd of more than 400 people packed North Scottsdale United Methodist Church (NSUMC), the new home of the Ascension Lutheran congregation, to sing along with AMC and the choirs of NSUMC and ALC.

In November 2024, AMC joined forces with the Carolyn Eynon Singers, to present the Arizona premiere of Elaine Hagenberg's "Illuminare," a five-part work for chorus and orchestra. In March 2024, AMC collaborated with the Phoenix-based Canticum Novum Chamber Choir to present "English Madrigals & Masterworks," a concert of sacred and secular works by English composers from the Renaissance to the 20th century. And at Christmas 2024, we performed "The First Nowell," a unique arrangement of carols by Warren Cohen, director of the Phoenix-based MusicaNova Orchestra. These collaborations have been well received by audiences and singers alike, and we plan to pursue more such collaborations in the future.

AMC also strives to bring choral music to those in our broader community, who are underserved musically and without access to fine performances, through our collaborations with the Global Academy of Phoenix and Circle the City, as described above. AMC performed for patients and staff at CTC's Downtown Phoenix Medical Respite Center in December 2024 and publicized CTC's mission through a presentation at our March 2025 concert, "Coming Home: Songs of Return and Restoration." In December 2023 and May 2024, AMC members performed at assemblies for students at GAP, and their Treble Choir performed with us at a concert in 2022, made possible by a POAC project grant. We are planning to enhance and expand these collaborations in the future.

Financial & Leadership Capacity

Adjusted Annual Revenue

Enter your organization's adjusted annual revenue from its most recently completed fiscal year, as it appears on your DataArts Funder report or Statement of Activity. This is the figure labeled "Total Revenue Unrestricted Less In-kind Unrestricted" found at the top of the first page.

\$38,597.00

Cultural Data Profile Report/Statement of Activity

Profile must include past three years of financial data.*

[Visit SMU | Data Arts](#) to create your CDP report

Upload report here once completed

* Applicants with a prior annual income of \$4,000 to \$249,999 have the option of submitting completing the provided [summary form](#).

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Total Files: 1

Reference and explain specific Cultural Data Profile/budget expense and/or revenue line item trends/variances or debt/loan circumstances impacting the financial position.

In the 2023-24 season (FY24), as reported in the CDP Funder Report, AMC saw total revenue increase by 5%, primarily through increased grant funding, including a one-time “Flash Grant” project grant from the City of Phoenix. However, FY24 saw a significant cost impact due to the move of AMC's music library to an expensive commercial storage unit. This was necessary after the closure and demolition of Ascension Lutheran Church in Paradise Valley, where AMC had rehearsed, performed, and stored its library for years. Rather than raise ticket costs for our audience, AMC reduced expenses by decreasing the number of paid section leaders and staff singers from the preferred eight to six.

Our revenue and expense profiles remained steady in FY24, with approximately 80% contributed revenue and 92% of expenses devoted to program costs. Our earned revenue increased slightly, primarily through website ad sales, while contributed revenue increased by 7%, primarily because of POAC grants received. Through diligent management of cash flow, we completed FY24 with a surplus of \$1,546 (4% of budget) vs. a deficit of nearly \$4K (10% of budget) in FY23.

Describe successes, challenges, or special circumstances related to your financial position in the past, current, and next fiscal year. Reference the CDP report/summary form when applicable.

If experiencing an operating deficit or an accumulated debt, or if a deficit or accumulated debt is anticipated in the next three years, please describe the strategy for eliminating or managing the deficit/debt.

The 2024-25 season (FY25) has seen AMC face more fiscal challenges, primarily a significant drop in grant funding due to state budget cuts, and less grant funding than anticipated from the City of Phoenix. We have also seen increased expenses due to higher rental fees at our primary concert and rehearsal venue and music library storage, and a new requirement from All Saint's Episcopal Church that all outside groups hosting events must pay for uniformed security coverage. AMC has managed these fiscal challenges by reducing the number of concert performances from a two-concert series on Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons, to a single Sunday afternoon concert. We also cut our number of paid section leaders from six to four, only half the desired number. We continued to hold the line on raising ticket prices, keeping them at \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and students, and free admission for children under 12. We have also continued our \$10 "Community Special" advance ticket sales, both online and via paper tickets sold by our members.

On a brighter note, AMC also had our most successful Messiah Sing-Along ever in November 2024, with a sold-out crowd from which we received nearly \$1,800, our share of total donations split between AMC, the WOA and the host venue, NSUMC. AMC was also surprised and grateful to receive a memorial donation of \$10,000 from the widower of a longtime AMC member, tenor David Fetz, who passed away last summer. This generous donation in David's memory sponsored our March 2025 and May 2025 concerts.

As we face considerable uncertainty over the availability of grant funds from government sources at all levels going forward, AMC is keenly aware of the need to seek other sources of funding, and will look to increase our revenue through attracting larger audiences to our concerts, and seeking out corporate and private sponsors and donors who share our love of choral music and our desire to advance the choral arts in Phoenix.

Identify *three separate reflections* about how your organization is working to build more equitable practices and procedures. Reflections can be processes, steps, wins, challenges, etc.

1.) Board Leadership: AMC has faced challenges in growing our Board, which is composed of current Chorale members, and exclusively White. We are keenly aware of the need to include members outside our membership, who can bring new perspectives and resources. Our Board should reflect our community, and AMC will recruit new Board members from a variety of demographic groups. We want to include more women, more people of color, and more people representing the LGBTQ community. As a Board comprised of Baby Boomers and GenXers, we hope to welcome Millennials and even GenZ leadership "on Board."

2.) Community Outreach: Since returning from pandemic hiatus, AMC's members and leadership, like so many others, have come to realize the importance of community. Rehearsing and learning new music in a choral ensemble and sharing the beauty of choral music through performances, brings people together and helps our community thrive. We seek to bring that experience to as many people as possible, including those parts of our community who are underserved and have not always had access. We have done this through our past collaborations and performances with the Global Academy of Phoenix. With more school districts in the Phoenix area eliminating music programs due to budget cuts, AMC hopes to expand our outreach beyond Global Academy to other schools. Given additional resources, we have considered initiatives such as distributing free concert tickets to students, inviting students to attend our dress rehearsals and learn the stories behind the pieces we perform, and even creating an "AMC Choral Scholars" program, which would give select high school choral singers from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to rehearse and perform with AMC.

3.) Building Our Audience: AMC has built a modest but loyal following over the years. But to survive, we know we must grow and change. By collaborating with organizations like Circle The City which serve the most vulnerable members of our community, we hope to bring the healing power of music to those most in need, and raise our profile as an organization. We will seek to grow our audience and build on our reputation for performing music not often heard elsewhere in the Valley, by collaborating with local composers and seeking collaborations with artistic ensembles from diverse communities, to introduce our audience to the world of choral music that exists outside the usual "masterworks," and continue to grow our skill and artistry.

Authorizing Official

First and Last name

Bob Altizer

Title

President

Email

bob.altizer@arizonamasterworks.com

Phone Number

(480) 203-9078

PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

Before you submit this survey, we would like remind you about the city's policy on public records, which states that the information you are about to send: (1) is subject to public disclosure under the Public Records Law, (2) is not private or confidential and (3) is retained according to city records retention policies. If you do not agree with this policy, do not submit this form.

I have read and agree to the City of Phoenix's Public Records Policy.

Acknowledgement

By signing this application, I certify that the statements and attachments herein are true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge. As authorizing official of the applicant, I agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award