



ZOO LABS

LEARN + FUND + MENTOR + COMMUNITY

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

GRANT GUIDELINES

(as of July 16, 2021)

OVERVIEW

Zoo Labs serves artists through online learning, unrestricted funding, mentorship opportunities, and community building. In 2021, Zoo Labs will make available \$225,000 in unrestricted grants. Awards will range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 and will support Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led artist teams with a music-based project or business.

ABOUT THE FUND

Zoo Labs was founded in 2013 with a vision of building a startup entrepreneurship infrastructure for artists. Over the seven years that followed, Zoo Labs ran 26 accelerator residencies at their West Oakland recording studios, assembling a strong and vibrant community of over 250 artists and 350 mentors whose collective knowledge and skills are abundant. While many of these artists now have entrepreneurial skills and projects that are ready to go, there is a marked lack of capital for these individuals, especially Bay Area BIPOC artists, to afford starting or scaling up their creative businesses. In response to this pointed financial need, Zoo Labs will award unrestricted grants to Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led artist teams whose music-based project or business is contributing to the region's arts and culture environment in positive ways. In addition to receiving cash grants, teams will have access to mentors with expertise in a range of industries (music, tech, marketing, legal, and more). Zoo Labs is also translating their in-person business accelerator into a free, online video learning series—coming fall 2021—for a wider audience to develop entrepreneurial skills.

To administer the 2021 grant award cycle, Zoo Labs has partnered 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.

**UPDATE—as of July 2—the 2021 Zoo Labs award cycle
will make available \$225,000 in unrestricted grants!**

PURPOSE

Funding through this initiative is aimed at 1) bringing awareness to Zoo Labs' online accelerator curriculum; 2) strengthening the financial viability of Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led music-based projects and businesses—from early stage to established teams—so they can create economic opportunities in their communities; 3) building networks and exchanging knowledge through

mentorship pairings; and 4) enriching the stability, interconnectedness, and collaborative potential of Zoo Labs' community of artists, grantees, residency alumni, mentors, and partners.

WHO CAN APPLY

To be considered for funding, applicants:

- Must be BIPOC or BIPOC-led teams of two or more people, with at least one artist member¹;
- Must be launching, or have already established, a music-based project or business²;
- 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 staff 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.

While not a deciding factor, preference will be given to:

- Music-based projects and businesses that focus on social justice, education, music technology, or the performing 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 project or business. Further, we are open to a range of music-based projects and businesses 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.*

EVALUATION CRITERIA

CCI will invite panelists with various backgrounds and expertise to review eligible applications and make award recommendations.

Panelists will evaluate applications against the following criteria:

- **Group Strength & Dynamics:** team members have a healthy working relationship and are driven to seek out opportunities [evidenced by *Sections 3 and 5* of the online application and *one-minute pitch video*];
- **Artistry & Craft:** team produces work that is well-developed and creates a compelling fan/customer experience [evidenced by *Section 5* of the online application and *work samples*];

- **Entrepreneurship:** team is continually learning, open to feedback, and has, or is committed to building, a sustainable business that attracts resources and fans/customers [evidenced by *Sections 4 and 5* of the online application]; and
- **Impact:** team produces work that *matters* to their fan/customer base, and creates economic opportunities in their community by way of generating earned revenue and creating jobs. Additionally, 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 and long-term impact such as seeding the launch of a project or business, accelerating a project or business’ growth, or investing in the untapped potential of an established business) [evidenced by *Sections 4 and 6* of the online application, and *one-minute pitch video*].

AWARD DETAILS

CCI will award unrestricted grants in the amounts of \$5,000; \$15,000; \$25,000; and \$50,000. Award amounts will correspond to the project/business’ level of maturity, as it relates to revenue model, team composition, and fan/customer base. The chart below illustrates details for each award tier, including the award amount, approximate number of awards available*, and award factors (i.e., the project/business characteristics associated with each award tier). For further information regarding award tiers, see the **Frequently Asked Questions**, available [here](#).

Award Amount	Number of Awards Available	Award Factors
\$50,000	One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established team ● Strong fan/customer base ● Sustainable revenue model
\$25,000	Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established team ● Strong fan/customer base ● Earning some revenue
\$15,000	Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established team ● Growing fan/customer base ● Little or no revenue
\$5,000	Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Team is newly formed ● Small fan/customer base ● No revenue

**The number of awards available in each tier may be adjusted commensurate with the number of competitive applications received.*

APPLICATION

Applications will be accepted online from July 5 - August 19, 2021, and all applicants will be notified about their award status on October 15, 2021.

Applicants will choose which award tier (i.e., \$5,000; \$15,000; \$25,000; or \$50,000) to be considered for and will *only* be considered for the selected tier. In other words, if an applicant is not recommended for funding, they will not be rolled into a different tier for consideration. For example, applicants who request \$25,000 will only be assessed against other applicants who request \$25,000.

Additionally, 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. An **Application Preview** is available [here](#). Please note that in addition to the required narrative responses and work samples, each team must prepare a one-minute “pitch” video. Learn more about how to craft your pitch video in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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. More information about using Submittable is available [here](#).

The online grant application can be accessed at: www.centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com

An informational **webinar** will be hosted by CCI on **Wednesday, July 14, 2021, 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

Application Opens	July 5, 2021 at 9 AM PT
Application Webinar	July 14, 2021, 12 - 1 PM PT (<i>recording will be made available on CCI website</i>)
Application Closes	August 19, 2021 at 12 PM PT
Panel Review	Week of October 11, 2021
Application Notification	October 15, 2021 by 5 PM PT
Grantee Mentorship Coordination	October - November 2021

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

Grantees are required to participate in at least one, 1-hour consultation with a Zoo Labs mentor. CCI will connect grantees with Zoo Labs staff who will coordinate mentorship logistics and pairings based on each grantees’ needs, interests, and availability.

In addition, grantees are required 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.

QUESTIONS

Answers to **Frequently Asked Questions** are available [here](#). CCI staff are also here to help. Email us at grants@cciarts.org with the subject heading, "Zoo Labs Grant" or call 415.288.0530.