

Cultural Access Program School Enrollment Guide & FAQs

Eligibility & Application Process

How do I know if my school is eligible to participate in the program?

Your school is eligible to be a Cool Culture partner if you are:

- A NYC elementary school serving students in 3K For All, UPK, or Kindergarten
- A Universal Pre-K (UPK) program
- Receive Title I funding or a part of District 75
- Serve at least 60% of 3K, UPK, or Kindergarten students from low-income backgrounds (please refer to % of free/reduced-price lunch and any other DOE indicators that your school may use).

What is a Cultural Liaison, and how do I choose one?

Each school must identify a staff member to serve as the Cultural Liaison who will play an integral role supporting Family Pass Usage and will be the primary contact between your school and Cool Culture. They must be responsive to email correspondence, manage the administrative details of enrollment and payment process, keep their colleagues and families at the center informed about Cool Culture happenings, and work with Cool Culture staff to troubleshoot any issues that arise.

Choose someone who enjoys the art and cultural events and supporting families to increase their engagement in art enriching experiences. They ideally have a good relationship with your community of children and adult caregivers, enjoy the arts and culture, and want to support your increased engagement in art experiences of families in your school. This leadership role also calls for someone who will enjoy leading family artmaking workshops and will be a voice for the community by conveying their needs, interests and concerns.

Our Mission

To amplify the voices of families and strengthen the power of historically marginalized communities through engagement with art and culture, both within cultural institutions and beyond. Learn more at coolculture.org.

Have Questions?

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What are the specific responsibilities of a Cultural Liaison?

- Attending professional development workshops 2 times a year
- Coordinating registration and distribution of Family Passes (4 times a year)
- Orienting families and center staff to the program, Family Pass guidelines, the benefits of learning through the arts and family visits to museums
- Conducting workshops for parents and other adult caregivers throughout the year
- Working with the center team to support family learning through the arts, motivate families to visit museums and actively recommend places they can visit in person & online
- Promoting and distributing Cool Culture's family resources directly to adult caregivers. We've made distribution easy by designing emails, newsletters, text messages, and flyers that you can forward electronically and use to transform physical spaces within the school building to encourage use of the arts to support family learning and wellbeing.

Is there a fee for the Program?

The program fee for the CityWide Cultural Access Program 2022-23 school year is \$3,200 per school. Enrolled schools will receive invoices within 4-5 business days of enrollment.

Are discounts available for small schools?

Currently there are no discounts available. As a non-profit organization, we subsidize most of the program cost through fundraising to sustain the lowest program fee possible.

Do schools have to use Title I funding to pay for the program fee?

No, schools can pay for this program using other funds. Enrolled schools must submit a purchase order or check no later than October 31, 2022. **Several schools have even used DonorsChoose to fundraise for the program's cost. [Here's an example of a successful campaign on DonorsChoose.](#)** To stay true to the program's intent, we ask that schools enrolling in Cool Culture DO NOT mandate donations from parents or other family members to cover the program fee.

Can you walk me through the application process?

1. Select a staff member to be your center's Cultural Liaison for your school (see above).
2. Look out for an email notification approximately five business days after you apply to learn if your school is eligible and has been accepted.
3. After receiving enrollment confirmation, electronically sign the partnership agreement.
4. Submit the program fee (\$3,200) by **September 29, 2023**.

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About Cool Culture Programs

Enrolling with Cool Culture will connect families to experience nearly 90 museums, zoos, and botanical gardens for free. Your center's educators will explore art and social justice based pedagogy during our seminars and dialogues.

