



CALI CATALYST

Frequently Asked Questions

(as of June 1, 2021)

1. What is CALI Catalyst?

The California Art Leaders Investments (CALI) Catalyst grant program supports individual artists and arts workers whose bold actions (i.e., actions that have taken place in 2020 or later, or actions that are in progress) are tangibly helping underrepresented communities—Black, Indigenous, people of color, LGBTQIA+, and people with disabilities—gain more influence and power in California’s arts and culture sector. We consider these bold actions to be “changemaking” because they are shifting the needle for underrepresented communities to have more influence and power, and moving the sector towards greater inclusion, access, diversity, and equity.

2. Who is eligible to apply for a CALI Catalyst grant?

CALI Catalyst is open to individuals and teams of individuals (See Question 3 for additional information regarding “teams”). Applicants can apply for funding directly or be nominated.

To be eligible for consideration, applicants/nominees must:

- Be an artist or arts worker (e.g., arts administrator, cultural producer, culture bearer, creative, cultural practitioner, teaching artist, or specialized technician); and
- Be a full-time resident of California.

The following are ineligible for funding consideration:

- Organizations;
- Individuals, teams of individuals, or nominators who are requesting funding to support an organization; and
- Individuals, teams of individuals, nominators, or nominees who have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of the Center for Cultural Innovation.

3. I work closely with a team of collaborators. Can we submit a joint application?

If applying as a “team,” only one application will be accepted per team (in other words, individual team members cannot submit separate applications for the same “bold” action). Teams will therefore need to select a single team member to apply, and if funding is approved, this individual will be responsible for fulfilling the grant requirements such as final reporting and

providing a completed W-9. If an individual grant recipient wants to share their award with a team of collaborators, they may do so; however, CCI will not assume responsibility for any further due diligence regarding the team's membership as this grant is for individuals, and not teams.

4. I work at an organization. Can I apply?

CALI Catalyst is a grant program for *individuals*, and funding is meant to support the *person* who is enacting change in the arts and culture sector. If you are seeking funding to support your organization—such as a 501(c)3 nonprofit, fiscally sponsored project, cooperative business, for profit entity, or collective, to name a few—then this program is not for you. To be clear, employment or membership in an organization is fine, but funding is meant to support the needs of individual grantees and not those of the organization with which they're affiliated.

5. What does CALI Catalyst funding support?

CALI Catalyst awards unrestricted grants of up to \$5,000 to individual artists and arts workers whose bold actions (i.e., actions that have taken place in 2020 or later, or actions that are in progress) are shifting the arts and culture sector in ways that work better for marginalized people—BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and those with disabilities. Grant awards are unrestricted and therefore, not tied to a project or proposed outcome. Instead, the award's unrestricted nature is meant to support individual grantees in whatever way is most needed. However, CALI Catalyst 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 CALI Catalyst grant agreement.

6. I have an *idea* for a bold action. Can I apply?

CALI Catalyst will only consider applications from applicants/nominees whose bold actions have already taken place (2020 or later) or are in progress. We are prioritizing these applicants as they may be suffering financial fallout as a result of their disruption of the status quo.

7. What are some examples of "bold actions" that might be competitive for funding?

CALI Catalyst is open to a wide range of "bold actions" so long as the outcome tangibly helps underrepresented communities to gain more influence and power in California's arts and culture sector. Further, the impact of these actions should not be isolated but should have larger, field-wide reverberations. For illustrative purposes, examples of bold actions may include: a preparator who publishes an online "manifesto" about gender discrimination in the field; a creative who organizes peers against taking work-for-hire contracts; an arts administrator who pushes for salary transparency in regional job listings; a museum worker who creates an online petition to address racial micro-aggressions against frontline staff; a team of teaching artists who codify new standards for hiring organizations such as providing compensation for curriculum development, meetings, and participation in professional development activities; and an artist who creates a social media campaign advocating for private and community foundations to pay a land tax to their local Indigenous communities.

8. How do I apply for funding?

Individuals and teams can apply for CALI Catalyst funding directly or be nominated. In either case, applications will only be accepted through CCI's Submittable platform. Applicants **MUST** create an account in Submittable before they will be able to access the grant application. The application can be accessed at: www.centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com. Information about using Submittable is available [here](#).

