



INVESTING IN ARTISTS

2021 Guidelines

Bay Area Performing and Media Arts

Artistic Innovation Grants

Deadline: August 18, 2021 by 12:00 p.m. PT

OVERVIEW

The Investing in Artists grant program was established by the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) in 2007 to enhance the working lives of, and strengthen the creative support system for, California artists working in all disciplines. Since that time, and with the support of The James Irvine Foundation and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, CCI has awarded over \$2 million to 290 diverse artists across the state of California.

Through the continued support of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, CCI is pleased to offer additional rounds of funding (2021-2023) for the Investing in Artists program for Bay Area performing and media artists. Through a competitive application process conducted over three rounds of funding from 2021 to 2023, approximately eight grants of up to \$8,250 each will be made annually to Bay Area performing and media artists.

PURPOSE

The Investing in Artists program supports artistic innovation through grants of up to \$8,250 each for individual artists to create **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. Projects must be completed within 12 months of the grant award start date.

WHO CAN APPLY

Investing in Artists grants are designed to support diverse Bay Area 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. Applicants representing a wide range of cultural expressions and artistic practices in the performing and media arts are encouraged to apply.

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for funding, applicants:

- **NEW FOR 2021: Must reside full-time in Alameda, Contra Costa, or San Francisco county at the time of applying and for the duration of the grant period (October 2021 – September 2022).**
 - For the 2021 – 2023 award cycle, artists residing in select Bay Area counties will be eligible to apply. For the 2022 cycle, applicants residing in Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo counties will be eligible to apply, while the 2023 cycle will make eligible applicants residing in Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma counties.
- Application must be submitted by an **individual** working artist¹; organizations, artistic companies, and collectives cannot apply.
- Must propose a **new** project. (Projects that have already taken place or that will take place before the start of the grant period are ineligible. See the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.)
- Must have performed or presented artistic work in a public context—including online/digital platforms—within the last three years.
- Must be 18 years or older at the time of the application deadline.
- Cannot be a full-time or matriculated student.

- Cannot submit more than one application.
- Cannot have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of Center for Cultural Innovation.

¹*For the purposes of this 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. While serious artistic activity performed as a hobby or as part of volunteer community service may, in some cases, be considered technically eligible, successful applicants will have demonstrated a history of artistic accomplishment and a sustained commitment to deepening and expanding their artistic work.*

REVIEW PROCESS & CRITERIA

A grant review panel consisting of established field practitioners appointed by CCI will be convened to make recommendations on final grant recipients. Additional reviewers may also be used to advise on technical proposals, or to follow up with applicants to assess artistic practice, context, or work settings.

Panelists will evaluate applications against the following artistic innovation criteria:

- Clarity, rationale, and readiness of proposed project, including identification of specific work plans, timeline, and collaborators (if any) required to carry out the project;
- 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
- Demonstrated record of artistic achievement and quality of work.

NOTE: In light of 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; rather, 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 artists’ career.

TIMELINE

Application Opens	July 5, 2021, 9:00 a.m. PT
Application Webinar	July 12, 2021, 12:00 p.m. PT (<i>a recording of the live webinar will be made available on CCI’s website after July 12</i>)
Application Deadline	August 18, 2021, 12:00 p.m. PT (no exceptions)
Application Notifications	October 8, 2021
Project Start Date	October 9, 2021

HOW TO APPLY

Individual artists who meet the program’s eligibility criteria must submit an online application by **August 18, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. PT.**

The Investing in Artists online application can be accessed at:

www.centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com

Applications will be accepted online **ONLY** through CCI’s Submittable platform.

All applicants **MUST** create an account in Submittable before they will be able to access the grant application.

APPLICATION

Application components are addressed below and a full preview is available, [here](#). Incomplete applications that do not include all of the required elements in the online application form—including work samples and a project budget—by the August 18 deadline will result in automatic disqualification.

Narrative

The narrative provides panelists with fundamental details about the applicant’s project and its alignment with the review criteria. Regarding word limits, 350 words amounts to roughly three paragraphs and 150 words amounts to roughly one paragraph.

1. **Project Description:** Describe the artistic innovation project for which you are seeking funding, providing details with regards to your timeline, required resources, and collaborators, if any. (Max 350 words)
2. **Collaborators** (Optional): If applicable, you may include up to three brief bios for key collaborators. (Max 350 words)
3. **Why Now?:** Explain how your artistic innovation project is “pushing the envelope” for your artistic profession or practice, how it may affect your work in the future, and why it is important to undertake this project now. (Max 350 words)
4. **Applicant Context:** Provide a brief statement about your artistic practice and the nature of your work. (Max 150 words)

Résumé

Applicants must upload a brief artist’s résumé, not to exceed one (1) page (.pdf, .doc, and .docx formats accepted). The résumé is a helpful, at-a-glance reference for panelists to familiarize themselves with the applicant’s experience and activities in the field.

Budget

The project budget is a tool for conveying to panelists what an applicant needs to *fully* realize their proposed new work. Labor, materials, equipment, research, and travel are examples of items that may need to be reflected in the project budget.

The online application will provide an income and expense template for the proposed project. Applicants are required to enter the expense line items associated with their project, as well as any income that is being raised if the budget exceeds the maximum grant award of \$8,250. A “Budget Notes” section will be provided for any expense or income items that need clarification. The “Budget Notes” section is optional and has a limit of 300 words.

Work Samples

Work samples are required, and are critical in helping panelists acquaint themselves with the applicant's work. In general, it is best to select examples of recent work and, if applicable, work that relates to the proposed project. Avoid uploading samples that have poor visibility or audio quality.

IMPORTANT—PLEASE READ: Panelists will review up to 5 minutes total. Keep this in mind when selecting samples that are lengthy. You may opt to cue your sample to a specific starting point or to edit it. ***If you are submitting more than one type of work sample, then you cannot submit the recommended total for each type. For example: you can submit 2 minutes of audio and 3 minutes of video but NOT 5 minutes of audio and 5 minutes of video.***

At least one work sample, and no more than three, must be uploaded directly to the online application. Each upload can be accompanied by the sample's title, year, and a single sentence description. The total size limit for an application submission is 800 MB, which may include work samples uploaded in the following formats:

1. **Audio:** AIFF, WAV, M4A, or MP3 files accepted. Please refer to the panelist viewing instructions above and note there is a file size limit of 400 MB per upload.
2. **Video:** AVI, MP4, MOV, or MPG files accepted. We recommend the MPEG4 (H.264) format with a minimum 640x480 resolution and MP3 audio. Resizing your video to these specifications before uploading will help your samples look better. Please refer to the panelist viewing instructions above and note there is a file size limit of 400 MB per upload. In addition, **we will NOT accept a document with Vimeo, YouTube, or other video platform links. You must upload your sample directly to the Submittable platform.** Videos that require a password will not be viewed either.
3. **Written Documents:** For theatre artists applying as playwrights only—although we strongly prefer receiving video samples from all performing artist applicants, 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 panel will review up to 10 pages of manuscript (.doc, .docx, or .pdf file formats only).

SUPPORT

Applicants can access the program's Frequently Asked Questions, Application Preview, Sample Project Budget, Webinar recording (after July 12), and Submittable "Quick Tips" on the Investing in Artists webpage, [here](#).

If you have additional questions about the program or application process, contact CCI at grants@cciarts.org with the subject heading "Investing in Artists." We're here to help!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Investing in Artists grant program is made possible with support from:

