Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the 2021 BIPOC Arts Network & Fund (BANF) grant opportunity. The following document details the grant application process, requirements and key dates, and shares a little bit about us.

About BANF

The BIPOC Arts Network & Fund (BANF) is a multi-year initiative dedicated to providing resources that support the vibrant BIPOC arts community of Greater Houston in fully displaying their power, values and traditions.

Established in 2021 as a collaborative community effort, BANF is guided by the very artists, nonprofit organizations and local leaders it seeks to serve through grant funding, advocacy, and community-building networking initiatives.

On behalf of the BANF steering committee and our accountability and advisory council, made up of Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous and LGBTQ+ arts community leaders, we are grateful for your participation in the application process of our inaugural grant program.

First Round of Funding: $2M To Be Invested in 2021

BANF seeks to initiate its first round of funding by investing $2 million into BIPOC-founded and led organizations and fiscally-sponsored artist collectives that promote, preserve, and celebrate Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other communities of color through arts and cultural programming. The application is open to the Greater Houston Region, including Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller counties.

How We’re Funded

Tethered to the Ford Foundation’s America’s Cultural Treasures (ACT) national initiative, BANF is one of seven regional initiatives addressing structural discrimination and inequities in arts funding. With lead funding from Houston Endowment and the Ford Foundation, this grant is made possible with early commitments of four other local foundations, including The Brown Foundation, The Cullen Foundation, Kinder Foundation and Powell Foundation.

Where We Are Today and Where We Aim To Be

Over the last year, the arts and culture sector has been deeply impacted by disasters. In 2020, Houston lost 42,500 creative industry jobs and $1.6 billion in sales in four months. The South, Texas and Houston are among the most devastated. At the metropolitan level, the Houston area is the largest metro suffering significant losses.

BANF understands the urgency to support the BIPOC arts ecosystem during this challenging time as we seek to efficiently award $2 million in funds by the end of 2021.

Beyond the first round of funding, BANF seeks to listen and then act on the needs of BIPOC arts organizations and artists by collaboratively designing programs and community-building networking initiatives that revolutionize the local funding landscape, break down silos within the arts ecosystem, and welcome everyone to support and learn from BIPOC communities.
Eligibility Overview

Nonprofit organizations with arts and cultural programming and fiscally sponsored artist collectives that meet all of the below criteria are invited to apply.

- **BIPOC History and Leadership** – Founded, led by, and serving Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian Pacific Islander and/or other communities of color

- **BIPOC Focus** – Strategic focus on stewarding and sustaining artistic and/or cultural traditions rooted in a specific/defined community of color and elevating awareness of that community’s contribution to regional culture

- **Arts and Culture Focus** – Organization and entity have an arts and culture focus that is significant to their organizational programs and budget

- **History of Community Impact** – Demonstrated history of supporting and engaging with their specified or defined community of color

- **BIPOC Cultural Legacies** – A recognized source of inspiration, support, and/or contribution to the history, culture, vibrancy, and identity of BIPOC artists and Houston residents
# Complete Eligibility Requirements