9. When are applications due? When will I learn about my application status?

Applications are due by 5 p.m. PT on the 15th of every other month, with a one-month response turnaround. For the 2021 cycle, application deadlines and notification dates are:

Deadline	Notification
July 15	August 15
September 15	October 15
November 15	December 15

Applications received after the bi-monthly deadline will be reviewed with the next award cycle.

10. What should I prepare for the Support Materials section? And, are there file format or length specifications?

Applicants must upload a brief résumé, bio, or CV that references their current role(s) in the arts and culture sector, and is no longer than two (2) pages (.pdf, .doc, and .docx formats accepted). In addition, applicants must upload documentation of their changemaking action. A minimum of one, and no more than three, samples can be uploaded. Samples should demonstrate that the action was public-facing. Examples may include relevant URLs, press, screenshots, or photo/video documentation. Acceptable file formats are .pdf, .doc, .docx, .jpg, .png, .mp4, .mov, .avi, and .wmv. Individual samples have no page or time limits.

11. Who should I use as a reference and what information do you need?

We suggest choosing references who can attest to the applicant’s demonstration of the review criteria, and speak on behalf of the communities the applicant is hoping to positively impact. In addition, references should not be family members of the applicant, team, nominator, or nominee.

Applicants will need to provide the name and contact information (phone number and email) for two references and indicate the nature of their relationship. If you are nominating an individual or team, and meet the above criteria for references, you are welcome to include yourself as one of the references.

CCI staff will *only* contact the references of top candidates for funding. References must be able to commit to a 15-minute phone conversation with CCI staff at a mutually agreed upon time. At this time, staff can only accommodate phone conversations in English. References who are not fluent in English are welcome to have a translator on the call.

Please note that reference calls do not guarantee funding approval.

12. If I want to nominate an individual or a team of collaborators, what do I need to do?

Nominators, like all other applicants, must answer the online application’s narrative and demographic questions, and identify two references* who can verify the nominees’ impact in the community. In addition, nominators must provide contact information for themselves and the nominee, and indicate their relationship to the nominee.

If you are nominating a team, you can name only one individual in the application (i.e., the “lead team member”). If funding is approved, this individual will be responsible for fulfilling the terms of the grant agreement, such as reporting and completing a Form W-9. CCI will not assume responsibility for any further due diligence regarding the team’s membership as this grant is for individuals, and not teams. Learn more about how to choose a reference in Question 11 and how to apply online in Question 8.

Please be advised that CCI cannot guarantee that your identity as a nominator will remain confidential as we may mention your name if/when contacting references. If this is of concern to you, please email CCI at cali@cciarts.org or call 415.288.0530 to discuss alternative solutions.

*Nominators can cite themselves as a reference if they are able to meet the following criteria, they 1) can attest to the nominee’s demonstration of the review criteria; 2) speak on behalf of the communities the nominee is hoping to positively impact; and 3) are not family members of the nominee.

13. If I nominate a team or an individual, who will receive notification about the application’s status? And, can I remain anonymous to the nominee(s)?

Nominators will receive *all* status updates regarding their submitted application. In addition, if funding is approved, CCI will notify the nominated individual or lead team member in order to process their grant agreement and award payment.

Unfortunately, CCI cannot guarantee anonymity as we may mention your name if/when contacting references. If this is of concern to you, please email CCI at cali@cciarts.org or call 415.288.0530 to discuss alternative solutions.

14. What happens if an individual or team applies *and* gets nominated (perhaps even by multiple nominators) in the same application cycle?

They’re popular! In instances where an individual or lead team member is both an applicant and a nominee, CCI staff will review all application materials (i.e., both those submitted by the applicant and those submitted by the nominator).

15. If my request for funding is declined, can I reapply in a subsequent 2021 application round?

Unless a new body of work is being addressed, applications and nominations that are declined in 2021 will not be able to reapply until 2022. However, if funding is unencumbered in 2021, competitive applications/nominations from previous rounds may be reassessed.

