



INVESTING IN ARTISTS

ARTISTIC INNOVATION

Frequently Asked Questions

(effective July 3, 2024)

ELIGIBILITY

1. Which Bay Area counties are eligible for support?

For the 2024 – 2026 award cycle, artists residing in *select* Bay Area counties will be eligible to apply for an Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant. Funding rounds and their corresponding eligible counties are:

- **2024: Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco**
- 2025: Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo
- 2026: Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma

2. Who can apply for this grant? Is this opportunity only for performing and media artists, or can visual and literary artists apply?

The Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant program is designed to support diverse working artists in the performing and media arts, which includes the disciplines of dance, music, musical theatre, opera, theatre, video, film, and animation, to name a few. Performing and Media artist applicants must also live in the current award cycle's eligible Bay Area counties (see Question 1) at the time of application and for the duration of the grant period (November 2024–November 2025). Artists who propose visual, craft, or literary works are not eligible to apply. Playwrights are eligible if the proposed project results in a confirmed performance event for a public audience.

3. How do you define “Performing and Media Arts”?

The Performing and Media Arts category includes the disciplines of dance, music, musical theatre, opera, theatre, video, film, animation, and the like.

4. I’m developing a multidisciplinary work with *some* performing and media arts components. Am I eligible to apply?

Individual artists who request support to develop a new multidisciplinary work, and meet all other eligibility criteria, can apply for an Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant so long as the performing and/or media arts components are the *primary* features of the work. In other words, the performing and media arts must be *central* to the work’s realization, not ancillary or supplementary. The proposed work will not be competitive if the performing and/or media arts are an add-on or background element.

5. How do you define “working artists”?

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

artistic practice; self-define as professional artists; and attempt to derive income from work in which they use their expert artistic practices and skills. Full-time and matriculated students are not eligible to apply.

6. Are previous grantees eligible to apply for grants in the 2024–2026 funding rounds?

Previous Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation (formerly known as just Investing in Artists) grantees are eligible to apply for the 2024 application round. This eligibility criterion may be updated in future cycles.

7. Are organizations, companies, or collectives eligible to apply?

Only individual artists may apply for this grant. Applications will not be accepted from organizations, companies, or artist collectives. Artists with 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations may apply but must apply as individuals.

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

Grants are intended to support the work of one artist and will only be awarded to individual artists. Further, this grant is not intended to support group performances or other group-based projects. While we understand that individual artists may need the support of collaborators, the application should be written from the perspective of the specific artist applying and highlight their personal experience, work, and role in the proposed project.

In rare circumstances, we will accept applications from long-standing artist collaborators. 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. If applying as a collaborative, the application should be submitted by one individual member who 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.

Additionally, applicants who identify as long-standing artist collaborators should contact CCI first to discuss eligibility before applying.

9. Can bands, ensembles, or commissioned collaborations apply for this grant?

Bands, ensembles, and commissioned collaborations MAY not be eligible for this grant. As mentioned previously, this grant is intended for individual artists whose work is rooted in their own unique vision. If your work involves group performances or is based on someone else's concept (e.g., scoring a dance piece), you may not be eligible.

However, if you are unsure whether your project meets the eligibility criteria, please reach out to CCI for guidance. We are happy to help you determine if your project qualifies for the Individual Artist Grant.

10. I'm a music producer working with an artist on their new album. Am I eligible to apply?

Individual artists who request support to develop a new work, and meet all other eligibility criteria, can apply for an Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant. While important to the creative process, individuals playing a supportive role in developing an individual artist's work—such as curators, producers, designers, technicians, fabricators, and advisors—are not

eligible to apply. In these instances, we encourage artists to apply for funding and name their supporting collaborators in the application narrative.

11. I need support for an ongoing project. Is the Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant program a good fit?

Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation supports artists in creating **new work** that pushes the envelope of their creative process, explores new artistic collaborations, and/or supports artistic growth and experimentation that extends the boundaries of their art-making. If your project is ongoing or will be completed before the start of the grant period in November 2024, this program may not be a good fit for you at this time.

12. My new work will take longer than 12 months to complete. Should I apply?

We recognize that developing a new work often takes more than 12 months to complete. For this reason, your timeline should express the aspects or stages of the work that will be supported during the 12-month grant period. For some, 12 months may be all the time needed to take a work from concept to reality. For others, the grant period will support the work's early-stage benchmarks or its final stages of development. Whatever the case, you'll want to address this in the narrative.

APPLICATION

13. Is it okay if I don't have a venue/exact date(s) confirmed for the presentation of my new work?

It's OK if you haven't confirmed an exact venue or performance/screening/installation dates at the time of your application submission. In lieu of this information, you can estimate presentation dates and identify the *kinds* of venues you might work with on account of their location, audience capacity, production resources, or other factors.

14. What should I submit as a work sample?

The work sample is critical to the application and should represent your artistic work in the best possible light. When deciding how to present your work, please remember that the panel will have at most five minutes to review your sample(s). 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 three minutes flipping between different formats or forwarding through the credits to see the work.

At least one work sample, and no more than three, must be uploaded and submitted with the online application. **We strongly recommend at least one video work sample.**

Please note that Manuscripts will only be accepted from theatre artists applying as playwrights. We will not accept manuscripts from any other applicant type. In addition, please note that we strongly prefer receiving video samples from all applicants; however, if you primarily identify as a playwright and believe that a text sample will show your work in the best context, you may upload a text sample for review.

The [application preview](#) includes acceptable work sample formats and specific instructions on accepted formats. **You are encouraged to prepare and upload work sample(s) 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, or other application components, the ability of technical assistance to resolve issues will be significantly limited.

