



National Performance Network | Southern Artists for Social Change

2021 Letter of Intent Guidelines

Carefully read through the information contained in this document and use it to guide you in preparing your submission.

Funded By:



SURDNA FOUNDATION

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<https://npnetwork.smartsimple.com>



National Performance Network | Southern Artists for Social Change

The National Performance Network’s Southern Artists for Social Change program will provide \$25,000 project grants to artists and culture bearers of color living, working, and engaging in social change in urban, rural, and tribal communities of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

About NPN

NPN’s **Southern Artists for Social Change** envisions a world in which people of color living, working, and organizing for community change in the South have the power, resources, and opportunities to thrive. NPN’s mission is to contribute to a more just and equitable world by building artists’ power; advancing racial and cultural justice in the arts; fostering relationships between individuals, institutions, and communities; and working toward systems change in arts and philanthropy.

About the Southern Artists for Social Change Fund

Southern Artists for Social Change is part of the [Surdna Foundation’s](#) “Radical Imagination for Racial Justice” initiative, supporting [civic practice](#) projects that bring artists of color into collaboration and co-design with community partners and local residents of color around a community-defined vision. This three-year pilot program awarded its first grants in 2020. To see the announcement of the 2020 SA4SC cohort and to learn more about their projects click [here](#).

Who Is Eligible?

The 2021 Southern Artists for Social Grant is open to BIPOC artists/collectives and culture bearers, at any career stage, who are engaging in Civic Practice. Applicants must be primary residents of Louisiana, Mississippi or Alabama. Please see page #5 of this document for a list of eligible disciplines.

Applicants Must:	Not Eligible At This Time:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Artists and culture bearers who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color (BIPOC) living, working, and engaging in social change in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Individual artists as well as artist collectives may apply. Artist collectives must have a demonstrated history of creating new work collectively for at least two years.• Applicants must be 18 years of age or older by application deadline.• Applicants must be AL, LA, or MS residents for at least five years at the time of both application and payment and must provide a valid state ID.• Projects should (1) identify community challenges or needs, (2) imagine a different future, and (3) practice, test, or design for approaches toward that future that center racial justice.• While projects may be artist-driven, projects should include at least two community members (individuals, agencies, organizations) as collaborators who share in decision-making, shaping the project and project outcomes.• Grants may support any phase of a project (research, development, production, etc.), including new initiatives or ongoing work, and a portion of funding should directly support the artist(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nonprofit Organizations• 2020 NPN Creation Fund Recipients• Artists who are high school students, or who are college or graduate students enrolled in a degree-granting program, at the time of application or during the period of the grant• Current NPN staff, board of directors, or panelists• Curators and researchers

What Is Civic Practice or Community-Based Art ?

The Surdna Foundation uses the Center for Performance and Civic Practice’s definition of “[civic practice](#)” as *work that brings artists into collaboration and co-design with community partners and local residents around a community-defined vision*. Our peers at Alternate

ROOTS define “[community-based art for social change](#)” as *creative expression that emerges from communities of people working together to improve their individual and collective circumstances.*

Who are Culture Bearers?

A member of a community who practices that community’s artistic or creative expressions. Knowledge of these arts or skills are most often passed from person to person within the cultural group, and the art itself expresses the community’s values or aesthetics.

How Do You Define Community?

Borrowing again from [our colleagues at Alternate ROOTS](#), we define communities as groups of people who share a geography, historical or ethnic traditions, and/or a belief or spirit. NPN’s Southern Artists for Social Change program will support projects that take a community-centered approach that includes authentic partnerships between artists and community members and in which **those closest to a community’s challenges have the power to make change**. We ask applicants to define for yourselves the specific community you are engaging, your relationship to that community, and other community members’ roles in the project.

How Can the Funds Be Used?

Southern Artists for Social Change is a project specific grant. Funds can be used to support a project's programming, to pay community partners and other collaborators as well as for program supplies, events and documentation. The project’s values must be reflected in how resources are shared. We require that at least 15% of the grant (\$3750) go toward the lead artist(s)’ general wellbeing, *in addition to* artist fees for work. “Wellbeing” is essentially “general operating” support for the lead artist(s) (for example, health insurance, healing, retirement, childcare, etc.).

Eligible Disciplines

If you work in multiple disciplines, you can describe yourself as a multidisciplinary artist by selecting all the disciplines that apply to your practice.

Culture Bearers

Oral storytelling
Indigenous tradition keepers
Black Masking Indians
Community Agriculture

Literary Arts

Fiction writers
Creative nonfiction writers
Zine Makers
Playwrights
Poets

Media Arts
Filmmakers
Podcasters
New media
Immersive/VR
Animation

Music
Composers
Atmospheric sound
New music ensembles
Chamber

Performing Arts
Theater
Dance
Spoken word

Puppetry
Devised work
Performance

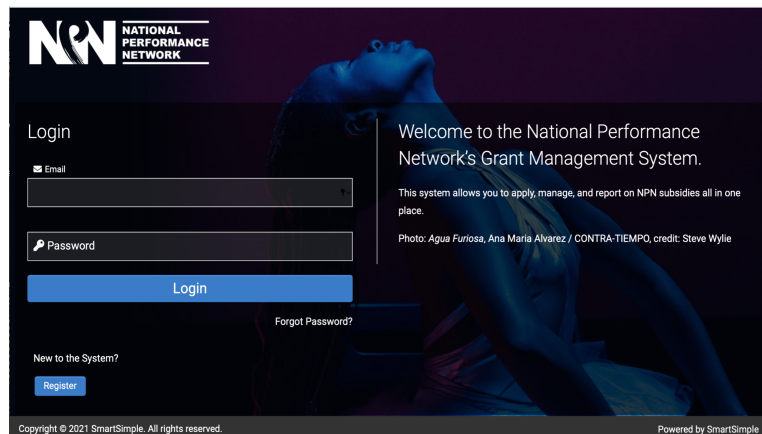
Visual Arts
Painting
Sculpture
Textile/fiber
Drawing
Photography
Clay/ceramics
Printmaking
Muralists
Installation
Public art

How to Apply

We have recently updated our grants management system to accept applications through the SmartSimple platform. When applying for the Southern Artists for Social Change grant, please let us know if you encounter any glitches or error messages stating that something isn't right. We are still learning this system as well and will be happy to help troubleshoot and figure out any problems you might experience. Contact National Programs Associate Nick Hüster at nick@npnweb.org for assistance.

Setting up an account

If you already have an account in our system, log in here: <https://npnetwork.smartsimple.com/>
If you do not have an account in our system, go to <https://npnetwork.smartsimple.com/> in your web browser and click the “Register” button to set up an account.



The screenshot shows the login interface for the National Performance Network's Grant Management System. The background features a dark, artistic image of a person. On the left, there is a 'Login' section with fields for 'Email' and 'Password', a 'Login' button, and a link for 'Forgot Password?'. Below this is a 'New to the System?' section with a 'Register' button. On the right, a welcome message reads: 'Welcome to the National Performance Network's Grant Management System. This system allows you to apply, manage, and report on NPN subsidies all in one place.' Below this is a photo credit: 'Photo: Agua Furiosa, Ana Maria Alvarez / CONTRA-TIEMPO, credit: Steve Wylie'. At the bottom, there is a copyright notice: 'Copyright © 2021 SmartSimple. All rights reserved.' and a power by notice: 'Powered by SmartSimple'.

As an artist, you will be asked to apply as an “Individual artist” or a “Collaboration of multiple artists.” Click on each option to see which one is right for you and fill out and submit your information. Then, check your email account to login using the link provided. You will be prompted to create a password.



Registration

I am applying as:

Individual Artist

All individuals who are applying without an organization

NPN Partner

All applicants applying as a National Performance Network partner

Collaboration of multiple artists

All Individuals applying as a collaboration

Application Questions

Please note: You are not evaluated on writing style, grammar, or complete phrasing. Brief answers are welcome—respond in the way you are comfortable. If you need technical assistance, please contact program coordinator, Steffani Clemons at sclemons@npnweb.org

Tab 1: Demographic Information

NPN is required to collect certain demographic data about artist recipients of grant funds to understand how our support aligns with the diversity of the arts sector. NPN has adapted some of our demographic categories to align with its funders. As a movement builder, we consider it important to have consistent data collection field-wide. The categories and their definitions are based on the Foundation Center’s Philanthropy Classification System, although we have adapted and supplemented their system in ways that make sense to our constituents and our needs. While we recognize that some of this data may seem personal, we ask that you respond to the best of your ability per the request of our funders. We also acknowledge that the terminology we use is imperfect and constantly evolving. We actively strive to update our demographic terminology as new information becomes available.

***You may respond to the next sections by filling out the fields on the application or by pasting a link with your audio and/or video responses (YouTube, Soundcloud, etc.) into the fields. Please state the question you are responding to.**

Tab 2: Artistic Information

1. Artist/Culture Bearer Biography - 150 word limit

Tell us very briefly about your story as an artist/cultural bearer. You can provide details about you and your work, such as where you were born or grew up, your training, career development, accomplishments, or other information that may not be found elsewhere in the application. Keep it simple and concise, no more than a couple sentences. If a project is awarded, we will use this summary to promote the project.

2. Project Discipline

<u>Clay/ Ceramics</u>	<u>Culture Bearer</u>	<u>Dance</u>	<u>Drawing</u>	<u>Installation</u>
<u>Literary Arts</u>	<u>Media Arts</u>	<u>Mural</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Oral Storytelling</u>
<u>Painting</u>	<u>Performance Art</u>	<u>Photography</u>	<u>Printmaking</u>	<u>Public Art</u>
<u>Puppetry</u>	<u>Sculpture</u>	<u>Spoken Word</u>	<u>Textile/ Fiber</u>	<u>Theater</u>
<u>Visual Art</u>	<u>Other</u>			

3. Discipline Statement - 50 word limit

Describe your artistic/cultural practice. It can be as simple as “I am a new music composer” or give a more detailed explanation of your practice.

4. Civic Practice Statement - 200 word limit

Describe how your practice engages the community. Feel free to describe methods and strategies you use to organize social change through your work. Why is it important to you to be a civic-minded artist? And how did you come to this work or has it been a part of your practice all along?

Tab 3: Project Information

5. Provide a brief general description of the project - 200-word limit

Example from **La Imaginistas** (Brownsville, TX): [Hacemos La Ciudad](#) (*We Make the City*):

Hacemos La Ciudad (We Make the City) is a comprehensive civic reimagining initiative that examines and questions how colonial ideology informs contemporary life by warping traditional planning processes and infusing the everyday with the magical.

Example from **Design Studio for Social Innovation** (Boston, MA): [Public Kitchen](#): *As public infrastructures—hospitals, water, schools, transportation, etc.—are privatized, the Public Kitchen takes a stab at going in the reverse direction.*

6. What specific community challenge does your project address? - 200-word limit

Tell us about the challenge that your project aims to highlight and change. Describe the challenge, its relation to the community affected, and the importance to disrupt it.

Example from **La Imaginistas** (Brownsville, TX): [Hacemos La Ciudad](#) (*We Make the City*): *Contemporary civic life, architecture, and the infrastructure of our cities is informed by colonial ideology.*

Example from **Design Studio for Social Innovation** (Boston, MA): [Public Kitchen](#): *Privatization of public infrastructure does not serve the public good.*

7. Imagine what your community would look like without this challenge. What elements would you put in place to make your community a more just place? - 200-word limit

Example from **La Imaginistas** (Brownsville, TX): [Hacemos La Ciudad](#) (*We Make the City*): *A decolonized civic landscape, where community members develop their own more equitable version of the city.*

Example from **Design Studio for Social Innovation** (Boston, MA): [Public Kitchen](#): *More vibrant public infrastructures that can improve the quality of our lives through social and food justice.*

8. How does your project work toward this new future? Feel free to describe strategies, models and tools that you will use to build this future. - 200-word limit

Example from **La Imaginistas** (Brownsville, TX): [Hacemos La Ciudad](#) (*We Make the City*): *Develop an artistic representation reflecting the dreams and ambitions of Brownsville community members, and a comprehensive call to action with suggestions for how to work collectively to materialize those dreams.*

Example from **Design Studio for Social Innovation** (Boston, MA): [Public Kitchen](#): *Challenge the public's own feelings that "public" means poor, broken down, poorly run, and "less than" private; engage communities in claiming public space, the social, and food justice; and make a new case for public infrastructures through creating ones that don't exist.*

9. Is the project new or ongoing? If ongoing, when did the project start and where are you in the process now? - 50-word limit

10. Does the project focus on a process, on creating a product or outcome, or both? - 100-word limit

11. How does the project advance racial justice? - 200-word limit

Tab 4: Community Partnership Information

While projects may be artist-driven, projects should include at least TWO community partners (individuals, agencies, organizations) as collaborators who share in decision-making, shaping the project and project outcomes.

12. What is the community this project centers? How would you define or describe that community? - 200-word limit

Tell us more about your community. Be as specific as you can with your description.

13. What community partners are involved with the project and what are their roles? Are these partners part of an ongoing network of support already in place? - 200-word limit

Community Partners can be individuals, organizations, agencies, etc.)

14. How do these community partnerships advance racial justice? - 200-word limit

Describe the racial justice work that your community partner does and the mission connection that you share. What led you to partner with them? Are these community partners BIPOC led and/or centered?

15. What is your relationship with these community partners? Is there a history of collaboration between you and them? - 200-word limit

Share more about your understanding of, commitment to, and relationship with the community in which the project is centered.

16. How are the vision and decision-making of the project shared among the partners? - 200-word limit

Describe how you will work with community partners and how you will steward a process that will ensure that community partners have equitable buy-in in the project and its outcomes.

Tab 5: Uploads

COLLATERAL AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

17. Work Samples Examples of Artistic/Cultural Practice

Include samples of your strongest work that best represents your artistic practice through the lens of civic and socially engaged work. Make sure your work samples are well-documented, cohesive, and follow the work sample guidelines listed on page 16. Upload your work samples numbered in the order you'd like the panel to review them. Please submit up to 10 images in jpg, gif, or tiff format, or 5-10 video links (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.) with 10-minute maximum cue instructions.

Additionally, include a work sample description/synopsis list that should include: a 1-2 sentence description of the work, title of work, materials, dimensions, and the year the work was completed. (PDF)

18. Proof of Residency - JPG, GIF or TIFF

Applicants must be primary residents of Louisiana, Mississippi or Alabama and hold a current license or state ID. Please upload a photo of your state issued identification. Please do not upload social security cards, passports or birth certificates.

Tab 6: Other Information - Additional Information

19. Anything else you'd like us to know?

20. How did you find out about this grant opportunity?

***Tips and Helpful Hints**

Want to respond to the application in video form? No problem, just record your responses and paste a link with your audio and/or video responses (YouTube, Soundcloud, etc.) into the fields. Make sure to address each question in your video.

Use a word processing tool to type your response to the application questions and then cut and paste your answers into the SmartSimple application. This is also a great way to work collaboratively with your colleagues and with your community partners.

Have a friend or someone you trust to review your application and give you feedback before you submit your application

If you have any questions about the guidelines, your eligibility, or anything else, please contact program coordinator, Steffani Clemons at sclemons@npnweb.org

Give yourself time to prepare your materials and start your application at least a week before the deadline. Don't wait until the last minute to Submit your application as high volume submissions could overwhelm the Smart Simple system. **We will not accept applications submitted after the deadline.**

Work Sample Guides

Video

- 5–10 video links
- Maximum of **10** minutes total.
- Begin and end each sample where you want the panel to begin and end.
- Feel free to include cue times using a longer sample and if you are not able to provide an exact excerpt.
- Choose a selection that will make the panel want to see/hear more (avoid long intros, fade-ins/outs, etc.)
- Youtube, Vimeo, etc.
- File type(s): .avi, .m4v, .mov, .mpg

Manuscripts

- One upload with a maximum of **10** pages, plus one synopsis page.
- All manuscripts must be double spaced with a 12-point font size or larger (except poetry, plays, or experimental works).
- Multiple poems, stories, pieces, or excerpts should be combined into one file.
- One synopsis page is allowed. Include it as the first page of your work sample (one synopsis page + maximum 10 manuscript pages). If the work sample consists of multiple excerpts, use the synopsis page to give information for each. A synopsis page can include publication dates,

whether the selections are from a larger series, additional description, or details about where the piece fits within a larger body of work. It can be single- or double-spaced.

- File type: .pdf.

Images

- Maximum of **10** images.
- Recommended 72 ppi/dpi (standard web resolution).
- Submit one piece per file (do not collage several angles or multiple pieces within one image).
- File type(s): .gif, .jpeg, .tiff.

Audio

- Maximum of **10** minutes total.
- Try to begin and end each sample where you want the panel to begin and end.
- Feel free to include cue times, if you aren't able to provide an exact excerpt.
- Choose a selection that will make the panel want to see/hear more (avoid long intros, etc.).
- Submit an individual file for each song or work.
- Music and music composition: No scores please.

Criteria for Selection

Statement of Civic Practice

Did you demonstrate artistic work rooted in civic practice that shows dedication to social change?

Relevance

Does the project articulate a clear, compelling community need?

Does the project propose an imaginative vision and/or strategy that centers racial justice?

Community Partnerships

Did you demonstrate an understanding of, commitment to, and relationship with the community in which the project is centered?

Do you demonstrate opportunities for community members to shape the process, share in project decision making, and have agency over the outcomes?

Quality of Work based off Work Samples

Do the work samples submitted show examples of strong artistic merit and quality of work within the applicant's field of practice?

FAQs

Q: I am a 2021 recipient of NPN's Take Notice Fund. Can I still apply for SA4SC?

A: Yes, you are eligible for this opportunity and can apply.

Q: I am a student currently enrolled in a degree program. Can I apply for this grant?

A: No, artists who are high school students or who are enrolled in college or graduate school degree programs at the time of application or during the grant period are not eligible.

Q: I am a nonprofit organization based in one of the eligible states. Can I apply for this grant?

A: This funding opportunity is only available for individual artists and collectives (including tribal groups). Artists/collectives who are organized as a nonprofit organization or other entity, please contact Program Coordinator Steffani Clemons at sclemons@npnweb.org or 504-595-8008 ext. 708 to determine eligibility.

Q: We would like to apply as a collective. What are the terms?

A: A team of two or more artists may apply if they have a documented history of creating and presenting work as a team for at least two consecutive years. Collective members should apply with one application, and funds must be distributed equally amongst members. Members of a collective may not apply individually for the same project, and members should meet the eligibility requirements individually.

Q: Do you provide technical assistance during the application process?

A: Yes, we can assist you with completing an application. You must schedule a phone interview with a staff member to complete the application questions. To schedule a call, please contact Program Coordinator Steffani Clemons at sclemons@npnweb.org or 504-595-8008 ext. 708.

Q: I prefer to answer the application through video response. Is that possible?

A: Yes, just record your responses and paste a link with your audio or video responses (YouTube, Soundcloud, etc.) into the corresponding fields. Make sure you state the question you are responding to at the beginning of your video.

Q: Do I need a fiscal sponsor to apply for this grant?

A: No, you do not need to have a fiscal sponsorship to receive this grant.

Q: What are the tax considerations should I receive this grant?

A: NPN will report this award as income to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You will receive a form 1099 from NPN.