16. If I am awarded a grant, how will I receive the funds?

If approved for a grant, you will have the option of receiving a direct deposit payment through Tipalti.com—CCI’s secure, third party accounting software platform—or via a mailed check. In either case, CCI will issue a single payment for the full amount of the grant award. Processing times will depend on the method of payment chosen and the return of your electronically signed grant agreement along with any requested attachments such as the Form W-9. To be clear, grantees do *not* need a fiscal sponsor or other 501(c)3 nonprofit intermediary to receive funding as CALI Catalyst supports individuals and not organizations or projects.

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

For **individuals** who apply for and are approved for funding through the CALI Catalyst grant program, please be aware that grant awards may be taxable as ordinary income. CCI, however,

cannot offer legal or tax advice, so please seek appropriate expertise about your specific circumstances if you have any questions.

For individuals who are **nominated** for a CALI Catalyst grant and approved for funding, there is potentially an exception to tax liability. Per IRC § 74(b), grant awards may be excluded from gross income if the award was made primarily in recognition of a past achievement (i.e., a changemaking action that has already taken place). This exception does not apply if the recipient (i.e., the CALI Catalyst grantee) takes any action to apply for the award, or the recipient is required to render substantial future services. Again, CCI is not able to offer legal or tax advice, so please seek appropriate expertise about your specific circumstances.

18. If I am awarded a grant, will I need to submit a report?

If you are awarded a grant, you will need to complete a brief final report that describes the impact and use of funding (i.e., line item expenses). Reports will be due within nine months of signing the grant agreement. CCI will provide further instruction, including how to submit the report through Submittable, in the grant agreement. In addition, grantees must submit a final report that is approved by CCI before they are eligible to reapply for CALI Catalyst funding.

19. If I've received funding through another CCI grant program, am I eligible to apply for CALI Catalyst support?

Yes, you are eligible! Funding through another CCI grant program has no bearing on your eligibility to apply for or receive funds through CALI Catalyst.

20. How often can I receive funding through CALI Catalyst?

Individuals may receive one CALI Catalyst grant per calendar year. If you are a current grantee, you must submit your final report to CCI for approval before you can be considered for funding again. Additionally, please be aware that CCI prioritizes first-time CALI Catalyst applicants.

21. Who reviews the applications?

Applications will be reviewed internally by a diverse team of CCI staff who have varied experiences with sector discrimination, exclusionary practices, and the power of artists and arts workers to have profound impacts.

22. How are applications evaluated? What makes for a competitive application?

Applications will be evaluated against the criteria listed in the CALI Catalyst guidelines. Please review these closely.

The most competitive applications are the ones that are clearly written, generally brief and to the point, and demonstrate a strong alignment with each criterion. While we welcome applications from changemakers who are working in varying ways and contexts, we discourage applications that describe having issues with any particular person as these conditions may have impact within an organization, but are too isolated to be felt industry wide.

23. How many grants will you make?

Year One (2021) of the CALI Catalyst grant program's two-year cycle has \$125,000 in available funding. Because 2021 is the fund's pilot year, we cannot anticipate the volume of applications that will be received or the number of awards that will be made. Moreover, this is a new program and inevitably, we will be learning as we go. For this reason, CCI may update guidelines and/or application requirements in light of observations made from the Year One pilot.

24. Will you publicize the names of grantees?

The names of CALI Catalyst grantees will be included in CCI's Annual Report, an online publication that is produced each fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) and available for download on our website. CALI Catalyst grantees may also be highlighted in posts on CCI's communication platforms including our e-newsletter, social media, and website.

25. If I am awarded a CALI Catalyst grant, does that mean that CCI and its funding partners agree with or endorse my changemaking action?

CCI and its funding partners do not take a position on the sentiments or actions expressed by CALI Catalyst applicants and grantees. This ensures that the adjudication and award processes remain focused on sector and community impacts, and not on individual institutions or actors.

26. What happened to CALI Accelerator grants?

CALI Accelerator 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 (fka, the NextGen program) was a professional development pipeline for young talent; then, when it was renamed CALI (California Arts Leaders 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 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 has emerged to support changemakers who are explicit about changing the arts and culture sector in ways that are needed by those whose voices have not been adequately heard.