



# ZOO LABS

**LEARN + FUND + MENTOR + COMMUNITY**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **CENTER FOR CULTURAL INNOVATION AND INTERSECTION FOR THE ARTS**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*(effective May 3, 2022)*

### ELIGIBILITY

- 1. My team operates multiple music businesses. Can we apply for funding for each one?**  
Teams that operate multiple businesses can request funding for only one business.
- 2. I live in an eligible Bay Area county, but members of my team do not. Are we eligible to apply?**  
For the 2022 award cycle, all team members must be full-time residents of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, or Sonoma County. However, if all team members were living in an eligible Bay Area county as of March 1, 2020, but have been displaced as a result of the pandemic, the team is eligible to apply.
- 3. Some of the team members have received funding through other CCI grant programs, are we eligible to apply for Zoo Labs: FUND support?**  
Funding through another CCI grant program has no bearing on the team's eligibility to apply for or receive grant funds through this opportunity.
- 4. Are alumni of a past (2013-2021) Zoo Labs program eligible to apply? What about previous Zoo Labs: FUND grantees?**  
Participation in a past Zoo Labs program has no bearing on the team's eligibility to apply for or receive grant funds through this opportunity. Similarly, previous Zoo Labs: FUND grantees may apply for funding in the 2022 cycle so long as their final report and mentorship requirements have been fulfilled.
- 5. What do you mean by "music business?"**  
By "music business" we mean that the business' key feature involves music as a product, program, service, or art form/cultural expression. We are open to a range of music businesses that conform to this description such as groups/ensembles, recording studios, music festivals, vinyl record presses, record labels, music technology, music-based healing services, and music education nonprofits, to name a few examples.
- 6. My team is getting ready to *launch* a music business. Can we apply?**

So long as all other eligibility criteria are met, then yes, you can apply! The Zoo Labs: FUND grant is open to businesses at all stages of development, including those that are nearing an official launch.

**7. Just so I'm clear, who *isn't* eligible for funding consideration?**

Ineligible applicants include solo artists and individuals who have an idea for a music business, but no team. In addition, teams will be considered ineligible if they reside outside of the eligible nine Bay Area counties (an exception will be made to those who have been displaced by the pandemic—see FAQ #2); are not BIPOC or BIPOC-led; and/or have a conflict of interest with Zoo Labs, CCI, or Intersection for the Arts. And remember, if any team members are 18 or younger, CCI must be contacted to discuss eligibility.

**AWARD TIERS**

**8. What are the award tiers?**

Teams will choose the award tier—\$5,000; \$15,000; \$25,000; and \$50,000—to be considered for and will only be considered for the selected tier. In other words, if a team is not recommended for funding, they will not be rolled into a different tier for consideration. For example, teams who request \$25,000 will only be assessed against other teams who request \$25,000.

**9. Which award tier should my team apply for?**

Teams will select the award tier to be considered for based on their alignment with its accompanying criteria. Award tiers, their associated criteria, and the approximate number of awards available are:

- **\$5,000** (approximately four awards available)  
Seed Funding: Teams that request \$5,000 are newly formed; have worked on the business for two consecutive (i.e., back-to-back) years or less; and are earning little to no revenue from the business.
  
- **\$15,000** (approximately five awards available)  
Startup Funding: Teams that request \$15,000 are starting to have traction; have worked together on the business for two to five consecutive (i.e., back-to-back) years; and are earning little to no revenue from the business.
  
- **\$25,000** (approximately three awards available)  
Self-sustaining Funding: Teams that request \$25,000 have traction; are on the cusp of realizing self-sustaining, revenue-generating activities; have worked together on the business for five consecutive (i.e., back-to-back) years or more; and are earning some revenue from the business.
  
- **\$50,000** (one award available)  
Next Level Funding: Teams that request \$50,000 are established; are ready to expand or further innovate; have worked together on the business for five consecutive (i.e., back-to-back) years or more; and are earning a steady stream of revenue from the business.

