



NPN Fall 2020 Creation Fund Guidelines

Application Deadline: October 9, 2020

Project Period: For projects premiering between Jan 1, 2021 and Dec 31, 2023

Award Notification: October 30, 2020

Next Creation Fund Cycle: May 14, 2021

NOTE: NPN is between grant management systems. Online applications will be available by September 14, 2020. Please use these guidelines to begin planning and pulling materials together.

The Creation Fund is Phase I of a three-part program that supports the creation, development, and mobility of new artistic work that advances racial and cultural justice and results in live experiential exchange between artists and communities.

The Creation Fund supports new work in its earliest stages, centering relationship building between artists, presenters, and communities. Each Creation Fund project receives a minimum of \$12,000 of unrestricted funding that supports the *process* of creation. The fund provides a framework for relationships to develop over time among diverse artists, arts organizations, and communities. Through funds invested by co-commissioners and NPN direct subsidies, each project is eligible for multi-level support. The Creation Fund:

- Advances racial and cultural justice
- Provides holistic support for the creative process
- Expands access to commissioning support, equitable distribution of funds, and geographic parity
- Honors both long-term relationship building and cultivation of new, authentic, reciprocal collaborations between artists, communities, and/or commissioners
- Builds organizations' capacities to develop work
- Leverages other opportunities, such as additional funding, new presentation sites, and national awards

CREATION FUND STRUCTURE

Relationships are central to the Creation Fund, which supports new work in early stages.

- **Artists apply** for the Creation Fund with an [NPN National Partner](#), who will serve as the lead commissioner.
- **At least one additional arts organization** must agree to serve as a co-commissioner. This co-commissioner is an arts organization in a different community from the lead commissioner (at least 100 miles apart). There is no restriction on the maximum number of co-commissioners each project can have.
- Each **co-commissioner contributes** a \$2,000–\$3,000 cash match and agrees to present the work once it has been created. Presentation may take many different forms.
- **NPN matches** these funds so that every Creation Fund artist receives a minimum of \$12,000 of project funding.



WHAT FUNDS CAN BE USED FOR

Unrestricted funds allow artists to experiment and take risks while creating work. They can be used for a variety of needs such as research and development, materials, artist fees, and technical support.

ADVANCING RACIAL AND CULTURAL JUSTICE

NPN recognizes there are many strategies to advancing racial and cultural justice and will support a variety of approaches that benefit artists, organizations, and communities marginalized by current and historic systems of oppression, as long as they are explicit, transparent, and authentic. Furthering this goal may look like: commissioning an artist of color, a First Nations artist, an artist with disabilities, or a trans artist; supporting a project that deals with issues of racial or cultural justice; supporting a process that builds work with communities that have been underinvested in, etc. Before applying, please carefully consider how projects fit these goals.

Not every new work project fits the goals of the NPN Creation Fund. **If the Lead Artist does not identify as a person of color, First Nations artist, an artist with a disability, or a trans artist, please consider the following before applying:**

- *How will this project advance racial and/or cultural justice?*
- *Why is racial and/or cultural justice important to you (the artist)?*
- *What is your (the artist's) history of working to advance racial and/or cultural justice and how do you currently work with your community to advance racial and/or cultural justice?*
- *Are the collaborators being paid fees by this project representative of the community you are engaging/serving?*
- *How are artistic, financial, and administrative decisions for this project made and who makes these decisions?*
- *What learning or unlearning are you doing as you work to dismantle white supremacy?*

ROLE OF THE CO-COMMISSIONER

Each project must have a minimum of two co-commissioning organizations (one of which is an NPN Partner) in different communities (at least 100 miles apart). Many projects secure more than the two required co-commissioners. Although projects need to be led by an NPN Partner, other co-commissioners can come from outside of the network. Co-commissioning organizations take many different shapes and forms, including presenting organizations, museums, galleries, producing artists, university departments, etc. If an artist is staff, a faculty member, or a company member of any of the co-commissioners, then a third co-commissioning organization must be identified. Any organization is eligible to participate as a co-commissioner as long as they meet the following requirements:

a) Commissioning Fees:

Each co-commissioning organization contributes a \$2,000 to \$3,000 **cash match** to the project. Matches cannot be in-kind and must be paid to NPN **no later than June 1, 2022**. If a co-commissioner cannot pay the cash match by June 1, 2022, then the project should apply in a future cycle.

Fees paid per organization:

Co-commissioning organizations	
With annual organizational budgets less than \$1 million	\$2,000 each
With annual organizational budgets greater than \$1 million	\$3,000 each
NPN	\$8,000



2019 Creation Fund Artist Will Rawls
Photo from *Planet Eaters* by Brian Rogers (2013)

b) Commitment to Live Public Engagement

Co-commissioners commit to hosting the artist in a paid exchange of the co-commissioned work within a **three-year period** of the award date. This exchange can take any format, such as a public presentation, performance, exhibition, and/or community residency, as long as it centers live experiential artistic exchange between the community, the artist, and the new work. During this time of physical distancing, NPN will remain flexible and support live engagement in all shapes and forms, whether it be an in-person or virtual engagement. Artist fees for these exchanges are

the full responsibility of the co-commissioner and should be paid to the artist in addition to co-commissioning fees. NPN offers access to, but does not guarantee, Artist Engagement Funds to NPN Partners to support artist fees for these exchanges.

CRITERIA & LIMITATIONS

- Artistic projects in the early stages of creation, to be presented no sooner than January 1, 2021 and no later than December 31, 2023.
- Projects that [advance racial and/or cultural justice](#).
- Projects that culminate in live experiential exchange between artists and communities, regardless of discipline, within three years of award date.
- Artists/companies based in the US and its territories or Mexico.
- NOTE: NPN Partners may be lead co-commissioner on one project per Creation Fund cycle, however they can participate as co-commissioner on any number of projects.
- At least two co-commissioners (one of which is an NPN Partner) in different communities confirmed at the time of application. NOTE: If the artist is a company member, staff member, or resident artist of one of the co-commissioning organizations, three co-commissioners must be identified (in different communities) to ensure visibility for artists beyond their home base.
- Co-commissioners have the capacity to meet the co-commissioner requirements, including paying out a cash match of \$2,000–\$3,000 to NPN by June 1, 2022 and presenting the work within three years.
- Artists who have not received a Creation Fund in the last two years (May 1, 2018–present).
- Artists and co-commissioners must credit NPN and co-commissioners for the life of the work in all marketing and promotional materials.
- In alignment with NPN’s commitment to creating an arts sector rooted in justice, we are committed to ensuring spaces, structures, and processes free of racism, transphobia, homophobia, ableism, misogyny, classism, or other bias. Our expectation is that all artists and co-commissioners receiving NPN support will honor this ethic.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

October 9, 2020	Application deadline
October 30, 2020	Award notifications
November 15, 2020	Earliest date for distribution of Creation Fund subsidies, per completion of grant requirements
Jan 1, 2021	Earliest date for work to be presented/premiered
June 1, 2022	Latest date for distribution of Creation Funds, including co-commissioner cash matches paid to NPN

SELECTION PROCESS

NPN will convene a peer panel of artists and presenters to select awards. Please note awards will not be made based on the language, grammar, or writing of the application. Additionally, projects will not be judged on artistic merit or career successes, but rather their alignment with NPN's program goals and quality of relationships. NPN will fund 8–12 projects in this application round, prioritizing projects using the following criteria:

- Artists and co-commissioners who represent communities that have been historically underinvested in, including but not limited to communities of color, First Nations, disabled, trans, and rural communities.
- Projects that [advance racial and/or cultural justice](#).
- Projects that honor authentic long-term relationship building and/or cultivate new authentic, reciprocal collaborations between artists, communities, and/or commissioners
- Projects in the creation phase of development (as opposed to near completion)



ADDITIONAL NPN SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATION FUND ARTISTS

- a) **Phase II—Development Fund:** Twice a year, NPN invites artists who have received Creation Fund support to apply for additional development support. Development Funds are artist-driven: artists may apply for up to \$10,000 for team-based projects with a co-commissioner of their choosing, or artists may apply for artist support only, up to \$5,000. Development Funds can offset a variety of needs when developing a work for public engagement. Guidelines are flexible in design in order to meet the unique needs of each project. Development Fund deadlines occur in September and March of every year and artists can apply once during the three years following their Creation Fund award. Please keep this in mind when applying to the Creation Fund.
- b) **Phase III—Mobility:** Once a work is developed, co-commissioners support artists through a public engagement of the new work, focused on live experiential exchange between artists and communities. NPN *offers access to, but does not guarantee*, Artist Engagement Funds for NPN Partners to support artist fees for Phase III. During this time of physical distancing, NPN will remain flexible with what presentation looks like. NPN Partners should consult Artist Engagement Fund guidelines for more details.
- c) **Annual Conference Support:** NPN supports attendance for a limited number of Creation Fund artists at its Annual Conference, which is a forum to experience creative work, explore alternative models in arts presenting, learn about local communities, and address the most critical issues in our field. The conference takes place each December but is canceled for 2021 due to the pandemic.

APPLICATION TIPS

- Keep it clear and simple! We don't judge applications on grantsmanship, so use plain language, and don't feel the need to fill up all the spaces. Applicants can submit applications via written, video, or audio narrative.

- Be sure to give yourself enough time to secure the commitment of co-commissioners, collect information, and build the project timeline and budget.
- When completing the application, make sure to focus the request—narrative, timeline, and budget—on the *Creation Phase* of the project.
- NPN understands that projects, timelines, and work may shift. Please use your best judgement when completing the application. If awarded, NPN will commit to the project, regardless of whether the project has to shift due to the pandemic and re-openings.
- Review [Addendum A: Sample Application](#) prior to completing the online application.
- Online applications will be available no later than September 14, 2020.
- Applicants can upload a project budget and timeline of their own, or use the templates provided.
- IMPORTANT! Once you submit your application you will receive an email receipt of acceptance. If you do not receive this email, your application has not been submitted.

HONORARIA

NPN provides a \$200 honorarium to artists who are not selected for their time spent on the application.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

NPN Staff are available and at your service to field any questions or eligibility concerns. Please feel free to contact Stanlyn Brevé, Director of National Programs: stanlyn@nnpweb.org, 504.595.8008 x704.

The Creation Fund is generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Doris Duke Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the generosity of co-commissioners.

The Creation Fund was the first such award to Ananya Dance Theatre. The process of enlisting co-commissioners raised our visibility with those venues, and the Creation Fund award cemented in place a working relationship that led to subsequent residencies and performances in the commissioning communities. All of it—the NPN imprimatur, the funding, the opportunity to do it right, and the relationships—enhanced our standing in our home community and raised our visibility with national and international gatekeepers. –Ananya Dance Theatre

ADDENDUM A: SAMPLE APPLICATION

Online application will be available by September 14, 2020.

Application deadline is October 9, 2020 at 11:59pm Central Time.

Please review Project Guidelines prior to completion. Carefully review Eligibility Requirements, Creation Fund Goals, and Selection Process.

When completing the application, make sure to focus the request on the creation phase of the project. Please note that applications will not be judged on language, writing, or grammar. When completing the project narrative, you will have the option of uploading a video, audio, or text response. Please be prepared to upload a project timeline and budget.

You may use the template provided or use your own.

Questions? Contact Stanlyn Brevé, Director of National Programs: stanlyn@nnpweb.org, 504.595.8008 x704.

**Responses required*

LEAD ARTIST/COMPANY INFORMATION

Please provide contact information and demographics of primary artist/company

Artist/Company Name *

Primary Contact *

Name, title, e-mail, and phone

Artist Website*

Artist Mailing Address*

Street address, city, state, zip code

Other Primary Artistic Collaborators:

Please give the name, role, email, phone, website, and city/state of other significant paid collaborators.

Number of years practicing as Artist/Company*

- 10 years or less
- 11–25 years
- 26 years or more

Has the Artist/Company previously received a Creation Fund award? *

- yes
- no

If yes, what year?

Is the Artist a company member, staff member, or resident artist of any co-commissioning organizations of this project? *

If yes, then at least THREE co-commissioners must be identified

- yes
- no

If yes, please explain.

ARTIST DEMOGRAPHICS

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. For movement-building work, it is important to collect consistent data fieldwide. 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.

LEAD ARTIST DEMOGRAPHICS

You may share demographics of primary collaborators in the next section.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Does the Lead Artist identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and/or Peoples of Color)? *

- yes
- no

Please indicate if the Lead Artist identifies as any of the following *

- African descent
- Asian descent
- European descent
- First Nations/Indigenous peoples
- Latin American descent
- Middle Eastern descent
- Multiracial

If you checked Indigenous/First Nations peoples above, please share more detail (for example, tribal/band affiliations with which you identify):

Optional: If you'd like to share more details about specific race, ethnic, national groups, and tribal/band

affiliations with which the Lead Artist identifies, please do. For example: African American, Lakota/Dakota, Iranian and Azeri/Persian, Quechua, Mexican, Singaporean, Honduran and Garifuna, etc.

GENDER & SEXUAL IDENTITY

Gender Identity - Does the Lead Artist identify as: *

- *Female*
- *Male*
- *Cisgender*
- *Transgender*
- *Gender nonconforming/non-binary*
- *Prefer not to say*
- *Prefer to self-describe*

Optional: If the Lead Artist would like to self-describe their gender identity.

Sexual Orientation - Does the Lead Artist identify as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, plus)? *

- *yes*
- *no*

DISABILITY AND ACCESS

Does the Lead Artist consider themselves a member of the disability and/or deaf community? *

- *yes*
- *no*

Optional: If the Lead Artist would like to share more details, about how you identify with the disability and/or deaf community please do:

Optional: Does the Lead Artist have specific mobility or access requirements, or require assistance such as a signer, aide, or personal caregiver?

GEOGRAPHY

Please indicate the type of community in which the Lead Artist lives and/or works (if they live and work in different communities, select the one with which they most closely identify) *

- *Urban*
- *Suburban*
- *Rural*
- *Tribal*
- *Geographically isolated*

ARTISTIC COLLABORATOR/S DEMOGRAPHICS

Please complete demographics for primary significant collaborators who will be paid with NPN Creation Fund for this project. Only include demographics for collaborators known and committed at this time. Artistic

collaborators may be other artists, directors, known company members.

Total primary artistic collaborators:

(Enter number)

RACE AND ETHNICITY

How many of the committed primary artistic collaborators identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and/or Peoples of Color)? *

(Enter number)

Please indicate if the primary artistic collaborators identify as the following: *

(Enter number)

African descent:

Asian descent:

European descent:

First Nations/Indigenous peoples:

Latin American descent:

Middle Eastern descent:

Multiracial:

Don't know:

If primary artistic collaborators identify as Indigenous/First Nations peoples above, please share more detail (for example, tribal/band affiliations with how they identify):

Optional: If you'd like to share more details about specific race, ethnic, national groups, and tribal/band affiliations with how the primary artistic collaborators identify, please do. For example: African American, Lakota/Dakota, Iranian and Azeri/Persian, Quechua, Mexican, Singaporean, Honduran and Garifuna, etc.

GENDER & SEXUAL IDENTITY

Please indicate how the primary artistic collaborators identify as the following: *

(Enter number)

Female:

Male:

Cisgender:

Transgender:

Gender nonconforming/non-binary:

Prefer not to say:

Prefer to self-describe:

Don't know:

Optional: If the primary artistic collaborators would like to self-describe their gender identity, please do:

Sexual Orientation – How many of the primary artistic collaborators identify as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, plus)? *

(Enter number)

DISABILITY AND ACCESS

How many of the primary artistic collaborators consider themselves a member of the disability and/or deaf community? *

(Enter number)

Optional: If the primary artistic collaborators would like to share more details, about how they identify with the disability and/or deaf community please do:

Optional: Do any of the primary artistic collaborators have specific mobility or access requirements, or require assistance such as a signer, aide, or personal caregiver?

GEOGRAPHY

Please indicate the type of community in which the primary artistic collaborators live and/or work (if they live and work in different communities, select the one with which they most closely identify) *

(Enter number)

Urban:

Suburban:

Rural:

Tribal:

Geographically isolated:

PROJECT INFORMATION

Please provide basic project information.

Project Title *

Title of work

Project Start Date *

e.g., October 1, 2020: Date project activity begins/began.

Project End Date *

e.g., September 3, 2023: Date project activity ends.

Anticipated date work will premiere *

e.g., May 2021

**The first public presentation, performance, gallery exhibition, or community residency, etc. We recognize*

that this date may change.

Projects must premiere between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2024.

Project Discipline*

Please select all that apply to this project.

- Ceramics
- Dance
- Digital/Computer
- Drawing
- Film/Video
- Installation
- Mural
- Music
- Painting
- Performance Art
- Photography
- Printmaking
- Puppetry
- Sculpture
- Site-Specific
- Spoken Word
- Theater
- Other, explain:

Total Project Budget *

Should match the total in the uploaded budget.

Total Creation Fund Request (including Co-commissioners' Matches)*

Commissioners' match + NPN \$8,000 match = minimum of \$12,000

This amount should match "Total Creation Fund Request" on Project Budget.

Brief Summary of Creation Fund Project: *

Tell us very briefly about the project. Keep it simple and concise, no more than a couple sentences. If project is awarded, we will use this summary to promote the project.

