

Lower Manhattan Cultural Council

 lmcc.net/program/creative-engagement/

Creative Engagement is an arts funding program that provides seed grants to individual artists and nonprofit organizations for projects and activities that offer Manhattan communities diverse artistic experiences. Each year, the program supports over 150 arts projects in Manhattan, including concerts, performances, public art, exhibitions, screenings, festivals, workshops, readings and more. Through this grant program LMCC will award over \$500,000 for projects in neighborhoods from Inwood to the Battery taking place between January 1–December 31, 2017.



Featured Image Photo Credit: Felipe Galindo, LMCC Grantee

ABOUT CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Creative Engagement is a grant program designed to enable Manhattan's artists and small nonprofit organizations to access local public funds under the guiding principle that support for artists of diverse disciplines, practices, cultural backgrounds, and career stages contributes to the vibrancy and sustainability of our communities.

Creative Engagement aims to support effective and innovative approaches to engaging audiences through projects and programming of strong artistry. Funding is provided for projects in the performing, literary, media, and visual arts, ranging from folk/traditional forms to contemporary and socially-engaged artistic practices. Creative Engagement strongly supports the payment of artist fees.

The program is comprised of two funds: City funds, provided by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs' Greater New York Arts Development Fund, and State funds, provided by the New York State Council on the Arts' (NYSCA) Decentralization program. Funding is intended for artists and organizations that are not able to apply directly to the City and/or State for arts funding. Creative Engagement often provides the first grant that an applicant receives, which can help leverage additional support.

The program is accompanied by technical assistance to applicants, and networking and promotional opportunities for funded projects.

HOW CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT WORKS

Creative Engagement awards approximately \$500,000 each year to enable arts projects in neighborhoods from Inwood to the Battery. Supported activities include concerts, performances, public art, exhibitions, screenings, festivals, workshops, readings, and more. The program encourages projects that connect audiences to rich arts experiences, as demonstrated by opportunities to attend and/or participate in arts events and programming. Funding priority will be given to projects that bring new arts activities to communities where the need exists, rather than replicate existing offerings.

Competitive projects will demonstrate strong artistic merit, thoughtful project planning, and clear plans to reach the public.

Creative Engagement offers the opportunity to access City, State, or both sources of funds by completing a single application. Please note:

- Applicants eligible for City funds may request up to \$5,000.

- Applicants eligible for State funds may request up to \$5,000.
- Applicants eligible for City and State funds may request up to \$8,000.
- If awarded, no grants will be made for less than \$750.

See Applicant Eligibility for specific City and State eligibility requirements.

Application Deadline: Friday, September 30, 5PM, for projects taking place between January 1 – December 31, 2017.

Important Information – Please read:

- Past applicants to LMCC’s Manhattan Community Arts Fund (MCAF) and The Fund for Creative Communities (The Fund) should consider applying for City and State funding through Creative Engagement.
- Applicants with community-based, arts-education projects should consider applying to LMCC’s Creative Learning program. For more information, visit the [Creative Learning](#) page.
- [The Online Application Form for Creative Engagement is available on Submittable.com](#). All new applicants are encouraged to sign up for a free account and become familiar with the new form in advance of applying.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Get an overview of Creative Learning and find out about the components of a well-prepared application at an information session:

- [Tue, Jul 26 from 4:00-6:00pm](#) , El Museo Del Barrio 1230 5th Avenue
- [Tue, Aug 2 from 3:00-5:00pm](#) , Chinese American Arts Council 456 Broadway #3
- [Wed, Aug 3 from 4:00-6:00pm](#) , Nuyorican Poets Cafe 236 E 3rd Street
- [Mon, Aug 8 from 6:30-8:30pm](#) , Goddard Riverside’s Bernie Wohl Center 647 Columbus Avenue at 91st Street
- [Thu, Aug 11 from 4:00-6:00pm](#) , Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts 323 W 39th Street #3
- [Thu, Aug 18 from 6:30-8:30pm](#) , The Studio Museum in Harlem 144 West 125th St.
- [Thu, Aug 25 from 4:00-6:00pm](#) , Alliance of Resident Theatres / New York Bruce Mitchell Room, 520 Eighth Avenue, 3rd Floor
- [Thu, Aug 25 from 6:30-8:30pm](#) , Alliance of Resident Theatres / New York Bruce Mitchell Room, 520 Eighth Avenue, 3rd Floor
- [Mon, Aug 29 from 6:30-8:30pm](#) , Gibney Dance Center, 280 Broadway, Enter 53A Chambers Street

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Nonprofit Organizations:

Creative Engagement supports nonprofit organizations that meet the following Core Eligibility Requirements:

- Organizations must be based in Manhattan.
- Organizations must have proof of nonprofit status.
- Organizations must have a core artistic mission and/or history of arts programming.
- Applicants may not have applied directly to LMCC’s Creative Learning program for the same fiscal year.

- First-time applicants and applicants who have not attended an information session for Creative Engagement, MCAF, or The Fund in 2013 or later are required to attend a session before applying. For dates, locations, and to RSVP, [click here](#).

In addition, to access City funding:

- Organizations may not be directly receiving funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) for the same fiscal year.
- Organizations must have operating budgets under \$100,000 for two of the last three completed fiscal years.
- Organizations may not be New York City agencies or departments.

To access State funding:

- Organizations may not be directly applying for funds from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) for a grant for the same fiscal year, regardless of funding status.
- Organizations may not be New York State agencies or departments.

Individual Artists and Collectives:

Creative Engagement supports individual artists, as well as collectives, project-based collaborations, and unincorporated groups that meet the following Core Eligibility Requirements:

- Individual artists must reside in Manhattan.
- Individual artists may not apply or receive funds on behalf of any organization.
- Collectives must designate a lead artist (director, or equivalent), who meets all eligibility requirements for individual artists, to apply as an individual on its behalf. Note: The lead artist must be the primary entity responsible for the application, as well as the grant, if awarded. Guest artists or temporary programming staff will not be considered a lead artist for the application.
- Applicants may not have applied directly to LMCC's Creative Learning program for the same fiscal year.
- First-time applicants and applicants who have not attended an information session for Creative Engagement, MCAF, or The Fund in 2013 or later are required to attend a session before applying. For dates, locations, and to RSVP, visit LMCC.net/program/creative-engagement

To access City funding Individual artists and collectives need only meet the above Core Eligibility Requirements. To access State funding:

- Individuals and collectives should be collaborating with a nonprofit Partner Organization to realize the proposed project.
- If desired, the Partner Organization may also act as the artist's fiscal sponsor. The Partner Organization must:

<>Be a primary project collaborator and contribute resources, monetary or otherwise, to the project

- Be based in Manhattan
- Provide proof of nonprofit status
- Provide a letter of commitment describing the organization's role and planned contributions to the project
- Not be directly applying to New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) for a grant for the same fiscal year
- Not be a New York State agency or department

- Individuals and collectives may not be directly applying to New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) for a grant for the same fiscal year, regardless of funding status.

About fiscal sponsorship:

Creative Engagement will directly support individual artists and collectives without a fiscal sponsor. Those who wish to apply with a fiscal sponsor, please note:

- Applicants for City funding may apply with a fiscal sponsor of their choice.
- Applicants for State funding may only designate their partner organization as fiscal sponsor.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants will be accepted for projects in any artistic discipline that meet the following requirements:

- Project must include a public component: an opportunity to access and engage with the arts that is promoted and available to the general public. In the case of workshops and participatory programs, participant recruitment must be open to the general public and reflected accordingly in outreach and promotional plans.
- Public activities of the project must be located in Manhattan.
- Project activities must take place between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017.
- Project budget must show at least 25% of planned project income, in cash or in-kind contributions, from sources other than Creative Engagement.
- All participating professional artists must be guaranteed a fee, indicated in the project budget.
- Applicants may not be a lead artist or key partner in more than one proposal to Creative Engagement.
- Applicants may only submit one (1) proposal requesting support for one (1) project from Creative Engagement, including those requesting both City and State funds.
- Applicants for City funding may also apply to the [SU-CASA](#) program, administered in Manhattan by LMCC and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) provided it is for a different project.

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Under this program, funding is not available for:

- In-school arts education programs or projects exclusively serving a school's student body
- Projects restricted to any organization's membership; eligible projects must be promoted and remain available to the general public
- Projects that are intended to be experienced solely online
- Arts programs that are primarily socio-economic, recreational, rehabilitative, religious or therapeutic in nature
- Work-in-progress showings solely for the development of new work
- Humanities projects
- Professional arts training programs
- General operating support or funds to establish a new organization
- Payment for facilities, purchase of capital equipment, or non-project related administrative expenses
- Offering fellowships or cash prizes

- Entertainment costs, such as opening parties, receptions or fundraisers
- Events that take place in private homes
- Payment to amateur participants of community workshops or programs
- Previous grantees of LMCC that have failed to comply with grant contract or reporting requirements
- An existing work previously funded by Creative Engagement, The Fund for Creative Communities, or Manhattan Community Arts Fund.

REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

A jury of artists and arts professionals will review projects using the following four criteria:

- **Artistic excellence, taking into consideration proposed personnel, project design, and audience experience**
- **Clarity of project proposal**
- **Project feasibility, taking into consideration budget, timeline, and capacity to achieve stated goals**
- **Appropriateness of outreach and marketing plans to reach the intended audience(s)**

The criteria are not listed in order of priority; each is equally important. Please make sure that your application materials, taken as a whole, address these criteria.

Applying to Creative Engagement is a competitive process. Proposals should accurately describe the project, public activities, the target audience, and the project's anticipated impact. Project budgets should be precise, reflect actual needs, and demonstrate the ability to raise funds from additional sources.

Applicants will be notified by email in **February 2017** whether their projects have been funded.

We encourage applicants and grantees to contact our staff for a summary of jury comments and feedback on their applications.

Grant Requirements

The grant award is a contract for arts services; grantees are required to do the following during the grant period:

- Sign and return grant contract to LMCC.
- Include funding credit on all marketing and event materials, print and electronic
- Submit an event notification form six weeks before funded public events take place to: 1) allow LMCC to promote the event information and/or 2) arrange for an LMCC representative to attend.
- Notify LMCC of any significant changes to proposed project activities, including schedule, key participants, project scope or budget, before these changes are finalized.
- Submit a final report, no later than 30 days after completion of all project activities.

Appeals Process

Applicants may appeal decisions in writing within ten (10) days of funding notifications should they believe an error in the review of their application has taken place, effectively arguing the case for appeal based on the criteria below. Dissatisfaction with either an unfavorable decision or the recommended level of support is not grounds for appeal.

Grounds for appeal are limited to the following:

- Misrepresentation of information: an applicant's information was improperly presented by the LMCC staff in a way that may have adversely affected the review process
- Non-presentation of information: the applicant's information was not presented by the LMCC staff as part of the jury's decision-making process
- Improper jury procedure: conflict of interest or biased decision

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINE

Applications should be completed and submitted online before **5PM on Friday, September 30, 2016**.

Follow these four steps to apply:

- **Read the [Program Guidelines](#) and [Online Application Form](#)**. Make sure your project is eligible for consideration before you apply.
- **Attend an Information Session**. First-time applicants, or returning applicants who have not attended an information session in the past three years, must attend an information session to be eligible to apply. RSVP for an information session [here](#).
- **Prepare Required Documents and Work Samples**. Prepare digital versions of the Required Documents and Work Samples to be submitted as part of the Online Application Form, including Project Budget (download template [here](#)) and Project Timeline (download template [here](#)). If you have difficulty converting paper documents into digital formats, please contact LMCC staff for assistance.
- **Complete and submit [Online Application Form](#)**. Make sure to save unfinished applications before you exit the form. Complete and submit all components of your application online. Application forms are not considered final until submitted.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Nonprofit Organizations: upload one (1) copy of each of the following items:

1. **Proof of nonprofit status** with address in Manhattan. Choose ONE (1) of the following options.
 - Letter of Determination from the IRS indicating tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3)
 - Documentation of charter by the New York State Board of Regents under section 216 of the New York State Education Law
 - Documentation of incorporation under Section 402 of the New York State No-for-Profit Corporation Law
 - Current New York State Bureau of Charities (Office of the Attorney General) filing receipt
 - Official authorization as an arm of local government (i.e., a formal letter on official stationery signed by the appropriate county, city, town or village executive) *Note: If the address on nonprofit documentation is a PO Box, provide additional proof of the organization's physical address in Manhattan.*
2. **Board of directors and staff lists**
3. **Financial statement** for the most recently completed fiscal year (audited statement or most recently filed IRS Form 990). *Note: If the organization filed a 990N, submit an itemized financial statement signed by the organization's treasurer, bookkeeper, or accountant instead.*
4. **Projected organizational budget** for the fiscal year in which the proposed project takes place (i.e. FY17 or FY18)

5. Optional **support materials** related to the project or the applicant. Examples include press clippings, promotional materials, or lesson plans for education- based projects.

Individual Artist(s) And Collectives: upload one (1) copy of each of the following items:

1. **Proof of Manhattan address** of the individual artist or lead artist of a collective. Upload one (1) copy of one (1) of the following.
 1. Utility bill (e.g. electricity, cable, gas, etc)
 2. Driver's license (address on the driver's license must be same as address provided in application) *Note: If the proof of address shows a PO Box, provide additional proof of the individual's physical address in Manhattan.*
2. Optional **support materials** related to the project or the applicant. Examples include press clippings, promotional materials, or lesson plans for education- based projects.

Individual Artists and Collectives applying i) for City Funds with a Fiscal Sponsor, or ii) for State funds with a Partner Organization, must also provide the following:

1. **Letter of commitment** on the organization's letterhead, signed by the Executive Director, or equivalent. The letter should confirm the following:
 - o For Fiscal Sponsors:
 - The scope of the proposed project, demonstrating an overall understanding of the proposal
 - Roles and responsibilities as fiscal sponsor
 - o For Partner Organizations:
 - The scope of the proposed project, demonstrating an overall understanding of the proposal
 - Roles and responsibilities as a collaborator to realize the project o Contributions towards the project, monetary or otherwise, if any
2. **Proof of nonprofit status** from the organization. Choose ONE (1) of the following options:
 - o Letter of Determination from the IRS indicating tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3)
 - o Documentation of charter by the New York State Board of Regents under section 216 of the New York State Education Law
 - o Documentation of incorporation under Section 402 of the New York State Not- for-Profit Corporation Law
 - o Current New York State Bureau of Charities (Office of the Attorney General) filing receipt
 - o Official authorization as an arm of local government (i.e., a formal letter on official stationary signed by the appropriate county, city, town or village executive) *Note: If the address on nonprofit documentation is a PO Box, provide additional proof of the organization's physical address in Manhattan.*

Applicants for State funds that designate their Partner Organization as a Fiscal Sponsor must also provide the following:

1. **Board of directors and staff lists** from the Partner Organization.
2. **Financial statement** from the Partner Organization for the most recently completed fiscal year (audited statement or most recently filed IRS Form 990). *Note: If the organization filed a 990N, submit an itemized*

financial statement signed by the organization's treasurer instead.

3. **Projected organizational budget** from the Partner Organization, for the fiscal year in which the proposed project takes place (i.e. FY17 or FY18).

We strongly recommend that you view the Online Application Form and instructions in advance and maintain a backup copy of your responses in a separate document off line. Once you have submitted the form, you will not be able to make changes, or resubmit.

WORK SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

Work samples are an important element of your application. Choose samples from within the last three years that best represent your project. LMCC uses a Mac laptop and projector to play work samples. Please test your samples accordingly.

The aim of the work sample is to bring the jury as close as possible to an actual experience of the work. Do not submit edited promotional or interview materials.

Work Sample Formats

Submit samples of past and current work by uploading or providing links directly in the Online Application Form in ONE (1) of the following formats, based on the discipline or form of your projects. Contact our staff if you wish to combine formats.

Performing Arts, Film, Media And Other Time-Based Projects Submit recordings: 2 maximum

Submit for up to two (2) recordings of past/current works or projects in performing, media, music, film or other time-based art forms. Creative Engagement accepts recordings in two formats:

- **Online**, links to video or audio samples hosted on one of the following external sites: YouTube.com, Vimeo.com, or SoundCloud.com.
 - Provide these links in the Online Application Form.
 - Samples should remain accessible online through March 2017.
 - Do NOT submit personal website URLs, or links to other online sites and platforms.
- **CDs or DVDs**, received by LMCC by the application deadline.
 - Indicate in the Online Application that you are submitting CDs or DVDs.
 - Submit your work samples disks to LMCC before the application deadline to the following address: Creative Engagement, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, 125 Maiden Lane, Second Floor, New York, NY 10038
 - Include a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) if you want the samples to be returned. Samples with SASE will be returned by April 2017.
- Label your CD/DVD as “[applicant name]: Sample #”. Use a permanent marker. Do not submit stickers on DVDs or CDs as these can jam equipment.

The selection jury will view each recording for up to 2.5 minutes. However, we encourage you to submit full-length work, if possible. **Provide a cue point**, which indicates the start time to play the sample during review, for any work sample that is longer than three (3) minutes total. Theater artists without video documentation should contact LMCC staff about alternative work sample formats.

Literary Projects

Upload manuscripts: 10 pages maximum

Submit samples no longer than ten (10) pages of scripts, poetry or prose. Applicants may provide any number of works totaling ten pages, however you will only be allowed to submit one (1) document in PDF format.

The manuscript must be typed, double-spaced with 8 1/2" x 11" page formatting. The applicant's name, title of the work, and a page number should appear on each page of the manuscript.

Visual Arts Projects

Upload images: 10 maximum

Submit a maximum of ten (10) digital images.

- Images must be saved as JPEG files, 800 pixels in the longest dimension, at 72dpi.
- Each image filename must be saved as: "LastName-FirstName-#" (e.g. Smith_John_01.jpg / Smith_John_02.jpg / etc.)
- During the selection process, images will be viewed one at a time as a projection.
- Work Sample image files should be directly uploaded into the Online Application.

QUESTIONS OR TECHNICAL ISSUES?

Contact: Haowen Wang, Program Manager, Grants at 212-219-9401 or CreativeEngagement@LMCC.net

APPLY!

[Click here](#) to fill out the application form.

Click [here](#) and [here](#) to download documents required to be submitted along with the application form.

COMPLIANCE FORMS FOR CURRENT GRANTEES

Current Creative Engagement grantees can use the following links to fulfill their grant compliance requirements: