

CREATIVE GROWTH FELLOWSHIP

GRANT GUIDELINES

On September 14, 2021, the Sacramento City Council adopted the mayor's proposed American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Framework and Funding Priorities and directed the City Manager, City Attorney, City Auditor, City Treasurer, and City Clerk to implement City Council direction consistent with the adopted ARPA Framework. The recommendations contained in the ARPA Framework and Funding Priorities allocate \$10 million of those funds to critical projects and programs needed to address the impact of the pandemic on the creative economy. On October 8, 2024, City Council adopted Resolution No. 2024-0293 approving the Creative Growth Support Fund, a revised approach to funding individual artists through the ARPA Arts and Creative Economy Program.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The City of Sacramento's Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) is offering an unrestricted stipend for artists who live within the City of Sacramento. Creative Growth Fellowships will support up to 200 individual artists with a \$850 monthly payment over the course of 12 months. These payments are intended to act as a supplement to artists and provide some additional financial support for them to pursue and advance their career in the arts.

Guidelines Released: May 1, 2025

Application Opens: June 2, 2025

Application Closes: June 20, 2025, 11:59 p.m. (PST)

Review Period: June 21, 2025 – July 28, 2025

Funding Period: August 1, 2025 – July 30, 2026

The City of Sacramento reserves the right to modify the dates listed at its sole discretion. The City will post notifications of any significant schedule changes to OAC's website or through social media. The City shall not accept proposals that are incomplete or submitted after the grant application deadline. No late proposals will be eligible for consideration under any circumstances.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Eligible applicants must be:

- City of Sacramento residents (we are unable to fund artists who live outside of the city council district areas, including unincorporated areas of Sacramento County.)
- At least 18 years of age on date of application submission

- Able to demonstrate work as an artist in the following artistic disciplines (please note, the examples and descriptions listed are to provide guidance on how each discipline is broadly defined):
 - Craft – Ceramics, embroidery, glass, jewelry, metalworking, and textiles
 - Dance – Dancers and choreographers
 - Design – Fashion, graphic designers
 - Film – Actors, directors, creative producers, animators
 - Literary Arts – Writers, screenwriters, poets, graphic novelists
 - Music – Singers, musicians, composers, producers, DJs (original work)
 - Oral Traditions – Culture bearers who preserve or pass on knowledge, art or ideas through speech or song; may include folktales, ballads, chants, prose or verses, and storytelling
 - Social Practice – Engages people and communities in debate, collaboration, or social interaction; artists partner with communities toward community development outcomes.
 - Theater – Actors, directors, playwrights, costume designers, set designers, sound and lighting designers
 - Performance Art – Artists who create work through actions performed by the artist or other participants
 - Traditional Arts – Work rooted in and reflective of the traditions and/or cultural heritage of a community, transmitted through generations, such as cultural dance, cultural music, and traditional crafts
 - Visual Arts – Installation, illustration, painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, photography, sculpture, video art, or public art
 - Interdisciplinary Arts – Work involving more than one artistic discipline and/or cultural practice

Applicants who are unsure whether their work aligns with eligible categories are encouraged to contact the Office of Arts and Culture. Please email your questions to creativegrowth@cityofsacramento.org.

We are unable to consider applications from those who work in arts administration, as commercial vendors, or merchants, or those who would apply as someone working in the following fields:

- Cosmetology
- Culinary Arts
- Architecture, interior, landscape design
- Radio DJs/personalities
- Event planning and production
- Wellness and fitness

City of Sacramento staff, officers, officials, and members of City boards, committees, and commissions are ineligible for this opportunity.

HOW MUCH CAN I REQUEST?

All grants awarded will total \$10,200. This amount is considered a fee or stipend for the artist which may be used to support their work or living expenses during the grant period.

WHEN AND HOW DO I APPLY?

The guidelines and application questions will be available for prospective grantees to review on May 1, 2025. *We strongly advise those interested in applying to carefully read through the guidelines, draft their application answers, and gather work samples **before** the online application opens.*

The online application will open on June 2, 2025, and can be found at:

<https://cgf.aidkit.org/apply/>

Deadline to apply: June 20, 2025, 11:59 p.m. (PST)

Applications must be submitted online. Emailed or faxed applications are not accepted.

To ensure fairness to applicants, late or incomplete applications are not accepted.

Applications that do not include the complete set of information and materials in the appropriate format by the deadline may be deemed incomplete and ineligible. No deadline for extensions will be granted.

Application Support

OAC has selected community organizations to provide application support to artists. These organizations will help interested applicants navigate the application, understand the guidelines, and will offer additional mentoring support, as needed. Please note, community organizations are not encouraged or expected to complete or apply on behalf of any artists. Translation services may be offered by some of these organizations; please contact them directly for more details. To learn which organizations will be offering support, please visit: cityofsacramento.gov/creativegrowth.

Prospective applicants can also email OAC staff at creativegrowth@cityofsacramento.org with any application related questions. Please note, emails will not be responded to outside of general business hours (Mon-Fri 9 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.), on weekends or holidays. *Emailed questions are unlikely to receive a response if they are not sent by 3:00pm on June 19th.*

WHAT DO I NEED TO SUBMIT WITH THE GRANT APPLICATION?

- Completed application form (including eligibility verification, payment and enrollment consent; please refer to the following section for details)
- Work Samples (please refer to the acceptable formats listed in the Work Samples section for details)

WHAT DOCUMENTATION IS NEEDED TO VERIFY MY ELIGIBILITY?

Please have the following documents on hand before you begin your application.

1. A government (USA or foreign) issued photo ID to verify your identity. The provided ID will not be shared with other government agencies; it will only be used to confirm eligibility for the program.
 - Your photo ID must have your full name, date of birth, and photo.
 - The photo ID must be valid or expired within the last 2 years.
 - Acceptable forms: Driver's License, Passport, Country Issued ID (USA or Foreign), Government ID (USA or Foreign), State Issued ID, Permanent Resident Card (USA Green Card), Matricula Consular Card (Mexico ID), Instituto Federal Electoral (Mexico ID), Military ID (USA).
2. Proof of Residency
 - The document must include the following information: Your name, your address, issue date within the last 60 days prior to the application deadline, OR a lease that is not expired.
 - Acceptable forms: 1) utility bill dated and issued within the last 60 days prior to the application deadline; 2) income information (i.e. pay stub) dated and issued within last 60 days; other third party business mail only (business letters, USPS dated and issued within the last 60 days prior to application deadline; rental agreement with address and date.
3. Payment Method. If selected for this grant, you will have three options on how to receive your monthly payments: 1) Direct deposit OR 2) Debit card mailed OR 3) Virtual debit card. If you choose to receive it via direct deposit, please have your bank account information (this can usually be found on checks) on hand. The bank account must be in your name.

TERMINATION OF THE GRANT PROGRAM FOR CITY'S CONVENIENCE

The City reserves the option to terminate this grant program at any time. If terminated, no further payments will be made to Grantees from the date of termination. If, prior to the date of termination, a Grantee received payment by debit card, those card(s) will remain valid.

WHAT ARE MY OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE GRANT?

- Short online survey at the beginning, middle, and end of the grant period. These surveys will focus on what impact the stipend has had over the course of the grant period. Failure to complete timely survey reports may lead to suspension of monthly payments.
- A summary of activity at the end of the grant period.

THE REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

OAC staff will review all applications for eligibility once the application deadline passes. Upon confirming all eligible applications, OAC staff will assign each application to a team of panel reviewers. Panelist assignments will consider artistic discipline. Scores will be scored on their strength against the criteria provided.

The highest scoring applications will advance to the randomization phase, where a randomization tool will be used to select the final 200 Fellowship awardees.

Public Record

Applications received are public records that will be disclosed upon request pursuant to a California Public Records Act request. OAC reserves the right to use application materials as demonstration examples in future workshops. Submission of an application gives OAC permission to use it for training purposes with confidential information (e.g., phone numbers and home address) removed.

If Funded

Once the review process is completed, OAC staff will notify all applicants of their application status.

HOW WILL APPLICATIONS BE REVIEWED AND SCORED?

Reviews will be based on three criteria and available point as indicated below.

- Commitment to Practice (30 points)
- Artistic Merit (30 points)
- Public Benefit (40 points)

Commitment to Practice	<i>Materials</i>	Min	Satis	Strong
Consistent and meaningful dedication of time and resources towards the development of artistic or creative practice.	<i>Narrative</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Significant engagement in artistic and professional development activities (e.g., apprenticeships, skill-building workshops, trainings, residencies).	<i>Narrative</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Clear and comprehensive long-term vision for artist's professional growth.	<i>Narrative</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Artistic Merit				
Body of work reflects technical proficiency and care of execution that effectively conveys, represents, or expands on intended artistic ideas and themes.	<i>Narrative, work samples</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Work samples demonstrate coherence of style or theme across a body of work and how the work samples contribute to the artist's trajectory.	<i>Narrative, work samples</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Artistic process and body of work reflect valued contributions to the vibrancy of the artistic discipline, medium, genre, and/or cultural tradition.	<i>Narrative, work samples</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Public Benefit				
Artistic process and/or body of work demonstrate significant local community engagement and opportunities for public involvement, and/or engages in cross-sector or cross-thematic explorations (e.g., environment, healthcare, science, social justice, transportation).	<i>Narrative, work samples, letter/ testimonial</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Body of work is deeply rooted in, and centers the experience of BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, and/or other historically marginalized individuals.	<i>Narrative, work samples, letter/ testimonial</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Artist ensures public access and exposure of their work to broad audiences, including historically marginalized communities or groups.	<i>Narrative</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10
Artistic practice enhances and contributes to the diversity and vitality of Sacramento's artistic, cultural, and creative landscape.	<i>Narrative, work samples</i>	1-3	4-7	8-10

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

The following five (5) questions will be required as part of the application. **We strongly advise drafting your answers prior to the opening of the application on June 2nd. Each answer has a 500 word count limit.**

Commitment to Practice

This section is meant to demonstrate your commitment to being a professional artist.

- How do you demonstrate consistent and meaningful dedication of time and resources towards the development of your artistic or creative practice? What is your long-term vision for professional growth?
- Please share examples of your engagement in artistic and professional development activities (for example: apprenticeships, skill-building workshops, trainings, residencies).

Artistic Merit and Public Benefit

This section is meant to demonstrate your dedication to artistic excellence and artistic merit.

- Please describe your artistic concepts, influences, philosophy, and/or visions that shape your work. Include techniques that are important to you and your work (form, materials, processes, traditions etc.).
- How does your work contribute to the vibrancy of the discipline, medium, genre, and/or cultural traditions? How does it contribute to the diversity and vitality of Sacramento's artistic, cultural and creative landscape?
- Please describe how your work demonstrates local engagement and public involvement, and/or how it engages in cross-sector or cross-thematic explorations. How do you ensure public access and exposure of your work to broad audiences?

WORK SAMPLES

You are required to submit work samples for this application. You may submit up to, but not more than two (2) of the indicated media types. Please use a second media type only when it is appropriate and necessary for the panel to understand the work being submitted.

Please limit audio and video work samples to no more than the five (5) minutes specified below.

Acceptable formats:

- Digital images, up to 10 (JPG, PNG)
- Audio, up to 5 minutes (MP3)

- Video, no more than 5 minutes will be reviewed (YouTube link only; please include the start time to begin playback. The panel will be instructed to review no more than 5 minutes, total.)
- Text, up to 10 pages (PDF)

Tips on submitting work samples:

Do not submit promotional material as work samples (e.g., promotional videos about your work, your theater, explanations of your work, or reviews of your work, etc.).

Select the strongest, best-documented work that complements your application. High-quality documentation (photos, recordings, etc.) of your work is critical to assessing the originality, technical skill, and community impact of the art itself. Panelists regularly cite low-quality documentation as a barrier. With less capacity to assess the scoring criteria, this often results in lower scores.

OAC cannot advise applicants as to what work samples you should choose. Consider the story your application tells, its through-line or theme. Have a trusted friend or colleague review the application for clarity and persuasiveness.

For more good tips on submitting work samples for grants, go to Creative Capital, [“Applying for Grants: Choosing Work Samples.”](#)

OPTIONAL LETTER OF SUPPORT

A letter of support or a short testimonial is optional; applicants will not be penalized for not including one. If one is included, please be sure it adheres to the following format and restrictions. The letter should be dated and signed by the person who is writing it. The person authoring the letter should state their title, professional affiliation and/or their relationship to the applicant and write specifically about their work. Letters should not exceed one (1) page in length. Testimonials should be recent and provide attribution to the individual providing the statement. Multiple testimonials may be provided, but in total should not exceed one (1) page in length.

FURTHER QUESTIONS?

Please contact creativegrowth@cityofsacramento.org for any questions related to the application. Emails will not be responded to outside of general business hours (Mon-Fri 9 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.), on weekends, or holidays. Emailed questions are unlikely to receive a response if they are not sent by 3:00 p.m. on June 19th.