

PRESENTATION TEXT

Teiger Foundation Call for Proposals Online Information Session August 15 2022 3:00 pm

Andrea Escobedo: Welcome to the info session for Teiger Foundation's inaugural call for proposals. Sorry about the glitch getting started and also about rescheduling, we hope it did not inconvenience you too much! Some housekeeping before we start. The chat is disabled so please put your questions into the Q&A field. This session will be recorded and posted on our website by the end of this week, and we will also email you a link when it's posted on our website. Some of your questions, either submitted early or today, will also be added (with our answers) to our FAQ page, so check that out too. Now I'll turn it over to Larissa Harris.

Larissa Harris: Thank you Andrea! Hi everyone, I'm Larissa Harris, Executive Director of Teiger Foundation. It's wonderful to have you all here today. A few words on how this session will unfold. First I'll introduce Teiger Foundation and myself. Then, I'll answer the top ten submitted questions up front. Then I'll touch quickly on each funding category, and answer the top related submitted questions as we go. Then I'll talk about budgets with a primary focus on W.A.G.E. standards. Then I'll talk about the Climate Action Plan such as it is at this moment. And that should leave us plenty of time for your submitted and live Q&A. To enliven things a little bit we will conduct a few polls throughout the session.

Teiger Foundation (TF) was founded in 2008 by David Teiger (DT), who was a museum patron and collector of contemporary art. He passed away in 2014. By all accounts he was a very engaged and engaging person who cared about artists and ideas. From a patron's perspective, as someone observing how big institutions worked while serving on acquisitions committees etc., he noticed that curators who were doing challenging and difficult work could and did run into institutional resistance and funding difficulties. He brought together some forward-thinking people in the field to discuss how to channel his funds as effectively as possible and the idea of a foundation to support curators in contemporary visual art was born.

According to his wishes, after his passing in 2014 the board of directors sold his collection of folk art and contemporary art and the proceeds form the basis of the current new phase of the Foundation. So from approximately \$300,000 per year the foundation now disburses a minimum of \$3.5 million per year. With this scaling-up, the board also hired an executive director, which is me.

I am a former curator. I was at the Queens Museum for over a decade. I started at TF in January 2021. I see my job at TF as connecting the work that DT and the board did to our current moment using feedback from working curators and my own experience.

I believe that the role of the curator is currently transforming—along with cultural institutions themselves—and TF wants to support these transformations. We are starting out fairly straightforwardly in supporting curators by supporting the work that you do. Along with supporting the “what”—that is, your wonderful ideas—part of our mission is also to affect the “how”—that is, where and to whom the money goes within a project or organization, and how visual art can participate in a just transition away from fossil fuels.

Selections will be made by a jury, led by Teiger Foundation staff. Given the focus of the Foundation, the curator's creativity, engagement and learning are the most important part of the application. As you know the application includes a section where the curator can talk about previous shows they've done—or even participated in in an assistant capacity—and I'll be encouraging the jury to think about the relationship between the past and the proposed project or projects. This is to help us understand and visualize the proposed show, but it's also an opportunity for a curator or curators to actually look at their work, to frame it as a practice.

Now that I've introduced myself, I would like to know more about *you*. Here's our first poll.

POLL 1: What is your role? Are you a...

- 1: Curator [79 (19.5%)]
- 2: Development director [101 (24.9%)]
- 3: Executive director [60 (14.8%)]
- 4: Artistic director [14 (3.5%)]
- 5: Independent curator [32 (7.9%)]
- 6: Other [119 (29.4%)]

We're going to do another poll now, regarding your location.

POLL 2: Where are you? Please choose 1-10 of the Census Bureau-designated divisions below.

Northeast

Division 1: New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) [27 (6.9%)]

Division 2: Mid-Atlantic (New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania) [134 (34.2%)]

Midwest

Division 3: East North Central (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) [31 (7.9%)]

Division 4: West North Central (Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) [20 (5.1%)]

South

Division 5: South Atlantic (Delaware; Florida; Georgia; Maryland; North Carolina; South Carolina; Virginia; Washington, D.C. and West Virginia) [45 (11.5%)]

Division 6: East South Central (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee) [6 (1.5%)]

Division 7: West South Central (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas) [24 (6.1%)]

West

Division 8: Mountain (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming) [22 (5.6%)]

Division 9: Pacific (Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington) [81 (20.7%)]

U.S. territories

10: Puerto Rico and other territories [2 (0.5%)]

Now, I want to thank those who sent in questions in advance. I'm going to start by answering the top ten most frequently asked questions.

