

RIISING, STILL!

2022
ANNUAL
REPORT



Center for
Cultural
Innovation

YEAR IN REFLECTION

Dear Friends,

This year marks a significant milestone for the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI)—20 years of supporting artists, culture bearers, and creative entrepreneurs—to realize greater self-determination. I wanted to take this moment to look back. I'm fortunate to have been here since the beginning and to share CCI's ongoing story.

Back in the early 2000s, Judith Luther Wilder and Cora Mirkitani established CCI after the findings of two studies. The studies, on nonprofit arts activity and financial aid, and business incubation for artistic innovation demonstrated that there was a lack of nonprofit infrastructure dedicated to supporting the working lives and creative enterprises of artists. With seed funding from, and based on a professional development training model the Small Business Administration (SBA) developed for women business owners, they began designing programs that, when adapted, could benefit artists. I was lucky enough to have a front-row seat when we held our first workshop, "Marketing and Promoting Your Art," on September 14, 2002, taught by artist Synthia SAINT JAMES.

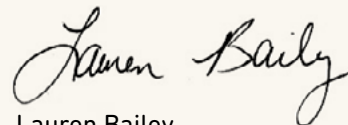
Since CCI's launch, keeping artists at the forefront of our work has always been the spark in all that we do to offer innovative and ever evolving services to all who work as creatives and culture bearers. For example, our signature series "Business of Art" in 2022 is now a 10-week series that includes our self-published workbook, *Business of Art: An Artist's Guide to Profitable Self-Employment – Third Edition*.

Originally, the 6-week series was called "Only For Artists Who Are Serious About The Business of Art." Over the years, CCI has offered one-on-one counseling, the Los Angeles Arts Loan Fund, group discounts on products and services, Next Generation Arts Leadership Initiative (now CALI Catalyst), relief funds, Investing in Artists grant program, and Quick Grants to name a few. Some of these programs stood the test of time and are still offered today.

A lot has changed in the past two decades, but why we started is still relevant today. In the next phase of CCI, we will continue developing new solutions for creatives. Through our close work with artists and arts workers, we have discovered that conditions that affect them impact others working in the broader gig economy, and if systems work for artists, who intersect all labor industries, they will benefit all workers.

AmbitioUS, our 10-year time-limited initiative, allows us to be super experimental in the ways we support artists, creatives, and culture bearers (see page 27 for more details). A new line of work for 2022, Sol Center for Liberated Work, will continue to invest in research, engage in advocacy, and direct investments to improve the social and economic livelihoods of all freelance workers whose conditions are like those of artists—unpredictable incomes, lack of savings, high amounts of student loan debt, and thin credit. Learn more about this work on page 36.

CCI has come a long way since our start on Higuera Street in Culver City, to where we now have a national footprint. I want to take this opportunity to thank the history of CCI directors (Judith, Cora, and Angie), board members (founding board member Sally Jo Fifer), staff, trainers, funders, artists, and creatives who laid the foundation for CCI's amazing journey. What a privilege to be on this journey together. CCI would not be the thriving, impact-focused organization it is today without all of your support and vision.



Lauren Bailey
Managing Director



MISSION, HISTORY, & NOW

MISSION, HISTORY, & NOW

The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) was founded in 2001 as a California 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. Its mission is to promote knowledge sharing, networking, and financial independence for individuals in the arts by providing business training, grants, and incubating innovative projects that create new program knowledge, tools, and practices for artists in the field, and conditions that contribute to realizing financial self-determination.

In 2000, a major study was commissioned by 38 funders nationally, resulting in a 2003 benchmark report produced by the Urban Institute in Washington, DC titled *Investing in Creativity: A Study of the Support Structure for U.S. Artists*. The Urban Institute study showed, and CCI's field experience has affirmed, that artists have significant needs in multiple domains, including training and professional development, material support, access to markets, public validation, information, and participation in larger communities and networks. In 2016, capping a two-year national research effort in collaboration with the National Endowment for the Arts, CCI released an updated report on U.S. artists, *Creativity Connects: Trends and Conditions Affecting U.S. Artists*, to understand artists' support systems in a technology-enabled era and to recognize how the very definition of "artist" has been expanding. In response to the report's findings, CCI has changed in two significant ways:

- » CCI has shifted from helping artists realize financial sustainability to include helping them realize financial self-determination. By prioritizing self-determination, CCI is attending to the needs of artists as a whole person and not just as producers of art. This requires CCI making a difference in the conditions of artists' lives, which we are doing in common cause with other sectors that are also addressing shared issues of low wages, lack of worker protections, high debt, and few assets.
- » CCI has expanded its reach to create opportunities for all. The Creativity Connects report called out the inequities that are built into conventional systems of arts support and highlighted the opportunity to support the diversity of cultural expressions in the U.S. This lens of opportunities-for-all prioritizes supporting those who have been traditionally marginalized so as to accelerate their impact in the arts and unfetter their contributions in society.

MISSION, HISTORY, & NOW

Over the years, CCI has been a key infrastructure organization in a number of ways and, with these shifts, CCI continues to play an influential role in society by:

- » **Validating** and serving the needs of artists, culture bearers, arts administrators and workers, artisans, makers, and creative entrepreneurs—in other words, individuals who comprise the larger creative workforce. Individuals are at the heart of the arts, and CCI is a conduit for resources and opportunities to flow directly to them rather than trickling down through institutions.
- » **Acting** as a bridge builder bringing together funders, artists, arts workers, researchers, field practitioners, and other innovation partners across sectors on specific problem-solving projects. Many of CCI's regranting, advocacy, funder collaborative, and research projects are incubated efforts to rise to the challenge of particular problems informed by our unique knowledge and set of principles.
- » **Generating** new knowledge: We commission primary research that expands our understanding of artists and their needs.
- » **Serving** as a platform for change to improve support systems for those who have not been well served by conventional nonprofit funding and private lending or financing systems—individual

artists and arts workers, junior-level professionals, creative entrepreneurs, and community-based cultural anchors.

- » **Being** a leading voice in the field for the value of supporting individuals in the arts, at a moment in time when social contracts are increasingly being re-written.

CCI is driven by a vision centered on linking the natural creativity and tolerance for risk of artists and creatives of all types to the latest professional practices and tools, new financial resources, and to one another. We believe this intentional focus helps artists and arts workers realize greater financial self-determination, which unfetters their productivity and social impact. In addition, by acting as a cross-sector incubator with an informed point of view, CCI advances efforts to improve conditions for artists and all those who share artists' conditions.

Knowledge is power. Financial independence begets creative self-determination. Partnerships lead to solutions. This is the Center for Cultural Innovation.

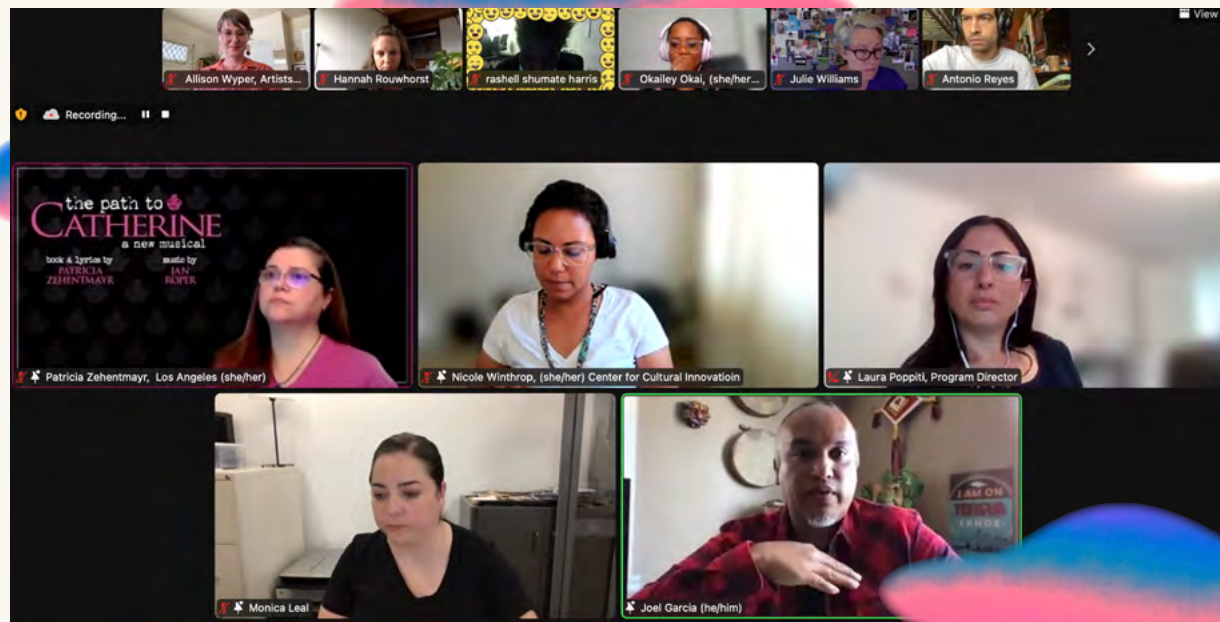


TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: FY22

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: FY22

Since its inception, the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) has helped thousands of California artists advance their artistic careers by offering a suite of professional development training programs and workshops that give artists opportunities to acquire current and necessary business skills, access top strategies to build and sustain thriving careers, and to protect their overall financial livelihood. Featuring a roster of successful arts and business experts with experience working with artists, creative entrepreneurs, and nonprofits, the program continues to prioritize and directly contribute to the sustainability, financial viability, and productivity of individual artists throughout the state.

CCI's interactive webinars brought artists together to explore meaningful ways to grow and sustain their businesses. Our skilled presenters integrated Social and Emotional Learning techniques to address the emotional challenges that can be triggered by topics like money and legal issues, and Business of Art trainers structured their lessons to support relationship building and peer learning. In response to restrictions on gatherings and travel due to the pandemic, CCI began offering our workshops and presentations online in spring 2020.



CCI staff and guest speakers present at "CCI Resources for California Artists" webinar. Center for Cultural Innovation. May 2022.

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: FY22

In total, CCI provided 87 hours of programming to approximately 1,300 artists and cultural workers in FY22.

Business of Art participant **YEU “Q” NGUYEN** commented in a workshop evaluation: **“It’s always interesting and helpful to hear stories and perspectives from others. It helps me to feel less alone on my journey as an artist. I’m also very impressed by the presenters. As an educator myself, I’ve always advocated for a more mindful, value-based pedagogy, and I think this course really exemplified that. I had a lot of fun, and learned a lot. I also made some friends and knew people I could collaborate with in future projects.”**

BRENDA ARELLANO attended Home of Your Own: Buying a Home for the First Time, reported gaining **“a sense of clarity with the home buying process and affirmation that I can buy a home. I also appreciated people being brave and asking questions that a lot of us have but are afraid to say out loud (living below the poverty line, unemployment) [...] the acknowledgement that money is very emotional and triggering.”**

NAOMI ROSE, who attended Retirement Savings for Artists, appreciated the perspective of the presenter, artist-turned-Certified-Financial-Planner, Christina Empedocles. **“Christina’s contextualizing retirement investing was very helpful, also making it seem within my reach and ability,”** she wrote. **“I love that Christina came to this field out of being an artist. It’s a very unique lens, and makes things seem achievable, as she presented it.”**

This feedback affirms that we are hiring the right presenters, and that our topic curation and lesson planning guidance yield meaningful and measurable results.

While in-person events are valuable, we consistently heard from participants how much they appreciate the accessibility of webinars, underscoring their importance.

“I appreciate these workshops very much, and thank you for the online access, which is the only way generally I can attend,” wrote Tax Tips for Artists attendee **CATHERINE HERRERA**.

A Business of Art participant said, **“I really appreciate that this workshop is on Zoom. I know it is just a byproduct of the pandemic, but it is really convenient for me as I have a young child, and I’m not sure it would’ve been possible to drive to LA to attend the workshop in person... It would’ve been difficult to plan and a strain on my scheduling. Zoom makes it so easy to do this from home, which is awesome. Thank you.”**

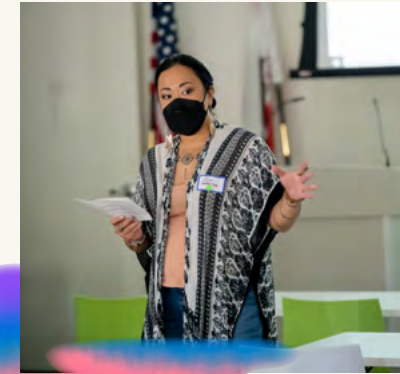
“I miss the live, human interaction aspect of a real class,” another Business of Art participant shared. **“There is something to be said for real life relationships... I also understand this can be limiting in terms of distance, location, time commitment, schedules... So all in all [I’m] grateful for the opportunity to attend this class.”**

In the future, CCI will offer both virtual and in-person programs.

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: FY22

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY22 INCLUDE:

- » CCI presented 18 free or sliding scale webinars including: **ToO+lkit: trading art for medicine, medicine for art (or whatever you want!); Home of Your Own: buying a home for the first time; Retirement Savings for Artists; Build Your Own Benefits Package; Protecting Your Work in the Digital Space; Tax Tips for Artists; Emergency Prep 101;** and a six part series on **Marketing Your Art Business Online.** All of our online programs offered live automatic closed captioning.



Clockwise from top left: WeHo Artist Bootcamp participant Antonio Rael presents his art business model; WeHo Artist Bootcamp participant Lyn Pacificar presents her business model; WeHo Artist Bootcamp class of 2022. Photos by Jonathan Moore.

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: FY22

- » For **CCI Resources for CA Artists**, our staff was joined by grantees **Ann C. James, Joel Garcia, Monica Leal Cueva, and Patricia Zehentmayr**, who shared their experiences with CCI grant and training programs, and the impact those programs have had on their professional practices. 226 people attended live or [watched the recording on our CCI YouTube channel](#).
- » CCI webinars served 814 participants from California and beyond, with presenters calling in from across the country. Those who could not participate live were able to watch recordings of the presentations. Of the 1,144 individual registrations for CCI programs, 614 were free and 505 paid between \$5 and \$25.
- » **The Business of Art** program utilized webinars, an online toolkit, and a recently updated workbook to support virtual cohort-style learning. The virtual format made the program accessible to artists outside of the Los Angeles metro area, and to artists with disabilities and transportation challenges. Art business experts Amy Kweskin, Sue Bell Yank, Casey Summar, Jeremiah O. Ojo, Amy Smith, and Elaine Grogan-Luttrull presented from California, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, respectively.
- » In fall 2021, CCI's 9-week virtual **Business of Art** workshop brought together 25 artists representing a range of disciplines and career stages. Participants called in from across the state



- » In fall 2021, CCI's 9-week virtual **Business of Art** workshop brought together 25 artists representing a range of disciplines and career stages. Participants called in from across the state of California and from Birmingham, Alabama. Thirteen of these artists received Quick Grants covering their tuition.
- » In spring 2022, CCI presented the third **City of West Hollywood Artist Bootcamp**, a free 10-part Business of Art workshop for 22 local artists. Though mainly virtual, the workshop concluded with an in-person gathering where the participants presented their art business models for one another and celebrated their accomplishments. This was CCI's first in-person event since winter 2020.
- » CCI partnered with the Sacramento Region Community Foundation & City of Sacramento on **Sharing Power: Solidarity Economies and the Arts**, a virtual meeting of 25 Sacramento-area arts and culture practitioners. CCI provided facilitation support and gave a presentation on our *AmbitioUS* initiative. The meeting was documented in real time by Graphic Artist Laura Chow Reeve.

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

Providing artists, culture bearers, and creative entrepreneurs with financial resources to help advance their careers has been a cornerstone of CCI's work. And, as an intermediary focused on the financial well-being of individuals in the arts, CCI continued to support and prioritize relief fund efforts that alleviated artists' financial hardship amid the economic devastation brought upon by COVID-19. Thanks to CCI's broad array of new initiatives and perennial grant programs such as: **Investing in Artists**, **Quick Grant**, the **California Arts Leadership Investments** portfolio, **AmbitioUS**, the **Zoo Labs: FUND**, national **SCI Artist-Innovator Fund**, and **regional relief funds**, artists and arts workers were able to improve their financial conditions, advance their professional development, expand their art practice or area of cultural production.

INVESTING IN ARTISTS

The **Investing in Artists** grant program was established by CCI in 2007 to enhance the working lives of California artists and strengthen the creative support system available to them. Since that time, CCI has awarded over \$2.4 million to 336 diverse artists across the state. Through the continued support of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the 2021 round of Investing in Artists awarded \$66,000 in project support grants to eight Bay Area artists. This was the first round of the program's new, three-year grant cycle.

The new cycle is marked by significant updates: the number of awards available for each round has increased to eight from six; the maximum award amount has increased to \$8,250 from \$8,000; and

we are rotating Bay Area counties that are eligible for support. For the 2021 application round, artists residing in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco Counties were eligible to apply. The 2022 round included eligible applicants residing in Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo counties, and the 2023 round will be open to applicants residing in Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma counties. In so doing, CCI will target resources more intentionally to all ten Bay Area counties.

For the 2021 round of funding, a group of panelists reflecting a diverse range of knowledge and perspectives assisted CCI in reviewing the Investing in Artists applications, including: **Natalia Ivanova Mount** (cultural leader, curator, published author, and Executive Director of Pro

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

Arts Gallery & COMMONS), **Destiny Muhammad** (recording/performing artist, band leader, composer, and producer), **Bhumi B Patel** (artist/activist and Artistic Director of pateldanceworks), and **Sapana Sakya** (documentary film producer and director, and Talent Development & Special Projects Manager at the Center for Asian American Media).

2021 INVESTING IN ARTISTS GRANTEES:

TIERRA ALLEN (Media/Alameda County) to support *The Real Work*, a podcast miniseries that weaves together interviews, music, and storytelling to explore transformative justice as a tool for preventing, addressing, and healing from sexual and identity-based harm in Bay Area art-making communities.

SHEHER AZAAD (Music/Contra Costa County) to support *Be-Sur*, an experimental album that centers women's authentic voices in a fast emerging, new-age contemporary genre of South Asian music.

BYB CHANEL BIBENE (Dance/Alameda County) to support *Religion Kitendi-Dress Code*, a dance project that dives into the portrayals of "Congolese sapeurs," a group of dandy men and women who strive to survive hardship and social and political challenges through feeling good in their attire.

CAT BROOKS (Theater/Alameda County) to support *I Am She*, a living, performed history by and for Oakland women that, in pursuit of justice for Black women everywhere, creates a record of the ongoing, patriarchal, racialized violence against and criminalization of Black, female bodies from the 1600s to the present day, so that it is no longer living in the shadows.

ERIC GARCIA (Dance Film/San Francisco County) to support *Up on High*, a contemporary dance film series collaboratively devised by a multi-generational ensemble of QTBIPOC drag artists that interrogates notions of queer legacy and our role as future ancestors for the next generation.

CORINNE MANABAT CUEVA (Film/Alameda County) to support *A Million Kisses from Lolo*, a personal documentary/hybrid piece about the artist's grandfather—a Filipino WWII veteran who wrote a screenplay that explores his wartime experiences and the themes of creative legacy, generational trauma, loss, and resilience. "Lolo" means grandfather in Tagalog.



Courtesy of Investing in Artists Grantee, Byb Bibene. (Pictured: Members of the Kitendi Dance Theater). Religion Kitendi-Dress Code. Dance. July 2022. ODC Theater, San Francisco, CA. Photography by Uzo Nwankpa.

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KIRTHI NATH (Film/Alameda County) to support *PARAMITA*, a poetic personal documentary bearing testament to the story of Prajna Paramita Choudhury, a first-generation South Asian American queer woman, as she comes out to her family and steps onto a spiritual journey that embodies Buddhist liberation practices, earth-based mysticism, and connection to nature as a pathway for collective healing.

NADHI THEKKEK (Dance/Contra Costa County) to support *Rogue Gestures/Foreign Bodies*, a Bharatanatyam dance production that interrogates the agency of South Asian women who immigrated to the U.S. since the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act.

Courtesy of Kirthi Nath, Investing in Artists grantee. Still from *PARAMITA*. Film. Photography by Sarah Wells. 2020



"Receiving the CCI Investing in Artists Grant had a profound impact both on my film project *PARAMITA* as well as for me as a creative artist. On a tangible level the grant gave me funds to pay for production needs that helped move the film forward, and just as importantly, grow my artistic process grounded in a values-based process – hiring a women of color/ women crew and cultivating a decolonized framework with both my crew and the film's main subject that involved relationship building, generative creation, and time as part of the creative practice. As an artist, being supported in this way was invaluable – it gave me the confidence and feedback that is possible to be funded and also be bold and fierce in my vision as a creator that insists on investing in a values-based process and artist(s), just as much as the project."

–Kirthi Nath, 2021 Investing in Artists Grant Recipient

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

CALIFORNIA ARTS LEADERS INVESTMENTS CATALYST GRANTS

The **California Arts Leadership Investments (CALI) Catalyst** program provides unrestricted grants of up to \$5,000 to California artists and arts workers—applying as either individuals or teams—who are on the frontlines of effecting greater inclusion, access, diversity, and equity in the arts and culture sector. Through bold actions, CALI Catalyst grantees are tangibly helping underrepresented communities—including Black, Indigenous, people of color, LGBTQIA+, and people with disabilities—gain more influence and power in the arts and culture sector. We consider these bold actions to be “changemaking” because they are visibly moving the needle for underrepresented communities to have more influence and power at an industry-wide level. In FY22, CALI Catalyst awarded \$95,000 to 19 individual and team recipients. Grantees were recognized for a range of bold actions that included

challenging issues of power and representation in the 3D asset marketplace, decolonizing municipal art collections, and shifting the dance industry towards more inclusive and diverse body size and type standards.

CALI Catalyst is part of a lineage of the evolving-with-the-times CALI program, which has been marked by different phases of grantmaking priorities since its launch in 2011. In its first years, CALI (then known as the NextGen program) was a professional development pipeline for young talent; then, when it was renamed CALI (California Arts Leadership Investments), it emphasized externally facing opportunities that prepared emerging arts professionals for managerial-level roles (i.e., workplace-specific skills and knowledge attainment). CALI Accelerator, offered from October 2018 – January 2021, prioritized

Courtesy of Leticia Resch. Pictured from left to right: Talitha Gabriel and Leticia Resch. June 2021. Melanin Gallery. Photo by John Dixon.



“Personally, this grant has allowed me to focus my career more on my work as a social practice artist/creative director. For the last several years, I have needed to support myself financially through my work in wedding and private event production. This grant allowed me to focus more on cultural events that celebrate and honor the Black community. I have a renewed commitment to growing the events and creative spaces for Black community members and Black artists. I have a deepened gratitude for the Black artists who I work with, and your funding has helped me have more steady work, and celebrate the Black community.”

—Leticia Forney Resch, 2021 CALI Catalyst Grant Recipient

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Courtesy of Joel Garcia, CALI Catalyst Grantee. The Land Under the Plinth, 17 July 2022, Tongva Taraxat Pasaayva Conservancy, Los Angeles, CA. Photo by Kenneth Lopez.



“The support from the CALI Catalyst grant arrived at a critical time as EDD [pandemic unemployment] was ending and further cancellation of in-person activities created barriers for income-earning opportunities. This support allowed me to dedicate two months to curriculum building and program development, tools that will help my ability to provide free programming to my community while also allowing me to use those tools to apply for grants. One such application was awarded in the range of \$100,000 for a year-long project focused on reimagining monuments.”

—Joel Garcia, 2021 CALI Catalyst Grant Recipient

activities aimed at helping grantees develop their leadership vision and voice while acquiring professional knowledge and skills as a means of preparing grantees to be influential in their organization, discipline, or larger arts and culture field. In response to the changing dynamics of the field, CALI Catalyst emerged in summer 2021 to support change makers who are explicit about changing the arts and culture sector in ways that are needed by those whose voices have not been adequately heard.

