



# VIA Art Fund

## Grant Guidelines & LOI Submissions

### Overview

Founded in 2013, VIA Art Fund is a nonprofit grantmaking organization and new model of philanthropy that supports (V)isionary (I)nitiatives in (A)rt. As a national coalition of donors, we fund international artists, nonprofit organizations, cultural institutions, art production platforms, and contemporary art biennials or festivals for the production, exhibition, public dissemination and institutional acquisition of ambitious and pioneering art projects and initiatives with far-reaching impact. VIA Art Fund focuses its grantmaking on projects in the field of contemporary art that are mounted beyond traditional exhibition environments and take place outside the museum or gallery walls. Since 2013, VIA Art Fund has awarded \$2.4 million in funding. Our work supports artistic projects and initiatives that exemplify our **three core values**:

### **I. Artistic Production**

We champion the production of new work – from creation to exhibition, documentation, and dissemination – that reflects artistic excellence and innovation. Whenever possible, we aim to support the production of long-term and permanent installations in the public realm. We are also committed to funding new projects that will ultimately enter a U.S. public collection, with our support enabling the presenting institution or another collecting museum to acquire the work following its display.

### **II. Thought Leadership**

We support the work of both established and emerging voices in contemporary art that bring new knowledge and dynamic avenues of understanding to the field. The creative output of these thought leaders generates entry points for dialogue and collaboration, and fosters vital intellectual exchange.

### **III. Public Engagement**

We promote works that penetrate social, cultural, geographic and economic barriers to inspire and educate diverse audiences. These projects act as platforms for inquiry and investigation, generating meaningful collective experiences for audiences and cultural producers.

### **Types of Funding**

VIA Art Fund awards funding within two grant categories:

- **Artistic Production Support**

Nonprofit organizations and institutions, as well as individual artists and curators, may apply for production support for new artistic commissions that take place outside the museum or gallery walls, and within the public realm or in non-traditional exhibition environments. Individual artists seeking production funding or the producing organizations must have a confirmed exhibition venue or presenting partner. Artistic Production funding ranges from \$25,000 to \$100,000 (can be lower than \$25,000) per project, with grants at the \$50,000 to \$100,000 level reserved for permanent or long-term installations, or newly commissioned works that may be gifted to a U.S. public collection through VIA Art Fund's support.

- **Incubator Support**

Under VIA Art Fund's Incubator category, small to mid-sized nonprofit organizations and alternative initiatives that are pivotal in cultivating artistic excellence, addressing the art community's evolving needs, and creating a more dynamic and inclusive contemporary art ecosystem may apply for unrestricted funding. Proposals considered under this category include experimental curatorial projects and exhibition series; discursive programming and public symposia; research and educational initiatives; innovative digital and new media platforms; publications and scholarly journals; and artist-in-residence programs. The fund will also consider grant requests for seed funding from

#### **VIA Art Fund**

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independent, start-up organizations at the nascent stages of a project or initiative. However, the organization must demonstrate clear objectives and engagement in current contemporary art discourse. VIA Art Fund's Incubator support is dedicated to nurturing experimental organizations and programs that champion diverse voices and new avenues of inquiry in the field of contemporary art. Incubator grant amounts are set each cycle and for 2018, VIA will grant up to \$15,000 per organization.

### **Eligibility**

- VIA Art Fund awards grants to artists, nonprofit organizations, cultural institutions, art production platforms, and biennials or festivals working in the field of contemporary art, in the United States and internationally.
- VIA may also award artist-direct grants for the production of new work. However, the project must have a confirmed exhibition venue in the United States.
- If the project takes place in the United States, the featured artist(s) may be American or international. If you are an international artist submitting a proposal, your project must take place in the United States. If you are a nonprofit entity (American or international) applying for support for a project outside the United States, your proposal must feature the work of American or U.S.-based artist(s) or curator(s).
- VIA Art Fund does not fund museum or gallery exhibitions – our support is geared towards high-impact projects in non-traditional exhibition venues and those mounted in the public realm.
- Requests for Artistic Production support must have a confirmed exhibiting venue or presenting partner in the United States or abroad.
- Requests for Incubator support, in the form of discursive programming and/or publications, must have a confirmed venue or publisher.
- Projects must begin after our grant award notification dates (see deadlines below).
- Previous grantees must wait two full years from the date of their last grant award to re-apply for funding. Previous applicants who did not receive support must wait one full year to re-apply. It is recommended that all previous applicants and grantees consult with VIA staff prior to submitting an LOI.
- If you need further information, please review our FAQ sheet under the “Apply + Contact” section of our website; you may also view a list of previous grantees under the “Grants in Action” section.

### **Letters of Inquiry & Application Process**

**Our next Letter of Inquiry (LOI) deadline is May 4, 2018 at 11:59pm EST.** Organizations applying must provide proof of nonprofit status; individual artists applying must provide supporting materials of confirmed venue. If your project is of interest, VIA Art Fund will contact you by June 8, 2018 with an invitation and further instructions on how to submit a formal application. VIA does not provide formal rejections in the LOI stage. If VIA staff has not contacted you by June 12, it is likely that your LOI was not invited to move forward in the application process. Applications from invited artists and organizations are then reviewed at our grant review sessions in Fall 2018, with final award notifications sent by October 12, 2018. To learn more about our philanthropic model and grant selection process, please review our FAQ sheet.

### **Your letter of inquiry should be submitted in a single PDF and include:**

- A two-page description of the project with details of the exhibition/project venue(s); a brief organizational mission; the type of support you are applying for (Artistic Production or Incubator) and a specific amount requested
- A project budget and current annual budget for the organization
- A project timeline
- Proof of nonprofit status, if applicable.



### **VIA Grant Program Timeline**

#### **Fall 2018 Award Cycle**

Letter of inquiry deadline:	May 4, 2018
Letter of inquiry notification:	June 8, 2018
Application deadline (by invitation only):	July 6, 2018
Grant award notification:	October 12, 2018
Projects must start after:	November 2018

#### **Spring 2019 Award Cycle (tentative dates)**

Letter of inquiry deadline:	October 26, 2018
Letter of inquiry notification:	December 7, 2018
Application deadline (by invitation only):	January 7, 2019
Grant award notification:	April 12, 2019
Projects must start after:	May 2019

### **LOI Submission Instructions**

Please submit your Letter of Inquiry in a single PDF file to [grants@viaartfund.org](mailto:grants@viaartfund.org).

### **Contact**

To obtain more information about our grant procedures, or if you have further questions, please consult our FAQ sheet under the “Apply + Contact” section of our website before contacting us at [grants@viaartfund.org](mailto:grants@viaartfund.org). Due to our small staff and the high volume of correspondence we receive, we cannot take inquiries by phone.

We appreciate your interest in VIA Art Fund.

