

Best Practices for Funding Creative Projects

Where to Begin?

You have an amazing idea for a short film, a play, a dance, performance, etc. The first step is defining the scope of your project by answering these questions:

- **What is it?**
 - This is the medium and genre. The answer to this question will play a large part in defining your budget.
- **Why are you making it?**
 - The answer to this question relates to what you care about and your passion for this project. The ‘why’ is what funders will relate to when considering whether to support your work.
- **Who is it for?**
 - Knowing your audience will help guide where you seek funding from
- **When/Where will you present it?**
 - Your timeline will influence where you seek funding. Short-term funding comes from individuals and producers. Long-term funding comes from the government, grants, and fellowships/residencies/programs.
- **Budget?**
 - Knowing your budget will focus your strategy for funding. No matter the size of your budget you will be looking for multiple sources for funding. We do not recommend building a budget around a single source of funding however you will want to make your project scalable in the event you do not meet your budget target.

If you need help answering these questions, consult with a faculty member or an EPICS team member. Seek out peers and alumni who have made similar projects.

The answers to these questions will be essential to getting funding through various channels especially when writing your grant proposals.

Diversity of Funding

1. **Government funding** for the arts can be found at the Federal level through the National Endowment for the Arts, through your state’s art council, and through your local municipalities (county and town).
2. **Grants** can be found at non-profit grant giving bodies such as [Creative Capital](#), The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, [Doris Duke Foundation](#), and Ford Foundation. There are hundreds of mission driven grant giving foundations.
3. **Fiscal Sponsorship** is recommended for individuals and new organizations to qualify for more grants and tax-deductible donations from individuals. Fiscal sponsorship will cost a percentage of funds received however the sponsoring organization will handle all reporting back to the grant giving body. Many non-profit organizations offer fiscal sponsorship including [The Field](#), [Fractured Atlas](#), [NYFA](#), and [IDA](#) (with membership). If you have a community-based project in partnership with a non-profit you might consider asking that organization for fiscal sponsorship.
4. **Crowd-Funding** via platforms such as [IndieGoGo](#), [GoFundMe](#), [Kickstarter](#), and [Patreon](#) enable you to run funding campaigns nationally. When seeking support from individuals, start with those closest to you (friends/families) and then widen the circle.
5. **Fellowships/Residencies/Programs** are an alternative way to support your project through training, providing space and time for creating the work, and community. A few examples include [2112](#), [Macdowell](#), [Yaddo](#), [Orchard Project](#), [Sundance Institute](#), [Academy Nicholl](#), and TV Studio Writing Programs.
6. **Additional Resources** can be found by researching projects similar to your project to discover who funded them. This is a short-cut to identifying funding sources that are more likely to fund your project. [Americans for the Arts](#) is a great database of local funding sources.

Tips for how to know what funding is right for your project

1. Find existing projects similar to your project. Research who they received funding from.
2. Know the mission of the giving organization and confirm it aligns with your project goals.