- **Free General Admission to Museums**
 - All enrolled families and center staff receive a personalized Family Pass. The Pass provides free, general admission for up to 5 people at [90 partner museums, gardens, historical societies, science centers and zoos](#) for one year. **Passes may not be used for group or field trips.**
- **Family Guide & Online Museum Database**
 - Our multilingual [Family Guide](#) will get you inspired and ready to visit museums, with such features as *How to Use the Family Pass* and *Family Spotlights*. Updates will be made quarterly as we continue to identify great resources for families.
 - Our database provides an easy-to-use resource for families to stay informed of updated museum openings and policies.
- **Bring the Cool Family Festivals**
 - A series of family festivals are hosted around the city in partnership with museums, gardens and zoos.
- **Curators for Educators: Seminars & Dialogues**
 - A series of workshops and dialogues help enhance Family Pass usage, design art-making experiences and nurture civic engagement.
 - SEMINARS orient educators to the Family Pass and our network museums; offer family engagement strategies; connect them to other educators across the city to exchange ideas; and introduces them to our **We are All Curators** (a framework for harnessing the arts and cultural through non-hierarchical, anti-racist, asset-based approaches to help promote child and family wellbeing).
 - DIALOGUES feature a diverse mix of panelists and are framed around salient current issues that ignite new thinking and practices for the holistic wellbeing of ourselves, our families and our communities
- **Enhanced Resources**
 - Throughout the year we distribute toolkits with Do It Yourself activities, resources and other information useful to families and educators. We are also updating our website to be a fully interactive platform. The platform will help you learn about activities taking place in museums, gardens and zoos; help connect families through online forums; and offer downloadable resources (including toolkits and videos) to enhance your teaching and family engagement practices.

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Family Pass Registration FAQs

How do I register families in our school for the Family Pass?

After the enrollment application materials are processed, Cool Culture will send notifications to your school of their acceptance into the program. A full timeline will be shared with all enrolled schools before the school year begins.

1. Once enrolled, all Cultural Liaisons will receive a link to an online orientation to guide them through the family and staff registration process.
2. Once the orientation is complete, family registration materials will be forwarded to the Cultural Liaison.
3. The registration form is a quick online form where families can register using a phone, laptop, or computer. We will provide you with as much assistance and tools needed to get families to register quickly.
4. Many of our veteran Cultural Liaisons have created exciting ways to register families easily.

PLEASE NOTE: Families will be asked for demographic and contact information for each registrant and information about language access needs. If you are registering on behalf of someone else, please make sure you have accurate information available.

Is the Registration Form in multiple languages?

Yes, the Registration Form is in English, Spanish and Chinese.

When does registration open?

Registration opens on **September 25**, and there will be three other opportunities to register families during the year. Please check the [website](#) for more details.

Are school staff eligible to receive the Cool Culture Family Pass?

Yes, only school staff that are listed below are eligible to receive a Family Pass.

Please note, that by registering for a Family Pass, the staff member agrees to use their museum visits to motivate and support family participation. Family Passes are given to staff to share recommendations with parents and support the Cultural Liaisons at their school.

- Principal and Assistant Principals
- 3K, UPK, Kindergarten Classroom Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Paraprofessionals
- 3K, UPK, Kindergarten Art Teachers, Cluster Teachers and SEITs
- 3K, UPK, Kindergarten Social Workers and Guidance Counselors

Family Pass guidelines were established in partnership with participating museums. We ask that each enrolled school help us ensure families and staff adhere to the Family Pass guidelines. This allows us to ensure strong relationships with our partners and to secure their participation in the CityWide Cultural Access Program for years to come.

- Passes give each registered family free general admission for up to 5 people to our 90 cultural institution partners - others should be prepared to pay for admission.

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- **Each family will receive ONE Family Pass**, personalized with their last name. The pass is not transferable. Family Passes are not intended for group or class trips. Up to 3 families can enter a museum with their Passes at one time.
- Family Passes do not provide free admission to special events or exhibitions that have an additional fee.
- Museum, garden and zoo staff may ask for a personal ID to ensure the last name of the parent matches the last name printed on their Family Pass.

Which museums, gardens, and zoos partner with Cool Culture?

To view a list of our 90 museum, garden, and zoo partners, [click here](#). To name a few, our Family Pass provides free admission to the American Museum of Natural History, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Museum, Bronx Museum of Arts, Children's Museum of Manhattan, El Museo del Barrio, Museum of Chinese in America, New York Hall of Science, Staten Island Zoo and more!

Can we take field trips using our Cool Culture Family Passes?

No. Passes are for use by families. No more than 3 families can enter a museum together at the same time. Cultural institutions view larger groups as they would a class trip, which is not covered by the Cool Culture Family Pass and requires separate arrangements with the museum's group services department.

DID YOU KNOW?

Cool Culture is aligned with National, State and Local Learning Standards

- The Citywide Cultural Access Program is aligned with DOE Early Learn requirements for community partnerships and family engagement, NYS Pre-K Foundation for the Common Core in social-emotional development, approaches to learning, and literacy, and Blueprint for the Arts.
- Further, our programs, pedagogical frameworks, and practices are rooted in our social justice values and situates families at the center of our work.

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