

2024 Creative Impact Fund Guidelines

Important Dates

- Applications open Friday, April 5, 2024.
- Deadline for Submission is Friday, May 31, 2024 at 11:59 pm.
- Applications will be reviewed by the Jury after the deadline.
- Applicants will be notified of the Jury's decision by email approximately six weeks after the deadline.
- Grantee final report due no later than 30 days after the end of the 12-month grant year.

Questions? Please reference the **Creative Impact Fund FAQs** on our [website](#) or contact grants@assemblycle.org.

About

Artists and creatives positively affect our lives and our region every day. Their work has the power to promote healing, to transcend barriers and unite people, and to highlight social injustices leading to just and equitable change.

Assembly for the Arts introduces the Creative Impact Fund (CIF), an unrestricted grant designed to support the growth of an artist's creative practice and advance their impact on our region. The CIF will award **seventeen (17)** forward-thinking artists and creatives with **\$10,000 in unrestricted funds** in addition to business development support.

The CIF is open to artists living and working in Cuyahoga County who have been **creating impactful and inventive artistic work** for three or more years in the disciplines of craft, dance, design, film, interdisciplinary work, media, music, theatre & performance, traditional arts, visual art, and writing/literary art. For additional detail on how Assembly defines an artist or creative, please see the *Artist & Creative Discipline Definitions* section below. If you do not see your creative discipline represented, please contact Assembly at grants@assemblycle.org.

The Creative Impact Fund is supported by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from [Cuyahoga Arts & Culture](#).

Awarded Artists Receive:

- \$10,000 in unrestricted funds
- Business and professional development support opportunities, including marketing
- Dedicated support from Assembly staff including advise on achieving creative goals for the grant year
- Networking opportunities, including connections to institutional partners, thought partners or potential collaborators
- Promotion of the as a Creative Impact Fund awardee on Assembly's website, social media
- Special access to opportunities as they arise throughout the year
- An Assembly for the Arts membership

Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.
- The CIF is open to artists and creatives (as defined below) who reside and work in Cuyahoga County and will continue to do so for the duration of the grant period. Artists must be able to provide a verifiable residential address (the location where you live more than 6 months out of the year). *An artist may not use their studio address unless it is their primary place of residence.*
- The CIF is open to artists (as defined below) only. Nonprofit organizations, businesses and artist collectives are not eligible to apply, however artists who make up collectives are eligible to submit individual applications.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate evidence of their creative work from at least the last three years through the submission of work samples (images, video, written works, audio, etc.)
- Artists may submit only one application to the CIF for consideration.
- 2023 CIF recipients are not eligible to apply to CIF in 2024.
- Jurors of Assembly's artist programs are not eligible to apply.
- **Grants and Awards for Artists/Creatives Funded by Cuyahoga Arts & Culture**
The following artist funding opportunities are supported by residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from [Cuyahoga Arts & Culture \(CAC\)](#):
 - Creative Impact Fund (Assembly for the Arts)
 - Premiere Fellowship (Cleveland Public Theatre)
 - Individual Artist Fellowship (Cleveland Public Theatre)
 - Unidos por el Arte (Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center)
 - Room in the House Fellowship (Karamu House)
 - Urgent Art Fund (SPACES)
- Applicants cannot be staff, board or family members of Assembly for the Arts, Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, Cleveland Public Theatre, SPACES, Julia de Burgos or Karamu House.
- **Artists can apply for multiple grant programs**, but they are only eligible to be awarded one unrestricted grant each year. If awarded a project grant, then the grant must be for different projects.
 - **Project Grants include:**
 - Unidos por el Arte (Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center)
 - Urgent Art Fund (SPACES)
 - Premiere Fellowship (Cleveland Public Theatre)
 - **Unrestricted Grants include:**
 - Individual Artist Fund (Cleveland Public Theatre)
 - Room in the House Fellowship (Karamu House)
 - Creative Impact Fund (Assembly for the Arts)

Assembly strongly encourages applications from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) artists, as well as other artists that have been historically excluded or marginalized.

How to Apply

Interested artists can apply using the online application found on Assembly's website at <https://assemblycle.org/cifprogram2024>. Paper applications will be accepted for accessibility reasons on a case-by-case basis. If you have a disability and require assistance in applying for CIF, please contact cif@assemblycle.org.

The CIF application is available in English only. Spanish, and possibly other translation services are available upon request.

The first part of the application confirms that all eligibility requirements are met as outlined in the previous section. After eligibility is determined, Applications will require at least the following materials:

- Artist statement
- Up to two letters of support
- Between 8 to 15 work samples (images, video, audio, text)
- Narrative responses related to your artistic philosophy, goals, and intended impact

Work Sample Guidelines

Your work sample files should be a streamlined, quality display of your artistic work and will be used to evaluate your application. Please remember jury members will review all you include in your application, so choose your best work and consider quality over quantity.

- Include between 8 and 15 work samples
- 15 files total across all file types/media
- Choose work samples that indicate you have been creating work for the last 3-5 years. Older work samples are acceptable but should be accompanied by evidence of more recent work
- Ensure that your work samples are high-resolution, easy to view, read or listen to
- Sketches and mock-ups for future projects may be included

Maximums and minimums

- Image / Document files cannot exceed 4MB each
- Video / Audio files cannot exceed 150mb/video
- You may upload up to 5 media files (video or audio), maximum of 2 minutes each
- Each PDF file uploaded may be no more than 4 pages including those that contain images and links

Permitted file types:

- **Images:** .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .pdf
- **Video:** .m4v, .mov, .mp4, .mpg, .wmv
- **Writing:** doc, .docx, .pdf
- **Audio:** .m4a, .mp3, .wav, .wma

Artist & Creative Discipline Definitions

To guide the administration of these funds, Assembly defines artists and creative as independent professionals who derive income from creating, performing, teaching, or supporting the development of work in following disciplines:

- **Craft** (ceramics, fiber, glass, jewelry, metals, textiles)
- **Dance & Choreography** (create or perform movement-based works)
- **Design** (fashion, graphic, industrial, object, all forms of architecture)
- **Film** (filmmakers, cinematography, directing, screenwriting, motion pictures, animation)
- **Interdisciplinary** (work creating intentional connections between multiple creative disciplines)
- **Media** (work at the intersection of technology, content creation, aesthetics, storytelling, and digital cultures)
- **Music** (composing, songwriting, performing, DJing, producing)
- **Theatre & Performance** (directing, playwriting, puppetry, set design, lighting/installation, and performance art)
- **Traditional or Folk Arts** (work related to the continuity and evolution of a tradition and/or cultural heritage such as cultural dance, cultural music, oral expression and traditional crafts)
- **Visual Art** (painting, sculpture, photography, installation, performance art, sound art, video, printmaking, illustration, drawing)
- **Writing / Literary Arts** (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, spoken word, literature for children, criticism, graphic novels, journalism, arts writing)

If you do not see your creative discipline represented, contact Assembly at grants@assemblycle.org.

Selection Criteria

The CIF is an unrestricted (flexible) grant designed to support and encourage the growth of an artist's creative practice. Eligible applicants are encouraged to share their artistic vision, creative philosophy, and ability to create impactful and meaningful work. The jury will score your application (if eligible) based on the following criteria:

- Evidence that you have been actively creating for at least the last three years.
- Demonstrated innovation in your creative practice including originating new work, experimenting with new ideas, taking risks, and pushing boundaries in your field.
- Completeness and quality of your application.
- Work that creatively impacts your neighborhood or community, or looks at new ways to address social, personal, political, community and/or global themes.
- Thoughtful and well-executed work (it's clear that you spend significant time thinking about and creating your work).
- Inventive and thought-provoking engagement with viewers, audiences, and participants.

Review Process

CIF grantees will be selected by a 3 to 5-person jury that includes artists, arts administrators, and community leaders, with several members of the jury from outside of Greater Cleveland.

- Applications will be reviewed by the jury after the May 31, 2024 deadline.
- Applications will be reviewed in a closed format based on the application selection criteria. Jury comments and feedback will be available upon request.
- All applicants, both those who did and did not receive funding, will receive email communication from Assembly about the status of their grant application approximately 6 weeks after the application deadline.

Funds Disbursement

- Grant funds will be disbursed to the individual artist submitting the application.
- Grantees will receive 90% (or \$9,000) of the full \$10,000 grant amount within approximately 30 days after final funding decisions have been made and after grantees complete the required paperwork (see below for details). The remaining 10% (or \$1,000) will be disbursed to grantees upon completion of final grantee reporting requirements.
- Grantees will be required to sign a Grant Agreement and provide a W-9 for tax purposes. Bank account information for direct deposit transfer of grant funds will be required. Grantees are responsible for any applicable taxes for any grant received. It's strongly encouraged to consult a tax professional with questions.

Grantee Requirements

- Complete and sign a CIF Grant Agreement
- Submit a W-9
- Have a bank account and submit an ACH (direct deposit) form
- Have at least two (2) in-person status update meetings with Assembly staff within the 12-month grant period.
- Track expenses and provide a summary of their grant fund spending at the end of the 12-month grant period.
- Complete and submit a final report at the end of the 12-month grant period. Artists will be asked to provide evidence of the work they have created over the year.
- Add an artist profile (required) and events (if relevant) to www.ClevelandArtsEvents.com.
- Include Assembly and CAC's logos on promotional materials during the grant period.

Eligible and Ineligible Uses of Funds

The CIF provides \$10,000 in unrestricted (flexible) funding to grantees. Unrestricted grants (sometimes called flexible funds) are meant to provide artists with the flexibility and financial means to engage in whatever artistic endeavors they wish to pursue. These are funds to support your artistic mission and creative vision however you see fit. Think of this money as an investment in your general costs to work as an artist.

Eligible Expenses (not limited to):

- Studio costs (upkeep, maintenance, rent, utilities)
- Travel expenses related to your artistic endeavors, as approved in the artist CIF agreement; grantees with questions regarding eligible expenses should contact Assembly.
- Creative and artistic needs including:
 - Supplies and materials
 - Technology
 - Contract services
 - Personal artist fees
 - Marketing and communications
 - Research and development
 - Space or venue rental
- Other operating expenses related to your artistic endeavors, as approved in the artist CIF agreement; grantees with questions regarding eligible expenses should contact Assembly.

Ineligible Expenses

- Illegal activity
- Political campaign endorsement
- Gambling activity
- Alcohol
- Travel outside of the U.S.
- Debt repayment
- Fundraising expenses
- Contributions or donations to external causes or organizations