



# ZOO LABS

**LEARN + FUND + MENTOR + COMMUNITY**

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

**Zoo Labs empowers Black, Indigenous, and people of color to own and amplify their music projects and businesses through entrepreneurial training, resource exchange, focused mentorship, and community building. In 2022, Zoo Labs: FUND will make available \$225,000 in unrestricted grants to Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led artist teams with a music business.**

## **ABOUT**

To address both the marked lack of capital for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) artists, as well as the lack of practical and affordable business education that cultural innovators need in order to begin and scale their creative businesses, Zoo Labs evolved its West Oakland-based, in-person programming to reach a broader audience in the Bay Area and beyond. In 2021, Zoo Labs introduced [Zoo Labs: FUND](#), which offers unrestricted grants paired with industry mentors to Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led teams with a music business, in addition to [Zoo Labs: LEARN](#), an online library of artist-tailored educational content for building a sustainable music business.

Zoo Labs: FUND returns in 2022 for a second grant cycle that will be administered in partnership with Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI), a trusted nonprofit intermediary focused on the financial well-being of artists, arts workers, culture bearers, and creative entrepreneurs.

Zoo Labs: FUND welcomes additional support!

If you would like to help with a tax-deductible contribution, [click here](#) to donate online, or contact Laura Poppiti, CCI Program Director, at [laura@cciarts.org](mailto:laura@cciarts.org).

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

To be considered for funding, applicants:

- Must be BIPOC or BIPOC-led teams of two or more people, with at least one artist member<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, we encourage teams who are of historically marginalized communities including LGBTQIA+ and gender variant people, people with disabilities, and immigrants to apply;
- Must be launching or have an already established music business<sup>2</sup>;
- Must reside full-time in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, or Sonoma County. This criterion applies to ALL team members; however, we recognize that the pandemic has resulted in the temporary and permanent displacement of individuals from their homes in the Bay Area. **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;**

- Can be any age, however, if a member of the team is 18 years old or younger, CCI staff must be contacted to discuss the team's eligibility;
- Can be a previous grantee<sup>3</sup>, however, first-time award recipients will be prioritized; and
- Cannot have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of Center for Cultural Innovation, Zoo Labs, or Intersection for the Arts.

<sup>1</sup>*Teams may consist of artists, content creators, producers, developers, engineers, managers, advisors, and other supporting roles.*

<sup>2</sup>*Music as a product, program, service, or art form/cultural expression must be the **key** feature of the business. We are open to a range of music businesses such as groups/ensembles, recording studios, music festivals or events, vinyl record presses, record labels, music technology, music-based healing services, and music education nonprofits, to name a few examples.*

<sup>3</sup>*Previous grantees must submit an approved final report and fulfill their mentorship requirements before reapplying.*

#### **AWARD TIER CRITERIA**

CCI will award unrestricted grants in the amounts (i.e., tiers) of \$5,000; \$15,000; \$25,000; and \$50,000. Teams will select the tier to be considered for based on their alignment with the tier's accompanying criteria, 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 applicants who request \$25,000.

Award tiers, their associated criteria, and the approximate number of awards available include:

**\$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.

Please note that the number of awards available in each tier may be adjusted commensurate with the number of eligible applications received.

## APPLICATION

Applications will be accepted online from May 3–June 22, 2022, and all applicants will be notified about their funding status on August 17, 2022 by 5 p.m. PT.

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. Additionally, teams that operate multiple businesses may request funding for only one business.

The online application ([click here for full preview](#)) is uniform across tiers, with the exception of a handful of financial questions directed only at \$25,000 and \$50,000 award tier applicants. All teams will need to provide contact information, details about the business and funding request, and optional demographic responses, as well as the following required items which will inform panelists' assessment of the evaluation criteria:

- **Pitch Video:** A two-minute “pitch” video that involves the entire team is required. The pitch video will address specific prompts that illustrate the business' mission, team members, audience, impact, and intended use of funding.
- **Business Matrix:** Teams must describe their business using the [provided one-page matrix template](#) (available as a fillable .pdf and .docx on CCI's website). Responses should be brief—they may be incomplete sentences or bullet points— but should be clearly understandable.
- **Work Sample:** 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.

### 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.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

CCI will invite panelists with various backgrounds and expertise to review eligible applications and make award recommendations. Panelists will evaluate applicants' Pitch Video, Business Matrix, and Work Sample against the following criteria:

- **Group Strength:** the team members, through their individual roles and as a collective, are critical to sustaining the business;
- **Artistry & Craft:** the business reflects or furthers the team's artistic, creative, craft, or cultural practice;
- **Entrepreneurship:** the team has a feasible business plan (emerging enterprises) or business model (already established enterprises) and is creating traction for the business; and
- **Impact:** the business contributes to the Bay Area's arts and culture ecosystem in positive ways (NB: how this is realized will be relative to the individual business and its mission—as examples,

the business may be creating economic opportunities, bringing accessible educational experiences to young people, helping audiences to heal, or centering marginalized voices). In addition, grant funding is arriving at a “critical juncture” (i.e., the team is at an inflection point where an infusion of capital has the potential for short or long-term impact such as seeding the launch of a business, propelling a business’ growth, supporting the business’ sustainability, or investing in the untapped potential of an established business).

**HOW TO APPLY**

Applications will be accepted online ONLY through CCI’s Submittable platform and applicants MUST create an account in Submittable before they will be able to access the grant application.

**The online grant application can be accessed at:**  
<https://centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com/submit>

An informational **webinar** will be hosted by CCI on **Tuesday, May 10, 2022, 12:00 - 1:00 PM PT**. The webinar will provide an overview of the application, helpful tips, and a live Q & A. You must pre-register to attend on CCI’s website, [here](#). If you are unable to attend the webinar, a recording will be made available on CCI’s website.

**TIMELINE**

<b>Application Opens</b>	May 3, 2022 at 9 AM PT
<b>Application Webinar</b>	May 10, 2022, 12–1 PM PT <i>(visit CCI’s website for a recording of the webinar and a copy of the presentation deck)</i>
<b>Application Deadline</b>	June 22, 2022 at 12 PM (Noon) PT
<b>Panel Review</b>	Week of August 8, 2022
<b>Funding Notification</b>	August 17, 2022 by 5 PM PT
<b>Grantee Orientation (virtual)</b>	September 13, 2022 at 6 PM
<b>Grantee Mentorship Coordination</b>	September–November 2022

**GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS**

If awarded funding, the full team is required to participate in a grantee orientation meeting, to be held virtually on September 13, 2022, 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 through Submittable.

**QUESTIONS & SUPPORT**

If you’re experiencing technical issues with the Submittable platform, contact Submittable directly at [support@submittable.com](mailto:support@submittable.com).

For questions about the program or application process, refer to the **Frequently Asked Questions**, available [here](#); email 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.