

Innovation Grants — 2017

OPERA America

OVERVIEW

INTENT TO APPLY

INNOVATION GRANTS

GENEROUSLY FUNDED BY THE ANN AND GORDON GETTY FOUNDATION

OPERA America's Innovation Grants support vibrant Professional Company Members (PCMs) in implementing innovative projects in opera's most important areas of practice, including artistic vitality, audience experience, organizational effectiveness and community connections. This new program begins in fiscal year 2017 with deeply appreciated funding from the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation and will provide up to \$1.5 million in awards on an annual basis.

The program enables companies of all sizes to increase their investment in experimentation and innovation, and contribute to field-wide learning. Grants will support projects that are (a) efforts new to the field; (b) adaptations or applications of strategies that have been implemented elsewhere, but are new to the applicant company or its community; and (c) refinements or enhancements to proven organizational strategies that merit continued development. The most competitive proposals will be those that demonstrate effective leadership and an organization's capacity to derive learning from the projects. In addition, OPERA America will also coordinate research and documentation, and disseminate resources to share lessons learned from the projects.

Complete [Grant Guidelines](#), and [Worksheets](#) may be downloaded by clicking the hyperlinks above.

For more information, contact Leah D. Barto, director of learning and leadership, at LBarto@operaamerica.org

[OPERA America Grants](#)

INTENT TO APPLY FORM

Professional Company Member in Good Standing*

All of OPERA America's U.S. and Canadian Professional Company Members in good standing are eligible to apply. To be in good standing, your organization must be:

- Current in the payment of membership dues;
- A Professional Company Member for at least one year (since July 1, 2016);
- Current in the completion of the most recent Professional Opera Survey;
- Current in the updating the Membership Director Staff Listings and Schedule of Performances; and
- Current in the submission of reports from any prior OPERA America grants.

Choices

I affirm that my organization is in good standing and eligible for this grant.

I will make all necessary arrangements to complete the requirements before January 1.

Comments:

Character Limit: 500

Display of OPERA America Logo*

Please provide the URL of the page on your website where the OPERA America logo (with hyperlink) is displayed. If the logo appears on multiple pages, please provide the most prominent location.

The current OPERA America logo may be downloaded from [here](#).

Character Limit: 2000

Project Title*

Either official or working title.

Character Limit: 200

Brief Project Description*

Character Limit: 1000

Innovation Type*

The proposed project is:

- An effort new to the field.
- An adaptation or application of a strategy that has been implemented elsewhere, but is new to the company or community.

- A refinement or enhancement of a proven organizational strategy that merits continued development.

Choices

An effort new to the field.

An adaptation or application of a strategy.

A refinement or enhancement.

Area of Practice*

Select one or more that most closely aligns with the challenge or opportunity that your project will address. See the Guidelines for further details.

Choices

Artistic Vitality

Audience Experience

Organizational Effectiveness

Community Connections

Deriving Learning*

Describe your plans for documenting and evaluating the activities. Explain how this project will advance field-wide learning.

Character Limit: 1100

Existing Grants

Do you currently have an open grant with OPERA America?

Please mark all applicable grant programs.

Choices

Building Opera Audiences

The Opera Fund: Audience Development

The Opera Fund: Repertoire Development

Opera Grants for Female Composers: Commissioning

New Works Exploration

Two-Year Awards

Applicant companies that describe multiyear approaches (projects spanning more than one year) may request consideration for two-year awards. Please indicate if your company intends to request a one-year or two-year award.

Choices

One-year award

Two-year award

Grant Activity Period — Start Date*

Grant activities may begin as early as July 1, 2017, and end as late as June 30, 2018, for one-year awards and June 30, 2019, for two-year awards.

Please enter the start date of your grant activity.

Character Limit: 10

Grant Activity Period — End Date*

Please enter the end date of your grant activity.