(100-word limit)

Upload a recent photo that is representative of the Artist/Company and/or proposed project: *

The application will not be judged on this photo. If project is awarded, we will use this photo to promote the award.

Photo credit for attached photo: *

Please include names of people in the photo, the title of the work (or activity), and any necessary photo credit to the photographer.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please note that decisions will not be based on language, grammar, or writing. There are two options for responding to project narrative. You may respond by completing the following questions in writing or upload a video or audio response. Feel free to keep it simple. You do not have to use all the space provided.

Describe the Creation Fund project

Please include responses to the following: What are the goals of the work? What is your relationship with the collaborators and how will they contribute to the work? Who is the community that the work is being created for? What is your history with this community and/or how will you engage these communities? What is the current stage of the work? What is the process of developing this work?

800-word limit

Describe how the project advances racial and/or cultural justice

If the Lead Artist does not identify as a person of color, First Nations artist, an artist with a disability, or a trans artist please be sure to address the following questions in your response: *Why is racial and/or cultural justice important to you? What is your history of working to advance racial and/or cultural justice and how do you currently work with your community to advance racial and/or cultural justice? Are the collaborators being paid fees for this project representative of the community you are engaging/serving? How are artistic, financial and administrative decisions made and who makes these decisions? What learning or unlearning are you doing as you work to dismantle white supremacy?*

800-word limit

Describe your relationship with co-commissioners and their communities?

Why did you choose to work with these co-commissioners? How will the project build long-term relationships and/or cultivate new collaborations with these co-commissioners and their communities? What does this look like?

500-word limit

Option to upload video/audio responses to narrative questions

If you would rather respond to narrative questions via video/audio, please upload here.

CREATION FUND PROJECT TIMELINE & BUDGET

Upload a project timeline and budget. You may use the template provided or create your own. If you are using your own project budget, make sure to include all project expenses and income, and indicate whether income is pending or confirmed. There is no minimum income—projects will not be judged on funds raised.

Creation Fund Project Timeline & Budget*

Upload

CO-COMMISSIONER INFO

Please provide co-commissioners' information in the next section, including contact information, organizational demographics, dates funds are available, and estimated date work will be presented. You will need to collect this information from each co-commissioner.

Each project must have a minimum of two co-commissioners in different communities. If the artist/company is a company member, staff member, or resident of any co-commissioning organizations, a third co-commissioner is required.

If the project has more than five co-commissioners, please upload a document providing the same information for other co-commissioners at the end of this section.

CO-COMMISSIONERS INFO

Complete info on form for each co-commissioner

Co-Commissioner Name: *

Primary Contact: *

Name, title, email, phone

Mailing Address: *

Street address, city, state, zip code.

Website: *

Please indicate if more than 50% of your staff identify as only one of the following:*

- African descent
- Asian descent
- European descent
- Indigenous/First Nations
- Latin American descent
- Middle Eastern descent
- Multiracial
- None of these categories describes more than 50% of our staff

Please indicate if more than 50% of your board identify as only one of the following: *

- African descent
- Asian descent
- European descent
- Indigenous/First Nations
- Latin American descent
- Middle Eastern descent
- Multiracial
- None of these categories describes more than 50% of our board

Please indicate if more than 50% of the artists you work with identify as only one of the following: *

- African descent
- Asian descent
- European descent
- Indigenous/First Nations
- Latin American descent
- Middle Eastern descent
- Multiracial
- None of these categories describes more than 50% of the artists we present

Please indicate if more than 50% of your audience, to your knowledge, identify as only one of the following: *

- African descent
- Asian descent

- *European descent*
- *Indigenous/First Nations*
- *Latin American descent*
- *Middle Eastern descent*
- *Multiracial*
- *None of these categories describes more than 50% of our audience*
- *Not sure, we don't have this data*

Co-commissioning fee to Artist: *

- *\$2,000 for organizations with annual budgets less than \$1 Million*
- *\$3,000 for organizations with annual budgets more than \$1 Million*

Date co-commissioning fee will be available? *

e.g., March 2021

Co-commissioning fees must be paid by June 1, 2022

Anticipated presentation* date: *

**This exchange can take any format, such as a public presentation, virtual engagement, performance, exhibition, or community residency, as long as it centers live experiential artistic exchange between the community, the artist, and the new work. Please estimate if you do not have an exact date. We recognize that projects may shift.*

Works must be presented between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2023.

Anything else you would like us to know?