2021 CALI CATALYST GRANTEES:

JAMIE ALDAYA, San Francisco County
TAYLOR BRANDON, Alameda County
JENNIFER CRYSTAL CHIEN, Alameda County
A.M. DARKE, Alameda County
RHIANNON EVANS MACFADYEN, San Francisco County
LETICIA FORNEY RESCH & TEAM, Santa Barbara County
MONICA GALVAN & TEAM, Santa Cruz County
JOEL GARCIA, Los Angeles County
JORGE HEREDIA, San Bernardino County
SKYLAR HOUZE & TEAM, Los Angeles County
ANN JAMES, Los Angeles County
DAVID MACK, Alameda County
DEVI PEACOCK & TEAM, Alameda County
RACHEL SANDERS, Trinity County
ELY SONNY ORQUIZA, San Francisco County
ASHLEY SOTO PANIAGUA, Los Angeles County
CHRIS STEELE, San Francisco County
JAVIER STELL-FRESQUEZ, MIKO THOMAS, & TEAM, San Francisco County
ALEX WEST, Los Angeles/Riverside County

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

CALIFORNIA ARTS LEADERSHIP NOW

Since 2018, CCI has managed and participated in the **CAL-Now** network, which is composed of seven associations for rising arts professionals in various regions of California. To stay connected, CAL-Now network members participate in monthly video conference calls to exchange insights about current trends in their organizations and the larger field. In addition, representatives of the CAL-Now network look forward to traveling each year to an outside convening to build their professional networks and for exposure to specific learning topics. However, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the network's FY22 travel funds were repurposed, albeit with the same objectives that were sought by outside convenings (i.e., network building and field learning). Member organizations were polled for their interest in a range of topics with an overwhelming majority demonstrating an interest in wellness and healing practices.

CCI then set out to contract with trainers who could support the network's engagement with this topic.

In May of 2022, CCI invited Art Therapy Studio to facilitate a workshop for CAL-Now members. In this workshop, members had a chance to learn about art therapy, and the importance of adopting therapeutic practices into your work life. The session focused on the power of positive self-talk, and walked members through a quick art directive focused on creating small cards with reinforcing/positive messages that they could keep or gift to others. Members were encouraged to implement this practice into their work life and to share it with their respective networks. A fall workshop is currently in development that will build on the first one and focus on self-help practices which CAL-Now members can implement into their daily lives and work.

CAL-Now Network members, Art Therapy Workshop. (Pictured from left to right: Top Row: Amber McElreath, Nadia Chrisanto, Okaley Okai, Jorge Vargas, Middle Row: Gemma Jimenez, Rhiannon McFadyen, Sofia Lugo, Christine Zheng, Bottom Row: Irene Faye Duller, Melba Martinez, Stephanie Barajas, Michelle Lin.) May 2022. Photo courtesy of CCI.



CAL-NOW MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:

CENTER FOR CULTURAL INNOVATION

EMERGING ARTS LEADERS/
LOS ANGELES

EMERGING ARTS PROFESSIONALS
SAN FRANCISCO/BAY AREA

GENARTS SILICON VALLEY

MULTICULTURAL ARTS LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTE/SAN JOSÉ

PUBLIC MATTERS/LOS ANGELES

RISING ARTS LEADERS/SAN DIEGO

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

FY22 COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDS

With the continued economic crisis and ensuing financial needs of individuals resulting from the coronavirus pandemic, CCI administered two additional **COVID-19 Relief Funds** that included the East Bay Relief Fund for Individuals in the Arts and the Berkeley Arts Recovery Grants for Artists & Cultural Practitioners. The funds were administered from November 16, 2021 – May 26, 2022 in support of artists and arts workers in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, and in the City of Berkeley.

To realize these efforts, CCI worked with Berkeley's Civic Arts Program, Kenneth Rainin Foundation, Hellman Foundation, and Walter & Elise Haas Fund.

FY22 RELIEF FUNDING BY-THE-NUMBERS:



FY20 – FY22 Grand Total: \$6.95M distributed to 3,768 grantees

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

QUICK GRANT PROGRAM

CCI launched the **Quick Grant** program in 2009 in partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission and San Francisco Grants for the Arts to establish a collaborative funding initiative that would strengthen the support system for artists and arts administrators. Now in its thirteenth year, the Quick Grant program is a statewide mainstay for artists and arts administrators with multiple funding partners collaboratively invested in providing professional development reimbursement funding.

"I want to thank the Center for Cultural Innovation for supporting artist entrepreneurs through networking opportunities at the Cannes Film Festival through Pavillion Afriques. This global network taught me new opportunities and pathways for reaching a global audience. Quick Grant afforded me a transformational experience to help grow my filmmaking career."

—Jacquil Constant, 2022 Quick Grant Recipient



Courtesy of Jacquil Constant. Jacquil Constant, pictured second from left, at the Cannes Film Festival – Pavilion Afriques. Photo by Foto Forey Fumey.

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"The CCI Quick Grant allowed me to find writing partners and learn more about the process of hiring an agent to support my career. I'm at a crucial point in my literary career where I am a seasoned writer, yet not widely published. With this support, I was able to network with many talented emerging writers (this was a highly competitive and selective workshop) and quickly develop a relationship with my workshop instructor, which will carry me forward as I learn to successfully navigate working with agents and editors."

—Gretchen Potter, 2022 Quick Grant Recipient



With the pandemic's severe disruption to artists' financial well-being and organizational staff capacity, the Quick Grant program has been a source of financial support for individuals to afford *adapting* to a disrupted reality. Grantees thus received support to adapt their business plans to all things digital; to adapt in-person experiences to online platforms and other new technologies; and to adapt to a world that has woken up and become more cognizant of systemic racism and exclusionary practices via a surge in interest in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training. In fact, the "double-whammy" combination of COVID and AB 5 was so disruptive to the field, that Quick Grants became even more *in demand* to help artists adapt in order to survive financially.

In FY22, the Quick Grant program awarded a total of \$134,125 in reimbursement grants to 249 artists and 21 nonprofit arts organization staff members.

THIS FISCAL YEAR'S PARTICIPATING FUNDERS INCLUDED:

BLOOMBERG PHILANTHROPIES

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

CITY OF LOS ANGELES, DEPARTMENT
OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, OFFICE OF
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT
OF ARTS AND CULTURE

SAN FRANCISCO ARTS COMMISSION

SAN FRANCISCO GRANTS
FOR THE ARTS

WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT
FOUNDATION

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

SPINAL CORD INJURY (SCI) ARTIST-INNOVATOR FUND

With support from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, CCI offered the second round of a national grant opportunity to artists and creative innovators, inventors, makers, hackers, problem-solvers, and entrepreneurs with spinal cord injury for social-impact oriented entrepreneurship projects that reflect and further grantees' artistic or creative practice. The **Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Artist-Innovator Fund** provided \$75,000 in grants of up to \$7,500 each to individual artist-entrepreneurs with spinal cord injuries who are inspired to innovate by opportunity-based entrepreneurship. CCI recognizes that having an underserved perspective, living with challenging circumstances, and applying creative practice can yield important solutions for not only the innovator but also society. This opportunity recognizes that the combination of SCI populations, craftsmanship and creative practice, and positive social impact can render powerful results.

CCI contracted with Reveca Torres to manage the SCI Artist-Innovator Fund. As a wheelchair user whose experiences inform her creative practice and entrepreneurial accomplishments, she led the successful design and implementation of the program.

The program received 35 applications from across the country. They were reviewed by the following panelists:

QUEMUEL ARROYO is the first Chief Accessibility Officer at the New York State Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). He is a 2020 SCI Artist-Innovator grantee.

WES HALLOWAY is an artist with spinal cord injury who is part of the inaugural cohort of students pursuing an MFA in Social Practice with an emphasis in Public Policy at The Corcoran School of Arts and Design in Washington D.C.

MINNA HONG is a mixed medium artist with spinal cord injury and the former Manager of SCI peer support at the Shepherd Center, in Atlanta, Georgia, from which she retired after working for 19 years.

ANDREA JENNINGS is an actress, keynote speaker, and the Vice-Chair of the City of Pasadena's Accessibility and Disability Commission, as well as the founder of Shifting Creative Paradigms Entertainment and Productions – Leveling the Playing Field™.

BROOK MCCALL is Senior Director of the Tech Access Initiative for the United Spinal Association, which brings tech industry stakeholders and thought leaders from the mobility disability community together to ensure that technology is accessible to all.

