



Center for Cultural Innovation
Fund for Creative Entrepreneurs with Spinal Cord Injuries

Request for Proposals for Implementation Consultant

Deadline: November 30, 2018

The Center for Cultural Innovation is seeking a Consultant to design, launch, and implement the national grant program Fund for Creative Entrepreneurs with Spinal Cord Injuries.

Overview

With funding from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) is excited to be implementing a new, one-year, national grant program called The Fund for Creative Entrepreneurs with Spinal Cord Injuries (aka The Artist-Innovator SCI Fund for short). CCI is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to supporting the financial self-determination and sustainability of artists. This partnership was sparked by the Foundation's aim to reflect the ambitions of its founder and namesake, Craig H. Neilsen, who was a successful entrepreneur and whose personal experience with spinal cord injury resulted in the Foundation's ongoing efforts to support those who share his entrepreneurial spirit and physical condition.

The Artist-Innovator SCI Fund will offer 10 grants of \$7,500 to individual artist-entrepreneurs with spinal cord injuries who are driven and inspired to innovate by opportunity-based entrepreneurship – in other words, by the possibilities and benefits that are offered through the experience of both being an artist and living with spinal cord injury. Grants will be open to applicants nationally, and will be awarded to individuals who successfully propose projects that have the potential to develop into self-sustaining revenue generating activities; that have art, culture and creativity at their core; that enable the individual to deepen an artistic, creative, or artisan practice; and that can have a positive social impact upon a specified place-based or identity-based population. Priority will be given to entrepreneurs at a start-up phase with demonstrated need for capital, with compelling projects backed by feasible business plans and how they intend to popularize their innovation. The program will prioritize projects that hold promise for improving applicant's financial sustainability, artistic excellence, and social or end-user impacts and, as a secondary-level consideration, that hold promise for shifting popular perception of those with disabilities positively.

Background

Recent statistics show that self-employment rates in the US are higher among disabled people than non-disabled people (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). A report from The OECD Project synthesizes research suggesting that this higher rate is due to barriers in securing and keeping employer-based work that range from inflexible or unsuitable workplace conditions to feelings of insecurity in the workplace (Kitching, 2014). At the 2016 UCLA National Arts and Disability Center's National Dialogue on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities, "limited available funding" for developing entrepreneurial capabilities of disabled artists that would provide pathways for financial independence was described as a particular challenge.

In addition, the University of Illinois at Chicago has noted that of the existing entrepreneurship programs for disabled people that exist, they are in fact limiting as a result of overly prioritizing "needs-based entrepreneurship" (Caldwell et al., 2016). The research argues that these programs wrongly assume that disabled people are driven to become entrepreneurs primarily as a result of barriers in other sections of the workforce. This prevailing attitude may in fact "sustain a disabling environment that limits social mobility." Ultimately, CCI perceives that what is needed are more opportunities that unfetter and invest in artists with disabilities as valuable contributors to their communities and society. At present, however, there is a lack of



programs that simultaneously support entrepreneurship spurred by the dual experiences of being an artist and having a disability: CCI's Artist-Innovator SCI Fund calls attention to and fills this critical gap.

As one of the few regrants of individual artists in the country, CCI recognizes both the need and opportunity to provide investment-type support to creative SCI entrepreneurs. The Artist-Innovator SCI Fund offers financial capital while also validating this population as artists, innovators, inventors, makers, and entrepreneurs through a competition-based fund (versus a need-based fund). The design of this program has been informed by both our existing Creative Economic Development Fund (CEDF) – which supports micro-sized creative and social enterprises in the City of Los Angeles – and through a series of conversations with those who are leading the way in raising awareness of the affirmative experiences of disability.

