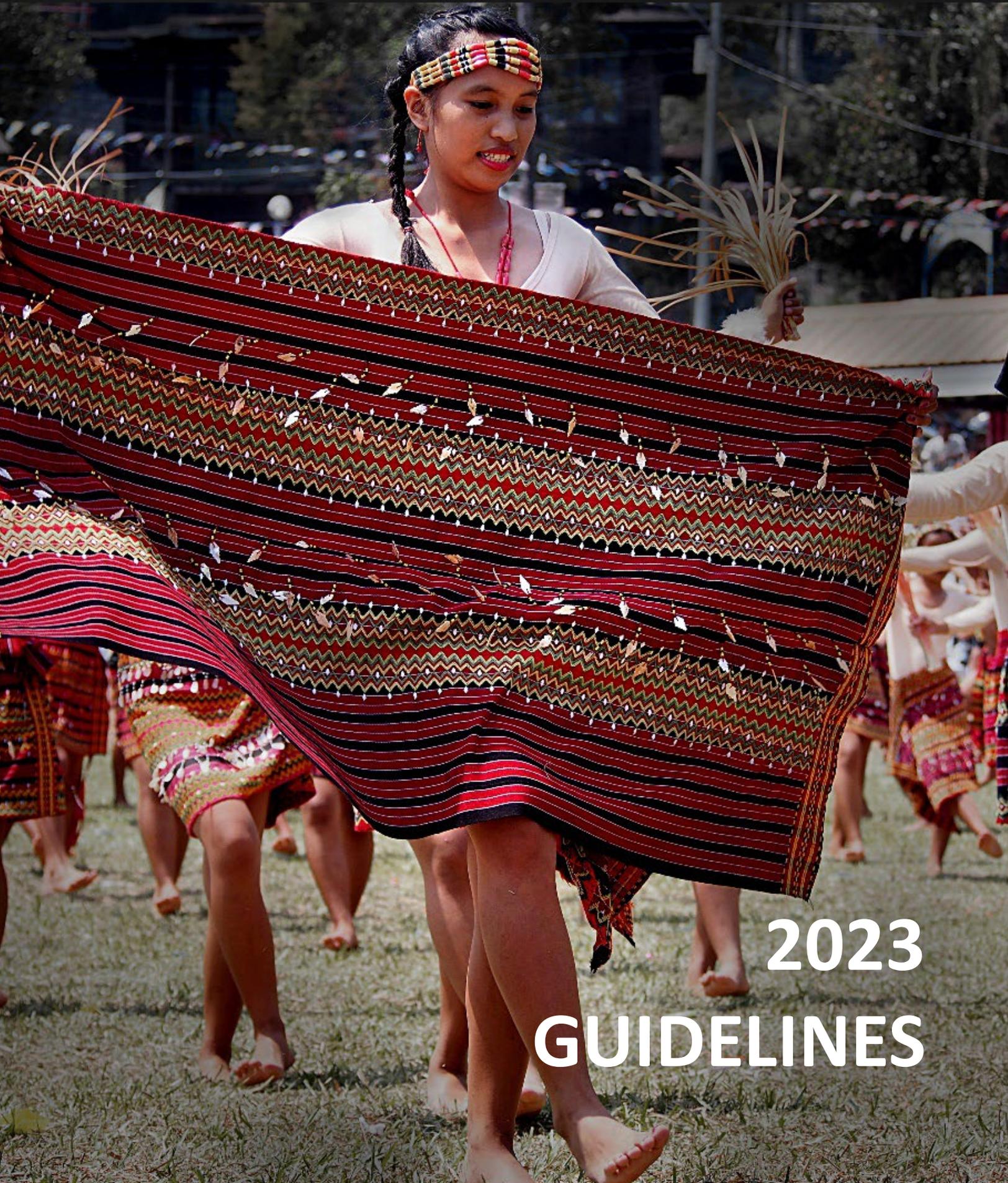


# CREATIVEWORKFUND



2023  
GUIDELINES

## A Fund for New Work

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Responding to several years of declining support for artists and new art works, four Bay Area foundations launched the Creative Work Fund (CWF) in September 1994. Today, CWF is a program of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund that also receives generous support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Since its inception, CWF has awarded \$16.3 million in funding.

**This program awards grants for artists and nonprofit organizations to create art works through collaborations.** It celebrates the role of artists as problem-solvers and the making of art as a profound contribution to intellectual inquiry and to the strengthening of communities. Artists are encouraged to collaborate with nonprofit organizations of all kinds.