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

2021 SCI ARTIST-INNOVATOR FUND GRANTEES:

MOLLY AUBRY (West Palm Beach, Florida) to set up an ergonomic and functional studio space to develop programming on human connection and social coordination for arts education programs in local schools in South Florida.

EMILY BARKER (Los Angeles, California) to complete construction of the first prototype of Moving Parts, a fully sustainable green energy wheelchair-accessible Tiny House that will serve as an artist residency and be used to sell units to artist residencies whose housing is inaccessible.

TYREE BROWN (Capitol Heights, Maryland) to purchase vlogging equipment intended to enhance artistic content creation on YouTube that aims to instruct, encourage, and increase representation of quadriplegic, Black women artists.



SCI Artist-Innovator Fund Grantee Carina Ho, promoting the release of "Diu diu dang," which she completed and released with support from her grant. June 2021. Oakland, CA. Photo by Julia Wang.

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

TAMEKA CITCHEN-SPRUCE

(Southfield, Michigan) to hire a social impact producer for her film *My Girl Story*, with the goal of supporting Black girls with disabilities to find power in their own stories through community screenings and conversations.

DILLON CONNOLLY (Long Beach, California) to compensate fitness instructors of various levels of spinal cord injury and video editors who create content for Zuk Fitness, a virtual fitness platform tailored for people with SCI.

RYAN GEBAUER (Coral Springs, Florida) to create promotional materials and utilize software to host online training for CARES, a Certified Accessibility Real Estate Specialist course, educating real estate professionals on accessibility and ultimately helping people with disabilities find accessible housing.

CARINA HO (Oakland, California) to record and promote a full-length album in creative collaboration with other artists with disabilities, and engage audiences through live streams and conversations with artists during production.

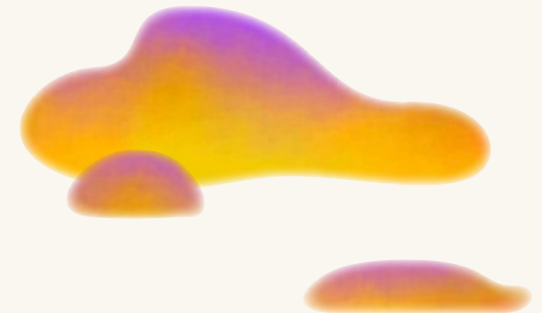
ANDRE JOHNSON (Chicago, Illinois) to pilot test and build out a sales and marketing campaign for LiveEquipd, a web-based platform for organizations to streamline their equipment procurement process while creating a robust resource to promote healthy outcomes for their patients with paralysis-related disabilities.

DAVID PLATILLERO (Fullerton, California) to create and promote *Lionheart to Heart*, a video series and podcast exploring trauma and finding purpose. Each conversation will inspire a song that will be compiled into an album.

“This award has enabled me to jump start work on my first full-length album. Putting out new work has renewed my personal sense of motivation as an artist, and has added to the momentum of my creative process. Since receiving my SCI Innovator Award, I have released four original singles and three music videos that will be a part of a larger album I plan to release at the end of the year. This award has allowed me to collaborate with a diverse range of artists, fund production costs [and] pay for online advertising to help circulate my songs to a wider audience.”

—Carina Ho, 2021 SCI Artist-Innovator Fund Grant Recipient

RACHEL SHORT (Carmel, California) to complete and exhibit a project using iPhone photography and platinum printing, a technique picked up after her spinal cord injury, and open her gallery to exhibit local photographers.



GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

ZOO LABS: FUND

Zoo Labs was founded with a vision of building a startup entrepreneurship infrastructure for artists. From 2013 through 2020, Zoo Labs ran 26 accelerator residencies at their West Oakland recording studios, assembling a strong and vibrant community of over 250 artists and 350 mentors whose collective knowledge and skills are abundant. While many of these artists now have entrepreneurial skills and projects that are ready to go, there is a marked lack of capital for these individuals, especially Bay Area BIPOC artists, to afford starting or scaling up their creative businesses. In response to this pointed financial need, Zoo Labs partnered with CCI to launch **Zoo Labs: FUND**, which awards unrestricted grants to Bay Area BIPOC artists and teams whose music business is contributing to the region's arts and culture environment in positive ways. In addition to receiving cash grants, teams receive access to mentors with expertise in a range of industries (music, tech, marketing, legal, and more).

The inaugural grantmaking cycle distributed \$235,000 through award tiers that included \$5,000, \$15,000, \$25,000, and \$50,000.

Two 3-member panels assisted CCI in reviewing Zoo Labs: FUND applications and making grantee recommendations. For the \$5,000 and \$15,000 award tiers, panelists included **Bosco Kante** (producer, inventor, artist advocate, and founder of ElectroSpit), **Quynh-Mai Nguyen** (artist and creative director of Art Builds Community), and **Maya Sykes** (brand marketing lead for Black Joy Parade). For the \$25,000 and \$50,000 award tiers, panelists included **Idris Ackamoor** (multi-instrumentalist, composer, actor, tap dancer, producer, administrator, and founder & executive director of Cultural Odyssey), **Nina Robinson** (financial activist, capital convener, creative, and fund director at RUNWAY), and **Vân-Ánh Võ** (musician, composer, and artistic director of the Blood Moon Orchestra).



TaikoPeace rehearsing at Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford University. October 2021. Photo by Steve Sano.

“What an honor to receive the 2021 Zoo Labs grant which supported me and TaikoPeace to boldly imagine new ways of creative expression and “business” while collectively practicing heart-values for transformation and systemic well-being. Where my previous work centered around performance with an artistic direction for a cultural performance group for 37-years, the Zoo Labs grant empowered me to rewire and step onto my path as a vibrant solo-artist/socialpreneur.”

—PJ Hirabayashi of TaikoPeace, 2021 Zoo Labs: FUND Grant Recipient

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Courtesy of Psychic Eye Records. Picture from left to right: Winter Zora and Akiko Sampson of Yama Uba. 2021. Oakland, CA. Photo by Kevin Brown.

“This grant was SO effective for us. We operate on a shoestring and still do, so what we used to supplement our current funds made many separate projects possible. Since we were awarded the Zoo Labs grant, Psychic Eye has released a debut 7” for our band Yama Uba, which sold 10% of our stock on the pre-order release date, without any PR. Yama Uba has also completed an album that is in mixing and mastering now and will release on vinyl in 2023. Yama Uba have booked three tours: California/Mexico, East Coast, and Europe in 2022.”

–Psychic Eye Records, 2021 Zoo Labs: FUND Grant Recipient

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

2021 ZOO LABS: FUND GRANTEES:

\$50,000	STOREFRONT RECORDS , Alameda County
\$25,000	CASTLES AND CROWNS , Alameda County HONEY GOLD JASMINE , Alameda County PLANET FUTURELIC , Alameda, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Solano Counties
\$15,000	THE AUTONOMOUS REGION , San Francisco County BEING CREATIVE FOR US , Contra Costa County MINDFUL VOICES: MUSIC & HEART PRACTICES FOR THE SOUL , Alameda County RENÉ Y FAMILIA – CANCIONES, EMOCIONES, Y PODER , San Francisco County TAIKOPEACE , Contra Costa County WÔC , San Francisco and San Mateo Counties
\$5,000	DESMOND O'SHEA AND DAVIS O'SHEA/LIL SHLURP SHLURP , Alameda County FIREBIRD SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND ARTS , Solano County ORCHESTRA GOLD , Alameda County PSYCHIC EYE RECORDS , Alameda County



Courtesy of Kev Choice. Castle & Crowns (Pictured from left to right: DJ.D Sharp, Tony Vic, Kev Choice). SharpChoice Studios, East Oakland, CA.

“The Zoo Labs Grant really helped provide an opportunity for me to create and collaborate in a way I’ve always envisioned. I was able to create a team of talented individuals I’ve longed to work with, fund and support improvements to our creative process, develop content, expand marketing, and also hire musicians to take the music to a higher place. It also opened me up creatively in having to worry less about financial restraint and focus more on the artistic process. My team also got a lot out of the videos on the site and the one on one sessions with mentors in the industry.”

–Kev Choice of Castles & Crowns, 2021 Zoo Labs: FUND Grant Recipient

GRANT FUNDING & PROGRAMS

AMBITIOUS: AIMING HIGHER

For *AmbitioUS*, 2022 marked a year of mission-driven *momentum*. No word better describes the third year of our time-limited initiative.

When CCI launched *AmbitioUS* in 2019 it was with the knowledge that significant demographic changes were on the horizon; that technology was changing the economics of artists' work; that race, gender, and ability-based disparities were pervasive even as awareness of these gaps increased; and that the social, political, and technological environment was primed for significant disruptions. While there was no way to predict in those early days how those disruptions might manifest, *AmbitioUS* began its work to support efforts that shift capital, power, and ownership to cultural communities under threat.

Four years later the seeds planted in the first years of funding and investing are not only bearing fruit but are seeding and inspiring new, community-focused efforts in communities all over the United States.

We witnessed some of these breath-taking results firsthand when, after nearly two years of not traveling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the *AmbitioUS* team took a road trip to visit a number of Economic Trailblazer investees, partners, and prospective grantees in five states in the South. As part of our trip, we were invited to talk about place-based models as a possibility to help influence the economic and cultural development of Bentonville, Arkansas. We spent time in rural Alabama with grantee, Ekvn-Yefolecv (pronounced "Ee Gun Yee Fo Lee Ja"), a Maskoke community which over the last two years raised more than \$3 million to purchase ancestral land outright. As some of the

first welcomed visitors to their village since the start of the pandemic, they showed us how they are building structures and practices that nourish, preserve, and reflect their cultural community's values.

We also traveled to see the incredible community weaving that Cooperative New West Jackson has done in its eight-block radius in Jackson, Mississippi. Its creative structure, where the cooperative holds title to the (21 acres of) land and the individual resident holds the title to their home, creates economic independence, a shared sense of purpose, and makes the co-op a powerful voice when developers who view its proximity to downtown Jackson, which is one mile away, as an opportunity to extract from a historically Black



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Grantee Orange Mound: A view inside of the 1950s abandoned feed mill set to become the group's new arts space. April 2022.

community for profit. From our last visit in September 2019 to this visit, the neighborhood transformation is nothing short of remarkable. And the work continues.

Our team also met with the next generation of leaders and organizations working towards community-controlled assets in Atlanta, Georgia. There, the Guild is specifically adapting some of East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative's (EB PREC) model to ensure that Black Atlantans are not gentrified out of their homes and neighborhoods, and we shared what we have learned from EB PREC and other investees to encourage adaptation and replication. It is developing community amenities and structures that are directly sourced from the needs of community members.

In Memphis, we met trailblazing grantee Anasa Troutman, Executive Director of Historic Clayborn Temple (HCT). Under her leadership, a Civil Rights monument is being restored back into a cultural home and a shared community asset for Memphis's Black community. We also met with the young leader of an organization that Troutman and HCT are working closely with as it builds out plans to make a significant investment in Orange Mound, a historically Black neighborhood in Memphis. The singularity of Troutman's work and bold leadership was celebrated by one of our funders, the Kresge Foundation. Kresge created a video showcasing Historic Clayborn as a national example of vital and creative economic regeneration in Memphis.

We hear from many of our grantees that guiding new grassroots-led, culturally-centered, and power-and capital-shifting organizations feels like or could be a full-time job. This is the momentum that we could only dream about when AmbitioUS started and now it is poised for ignition.

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Momentum is also growing in our Artist Ownership work. Debt Collective, a debtors union, has helped relieve billions of dollars in student loan debt, including recent victories against ITT Tech and Corinthian Colleges, Inc. It is positioning itself for a major campaign, hoping to influence the Biden Administration to provide widespread student debt relief. Another example of developing momentum is from a grant we made in the fall of 2021. AmbitioUS supported a one-time project grant to an innovative and experimental project of Flock DC called birdSEED, which provides no-strings-attached down payment grants to qualifying Black and Brown first-time home-buying residents in the Washington, D.C. area. Flock DC recognized that the real estate industry and its generation-to-generation wealth creation has been out of reach for many Black and Brown individuals. The experiment in D.C. served as a proof of concept and it is rolling out this program next in Philadelphia, and it has plans to bring it to other locations.

As delighted as we are by growing signs in 2022, we are not naive. We know momentum does not guarantee success. The longer-term ability of these and efforts like these to truly take hold and flourish depends on many things (examples include easy access to capitalization, affordable legal advice for organizational and/or deal structuring, infrastructure that can support back office needs). AmbitioUS is weighing the impact of those issues going forward, and we are hopeful and inspired by what these organizations and communities are doing to model ways of being in right relationship.

In total, from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, AmbitioUS awarded \$1,046,000 total in grants, investments, and professional services agreements.



The AmbitioUS road-trippers: AmbitioUS Director, Cate Fox (left), Angie Kim, CCI President & CEO (far right), and Nichole Christian, Narrative Shifter.

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BENEFICIARIES OF AMBITIOUS FUNDS (JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022):

BIRDSEED | fiscal sponsor: Greater Washington Community Foundation (\$30,000 first-time grant; Artist Asset category): birdSEED provides “no-strings-attached” down payment grants to qualifying Black and Brown first-time home buyers in the Washington, D.C. area. AmbitioUS provided a project-restricted grant to support two birdSEED down payment awards to BIPOC applicants who self-identify as artists, cultural producers, artisans, or creative entrepreneurs. This investment supported knowledge-building—and potentially, economic model replication—among AmbitioUS staff and funders with regards to shifting capital and ownership to cultural communities under threat.

BLACSPACE COOPERATIVE | fiscal sponsor: Black Arts Movement Business District (\$5,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): BlacSpace Cooperative is an early-stage Oakland, CA, cooperative that leverages the Black Arts Movement tradition to build a supportive ecosystem where Black arts, business, ownership, and culture can thrive. The vision of BlacSpace is to build a networked infrastructure of programming, cooperative business practice, democratic governance, and a city-wide marketing plan that sustains a network of cultural spaces throughout Oakland. Through the 2020 *Grant & Loan Fund for Early-Stage Arts, Creative, and Cultural Cooperatives*, AmbitioUS provided BlacSpace with a one-year operational support grant and technical assistance from Uptima Entrepreneur Cooperative. This award supported an additional year of technical assistance from Uptima.

BOSTON IMPACT INITIATIVE | (\$75,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): Boston Impact Initiative (BII) was created to close the racial wealth gap by changing the rules about how capital flows through communities of color. This project supports a cohort-based training program that will federate nationally the development of locally governed, integrated capital funds. These funds invested in Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other marginalized entrepreneurs’ startups and businesses to help close the racial wealth divide. AmbitioUS provided a one-year project support grant to BII for its Fund-Building Cohort.

BOSTON IMPACT INITIATIVE | (\$45,000 contract; Trailblazer category): BII has emerged as a leader in integrated capital investment strategies and shares its codified methodologies with place-based organizations and community foundations to support emerging funds, some of which were incubated through BII’s Fund-Building Cohort. This contract supported research, conducted by BII and its associates, to better illuminate the infrastructure needs of grassroots community-based funds that are designed to shift capital to those who have been historically excluded.

BOSTON UJIMA PROJECT | fiscal sponsor: Center for Economic Democracy Inc (\$175,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): Boston Ujima, a project of the Center for Economic Democracy, raised capital for a democratically controlled loan fund that finances small businesses, real estate, and infrastructure projects in the Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan neighborhoods of Boston, MA. Historically these neighborhoods of color have been underserved by conventional systems of government, commercial, and nonprofit support.

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AmbitioUS provided two years of operational support for the Ujima Fund alongside newer programs it is piloting, including a membership program that invites start-up community-based funds into a mentorship and learning cohort.

THE CEJJES INSTITUTE INC | (\$10,000 first-time project grant; Trailblazer category): The CEJJES Institute Inc (the Institute) is a cultural, educational, and research nonprofit dedicated to improving the educational and social conditions for all disenfranchised people. It works in collaboration with communities of color, with a focus on individuals of African descent and youth. As part of its education mission, the Institute is undertaking an effort to adapt *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice* (**Penn State Press, 2014**), written by Dr. Jessica Gordon Nembhard, into a graphic novel. The book was originally written for an academic audience but has become an important foundational text for

those interested in and involved with the solidarity economy movement. AmbitioUS provided a one-year project grant to support the creation of the graphic novel that distills Collective Courage's detailed histories, economic philosophies, and key learnings into a format accessible to more individuals.

