



CALI CATALYST

Frequently Asked Questions

(effective March 1, 2023)

1. What is CALI Catalyst?

The California Art Leadership Investments (CALI) Catalyst grant program supports artists and arts workers who are on the frontlines of effecting greater inclusion, access, diversity, and equity in the arts and culture sector. Through bold actions, these individuals 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 “change-making” because they are *visibly* moving the needle for underrepresented communities to have more influence and power at an *industry-wide* level.

2. What do you mean by “arts and culture sector?”

CCI is a nonprofit arts intermediary that supports individual artists and arts workers. In our work, we understand the “arts and culture sector” to encompass a wide spectrum of creative industries, artistic disciplines and practices, cultural expressions, and areas of focus, all at varying scales. However, we’re more interested in knowing how CALI Catalyst applicants self-define the “arts and culture sector,” and importantly, what aspect(s) of it they are trying to overtly influence.

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

CALI Catalyst is open to individuals and teams of individuals (See Question 6 for additional information regarding “teams”).

To be **eligible** for consideration:

- Applicants must be artists or arts workers (e.g., arts administrators, cultural producers, culture bearers, creatives, cultural practitioners, teaching artists, or specialized technicians).
- Applicants must reside full-time in California.
- Applicants’ change-making action(s) must have taken place or commenced (i.e., the action is still in progress) on or after January 1, 2020. *We are prioritizing this timeframe as these individuals may be suffering an immediate financial fallout as a result of catalyzing industry-level shifts in the arts and culture sector.*

The following are **ineligible** for funding consideration:

- Organizations (e.g., nonprofits, for-profits, fiscally sponsored orgs);
- Individuals or teams who describe a change-making action that began or took place before January 1, 2020;
- Individuals or teams who are requesting funding to support an organization;
- Individuals or teams who have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of the Center for Cultural Innovation; and
- Incomplete applications or applications with inaccessible (e.g., password-protected, broken links) attachments.

4. 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.

5. What does CALI Catalyst funding support?

CALI Catalyst awards unrestricted grants of up to \$7,500 to individual artists and arts workers whose bold actions (enacted on or after January 1, 2020) have shifted the arts and culture sector in explicit ways that work better for marginalized people—BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and those with disabilities. Grant awards are unrestricted and therefore, not tied to the support of a project or a 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 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 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 the 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.

7. I know an individual/team who would be a great candidate for funding. How can I help this potential applicant?

The best way to help potential applicants is to share this opportunity with them and, if needed, support their preparation of an application. This may mean helping the applicant to compose narrative responses, select ephemera, or identify references. You might also support the applicant by reviewing their application for clarity and completeness or reaching out to CCI staff on their behalf with questions.

8. 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 an organization—such as a 501(c)3 nonprofit, fiscally sponsored project, cooperative business, or for-profit entity, to name a few—then this program is not for you. To be clear, being employed

by or a member of 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.

9. I have an *idea* for a change-making action. Can I apply?

CALI Catalyst will only consider applications from applicants whose action took place or commenced (i.e., the action is still in progress) on or after January 1, 2020. We are prioritizing this timeframe as these individuals may be suffering an immediate financial fallout as a result of catalyzing industry-level shifts in the arts and culture sector.

10. My change-making action is in progress. Can I apply?

We are agnostic as to the status (i.e., completed or in progress) of the change-making action. However, applicants who can point to their action's impact in *tangible and measurable ways* will be more aligned with the grant review criteria than applicants whose actions are described as having the *potential* for impact.

11. My work isn't targeted at shifting practices or power within the arts and culture sector, but it does aim at having an impact on social issues. Can I apply?

We recognize that many artists and arts workers work at the intersection of arts, culture, and activism to address and bring visibility to important areas like racial justice, climate justice, gender equity, economic security, labor protections, and more. We see you and we acknowledge the value of your work. However, CALI Catalyst focuses on effecting tangible changes in the *arts and culture sector*, so that entrenched inequities within the sector itself are upended. For this reason, applications that describe change-making work in relation to sectors other than arts and culture, will be considered outside of the program's current scope and will not be competitive.

12. What are some examples of change-making actions within the arts and culture sector that align with the review criteria?

Examples of change-making actions within the arts and culture sector that align with the review criteria can be illustrated by CALI Catalyst's inaugural 2021 and 2022 grantees. To learn more about the individuals and teams supported, search CCI's Past Recipient directory by clicking [here](#) or view the 2021 and 2022 visual directories of grantees, [here](#).

13. How do I apply for funding?

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: <https://centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com/>. Information about using Submittable is available [here](#).

14. I'm having technical problems with my application, what should I do?

If you need technical assistance (e.g. password or upload issues), submit a request for 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.

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

CALI Catalyst will offer two open application rounds in 2023. These include:

Round #1

Applications will be accepted from March 8 to May 3, 2023, at 12 p.m. PT (noon). Notifications will be sent on July 5 by 5 p.m.