Character Limit: 10

Consortia

Projects involving collaboration between two or more PCMs are eligible. Each PCM may apply for funds related to its own role in the project. As applicable, list any collaborating PCMs also applying for a 2017 Innovation Grant for the same project.

Character Limit: 1000

Operating Expense*

From your most recently completed fiscal year as it appears on your Dues Assessment Form submitted to OPERA America.

Please enter without commas or currency signs, in the format XXXXXX.XX

Character Limit: 20

Your Intent to Apply can be edited up until the point it is submitted. Please save your work before exiting.

Your saved Intent to Apply can be found in the Applicant Dashboard, under the REQUESTS heading in the left-hand column at the top of the page.

Once your Intent to Apply is submitted, the status on the Application Dashboard will change to SUBMITTED.

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OPERA America

PROJECT

GRANT APPLICATION

Please refer to the [Grant Guidelines](#) for information regarding grant objectives and application procedures.

For more information, contact Leah D. Barto, director of learning and leadership, at LBarto@operaamerica.org.

Project Title*

Either the title or working title. The field is auto populated with your entry on the Letter of Intent. Please modify here, if appropriate.

Character Limit: 200

Grant Activity Period — Start Date*

Grant activities may begin as early as July 1, 2017 and end as late as June 30, 2018 for one-year awards, and June 30, 2019 for two-year awards.

Please confirm the start date of your grant activity. Please adjust if this is different than reported in your Letter of Intent.

Character Limit: 10

Grant Activity Period — End Date*

Please confirm the end date of your grant activity. Please adjust if this is different than reported in your Letter of Intent.

Character Limit: 10

Innovation Type*

In the LOI, you identified the project as one of the following types of innovation. Please reconfirm the type of project that is being submitted.

- An effort new to the field.
- An adaptation or application of a strategy that has been implemented elsewhere, but is new to the company or community.

- A refinement or enhancement of a proven organizational strategy that merits continued development.

Choices

An effort new to the field.

An adaptation or application of a strategy.

A refinement or enhancement.

Area of Practice*

In the Letter of Intent, you selected one or more areas of practices that most closely align with the challenge or opportunity that your project will address. Please reconfirm your your area or areas of practice.

Choices

Artistic Vitality

Audience Experience

Organizational Effectiveness

Community Connections

SECTION A: ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

PART 1: NARRATIVE

This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your company's organizational health and ability to fulfill its mission. The entire narrative should not exceed 2,000 words and it is recommended that you respond to each of the points (a.-g.) with equal weight. The questions below provide recommended key elements to include in your response, but you may wish to highlight other aspects to best demonstrate your company's strengths as it relates to the criteria in the Guidelines.

ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

a. Artistic Vision, Policies and Planning

What are your company's current artistic priorities? How are seasons planned, reviewed and approved? How do company leaders assess whether each season has strengthened the company's reputation?

b. Community Connections

Describe relevant, established partnerships your company has with other arts and/or non-arts organizations. How were these partnerships established and how have they benefited all parties?

c. Staffing

What is your company's staff structure? How does the staff work together to achieve organizational goals?

d. Governance

Describe the working relationship between your board and staff. How do board members monitor the company's progress? In what ways is the board most successful in advancing the company's mission?

e. Financial Health

What is the overall financial condition of your company? Please tell us about recent changes in your budget, cash reserve and/or endowment. What is the process by which your company creates, approves and monitors your annual budget?

Submission of an organizational budget is not necessary. OPERA America will create a financial profile from the information you have provided in your Professional Opera Survey. Provide any additional notes here to accompany that financial information.

MISSION FULFILLMENT

f. Organizational Planning

Does your company have a strategic plan? Does that plan describe a primary objective for the company? How is progress toward this objective measured? How is the plan updated?

LEARNING CAPACITY

g. Organizational Learning

Provide an example of how your company has learned and adapted to address a challenge or opportunity. How has your company demonstrated resiliency in recent years? Has your company adapted an existing practice from other arts or non-arts organizations to develop a new program or strategy; if so, how?

