

Investing in Artists FAQs

1. Who can apply for this grant? Is the application process only for visual artists, or can dancers and musicians apply?

The *Investing in Artists* grants program is open to working artists in California in the performing, visual, literary, media, design, and cross-disciplinary fields. Each round of funding is rotated between Performing and Media Arts applications and Visual Arts, Craft, and Literary Arts applications. For the purposes of this grant program, eligible “working artists” are defined as adults who have received training in an artistic discipline or tradition, spend ten or more hours a week on their artwork, self-define as professional artists, and attempt to derive income from work in which they use their expert artistic practices and skills.

July 1, 2013 – Visual Arts, Craft and Literary Arts applications

January 2014 – Performing Arts and Media Arts applications

July 2014 – Visual Arts, Craft and Literary Arts applications

Check back on our website for specific dates regarding future rounds of funding.

2. How do you define “Media Arts?”

Media Arts category includes film, audio and video projects, as well as digital arts projects including computer graphics, animation and emerging digital forms. Some interdisciplinary media projects may fall across more than one discipline category, and artists applying for such projects may self-determine where they best fit, and in what competitive grouping they think their work would be considered most appropriately.

3. Is this grant only open to individuals or can organizations apply?

Only individual artists may apply for this grant. Applications will not be accepted from organizations. Artists that have their own 501(c)3 organizations may apply, but they must apply as an individual.

4. What about collaborative artist groups? Can this grant support more than one artist?

Grants will only be awarded to individual artists and are intended to support the work of one artist. In rare circumstances, we will accept applications from long-standing collaborative artists. To be considered, the collaborative must be joint creators of work, have an established track record of working together, and have developed their artistic career and reputation as a team. One individual from the collaborative must serve as the official applicant to CCI. This grant is not intended to support group exhibitions or other group based projects. If you apply as a collaborative, the application should be submitted by one individual member that will receive the funds and be responsible for administering those funds. Grants will not be made to multiple members of the same group nor can collaborative members submit separate applications as individuals.

5. Can I apply in more than one grant category in a round?

No. An artist can only submit one application total per round.

6. Are previous *Investing in Artists* grantees eligible to re-apply for grants in the 2012–2014 funding rounds?

Beginning in 2012, previous grantees in the Artistic Innovation category ONLY may now re-apply if they received a grant in this category three (3) or more years ago (i.e., for the current 2013 round, in 2010 or earlier); previous grantees in the Artistic Equipment & Tools category may NOT re-apply in this category. Please check the most current guidelines for further specific eligibility requirements.

7. What will the review process be like? Who reviews the applications?

A grant review panel consisting of arts field experts will be convened following the close of each round of applications to make recommendations to CCI on final grant recipients. Additional field experts may also be used to advise on technical proposals or to conduct site visits with applicants to assess artistic practice, context, or work settings.

8. How are applications evaluated? What makes a competitive application?

Each grant category has a different set of review criteria against which applications are evaluated. This information is listed in the grant guidelines, and we encourage you to review it closely. The most competitive applications are the ones that are clearly written, generally brief and to the point, and demonstrate a strong alignment with each criteria point. Applications will also be evaluated based on the strength of the artist's work; clarity and readiness of the proposed project; timeliness and impact of the requested funding on the artist's career; and significance of the artist to a geographic community, tradition, or art form.

9. Can I apply for support to buy arts supplies under the Artistic Equipment and Tools Grant category?

While CCI recognizes the importance of these items to artists' continued development, art supplies used either in association with ongoing artistic practice or for creation of new work are not eligible. Applicants applying under Artistic Equipment and Tools are also advised that certain items, such as laptops or digital cameras, are frequently requested in this funding category. Artists seeking more generic, popular items in their respective fields may want to take this into consideration when articulating their rationale.

10. What does the term “critical juncture” mean?

As part of the review criteria for the Artistic Innovation category, applications must show that funding would come at a “critical juncture” in the artist’s career. This means that you need to address how your proposed activities will push the boundaries of your artistic practice in a really significant way and you need to answer the ‘why now?’ question. Why is this the right moment in your career to undertake this project? Demonstrating a clear and significant critical juncture is important to putting together a competitive application.

11. What should I submit as a work sample?

The work sample is a critical part of the application and should represent your artistic work in the best possible light. When deciding how to present your work, please keep in mind that the panel will have less than 5 minutes to look at your work. Therefore, you should pick the strongest work and/or work segment to present first. It is a disservice to your application if the panel has to spend 3 minutes flipping between different formats or forwarding through the credits to see the actual work. Work samples in all formats, including video, audio, image, and text-based samples, must now be uploaded and submitted with the online application. The list of acceptable work sample formats and specific instructions on accepted formats in each round are included in the guidelines. Detailed Instructions for the current round are provided and under the “How to Upload Files” tab in the new GO™ system.

We strongly advise that you prepare and upload work samples well in advance of the deadline. Should you wait until the day of the deadline and encounter technical difficulties with file formats, the upload process, etc., the ability of technical assistance to resolve issues will be significantly limited.

12. Is preference given to emerging or established artists? Does career stage matter?

Artists have new and evolving challenges as they move through their career. For this reason, CCI does not give preference to emerging, mid-career, or established artists. Competitive applications will demonstrate the impact of the proposed project on the artist’s career at the current point in time. Quality of artistic work and track record will also be factors in determining who receives a grant.

13. Do artists outside of the Bay Area and Los Angeles have a chance?

Yes. CCI seeks to support a broad diversity of the state’s artists through the *Investing in Artists* grants program. The significance of the artist’s work to a geographic community, tradition, or art form is specifically considered in the application review process. However, applicants should also be aware that this grants program is highly competitive and that, unfortunately, many good proposals cannot be funded due to the limited grant dollars available.

14. How many grants will you make?

There is no set number. The actual number of grants awarded will depend on the quality of the applications received and on the financial requirements of the funded projects. In general, we anticipate making 20-25 grants in each round of funding from 2012–2014.

15. If I am awarded a grant, is it considered taxable income?

Artists who receive funding through the *Investing in Artists* grants program should be aware that grant awards may be taxable as ordinary income. In some cases, CCI will work with grantees on an individual basis to make awards through either an artists' incorporated 501(c)(3) or individual business. However, we recommend that you consult a qualified tax advisor for further information.