

Announcement of Grants for Arts in Action 2020 Request for Preliminary Proposals

OVERVIEW

USC Arts in Action plants seeds for positive social change by activating intensive arts projects between LA community partners, faculty, and students. Launched in fall 2018, the program is part of USC Visions and Voices: The Arts and Humanities Initiative.

Arts in Action supports and creates work that builds upon USC's commitment to remedying society's most intractable problems. Projects span a wide range of art forms to address systemic oppression and social issues including homelessness, mass incarceration, climate change, educational inequity, and multiple forms of violence.

Arts in Action projects are often participant-driven, challenging the separation between "artists" and "audiences." We prioritize artwork that grows from a shared process, where the collaborative act of creating the work is a core part of the project's impact and value.

ARTS IN ACTION GRANTS

USC faculty and students working with community partners are invited to submit preliminary project proposals for Arts in Action 2020 for projects beginning no earlier than February 3, 2020. These grants will activate community-based projects that address social issues, bring people together, facilitate dialogue, and create spaces to imagine and design future change.

Eligible disciplines include the visual arts and design, dramatic arts, cinematic arts, music, dance, and architecture. Projects involving multiple art forms are welcome and encouraged. Interested teams of faculty and students should send:

- A preliminary proposal (500 words) that clearly describes the project, its objectives and anticipated outcomes, and its relationship to the Arts in Action mission.
- A 100-word abstract that clearly describes project workings (e.g., a series of workshops or public performances, an exhibition or a piece of public art, or a service activity; a collaboration involving etc.)
- A one-page biography plus contact details for each team member.

Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m., on October 4, 2019, to artsinaction@usc.edu. Your entire proposal should be comprised of a single Word document or PDF.

Following an initial review of the preliminary proposals, the advisory committee will provide applicants with information about the full application and review process.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- Faculty and current students from across USC are invited to apply. Proposals that include at least one faculty member from one of USC's six arts schools are encouraged, and will be prioritized.
- Teams comprised of faculty or students from multiple USC schools are strongly encouraged.
- Projects that centrally involve students of any level are strongly encouraged.
- Students submitting a proposal must identify at least one faculty mentor as a key member of the project team. Faculty mentors should be willing to discuss the project with Arts in Action staff following the preliminary proposal stage, if requested.
- Project outputs should include at least one free public-sharing event, whether a workshop, performance, or service activity. Multiple public outputs that span the lifetime of the project are strongly encouraged. Preliminary proposals are not required to have all outputs identified.
- Projects should include at least one community partnership. Work that takes place off campus and in community settings is strongly encouraged.

WHAT MAKES A STRONG PROJECT?

1. Understanding of the issue: Does the project demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to an intractable social issue or problem?
2. Partnership: Has or will the project be developed with adequate participation from community partners, will it engage students directly, and does it fully address their needs? (See 'Modes of Participation' grid on page 4 for further guidance.)
3. Project feasibility: Can the project's team and method realistically meet the project's objectives?
4. Impact: How will the project contribute to positive and ongoing social change? Will the project contribute to students' development as socially engaged artists and citizens?
5. Outputs and visibility: Will the project be visible to the wider public?

KEY DATES:

October 4, 2019, at 5:00 p.m.: preliminary proposals due

Mid-October: applicants invited to submit full proposal

Late November: full proposal due

Early January 2020: awardees notified

February 3, 2020: earliest date for project commencement

PREVIOUS ARTS IN ACTION GRANTS

In 2019, Arts in Action supported seven faculty/and or student-driven projects. Grant amounts ranged from \$8,000 to \$20,000. More information about all Arts in Action projects can be found at artsinaction.usc.edu/project

Projects included:

- *Medical Clowning with The Children's Bureau:* Faculty and student medical clowns have worked alongside mental health counselors during monthly support groups to improve outcomes in therapeutic interventions for foster children and their guardians.
- *The Skid Row Buskfest for the Arts:* Skid Row's Urban Voices Project has collaborated with USC students to deliver monthly pop-up music events on the streets of Skid Row, featuring an arts and culture map collaboratively designed by the community and USC Roski students.
- *Jails and Justice: Rethinking Public Safety through the Arts:* USC's Institute for Theatre and Social Change partnered with Black Lives Matter LA to devise scenes that were performed and filmed on LA's buses. Their work disseminated information about the prison-reform movement in Los Angeles County, culminating in a forum theatre event at the California African American Museum alongside the Reform L.A. Jails coalition.
- *I Too Am: Media, Arts and Belonging:* Faculty from Annenberg and Cinematic Arts are working with teachers and students from three LAUSD schools to provide youth with critical and creative tools to share stories about identity in the face of displacement.
- *Kaufman Connections:* A 24-week hip hop dance program that introduces elementary students to the choreographic process through weekly, one-hour sessions of integrated dance instruction at 32nd Street Elementary School, led by USC students.
- *Warrior Bards - Veterans Exploring Ancient Drama:* Faculty from Dornsife, Cinematic Arts, and Dramatic Arts are working with the 1887 Fund to provide an opportunity for military veterans to explore and perform their experiences of service through engagement with ancient Greek tragedies.
- *RAD in the Neighborhood:* A partnership between the California African American Museum and Roski School of Art and Design allowing graduate students and faculty to provide high-quality, year-round, weekly after-school visual arts and design programming and mentorship for students at Ánimo Jackie Robinson High School.

Appendix: Modes of Participation Grid

This breakdown of “modes of participation” has been created by the James Irvine Foundation. We include it as a helpful resource for applicants seeking further guidance on what constitutes a strong community collaboration. “Participants,” in the case of Arts in Action, refers to community partners. We support projects that fall within categories 3 through 5.

Mode of Participation	Participant Engagement	Content Contributed by Participants	Presented or Culminating Artistic Product	Examples	Role of Arts Professionals
1. Observational: participants receive finished work presented by arts professionals	Watching/ Viewing	None	No contribution by participants	Performance/ Exhibit	Sole Author, Presenting/Exhibiting Content
2. Observational Learning: participants receive finished work with explicit learning or enrichment component	Learning	None to minimal	No contribution by participants	Educational component to performance/exhibit	Sole Author, Presenting/Exhibiting Content
3. Co-Presentation: participants share in presentation/ exhibition of artistic work	Doing/ Practicing with guidance or instruction	Minor choices and suggestions	Participants play an instrumental role	Play with community actors; artist-driven community mural	Leading/Directing, possibly participating
4. Co-Creation: participants share in creation of new artistic work	Contribute content to artistic product	Major artistic input	Final product is shaped by contributions of participants	Creation and performance of a play based on stories of a community	Gathering input, directing, guiding, presenting/exhibiting content
5. Participant - Driven: participants engage directly in the creative process, with or without involvement of arts professionals	Doing/ Practicing	Maximum artistic input	Product not necessarily required	Art-making workshops or classes where participants create or present work	Lightly facilitating/organizing