### FOUR PRINCIPLES GUIDE CWF

- Artists' creativity merits philanthropic support.
- Individual creativity is the source of cultural richness and diversity.
- The arts can be a powerful vehicle for problem-solving and community renewal.
- Collaborative efforts among artists, organizations, and their constituents can generate a productive exchange of ideas and bring the arts to new audiences.

In October 2023, CWF will award approximately \$650,000 in grants to nonprofit organizations and collaborating artists. Grants will range from \$20,000 to \$50,000. Projects are expected to be completed within two or three years, but those of longer duration are considered.

ON THE COVER  
2022 Grantee Manilatown Heritage Foundation  
*Photo by Tony Remington*

## Who Is Invited?

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CWF projects feature one or more artists collaborating with 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. The program supports artists and organizations to “come together” for the sake of this collaboration: An artist should not submit a request to collaborate with an organization if he or she is a member of its paid staff or serves on its board of directors.

The principal collaborating artists must live in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, or Sonoma County, and have lived there for at least two years. (Temporarily relocated by COVID-19? See our [FAQ](#) below.) Collaborating organizations also must be based in one of the 10 counties.

**Artists from all artistic disciplines are welcome to apply.** Lead artists will be asked to identify primary and secondary artistic disciplines in which they have strong track records of accomplishment. For a list of disciplines and their short definitions, visit [creativeworkfund.org/grant-guidelines](https://creativeworkfund.org/grant-guidelines).

Artists and organizations should jointly plan their projects and prepare and authorize their letters of inquiry together. If a project will use a fiscal sponsor, that sponsor also must review and authorize submission of the letter.

Artists and organizations may submit one proposal per deadline and may receive no more than one CWF grant every three years. Before submitting new letters of inquiry, prior CWF grant recipients must have finished their projects, submitted their final reports, and had those reports approved.

## Our Priorities

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### CWF SEEKS PROJECTS WHERE

- the creation of an artwork is central
- the artist functions primarily as an artist, not as a teacher, an art therapist, or in another capacity
- an active, authentic working partnership between the artist or artists and the organization is central to the work’s development
- the organization’s constituents are engaged in the artist’s work
- artists’ creativity and problem-solving abilities are central to the collaboration
- the making of art can strengthen a community, draw attention to an important issue, or engage audiences in new ways
- artistic imagination and organizational thinking are challenged
- final presentations take place in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, or Sonoma County
- At least two-thirds of the grant funds are paid to the principal artists and their direct expenses for creating the work

### **CWF DOES NOT SEEK**

- commissions of new works by artists in which the applicant organization and artists are not collaboratively engaged in creating those works
- projects in which the specified lead artist is an employee of or board member for the applying nonprofit organization (artists who were previously commissioned or contracted by an organization may still apply)
- multiple letters of inquiry for projects featuring the same artist or submitted by the same collaborating organization
- projects in which the lead artists and collaborating organizations are not based in the eligible counties or those with multiple artists, most of whom are based outside of the 10 counties
- projects that do not feature the artist(s) centrally in the project descriptions and budget allocations
- projects from lead artists or organizations that were awarded Creative Work Fund grants in 2020, 2021, or 2022
- projects from artists or organizations that have not completed projects and final reports for previously awarded Creative Work Fund grants

### **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

- Applicants receiving a William and Flora Hewlett grant or a Wallace Alexander Gerbode Special Award in the Arts *for the very same project* are unlikely to be supported.

## Overview of application and awards process

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Days or weeks before beginning your letter of inquiry (LOI), complete a brief [eligibility quiz](#) and set up a grantseeker account at [creativeworkfund.org/apply](https://creativeworkfund.org/apply). If you are eligible to apply, we will respond with your username and password within a day or two.

Organizations and artists then jointly draft a brief (two to three page) LOI and complete a high-level budget form in the grantseeker portal. The portal allows everyone to save their work until ready to submit.

The lead artist prepares a professional resume or brief biographical statement of no more than two pages to upload with the LOI.

LOIs are screened by three to six community readers who use to evaluate LOIs. Based on their feedback, we will select approximately 45 finalists for further consideration.

Invited LOIs receive a summary of the readers' comments and detailed guidelines for preparing full proposals. Full proposals restate and expand upon the ideas presented in the LOI, incorporate responses to the reader comments, and include an artist's statement, documentation illustrating the quality of the artists' work, detailed budgets, and additional background information about the collaborating organization.