Q: What is the grant period?

A: All projects should start no sooner than four months after the award date of February 2023. That means no projects should start before May 2023.

Projects should start no later than two years after the award date. That's February 2025 for this cycle. This timing applies to all categories. There is no required end point for your projects.

Q: What qualifies as overhead costs?

A: For the two grants of up to \$150,000, 30% of the overall grant request can go towards overhead. Salaries for full-time staff who are working on the project qualify. Capital projects or endowments do not qualify.

The traveling show grant should go to the costs of mounting the show and to the fee, if needed.

As for the research grant, up to 60% can go to the institution to cover costs of on-staff curator taking a leave to go do the research. To be clear, the curator should continue to get their full salary, but because they might be gone for a couple of months, the institution can use the grant to pay someone to do some administrative work, or other creative options that you might come up with.

Q: Are university galleries eligible?

A: Yes!

Q: What project reporting will you require?

A: I will have an IRL or Zoom meeting at mid-point with the curator involved, and will need a one-page final report at the close of the project, which both the curator and the organization will sign off on.

Q: Are organizations allowed to apply for more than one category?

A: No. Please apply only in one category.

Q: Will organizations be considered for repeat funding in the future? Is this a yearly call?

A: If you are a grantee in one of the \$150,000 categories we will ask you to wait one year before applying again for a grant in that category. If you receive a grant in one of the \$150,000 categories, you may apply for a grant in the \$50,000 categories the following year, and vice versa. If you don't get any grants this cycle you can of course apply again next year. Yes, this is a yearly call.

Q: Is there a minimum age that the organization must be in order to qualify for the grant? We also wanted to know if there was a minimum budget in order to apply.

A: There is no minimum age or budget.

Q: Do past projects need to reflect the previous work of the curator's proposed projects, or any past exhibitions at the museum?

A: We want to learn about the curator's own work.

Q: How competitive is this call for proposals?

A: This is our first year, so there's no way to answer that question precisely. What we do know is that we will give out between 15-20 grants altogether, including all four categories.

Now we'll go over the individual categories. Before that though, we'll do another poll.

Which category do you plan to apply for?

- 1: Single project [155 (39%)]
- 2: 3 years of funding [183 (46.1%)]
- 3: Host a touring show [25 (6.3%)]
- 4: Research [34 (8.6%)]

We provide support for a single project at a non-profit contemporary visual-art organization with an annual budget above \$3 million.

As we say on the website, funding can support the development, realization, interpretation, and documentation of exhibitions, related public programs and publications, as well as microsites and other online components of an on-site project. It can support print or digital publications related to the proposed exhibition(s) or project(s). I want to say here that "publications" should reflect and convey informed decisions about whether and how to make a book, a website, or deploy another digital medium such as a podcast, live or edited video interview, etc. As we say in the FAQ, our aim is to empower curators to retain control over how their work exists online, and drive innovation around methods for doing so. And here are some of your top questions:

Q: Are online exhibitions eligible?

A: Try us. I will say that because digital art can be a world unto itself, inherently there will be a high bar to educate the jury on the artists and their work, where the money would go, and how you understand your audience or community.

Q: Are curator-led, multidisciplinary exhibitions eligible for funding? (For example, an exhibition that brings contemporary art, design, and fashion in dialogue).

A: Try us.

Q: Are the funds for a single project grant all released at the start, at the end, or in installments?

A: For the single-project grants, research, and to host a touring show, all funds will be disbursed at the start. Currently we are finalizing whether the 3-year grants are disbursed at once or in installments.

OK, now, I'll talk a bit about the category in which we support three years of programming at a smaller organization with an annual budget below \$3 million.

The main thing I want to say here is: Don't let the fact you don't know your programming three years in advance prevent you from applying. If you know two years, great. Just put more emphasis on your previous work and let us know how the two are connected. The last thing I want this grant to do is to force an organization to change their mission and plan further out than they normally would. Smaller organizations' flexibility is in fact one of their biggest assets. This grant is really meant to boost smaller organizations' financial stability.

And now for some questions related to this category.

Q: What is the best way to present three years worth of projects?

A: Avoid lists and choose highlights. Use the word count to add detail to highlights, so the jury can get a sense of your organization overall.

Q: Do the projects need to take place within the three-year period of programming, or can parts of the project take place afterwards? We are asking this with the "residency + exhibition" model in mind.

A: They should start within the three years but do not have to conclude.

Q: We got some questions from organizations on the cusp of the \$3 million budget category, mainly asking versions of whether the \$3 million applied to the current or projected fiscal year operating budget.

A: It would be for the projected operating budget—the one with which you are applying.

Now, to the two \$50,000 categories. A reminder here that the \$50,000 grants are for organizations of any size, above or below \$3 million.

Teiger Foundation supports venues that wish to host touring exhibitions. We like to say that we support original work and also extending, deepening, and transforming original work, which is what happens when a show tours, with immense benefits to both the originating and hosting curators.

The jury will evaluate your proposed new configurations, programs, and learning around the touring exhibition, and how those reflect the distinct context of the hosting institution and community.

Eligible expenses include touring fees and all aspects of mounting the exhibition as well as costs associated with additional programs, artworks, and other means you are using to integrate the exhibition into its new context.

The organization hoping to host the touring show—NOT the originating organization—should be the applicant. And now for a question regarding the touring show category.

Q: For touring exhibitions, what if the artists' fees are covered by the originating organization? Do we still need to include them in our budget?

A: Great question. Because we are following W.A.G.E. standards for budgeting, here is the W.A.G.E. answer, which you can find at this [link](#), and here: In subsequent iterations, fees are paid by each institution at 50% of the standard full fee. If an artist is required to install their work each time the exhibition is mounted, the host institution must pay the artist using the Day Rate for Performers category in this schedule, in addition to covering travel and accommodation expenses.

Finally, a little more about the category of curatorial research. We cover costs related to travel, convenings, and collaborative investigations around critical issues leading up to an exhibition or other project.

We do not require that research projects lead to an exhibition. A research grant award does not guarantee support for resulting exhibitions. But those projects will be eligible for future consideration.

Research applications can include costs of research assistance. They can also include institutional support for curators to take leave to conduct their research, comprising up to 60% of the requested award.

POLL 4: Working Artists for a Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.)

Have you heard of W.A.G.E. standards?

Yes [314 (86.7%)]

No [48 (13.3%)]

If yes, does your organization use W.A.G.E. standards?

Yes [253 (69.9%)]

No [109 (30.1%)]

As you know, Teiger Foundation encourages you to follow W.A.G.E. standards in your budgets. Here are the basic ideas, drawn from their work.

What is an artist fee? Artists fees are the closest thing artists have to a wage for their work.

How should fees be paid? An artist fee is separate and distinct from production costs. Production costs are what it costs to produce a work. An artist's fee should never be used to cover exhibition expenses or production costs.

How does W.A.G.E. determine artist fees? *[speaker refers to website]* I'll stay here at the \$5 million mark so I'm not calling out any particular institution. The fees are calibrated to an institution's projected TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENSES (TAOE). The more money an institution has, the more it can afford to pay.

How do I, as a curator or institution, know how much to pay? W.A.G.E. uses a three-tiered system that calculates fees using a compensation floor, a compensation ceiling, and a scaling mechanism that ties fees to operating expenses. That's what we are looking at here.

For a rough calculation, you can find an institution in the Fee Calculator with an equivalent-sized budget to your own budget, and view its fee schedule. For a precise calculation, use the fixed percentages for each fee category against your own projected TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENSES (TAOE).

This website has great information—I encourage you to take a look at it if you haven't already.

Now, W.A.G.E. focuses on the unique puzzle of compensation for artists (although they are currently working on contracts for independent curators and others, coming soon). I want to emphasize again that Teiger Foundation will

ALSO be looking for meaningful compensation for community partners and project team members of all kinds.

If you're applying as an independent curator in partnership with a committed 501(c)(3), you should include your own fee in the proposed budget. Your compensation should be calculated as a portion of a full time rate (say, if you're working three months full time, or one year at 25% of your time, etc). Of course rates vary across the country. Perhaps you can use the rates of the organization you're working with as a starting point. The main idea is that your compensation should be calculated in proportion to a full time labor model.

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OK! Our last poll is about climate.

POLL 5: Climate

Have you or others in your organization talked about reducing carbon emissions and/ or waste?

Yes [257 (77.4%)]

No [75 (22.6%)]

If yes, have you or your organization taken any actions related to reducing your carbon emissions and/ or waste?

Yes [188 (56.6%)]

No [144 (43.4%)]

Teiger Foundation is planning a Climate Action pilot program to support exhibitions and organizations in planning and actually executing a reduction of their emissions and waste. This program is still very much under development. What we do know is that each grantee will have different needs, capacities, knowledge bases, that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, and that bandwidth is your main obstacle. So, each grantee will get some version of the following that makes sense for who they are: 1) help making a climate plan for their project or organization, and 2) access to a person to help them execute that plan.

I recommend you take a look at the work of our 2022 climate grantees. They are on our website under [recent grantees](#). These folks have taken matters into their own hands to bring their fellow artists and art workers into the climate conversation and start taking concrete steps towards a livable future. I'm

inspired by them every day, and we will be working with them to develop a program that supports our eventual grantees on a similar journey.

Now we will open it up to your questions. Although there are already plenty in the Q&A, we will first answer a few more of the questions that were emailed beforehand.

Q: Can you please share more about who qualifies as a curator? Can it be a guest curator of a one time exhibition or program who otherwise filled a different professional role?

A: Traditionally, we are supporting people who are professional curators, but absolutely, I can imagine many moments where an organization is bringing in special expertise for a project or show. You can use the past proposal field to flesh out the person's area of expertise and why you and they feel like the visual-art context is the right context for their work.

Q: Do you support video programs?

A: If a video program has the ambition to use a \$150,000 grant, absolutely.

Q: Can guest co-curators be included in grant proposals?

A: Yes.

Q: Can artistic cultural practitioners in other countries or U.S. territories be included in the grant proposal?

A: Yes, definitely.

Q: I am applying for nonprofit status but don't have it yet. If we receive funding through a fiscal sponsor for the first year, do we have to for all three years of support?

A: We are still determining on our end whether it makes more sense to disburse the funds for 3-year grantees in one chunk or in three installments. Regardless, we will work with you if you want to switch for the reason you mention.

Q: I am an independent curator in Hungary currently but I wonder if I am eligible to apply for a grant if I work with a nonprofit organization based in the U.S.

A: We are able to disburse funds to US 501(c)(3)s, so, yes.

Q: If you are a brand new curator, will that be held against you?

A: It certainly won't be held against you but part of the application involves a description of a past project or projects, so you would have to successfully contend with that.

O.K., now to our new questions.

Q: We have two upcoming solo exhibitions traveling from other venues to our museum -- one will be from March to August. Another will be from September to February. We have been at a \$2.8 million operating budget but just hit \$3 million this fiscal year. Do you recommend we apply for one or both and in which funding category?

A: It seems like the timing is right for you to apply for the funds for the second exhibition. It doesn't matter what size your organization is because the touring funds are for any size organization.

Q: As a grant-funded independent curator, would I be eligible for a research grant?

A: There needs to be a nonprofit organization committed to presenting the eventual project and through which you can receive funds. We cannot fund individuals.

Q: I work in a nonprofit organization without our own IRL gallery exhibition space but we do a lot of online exhibitions as this is our specialty. Do we qualify?

A: As I said in the beginning, we are definitely open to online exhibitions but my guess is there will be a high bar.

Q: How do you all define "contemporary?" Do you have a particular year or decade where "contemporary" starts?

A: We are going to say 1960 to the present.

Q: I see in the guidelines that you do not support film, does this include experimental and artist-made films?

A: There is plenty of moving image work that unfolds in the visual art context. If you are working in that kind of context, please apply.

Q: For a university art museum, overhead and indirect costs are different. The indirect costs go into the larger university and we can't use them for museum staffing or admin costs. Does the Foundation have a policy on indirect costs specifically?

A: No. I would be happy to discuss further to get a better understanding of your situation.

Q: I run a gallery visual arts program that is part of a larger cultural institution. The departmental budget is well under \$3 million. But the organization's operating budget exceeds \$3 million. We are not a university gallery but it is a comparable infrastructure. Are we eligible for the three years of programming grant?

A: It sounds like it.

Q: If we are a curatorial team of three co-curators, may we submit three past projects to indicate the practices and how they converge in the project we propose to Teiger?

A: Sure. Use the space as needed. If you need to take up some of the word count from the main proposal to explain something that sounds complex and interesting, do it.

Q: Are there specific themes that Teiger sponsors?

A: No.

Q: For the 3-year funding category, does the budget have to apply to the larger organization or could it just apply to the university gallery itself?

A: The budget should be from the applying entity, not the bigger one.

Q: We are a nonprofit without a curator in house. Can we work with an outside curator to define the funding needs of projects?

A: If the curator is going to be proposing a project that you intend to realize, absolutely.

Q: Who are the jury -- peers, your board members, a mixture?

A: No board members, yes peers, meaning, other curators.

Q: When planning for a project on U.S. territory, can research and travel be conducted and funded outside of the U.S.?

A: Definitely.

Q: I work for the American Federation of Arts. We produce exhibitions and coordinate tours and partner with museums. Can we apply for a single project for one exhibition as a non-presenting institution and apply the partner museums to host the exhibition?

A: I don't know if I can answer this offhand but I would be willing to talk to you about that. Just to say we are having office hours 3-5 P.M. through September 14th. Please email the info@teigerfoundation.org to get a Calendly link.

Q: Can you please talk about the types of performance you support?

A: Performance in a visual-art context. Think Performa Biennial, or The Kitchen.

Q: If the organization is applying on behalf of the multiple curators it serves, what would be expected to highlight past projects of the curators or should we think to focus on one curator over a 3-year period?

A: That is interesting -- this is a situation in which a small organization under 3 million has more than one curator, right? I think it would be multiple curators.

Q: Will the review look more favorably on applications that already have matched funds? Or will the review consider those that don't have matching funds from other sources?

A: We are neutral on that.

Q: Is there a time by which the application must be submitted on September 15?

A: 5 P.M.

Q: Who would you prefer to have as the contact name on the application? The curator, or the organization's grants manager?

A: Ideally the curator, because there may be a moment in the selection process when we want to circle back to the applicant with questions.

Q: I work in a visual arts run school platform that is in the process of achieving 501(c)(3) status but won't have it by the application due date. Do we qualify?

A: If you have fiscal sponsorship, yes.

Q: Confirming the grantees will be announced in February 2023 with projects starting no sooner than May of 2023 and no later than February 2025, with award funding released all at once?

A: The timing is correct. And the funding will be released as soon as the award is made, for the stand-alone projects. As I mentioned we are working out the best way for the three-year organizations.

Q: If the project is a partnership between a science museum and nonprofit, should the science museum be the applicant if the project exhibition will be mounted there?

A: The applicant should be the arts nonprofit and we can work with you on where the funds are actually disbursed.

Q: Do you plan in the future to expand the call to non-U.S. based curators?

A: We are committed to funding internationally and we have done so but we haven't yet set up a formal process for that. I am not convinced that an open call is necessarily the right process for *the whole world*, but please stay in touch with us because we are actively figuring that out.

Q: Regarding the project narrative word count, can you confirm that the 150-word captions do not count against the total word count of the 750?

A: Correct. They are in addition to the 750.

Q: You highlight visual arts and stay consistent with exhibitions. Performances and public programs series are mentioned as well. Are curatorial applications surrounding performance and public programs not centered around the exhibition able to get support?

A: Try us.

Q: For the touring exhibition support, would the fees support visiting artists, scholars etc.?

A: Definitely.

Q: My organization is in the field of experimental film and promotes screening of the work. We are dedicated to presenting work that engages with traditions and history of film and champion non-narrative work and receive funding regularly from funders promoting visual arts. Does the Foundation statement against supporting exhibitions in the field of film count us out?

A: Unfortunately we do not support venues that primarily explore the medium of film.

Q: If the organization's annual budget is below \$3 million does it mean the organization doesn't qualify for the single project grant?

A: If you are a small organization under \$3 million but are, for example, partnering with other organizations to work on an exhibition of a very considerable scale, that project is eligible for the single project grant.

Q: Can you say more about the Climate Action focus? Does this imply that curatorial projects that emphasize environmental themes will have priority?

A: No.

Q: Are the grants for a single curator or can I apply as a group of curators for example at an artist-run space with five members all functioning as curators?

A: These are interesting border cases. If you would like to talk, I am happy to.