References

- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). Employed persons by disability status, industry, class of worker, and sex, 2016 annual averages. [Data File]. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.t04.htm>
- Caldwell, K., Parker Harris, S., & Renko, M. (2016). Social Entrepreneurs with Disabilities: Exploring Motivational and Attitudinal Factors. *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, 5(1), 211-244. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.15353/cjds.v5i1.255>
- Kitching, J. (2014). *Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment by People with Disabilities*. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/background-report-people-disabilities.pdf>

Scope of Work

As CCI has received support to implement the program for only one year, we are seeking a Consultant with specialized expertise in the field of disability to take the lead in designing, implementing, and managing the various grantmaking stages of the Artist-Innovator SCI Fund. The stages are to:

- assemble a set of National Advisors to inform the development, act as ambassadors, and serve as a resource to grantees;
- work with CCI senior staff to design and write guidelines and develop the application;
- manage the launch of the application, including generating website and social media copy;
- conduct outreach, including generating a broad and targeted contact list spanning disability, entrepreneurship, and arts sectors to ensure that this opportunity reaches prospective applicants;
- manage responses to inquiries and technical assistance needs with support from CCI's program assistant;
- identify and invite panelists and facilitate the panel review via video conference;
- notify applicants of their status;
- promote grantees so as to shine a spotlight on the important and exciting ways that creative entrepreneurs with SCI are making contributions;
- design and implement online, light operational activities for grantees that initiate relationships and provide important information or connections; and
- scan for and connect CCI with prospective funders of this program in an effort to make this opportunity more robust and long-standing.

Qualifications

CCI seeks a Consultant with the following skills, background, and experiences:

- Alignment with CCI's mission and principles (cf. CCI's website);
- Leads from the rights-oriented social model of disability;
- Experience working with people with physical disabilities, especially those with spinal cord injuries;
- Understanding or experience with grantmaking a plus; and
- Familiarity or direct experience in the arts and/or in entrepreneurship.



Program Timeline and Deliverables

CCI seeks to launch the Artist-Innovator SCI Fund by March 2019 and to make awards by July/August 2019. The Consultant will deliver a (1) list of connections made and potential sources of funding to continue and expand the program; and (2) final narrative report synthesizing activities, lessons learned, and recommendations for the program (approximately 3-5 pages) by August 30, 2019.

Budget and Contract Terms

The stipend amount for the Artist-Innovator SCI Fund Consultant is \$18,000. Travel is not anticipated, but if it becomes necessary, CCI will reimburse expenses with receipts and prior approval. CCI will issue a not-to-exceed contract, and we will use the following payment schedule: 1st payment of \$5,000 upon execution of contract agreement; 2nd payment of \$3,000 upon launch of program; 3rd payment of \$5,000 upon completion of the panel review and scheduling of online grantee meeting and workshop; and 4th (final) payment of \$5,000 upon receipt of final deliverables.

Requirements

- This work spans several months, but the time required is not spread evenly; rather work will concentrate around major deadlines, which can be set to fit the Consultant's schedule up front.
- The Consultant will be from anywhere in the U.S. or territories and does not need to be in or near CCI's offices in Los Angeles or San Francisco.
- The Consultant must have familiarity with and capability to facilitate video-based conference calls.

Interested?

By November 30, 2018, please submit in a single attachment the following to search@cciarts.org with the subject line: "Artist-Innovator SCI Fund Consultant" (questions may also be directed here):

1. Cover Letter (no more than two pages) describing your interest in this program as well as your background and qualifications that make you uniquely positioned to be of service to this program. Please include your perspective of a medical or social model of disability.
2. Resume
3. Reference List with names, institutional affiliations and positions (if applicable), and one-sentence explanation for each of why you included them. CCI would seek your permission before we contact them, and we are requesting this information at this stage to better understand your networks and experience in this field. Please include a link or work sample, if available, if you have performed relevant work for them that you would like to share.
4. A preliminary, bulleted proposed Workplan demonstrating how you would set tasks and deadlines based on the information shared here. (As CCI is familiar with managing and implementing grantmaking programs, we seek this information to assess how much you can self-manage this program. We emphasize that this should be no more than two pages and only bulleted as we do not want you to expend an inordinate amount of time on this item.)