**APPLICATION**

**10. We're a team of three people. Do we each apply for support?**

Only one application will be accepted per team (i.e., individual team members cannot submit separate applications). Teams will identify a lead applicant, who will serve as the primary contact for the application. Information about the other team members will be collected in the application.

**11. Is the application different for each award tier?**

The application is uniform across award tiers with the exception of a handful of financial questions directed only at \$25,000 and \$50,000 applicants.

**12. What is the business matrix?**

Teams **must** use the [provided one-page matrix template](#) (available as a fillable .pdf and as a .docx on CCI’s website, and can be uploaded to Submittable as a .doc, .docx, or .pdf file) to describe their business. The provided template is a helpful tool for organizing multiple aspects about your business in a clear and concise way. Responses should be brief—they may be incomplete sentences or bullet points—but should be clearly understandable. In addition, an 11-pt font or larger must be used and the completed matrix cannot exceed one page.

**NEED HELP WITH THE PITCH VIDEO OR BUSINESS MATRIX?**

[Visit Zoo Labs: LEARN](#) for in-depth guidance on preparing these application components and watch this 3-minute video on [Pitching to Zoo Labs](#) for tips and techniques.

**13. What is the pitch video and how do we prepare it?**

Pitch videos are another tool for communicating aspects about your business in a clear, concise, and compelling way. For the Zoo Labs: FUND application, the pitch video cannot exceed two (2) minutes in duration and can be recorded on a phone, tablet, camera, or even through a platform like Zoom if the team is unable to be in the same physical location together.

The entire team must participate in the video, and one or more members will need to address the following prompts:

1. What is the name of the music business and what does it do?
2. Who are the team members and why are their roles critical to the business?
3. How does the business reflect or further the team’s artistic, creative, craft, or cultural practice?
4. Who does the business serve?
5. Has the business had traction?
6. How does the business contribute to the Bay Area’s arts and culture ecosystem in positive ways?
7. How is this moment a critical juncture for the business and how will funding be used?

**14. Do you have any tips for preparing a compelling pitch video?**

We’re glad you asked. Teams are encouraged to [visit Zoo Labs: LEARN](#) for in-depth guidance and watch this 3-minute video on [Pitching to Zoo Labs](#) for tips and techniques. We also recommend that promotional content is avoided if it replaces responses to the required prompts.

**15. Some of the team’s members go on temporary hiatus, then return to the business. Should we include them in the pitch video? Also, our team has 15 members! Do we need to include and introduce each person?**

The team members referenced in the pitch video, et al. should be core to the business and its operations. If itinerant members fit this description, then please include them in the pitch video and any other applicable areas.

For large groups, please have all team members involved as best you can. Teams might have each member say their name and role only or the lead team member might cluster roles, ex. "Joining me are Musicians A, B, C; Producers D & E; and Manager F." Contact CCI if this is a challenge—we'll figure out a solution!

**16. How many work samples are required and what types are accepted?**

Only one work sample will be accepted. Panelists will review up to 5 minutes total of an audio or video sample OR up to 5 pages of text/image-based materials. Like the pitch video and business matrix, the work sample is another format for presenting information about your business in a compelling and dynamic way. In general, it is best to select examples of recent work (2019 or later), and to avoid samples that have poor visibility or audio quality. For samples that are lengthy, you may opt to cue your work to a specific starting point or to edit it. Finally, a one to two sentence description of the work sample must be included. If applicable, include playback instructions in the description.

**File Formats**

- **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. If none are provided, panelists will listen to the first 5 minutes of the sample.
- **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. If none are provided, panelists will view the first 5 minutes of the sample.
- **Text/Image-Based Materials:** .doc, .docx, and .pdf files accepted. Up to five (5) letter size (8.5 x 11 inches) pages of ephemera may be combined to create a single text/image-based work sample.

Regardless of file type, the work sample must be uploaded directly to the Submittable platform. We will not accept a document that links to an outside platform such as Vimeo, YouTube, Issuu, etc. nor will we review samples that are password-protected.

