



# ZOO LABS

**LEARN + FUND + MENTOR + COMMUNITY**

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

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*(as of July 16, 2021)*

### 1. What is Zoo Labs? What is the Zoo Labs grant?

Since 2013, Zoo Labs has been building an ecosystem that values art, ideas, and people. Their programming helps empower artists to own and amplify their creations, breaking down the roadblocks between art and business. In Fall 2021 Zoo Labs will launch a specially curated suite of online entrepreneurship courses made for artists - which will be free and accessible to all on [zoolabs.org](http://zoolabs.org). Please follow Zoo Labs on social media for the latest updates.

The Zoo Labs grant was developed in response to the lack of financial capital available to Bay Area music entrepreneurs—especially BIPOC artists—to afford starting or scaling up their creative businesses. Zoo Labs’ pilot grantmaking round will be administered in 2021 by the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI), a trusted nonprofit intermediary focused on the financial well-being of artists, arts workers, culture bearers, and creative entrepreneurs.

### 2. Who is eligible to apply?

To be considered for funding, applicants:

- Must be BIPOC or BIPOC-led teams of two or more people, with at least one artist member (Teams may consist of artists, producers, app developers, engineers, managers, advisors, technicians, and other supporting roles);
- Must be launching, or have already established, a music-based project or business;
- Must reside full-time in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, or Sonoma county\*
  - **\*UPDATE, 7.16.21:** 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 must be contacted to discuss the team’s eligibility; 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.

### 3. I live in an eligible Bay Area county, but members of my team do not. Are we eligible to apply?

For the 2021 application round, **all** team members must be full-time residents of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, or Sonoma county.

**As of July 16, 2021, an exception has been made to this criterion for teams whose members were displaced by the pandemic. To qualify for this exception, all team members must have been full-time residents of an eligible Bay Area county as of March 1, 2020.**

**4. What do you mean by “music-based project or business?”**

By “music-based project or business” we mean that the project or business’ key feature must involve music as a product, program, service, or art form/cultural expression. We are open to a range of music-based projects and businesses that conform to this description such as groups/ensembles, recording studios, music festivals, vinyl record presses, record labels, online platforms or applications, and music education nonprofits, to name a few examples.

**5. My team is getting ready to *launch* a music-based project. Can we apply?**

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

**6. 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-based project/business, but no team. In addition, teams will be considered ineligible if they reside outside of the eligible nine Bay Area counties; 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.

**7. How do I apply for a grant?**

Applications will only be accepted through CCI’s Submittable platform. Applicants **MUST** create an account in Submittable before they will be able to access the grant application. The application can be accessed at: [www.centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com](http://www.centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com). Information about using Submittable is available [here](#).

**IMPORTANT:** 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 other team members will be collected in the application.

**8. When are applications due? When will I learn about my application status?**

Applications are due by noon (12 p.m.) PT on Thursday, August 19, 2021. All applicants will receive notification regarding their status on Friday, October 15, 2021 by 5 p.m. PT.

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

Teams will choose the award tier (\$5,000; \$15,000; \$25,000; \$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. Further, the online application is almost entirely uniform across tiers, with the exception of a handful of financial questions directed at \$25,000 and \$50,000 award tier applicants.

**10. Which award tier should we apply for?**

Award tiers correspond to the music-based project/business' maturity with regards to revenue model, team composition, and fan/customer base. As such, teams should consider how their project or business aligns with each tier's "Award Factors" to inform their selection. NB: The Zoo Labs grant program does not define or quantify "Award Factors"; instead, teams are invited to self-define these and to choose whichever award level resonates.

**11. If I've received funding through another CCI grant program, am I eligible to apply for Zoo Labs support?**

Funding through another CCI grant program has no bearing on your eligibility to apply for or receive grant funds through this opportunity.

**12. Are alumni of a past (2013-2020) Zoo Labs program eligible to apply?**

Participation in a past Zoo Labs program has no bearing on your eligibility to apply for or receive grant funds through this opportunity.

**13. How can grant funding be used?**

Grant funding is unrestricted and therefore, not tied to a project, proposed outcome, or timeline. Instead, the award's unrestricted nature is meant to support grantees in whatever way is most needed. However, Zoo Labs 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 grant agreement.

