2022 Guidelines and Application Instructions

I. OVERVIEW
SVCREATES operating grants, offered in partnership with the County of Santa Clara, provide general operating support for small nonprofit arts and culture organizations that:

- Reflect the dynamic, diverse, and innovative character of Santa Clara County
- Demonstrate commitment to equity, inclusion, and artistic vibrancy and relevance
- Positively impact the County’s cultural ecosystem through active and sustained engagement with audiences, volunteers and artists
- Pursue organizational sustainability in service to the local community

Note: please see SVCreates Grant Program Glossary for words in italics. A link to the glossary is on the webpage for this grant program.

II. KEY NEW FEATURES OF THE OPERATING GRANT PROGRAM IN 2022

- Establishes a two-year grant cycle
- New budget requirements for eligibility established (see eligibility criteria below)
- Requires a site visit once per grant cycle for each grantee
- Specifies evaluation criteria of:
  - Artistic Vibrancy and Relevance;
  - Organizational Resilience and Ingenuity;
  - and Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

III. ELIGIBILITY
1. Purpose: The organization’s primary purpose must be the performance, production, or presentation of arts and cultural activities that are open and accessible to all.
2. Geography: The organization’s home base (primary business office or primary performance/exhibition venue/facility) must be located in Santa Clara County and the majority of programming (performances, presentations, exhibitions) must take place in Santa Clara County.
3. History: The organization must have been performing, producing or presenting in Santa Clara County a minimum of 3-years prior to the term of the grant. (July 2019 for the current cycle)
   Note: We understand that programming over the past two years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, might have been at reduced levels or in an alternative format.
4. Size: The organization’s annual budget (expenses as averaged for prior three fiscal years) must be greater than $10,000 and not exceed $1.2 million.
5. **Tax Status:** The organization must be a California non-profit corporation with a 501c3 tax-exempt certification.
   a. Applicants with annual budgets under $750,000 may use a fiscal sponsor with 501c3 tax-exempt status.
   b. Applicants with budgets over $750,000 must be 501c3 nonprofits.
6. The organization must have satisfied all of the reporting requirements of any previously awarded grants from SVCREATES.
7. The organization prioritizes accessibility for a range of physical abilities when selecting spaces/venues for public programming.

**Restrictions**
- For-profit organizations are not eligible.
- Institutions of primary and secondary education are not eligible.
- Local governments are not eligible.
- Universities and colleges are limited to providing fiscal sponsorship for one arts program only.
  Grants may not support operating costs for the university or college, but must be applied to program and overhead costs of the applying entity.
- Grants may not be applied toward support for political or religious purposes, fundraisers for other organizations or causes, capital improvements, lobbying, or projects already completed.

**IV. HOW TO APPLY**
Applications will be completed and submitted through SVCREATES online grantmaking platform.

Organizations who receive 2022 Unrestricted Operating Grants will be placed in a two-year grant cycle based on organizational budget size. Grant award notifications will detail grant cycle and reporting requirements.

**Application Support**
Office Hours: you may schedule a one-one video call with SVCREATES staff [here](#). If language, access to technology, or other factors present a barrier for your organization, please reach out to Alyssa Erickson to arrange specialized support: alyssae@svcreates.org.

**Preview the Application**
A PDF of the application is available for review and download on the grant program webpage. Note, this is for preview only, applications must be completed on our online platform. If you have barriers to completing an online application, please reach out to Alyssa Erickson for alternatives: alyssae@svcreates.org.
V. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Narrative and data collection questions include:

- Mission, programming and audience details
- Staff and Board demographics
- Artistic/Program Work samples
- Financial and budget data, including a financial statement for your most recently completed fiscal year

VI. FUNDING CATEGORIES FOR 2022

Operating grant applicants will not request specific grant amounts. Rather, grant awards will be determined by the following factors:

- Panel ranking and funding recommendation.
- Organization’s annual operating budget.
- The amount of funds allocated for organizational support by the County of Santa Clara.

The grant award amounts represented in the chart below are based on projections for the 2022 grant cycle; changes in external economic factors impacting available County funding could shift these amounts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Category</th>
<th>Award Range</th>
<th>&quot;Middle&quot; Award</th>
<th>Award Increments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10K - $100K</td>
<td>$2,000 - $4,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$2,000; $3,000; $4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over $750K ($1.2m)</td>
<td>$8,000 - $12,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$8,000; $10,000; $12,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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VII. REVIEW PROCESS

Applicants are grouped by budget size, since organizations with similar sized operating budgets share more organizational characteristics.

1. **Review of applications by staff.** Staff reviews each application for compliance with eligibility and submission requirements.

2. **Panel review.** A panel consisting of four to six individuals – chosen for their experience with arts and culture organizations of similar size to that budget cohort being evaluated, as well as expertise in the field – is selected. At least two panel members of each will be BIPOC/ALAANA individuals. The panel will review and score each application based on the review criteria. The panel meets either in-person or virtually to discuss each application.

3. **Funding recommendations.** Funding recommendations are determined by the final score and funding formula.

4. **Notification of grant awards.** Notifications will be made approximately 2 months after the application deadline.
VIII. EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Artistic Vibrancy and Relevancy (50 Points)
This criterion reflects an organization’s ability to meaningfully engage and inspire its community through arts and culture in order to achieve its mission.

An organization demonstrates this by:

- Showing a commitment to craft in their artistic artform. (work sample)
- Having a clear relationship between programming and mission.
- Being able to define the geographic area and communities they serve.
- Demonstrating that the organization understands, works with, and is responsive to its community through its programming.
- Being accessible and inviting to its community and open to the public.

2. Organizational Resilience and Ingenuity (40 Points)
This criterion reflects the ability of an organization’s board and staff to manage resources, plan, evaluate, and - when necessary - creatively pivot their organization and their programming now and for years to come.

An organization displaying strong Organizational Resilience and Ingenuity will:

- Have a diverse board and staff that is demographically reflective of the community being served by the organization.
- Clearly articulate how their organization functions and the context of their financial information.
- Demonstrate understanding of their organization’s challenges and engage in short and long-term planning using processes commensurate with the size and capacity of the organization.
- Have evidence of community support, through volunteer participation, in-kind support, individual donors, etc.

3. Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (10 points)

- Exhibit practices that are inclusive and welcoming of all people in their defined community, including those who have been historically and/or continuously marginalized and underrepresented, e.g., immigrant groups, BIPOC/ALAANA communities, rural populations, aging populations, people living in poverty, people who are homeless, people with disabilities, and communities recovering from trauma or disaster.
- Show that staff at a variety of levels, as well as board, artists, and key collaborators, include those in the community who have been historically and/or continuously marginalized and underrepresented, in both their public-facing programming and administrative work.

IX. TIMELINE
Application Opens: April 1, 2022
Application Deadline: May 6, 2022
Awards Announced: July 2022
Grant Period: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023