

Center for Cultural Innovation

Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants

*Change capital for shaping the future of California's arts nonprofit field
by arts organizations and its visionaries*

Short Blurb

Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants provides funding for projects by diverse and up-and-coming leaders at nonprofit or fiscally sponsored arts organizations that hold promise for re-shaping the trajectory of California's nonprofit arts sector in ways that advance intergenerational and multicultural leadership, inclusion and equity, and new sustainability models.

Background

As part of the Center for Cultural Innovation's (CCI) efforts to support new arts leadership with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, *Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants* is a new, one-time grant program that will invest \$105,000 in bold ideas by individuals at California nonprofit or fiscally sponsored arts organizations that have the potential to re-shape the future of the arts sector in exciting and important ways. CCI recently published *Creativity Connects: Trends and Conditions Affecting U.S. Artists*, a national research report to examine the state of the arts and its shifts. The report described how the nonprofit arts sector is changing in dramatic ways. Shifts in demographics have created new priorities for democratizing production of and access to culture. In addition, emerging generations of artists and arts leaders eschew being defined solely by sector or discipline in favor of more complex identities, including prioritizing artistic practices that have social impacts. On January 23, 2017, CCI convened over 200 artists and arts professionals to brainstorm the future of the arts. What we heard affirmed our *Creativity Connects* research findings: Participants want to work toward advancing equality, inclusion, equity, and financial sustainability in common cause with others.

At this time, there are no grants of this type—field-wide change capital for promising leaders to improve the nonprofit arts sector through existing arts organizations. *Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants* will therefore surface and support catalytic individual and institutional leadership at this time of tremendous social, economic, generational, demographic, and technological change.

Program

Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants is a one-time grant program that will provide 14 grants of up to \$7,500 each to California arts nonprofits or fiscally sponsored arts and culture organizations. Projects must be authored and led by diverse and/or junior-level leaders in order to respond to their ambitions for shaping the future of California's nonprofit arts sector. Project leads must be part-time or full-time employees (or otherwise formally affiliated). Projects will demonstrate good ideas for influencing the future directions of the arts sector, and must respond to at least one program priority. These priorities have been informed by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation's report *Moving Arts Leadership Forward*, the national research report *Creativity Connects: Trends and Conditions Affecting U.S. Artists*, and CCI's Future Arts Forward futurist convening.

Priority Issue Areas (in no particular order):

- Inclusion and/or Equity: Projects that will re-shape the arts nonprofit sector to be more distributive of resources, products, services, and opportunities in ways that are fair, equal, inclusive, and/or equitable. These may include projects that influence how decisions are made and resources are shared, or support for artistic or cultural practices that have been historically under-recognized by the formal nonprofit arts field (i.e., practices not formally taught in Western European fine arts traditions). (As reference, see [Creativity Connects](#), p. 19, and [Moving Arts Leadership Forward](#), pp. 11 & 18*.)
- Intergenerational and/or Multicultural Leadership: Projects that will shape how nonprofit arts organizations can better fulfill their missions through intergenerational and/or multicultural leadership. Diversity of all types is an asset, and we are interested in projects that model and proliferate this kind of organizational ownership. (As reference, see [Moving Arts Leadership Forward](#), pp. 10–12*.)
- New Financial/Sustainability Models: Projects that innovate how nonprofit or fiscally sponsored arts and culture organizations can become more sustainable by innovating or responding to new potential markets and demands. For example, responding to shifts toward cross-sector partnerships, engaging younger and diverse donors, innovating art worker sustainability in gig economies, forgiveness programs for student debt, sharing and collective economies, among others. (As reference, see the readings under “Arts Sector” on CCI’s [Future Arts Forward site](#), in particular [Douglas Rushkoff and Ruth McCambridge’s “The Sustainability Prerogative: Nonprofits in the Future of Our Economy.”](#) (CCI and its funders neither endorse nor agree with 3rd-party writings, but encourage reading these to stimulate critical awareness and thinking.)

(* References are provided as context and to share our understanding of these issues. What is presented in the reports is not meant to be prescriptive; rather, we encourage applicants to go beyond what is described in ways that may not have already been imagined.)

