



INVESTING IN ARTISTS

2023 Guidelines

**Bay Area Performing and Media Arts
Artistic Innovation Grants**

Deadline: August 28, 2023, by Noon, Pacific Time

OVERVIEW

The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) established the Investing in Artists grant program 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 more than 300 diverse artists across 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 2023: Must reside full-time in Marin, Napa, Solano, or Sonoma Counties when applying and for the duration of the grant period (October 18, 2023 – October 17, 2024).**
 - For the 2021 – 2023 award cycle, artists residing in select Bay Area counties will be eligible to apply. In 2021, artists residing in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco Counties were eligible to apply, and in 2022, artists residing in Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo Counties were eligible.
- Must be 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

CCI will invite panelists who are established field practitioners to review applications and make recommendations on final grant recipients. Additional reviewers may be invited to advise on technical proposals or 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 applicable) 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.

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.

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.

TIMELINE

Application Opens	July 10, 2023, 9:00 a.m. PT
Application Webinar	July 18, 2023, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. PT
	Register Here

	<i>If you cannot attend, a recording will be posted on CCI's website, along with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.</i>
Drop-in Q + A	<p>August 2, 2023, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. PT</p> <p>Register Here</p> <p><i>Please note that this is not a formal presentation, nor will it be recorded. The Drop-in Q/A is an opportunity to have your questions addressed by CCI staff in real-time. So that everyone's time can be used efficiently, we ask that you review the grant guidelines, application preview, and Frequently Asked Questions in advance.</i></p>
Drop-in Q + A	<p>August 9, 2023, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. PT</p> <p>Register Here</p>
Drop-in Q + A	<p>August 16, 2023, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. PT</p> <p>Register Here</p>
Application Deadline	<p>August 21, 2023, Noon, PT (no exceptions) UPDATED as of July 18: Deadline is August 28, 2023, Noon PT (no exceptions)</p>
Application Notifications	October 18, 2023, 5 p.m. PT
Grant Support Period	October 18, 2023 – October 17, 2024

HOW TO APPLY

Individual artists who meet the program’s eligibility criteria must submit an online application by **August 28, 2023, at Noon PT.**

The Investing in Artists online application can be accessed at:
<https://centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com/submit>

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.

If you need 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.

Learn more about using Submittable [here](#).

APPLICATION

The application's main components are described below. A complete preview is available [here](#) (.doc and .pdf versions available), and we encourage you to review it before preparing your narrative responses and the requested materials. The application preview includes important details such as word limits, work sample instructions, and accepted file types.

Incomplete applications that do not include all of the required elements in the online application form—including work samples and the project budget—by the August 28 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, and applicants are strongly encouraged to consider the review criteria in the Guidelines when composing their narrative responses. Per word limits, 350 words are roughly three paragraphs, and 150 words are approximately one paragraph.

Note: We have enabled rich text formatting, which allows applicants to add bold, underlined, or italicized font and numbered or bulleted lists. However, we will not accept hyperlinks in lieu of narrative details. Additionally, do not use hyphens/dashes ("- " or "--") to begin a paragraph—using these will cause Submittable to reject your response.

- 1. Project Description:** Describe the artistic innovation project for which you are seeking funding, providing details with regards to your concept, stage of development, timeline, required resources, and collaborators, if any. (350 words max)
- 2. Collaborators (OPTIONAL):** If applicable, include up to three brief bios for key collaborators and describe how they are supporting the project. (350 words max)
- 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. (350 words max)
- 4. Applicant Context:** Provide a brief statement about your artistic practice and the nature of your work. (150 words max)

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.

Project Budget

Applicants must upload a 1-page version of the project 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. In addition, note that Investing in Artists' funding can be used in any way that supports the development of the new work.

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](#).

If the total expenses are projected to exceed the amount requested (up to \$8,250) from Investing in Artists, list the additional income sources and their status (.xls, .xlsx, .doc, .docx, and .pdf file formats accepted). A sample project budget is available [here](#). Note: The sample project budget is for applicants' reference. You are not required to use this template.

A "Budget Notes" section is provided for any expense or income items that need clarification. The "Budget Notes" section is required and has a limit of 300 words, and notes can be bulleted or in a narrative format—whichever is easier; however, if applicants have no notes, they can enter "Not applicable."

Work Samples

Work samples are required and are critical in helping panelists acquaint themselves with the applicant's work. Generally, it is best to select examples of recent work (2020 or later) and, if applicable, work related to the proposed project. Additionally, we recommend avoiding samples that have poor visibility or audio quality.

Requirements

- Only one support material is required; applicants can submit up to three. **We strongly recommend at least one video work sample.**
- **IMPORTANT: Panelists will review up to 5 minutes total.** Keep this in mind when selecting lengthy samples. You may cue your sample to a specific starting point or edit it. **If you submit more than one type of work sample, 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. If you are uploading a manuscript, ten pages equate to 5 minutes.**
- Work samples must be uploaded directly to Submittable. We will not accept documents that link to an external platform such as Vimeo, YouTube, Issuu, etc., nor will we review password-protected samples. Failure to upload work samples 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 or audio sample, cue the sample to the desired start time or include playback instructions in the work sample description, if applicable.
- We strongly advise all applicants to test their materials for functionality before uploading. Corrupted, password-protected, or otherwise inaccessible work samples will render the application incomplete and ineligible for review.
- Each uploaded work sample must be accompanied by a one- to two-sentence description that includes contextual information and viewing/playback instructions if applicable. For example, “Recording of my one-woman show, SOLO, presented in February 2022 as part of the XYZ Festival. Start sample at 00:05:03 and play until 00:08:18.” Note: the field to enter the work sample description will appear AFTER your file is uploaded. It is otherwise not visible.

We will accept the following file formats:

- **Video:** .avi, .mp4, .mov, and .mpg files accepted. If your sample is more than 5 minutes, include the desired start/end times in the work sample description. 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. **Uploading at least one video work sample is strongly encouraged.**
- **Audio:** .aiff, .wav, .m4a, and .mp3 files accepted. If your sample is more than 5 minutes, include the desired start/end times in the work sample description.
- **Manuscripts:** .doc, .docx, and .pdf files accepted. For theatre artists applying as playwrights only—although we strongly prefer receiving video samples from all Investing in Artists 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. Up to ten (10) letter size (8.5 x 11 inches) pages may be uploaded.

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

Grantees must complete a brief final report describing the impact and use of funding (i.e., line item expenses) and provide documentation of the activities supported, such as high-quality images, URLs to relevant press, or video recordings. Reports will be due October 17, 2024, through Submittable. Further details will be provided in CCI’s grant agreement.

QUESTIONS & SUPPORT

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions are available [here](#). CCI staff are also here to help! Email us at grants@cciarts.org or call us at 415.288.0530 during our office hours on Wednesdays and Fridays 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.

If you need 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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