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<th>Who is Eligible to Apply</th>
<th>Who is Ineligible to Apply</th>
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| **Organization Type**    | • Educational institutions that lead to a degree or diploma, including but not limited to private or public schools or scholarship programs, colleges and universities. This includes departments and programs therein, except for arts organizations that possess independent 501(c)(3) status.  
• K-12 Educational Institutions  
• Municipal or County government agencies and departments.  
• Individual artists that are not a part of a collective with its own 501(c)(3) status or a fiscally sponsored entity. |
| Applicant is a nonprofit and/or collective with fiscal sponsorship |  |
| **Geographical**         |  |
| Applicants whose address is located in and serve the 9-County Region of Greater Houston. Counties include:  
• Austin County  
• Brazoria County  
• Chambers County  
• Fort Bend County  
• Galveston County  
• Harris County  
• Liberty County  
• Montgomery County  
• Waller County |  |
| **BIPOC History**        |  |
| Entities who are BIPOC Founded and have a demonstrated history and current pattern of the organization being led by, featuring, and serving Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, or other specific/defined communities of color in the Greater Houston Area. Applicants must demonstrate 60%+ BIPOC staff or leadership |  |
| **Cultural Identity**    |  |
| Have a focus on stewarding and sustaining works, artistic and/or cultural traditions of BIPOC artists/communities and elevating awareness of that community's contribution to American culture |  |
| **Organizational Structure & Programming** |  |
| Organizations must have an arts and cultural focus or consistently present, produce, or maintain arts and culture programming that is equivalent to:  
• 15% of annual operating expenses (after capital expenses) and/or  
• an arts/culture program budget that is 20%+ of all programmatic expenses |  |
| **Organizational Capacity** |  |
| Have staff or identified personnel who can support the management and execution of the funds. |  |
| **Funding Support**      | The following is a nonexclusive list of costs that would not be eligible expenditures of grants from BANF:  
• Damages covered by insurance.  
• Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal program.  
• Reimbursement to donors for donated items or services.  
• Legal settlements.  |
| The following is a nonexclusive list of costs that are eligible expenditures of grants from BANF:  
• Staff and personnel  
• Paying off organizational debt/financial solvency  
• Equipment and infrastructure  
• Existing or new programming  
• Training and expertise building  
• Rent and mortgage  
• Insurance |  |
Additional Eligibility Requirements for Collectives

Artist collectives must apply with a fiscal sponsor. A fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit corporation with 501(c)(3) status that applies for financial support on behalf of another organization to receive benefits of a tax-exempt status.

The following documents are required for collectives:

- Fiscal Sponsor Agreement: Applicant must provide proof of fiscal sponsorship with a fiscal sponsor agreement signed by the “Fiscal Sponsor Authorizing Agent.”

Signs of A Strong Grant-Funding Prospect

- Mission Match: A clear tie between your organization’s mission and helping BIPOC communities display their power, values and traditions.
- Geographic Focus: A clear alignment with the nine-county geographic location and community.
- Demographic Focus: A clear alignment with your BIPOC leadership and service to BIPOC key constituencies.

Signs that this grant might not be a match:

- Lack of Connection: A lack of existing BIPOC leadership and service to BIPOC key constituencies.
- Mission Mismatch: applicant does not have an arts and culture focus, as demonstrated by mission or long-term arts programming.

Click here to view the BANF Application Worksheet.
Grant Application Review Process

Applications undergo a multi-step review process as follows:

**Step 1: Eligibility Review - Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) Grants Staff**
Applications are reviewed by HAA Grants staff to verify eligibility. HAA is an operational partner to BANF and will provide operational and infrastructure support. HAA has no decision-making power within the BANF grantmaking process.

**Step 2: Panel Review - Accountability & Advisory Council with Community Nominated Reviewers**
BANF is committed to building equitable processes in grantmaking. We are creating processes informed by and inclusive of community members.

We are currently calling for nominations for community reviewers. These leaders in the arts community may include independent artists, educators, patrons, community leaders and organizers. The selected reviewers will join BANF’s Accountability & Advisory Council to engage in a peer-review process to consider grant applications. The Accountability & Advisory Council and the Community Nominated Reviewers will collaboratively develop additional criteria and scoring rubrics if they are needed. We will release the final criteria and methodology in December along with the announcement of the awardees.

**Step 3: Verification and Approvals**
Accountability & Advisory Council will forward all recommendations to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee with Project Director will resolve any outstanding questions and finalize allocations.
Roles & Responsibilities

BANF is structured as a collaborative, multi-phase fund and a resource network guided by funders, artists, and nonprofit leaders in the region. Acknowledging historical underinvestment in Houston BIPOC cultures and art communities, the initiative aims to increase philanthropic support to collective grantmaking and facilitate new connections between funders and prospective grantees through shared decision-making authority.