Criteria

Grant applications must meet the following criteria to be eligible for funding:

- Applicants must be a 501(c)3 or fiscally sponsored arts organization based and operating in California.
- There is no limit to the number of applications each organization can submit; however, grants are limited to one per organization.
- Project lead(s) must be culturally diverse (i.e., diversity in many forms, including but not limited to socio-economic background, education level, ethnicity, gender, or geographically underserved communities) and/or early- to mid-level arts professional (i.e., promising, rather than already demonstrated, leadership). Project lead(s) must be formally affiliated with the applicant organization (i.e., full- or part-time employment, board member, actively contracted consultant, but not volunteers).
- Applications must be authored by project lead(s) so as to reflect their ambitions for shaping the future in ways that are important to them. Applications will require the signature of the project lead(s) and two different signatures of the heads of the organization (both the Director and a board member).
- Projects must meet one (or more) of the priority issue areas of *Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants*. (There is no limit to the number of priority areas projects may address, but it is advisable to identify the most relevant as applications will be judged on the merits of responding to every selected issue area.)

- Applications must convey concrete ways that the project can influence change in the nonprofit arts sector. (Caveat: Real change can happen without a lot of money but, at the same time, we recognize that project ambitions should also reflect what is actually possible at this grant amount and amount of time.)
- Projects must be able to be fully implemented within a one-year grant term. (Grantees will be expected to report on early signs and stages of field change, even though the long-term effects may not be realized until much later.)

Ineligibility: Current grantee organizations participating in William and Flora Hewlett Foundation’s Arts Leadership Forward program are not eligible so as to distribute funding beyond this cohort more broadly.

Funds Available

Applicants who meet the eligibility requirements may request up to \$7,500. This is a one-time grant opportunity that aims to support 14 projects for a total investment of \$105,000.

Example of Potential Grants

- Inclusion and Equity: Address issues of workers’ rights, immigration, affordable housing, racial discrimination, and the like in collaboration with a non-arts organization, and present outcomes at professional conferences.
- Intergenerational Leadership: Curated social gatherings of various nonprofit junior- and senior-level arts professionals that build stronger social networks cross-generationally.
- Multicultural Leadership: Produce a public speaker’s series of important, yet underrepresented, perspectives of arts and culture thinkers who have not been well recognized in the conventional nonprofit arts field.
- Intergenerational and Multicultural Leadership, and Equity: Create new Human Resources practices and documents that make the qualities of diversity, difference, and inclusion across backgrounds and age competitive assets to the organization, that will be shared publicly online.
- Intergenerational Leadership, and Equity: Create an employee-owned operating structure wherein risks and rewards are determined by all staff (e.g., salaries, benefits, and fundraising obligations). Could be shifting a conventional nonprofit or a new cooperative effort.
- New Financial/Sustainability Models: Explore becoming a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) so as to target financial services to the arts field, and share lessons learned with the arts field.
- New Financial/Sustainability Models: Become an impact investor to influence the evolution of this still-nascent field, and share contacts and networks of impact investors with the nonprofit arts field.
- Inclusion, Equity, Intergenerational and Multicultural Leadership, and New Financial Model (all priority areas): Offer workforce development for creative employment in economically disadvantaged communities.

Evaluation Criteria

Priority will be given to project proposals that:

- Reflect the field-changing priorities of this program.
- Demonstrate potential to influence California’s nonprofit arts field.

- Position the nonprofit organization as a platform for influencing field-wide change.
- Provide leadership opportunities to diverse and/or early- to mid-level arts workers who show great potential for institutional and sector-wide leadership.
- Demonstrate that project lead(s) will have the support of organizational leaders for decision-making control of and ability to implement the project.
- Demonstrate feasibility and realistic expectations of what is possible by presenting alignment of objectives with strategies for implementation.
- Generate exciting and bold directions that the arts nonprofit can take and, to that end, may be experimental and hold a potential for failure.
- Reflect and contribute to the uniqueness that defines California's arts and culture communities.

