



INVESTING IN ARTISTS

TOOLS & EQUIPMENT

2024 GUIDELINES

The Investing in Artists: Tools & Equipment program (“T&E Fund”) will award grants of \$1,000–\$5,000 to individual craft artists to purchase artistic tools and equipment that support their ability to make object-based work. The T&E Fund is open to individual craft artists, folk and traditional artists, and craftspeople in the United States and its Territories, with geographic eligibility rotating over the 2024–2026 funding cycle. See the ELIGIBILITY section below for details.

Funding will be awarded through a competitive grant application process. Competitive applicants will present a clear request, demonstrate a sustained commitment to their craft discipline, and illustrate how funding will provide linchpin support, such as enabling the artist to meet demand, address safety requirements or other regulations, replace outdated or damaged equipment, or reach a higher standard of quality or craftsmanship. In other words, funding will support craft artists’ careers and ability to make work. A total of \$50,000 is available in each round of funding.

Investing in Artists: Tools & Equipment is administered by the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI), a trusted intermediary focused on the economic security of individuals in the arts, with funding support provided by the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation.

ABOUT

Investing in Artists: Tools & Equipment marks a new chapter in the Investing in Artists portfolio. The portfolio was established by CCI in 2007 to enhance the working lives of and strengthen the creative support system for California artists working in all disciplines. From 2007–2011, and with the support of the James Irvine Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Investing in Artists awarded grants to individual artists across disciplines to acquire tools and equipment, produce new artistic work, and develop plans for marketing and presenting artistic work. With the continued support of the Hewlett Foundation, Investing in Artists has continued to support the development of new work by Bay Area performing and media artists through the portfolio’s annual Artistic Innovation grant. Now, in partnership with the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation, CCI is reviving Investing in Artists’ support of tools and equipment, with a new focus on the disciplines of craft and folk and traditional arts and expanded geographic eligibility across the U.S. and its Territories.

Access to tools and equipment plays a significant role in every artist’s ability to innovate, contribute, and start their careers. However, affordability, availability, and career stage can present significant barriers to meeting this structural need. These barriers to entry are amplified for craft artists, especially those who are underrepresented in their discipline and/or the field at large. The T&E Fund responds to these circumstances by supporting craftspeople in acquiring the tools and equipment they need and bringing greater visibility to the field and its practitioners.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for funding consideration, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Identify as an individual working craft artist¹ (see definition below).
- Align with CCI’s definition of craft² (see definition below).
- Reside full-time in an eligible region. Investing in Artists: Tools & Equipment's 2024–2026 funding cycle will rotate geographic eligibility.
 - **For the 2024 round of funding, craftspeople residing full-time in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, or Wyoming are eligible to apply. Additionally, craftspeople residing full-time in a U.S. Territory—American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands—are eligible to apply.**
 - *For the 2025 funding round, craftspeople residing full-time in Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, West Virginia, Tennessee, Texas, or Wisconsin will be eligible to apply.*
 - *For the 2026 funding round, craftspeople residing full-time in Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, or Virginia will be eligible to apply.*
- Presented artistic work in a public context—including online/digital platforms—within the last three years (i.e., since 2021).
- Are 18 years or older at the time of the application deadline.

¹ For the purposes of the T&E Fund, eligible “working craft artists” are defined as adults who are self-taught or have received training in an artistic discipline or tradition such as through an apprenticeship, trade school, undergraduate or graduate program, spend ten or more hours a week on their artwork, 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 practice.

² CCI uses the definition of craft put forth by the [Craft Emergency Relief Fund \(CERF+\)](#), which describes craft as the creation of original objects by the skillful manipulation of materials. While objects may be created from traditional or non-traditional materials and be functional or nonfunctional, both types derive part of their meaning from their association with traditional functional forms such as chairs, vessels, garments, or implements and/or their association with cultural tradition. CERF+ also acknowledges that artists working in craft disciplines may self-identify as makers, designers, potters, ceramicists, mixed media artists, etc. To be inclusive of all eligible materials-based artists, regardless of discipline, CCI uses “artist,” “craft artist,” “craftsperson/people,” and “folk and traditional artist” throughout the T&E Fund’s guidelines and other program ephemera.

