



INNOVATIONS IN STRENGTHENING THE ARTS (ISA) GRANTS PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The *Innovations in Strengthening the Arts (ISA)* Grants Program supports research, knowledge-building activities, and capacity-building and technology-based initiatives that strengthen San Francisco's arts community. Ideally, ISA Grants provide relevant information, share new thinking and practice, and encourage innovations that can lead to dynamic systemic change in how the arts field works.

At this time of diminished financial resources, changing demographics and rapid technological advances, artists and arts and cultural organizations are increasingly challenged to find ways to revision how they work; more deeply engage their communities; articulate their impact; and enhance organizational infrastructure to more effectively achieve their missions.

The San Francisco Arts Commission seeks to make responsive, strategic grants that facilitate informed decision-making and promote innovation by supporting:

- ❖ **Research and Data Management Tools:** Providing quantitative and qualitative data, analyses and the development of data management tools that will help the San Francisco arts, cultural and policy communities better understand the ecology in which, and factors impacting how, the arts operate
- ❖ **Knowledge-Building Activities:** Bringing thought-leaders and new information to the arts community in order to build appropriate, relevant practice
- ❖ **Capacity-building and Technology-based Initiatives:** Seeding initiatives that will appropriately increase capacity through culturally sensitive and competent strategies and technology-based tools and platforms

ISA Grants will support initiatives that reach and influence the broader arts field. In addition to proposals from eligible leadership organizations, ISA Grants enable the Arts Commission to work with partners to commission research and to pilot initiatives that benefit the greater San Francisco community.

Because of the innovative and systemic nature of the funded initiatives, the grantee and the Arts Commission will be working closely together, possibly including:

- ❖ Discussions on a monthly basis or at key milestones
- ❖ Agreed upon course adjustments based on progressive findings
- ❖ Presentations to key stakeholders
- ❖ Jointly developed plans for promotion and distribution

EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE INITIATIVES

- ❖ Studies, reports, needs assessments and trend analyses of individual artists, arts/cultural organizations and their communities in San Francisco

- ❖ Convenings, forums and workshops for the greater arts community and cross-sector partners
- ❖ Web-based tools to capture and aggregate data about arts activity and organizational functions and characteristics

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

- ❖ Scale and Scope of Impact (35%): Proposed initiative demonstrates the potential to encourage innovation and systemic change, and/or to influence policy or funding practices. Initiatives are most likely new, unique ventures, and may work across artistic disciplines and sectors to affect larger numbers of practitioners.
- ❖ Relevance and Timeliness (35%): The challenges to be addressed are timely, reflective of major trends, and are well matched with the goals of the Arts Commission
- ❖ Organizational Capacity (30%): Successful applicants will:
 - Demonstrate a depth of knowledge of the arts field in the United States through research, policy and publications, and active participation in the regional and national arts arena.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the arts and culture ecology in the San Francisco Bay Area
 - Demonstrate experience, expertise and capacity in overseeing and/or conducting research, knowledge-building activities and/or capacity-building and technology-based initiatives.
 - Have organizational capacity, strong financial position and be of sufficient budget size to successfully implement the proposed initiative

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Eligible Organizations must have:

- ❖ A mission focused primarily on the arts, culture, philanthropy and/or research and policy, but with a demonstrated history of working in arts and culture.
- ❖ 501(c)(3) status or other tax exempt status
- ❖ A continuing and stable presence in the San Francisco Bay Area region, as evidence by a minimum of two public activities in the City and County of San Francisco within the past 18 months.
- ❖ Successful completion of previous SFAC grants, and/or compliance with current SFAC grants.
- ❖ Minimum five years demonstrated experience in designing and implementing initiatives/programs in two or more of the following areas: research studies with publication; direct service provision to the arts community; knowledge-building convenings; regrant programs; web-based tools development
- ❖ Minimum organizational budget of \$250,000 with at least one full-time staff. If the proposed project involves working with consultant(s), the applicant must identify a minimum of two successfully completed projects working with consultants within the last five years.
- ❖ Senior staff member(s) who participate in regional/national organizations or convenings by holding leadership positions, or serving as a speaker or grant review panelist. Participation must have taken place within the last 18 months or is upcoming. Note: attendance at a conference is not sufficient.

INNOVATIONS IN STRENGTHENING THE ARTS | COVER SHEET

Date of Request _____

Name of Organization _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Website _____

Organization’s Director _____

Director’s Telephone _____

Director’s Email _____

Contact Person & Title _____

Contact Person Telephone _____

Contact Person Email _____

Initiative Name _____

Initiative Time Period _____

Amount of Request _____

A proposal must include all of the following components:

- ❖ Innovations in Strengthening the Arts Cover Sheet & Eligibility Form
- ❖ Brief organizational description
- ❖ Key Initiative Personnel bios/resumes
- ❖ Initiative Description, including goals, rationale/background, description, environmental analysis, and any progress-to-date
- ❖ Timeline and Initiative Budget with budget notes
- ❖ Lists of Staff and of Board of Directors Members including outside affiliations
- ❖ 990s for most recently completed fiscal year and organizational budget for current year
- ❖ Copy of 501(c)(3)
- ❖ NOTE: Additional detailed information may be requested.

INNOVATIONS IN STRENGTHENING THE ARTS | ELIGIBILITY FORM

Check to confirm that the applicant meets each of the eligibility criteria:

_____ Has 501(c)(3) status or other tax exempt status. Federal Tax ID#: _____

_____ Good standing on previous or current SFAC grants.

_____ Has a mission focused primarily on the arts, culture, philanthropy and/or research and policy, but with a demonstrated history of working in arts and culture. Please state:

_____ Has a continuing and stable presence in San Francisco Bay Area region, as evidenced by a minimum of two public activities in the City and County of San Francisco within the past 18 months. Please list the two qualifying activities:

_____ Minimum five years demonstrated experience in designing and implementing projects/programs in two or more of the following areas (please check and give specific examples):

- _____ research studies with publication
- _____ direct service provision to the arts community
- _____ knowledge-building convenings
- _____ regrant programs
- _____ web-based tools development

_____ Minimum organizational budget of \$250,000 with at least one full-time staff.

Please provide the name and title of the full-time staff member:

If the proposed project involves working with consultant, the applicant must identify a minimum of two successfully completed projects working with consultants within the last five years. Please provide the title of the project, project dates, approximate project budget and a brief description, including name of consultant(s).

_____ Senior staff member(s) who participate(d) in regional/national organizations or convenings by holding leadership positions, or serving as a speaker or grant review panelist within the last 18 months or invitation for an upcoming event. Please list:

_____ Has not defaulted on a loan, contract or grant.

_____ All loans are up-to-date with the payment schedule.

Organizations that have defaulted on a loan, contract or grant, describe the circumstances of the default. If the organization has a loan, describe terms of the loan repayment.