**EVALUATION**

**17. What will the review process be like? Who reviews the applications?**

Two grant review panels consisting of established music practitioners and entrepreneurs will be convened following the application deadline to make recommendations to CCI on final grant recipients. Additional field experts may be used to advise on technical proposals or to assess artistic practice, context, or work settings.

**18. 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 evaluation criterion.

## GRANTEES

### 19. How can grant funding be used?

Grant funding is unrestricted and can be applied in whatever way is most needed by the team and their music business. However, grant 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 Zoo Labs: FUND grant agreement.

### 20. If grant funding is unrestricted, why are you asking what the team will use it for?

Great question. We ask what funding will be used for because we're interested in knowing how it will support the business and/or the team members behind it. Because it's unrestricted, we don't have limits on what funding can be applied towards, nor do we require a line item budget.

### 21. If my team is awarded a grant, what will be required of us?

If awarded a grant, the full team is required to participate in the grantee orientation meeting, to be held virtually on September 13, 2022 at 6 PM PT, as well as one, 1-hour session with a Zoo Labs mentor. CCI will connect the team with Zoo Labs staff who will coordinate mentorship logistics and pairings based on each team's needs, interests, and availability. Additionally, the lead team member will need to complete a brief final report that describes the impact and use of funding (i.e., line item expenses). Reports will be due in August 2023. CCI will provide further instructions, including how to submit the report through Submittable, in the grant agreement.

### 22. Can you tell me more about the mentorship opportunity?

Zoo Labs staff will coordinate mentorship logistics and pairings based on each team's needs, interests, and availability. Needs will be assessed based on the online application question regarding mentorship needs and through the grantee orientation meeting that will be held virtually on September 13, 2022 at 6 PM PT. Your full team is required to participate in the orientation and in a 1-hour session (virtually or in person) with the chosen mentor. As part of their award, \$25K and \$50K grantees also receive a one-on-one consultation with Zoo Labs staff prior to meeting with their mentor.

**New for 2022:** Our creative ecosystem relies on the sharing of knowledge; to this end, \$25K and \$50K grantees are invited to serve as Zoo Labs mentors in order to give back and grow Zoo Labs' as well as the Bay Area's music community. This is an optional opportunity.

### 23. If my team is awarded a grant, how will payment be made?

If awarded a grant, the lead team member will designate a single recipient for the funds. The recipient may be the lead team member, another member of the team, the business, or other entity such as a fiscal sponsor. We understand that fund disbursement may impact disability-related community support or other social benefits; therefore, we will structure options that work for each grantee's unique financial situation. CCI cannot, however, make payments to multiple team members, nor will CCI assume responsibility for any due diligence regarding the team's membership.

As far as method of payment, grantees have the option of receiving a direct deposit payment through Tipalti.com—CCI's secure, third party accounting software platform—or via a mailed check. In either case, CCI will issue the award in two payments: The first installment will be 90% of the grant funds. The remaining 10% will be paid upon fulfillment of the program orientation

and one-hour mentorship session, and receipt and approval of the final report by CCI. 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 team bio or representative image.

**24. Are grant awards considered taxable income?**

Zoo Labs: FUND grant awards may be taxable as ordinary income. We recommend that you consult a qualified tax advisor for further information.

**25. Will you announce the names of grantees?**

The names of Zoo Labs: FUND grantees will be announced via a press release that is shared on CCI's website (issued on or around September 1) and in CCI's Annual Report, an online publication produced each fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) and made available for download on our website. In addition, grantees may be highlighted on CCI's and Zoo Labs' communication platforms including each organization's e-newsletters, social media channels, and websites.

**SUPPORT**

**26. I'm having issues with Submittable (e.g., lost password, error messages, trouble uploading) and need help. Who do I contact?**

For technical issues, please contact Submittable at [support@submittable.com](mailto:support@submittable.com).

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

CCI staff are here to assist you. Please contact us at [grants@cciarts.org](mailto:grants@cciarts.org) with the subject heading, "Zoo Labs: FUND" or call 213.705.9112. 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.