

Midway Contemporary Art

Visual Arts Fund Community Relief Grants

Sparked by the murder of George Floyd, the world joined Minneapolis in an unprecedented reckoning with centuries of systemic and structural racism. In the midst of peaceful protests, destruction of property, violent police response, and an ongoing pandemic, people across the globe are watching Twin Cities artists respond to racial injustice through their artwork. Many have painted now-iconic murals on boarded-up windows; others are volunteering, organizing relief efforts, advocating for their communities, and taking action to advance difficult conversations while developing new work and seeking opportunities to further their artistic practices. Much of the artistic labor of artists of color, and Black and Indigenous artists in particular, often goes uncompensated. This disparity, paired with the tremendous economic losses the pandemic has inflicted on freelancers and artists with day jobs, has created unprecedented stress and uncertainty within the arts community.

In response, Midway has secured an additional \$100,000 in funding from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, which will be made available as \$10,000 VAF Community Relief Grants for artist-organized projects. In early May, the Visual Arts Fund awarded Emergency Relief Grants to 60 Twin Cities artists suffering economic losses due to the Covid-19 pandemic and shutdown; this new round of funding will add to that earlier relief effort. Grants will support artist-organized projects within the neighborhoods most impacted by the recent unrest, where communities are advocating for change.

The VAF Community Relief Grant program will offer \$10,000 grants to 10 artist-organized projects that serve artists and communities in North Minneapolis and areas of South Minneapolis and St. Paul. Project proposals must name two Co-Lead Organizers who live within Hennepin and Ramsey counties; priority will be given to projects with Black, Indigenous, and POC Lead Organizers living and working within the eligible neighborhoods. Applications will open online beginning Monday, July 6th and are due Saturday, August 1st at 11:59 pm (CST). Applications will be reviewed by a panel of four artists connected to the communities eligible for funding. Funding will be disbursed to grant recipients in early August. Projects must be completed by July 31st, 2021.

Please read the eligibility and application guidelines closely prior to applying. These guidelines can be made available in alternative formats or languages. To request an alternate format, or if you have questions, please contact us via email at vaf@midwayart.org or phone (612) 605-4504.

What do the VAF Community Relief Grants fund?

The VAF Community Relief Grant program seeks to fund artist-organized projects that offer opportunities for artists to engage the community, using their skills to provide experiences, content, materials, activities, platforms, etc, which amplify the momentum of the current moment to further racial equality and justice. The program seeks to support artists through these projects by offering financial relief through fair pay for their time and involvement. Projects could include exhibitions of artworks created by artists living in the eligible neighborhoods; workshops or public programs focused on racial justice and equality; the creation of care, activity, or supply packages to be disbursed within the community; platforms for artists and community members to tell stories, process, and be heard; and other

activities that are related to the visual arts. Project activities should be publicly accessible with no fees or other barriers to participate. Co-Lead Organizers are encouraged to budget up to \$1,500 each as a stipend for their time organizing as well as fair pay for all others involved in producing the project.

Eligibility

- Projects must engage visual artists and communities with a focus on relief, rebuilding, equality, justice, and fair pay for artists involved with producing the project. Eligible areas include North Minneapolis; [South Minneapolis including the Central, Bryant, Bancroft, Powderhorn Park, Corcoran, Lyndale, Whittier, East Phillips, Midtown Phillips, West Phillips, Ventura Village, Cedar-Riverside, Seward, and Longfellow neighborhoods](#); and [St. Paul's Hamline-Midway, Frogtown/Thomas-Dale, Rondo, Payne-Phalen, Dayton's Bluff, and Greater East Side neighborhoods](#).
- Projects must adhere to Covid-19 safety precautions and restrictions to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved; this includes wearing masks, providing space for social distancing, and limiting groups to the size authorized by the Minnesota Department of Health. Priority will be given to projects that are not solely dependent on online/virtual engagement.
- Project activities must function primarily within, or have a strong connection to, the visual arts (painting, drawing, sculpture, social practice, performance, film/video, photography, textiles, ceramics, cross-disciplinary, public art, etc.)
- Projects must take place between August 1st, 2020 and July 31st, 2021
- Co-Lead Organizers must live within Hennepin and Ramsey counties; priority will be given to projects with BIPOC Lead Organizers living and working in the eligible areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- Lead organizers may only submit one application
- Currently enrolled students may only apply with a non-student Co-Lead Organizer
- Applicants do not need to be US Citizens but at least one of the Co-Lead Organizers must have a social security number to receive payment
- All past VAF project grant and VAF Emergency Relief Grant recipients are eligible to apply for a VAF Community Relief Grant
- 501c3s, commercial galleries, and incorporated businesses are not eligible to apply

Application

The VAF Community Relief Grant application will be available online at www.midwayart.org/vaf beginning Monday, July 6th and will close on Saturday, August 1st at 11:59 pm (CST). The following information will be required:

- **Contact and Project Info**
Co-Lead Organizers must live within Hennepin and Ramsey counties. Please provide the

following information for each Co-Lead Organizer:

- Name
- Address
- County (drop down selection: Hennepin and Ramsey)
- Email
- Phone
- I identify as... (50 words max, please include all personally relevant demographic information)

— **Project Summary**

- Title of Project
- Project Start Date
- Project Completion Date
- Amount Requested (\$10,000)
- Total Project Budget
- Project Summary (100 word max)

— **Project Description**

Describe your project (max 100 words for each question):

- What is your project?
- How does this project involve the work/practices of other individuals?
- How will you determine others involved?
- Where will the project ideally take place?
- What is the project timeline?
- What is the community your project will serve? What is your connection to this community?
- What component of your project will be accessible to the public?
- How will you enforce Covid-19 safety measures to protect those involved?
- How do you foresee your project providing support and relief to artists and the community?

— **Visual Support Materials**

Visual support materials should help the review panel understand the project and your ability to realize it. For each of your support materials, please include a description and relevant explanatory notes (max 50 words per entry). Please provide between 5–10 visual examples, including:

- Images (up to 10 total, max 2MB each — .jpeg, .jpg, .gif and .png are accepted)
- Website URL (up to 2 total — must be relevant to the project and offer additional information on your ability to realize the proposed project)
- Video (up to 2 total, max 2 min each — video files must be hosted on a video platform such as YouTube or Vimeo; include a password in the description section if your account is private)

— **Bios**

Please provide a short bio for each of your lead organizers, as well as any key collaborators and artists (up to 5 bios, max 100 words each). Focus on experience relevant to this project.

— **Project Budget**

Please list expenses for your project. This program supports fair pay for all artists involved with your project; Co-Lead Organizers may budget up to \$1,500 each for their time organizing the project.

You are not expected to have additional income for the project outside of the Visual Arts Fund grant, but please indicate it if you plan to do additional fundraising and what your goals are. Your budget must show a zero balance between your Expenses and Income.

- Expenses (Co-Lead Organizer stipends, artist stipends, materials, facility rental, equipment rental, production costs, marketing, reception costs, other)
- Income (other grants, crowd funding, personal contributions, etc. — not required)
- In-Kind donations (donated location, pro-bono design services, donated materials, etc.)

Applications will be reviewed for eligibility. Panelists will consider each proposal in the areas of Community Impact, Creative Impact, Artistic Excellence, and Feasibility.

Grant recipients will be notified the second week of August. Co-Lead Organizers must determine which of the two will manage the funding and complete a provided W9. Funding will be disbursed in two payments, the first half up front and the second half once the project activity has begun. Grant funds may be disbursed electronically via PayPal or by mailed check.

The 2021 Visual Arts Fund grant cycle will resume its regular schedule and award \$60,000 (\$5,000 and \$10,000 grants) to artist organized projects in the 7-county Twin Cities metro region; information on the application and deadlines will be posted in spring of 2021.

— FAQ —

Why do Co-Lead Organizers need to live in Hennepin and Ramsey counties?

The VAF Community Relief Grants are funded by the Visual Arts Fund Regional Regranting program with support from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. While the Visual Arts Fund traditionally is open to artists working within the 7-county Twin Cities metro region, this iteration of the VAF program is geared toward supporting artists and communities in North Minneapolis as well as areas of South Minneapolis and St. Paul that were listed in the eligibility section.

Why does the VAF Community Relief Grant program require Co-Lead Organizers?

Co-Lead Organizers will be able to share the responsibilities of carrying out the proposed project throughout the grant period. Both will be compensated for their time (if budgeted for in the grant proposal). If funded, Co-Lead Organizers will determine which of the two will receive and manage the funding and complete a provided W9. The VAF will communicate directly with both of the Co-Lead Organizers during the grant period.

What areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul are eligible?

The VAF Community Relief Grant program is focusing on North Minneapolis; [South Minneapolis neighborhoods including Central, Bryant, Bancroft, Powderhorn Park, Corcoran, Lyndale, Whittier, East Phillips, Midtown Phillips, West Phillips, Ventura Village, Cedar-Riverside, Seward, and Longfellow](#); and the [St. Paul neighborhoods of Hamline-Midway, Frogtown/Thomas-Dale, Rondo, Payne-Phalen, Dayton's Bluff, and Greater East Side](#).

What if I do not know all of the artists/collaborators who will be involved when I apply?

There will be an opportunity for you to let the jurors know how you will determine who will be involved with your project. If you will be inviting individuals to participate/collaborate, mention the individuals you would ideally like to work with, your connection to them, and how you plan to invite them. If you plan to use a call for submissions, let the jurors know how you will select individual artists and what criteria you will use when considering submissions.

Do I need to have a location/space confirmed when I apply?

No. We ask that you let us know where your project will ideally take place: a park, a garage, an empty storefront in your neighborhood, on a bus, online, etc. This information helps the jurors better envision your project.

Can my project take place at an existing arts venue?

Yes. While the regular VAF grant program seeks to fund projects happening outside of traditional existing arts venues, the VAF Community Relief Grant project activities may be held at already established spaces. Projects may also happen in temporary or non-traditional art spaces, community centers, public spaces, etc. Please ensure the Covid-19 safety measures are enforced in whatever location you choose to host your project.

What qualifies as publicly accessible?

As Co-Lead Organizers, you determine your audience and how to make the project publicly available to them, such as producing a community event/exhibition/program/platform that is free and open to the public, something that can be distributed and available free of charge, or an online project that is available to anyone using the web. Projects cannot charge admission or other fees to the public or to participants; grant funding should be used to cover costs associated with producing the project. You may include a component of your project that raises additional funds to continue the project or donate, such as selling t-shirts, publications, other goods, but the primary activity of the project must be free of barriers for artists and community members to participate.

Does my project need to be ADA-Accessible?

If you are using a project location that may not be physically accessible to all visitors, Midway staff will work with you to find ways to anticipate visitors' accessibility needs, communicate accessibility challenges, and accommodate requests.

How do I submit visual support materials if the project has not already begun?

Your Visual Support Materials should help the jurors envision the overall project. If your project involves working with artists, we recommend that you submit images or videos of works by the artists that you would like to work with. You could also show images of activities that inspire what you would like to do. You could submit a drawing or diagram if it makes sense with your project.

How do I determine fair pay for artists involved?

The VAF supports artists being compensated for the work they do. Your budget must be feasible, showing that you can cover all costs associated with the project (materials, space rental, event/reception costs, etc) while also compensating those involved. Co-Lead Organizers are encouraged to budget up to \$1,500 each for their time in overseeing the project; others involved with the production of the project should be compensated fairly for their time as well.

Who will review the applications?

A panel of four artists, including Alex Buffalohead, Christopher Harrison, Pao Houa Her, and Jonathan Herrera Soto, will review the applications online and meet via Zoom to determine 10 projects to award funding. Midway's staff will facilitate the review process and be available to assist the panel as necessary.

When will we know if our project is funded?

Grant recipients will be notified the second week of August 2020.

Will we need to report on the grant?

At the close of the grant in July 2021, Grantees will be asked to fill out a brief four question survey related to activities accomplished during the grant period.

As a Co-Lead Organizer, will I be responsible for paying taxes on the grant funds?

Yes. If you are awarded a grant and have been determined the Co-Lead Organizer who will accept the funds and complete a provided W9 form, you will be responsible for reporting the grant funds. With most of the funds being paid out to produce the event and pay others involved, you will only be responsible for taxes on the amount that you keep as your fair pay (up to \$1,500). The VAF offers guidance on best practices for tracking and recording expenditures associated with the grant and filing an IRS Schedule C (Form 1040). [Prepare + Prosper](#) is also a great resource for anyone looking for assistance with taxes due to changes to their income.

Am I still eligible to apply as a Co-Lead Organizer if I have received VAF funding in the past?

Yes.

Will I still be able to apply for regular VAF grants in the future?

Yes, you will still be able to apply as usual beginning in the 2021 grant cycle.

If I have applied to the VAF in the past, can I use my same login credentials?

Yes. If you have already set-up an account on the VAF application portal, you may use the same username and password to apply for the 2020 VAF Community Relief Grant.

How do I contact Midway if I have more questions?

Please email vaf@midwayart.org or call Megan McCreedy at (612) 605-4504 if you have additional questions about the program. We also encourage you to call if you would like to discuss your idea or have specific inquiries related to the eligibility of your project proposal.