



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 its founding in 2013, VIA has awarded over \$2.75 million through 68 grants to artists, curators, cultural institutions, publications, foundations, and biennials in the United States and worldwide, and has gifted 13 works of art to U.S. museums. 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.

VIA Art Fund

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- **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 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. ** Starting 2019, we will be adopting a new platform for our Incubator Grant Category and thus are not accepting any Incubator Grant submissions at this time. We hope to post new guidelines and processes by the end of November 2018.*

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.
- Projects must begin after our grant award notification dates (see deadlines below).
- Previous grantees must wait three 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 for Artistic Production Grants is October 26, 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 November 7, 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 December 10, 2018, 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 Spring 2019, with final award notifications sent by April 19, 2019. 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, or artists statement; the type of support you are applying for (*we are currently only accepting proposals in the Artistic Production category*) and a specific amount requested
- A project budget and current annual budget for the organization (if applicable)
- A project timeline
- Proof of nonprofit status, if applicable.

VIA Grant Program Timeline – Artistic Production Grants ONLY

Spring 2019 Award Cycle

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| 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 18, 2019 |
| Projects must start after: | May 2019 |

Fall 2019 Award Cycle (tentative dates)

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| Letter of inquiry deadline: | May 3, 2019 |
| Letter of inquiry notification: | June 7, 2019 |
| Application deadline (by invitation only): | July 5, 2019 |
| Grant award notification: | October 15, 2019 |
| Projects must start after: | November 2019 |

LOI Submission Instructions

Please submit your Letter of Inquiry in a single PDF file to 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. 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.