Round #2

Applications will be accepted from June 1 to July 27, 2023, at 12 p.m. PT (noon). Notifications will be sent on September 28 by 5 p.m.

16. 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. If you haven't heard from CCI by the promised notification date and time, check your spam folder. 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.

17. Who reviews the applications?

Applications are 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. The internal review process is meant to support the program's two-month response turnaround. However, CCI does contact the references of top funding candidates, as well as individuals in the field of a competitive applicant's work. In so doing, the people directly meant to benefit from an individual or team's work can influence the adjudication process.

18. How are applications evaluated? What makes for a strong application?

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

In general, the most competitive applications are the ones that are clearly written, brief, and to the point, and demonstrate a strong alignment with each criterion. In the case of CALI Catalyst, competitive applications will describe an action or actions that directly resulted in tangible impacts on the arts and culture sector.

Please note: while we welcome applications from change-makers who are working in varying ways and contexts, we discourage applications that describe having issues with any particular person as these conditions may have an impact within an organization, but are too isolated to be felt industry-wide.

19. 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).

Applicants must also upload documentation of their change-making action. A minimum of one, and no more than three, samples can be uploaded. Samples should demonstrate that the action was public-facing and provide further context for the action's direct impact. 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.

*Please check your uploaded support materials to ensure functionality—applications with inaccessible attachments (e.g. corrupted, password-protected) will not be reviewed.

20. Whom 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 has positively impacted. In addition, references should not be a family member or spouse/partner nor should they be engaged in an active financial relationship with the applicant. We consider a reference with whom the applicant has a family or active financial connection to be a conflict of interest.

Regarding information needed, applicants will need to provide contact information (phone number and email) for both references and indicate the nature of their relationship, as well as language preference. References must be able to commit to a 15-minute phone conversation with CCI staff at a mutually agreed upon time. Currently, staff can only accommodate phone conversations in English and Spanish. References who are not fluent in English or Spanish are welcome to have a translator on the call.

CCI staff will *only* contact the references of top candidates for funding. CCI may also call on individuals in the field of a competitive applicant’s work so that the people directly meant to benefit will influence the adjudication process. Please note that reference calls do not guarantee funding approval.

21. If my funding request is declined in round 1, can I reapply in round 2?

Unless a new body of work is being addressed, applicants who are declined in round 1 may not reapply to round 2.

22. Do you offer feedback?

We are unable to provide feedback on individual CALI Catalyst applications. However, staff are available to schedule a 15-minute phone call with declined or prospective applicants to review grant guidelines. Please contact us at cali@cciarts.org to coordinate.

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

If awarded 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’s preference is to 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 documents 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.

We understand 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. Please contact CCI at 415.288.0530 or at cali@cciarts.org to determine a plan that works best for you.

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

Please be aware that grant awards may be taxable as ordinary income. As CCI cannot offer legal or tax advice, grantees are advised to consult with an accountant, tax expert, and/or a benefits specialist.

We understand that fund disbursement may impact disability-related community support or other social benefits and are willing to structure options that work for each person's unique financial situation. Please contact CCI at 415.288.0530 or at cali@cciarts.org to determine a plan that works best for you.

25. If I am awarded a grant, will I need to submit a report? Are there any other requirements?

If you are awarded a grant, you must complete a brief final report describing the impact and use of funding (i.e., line item expenses). Reports will be due within 12 months of signing the grant agreement. CCI will provide further instructions, 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.

In addition, CCI will also host one or more virtual, community-building gatherings for the 2023 CALI Catalyst grantees in November 2023. The gatherings will be an opportunity for grantees to connect and learn about each other's work. More information will be provided in the CALI Catalyst grant agreement.

26. How often may 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.

27. How many grants will you make?

Year One (2023) of CALI Catalyst's three-year award cycle has \$112,500 in available funding, which will support approximately 15 grantees.

28. 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 through CCI's communication channels including our e-newsletter, social media accounts, website, and press releases, as well as our website's searchable grantee database.

To learn more about previous CALI Catalyst recipients, search CCI's Past Recipient directory by clicking [here](#) or view the 2021 and 2022 visual directories of grantees, [here](#).

29. If I am awarded a CALI Catalyst grant, does that mean that CCI and its funding partners agree with or endorse my change-making 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.

30. 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 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 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 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. And, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge and give credit to the change-makers who helped to inspire CALI Catalyst such as Taylor Brandon, who held the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art more accountable for its censorship of Black voices; Ely Sonny Orquiza, creator of “The Living Document of BIPOC Experiences in Bay Area Theater Companies,” which collected anonymous testimonials of racism within the region’s theater industry; and former Marciano Art Foundation workers in Los Angeles, whose efforts to unionize led to greater awareness of the need to protect museum workers.

31. I still have a question.

CCI staff are here to help and listen. Please email us at cali@cciarts.org or call 415.288.0530 for assistance. For Deaf applicants and those with hearing loss, contact CCI using the [California Relay Service](#)—our staff are trained in making and receiving these calls.

If you need technical assistance (e.g. password or upload issues), submit a request for 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.