



# 2024 GUIDELINES

**CREATIVEWORKFUND**

## A Fund for New Work and Collaboration

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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 \$17 million in funding.

**This program awards grants for artists and 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 we-making and artistic innovation that strengthens communities. Artists are encouraged to collaborate with organizations of all kind: nonprofits, fiscally-sponsored collectives, schools, and public agencies.

### FOUR PRINCIPLES GUIDE CWF

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

In June 2024, CWF will award approximately \$775,000 in grants to organizations and collaborating artists. Grants will range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and be paid to the nonprofit partner in the collaboration. Grantees receive the maximum amount of funds requested. Projects are expected to be completed within two or three years, but those of longer duration are considered.

## The Application Process Is Changing for 2024

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Applicants are invited to a new **one-stage, streamlined application** that allows collaborators to describe their idea and answer a few questions, then upload a project budget, lead and collaborating artist resumes, and a work sample.

The applications are reviewed by a group of community readers who forward about 50 of the submissions to a panel for further review and for award recommendations.

ON THE COVER  
2022 Grantee Dance Brigade collaborating with Sarah Crowell  
*Photo by Robbie Sweeney*

## Who Is Invited?

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CWF projects feature one or more artists collaborating with 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and unincorporated collectives using a nonprofit fiscal sponsor. Artists and organizations come together for the sake of this collaboration, and don't always have a deep history of previous collaboration. A lead artist should not submit a request to collaborate with an organization while employed as the organization's paid staff or serving on its board of directors. The lead artist 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. Collaborating organizations also must be based in one of these 10 counties.

**Artists from all artistic disciplines are welcome to apply.** Lead artists are asked to identify primary and secondary artistic disciplines in which they have experience and 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 their application together. If a project will use a fiscal sponsor, that sponsor also must review and authorize submission of the application.

Artists and organizations may submit one proposal per deadline and may receive no more than one CWF grant every three years. For 2024 consideration, artists and organizations that received Creative Work Fund grants in 2021, 2022, and 2023 are ineligible to apply. CWF grant recipients who received grants before 2021 must have finished their projects and had grant reports approved before applying again.

## Please apply if your collaboration

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- centers the creation of a new artwork
- is an active, authentic working partnership between the artist or artists and the organization is central to the work's development
- engages the organization's constituents in the artist's work
- centers artists' creativity, expertise, and passion in the collaboration
- demonstrates that the making of art can strengthen a community, draw attention to an important issue, or engage audiences in new ways
- challenges artistic imagination and organizational thinking
- is rooted with artists, organizations, and final work in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, or Sonoma County
- pays at least two-thirds of CWF funds to the lead artist and their direct expenses for creating the work

## Please pause if your collaboration

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- is **not** rooted with artists, organizations, and final work in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, or Sonoma County
- commissions new works by artists when the applicant organization and artists are **not** collaboratively engaged in creating those works
- features a lead artist who is a current paid employee of or board member of the collaborating organization
- does not feature the artist(s) centrally in the project descriptions and budget allocations
- is one of multiple proposals for projects featuring the same artist or submitted by the same collaborating organization
- involves a lead artist or collaborating organization that were awarded Creative Work Fund grants in 2021, 2022, or 2023
- involves a lead artist or collaborating organization that have not completed Creative Work Fund projects and final reports awarded before 2021

## 2024 Program Overview

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### **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5**

Application window opens

### **FEBRUARY & MARCH**

Lead artists and organizational collaborators check their eligibility at [creativeworkfund.org/grantseeker](https://creativeworkfund.org/grantseeker). If eligible, they complete a form to receive grantseeker credentials. Applicants use a one-stage, streamlined application that allows collaborations to describe their idea and answer a few questions, then upload a project budget, lead and collaborating artist resumes, and a work sample.

### **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12 | 12PM**

### **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21 | 12PM**

#### **Applicant Session: How We're Changing & How to Apply**

Application sessions allow potential applicants, both individual artists and nonprofit representatives, to learn about CWF's history and focus, guidelines, new application process, and deadlines. We navigate the online application and talk about what makes a strong proposal.

### **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13 | 12PM**

#### **Applicant Session: Ask Us Anything**

Ask Us Anything sessions are open hours for potential applicants to ask specific questions about the program guidelines, eligibility, the online application portal, and the practical parts of the proposal. We share frequently asked questions and connect applicants to resources.

### **TUESDAY, APRIL 2 | 6PM PACIFIC TIME**

Submission deadline for applications

### **APRIL–MAY**

Three to seven community readers review and score each application. Based on their feedback, we select approximately 45-50 applications for panel review.

### **FRIDAY, MAY 17**

#### **Notification of Advancement to Panel**

Applicants receive an email on the status of their application. A summary of reader comments is provided to applicants whose applications not being forwarded to panel.

### **JUNE**

A multidisciplinary panel, composed of artists and other arts professionals, reviews the applications and recommends projects to be funded.

The Creative Work Fund collaborating funders consider panel recommendations and approve the final awards.

**MONDAY, JUNE 28**

Grant awards announced via email. Funded collaborations receive award letters for lead artist, head of the collaborating organization, and fiscal sponsor (if used) signature.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 24 | TIME TBA**

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

*This workshop allows CWF grantees 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.*

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 27**

Deadline for MOU

**THROUGH SEPTEMBER 16**

Grant awards are paid via electronic fund transfer to the collaborating organization (or its fiscal sponsor) as soon as signed grant agreement 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) reflecting on the project and collaboration. 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 \$25,000 to \$50,000 for projects in which artists and nonprofit organizations are working closely together to create new art works. Any kind of 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 funds project at any stage, with attention paid to 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?**

Grants will be awarded in June 2024. If a project already has begun by that time, the artist and the organization should still be actively involved in the new work's creation and collaborating with one after the grant awards are made.

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

### THEN CHECK YOUR ELIGIBILITY

1. Both the lead artist and the organization need to complete a brief grantseeker eligibility quiz and request/update grantseeker accounts at [creativeworkfund.org/grantseeker](https://creativeworkfund.org/grantseeker)
2. You will receive your username and password for the Fluxx Grantseeker portal via email from "haassr@fluxx.io" 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.
3. Be sure to check your spam and junk filters for this email and add the "haassr@fluxx.io" address to your address book to ensure delivery of future notifications.
4. If you encounter difficulties with the Fluxx Grantseeker portal or aren't sure if you are eligible, read the [FAQ](#) below.

### REVIEW THE SAMPLE APPLICATION

- A sample application in Microsoft Word format is available for download at [creativeworkfund.org/applicationpreview](https://creativeworkfund.org/applicationpreview).
- Some parts of the application allow you to pick from a list of prepared options or click to upload instead of cutting and pasting.
- You are welcome to draft the application in a Word or Google document, but we've learned that cutting and pasting from those applications may result in unexpected characters in our grantseeker portal. Check your work!

## Application Review Criteria

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Application screening and 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. Reviewers explore work samples, reflect on 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 proposed project connect the artist's passion and the organization's work in this moment?

Does the collaboration seek to reach new audiences, strengthen a community, draw attention to a critical question or need?

- **PROJECT PHASE.** These grants support the creative process at any stage. If a project is in its later stages, readers should ask themselves whether active, collaborative art making would be continuing after June 2024 when these grants will be awarded.

### REVIEWER PROMPTS

Is it a new work?

Is there a vision and plan for developing the project?

If it has already been developed, would the artist and organization still be collaborating on its creation if they received a grant in June 2024?

Is there a vision and plan for the presentation of the work at the end of the process of making it?

- **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.** The Fund does not have a rule about the size of organization that may apply, instead focusing on whether organizations are strong partners with collaborating artists. Reviewers gain some information about the history, mission, and goals of the collaborating organizations from the application. Staff research the financial health for the collaborating organizations that readers forward to panel review so reviewers can focus on other indicators of organizational strength.

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

Does the organization appear to have the capacity to undertake this project?  
Is the form and process of the proposed project in alignment with the organization's mission?  
Does the organization's presence bring insight, expertise, and relationships to the project?  
Does the organization's community/constituents benefit?

- **POSSIBILITY.** In our experience, creative collaborations express their potential in different ways. Both a "polished" and a "rough" proposal can dream big, forge new paths, innovate, and reimagine the current reality in ways that benefit us all. We are on the lookout for potential.

**REVIEWER PROMPTS**

Are collaborators stretching to create something neither of them can create alone?  
Are collaborators dreaming big? Being innovative?

## Application Instructions

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

#### 1. Who is collaborating?

Enter information about the lead artist, organization, and the fiscal sponsor (if used), including

- Organization location and budget size (and the fiscal sponsor, if used)
- Lead Artist name, county of residency and artistic discipline(s)
- Names of additional collaborating artists

We use this information to start understanding the quality and potential of the artists and organization involved. We also check to see if the lead artist and organization are eligible to apply to this program, and whether the organization (or its fiscal sponsor) is qualified by the IRS as an exempt organization.

#### 2. What do you want to do together?

Enter the project start and end date, a description of the new work, information about where and when it will be presented, and how much money you are requesting from the Creative Work Fund.

We use this information to understand what the project is, its feasibility given the time frame and request amount, and begin to connect how the lead artist and organization seem well-suited to the project. We reflect on this section through the lens of the Creative Work Fund guidelines.

### PREPARE RESPONSES TO THE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

#### 3. Why this why now?

Provide the reasons for the collaboration between the lead artist and organization, and why the project is appropriate now.

We use your response to go deeper into the project's goals and motivations. Is the collaboration seeking to reach new audiences? strengthen a community? draw attention to a critical question or need? Are the collaborators dreaming big? forging new paths? innovating? reimagining the current reality in ways that benefit us all? We reflect on this section through the lens of the Creative Work Fund guidelines.

#### 4. A QUESTION JUST FOR THE LEAD ARTIST:

##### **How does this collaboration connect to your passion in this moment?**

We use the lead artist's response to understand the potential of their presence in this project and the context, insights, expertise, questions, and aspirations they bring to the collaboration. The response provides an additional layer of insight to the *Why This Why Now* response, highlighting the point of view of the lead artist themselves.

**5. A QUESTION JUST FOR THE COLLABORATING ORGANIZATION:**

**How does this collaboration connect to your organization's work in this moment?**

We use the organization's response to understand the potential of their presence in this project and the context, insights, expertise, questions, and aspirations they bring to the collaboration. The response provides an additional layer of insight to the *Why This Why Now* response, highlighting the point of view of the organization itself.

**We don't allow embedded links to personal websites or channels, project sites, or reviews in this section.** Instead, we will focus deeply on responses and how they resonate with the intentions of the CWF program.

**SHARE THE PROJECT BUDGET**

Upload a complete project budget using your own format or our template available at [creativeworkfund.org/budget](http://creativeworkfund.org/budget). The CWF request may be part of a larger budget or used to cover all costs.

We learn most when you include

- Major sources of income, both pending and committed
- Major expenses for the project  
A minimum of two-thirds of the CWF request must be spent on the lead artist fee and their direct expenses. The program values artists being paid sustainably.

We use budget information to understand the feasibility of the project, where it is in its project phase, and how CWF dollars will be used, checking especially to see if two-thirds of the CWF dollars are allocated to the Lead Artist and their direct expenses.

If the proposal is forwarded to panel review, we research the financial health of the collaborating organization (or their fiscal sponsor) using publicly available documents from the charity databases at the [State of California](#), the [Internal Revenue Service](#), and [Guidestar](#).

When we research organizational financial health, we use trend information to answer specific questions:

- **Is the organization likely to be stable through the end of this project?**  
We scan for new or longstanding debt that could negatively affect the flow of funds to the project as the organization does their best to maintain programs and operations.
- **Is the artist likely to be supported by their collaborating organization without a stress to systems?**  
We look at the capacity of the collaborating organization to track special programs, additional partners, and restricted CWF dollars.

## ADD ARTIST RESUMES

- The lead artist resume, biography, or CV is required. It can be no longer than two pages. Please format as a PDF.
- If other artists are collaborating, optionally add a single PDF document that provides a one-paragraph biography for each artist..

We use this information to learn the history of the lead artist (required) and any collaborating artists (optional). The information provides an additional layer of insight to the *Why This Why Now* response and the lead artist's response to *How Does This Project Connect to Your Passion in This Moment?*

## ADD THE WORK SAMPLE (AS A LINK OR AN UPLOAD)

You may provide up to three work samples, including videos up to 5 minutes. Work samples can be provided by using online links (video or audio), or uploading JPGs (images), and PDFs (documents).

- Up to five minutes of audio and video
- Up to ten images
- Up to 15 pages of manuscript

Include information about the work sample in the area provided, including how the sample relates to your request.

We use this information to briefly experience the work of the lead artist, which is especially important since we don't allow embedded links to personal websites or channels, project sites, or reviews. The information provides an additional layer of insight into quality and potential of the artist involved, and the entire project proposed.

## TELL US WHAT YOU WANT US TO KNOW AND WE DIDN'T ASK

We use this information to learn what is additionally important to artists and organizations, and to think how we can make future editions of this application even more supportive of grantseeker stories and priorities. Responses are truly optional, so there's no need to respond if nothing comes to mind.

## SUBMIT THE APPLICATION BY 6:00PM PACIFIC TIME ON TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2024

Check the approval boxes when all collaborators (artist, organization, and fiscal sponsor, if used) agree to submit the letter, then click Submit.

You can be confident your submission has been received upon receipt of a confirmation email. *Save this email for your records.*

**No email?** Check spam and junk folders, and your blocked and safe sender lists.

**Still no email?** Call 415-402-2793 for assistance.

## Application Checklist

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- Lead Artists and collaborating organizations visit [creativeworkfund.org/grantseeker](https://creativeworkfund.org/grantseeker) to complete their eligibility quizzes and request grantseeker credentials
- Collaborators receive grantseeker portal credentials from [haassr@fluxx.io](mailto:haassr@fluxx.io) (Check spam and junk folders!)
- Collaborators log in at [haassr.fluxx.io](https://haassr.fluxx.io) and click to create a CWF application, or continue one in progress
- Share who is collaborating, what you want to do together, and why this why now
- Lead artist responds to their question
- Organization responds to their question
- Fill in Project Budget section
- Upload project budget
- Upload lead artist resume
- OPTIONAL Upload bios of additional collaborating artists
- Upload or link to work sample of
  - Up to five minutes of audio/video
  - Up to 10 still images
  - Up to 15 pages of manuscript
- Complete work sample information sections
- Click to submit by **6:00PM Pacific Time, Tuesday, April 2, 2024.**
- Watch for your confirmation email to arrive.  
Call (415) 402-2793 if it is not received.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GRANTSEEKER ACCOUNTS	
What if I am an artist who previously applied to the Creative Work Fund and already has a grantseeker account?	Take the eligibility quiz, complete the Fluxx Grantseeker registration, and contact <b>grantsmanager@haassr.org</b> . A member of the team will connect your existing grantseeker account to your new collaborating organization.
What if I'm currently or previously was a contractor for my collaborating organization? Can we apply together?	Possibly. Reach out to us at <b>cwf@haassr.org</b> and we will talk through the specifics of your situation.
What if, due to COVID-19, I am an artist temporarily relocated outside the 10 counties the Creative Work Fund supports?	We hope you are safe and well. Please complete the Fluxx Grantseeker registration answering "Yes" to the residency question and providing a few details about your situation. We'll be in touch to confirm your eligibility.
What if I work at a nonprofit that receives grants from the Walter & Elise Haas Fund and I already have credentials for entry into the application portal?	That's fine. If you are representing the nonprofit partner, complete the Fluxx Grantseeker registration with your nonprofit account email and we'll tie your accounts together. If you are the lead artist, complete the Fluxx Grantseeker registration with your individual email.
What if I am an artist or a nonprofit organization leader who does not yet know who my collaborating partner will be?	No problem. Complete the eligibility quiz and complete the Fluxx Grantseeker registration at any time. When you know who your collaborating partner will be, that partner must complete their eligibility quiz and register for a Fluxx Grantseeker account. When that's all done, contact <b>grantsmanager@haassr.org</b> . A member of the team will connect the collaborators.
What if I change my mind about the artist or the organization with whom I want to collaborate?	It happens. Ask your new partner to complete the appropriate eligibility quiz, register for a Fluxx Grantseeker account, and contact <b>grantsmanager@haassr.org</b> . A member of the team will connect the new collaborators.

## 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).

### **APPLICANT INFORMATION SESSIONS**

To assist applicants, CWF presents webinars and conducts online sessions allowing potential applicants to learn about the program, learn how to apply, and ask specific questions.

Applicants are not required to attend a session 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.