

Teiger Foundation 2024 Call for Proposals
Online information session
December 6 2023 3:00 pm EST

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Andrea Escobedo: Thank you again for joining. Hi, everyone, I'm Andrea Escobedo, Assistant Program Manager. I'm joined here by Executive Director Larissa Harris and Program Officer Stephanie Koch. First, some housekeeping. We're not going to have a Q and A feature, so you can use the chat feature to ask us any questions for the Q and A. Not everyone can see the chat, only the Teiger Foundation team.

This session will be live captioned, with live captioning provided by Adina. This session will be recorded and posted on our website within two weeks. Some of your questions submitted earlier or today may also be added to our website FAQ. I'll pass it over to Larissa.

Larissa Harris: Hello, everyone. I am the executive director of TF, welcome. Great to have you all. I will give you some words on how the session will unfold. I'll introduce Teiger Foundation (TF) and touch on each of the funding categories with a little dip into W.A.G.E. guidelines for budgeting and together, the TF team will share some relevant points from our most frequently asked questions, then we'll talk about the Climate Action Program. That should give us plenty of time for your questions.

TF was founded in 2008 by David Teiger who was a museum patron. He passed away in 2014. From a patron's perspective, as someone observing how big institutions worked while serving on committees, he noticed that curators who were doing challenging and different work could and did run into institutional resistance and funding issues. He brought together 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 art was born. According to his wishes, after his passing in 2014, the board of directors sold his collections of folk and contemporary art and the proceeds formed the basis of the new phase of the foundation.

From approximately \$300,000 a year, the foundation now disperses a minimum of \$3.5 million annually. With this scaling up, they hired me. I'm a curator; I was at The Queens Museum for over a decade and other cultural institutions

before that. I started at TF almost three years ago, in January 2021. My job is connecting the work that David Teiger and the board did to our current moment, using feedback from curators and the people who love them.

I believe that the role of the curator is transforming along with cultural institutions themselves, and TF wants to support these transformations. Currently, we're doing this straightforwardly by supporting your work. But, along with supporting the *what*—that is your wonderful ideas—part of our mission is to affect the *how*, meaning that is *where* and to *whom* the money goes within the project or organization, and also how visual art can participate in a just transition away from fossil fuels. But, the curator's creativity, engagement, and opportunities for learning are the most important part.

Those who read over the guidelines will know that in three out of four categories, the application includes a section where the curator can talk about previous projects they've worked on. This is to help us understand and visualize what you're proposing, but it's also an opportunity for curators to actually look at their work and frame it as a practice.

This is our second open call. We made some updates to the guidelines and application based on grantee feedback on our second round which is happening now, and we have also been traveling the US. Those who applied last year will notice some subtle adjustments but nothing too dramatic. Who makes the selections? They're made by a jury of your peers, curators who are working in the US, led by TF. The makeup of the jury is different every year. Now, I'll pass it on to Stephanie, our program officer.

Stephanie Koch: Hello, everyone. I'm Stephanie Koch. We want to know a few things about you, and you'll have about 20 to 30 seconds to respond to each. The poll questions are...

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

- artistic director 9
- curator 51
- development director 124
- executive director 34
- other 78

2. Where are you located?

- Northeast Division 1: New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) 34
- Northeast Division 2: Mid-Atlantic (New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania)

92

- Midwest Division 3: East North Central (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) 25
- Midwest Division 4: West North Central (Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) 20
- South Division 5: South Atlantic (Delaware; Florida; Georgia; Maryland; North Carolina; South Carolina; Virginia; Washington, D.C. and West Virginia) 24
- South Division 6: East South Central (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee) 4
- South Division 7: West South Central (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas) 17
- West Division 8: Mountain (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming) 13
- West Division 9: Pacific (Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington) 54
- US territories Division 10: Puerto Rico and other territories 1

3. Did you apply last year?

- No 207
- Yes 85

Thank you so much for sharing a bit more about what you do, where you are, and how you know Teiger.

I will share my screen here and give some insight into our current categories. We have four categories. Our single projects category offers grants up to \$150,000. Curators from organizations of any size are eligible to apply. Our other up to \$150,000 grant is for three years of programming, and it's for small organizations with an annual budget of less than \$3.5 million. Our third category is hosting, up to \$75,000. Last year it was called touring. It's the same category, but we changed the name to emphasize that we intend to support organizations that wish to bring an exhibition and host it at their institution. (Organizations that are originating a touring project can apply to the single project category.) Our last category offers up to \$50,000 for curatorial research and development. We spent some time updating our guidelines to make them specific to each category.

You can start preparing your application in advance. The application portal opens on January 2nd, but we outlined the sections you can complete ahead of that time. So there are five parts for most categories. First is your proposed projects, and we offer a few prompts for you to center your authorship when

sharing these. We also provide an opportunity to talk about a past project that gives context to the proposed project. This section is not included within the application for three years of programming (only for single projects, hosting, and research). We also give space for project budgets and organization budgets. You can create your own PDFs; we don't have a single budget format. Finally, we have a space for you to share your proof of 501(c)3 status.

New elements this year include an FAQ section specific to each grant category, and sample budgets for each category. We don't need you to translate your budgets into a single format, but wanted to provide some guidelines for what we hope to see through these examples.

The examples show you what we hope to see in both expenses and your income—committed and pending. We also wanted to provide two things: one, a way that you can annotate your budget to communicate the specifics of your project, and two, we wanted to show what components of a project might be eligible for funding.

Each budget within each category also features a specific project type, so here, it's a group project (within the single project category). We also try to think of an organizational profile for each; for example, this is a case of a museum with a total operating cost of \$28 million, working on an ambitious group show with 16 artists, and it bases its resources accordingly.

You'll notice that for each budget, we use W.A.G.E. standards. In this case, this is a large group show, 16 artists, so with this organization's total operating budget, W.A.G.E. requires approximately \$1,875 for each artist fee, totaling \$30,000. TF encourages you to follow W.A.G.E. standards in your budgets. So how does W.A.G.E. work? How do you determine artists' fees?

[Goes to W.A.G.E. website]

For example, the Smithsonian Institution, which has an operating budget of \$1.41 billion. The fees are calibrated to an institution's total annual budget; the more money an institution may have, the more it can afford to pay an artist. So, how do I, as an institution or curator, know how much to pay?

For each institution, W.A.G.E. will have a minimum wage, a living wage, and a max wage; the living and max wage are the same, and the living wage is an addition to their recent calculator reboot. You'll look at the kind of project you anticipate and then find the appropriate wage. And so that is what we're

looking at here.

For a rough calculation, you can find an institution with a similar annual operating budget here as your own, and view its fee schedule. You can also enter your institution's operating budget, and the fee calculator will recommend your organization's size. We are also mindful of compensation for any community partners or any project's team members of any kind.

Ok, on to the FAQ. We have asked people to send in their questions ahead of time so these are their questions as well. I want to say thank you to those who sent questions in advance, they'll be asked by Andrea.

Q: Is this an opportunity only for US curators?

A: We assign geographic eligibility to the institution, not the curator. We only support US-based institutions for our call for proposals. If it plans to collaborate with an international institution, those proposals would be eligible. We did get another question asking if international organizations are eligible; they are not for the call for proposals.

Q: Are university galleries eligible?

A: Yes. And we also know that multiple galleries may exist under one University's 501(c) 3 status. The university doesn't have to select one gallery to put forth an application. We know from experience that cost flows through and out of universities is complex, and we're happy to provide a letter that states that the entirety of Teiger Foundation grant monies should go to your gallery.

Q: Should the past projects section of the application be written from the perspective of the curator or the institution?

A: This section should focus on the curator.

Q: How competitive is this call for proposals?

A: It's hard to know, this is our second year. In our 2023 call for proposals, we received over 400 applications and awarded 39 grants. We don't require a certain number of grants, and the total number may change. For this upcoming year, we may award fewer projects.

Q: Is there a minimum age an organization has to be to qualify, or a minimum budget?

A: There isn't a minimum age, but there is a minimum annual budget of \$170,000. That's a new element that we added for this 2024 cycle. Our grants range from \$25,000 to \$150,000, and we want to be mindful of

overstretching a small organization's financial capabilities.

Q: Can I apply with a fiscal sponsorship?

A: Yes. You can, and I'll note until very recently, we shared for this 2024 cycle that we do not fund, but we changed that position. We only allow fiscal sponsorships of organizations, and we do not accept fiscal sponsorships from individuals. You can navigate to our guidelines to find the information required with your application.

Q: Are independent curators eligible?

A: TF is set up to fund organizations, not individuals. If you're applying, you need to apply with a host institution.

Q: Can we apply for more than one category?

A: No. Each organization can only apply to one category.

Q: Are funds released all at once or in installments?

A: The funds are distributed in equal annual installments for three years of programming. Funds for all other grants are distributed in full.

Q: What qualifies as indirect or overhead cost?

A: For three years of programming, hosting, and single project grants, 30% of the grant can go towards overhead or indirect costs. Capital projects and endowments do not qualify. What does are administrative costs such as your non-project staff's salaries and office supplies, facility costs, your organization's rent or mortgage, your utilities, anything involving property insurance, maintenance expenses, technological costs, anything maintaining upgrading or using infrastructure, internet, phone services, and other general operating expenses related to your organization.

Stephanie: Thank you, Andrea. Great questions. So I am going to navigate to one other poll.

4. Which category do you plan to apply for?

Curatorial research and development	23
Hosting	11
Single Project	85
Three years of programming	73
Not sure	88

Okay, thank you guys for sharing that information.

So a large number of the attendees are small organizations, which we define as an organization with an annual budget of \$3.5 million or less. The three years of programming category offers grants up to \$150,000 to organizations of this size. Here are some frequently asked questions about this category.

Q: What do you mean by “programming”?

A: Programming can encompass the entire spectrum of curatorial activities. It can range from intimate-scale projects, including an element of research within your three years, to exhibitions, commissions, events, or workshops. It can also expand into ongoing organizational initiatives, artist-in-residence programs with a strong curatorial component, institutional partnerships, or a combination of the above.

Q: What if we don't know what will happen in three years?

A: You shouldn't let the fact that you don't know your programming three years in advance prevent you from applying. If you know your program for two years, that's great. The last thing we want is for our grant to force an organization to change its mission or plan further out than it normally would. Something else we added this year is that you can share your 2024 programming calendar. Since your grant period starts December 1, 2024, anything you might include within your 2024 programming calendar wouldn't be eligible for funding, but it might help us get insight into your future curatorial choices.

The second thing I want to emphasize is that we gained some important insight from last year's cycle in that applicants in this category found it challenging to articulate a clear curatorial vision. Some of that is structural. We've increased the word count to add more space for this grant category. We would like you to think about how curatorial authorship is structured in your organization and share that within your application. When outlining your program, you should describe how they combine to form a cohesive curatorial vision, especially if multiple curators lead your programming.

When discussing curatorial vision, we're not speaking to a thematic arc, like, for example, feminist perspectives. Rather, we want to see a clear presence of a curatorial voice in your three-year projects. Our focus at TF is on the

people who drive the programs; individuals shape them, and this creates a unique thread. We encourage you to consider this throughout your projects. Look at our 2023 grant list of three-year program grants to see how different voices are articulated in those projects.

Finally, some budget considerations. For a \$75,000 grant, your annual installment for each of three years will be \$25,000. For a \$150,000 grant, the annual installment would be 50,000. We will only fund up to 15% of your organization's total annual operating expenses, based on the amount of the annual grant. So please consider this when deciding whether to apply for \$75,000 or \$150,000.

Now, for some questions related to this category.

Q: Does the budget limit refer to the current or projected fiscal year?

A: The \$3.5 million budget cap applies to the projected fiscal year for which you're applying. We ask for your past and future budgets to better understand your organization.

Q: Can I apply if my job title isn't curator, but I fulfill a curator's duties?

A: Your curatorial involvement determines eligibility, not your job title.

Q: Are artist-run spaces eligible for this grant?

A: We acknowledge the value of artist spaces, but it's essential to know that TF does not directly fund artists or communities of artists. However, we know some practitioners occupy dual roles as curators and artists. Some examples from our 2023 open call include Beta-local, The Luminary, and Summertime Gallery. These are all artist-led organizations, but they curate other artists' work. So, if it has a curator component and the application focuses on that curatorial practice, and you are not curating yourselves, then you, as an artist-run space, are welcome to apply.

Q: Do you provide support for fellowships and residencies?

A: Yes and no. So, currently, we don't offer standalone support for those programs. If you put forth an application, those initiatives would only be eligible if they are integrated into a broader curatorial vision for the institution. They can be part of an exhibition program including guest and in-house curators and traveling shows. If it's a part of this larger constellation of exhibition programs, we'll consider proposals

that include curatorial fellowships or residency programs as part of this comprehensive framework.

Q: Can smaller organizations apply for grants other than the three-years of programming grant?

A: Yes, you can apply for a single project, especially if the project is large-scale or organized in partnership with another organization.

Great, now onto other categories.

Larissa: Hi, everybody. Thank you, Stephanie, and thank you, Andrea. I will quickly talk about the single project category and the hosting category. So, it looks like about 30% of you were planning to apply to the single project category. This category provides grants of either \$75,000 or \$150,000 for a single project at a non-profit of any size. A single project could be a group show, solo show, a project in another format, like a major performance series; the point is it's standalone, authored, or co-authored, and it's a project that requires our level of funding. And the money is for implementation.

TF single project grants can fund up to 50% of your overall project budget. That means the minimum single project budget would be \$150,000. You may also apply 30% of this grant to overhead. If you're doing a print publication, a microsite, or community engagement programs, all of that should be part of the application and part of the budget. We're not funding standalone publications, stand-alone microsites, or standalone community engagement programs. Last year mostly larger organizations, meaning organizations above \$3.5 million, applied to this category, but actually, small organizations are welcome to apply, especially in partnership with other small organizations, with co-originated projects.

If you do decide to apply as a partnership, just identify one organization to be the lead applicant; this doesn't imply anything about the relationship of organizations or curators to one another. It's for efficiency's sake. Some great single project examples from our current grantee list are Dan Leers, who is organizing the Carnegie Museum of Art's amazing photo show on photography and the environment, and Alex Klein's retrospective of the artist Carl Cheng that will be at the Contemporary Austin and travel around Europe and then back to the US. Okay, so that's single project.

The second category is hosting. At Teiger, we support both new ideas and extending and deepening existing ideas. Hence, the hosting category. Yes, previously, it was known as touring, but we changed the name to dispel any

confusion because it's the organization that is hoping to host a touring show, not the originating organization, that should apply.

The amount that is available is \$75,000. It's actually up from \$50,000 last year. And so, like the three years of programming and the single project categories, up to 30% of this grant can go to overhead if you wish. TF hosting grants are for organizations of any size, from large to independent spaces. And so the jury is going to evaluate your proposed new configurations, all the learning that is happening around the touring exhibition. It's really about how you adapt the exhibition in a way that reflects your space's unique ethos. Why does the show belong with *you*? And then, because we support curatorial learning—and so much of what we learn is from one another—we also want to know how you, as a host, will work with the originating curators.

So eligible expenses include touring fees, the cost of installing the exhibition, and any programming or partnerships you design to introduce the project to its new audience. Examples from our existing grantee list include the *Black American Portrait* show, which originated at LACMA and went to Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, an amazingly beautiful show—great success. Another example would be a show called *Véxoa* which came to the Tufts University Art galleries from the Pinacoteca in São Paulo, Brazil.

So now Andrea will join me to ask a few questions about the single project and hosting categories.

Andrea: Great, thank you.

Q: I'm working in partnership with another organization, and I need clarification about whether I should apply for hosting or for a single project.

A: Okay, so if your organizations are collaborating equally in the planning and organization of the project, you should apply together for a single project grant, with one organization serving as the lead applicant. This implies shared responsibility for the project's development and implementation. If, on the other hand, you've been invited to join a project that has already been organized and developed by another institution, then apply for a hosting grant. These grants support your work to adapt and present the project within the context of your own institution.

Q: I'm working on an exhibition co-organized by multiple institutions that will tour all of the collaborating venues. Should I apply for a

hosting or a single project grant?

A: You should apply for a single project grant and submit during the early planning stages of the exhibition. The budget can include budgets for each institution.

Q: I'm applying for a hosting grant. What if the originating organization covers artist fees?

A: Great question. And because we're following W.A.G.E. standards for budgeting, the W.A.G.E. answer is the following. In subsequent iterations—when the show is going to other venues—artist fees are paid by each institution at 50%. So your budget as a hosting organization should include 50% of the W.A.G.E.-designated fee. Then, if an artist is required to install each time, you can pay the artist the day rate that you can find on the W.A.G.E. website, as well as travel and accommodation.

And now back to Stephanie.

Stephanie: All right. So, we're going to round out our session with our last category. It's an exciting category to me; it's our curatorial research and development category. This offers grants of up to \$50,000, and it covers the more traditional aspect of curatorial research, including travel, convenings, and collaborative investigations around critical issues; you may want to convene some collaborators, some scholars, or other knowledge bearers and scholars. Another element that we've added this year, in addition to funding your own research, is to expand to include a constellation of folks that may be part of your research process. This means you, as an applicant, may apply for collaborators such as artists, program partners, and catalog contributors. Or you are making the first deposits to a publisher or for production. This is meant to get work started for an exhibition that will further inform your curatorial research process. It can expand out to whatever collaborators you're working with.

We do not require that a research project lead from an exhibition. It may, and if it does, we want to note that the research grant does not guarantee funding for your resulting exhibition. But you may apply for support for this exhibition.

In addition to travel and anything involving collaborators, your research applications can include research assistance. Another aspect we feel is very exciting is you can also include institutional support for a curator to leave the institution for some time to conduct the research. You can receive 60% for

temporary assistance while you are on leave. So those are some elements. Larissa will wrap up our participation with a few words about our climate action program.

Before we do, I want to do our last poll.

6. Have you or others in your organization discussed reducing carbon emissions or waste?

Yes	211
No	51

7. If yes, have you or your organization taken any actions to reduce carbon emissions and waste?

Yes	147
No	50

All right, with that last poll, I will pass it to Larissa.

Larissa: Thank you for that poll and those responses. So very quickly about our climate program, it's for grantees. You would apply with your project, whatever it may be; the jury would select your project, and then staff come in and invite a subset of those grantees into the climate program. The program connects curators to ways of working sustainably that are right for them and their projects and communities.

In terms of the application, all you have to do is check the box to indicate your interest in the program at the end of the application when it opens in January. Really what happens is each participant is paired with a sustainability coach for 15 months. That coach works with the grantee on how to execute their TF project sustainably, and once a plan is in place, they receive up to \$20,000, in addition to their grant award. So a subgroup of seven 2023 grantees is part of the climate action project, and it was based on the start date of their projects and project type, and this group is halfway through the program. A few of them will be featured in more depth in January, so check it out when you're ready to apply.

And now Stephanie and Andrea will answer some of your live Q and A questions which have been accumulating. Thank you very much for coming.

Andrea: Okay, so thank you so much for your questions, we have received a lot, so I'm sorry that we won't be able to get to all of them.

Q: The guidelines for 2024 say the project must start after December 1st, 2024; the exhibition I would like to apply for opens before that, so would that exhibition be ineligible?

A: If the exhibition is starting before December 1st, it would not be eligible.

Q: Do you recommend a certain ratio of the organization's budget to the request? If we have an annual budget of about \$280,000 can we apply for \$150,000 or \$75,000?

Okay, so this is from a small organization that is considering applying for three years of programming grant and the question is based on their operating costs. This has been asked in a couple of different ways; when I say TF will support 15% of your total annual operating budget, it's per the annual installment. I would not suggest applying for a grant that would award annual installments that exceed 15% your total annual operating costs. So if you are an organization with a budget of \$170,000 a year then you could apply for \$75,000, which would provide annual installments of \$25,000 over three years.

Q: Would a university gallery with an annual budget of less than \$3.5 million be eligible for three years of programming if the university it operates within has a budget that is much larger than the \$3.5 million threshold?

A: Yes. Your eligibility is determined based on your gallery budget, not the university budget.

Q: What qualifies as an arts organization? If you're a curator helping a nonprofit primarily focused in another area to increase their arts program, could this organization qualify?

A: We support contemporary visual art in two ways: one is presenting art made after 1960, and another is operating within a visual arts framework. Your space doesn't necessarily need to be a contemporary visual art space—you might be a historical institution or public service nonprofit that is looking to expand to artists. But the project does need to be primarily situated within a contemporary visual art conversation, and the primary content of the proposed project should be contemporary visual art.

Q: My organization presents theatrically-based screenings of noncommercial artist-made film and video. Are these sorts of exhibitions eligible for TF support or is funding only available for gallery-based

arts?

A: There are a lot of different ways that contemporary art is installed. For instance, we've supported public art in the past. There are some gray areas between performance and film. I would say to try us, but really consider if you're maybe overstretching your project to fit within our grant guidelines and definitions regarding contemporary visual art.

Q: Our organization does not have a curator on staff, do we need to work with a single curator to apply?

A: It depends on your organization, there are many cases, especially with small organizations, where they invite curators to organize exhibitions. So if you don't have a curator on staff, we're open to what you might propose, but one note is that the curator, collective, or series of curators should be named in your application.

Q: Is a curator fee an eligible line item?

A: Yes. If you're an in-house curator, part of your staff salary can be included; if you're invited guest curator, it can also be in the budget.

Q: I know that TF matches existing budgets but do other grants count towards the existing budget?

A: You are required to provide your project budget and organization budget, so we do want to see your pending and committed income. If a curator has funds raised elsewhere, whether it's from the government or individual donors, we would love to see what is part of their support. Already committed funds are not required, but we would love to see what funding you've been working on or is pending.

Q: Are there specific thematic exhibition elements that the foundation prioritizes?

A: No. We do want to see projects that are pushing the conversation forward, whether it's within contemporary visual art or within current events, but we don't have certain thematics that we're interested in. We do as an institution really try to support curators to lead the conversation within climate action, but we don't necessarily prioritize exhibitions that focus on climate action.

Q: Can you elaborate a little bit more on requiring artist residencies to have a strong curatorial component to be eligible for funding?

A: Institutions might provide a lot of different forms of support for an artist-in-residence; they may be focused on their research or on their

production. If there's an element as the artist where perhaps an institution is curating the work that the artist may bring or may develop, that would be eligible for funding. One example of a current grantee is Kelly Kivland at the Wexner Center. She's working with the artist Tanya Linklater on an amazing exhibition, and this relationship was instigated by an artist-in-residence program that Linklater took part in at the Wexner. So take a look at that grantee as an example.

Q: In the application, are past projects meant to have occurred at the same organization, or is it more important that they relate to the applying curator's practice?

A: That's a great question. It is related to the curator's practice. So perhaps you're an invited curator, or you're a curator at an institution for a long time, but you worked on a project elsewhere. You can include that as an example if it offers a throughline to the project you're proposing. It's about you as a curator and trying to understand how you got to this moment of making this project.

Andrea: And then, there is one more question to ask. There was a jump from 3.5 to 10 million that a lot of people had questions about, so would you mind just touching on that real quick?

Stephanie: Is it about the poll? I made an error when I was making the poll. We do accept applications from organizations with budgets between \$3.5 and \$10 million. We do not favor one organization's size over another. The only requirement is simply that your organization's operating budget is above \$175,000 per year.

Another thing I'll say is there are a lot of great questions in the chat, we're not going to be able to get to all of them, but many of these questions are already in our FAQ on our website. You can find them either in our general FAQ or our category-specific FAQ sections. If we were unable to answer your question, more likely than not it's already on our website. And I'll pass it back to Andrea.

Andrea: I just want to say thank you so much for coming if you have any further questions and if you would like to chat with TF staff for 15 minutes about your proposal, we're holding office hours from January 8th to February 9th, please email us info@teigerfoundation.org.

Also, we will have another info session on January 17th after the application

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portal is live. (As a reminder it will be live on January 2.) During that session, we'll answer questions about the portal.

Please also follow us on Instagram @teigerfoundation and subscribe to our newsletter as we disseminate a lot of important information through that channel. Thank you!