

San José Creative Economy Fund Application Preview
FOR REFERENCE ONLY
(effective May 12, 2026)

The San José Creative Economy Fund Application Preview is for REFERENCE ONLY.

All applications must be submitted online through CCI's Submittable platform [here](#). We will not accept applications submitted by mail or email using this form. Responses to all questions/prompts are required unless otherwise noted.

For technical assistance (e.g., password or upload issues), request support 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.

ELIGIBILITY QUIZ

1. Is your business located in the city of San José?
2. Do you operate a commercial (i.e., *not* a nonprofit) business, including small businesses and sole proprietorships?
3. Does your business have 35 employees or fewer?
4. Does your San José-based business primarily provide a cultural, creative, or arts-related service or product?

*Note: By "arts, cultural, or creative business," we are referring to commercial (i.e., for-profit) enterprises that primarily provide or are involved in the distribution of a cultural, creative, or arts-related service or product, including manufacturers, service providers, presenters, and designers, among others. **Please note that the enterprise must focus on a cultural, creative, or arts-related service(s) or product(s).***

5. Are you in good standing with the City of San José?
Note: This is demonstrated by having an active business tax certificate (aka business license, business permit) and fulfilling any Office of Cultural Affairs or other City department grant reporting requirements, if applicable.
6. Is your proposed project already funded through another Office of Cultural Affairs grant program?
7. Are you a previous Creative Economy Fund or Creative Industries Incentive Fund (CIIF) grantee?

- Yes

- *Have you completed your final report?*

- **If yes, continue to SECTION 1: BUSINESS INFORMATION**

- *Note: Past CIIF grantees, along with past and current Creative Economy Fund grantees, are eligible to apply if a final report has been submitted to and approved by CCI prior to the deadline of June 26, 2026. **Please note that first-time applicants may be prioritized.***

- *No—Continue to SECTION 1: BUSINESS INFORMATION*

- *I'm not sure—Continue to SECTION 1: BUSINESS INFORMATION*

- *Note: Applicants who are unsure should reach out to CCI at grants@cciarts.org to confirm.*

SECTION 1: BUSINESS INFORMATION

1. Business Legal Name
2. OPTIONAL: Business DBA (Doing Business As) Name
3. Business Mailing Address

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Note: Please enter the address where the business conducts its operations in San José and not the address where the business is incorporated, which may be in another city or state. For online or nomadic businesses like "pop-ups," you may enter your residential address if this is where your operations are concentrated in San José. For questions, please contact CCI at grants@cciarts.org.

4. Business City
5. Business State
6. Business Zip Code
7. Describe your business in one to two sentences. (65 words)
Note: Make sure to include how the cultural, creative, or arts-related services or products you offer are central to your business.
8. What is the business's primary artistic/creative discipline or area of cultural production? (Select one.)
 - *Options: Dance; Design; Education; Folk/Traditional Arts; Humanities/Literary Arts; Media Arts; Multidisciplinary; Music; Musical Theatre; Opera; Social Practice; Theatre; Visual Arts; XR (AR/MR/VR); Write-In Option (25 words)*
9. OPTIONAL: Select any other artistic disciplines or areas of cultural production in which you work. (Select up to three)
10. Year Established
11. Business Type
Note: This question is for informational purposes only and will not be factored into the evaluation of your application.
 - *Options: Cooperative; Corporation; LLC; Partnership; Sole Proprietorship; Unincorporated; Write-in Option (25 words)*
12. OPTIONAL: Provide up to three URLs/handles related to your business.
13. Has the business received funding from the City of San José, including the Office of Cultural Affairs? If yes, please list the department, funding program, and award date. If you have received multiple awards from the same department, list only the most recent.
Note: This question is for informational purposes only and will not be factored into the evaluation of your application.
 - *Options: Yes, No, I'm not sure*
 - *For "Yes" responses:*
 - *List the City of San José department, funding program, and award date. If you have received multiple awards from the same department, list only the most recent. [50 words]*
14. What type of workers will your business employ during the grant period (October 2026–October 2027)? Select all that apply.
Note: This question is for informational purposes only and will not be factored into the evaluation of your application.
 - *Options: Full-time Employees; Part-time Employees; Contractors/Freelancers; Seasonal Employees (For each option chosen, you will be prompted to enter the number of workers that will be employed. See below)*
 - *How many full-time employees will you employ?*
 - *How many part-time employees will you employ?*
 - *How many contractors/freelancers will you employ?*
 - *How many seasonal employees will you employ?*
15. How much revenue did your business report earning in your most recently filed income tax return?

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Note: This question is for informational purposes only and will not be factored into the evaluation of your application.

- *Options: \$0-\$50,000; \$50,001-\$100,000; \$100,001-\$200,000; \$200,001-\$300,000; \$300,001-\$400,000; \$400,001-\$500,000; Greater than \$500,001*
16. OPTIONAL: If there is any additional information regarding your earned revenue or financial situation that you would like to share with the panel, please include it here. (100 words)
 17. Upload a copy of your active City of San José business tax certificate (aka business license, business permit).

Note: Files accepted include .doc, .docx, .png, and .pdf. If you recently registered your business and are waiting to receive a copy of your tax certificate, you may upload documentation that confirms the business's successful tax payment.

*To register your business or renew your business tax certificate, visit the City of San José's website [here](#). For your reference, you can find a **SAMPLE** tax certificate [here](#).*

SECTION 2: PRIMARY CONTACT

1. Primary Contact Legal First Name
2. Primary Contact Legal Last Name
3. OPTIONAL: Primary Contact Other Names (e.g., Stage, Artist, Preferred, or Chosen Name)
4. Primary Contact Pronouns
5. Primary Contact Title
6. Primary Contact Phone Number
7. Primary Contact Email
8. How did you hear about this opportunity?
 - *Options: San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs (SJOCA) newsletter, SJOCA Social Media, CCI Newsletter; CCI Website; CCI Workshop; CCI Social Media; Consultant; Friend/Colleague; Write-in Option (25 words)*

SECTION 3: PROPOSAL DETAILS

1. Provide a brief one to two-sentence summary of your request. Begin your summary with "To support..." (65 words)

Note: The request summary will be used to introduce your proposal to panelists and should briefly describe your project. Should you be awarded funding, this summary may be used in your grant contract and public-facing announcements.
2. Amount Requested: (Whole numbers only. Do not insert commas or other punctuation)

Note: Applicants may request \$1,000 - \$8,000. We encourage you to ask for what you need to fully realize the project, as partial funding may be awarded. Note that the amount requested will not affect the application's evaluation.

SECTION 4: NARRATIVE

Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider the review criteria in the [Guidelines](#) when composing their narrative responses and to answer all prompts. Regarding format, responses can be bulleted or complete sentences, whichever is easier, so long as the concept is clear and easy to understand.

Word limits vary; as a reference, 350 words are roughly three or four paragraphs.

Note: Do not use hyphens/dashes ("-" or "--") to begin a paragraph.

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1. **Business Description:** Describe the business, including details about the product or service that you offer, your audience/clientele, location (virtual or physical location), and any cultural communities that are represented or centered by the business. (350 words)
Note: Make sure to include how the cultural, creative, or arts-related services or products you offer are central to your business.
2. **Project Description:** Describe the proposed project, including what funding will support*, the scope of work, current stage of development (e.g., preparing for launch, already in implementation, nearing completion), timeline, and specific goals. (350 words)
*Note: *If hiring a consultant for a professional service (e.g., business coaching or bookkeeping), upload a letter of commitment from the consultant in SECTION 6: SUPPORT MATERIALS.*
3. **Project Outcomes:** Describe how the proposed project will: 1) contribute to San José's cultural vibrancy; 2) grow and achieve greater financial resilience for the business; and 3) have an economic impact (e.g., attract visitors, generate sales tax, and create jobs) in San José. (350 words)
4. **Team Bios:** Provide bios for the project team or staff and include relevant experience as it relates to the project. (350 words)

SECTION 5: BUDGET

The project budget is a tool for conveying to panelists what the applicant needs to realize their proposed project fully. Artist fees and compensation, staff salaries, space improvement costs, supplies and materials, equipment, and consultants are line-item expenses that may be reflected in the project budget.

In addition, we encourage applicants to compensate artists, staff, designers, contractors, et al. with a fair living wage. Wages must also be compliant with State, local, and federal laws. Resources for considering appropriate rates and ranges are available at the [Teaching Artists Guild Pay Rate Calculator](#), [Working Artists and the Greater Economy \(W.A.G.E\) Fee Calculator](#), and [MIT's Living Wage Calculator](#).

1. **Upload a 1-page version of your budget.** If your total expenses are projected to exceed the requested grant award amount, list your additional income sources and their status (.xls, .xlsx, .doc, .docx, and .pdf file formats accepted). *When making your plans, please consider that partial funding may be awarded.*
*Note: A sample project budget is available [here](#). The sample project budget is for applicants' reference. **You are not required to use this template.***
2. **Enter the total amount of income** (including pending and prospective funds):
Note: The amount entered should match the income total in your uploaded budget.
3. **Enter the total amount of expenses:**
Note: The amount entered should match the expense total in your uploaded budget.
4. **Budget Notes:** Explain any items that need clarification to help panelists interpret your budget. Additionally, if your budget is not balanced (i.e., your income exceeds your expenses or vice versa, your expenses exceed your income), explain your intentions. For example, how will excess

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income be utilized if there is a net profit? Alternatively, how will you secure the funds needed if there is a deficit, where your income sources fall short of your expenses? (150 words)

Note: It's OK if your budget is not balanced; however, you will want to explain any discrepancies so that panelists can understand your plans.

*Budget notes can be bulleted or in a narrative format—whichever is easier, so long as the concept is clear and easy to understand. **We strongly encourage each applicant to provide budget notes**; however, if you have none, enter “Not applicable.”*

SECTION 6: SUPPORT MATERIALS

Support materials accompany the review of applications and are critical in helping panelists acquaint themselves with your business. Generally, it is best to select recent support materials (2021 or later) and, if applicable, materials related to your project. We also recommend avoiding support materials with poor visibility or audio quality.

Panelists will review materials for up to five (5) minutes in total. If you upload text or image-based materials, five pages equate to 5 minutes. Please note that if you are submitting more than one type of support material, you cannot submit the recommended total for each type. For example, you can submit 3 minutes of video and two pages of text or image-based materials, but NOT 5 minutes of video and five pages of text/image-based materials.

Requirements

- Only one support material is required; however, applicants can submit up to three.
- **Support materials must be uploaded directly to Submittable. We will not accept documents that link to an external platform. Failure to upload support materials directly to Submittable will result in your application being marked as incomplete and, therefore, ineligible for funding consideration.**
- There is a size limit of 400 MB per uploaded file and 800 MB for the complete application submission. If uploading a video, cue the video to the desired start time or include playback instructions in the support material description, if applicable.
- We strongly advise all applicants to test their materials for functionality before uploading. Corrupted, password-protected, or otherwise inaccessible support materials will render the application incomplete and ineligible for review.
- Each uploaded support material must be accompanied by a one- to two-sentence description that includes contextual information and viewing/playback instructions if applicable. For example, “Contractor bid per signage replacement, 2024” or “Promotional video for a woman-owned business pop-up that I produced as part of the February 2025 XYZ Festival. Start sample at 00:05:03 and play until 00:08:18.”

We will accept the following file formats:

- **Video:** .avi, .mp4, .mov, and .mpg files accepted. If your video is longer than 5 minutes, include the desired start/end times in the support material description. We recommend the MPEG4 (H.264) format with a minimum 640x480 resolution and MP3 audio. Resizing your video to these specifications before uploading it will help your video look better.
- **Text/Image-Based Materials:** .doc, .docx, .png, and .pdf files accepted. Up to five (5) letter-size (8.5 x 11 inches) pages of ephemera are accepted. We recommend combining individual ephemera

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into a single document. Examples of text/image-based materials include marketing materials, press, letters of support, letters of commitment, project bids, brochures, and other collateral.

For technical assistance (e.g., upload issues), request support 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.

1. **Upload Support Material(s) Here.**
2. **Provide a one- to two-sentence description that includes contextual information and viewing/playback instructions, if applicable, for each support material uploaded.**

Note: For example:

- *Upload 1: "Contractor bid per signage replacement, 2024"*
- *Upload 2: "Promotional video for a woman-owned business pop-up that I produced as part of the February 2025 XYZ Festival. Start sample at 00:05:03 and play until 00:08:18."*

SECTION 7: AWARD ADMINISTRATION

If you are recommended and approved for funding, the information requested below will expedite the preparation of your grant contract and processing of your award payment. We appreciate your support.

1. **Who will receive the funds if you are awarded a grant?**
 - *I will receive the funds.*
 - *I will use my business.*
 - Provide the business name and mailing address. If the authorized contract signatory is someone other than yourself, enter their first and last name, title, email, and phone number.
 - *I'm not sure; please contact me.*
2. **Image:** Upload a landscape-oriented photograph (2021 or later) that is representative of your business. (.jpg, .png, and .pdf file formats accepted)
Note: Please do not upload flyers or other promotional materials.
3. **Photo Credit:** Enter the names of any individuals in the photo (L to R), location, photographer credit, and year.

SECTION 8: CERTIFICATION

I certify that I have read and met the eligibility requirements stated in the Creative Economy Fund guidelines and that all the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further acknowledge that the Center for Cultural Innovation is not liable for damage or loss of materials submitted.

At any time, if the Center for Cultural Innovation determines that my application is false, misleading, improperly submitted, or fails to further the Creative Economy Fund objectives, it may, at its sole discretion, suspend or demand the return of funds. Lastly, I agree not to sue the Center for Cultural Innovation if it suspends payment or demands repayment.

[check box] By checking this box, I certify that the above is true.