COMMON FUTURE | (\$100,000 forgivable loan; Trailblazer category): Common Future is an Oakland, CA nonprofit intermediary that supports philanthropic partners and community leaders of color to rebuild an economy that includes everyone. It is actively working to transform current lending practices that rely on exclusionary practices, like the 5C's of Credit, to a more relationship- and character-based lending approach. AmbitioUS provided a forgivable loan to Common Future and its Character-Based Lending Fund. The Fund works with BIPOC-led organizations to offer loan products to BIPOC entrepreneurs in three communities across the country.

Common Future staff members gather at the annual Community Capital conference. (Pictured from left to right: Jessica Feingold, Leslie Lindo, Ronilay Diaz, Lauren Paul, Patricia McCarthy, Rakiba Kibria.) October 2019. Common Future, Oakland. Photo by Morgan Shidler Photography.



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COOPERATIVE OF NEW WEST JACKSON | fiscal sponsor: Voices of Calvary Ministries (\$30,000 renewal; Economic Trailblazer category): Co-op NWJ is a grassroots effort to rebuild socio-cultural cohesion and create real financial opportunities that rely on residents retaining home ownership and improving their neighborhood. AmbitioUS provided one year of operational support to Co-op NWJ and its leaders who are using place-based, community development in ways that lead to ownership and financial sustainability for a historically marginalized African American neighborhood of West Jackson, MS.

DEBT COLLECTIVE | fiscal sponsor: Sustainable Markets Foundation (\$50,000 renewal; Artist Asset category): The Debt Collective is a social movement organization attempting to fix financialized capitalism by collectivizing individual debt-holders to exert bargaining power against financial institutions for better practices, terms, and loan forgiveness. AmbitioUS provided one year of operational support to bolster the Debt Collective's work to collectivize student loan debtors so that they can exert bargaining power with financial institutions that profit from their debt.

EAST BAY PERMANENT REAL ESTATE COOPERATIVE | (\$50,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative (EB PREC) is taking land and property in Oakland, CA, off the speculative market in order to put ownership in the hands of African American community members. Their displacement as a result of gentrification would not just be a problem for Black Oaklanders, it would be a loss of cultural identity for all Americans. AmbitioUS provided a one-year expenditure responsibility grant to support EB PREC with its cooperative ownership structure that benefits and retains African American communities in Oakland and their shared cultural identity.

EKVN YEFOLECV | (\$50,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): The EkvN-Yefolecv Ecovillage is the home of a community of Maskoke people who recently purchased some of their ancestral homeland, in what is now known as the state of Alabama, after the Maskoke were driven from their land as part of the Trail of Tears, America's forced migration of the Cherokee people. The Ecovillage includes housing, regenerative farming, ceremonial lodge, and it is currently raising funds for Vlahoke (uh-lah-hoe-ghee) an earned-income generating,



Art work is a centerpiece of grantee CO-op New West Jackson's neighborhood revitalization efforts in Mississippi.

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off-the-grid education, meeting, and retreat space. The village demonstrates the possibilities for localized, culturally owned, and revitalizing economies. AmbitioUS provided two years of general operating support.

HISTORIC CLAYBORN TEMPLE | (\$50,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): The Historic Clayborn Temple is a non-profit based in Memphis, TN, and is officially acknowledged as a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Clayborn Temple was the base of operations for the Sanitation Workers' Strike of 1968 where civil rights and labor activists organized to demand better working conditions and higher pay. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. joined their protest efforts and gave a speech at the Temple on March 18, 1968. Clayborn is making possible a cooperative ecosystem of businesses and services in Memphis—a first of its kind in Memphis—in order to confer ownership and power into the hands of African American community members through a cultural lens. AmbitioUS provided one year of general operating support.

NEW ECONOMY COALITION | (\$5,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): New Economy Coalition (NEC) is a nonprofit affinity network of over 200 organizations in the United States and Canada that work at the forefront of the new economy movement. The “new economy” represents an emerging vision for a just, sustainable, and democratic future that centers traditional ecological knowledge, reparations and restoration, and responsive and participatory governance. NEC is one of the few nonprofit intermediary and membership organizations that AmbitioUS supported due to their important role in intersecting and advancing both the new economy with economic justice and equity priorities.

NEXUS COMMUNITY PARTNERS | (\$100,000 investment; Trailblazer category): Nexus Community Partners (Nexus) is a nonprofit organization focused on the intersection of community building and community development for communities of color, with a particular emphasis on the historically African American community of North Minneapolis. Through its Community Wealth Building program, which has a focus on cooperative development, Nexus helps residents build greater individual and collective wealth. AmbitioUS provided two years of support for Nexus' Community Wealth Building work which includes support for the North Star Black Cooperative Development Fellowship, the Nexus Cooperative Development Fellowship, and the Fellowship Alumni Fund.



Nexus Community Partners, North Star Black Cooperative Fellowship. (Pictured from left to right, top to bottom: Me Lea Connelly, Danielle Mkali, Carla Olukemi Schleicher, DeVon Nolen, Rekhet Si-Asar, Kenya Mknright, Ashley Bennett, Tana Hargest, Repa Mekha, Dr. Jessica Gordon Nembhard, LaDonna Sanders Redmond.) 2018. Nexus Community Partners, Minneapolis. Photo by Lynette Condra.

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A big sign of the ongoing growth for grantee Roanhorse Consulting.

TONE, F/K/A THE COLLECTIVE | (\$25,000 first-time project grant; Trailblazer category): TONE is a Memphis, TN, based organization whose mission is to elevate Black artists as innovative thought leaders, courageous storytellers, and risk-taking problem solvers through intentional exhibitions, conversations, concerts, and artist development. TONE is working alongside a few other key artist leaders to redevelop Orange Mound Tower, a visual symbol of this historically Black neighborhood into a cultural hub for Black Memphis that includes a commercial market space, multifamily housing, performance venues, courtyard, and more. The vacated Orange Mound Tower property is a 10-acre industrial site located on Lamar Avenue, a major thoroughfare. The site consists of a group of buildings once used as a grain operation, including a grain elevator known by neighborhood residents as the "Tower" and is directly adjacent to a rail loading area. The site has been vacant since 2010 and inoperable for 20+ years. AmbitioUS provided one year of project support to TONE for its work reimagining Orange Mound Tower.

ROANHORSE CONSULTING, LLC | (\$50,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): Roanhorse Consulting is an Indigenous women-owned firm that supports community-led solutions in addressing social, economic, health, and well-being challenges; co-creates opportunities and spaces that challenge systemic barriers through power-building and self-determination; reframes and strengthens systems through an equity and justice lens; and builds the capacity of all clients. Roanhorse is a leading voice in the creation of Character Based Lending initiatives and models which offer alternative lending and financing mechanisms that focus on trust and relationships to move capital. AmbitioUS provided two years of expenditure responsibility grants to support Roanhorse Consulting and its

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Indigenous, women-led principals who are contributing to an emergent alternative economic paradigm that includes and works for Native American communities.

RUNWAY | fiscal sponsor: Everyday People for Change (\$100,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): RUNWAY (formerly known as The Runway Project) addresses the lack of capital (investments, loans, grants) that Black creative entrepreneurs face in trying to start and run successful small businesses in Oakland, CA and Boston, MA. AmbitioUS provided RUNWAY with two years of operational support that bolsters efforts to build financial opportunities for Black business owners and investors in Oakland and Boston through their Friends and Family Loan Product, the launch of their new integrated capital fund, and their ongoing operations.

SOLIDAIRE NETWORK | (\$25,000 first-time investment; Trailblazer category): Solidaire Network is a community of donors mobilizing critical resources into intersectional movements for racial, gender, and climate justice. Membership dues are pooled and allocated to social and racial justice movement partnerships primarily through its portfolio of grants given through the Movement Infrastructure Fund. In addition to grantmaking, Solidaire Network activates its network through educational programming, community building opportunities, and information sharing on its listservs. With this grant, AmbitioUS became a member of the network that includes individual donors and institutional funders and joins this dynamic learning network.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES LAW CENTER | (\$75,000 renewal; Trailblazer category): Sustainable Economies Law Center (SELC) is a nonprofit law center in Oakland, CA, that specializes in developing cooperatives and innovating sources of new capital to benefit underserved communities. AmbitioUS provided one year of general support for SELC's cooperative development efforts that, in this COVID-19 economic recession, are focused on preventing displacement of people of color and supporting efforts to help people of color own property collectively. AmbitioUS funding also supported SELC's Next Egg project, which is building a new market for individual retirement accounts to be invested locally and not through Wall Street.