BANF is led by Project Director Sixto Wagan with a seven-member Steering Committee that currently guides core programmatic goals and sets immediate priorities. The Steering Committee works in conjunction with the nine-member Accountability and Advisory Council (AAC). The AAC is a diverse group of artists, curators, scholars, organizational leaders and foundation partners who work with the Project Director and Steering Committee to develop and advise on the strategic vision, language, and community impacts.

BANF continues to develop and evolve. In 2022, BANF will build a Community Board (CB) that brings together donors to make decisions in partnership with leaders and members from the very community they seek to serve. The CB is envisioned as a 13-member body comprised of foundation partners, artists, arts professionals and community leaders.

BANF leadership utilizes dialogue and collective process to engage thought leaders from different sectors of Greater Houston’s BIPOC arts ecosystem to better educate ourselves, each other, and build a more cohesive and powerful community.

Houston Arts Alliance
- Operational Partner to BANF
- Provide grants administration, financial and technological services, administrative support
- Eligibility Verification

Accountability & Advisory Council and Panel
- Review applications using the review criteria
- Documents scores and comments

Steering Committee
- Finalize allocations
- Approve for funding
Award Determination

By December 2021, BANF will invest $2 million into our local arts community, and will support a broad range of applicants from varying organizational sizes and budgets, different areas of the Greater Houston Area, and cultural communities. Awards are up to 50% of the applicant's operating budget and capped at $50,000.

Grant Recipient Requirements

BANF will not require a traditional Final Report from grantees awarded in this round. We will ask all grantees to designate at least one representative from the leadership team to attend a Listening/Learning Session scheduled in 2022. We will announce dates and locations with the award letters in December 2021. Additionally, we will welcome videos or notes that demonstrate what this funding will make/have made possible.

Key Dates

Application Open
Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 10 AM CST

InfoSessions
Weeks of September 20, 2021 to October 11, 2021
Information sessions will include instructions for applying and information on the application process.

Application Due
Friday, October 22, 2021 at 5 PM CST

Application Review
Monday, October 25, 2021 through Friday, December 10, 2021.

Award Notifications
BANF will notify all awardees by December 20, 2021. Payments will be disbursed in January.
**Assistance**

The BANF Team provides application support via information sessions, scheduled meetings, phone calls and submissions to the [Support Desk](mailto:info@houstonbanf.org).

Spanish language assistance is available upon request, and BANF & HAA staff are available to provide technical assistance to people with disabilities. If you have any questions or need assistance, please email through the info@houstonbanf.org or call us Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. CDT, 713-581-6148.

BANF will assess additional assistance in other languages based on demand.

Note: On grant deadline dates, the Support Team is available for technical assistance with online application technology only due the high volume of calls, Support Desk inquiries and emails.

Visit [www.houstonbanf.org](http://www.houstonbanf.org) to learn more about information session opportunities, review frequently asked questions, and sign up to receive email updates.

**Glossary of Terms**

**Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)**
A term adopted to replace People of Color in an effort to undo Native invisibility, anti-Blackness, dismantle white supremacy, and advance racial justice and highlight the unique relationship to whiteness that Indigenous and Black (African Americans) people have, which shapes the experiences of and relationship to white supremacy for all people of color within a U.S. context.

**Collaborator**
A permission level in Submittable designated by the organizational applicant to include input on an application.

**Collective**
For this funding opportunity, a collective refers to an artist-led entity that comes together to support a mission beyond individual artistic practices. Many collectives also demonstrate a non-hierarchical leadership structure and commonly utilize consensus-driven decision-making.

**Fiscal Sponsor**
A nonprofit corporation with 501(c)(3) status who applies for financial support on behalf of another organization/collective in order to receive benefits of a tax exempt status.

**Fiscally Sponsored Project**
For the purposes of this funding opportunity, refers to a collective or organization of artists/creative-focused community members operating without a 501c3 nonprofit designation. They must have a history of working together (in some capacity) toward some community benefit and are demonstrating leadership for BIPOC cultural communities.