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 businesses through entrepreneurial training, resource exchange, focused mentorship, and community building. In 2023, Zoo Labs: FUND will make available $225,000 in unrestricted grants to Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led artist teams with a music business.

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**, a competitive grant opportunity that supports BIPOC music businesses through unrestricted cash awards. FUND recipients also receive access to a suite of mentorship resources offered by **Zoo Labs: LEARN**, including on-demand artist-tailored entrepreneurial courses, virtual group learning and networking sessions, and curated pairings with business mentors.

Zoo Labs: FUND returns in 2023 for a third grantmaking round 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.

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[1]. 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[2];

- 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 COVID-19 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[3], however, first-time award recipients may 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.

[1]*Teams may consist of artists, content creators, producers, developers, engineers, managers, advisors, and other supporting roles.*

[2]*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.*

[3]*Previous grantees must submit an approved final report and fulfill their mentorship requirements in order to be eligible for funding consideration.*

AWARD TIER CRITERIA

CCI will distribute 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, it 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.

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.

The number of awards available in each tier may be adjusted commensurate with the number of eligible applications received. In addition to receiving an unrestricted cash grant, Zoo Labs: FUND recipients will have access to a suite of mentorship resources through **Zoo Labs: LEARN**, including on-demand entrepreneurial courses, virtual group learning and networking sessions, and a curated pairing with a business mentor. Grantees who are awarded $25K or $50K will also have access to strategy sessions with Zoo Labs Co-Founder, Vinitha Watson**.**

APPLICATION
Applications will be accepted online from May 10–June 28, 2023, and all applicants will be notified about their funding status on August 30, 2023, 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.
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 applications against 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. (See application preview and FAQs for specific prompts.)

- **Business Matrix:** Teams must describe their business using the **provided one-page matrix template** (available as a .docx and as a fillable .pdf on CCI's website). Responses should be brief– they may be incomplete sentences–but should be clearly understandable.

- **Work Sample**: Only one work sample will be accepted. Panelists will review up to 5 minutes total of a video or audio 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 who reflect diverse cultural, gender, and experiential backgrounds 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 (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).

Panelists will also aim to ensure that recommended grantees represent the Bay Area's diverse arts and culture ecosystem. To that end, the panel will seek to balance the final grantee pool across factors, which include: communities served, geography, business focus, arts and cultural form and/or tradition represented, and other descriptive demographics.

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 **information session** will be hosted by CCI on **Wednesday, May 17, 2023, 12:00 - 1:00 PM PT,** and will provide an overview of the application, helpful tips, and a live Q&A. You must pre-register to attend the information session on CCI's website, **here**. If you are unable to attend, a recording will be made available on CCI's website. In addition, CCI will host a **virtual "drop-in"** for applicants to ask questions and receive answers from staff in real-time on **May 24, 2023, 12 - 1 pm PT**. The drop-in will not be a formal presentation, nor will it be recorded. Register **here** to receive Zoom access.

TIMELINE

Application Opens	May 10, 2023 at 9 AM PT
Application Information Session	May 17, 2023, 12–1 PM PT (*visit CCI's website for a recording of the webinar and a copy of the presentation deck*)
Application Drop-in Q&A	May 24, 2023 12 - 1 pm PT
Application Deadline	June 28, 2023 at 12 PM (Noon) PT
Panel Review	Week of August 21, 2023
Funding Notification	August 30, 2023 by 5 PM PT

Period of Support	September 2023 – September 2024
Grantee Orientation (virtual)	October 18, 2023 at 6 PM

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

If awarded a grant, the full team is required to participate in a grantee orientation meeting, to be held virtually on October 18, 2023 at 6 PM PT, wherein grantees will meet one another and learn more about Zoo Labs and its mentorship resources. The full team is also required to participate in a 1-hour, one-on-one session (virtually or in person) with a business mentor. Mentor pairings will be curated by Zoo Labs staff based on each team's needs, interests, and availability. Zoo Labs staff will also support mentorship logistics and scheduling. As a final requirement, the lead team member must complete a brief final report that describes the impact and use of funding (i.e., line item expenses). Reports will be due in September 2024. CCI will provide further instructions, including how to submit the report through Submittable, in the grant agreement.

Lastly, 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.

QUESTIONS & SUPPORT

CCI staff are here to help! For questions about the FUND's guidelines or application, email us at grants@cciarts.org with the subject heading, "Zoo Labs: FUND" or give us a call at 415.288.0530 during our office hours on Monday and Wednesday from 10 am to 2 pm. (**Office hour appointments are not required but encouraged! Find a time slot here**.) 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.

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.

For additional application support, please see the **Frequently Asked Questions** and **Submittable Quick Tips**.