UPTIMA ENTREPRENEUR COOPERATIVE | fiscal sponsor: L.C. Lille Cox Haven of Hope (\$20,000 project grant; Trailblazer category): Uptima Entrepreneur Cooperative (Uptima) provides holistic and culturally relevant education, advising, and networking to support diverse entrepreneurs in creating thriving businesses in service to their communities. In 2020, Uptima partnered with AmbitioUS and SEED Commons in the Grant & Loan Fund for Early-Stage Arts, Creative, and Cultural Cooperatives program. Through this program Uptima was contracted to provide cooperative-specific business and technical assistance to the five artist cooperatives that were selected to receive grants. AmbitioUS provided Uptima a one-year project support grant for continued technical assistance support to selected early stage cooperatives.

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FROM RUSTLE TO SOL: Shifting Power, Building Opportunities For All Workers

The seven words above embody and encapsulate both the mission and CCI's decision to sharpen even further the focus of its newest permanent line of work, launched initially in 2021 as Rustle Lab, and formally rebranded as the Sol Center for Liberated Work. The center's charge includes: Investing in research, advocacy, and community-based solutions that build social and economic protections for arts workers and those in the broader gig economy.



The Sol Center for Liberated Work builds on CCI's long-standing track record of issuing critical research on artists, and in particular our influential [Arts Workers in California \(2021\)](#) report, which exposed major gaps in the safety net for arts workers, as well as others working in the broader gig economy.

The Sol Center also grows from our recognition, gleaned from several years of learning through our AmbitioUS grantmaking portfolio, that

enabling BIPOC arts workers and cultural communities to achieve agency and self-determination requires engaging at the level of systems change, and in particular, by investing in both policy and community-driven solutions.

We see a world where everyone has:

PROTECTION:

To meet our basic needs, weather unexpected shocks, and take risks

OPPORTUNITY:

To shape our lives, institutions, communities, economies, and places; and

POWER:

To joyfully express our personal agency, freedom, and self-determination

As ever, our intentions and efforts are grounded in the experiences of arts workers, with the important caveat that we are committed to solutions that prioritize and work for *all workers*, regardless of sector. Arts workers share precarious working conditions with many others in the gig economy, including domestic workers, freelancers, and informal workers, among others. We all need liberated work, and we think the best path to get there is to work in alliance with other movement leaders, to build a better future together.

To advance our vision in 2022, we invested in three core areas:

RESEARCH

In 2022, we commissioned two pieces of research. The first, led by the Urban Institute, was a landscape scan of academics, advocacy organizations, and worker groups seeking to build a new social contract

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for nontraditional workers. As the foundation of our first cross-sectoral convening in December 2022, the research identified proposals, researchers, and leaders working to expand social protections, worker power, and basic rights for nontraditional workers. The scan's findings will be shared in early 2023 along with findings from a related convening.

At the closing of this report, the Sol Center was also preparing to publish a commissioned analysis of the legal considerations raised by blockchain technologies for arts workers. Conducted by Gundzik Gundzik Heeger LLP, the analysis examined the legal risks posed by the blockchain economy to individual creatives, examining issues such as NFTs and copyright, smart contracts, resale royalties, issues in forming or joining an existing DAO, fractionalized NFT ownership, and the meaning of ownership in the metaverse.

FIELD BUILDING

In 2022, we began preparing to convene two cross-sectoral convenings focused on expanding social and economic protections to nontraditional workers.

In partnership with the Urban Institute, we began planning a virtual convening of leaders in the field of social and economic protections

for nontraditional work. Entitled "Reimagining Social Protections for Independent and Other Traditionally Excluded Workers," our aim continued to be focused on bringing together disparate sectors to explore opportunities to align around a common vision, framing, and agenda for shared work. We believe this focus will help to anchor the development of a cross-sectoral movement in support of liberated work.

ADVOCACY

In many ways, 2022 was a building year for our advocacy agenda, laying the groundwork for direct advocacy engagement starting in 2023. In our first year, we conducted over 100 interviews with arts advocates, movement leaders in the labor, racial justice and economic justice sectors, as well as initiated an outreach program focused on building deeper relationships with BIPOC arts workers in our network.

OUR FUTURE

The Sol Center for Liberated Work is still very much in its infancy. As we lay the groundwork for more public engagement and investments in 2023, we look forward to working with friends old and new to advance and achieve our vision of liberated work.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

The Center for Cultural Innovation continued its pattern of prudent management in FY22, with income of \$5,926,103 received against program and operating expenses totaling \$3,996,178. CCI's practice of recognizing multi-year restrictions and commitments during the same budget year it was received has created a seeming financial imbalance but one in line with strict adherence to income restrictions for future spending.

For further information on CCI's audited FY22 financial statements, please contact the CCI Administrative Office at:
244 S. San Pedro Street, Suite 401, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

CCI IS GRATEFUL TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR THEIR GENEROUS PROGRAMMATIC AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT IN FY22:

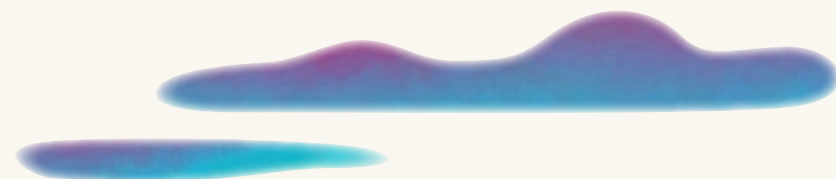
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Anonymous
Barr Foundation
Bloomberg Philanthropies
California Arts Council
California Community Foundation
Chicago Community Foundation
(anonymous donor)
City of Berkeley
City of Los Angeles,
Department of Cultural Affairs
City of San José,
Office of Cultural Affairs
City of West Hollywood
Craig H. Neilsen Foundation

Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
Hellman Foundation
Kenneth Rainin Foundation
Kresge Foundation
Los Angeles County Department
of Arts and Culture
Nathan Cummings Foundation
San Francisco Arts Commission
San Francisco Foundation
(donor advised funds)
San Francisco Grants for the Arts
Surdna Foundation
Walter and Elise Haas Fund
William and Flora Hewlett
Foundation

CCI ALSO APPRECIATES THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF CCI'S MISSION AND RELIEF FUND EFFORTS IN FY22:

Betty Avila
Bright Funds (anonymous donors)
Jack Constant
Karen Constone
Sage Crump
DM3 Fund (anonymous donor)
Sadie Eaton
Fidelity Charitable Grant
(anonymous donors)
Paul Heller
Edgar Hirst
Jeffrey Holgate

Sally Jo Fifer
Angie Kim
Lorna Lathram
Destiny Muhammad
Network for Good
(anonymous donor)
Mari Riddle
Carolyn Salcido
Christine Spang
San San Wong (with matching
support from Barr Foundation)



ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

STAFF



Angie Kim
PRESIDENT AND CEO



Lauren Bailey
MANAGING DIRECTOR



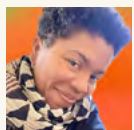
Laura Poppiti
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Cate Fox
DIRECTOR, AMBITIOUS



Althea Erickson
DIRECTOR, SOL CENTER
FOR LIBERATED WORK



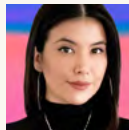
Nichole M. Christian
NARRATIVE SHIFTER



Allison Wyper
ARTISTS KNOWLEDGE MANAGER



Nadia S. Chrisanto
ASSISTANT OPERATIONS +
DIGITAL ASSETS MANAGER



Lorena Moreno
SYSTEMS AND GRANTS MANAGER



Stephanie Barajas
PROGRAM ASSOCIATE



Jennelyn Tumalad Bailon
PROGRAM ASSOCIATE



Norrell Thompson
PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

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