Examples of eligible requests:

- New/used tool or equipment purchases
- Repairs to broken equipment
- Installation of equipment
- Materials needed to build equipment
- Tool/equipment storage

The following applicants/requests are **ineligible** for funding consideration:

- Artist collectives, coops, or collaboratives;
- Nonprofit or fiscally sponsored organizations;
- Recipients of the Maxwell/Hanrahan Award in Craft, administered by United States Artists;
- Incomplete applications and those with inaccessible work samples or other required files;
- Full-time or matriculating students;
- Applicants who submit more than one application;
- Requests to support training in or experimentation with a new medium;
- Requests for routine art materials or supplies;
- Requests for fixed costs (e.g., studio rent, equipment/tool insurance and ongoing maintenance, utilities);
- Requests to support capital improvements or repairs, purchases made before the award of the grant, consultant fees, personal compensation, or payment of debts, credit cards, loans, or other financial responsibilities; and
- Applicants who have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationships) with the boards, staff, and directors of CCI or the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation.

AWARD DETAILS & REQUIREMENTS

Award Range: \$1,000–\$5,000

Funding Available: \$50,000

Period of Support: December 2024–December 2025

Requests must be between \$1,000 and \$5,000. We anticipate a high volume of applications. For this reason, partial funding may be awarded.

All projects must be completed within twelve months of receiving the grant award. 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 in December 2025 through Submittable. Further details will be provided in CCI’s grant agreement.

REVIEW PROCESS & CRITERIA

CCI will invite panelists with craft expertise to review eligible applications and make award recommendations.

Panelists will evaluate requests using these criteria:

- **Vision:** Proposed project is clear and has a strong rationale. Details are provided about the specific tools/equipment requested, associated costs, timeline, resources needed and their status, and other considerations required to carry out the project.
- **Impact:** Proposed project will offer vital, linchpin support that will impact the artist’s career and ability to produce work, enabling them to meet demand, adhere to safety requirements or other regulations, replace outdated or damaged equipment, reach a higher standard of quality or craftsmanship, or realize other professional needs.
- **Artistry:** Applicant demonstrates sustained commitment to their discipline by way of training, record of artistic achievement/cultural relevance, and quality of work.

Panelists will aim to ensure that recommended grantees reflect the diversity of the craft landscape, with a priority for those who are underrepresented or under the radar in the field or their specific discipline,

such as people of color, folk and traditional artists, and women. To that end, the panel will seek to balance the final grantee pool across factors, which include geography, disciplines, communities served, and cultural form/tradition represented.

APPLICATION

The application consists of the following required sections:

1. Contact Information & Proposal Details
2. Narrative
3. Résumé
4. Budget
5. Work Samples
6. Award Administration Information
7. Demographic Survey (Optional)
8. Application Certification

An **Application Preview** (.doc and .pdf versions available) is available [here](#). We encourage you to review it in advance to prepare your narrative responses and the requested materials. The application preview includes important details such as word limits, work sample instructions, and accepted file formats.

2024 TIMELINE

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Application Opens | July 10 at 9:00 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) |
| Information Session | July 24 from 12:00–1:00 p.m. PDT Register Here <i>If you cannot attend, a recording and a copy of the presentation deck will be posted on CCI’s website by July 26 at 5 p.m. PDT.</i> |
| Drop-in Q&A’s | July 31 from 12:00–1:00 p.m. PDT Register Here August 14 from 5:00–6:00 p.m. PDT Register Here August 21 from 12:00–1:00 p.m. PDT Register Here <i>Please note: These are not formal presentations, nor will they 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> |
| Application Deadline | September 4 at 11:59 a.m. (Morning) PDT |
| Panel Review | October–November 2024 |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Notifications | November 20 by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) |
| Period of Support | December 2024–December 2025 |

HOW TO APPLY

Applications will be accepted beginning July 10, 2024, at 9 a.m. PDT and accepted until September 4, 2024, at 11:59 a.m. (morning) PDT. Complete applications must be submitted by the deadline—no exceptions will be made. In addition, applications with missing or inaccessible content (e.g., corrupted or password-protected files) will not be reviewed.

Note: The Investing in Artists: Tools & Equipment grant deadline, notifications, and technical assistance workshops utilize Pacific Time. Please plan accordingly. For help converting to the Pacific Time Zone, see [here](#).

Access the Investing in Artists: Tools & Equipment online application at:
<https://centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com/>

Applications will be accepted online ONLY through CCI’s Submittable platform. Applicants MUST create an account in Submittable before they can access the grant application. Learn more about using Submittable [here](#).

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.

SUPPORT

Answers to **Frequently Asked Questions** are available [here](#). CCI staff are also here to help! For questions about the grant guidelines or application, email us at grants@cciarts.org (include “T&E Fund” in the subject line) or call 415.713.7650. Deaf applicants and those with hearing loss can 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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Investing in Artists: Tools & Equipment is supported by a network of promotional partners (see [here](#) for a complete list). Funding is provided by:

