2021 FCA COVID-19 Relief Grants:
FCA Emergency Grants COVID-19 Fund and FCA COVID-19 Bridge Fund Fact Sheet

On March 18, 2020, in direct response to the abrupt closure on March 13 of all arts venues around the country and the even more precarious position in which this left so many emerging artists, the Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA) launched the FCA EMERGENCY GRANTS COVID-19 FUND. Administered as a subset of FCA’s respected EMERGENCY GRANTS program (which offers modest, immediate grants to artists with unexpected opportunities or budget shortfalls associated with presenting work to the public) the FCA EMERGENCY GRANTS COVID-19 FUND was a resource for artists in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Due to lingering need, in 2021 the FCA EMERGENCY GRANTS COVID-19 FUND continued to offer one-time $2,000 grants to artists who experienced a loss of income because of the cancellation or indefinite postponement of their performances and exhibitions through June 2021.

In April 2021, FCA also began offering $1,500 one-time grants through the FCA COVID-19 BRIDGE FUND to contemporary and experimental artists experiencing sustained financial hardship unrelated to canceled performance or exhibition opportunities.

FCA EMERGENCY GRANTS COVID-19 FUND: $2,000 Grants to Offset Project Cancellations or Postponements
Between March 18, 2020, and June 30, 2021, the FCA EMERGENCY GRANTS COVID-19 FUND provided one-time $2,000 grants on an ongoing basis, intended to offset unplanned losses incurred by artists for expenses from already-purchased materials or equipment, or anticipated income from ticket sales, artist and commissioning fees, or other earnings related to a scheduled performance or exhibition that had been canceled or postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak. Program highlights:

- Open application process.
- Applicants were required to meet FCA’s criteria of mission fit (contemporary, experimental work). As a relief program, merit was secondary to need.
- Peer-determined grants are integral to FCA’s process. After staff screened for mission-fit and artistic excellence, applications were reviewed at monthly panel meetings with an all-artist panel.
- Through its existing EMERGENCY GRANTS program, FCA already had a unique infrastructure in place to accept, screen, review, select, and process a high volume of applications and grants on an average two-week turnaround, and on a rolling basis.
- 2021 panel meetings, held remotely, shifted from a weekly to a monthly schedule, reflecting a slowdown in applications since fall 2020.
- Between January–May 2021, FCA disbursed $222,000 to 111 artists through the FCA EMERGENCY GRANTS COVID-19 FUND, bringing the total grant disbursements since the Fund’s inception to $3,018,000 to 1509 artists (March 18, 2020 - May 31, 2021). An additional round of grants will be made in June 2021.

Need:
- Many artists working in contemporary, experimental practices do not have full-time jobs, paid sick leave, health insurance, or savings, and remain at high risk of being disproportionately affected by the ongoing pandemic.
- The FCA GRANTS COVID-19 FUND received over 6,000 applications. In contrast, in 2019 FCA received 1,500 EMERGENCY GRANTS applications, already a program record at the time.

FCA COVID-19 BRIDGE FUND: $1,500 Grants for artists with extreme financial needs
Since April 2021, the FCA COVID-19 BRIDGE FUND has offered one-time, $1,500 relief grants for experimental artists who have extreme financial needs and require interim assistance but are ineligible for the Emergency Grants COVID-19 Fund (above). This program was created in response to feedback from presenters and artists in FCA’s community about the shifting needs of artists one year into the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing that many artists do not typically have commitments from venues 12-24 months out.

- The FCA COVID-19 BRIDGE FUND is designed to alleviate the burden of filling out extensive applications and to eliminate the need to demonstrate artistic merit to access relief funds for eligible
artists who are aligned with FCA’s mission to support innovative, experimental visual and performing artists.

- In the spirit of FCA’s “Artists for Artists” ethos, FCA will work with community partners, including all past artist and arts presenting organizations grantees to identify experimental artists in their communities in need of urgent support. FCA will approach these community partners in a tiered manner to manage the volume of applications.
- Artists identified by these community partners may then apply to the FCA COVID-19 BRIDGE FUND through a streamlined application designed to quickly confirm mission-alignment and to identify financial need/hardship.
- As with every FCA grant program, applications will be reviewed and approved by professional artists.
- Eligibility factors include housing insecurity, food insecurity, sustained unemployment (or loss or reduction of freelance, service industry, administrative, or other work); ineligibility for government stimulus programs or unemployment, medical expenses relating to COVID-19, etc.
- Between April-May 2021, FCA has disbursed $361,000 to 361 artists through the FCA COVID-19 BRIDGE FUND (grant amounts were increased from $1,000 to $1,500 in June, and artists who previously received grants will be contacted and receive an additional $500 in support).

In 2021, the FCA COVID-19 RELIEF GRANTS programs have been generously supported by the following individuals and foundations:
  - MacKenzie Scott and Dan Jewett—$1,500,000
  - Teiger Foundation—$500,000
  - The Willem de Kooning Foundation—$200,000
  - Helen Frankenthaler Foundation COVID-19 Relief Effort—$200,000
  - The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts—$200,000
  - The Destina Foundation—$100,000

We are grateful to the generous artist-endowed foundations, foundations, and individuals who supported the FCA EMERGENCY GRANTS COVID-19 FUND’s 2020 grant-making cycle, which provided $2,000 grants to 1,398 artists whose projects or performances were unexpectedly canceled or indefinitely postponed. Please visit our website for a list of these supporters.

Prospective donors can contact Kathleen Flynn at kf@contemporary-arts.org with any questions.