EVALUATION

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

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

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

Panelists will evaluate applications against the following artistic innovation criteria:

- **Readiness:** Clarity, rationale, and readiness of proposed project, including identification of specific work plans, timeline, and collaborators (if applicable) required to carry out the project;
- **Critical Juncture:** Evidence that funding is coming at a “critical juncture” in the artist’s career (i.e., that the proposed project provides a significant opportunity to “push the artistic boundaries” at the right moment for the artist) and the potential long-term impact of the grant. In other words, there is a compelling rationale as to why the artist should be supported at *this particular moment*; and
- **Artistic Achievement:** Demonstrated record of artistic achievement and quality of work.

The most competitive applications are the ones that are clearly written, generally brief and to the point, and demonstrate a strong alignment with each criterion.

Panelists will also aim to ensure that recommended grantees reflect the Bay Area’s diverse cultural communities and performing and media arts landscape. To that end, the panel will seek to balance the final grantee pool across factors, which include: geography, disciplines, communities served, and cultural form and/or tradition represented.

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

As part of the review criteria for artistic innovation, applications must show that funding will come at a “critical juncture” in the artist’s career. This means that you need to address how your proposed project will push the boundaries of your artistic practice in a significant way, and you need to answer the “Why now?” question. In other words, why is this the right time to undertake this project in your career? Demonstrating a clear and significant critical juncture is important in order to put forth a competitive application.

NOTE: In light of the continuing recovery from COVID-19, we recognize that nothing is “business as usual” and that artists have had to respond in nimble ways, such as transitioning projects to online platforms or outdoor venues and re-tooling audience engagement strategies. These changes are not enough to be competitive; instead, if applicable, such changes must still demonstrate catalyzing artistic (not just presentation or business) practices, and that funding would be coming at a critical juncture in the artist’s career.

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

Artists face new and evolving challenges as they move through their careers. For this reason, CCI does not give preference to particular career stages. Competitive applications must demonstrate the proposed project’s impact 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.

NOTIFICATIONS

19. The notification date has passed, and I haven't heard from CCI. Does this mean I didn't receive a grant?

All applicants will be notified regarding their application status on October 30, 2024, by the end of the day. We ask that you check your spam folder if you haven't heard from CCI by the promised notification date and time. You can also view your application status by logging into your Submittable account.

To ensure the timely delivery of all communications, please safelist notifications@email.submittable.com. See [here](#) for instructions by email service provider.

20. If I'm declined for funding, will you offer feedback on my application?

Depending on the volume of applications, CCI may provide feedback through a webinar that addresses panelists' general application observations, through one-on-one phone calls with applicants, or through a short write-up sent via email. Details will be provided when notifications are shared on October 30, 2024.

GRANTEES

21. How many grants will you make?

We anticipate making up to eight grants in each round of funding from 2024 – 2026, but the actual number of grants awarded will depend on the quality of the applications received and on the financial requirements of the funded projects.

22. If awarded a grant, how will funding be disbursed?

CCI will issue the award in two payments: The first installment will be 90% of the grant funds which will be paid once the grant agreement is signed and returned. The remaining 10% will be paid once all grant requirements have been met and a final report has been submitted and approved by CCI.

The payment will be processed via direct deposit through Tipalti—CCI's secure, third-party accounting software platform. Processing times will depend on the return of your electronically signed grant agreement, along with any requested documents, such as the Form W-9. Grantees also have the option to use a fiscal sponsor, LLC, or incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit to contract with CCI and receive the awarded funds on their behalf.

We understand that individuals may have a unique financial situation and that direct deposit may not be an option. CCI also understands that fund disbursement may impact disability-related community support or other social benefits; therefore, we will structure options that work for each person's unique financial situation.

23. If awarded a grant, how can funding be used?

Funding awarded through the Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant program may be used in whatever ways support the grantee's realization of the proposed new work, such as personal compensation, collaborator fees, supplies, equipment, and travel, to name a few examples. However, funding, or any portion thereof, may not be used for lobbying, political campaigns, voting efforts, or in a manner inconsistent with CCI's charitable purpose under IRS Section 501(c)(3). Further details are provided in the Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant agreement.

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

Artists who receive funding through the Investing in Artists: Artistic Innovation grant program should know that grant awards may be taxable as ordinary income. We recommend that you consult a qualified tax advisor for further information.

25. What are the grantee requirements?

Grantees must complete a brief final report describing the impact and use of funding (i.e., line item expenses). Reports will be due at the end of the grant period in October 2025. CCI will provide further instructions in the grant agreement, including how to submit the report through Submittable.

SUPPORT

26. I need help preparing my application. What do you recommend?

We're glad you asked. We recommend preparing your application in Word or Google Docs and sharing your draft with a friend or peer for feedback. From there, copy and paste your responses into the Submittable online application and upload the required items (budget, résumé, work sample). Test the uploaded items to ensure they're working properly; if they are, you're ready to submit your application!

27. I'm having issues with Submittable (e.g., lost password, error messages, trouble uploading) and need help. Who do I contact?

For technical assistance (e.g., password or upload issues), request support from Submittable at: <https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter/>. Submittable's business hours are 9 am – 5 pm MT. They aim to respond within 24 business hours.

28. I still have questions. What do I do?

CCI staff are here to help and listen. Please email us at grants@cciarts.org (include IA - Artistic Innovation in the subject line) or call 415.288.0530 for assistance. You may also schedule a time to speak [here](#).

For Deaf applicants and those with hearing loss, contact CCI using the [California Relay Service](#)—our staff is trained in making and receiving these calls.