OVERVIEW
From March 23 to April 15, under the leadership of Mayor London N. Breed, San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC) and Grants for the Arts (GFTA) supported artists and arts organizations that anchor our already vulnerable and vitally important cultural communities with the San Francisco Arts & Artists Relief Fund. This $1.5 million Relief Fund helped mitigate COVID-19 related financial losses that these anchors of arts communities have been facing.

The City has made available an additional $250,000 to re-open this Fund for individual artists, with additional support from the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation. Renamed the San Francisco Artists Relief Fund, the Fund will directly support the financial needs of artists of historically vulnerable communities who have been impacted by the COVID-19 related economic shutdown.

Crisis moments are challenging, but also offer the opportunity to reshape the future. The Fund is being administered and adjudicated by the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI), a trusted intermediary focused on the economic security of people in the arts. CCI will additionally manage the Bay Area Artist Relief Exchange, a Google Group (i.e., a listserv) for individual applicants that will facilitate the exchange of expertise, advice, and resources (e.g., negotiating lower credit card interest rates, managing student loan debt, sharing job or space opportunities). In this time of physical isolation, the Bay Area Artist Relief Exchange will help foster social connections, build a shared sense of community, and cooperatively exchange useful information and resources.

PROGRAM
The Fund will prioritize the financial needs of artists who are of and serving cultural populations that have been and remain financially vulnerable—black, indigenous, immigrant, trans, and people with disabilities. It is imperative that we do not lose their participation in shaping the County’s unique and diverse cultural identity. Individuals may apply for up to $2,000 and use the award however they see fit.
We anticipate a high volume of requests. Therefore, awards may be less than the amount requested so that funds can be distributed as widely and as long as possible.

**PRINCIPLES**

CCI will operate the Fund with the following ethos:

*Trust:* We intend to operate this Fund in a way that provides some relief from stress, anxiety, and isolation. To that end, we ask for relatively little by way of documentation. We trust that those who apply have artistic, cultural, and creative practices that have been shared in ways that contribute to their communities and that authentically are by and of these priority vulnerable communities.

*Generosity:* No one funder can ameliorate the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Before applying, we ask for self-assessment of your financial state of need. Only apply when and for an amount that you most critically need. This way, we can stretch the Fund’s resources as much as possible.

*Community:* We know that the arts community is resourceful, and we encourage applicants of the program to share what they need and what they can offer, particularly when it comes to advice, expertise, and resources. If you’ve successfully re-negotiated student loan debt, pay this opportunity forward by helping someone else realize the same positive outcome. The Bay Area Artist Relief Exchange will be porously managed, and can be open to anyone applicants of the program wish to invite.

**ELIGIBILITY**

The San Francisco Artists Relief Fund will accept applications from individuals (artists, creatives, cultural producers, etc.) who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Must be a full-time resident of San Francisco;
- Must not be eligible for, or currently on unemployment (applicants can be receiving CARES benefits);
- Cannot have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationships) with board, staff, and directors of CCI, SFAC, GFTA, and the City and County’s elected officials; and
- Must not have already received support from the San Francisco Arts & Artists Relief Fund.

**REVIEW CRITERIA**

- Demonstrate urgent financial need.
- Priority will be given to individuals that are of and serving cultural populations that are financially vulnerable—black, indigenous, immigrant, trans, and people with disabilities.

**REVIEW PROCESS & TURN-AROUND**

Funding recommendations will be made by CCI, and approved by SFAC and GFTA. Notifications will then be sent to all applicants. Grantees will need to complete CCI’s grant agreement and
the online payment processing form through Tipalti.com. Payments will be made via direct deposit and may take three—five business days.

- May 1, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. (PDT) – Application Cycle Opens
- May 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. (PDT) – Application Cycle Closes
- May 22, 2020 – Notifications Made

HOW TO APPLY
Applications will be accepted beginning May 1, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. and accepted until May 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. Completed applications must be submitted by the deadline—no exceptions will be made.

The San Francisco Artists Relief Fund online application can be accessed at: https://ccigrants.gosmart.org/

Applications will be accepted online ONLY through CCI’s GO Smart™ system. All new applicants MUST register for an account with the GO Smart™ system before they will be able to access the grant application.

APPLICATION
In addition to collecting your contact information, demographic information that is used to assess eligibility and for us to understand the population we are serving, amount of funding requested, and website URL, you will be asked to describe in 1-2 paragraphs your current financial situation, what loss of income you have been facing since mid-March, and why you need funds now. The URL (or an equivalent ephemera) should demonstrate that the applicant has an artistic and cultural practice (broadly defined as ranging from fine arts to expressing cultural identity).

REPORTING
Grantees will be required to complete a survey at the end of the grant period, roughly three months after receipt of the award. The survey will ask how the grant was used and what occurred as a result of receiving funding.

QUESTIONS
If you have questions about the Fund or the application process, contact CCI at grants@cciarts.org or (415) 288-0530.