



Press Release

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Center for Cultural Innovation Partners with Zoo Labs to Support Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led Music-Based Projects and Businesses

San Francisco Bay Area – The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) today announced a new grant opportunity in partnership with Zoo Labs, which empowers artists to own and amplify their creations by breaking down the roadblocks between art and business. The eponymous “Zoo Labs grant” makes available \$225,000 in unrestricted funding to Bay Area BIPOC and BIPOC-led artist teams with a music-based project or business that is contributing to the region’s arts and culture environment in positive ways. Grants will range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. In addition to receiving a cash award, grantees will have access to mentors with expertise in a range of business topics and industries.

The Zoo Labs grant was shaped 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. Along with other criteria, the Zoo Labs grant will be awarded to teams based on the potential for funding to have a 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.

To be eligible for consideration, applicants must be BIPOC or BIPOC-led teams of two or more individuals, with at least one artist member, who reside full-time in the nine county Bay Area region and are launching, or have already established, a music-based project or business. In addition, funding priority will be given to music-based projects and businesses that focus on social justice, education, music technology, or the performing arts.

“Zoo Labs is thrilled to build on the last 8 years of proven success in supporting the entrepreneurship of Bay Area musicians,” remarked Vinitha and David Watson, Founders. “Coming off of an incredibly challenging and transformative year, we believe this is the right time to directly fund the innovative work being done by artists in the Bay. We look forward to the opportunity to support amazing projects and businesses.”

CCI Program Director, Laura Poppiti, adds “Through the Zoo Labs grant, we at CCI are realizing our commitment to channeling resources—including knowledge, an established network, and financial capital—to artists and arts workers while also uplifting one of the hardest hit industries of the pandemic.”

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About Zoo Labs

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. For more information about Zoo Labs and its online entrepreneurship curriculum, please visit www.zoolabs.org.

About the Center for Cultural Innovation

The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) was founded in 2001 as a California 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Its mission is to promote knowledge sharing, networking, and financial independence for individuals in the arts by providing business training, grants, and incubating innovative projects that create new program knowledge, tools and practices for artists in the field, and conditions that contribute to realizing financial self-determination. For more information about CCI and the Zoo Labs grant, please visit www.cciarts.org.

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