

# **An Introduction to The Common Application for Arts Bay Area**

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September 18, 2024

# The Common Application for Arts – Bay Area

Origin Story

How it works

- Common Questions
- Budget Templates

Who uses it?

- Participating Funders
- Community Grantseekers

# Origin Story

A desire for greater collaboration among arts funders Arts Loan Fund, BACFE and Pandemic Relief & Recovery recommendations

Increase Access to Funding Opportunities  
Better User Experience  
Eliminate Urgency  
Streamline Back End  
Coordinated Outreach Efforts  
Simplified Process

July 2021

## **Pandemic Relief & Recovery: Emergency Funding & The Bay Area Arts Community**

An analysis of COVID-19 relief support grantmakers provided to Bay Area artists and cultural organizations, how it helped mitigate the crisis, and what the regional arts community needs now to recover

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*The Walter & Elise Haas Fund*

*Zellerbach Family Foundation*



[cover image caption and image description on page 2]

# What is The Common App?

- THE COMMON APP is a tool for artists, arts and culture organizations, and fiscally sponsored projects seeking funding from several Bay Area arts funders
- It is designed to make applying to multiple funders simpler and faster
- THE COMMON APP includes only the essential questions that the collaborating funders determined were necessary for them to make a grantmaking decision, and for artists and arts organizations to describe themselves and their project authentically
- More than that, THE COMMON APP standardizes these questions so that all of these funders ask for the same information in the same way
- Responses you provide to the questions asked in THE COMMON APP will match between 90-100% of the questions you will find if you apply to any or all of the participating funders

# What it's not...

- THE COMMON APP does not combine grant programs
- THE COMMON APP does not pool funds
- Each funder will ask a subset of questions from THE COMMON APP that are relevant to its own funding opportunities
- Each funder maintains its own
  - Guidelines and Eligibility
  - Deadlines
  - Priorities
  - Reporting

# How it works...

- Common Questions

- Sourced from dozens of Bay Area arts grant applications
- Distilled to an essential list covering:
  - Organization Info
  - Project Info
  - General Support Info
- Same questions, same word count

- Additionally

- Optional Budget Templates
  - Project and Organization
- Work Sample Instructions
- Accessible Website
- Downloadable .doc and .pdf files
- Coordinated Outreach/Info Sessions
- Grantseeking tips and tools

# THE COMMON APP

FLEISHHACKER  
FOUNDATION



Kenneth  
Rainin  
FOUNDATION



Gerbode  
Foundation

Zellerbach  
FAMILY FOUNDATION



theatre  
BAY AREA

Since THE COMMON APP  
was introduced in 2023,  
funders report between  
25-40% of applicants are  
engaging with the tool as part  
of their grantseeking process.



# Why collaborate?

- Better experience for grantseekers
  - Asking only what is truly needed
  - Limited funds for the arts
  - Coordinated data and demographics
  - Opportunity to go further
    - One form submission?
    - Aligned deadlines?
    - Shared reporting?
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<https://commonappartsbayarea.org/>

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