SAN DIEGO ARTS + CULTURE CHALLENGE FUND GRANT

Purpose

The purpose of the *San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge Fund* is to distribute gap funding to nonprofit arts and culture organizations based in San Diego City and County in response to the COVID-19 crisis. While these gap funds can be used for general operating needs, the intent is to support creative workers employed by these organizations. The Fund will distribute grants ranging from $1,500 to $10,000 in phases as funds become available. We will prioritize the most vulnerable small and mid-sized nonprofit arts and culture organizations that meet the program’s eligibility criteria in this first phase.

About the Funding Opportunity

Recognizing the urgency of need within the nonprofit arts and culture sector, particularly as it relates to the region’s creative workforce, a cohort of San Diego arts and culture funders together launched the *San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge*, including the *Challenge Fund*. Lead contributions from The San Diego Foundation and Clare Rose Foundation totaling $250,000 seeded the *Challenge Fund* for immediate grantmaking. Now, additional funds are being raised with a goal of providing additional grant rounds. Other San Diego county-based funders have joined the *Challenge*, but not with direct contributions to the grantmaking process. For example, the City of San Diego has earmarked $1 million to purchase artwork or commission artworks by local artists, providing valuable income directly to San Diego artists. These funds will be managed through the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture.

The *Challenge Fund* is housed at The San Diego Foundation, and a steering committee of local arts and culture community leaders with extensive experience in nonprofit grantmaking advises on the distribution of funds. Foundation, corporate and individual donors able to make major gifts to modest donations have and continue to donate to the *Challenge Fund* to help support the very creative workforce that has made San Diego the vibrant cultural center it is. Not knowing what the future holds, the *Challenge* will continue to invite additional collaborators and raise monies through the *Challenge Fund* as long as urgent support is needed.

Statement of Commitment to Cultural Equity and Trust-Based Philanthropy

The Steering Committee of the San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge Fund recognizes that many existing systems of power grant privilege and access unequally, and that equity is crucial to the long-term viability of both the arts and culture sector and the creative workers they employ. The Steering Committee seeks to ensure that the Challenge Fund and all its decision-making
processes are informed by this knowledge, even while operating under considerable constraints due to the COVID-19 crisis. We commit to the work of advancing cultural equity as part of our grantmaking strategy, grounded in principles that promote trust-based philanthropy. This has required that we evaluate our blind spots and question old assumptions to ultimately guide us to new ways of working with the community we serve.

As a community of trust, we commit to:

- Simplify and streamline paperwork to save grantees precious time they need to respond to the crisis;
- Trust the organizations know best how to use the funds within the intention of the grant
- Be open, honest and transparent about what we do and do not fund, and to invite grantees to be open, honest and transparent about their challenges so that we are operating with the best information about what matters;
- Solicit and act on feedback so that we can better serve applicants and grantees in the future.

**Eligibility Criteria**

**To be eligible for funding, applicants must meet the following criteria:**

- Be a 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit arts and culture organization;
- Have provided arts and culture programming for at least 2 years;
- Based in San Diego County and produce the majority of programming in San Diego County;
- Most recent board-adopted annual budget is between $150,000 and 1.5 million to be eligible for the first-phase grant;
- Have at least one full-time professional employee;
- Currently receive funding or have proof of approved funding from one or more of the following entities: City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture, California Arts Council or County of San Diego Community Enhancement Fund;
- Proof of funding from a San Diego County-based foundation or corporation may be considered as well, possibly with additional information.

**Not Eligible**

- All Volunteer-run Organizations
- Social Service Organizations
- Festivals, Concerts, Parades, etc
- Fiscally Sponsored Programs or Organizations
• Arts and Culture Service Organizations

GRANT AMOUNTS
There is $250,000 available for granting during the first round of application funding. Award amounts will range from $1,500 to $10,000 based on need and available resources; Additional rounds will be announced as funds are raised.

Grants will be one-time payments to eligible nonprofit arts and culture organizations participating in a broad range of artistic disciplines: music, theatre, dance, visual arts, literary, combined or multidisciplinary arts, museum practice, or historical societies.

GRANT REVIEW PROCESS
Final granting decisions will be made by a subset of steering committee members who do not have conflicts due to their or their family member’s employment or board service with an applying organization.

Phase 1: May 1st open applications for small and mid-sized organizations with budgets between $150,000 and $1.5M. Applications due by May 15th, grants announced by May 22nd.

Subsequent phases will be determined by available funding. Fundraising will be ongoing. Decisions and grant amounts will be determined by available funds. Applicants may receive support only once.