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

A review panel 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.

**15. 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 criterion.

**16. Why do we need to submit a pitch video?**

Pitch videos help the panelists understand team dynamics, as well as the music enterprise itself. Your pitch is also a way to demonstrate personality and creativity; have fun with it!

**17. How do I prepare the pitch video?**

We're glad you asked! The pitch video 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. (AVI, MP4, MOV, or MPG files accepted.) In addition, the pitch video should involve the entire team and address the following:

- Who are the team members?
- What is the music-based project or business?
- Why is the team applying for funding?
- How is this moment a critical juncture in the trajectory of the project or business?

We encourage you to check out Zoo Labs alum and inventor, co-founder, & CEO of ELECTROSPIT, Bosko Kante, who has even more tips and techniques to share in this 3-minute video, [here](#).

**18. What should I submit as a work sample?**

The work sample is a critical part of the application and should represent your project or business in the best possible light. In general, it is best to select examples of recent work (2018 or later), and to avoid samples that have poor visibility or audio quality.

When deciding how to present your work, please keep in mind that **panelists will review up to 5 minutes total**. For samples that are lengthy, you may opt to cue your work to a specific starting point or to edit it. Additionally, you should pick the strongest work and/or work segment to present first. It's a disservice to your application if the panel has to spend 3 minutes flipping between different formats or forwarding through the credits to see the actual work.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are submitting more than one type of work sample, then you cannot submit the recommended total for each type. For example: you CAN submit 2 minutes of audio and 3 minutes of video but NOT 5 minutes of audio and 5 minutes of video.

**19. How many samples can I submit and what are the acceptable formats?**

At least one work sample, and no more than three, must be uploaded directly to the online application. Each upload can be accompanied by the sample's title, year, and a single sentence description. The total size limit for an application submission is 800 MB, which may include work samples uploaded in the following formats:

- **Audio:** AIFF, WAV, M4A, or MP3 files accepted. Please refer to the panelist viewing instructions above (Question 17) and note there is a file size limit of 400 MB per upload.
- **Video:** AVI, MP4, MOV, or MPG files accepted. We recommend the MPEG4 (H.264) format with a minimum 640x480 resolution and MP3 audio. Resizing your video to these specifications before uploading will help your samples look better. Please refer to the panelist viewing instructions above (Question 17) and note there is a file size limit of 400 MB per upload. In addition, **we will NOT accept a document with Vimeo, YouTube, or other video platform links. You must upload your sample directly to the Submittable platform.** Videos that require a password will not be viewed either.
- **Text/Image-Based Materials** (such as press, marketing, or promotional ephemera; examples may include event flyers, concert posters, product advertisements, press releases, print/online media coverage, etc.): .doc, .docx, or .pdf files accepted. Up to five (5) letter size (8.5 x 11 inches) pages of ephemera may be submitted, which equates to two (2) minutes of panelist review time.

**20. How many grants will you make and will there be additional funding rounds?**

In 2021, Zoo Labs will make available \$225,000 in unrestricted grants. Awards will range from \$5,000 to \$50,000, and the actual number of grants awarded will depend on the quality of the applications received. Along with receiving cash grants, grantees will have access to mentors with expertise in a range of industries (e.g., music, tech, marketing, legal, and more).

Additional funding rounds are to be determined.

**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 at least one, 1-hour consultation 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 October 2022. 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 a one-on-one consultation with Zoo Labs staff. Your full team is required to participate in the one-on-one consultation and to participate in a 1-hour session (virtually or in person) with the chosen mentor.

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

If awarded a grant, CCI will only issue payment to the lead team member or their project/business. Unfortunately, CCI cannot make payments to multiple team members, nor will CCI assume responsibility for any further due diligence regarding the team's membership.

As far as method of payment, the lead team member will 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 mentor consultation and 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 the Form W-9.

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

Zoo Labs 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 grantees will be announced via a press release on CCI's website (issued sometime between October 18 and October 29) 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, and website.

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

CCI staff are happy to assist you. Please contact us at [grants@cciarts.org](mailto:grants@cciarts.org) with the subject heading, "Zoo Labs" or call 415.288.0530.