



INVESTING IN ARTISTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ELIGIBILITY

1. Which Bay Area counties are eligible for support?

For the 2021 – 2023 award cycle, artists residing in *select* Bay Area counties will be eligible to apply for an Investing in Artists grant. Award cycles and their corresponding eligible counties are:

- 2021: Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco
- 2022: Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo
- **2023: 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 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 (October 18, 2023 – October 17, 2024). 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 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. 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 Investing in Artists grantees eligible to apply for grants in the 2021–2023 funding rounds?

For the 2023 application round, previous Investing in Artists grantees are eligible to apply. This eligibility criterion may be updated in future cycles.

7. Can organizations, companies, or collectives 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 will only be awarded to individual artists and are intended to support the work of one artist. 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. 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 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.

10. I need support for an ongoing project. Is the Investing in Artists grant program a good fit?

Investing in Artists 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 October 18, 2023, grant period, Investing in Artists may not be a good fit for you at this time.

11. 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

12. 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.

13. 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, and **we strongly recommend at least one video work sample.**

We will not accept work samples by mail or email. The guidelines and application preview include 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

14. 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.

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

This information is listed in the grant guidelines, and we encourage you to review it 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. Applications will also be evaluated based on the strength of the artist's work, clarity and readiness of the proposed project, and timeliness and impact of the requested funding on the artist's career. 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.

16. 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.

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

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

18. 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 18, 2023, by 5 pm PT. 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.

19. 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 or through one-on-one phone calls with applicants. Details will be provided when notifications are shared on October 18, 2023.

GRANTEES

20. How many grants will you make?

There is no set number. The actual number of grants awarded will depend on the quality of the applications received and on the financial requirements of the funded projects. In general, we anticipate making eight grants in each round of funding from 2021–2023.

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

Regarding payment method, grantees can receive a direct deposit payment through Tipalti.com—CCI’s secure, third-party accounting software platform—or via a mailed check. In either case, CCI prefers to issue the award in two payments: The first installment will be 90% of the grant funds. The remaining 10% will be paid upon completion and approval of the required final report. Processing times will depend on the method of payment chosen and, in the case of the first installment, the return of an electronically signed grant agreement along with any requested attachments, such as a bio and headshot or representative image.

We understand that fund disbursement may impact disability-related and other social supports; therefore, we will structure options that work for each grantee’s unique financial situation. Grantees may also use their fiscal sponsor or incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit to contract with CCI and receive the awarded funds.

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

Funding awarded through the Investing in Artists 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, Investing in Artists’ 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 grant agreement.

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

Artists who receive funding through the Investing in Artists 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.

24. 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 on October 17, 2024. CCI will provide further instructions in the grant agreement, including how to submit the report through Submittable.

SUPPORT

25. 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 in 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!

26. 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.

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

CCI staff are here to help! For questions regarding the Investing in Artists guidelines or application, email us at grants@cciarts.org with the subject heading “Investing in Artists” or call

us at 415.288.0530 during our office hours on Monday and Wednesday from 10 am to 2 pm.
(Office hour appointments are not required but encouraged! Find a time slot [here](#).)

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.