



# VIA Art Fund

## General FAQs

### General Information FAQs

#### **What VIA Grants Can I Apply To?**

VIA has two grantmaking programs that accept unsolicited Letters of Inquiry (LOIs): **Artistic Production Grants and Incubator Fund Grants.**

#### **Grant Programs:**

Within the **Artistic Production Grant Program**, VIA accepts Letters of Inquiry 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 typical museum or gallery exhibitions. Our support is geared towards high-impact projects in non-traditional exhibition venues and those mounted in the public realm. There are **two** Artistic Production grant cycles per year (Spring and Fall). Please scroll down for **Artistic Production Grant FAQs.**

#### **Spring 2020 Award Cycle**

Letter of inquiry deadline	October 25, 2019
Invitation to submit full application	December 6, 2019
Application deadline (by invitation only)	January 6, 2020
Grant award notification	April 17, 2020
Projects must start after	May 2020

#### **Fall 2020 Award Cycle**

Letter of inquiry deadline	May 26, 2020
Invitation to submit full application	June 5, 2020
Application deadline (by invitation only)	July 6, 2020
Grant award notification	October 1, 2020
Projects must start after	November 2020

Within the **Incubator Grant Fund**, VIA accepts Letters of Inquiry from U.S. 501(c)(3) nonprofit visual arts organizations. Organizations or artists' initiatives that do not have 501(c)(3) status may submit an application through a fiscal sponsor. VIA does not award grants to international entities within the Incubator Grant Fund. There is **one** Incubator grant cycle per year. Please scroll down for **Incubator Grant Fund FAQs.**

#### **2020 Incubator Grant Cycle:**

Open Rolling Acceptance of LOI's	February 3, 2020
Invite-Only Applications Deadline	May 11, 2020
Grant Award Notification	November 3, 2020
Grant Distribution	November 30, 2020

#### VIA Art Fund

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### **What is VIA Art Fund's philanthropic model?**

As an international coalition of individuals and private foundations, 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 \$3 million in grants to date. VIA Partners convene in semi-annual grant review meetings 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 spring and fall each year. At these meetings, finalists are invited to present their proposals in person in Boston, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Subsequently, VIA Partners vote on which projects 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 on to the final review phases or be awarded funding.

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

No. Our funding is for the production of new works of art with a confirmed exhibition venue.

### **Does VIA support artists or curators conducting artistic research?**

No. Our funding is for artistic production.

### **Does VIA have a mailing list?**

VIA does not have a mailing list. To stay up to date with our current grantees, we recommend visiting our Grants in Action page and following us on social media



(Facebook, Instagram, Twitter). Information on our grant making cycles is available under “Apply + Contact” on our website.

**Does VIA accept applications for the Curatorial Fellowship?**

The Curatorial Fellowship is by nomination only, meaning that we accept nominations from our colleagues/constituents, and invite select curators to submit a proposal.

**Does VIA accept applications for the Frontier Art Prize?**

VIA is a proud partner of the Frontier Art Prize but does not accept applications. The prize is by nomination only. For more information about the prize, visit the [World Frontiers Forum, Frontier Art Prize](#) website.

**Does VIA Art Fund support projects by previous grant recipients?**

Yes, but previous grant recipients must wait three full years from the date of their last grant award to re-apply for funding. If you are a past grantee and have another project you would like to propose for funding, it is recommended to consult with VIA staff first before submitting an LOI.

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

If your application was rejected, then yes, you must wait at least 2 years from the previous application’s deadline to reapply. Regardless, it is recommended that previous applicants consult with VIA staff prior to submitting an LOI.

**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. VIA works in two 6-month grant cycles: spring (LOI deadline in May for projects opening after November) and fall (LOI deadline in October for projects opening after May of the following year). Please refer to the dates listed at the top of this document.



## Artistic Production Grants FAQs

### **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. Within the Artistic Production category, VIA does not accept applications for artist talks or symposia organized as auxiliary events to accompany traditional exhibitions.

### **Does VIA give grants to individual artists?**

Yes, VIA may award artist-direct grants towards the production of new work as long as 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.

### **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); outside the United States, VIA's support is targeted at significant opportunities such as biennials, triennials, and notable exhibitions that take place outside gallery walls. If the project takes place within the United States, the featured artist(s) may be American or international.



**Does VIA support organizations or artists through their fiscal sponsors?**

Yes. In such cases, we request a letter proving the artist's or organization's relationship to a fiscal sponsor.

**Does VIA support collaborative projects?**

Yes. Please decide which presenting organization will apply and select one point person for your Letter of Inquiry. In some cases, a direct artist grant might be more appropriate for multi-site projects, rather than a grant to a presenting organization.

**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 (can be lower than \$25,000).

**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.

**How does VIA's production/acquisition funding work?**

**Artistic Production Grant:** Since 2013, VIA has gifted or partially gifted 18 works of art to public collections throughout the United States. When an opportunity arises, VIA is happy to work with artists/commissioning organizations to gift or partially gift VIA supported projects to U.S. public collections. These conversations are typically initiated early in the application process and in consultation with the artist, their gallery, the presenting organization, and the possible receiving institution. You may see an inventory of accessioned works on our website under "[Gifted Works.](#)"

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**Artistic Production Grant Cycles**

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**Incubator Grants FAQs**

**What is the Incubator Grant Fund?**

Starting in 2019, VIA Art Fund and Wagner Foundation join forces to create a five-year, \$1 million Incubator Grant Fund providing two-year, unrestricted general operating support for small-scaled to mid-sized visual arts organizations across the United States. The fund aims to build a robust and inclusive national arts ecosystem.

**What is the maximum operating budget size for organizations applying for Incubator Fund support?**

The maximum annual operating budget for eligible applicants to the Incubator Grant Fund is 1.5 million. Organizations must have an operating budget of under 1.5 million to apply.

**Is there a minimum number of years that an organization needs to have been in operation to be eligible for Incubator Fund support?**



No. New organizations with minimal to no programming history are welcome to apply.

**Can university art galleries whose operating budgets are independent from the university apply for an Incubator Grant?**

Yes. Should you be invited to progress past the LOI stage, you will need to provide a budget that demonstrates the relative independence of your operating budget from the university's.

**How much funding should my organization request in our LOI?**

The Incubator Grant Fund offers \$40,000 of unrestricted general operating support, paid out in \$20,000 disbursements over a two-year period. All organizations or initiatives applying to the Incubator Grant will be considered for \$40,000 to be paid out in \$20,000 installments over two years.

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**Contact**

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

