



VIA Art Fund

Letter of Inquiry – FAQs

Who can apply for funding from VIA Art Fund?

VIA accepts applications from U.S.-based and international artists, curators, nonprofit organizations, cultural institutions, art production platforms, biennials and/or festivals. Please note that we do 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.

What are the criteria for international applicants?

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 outside the United States, your proposal must feature the work of American or U.S.-based artist(s) or curator(s). If the project takes place within the United States, the featured artist(s) may be American or international.

Does VIA give grants to individual artists?

Yes, VIA may award artist-direct grants if there is a confirmed exhibition venue with a sponsoring entity or if the artist can demonstrate that they have the production capacity to realize the project. If the artist is U.S. based, the artist must provide a W-9, request for taxpayer identification number and certification.

Does VIA support collaborative projects?

Yes. Please decide which presenting organization will apply and select one point person for your Letter of Inquiry.

Does VIA support artists or curators with tuition or living stipends for university or residency programs?

No.

How much funding should my organization request in our LOI?

If you are applying within the Artistic Production category, grants range from \$25,000 to \$100,000. VIA awards \$50,000 to \$100,000 grants in the case the work is a permanent or quasi-permanent installation, or can be gifted to a U.S. public collection. If this is a production request solely for exhibition purposes, grants are usually in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range. If you are applying within the Incubator category, funding is typically \$15,000.

Is there a median project budget size for projects that VIA Art Fund supports?

No, we fund a diverse group of projects, each with varying budgets and project scopes.

I'm interested in applying for Artistic Production support – should I submit an LOI for a single artist project or multiple artist projects?

If you are submitting an LOI for Artistic Production support, please include the full list of participating artists and brief project synopses. If your proposal moves forward, VIA staff will work with you to select a single artist project to apply with for the full application phase.

I would like to apply with a project that features an exhibition within my institution's galleries, as well as a public artistic component. Am I eligible for funding with this hybrid scenario?

If the public component (installation, intervention, performance, socially-engaged programming, etc.) is paramount and central to the proposed artist's project, then yes, you are eligible to apply for Artistic Production support. VIA does not accept applications for artist talks or symposia organized as auxiliary events to accompany traditional exhibitions.

How does VIA's production/acquisition funding work?

At the \$50,000–\$100,000 level of funding, if VIA is a lead supporter of a project, we will work with the applying organization or artist to gift the commissioned work to a collecting U.S. institution. Each production/acquisition grant is unique and specially negotiated with the artist and/or gallery during

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the application process and prior to the grant review phase.

What is VIA Art Fund's philanthropic model?

As a national coalition of patrons, our approach as a collective initiative stands apart in the landscape of arts philanthropy: we are rigorous in our vetting of grant proposals, committed to providing meaningful opportunities for partner education, and democratic in our decision making. Since our founding in 2013, we have funded over \$2.1 million in grants to date. VIA Partners participate in a unique program of curated travel, intimate studio visits, private museum tours, and semi-annual grant review meetings where we convene to democratically vote on which projects to fund in the coming year.

What is VIA Art Fund's grant review and selection process?

VIA's grant program is highly competitive and not all applicants will move forward to the final stage of review. Letters of Inquiry are reviewed by staff and successful applicants are invited to submit a full application. Full applications are then assessed in three stages. First, VIA staff conducts a preliminary review and decides which applications will move forward to our Grant Advisory Committee, a subcommittee of our Partners. Following a review session with our Grant Advisory Committee, the remaining group of successful applications moves forward to our final vetting session – or Partners Meeting – held in early April and early October each year. At these teleconferenced Partners Meetings, finalists are invited to present their proposals in person in Boston, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Subsequently, VIA Partners discuss, deliberate and submit their rankings for the projects they wish to fund within each grant category.

How are Letters of Inquiry evaluated?

They are evaluated according to overall artistic and curatorial merit, and by how well they fulfill our three core values: artistic production, thought leadership and public engagement. We also examine the impact these projects and initiatives will have on the broader field of contemporary art and on the public at large. This is a highly competitive process and not all proposals will move onto the final review phases or be awarded funded.

Does VIA Art Fund support projects by previous grant recipients?

Yes, but previous grant recipients must wait 2 full years from the date of their last grant award to re-apply for funding.

If my organization has previously applied for funding and has been rejected, do I need to wait before reapplying?

If your proposal was rejected, then yes, you should wait 1 full year from the previous application's deadline to reapply with a different project.

What if I would like to apply for a grant that falls outside VIA's bi-annual grant cycles?

VIA does not award funding outside of our bi-annual grant cycles. For our 2018 cycle dates, please view our "Grant Guidelines" PDF under the "Apply + Contact" section of our website starting September 1, 2017.

Contact

If you still have further questions after consulting our grant guidelines and FAQ sheet, you may contact 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.