Information Sessions

CCI will offer free, in-person information sessions to provide more details about this grant opportunity and answer questions by interested applicants. Locations and dates will be announced on our website, via emails, and our social media channels. The best way to be notified about the *Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants* information sessions is to [sign up](#) for our email announcements.

Timeline & Deadline

The application (instructions below) must be received by CCI by **Wednesday, July 12, 2017 by 12:00 p.m. PST.**

A selection panel will review applications in August, with notifications sent to all applicants by mid-September.

The project period is September 2017–September 2018, with the official start date set by a fully executed grant agreement.

Grantees must turn in final reports and financial accounting to CCI in October 2018.

Grant Deliverables & Expectations

Grantees will be asked to share progress of their projects, in particular any activities that help them influence changes in the field. CCI is a ready partner in advancing project objectives and can promote activities and information through our own channels. Final reporting components will include:

- Narrative report detailing use of project funds, outcomes, how the project furthered (or not) intended ambitions, and any lessons learned.
- Final financial accounting of how the project fund was used.
- Stories of influence and impact, including the affect on project leads, organizational staff and internal culture, and the field.
- High resolution photos in JPEG, any links to video documentation of activities, and submission of any ephemera generated by the project.

Application

I. Information:

1. Organization Name
 - a. Head of Organization Name, Title
 - b. Organization Address
 - c. Phone Number
 - d. Organization Email
 - e. Organization Website Address
 - f. Is organization fiscally sponsored (y/n)
2. Project Lead (Primary Contact for this proposal) Name
 - a. Address
 - b. Email
 - c. Phone Number
3. Project Lead 2 (repeat, if applicable)
4. Project Lead 3 (repeat, if applicable)

If project has more than three project leads, please list on a separate Word or PDF document and attach with the header "Additional Project Leads."
5. Amount Requested (maximum \$7,500)
6. Check the priority issue area that your project will work toward (one, or more):
 - a. Intergenerational Leadership
 - b. Multicultural Leadership
 - c. Inclusion
 - d. Equity
 - e. New Financial/Sustainability Models

II. Narrative:

1. Describe the project, *including*: (no more than 400 words)
 - a. What are the specific project goals, and what will take place to realize aims?
 - b. How does the project address the selected issue area(s)?
2. Describe the rationale for this project. What is the sectoral problem that your organization can address? (no more than 150 words)
3. How may this project affect California's arts sector? What is the problem or opportunity this project addresses, and what will you do to ensure that your project can influence change? (no more than 150 words)
4. How may this project affect your organization? Depending on the project, please address the impact on the organization's perceived standing and role in the arts community, as well as internal culture, staffing, leadership and leadership dynamics, mission, or hiring and retention practices. (no more than 150 words)
5. How will this project professionally advance diverse and/or junior-level arts professional(s) (i.e., the project lead)? And, what will help project lead(s) feel well supported, including how their leadership advancement will be sustained? (no more than 150 words)

III. Project budget: Provide a project budget with the following categories (if not applicable, list \$0):

- Sources of project funding/income, including source of support, amount, and whether or not already raised or earned. List your requested grant amount in this section.
- Project lead(s) compensation
- Other organizational project staff compensation
(Add other income and expense categories that provide a financial picture of the project.)

IV. Organizational Financial Actuals: Include your organization's completed audited (or, if unavailable, unaudited) financials of your most recently concluded full fiscal year.

Biographies: Provide narrative bios of the project lead(s), and any key collaborators of the project, including from within the organization and outside of the organization if partnering with other entities. (no more than 100 words per person)

A Letter of Support Signed by the Organizational Head and Board Member (to be attached as PDF or word doc).

How to Apply

To be considered, applicants must meet eligibility and submit an online application by **Wednesday, July 12, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. PST**. Applications will be accepted only through CCI's electronic GO™ system.

The *Investing in Tomorrow Organizational Grants* online application can be accessed at: <https://ccigrants.cgweb.org/>. All applicants **MUST** register on the online grants system before they will be able to access grant application forms. For this and many reasons, interested applicants are strongly urged to apply *in advance* of the deadline to leave time for technical problems or questions.