In recognition of the expenses that can be incurred when preparing a proposal, finalists will receive a \$500 application grant. Grant funds go to the collaborating nonprofit, not the lead artist, and are typically used to create recent documentation of lead artist work. Funds can be used for any application-related expense.

A multidisciplinary panel, composed of artists and other arts professionals, reviews the finalists' proposals and recommend projects to be funded.

Collaborating funders that support the Creative Work Fund then consider the recommendations and sign off on the final awards.

## 2023 Timeline

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### **MONDAY, MARCH 13**

Letter of inquiry period opens

### **MONDAY, MAY 8**

Deadline for letters of inquiry

### **TUESDAY, JUNE 20**

Invitations to submit a full proposal sent to collaborating artists and organizations. Notifications come via email and contain detailed instructions.

Applicants who were not selected to submit full proposals are notified by email.

### **WEDNESDAY, JULY 5**

Distribution of \$500 application grants to support costs of documenting the lead artist's work and any other application-related expense.

### **MONDAY, JULY 31**

Deadline for full proposals

### **MONDAY, OCTOBER 2**

Grant awards announced via email. Funded collaborations receive award letters to eSign. The lead artist and the head of the collaborating organization sign, as do fiscal sponsors, when used.

### **THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 9**

Grantee workshop on the design of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between lead artist and organization.

*This workshop allows participants to learn how to prepare, sign off, and submit a MOU that allows artists and organizations to spell out shared responsibilities, copyright assignment, distribution rights, and royalty payments for the new work.*

### **MONDAY, OCTOBER 30**

Deadline for MOU

### **THROUGH DECEMBER 15**

Grant awards are paid via electronic fund transfer to the collaborating organization (or its fiscal sponsor) as soon as signed grant agreements and MOU are received.

### **THREE MONTHS AFTER PROJECT END DATE**

Final reports are due. Grantees must submit two final reports (one prepared by the artist and one by the organization) describing the project and how they collaborated. Final reports include documentation of the finished projects and a financial report.

## How to Apply

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### FIRST, TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT

- **IS THIS THE RIGHT KIND OF GRANT FOR YOUR PROJECT?**

CWF awards grants that range in size from \$20,000 to \$50,000 for projects in which artists and nonprofit organizations are working closely together to create new art works. Any kind of nonprofit organization is eligible to apply to collaborate with an artist. The Fund takes the idea of a close working relationship between the artist and the organization very seriously and specifically wants to support the creation stage for a new artwork.

You can browse examples of previously funded applications at [creativeworkfund.org/search](https://creativeworkfund.org/search).

- **DOES YOUR PROJECT FIT WITHIN THE TIME FRAME FOR THIS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY?**

Please review the timeline below. Grants will be awarded in October 2023. If a project already has begun by that time, the artist and the nonprofit organization should still be actively involved in the new work's creation and collaborating with one after the grant awards are made.

CWF prefers that projects be completed in two to three years, but projects of longer duration are eligible and welcome.

### THEN TAKE THE ELIGIBILITY QUIZ TO RECEIVE GRANTSEEKER CREDENTIALS

- Both the lead artist and the organization need to complete a brief grantseeker eligibility quiz and request/update grantseeker accounts at [creativeworkfund.org/apply](https://creativeworkfund.org/apply).
- If you are eligible to apply, you will receive your username and password via email from “[grantsmanager@haassr.org](mailto:grantsmanager@haassr.org)” within one or two business days. If you complete the quiz after hours or on weekends it may take longer to receive your login information. Thanks for your patience.
- Be sure to check your spam and junk filters for this email and add the address to your address book to ensure delivery of future notifications.
- If you encounter difficulties with the portal or aren't sure if you are eligible, read the [FAQ](#) below.

### REVIEW THE LETTER OF INQUIRY SAMPLE QUESTIONS

A sample letter of inquiry in Microsoft Word format is available for download at [creativeworkfund.org/loipreview](https://creativeworkfund.org/loipreview).

- Some parts of the letter of inquiry allow you to pick from a list of prepared options or click to upload instead of cutting and pasting.
- You are encouraged to draft the application in the Word document, but we've learned that cutting and pasting from Word may result in unexpected characters in the online application. Check your work!

## Letter of Inquiry Review Criteria

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Letter of inquiry screening and proposal-award decisions are based on

- **QUALITY.** The Fund wants to be enthusiastic about the quality and potential of the artists' work and encourages artists from all career stages to apply. By design, readers don't have access to work samples at this stage in the review process. Instead, they are asked if they recognize whether ideas are fresh and interesting and whether the artist and organization seem well-suited to the project they have described.

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

What is your sense of the project's overall quality?

Is it an interesting idea?

Are they accomplished partners?

Does it have other distinctive qualities?

- **COLLABORATION.** Collaboration is a defining theme for Creative Work Fund. Collaborations are realized through many different approaches. The Fund seeks projects in which there is a genuine depth of interaction among the participants. Strong projects generally include a balance of tenacity and flexibility, vision, and open mindedness. Added values may be engaging an organization's constituents in the artists' work, reaching new audiences, strengthening a community, or drawing attention to a critical question or need.

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

Does the project seem to be truly collaborative?

Is the proposed process appropriate and thoughtful?

Does the letter introduce a compelling rationale for why the artist and organization want to work together?

- **PROJECT PHASE.** These grants support the creative process. If a project is expensive and has many phases, a Creative Work Fund grant would be more appropriately applied to development of the work rather than exhibiting something that already has been created. If a project is in its later stages, readers should ask themselves whether active, collaborative art making would be continuing after November 2022 when these grants will be awarded.

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

Is there the beginning of a clear and reasonable plan for developing the piece?

Is it a new work?

If it has already been developed, would the artist and organization still be collaborating on its creation if they received a grant in October 2023?

Has any thought been given to the disposition/presentation of the work at the end of the process of making it?

If so, is that part of the plan compelling?

- **FEASIBILITY.** The project should have a reasonable plan. The Fund is flexible about allowing organizations and artists to have as much time as they need to finish the work. (The time needed to complete projects has ranged from two months to seven years. Most have been developed over two or three years.)

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

Does the budget seem appropriate to the scale and ambitions of the project?  
If other funds are needed, is it reasonable to assume the artist and the organization could raise or earn them?

- **ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH.** Organizations should be strong partners to the collaborating artists. Readers will gain some information about the history, mission, and goals of the applicant organizations through reading the letters. Staff are checking the financial health for the applicant organizations that readers recommend so you can focus on other indicators of organizational strength.

The Fund does not have a rule about the size of organization that may apply. Artists have created excellent projects with both small and large organizations.

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

Does the organization appear to have the capacity to undertake this project?  
Does the form and process of the proposed project seem appropriate to the organization's focus?  
Does the organization benefit?  
Could this project pose a worthwhile challenge to the organization?

- **POSSIBILITY.** In our experience, creative collaborations express their potential in different ways. Both a “polished” and a “rough” letter of inquiry can dream big, forge new paths, innovate, and reimagine the current reality in ways that benefit us all. Be on the lookout for potential.

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

Does this project express some potential?  
Are partners stretching to create something neither of them can create alone?

## Letter of Inquiry Instructions

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### PREPARE THIS INFORMATION FOR THE FIRST PART OF THE LOI

- Who is collaborating: lead artist, organization, and any fiscal sponsor
- Location and budget size of the collaborating organization and any fiscal sponsor
- Residency and artistic discipline of the lead artist
- The project at a glance
  - Working title
  - Brief description
  - Project duration and start date
  - Anticipated form of the finished project
  - Total project budget amount
  - Amount requested from the Creative Work Fund
- Upload the lead artist's professional resume or brief biographical statement. This document can be no more than two pages.

### PREPARE THE LETTER OF INQUIRY NARRATIVE

Because you've already written a brief description and summarized the project in the first part of the LOI, the letter of inquiry narrative is brief. When in doubt about what to emphasize, read the review criteria below.

Writing two to three pages of 12-point type on a page with 1" margin all around is a sound approach.

#### INCLUDE

- The rationale for the collaboration between the artist and organization, and a brief explanation of why the project is appropriate now. Touch on how artist and organization will collaborate.
- A description of how the artist's work relates to this project and some information about the range and quality of the artist's work.
- A description of the collaborating organization
- Brief information about how the work will reach audiences

#### EXCLUDE

- Image, manuscript, audio / video files, or other documentation uploads
- Images or web links embedded in the body of your narrative.

**FILL IN THE ONLINE BUDGET FORM WITH**

- Major sources of income, both pending and committed  
Please note that the CWF grant may be part of a larger budget or used to cover all costs.
- Major expenses for the project  
A minimum of two-thirds of the CWF request must be spent on artists' fees and direct expenses. The program values artists being paid sustainably.

**SUBMIT THE FINISHED LOI BY 11:59:59PM PACIFIC TIME ON MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023**

## Letter of Inquiry Checklist

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- Complete a brief grantseeker eligibility quiz and request a grantseeker account at [creativeworkfund.org/apply](https://creativeworkfund.org/apply).
- Receive your credentials from [haassr@fluxx.io](mailto:haassr@fluxx.io) (check spam and junk folders!).
- Enter your credentials in <https://haassr.fluxx.io/> and click to create a CWF Letter of Inquiry.
- Complete identifying information about the lead artist, nonprofit partner, and – if applicable – fiscal sponsor.
- Upload a short (two-page maximum) bio or vita for the lead artist.
- Write a brief narrative equivalent to two to three pages of 12-point type using 1” margins all around.
- Complete the summary budget form.
- Ensure there are no image, manuscript, audio / video files, or other documentation uploaded and that there are no embedded images or web links in the body of your narrative.
- Click to submit by **11:59:59 PM Pacific on Monday, May 8, 2023**.
- Watch for your confirming email to arrive.  
Call (415) 402-2793 if it is not received.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GRANTSEEKER ACCOUNTS

<p>What if I am an artist who previously applied to the Creative Work Fund and already has a grantseeker account?</p>	<p>Take the eligibility quiz and contact <b>grantsmanager@haassr.org</b>. A member of the team will connect your quiz to your existing grantseeker account and connect you to your collaborating organization.</p>
<p>What if I'm currently or previously was a contractor for my collaborating organization? Can we apply together?</p>	<p>Possibly. Reach out to us at <b>cwf@haassr.org</b> and we will talk through the specifics of your situation.</p>
<p>What if, due to COVID-19, I am an artist temporarily relocated outside the 11 counties the Creative Work Fund supports?</p>	<p>We hope you are safe and well. Please register for a grantseeker account answering "Yes" to the residency question and providing a few details about your relocation. We'll be in touch to confirm your eligibility.</p>
<p>What if I work at a nonprofit that receives grants from the Walter &amp; Elise Haas Fund and I already have credentials for entry into the application portal?</p>	<p>That's fine. If you are representing the nonprofit partner, complete the eligibility quiz with your nonprofit account email and we'll tie your accounts together. If you are the lead artist, complete the eligibility quiz with your individual email.</p>
<p>What if I am an artist or a nonprofit organization leader who does not yet know who my collaborating partner will be?</p>	<p>No problem. Apply for a grantseeker account at any time. When you know who your collaborating partner will be, that partner also must complete the eligibility quiz. Both of you should contact <b>grantsmanager@haassr.org</b> for help with connecting you to one another in the application portal.</p>
<p>What if I change my mind about the artist or the organization with whom I want to collaborate?</p>	<p>It happens. Ask your new partner to complete the eligibility quiz and contact <b>grantsmanager@haassr.org</b> for help with connecting you to one another in the application portal and voiding your previous letter.</p>
<p><b>Caution: Wrong Turn!</b></p>	<p>The Creative Work Fund is a program of the Walter &amp; Elise Haas Fund, but make sure that you are requesting applicant credentials and registering your project idea through <b>creativeworkfund.org</b> not haassr.org.</p>

## Additional Information

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### WEBSITE

In addition to the application information provided in these guidelines, [creativeworkfund.org](https://creativeworkfund.org) includes descriptions of previously funded projects and frequently asked questions. To receive announcements and reminders about webinar and seminar dates and future deadlines, sign up on [creativeworkfund.org/contact](https://creativeworkfund.org/contact).

### WEBINARS & SEMINARS

To assist applicants, CWF presents one-hour webinars and conducts online and (when public health conditions indicate it is safe to do so) in-person seminars allowing prospective applicants to learn about the program, learn how to apply, and ask specific questions.

Applicants are not required to attend a webinar but are encouraged to do so, especially if they are unfamiliar with the program.

To register for these programs, visit [creativeworkfund.org/applicant-seminars](https://creativeworkfund.org/applicant-seminars)

### GENERAL INFORMATION

For additional information email [info@creativeworkfund.org](mailto:info@creativeworkfund.org) or call (415) 402-2793.