Narrative Submission*

Please upload your narrative statement through the link below. Documents may only be submitted in PDF format.

File Size Limit: 2 MB

PART 2: PAST REPERTOIRE

Please upload a list of your company's repertoire for the last three seasons and next two seasons, if available. Use a table format to include production information that best demonstrates your organization's artistic vision.

Repertoire Submission*

Please include column headings of:

- season,
- title,
- composer/librettist,
- creative team,
- significant artists,
- premiere, and
- other notes.

PDF format is required, 2 page maximum.

File Size Limit: 1 MB

SECTION B: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Award Eligibility

Eligible Grant Award Amount:

Character Limit: 20

Requested Amount:*

Please enter without commas or currency signs, in the format XXXXX.XX

Character Limit: 20

Two-Year Awards*

Applicant companies that describe multiyear approaches (projects spanning more than one year) may request consideration for two-year awards. You indicated the following in your Letter of Intent. Please modify if this has changed from your Letter of Intent.

Choices

One-year award

Two-year award

PART 1: NARRATIVE

INNOVATION

A. Statement of Opportunity and Project Overview*

- Describe your project. What is the specific opportunity your project will address, and how will your company achieve the desired results? Explain how you arrived at this approach.
- Provide an overview of how the project relates to one or more of the key areas of practice.
- In what ways is the project distinctive and courageous as (a) an effort new to the field; (b) an adaptation or application of a strategy that has been implemented elsewhere, but is new to your company or community; or (c) a refinement or enhancement of a proven organizational strategy that merits of continued development?

Character Limit: 3000

B. Planning and Management*

- A detailed project budget is not required. Instead, briefly describe major costs that the grant would cover. List the categories of expenses (e.g., research consultation, marketing and promotion, project administration, equipment and supplies). Please differentiate between the allocation of the grant funds toward conducting the activity and the funds allocated toward helping your organization derive learning from the activity.
- Include a timeline of project activities.
- Explain the roles of opera company personnel and the commitments from organizational partners or other constituents, as applicable.

Character Limit: 3000

LEARNING CAPACITY

C. Statement of Learning*

- Outline how the project incorporates opportunities for your organization to learn and advance its own practice (e.g., research, documentation, evaluation). Explain how this builds on learning from past activity, if applicable.
- Evaluation: How will you know if it is working? Explain how you will measure the effectiveness of your plans. What valuable learning can be derived from this activity and conveyed to other companies?
- Documentation: Explain your plans for documenting the activities, especially so that these practices can be shared more widely.

Character Limit: 3000

OPTIONAL SECTIONS

D. Two-Year Awards

Companies with exceptional programs and strategies that will be implemented and assessed over more than one year are eligible to receive funding for two years. Companies receiving two-year awards will be required to complete an interim report after the first year. If you do not wish to be considered for a multi-year award, leave blank. Please tell us how your plans are designed to extend over at least two years.

1. How would your company benefit from a two-year award?
2. Discuss additional plans for implementation, measurement and refinement over this extended period

Character Limit: 3000

E. Consortia

Projects involving collaboration between two or more Professional Opera Companies are eligible. If you are applying as part of a consortium, please explain the nature and terms of the collaboration. A copy of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) may be requested.

1. Rationale. In what ways will collaboration among companies benefit the project?
2. Roles and Responsibilities. What will your organization lead or offer? What will the other opera company(ies) provide?

Character Limit: 3000

F. Reference Material

You may provide additional, pertinent information to help the panel better understand your project. Note: This is not a requirement.

If, however, supplemental material will provide additional insight into your project, you may submit up to three URL links to online content (e.g., Webpage, YouTube, SoundCloud) or file sharing platforms (e.g., DropBox, GoogleDrive). Limit the total content so that all items can be reviewed within a reasonable amount of time (5-10 minutes).

Examples: a video excerpt, a webpage demonstrating model projects from other organizations, memorandum of understanding.

Link #1

Character Limit: 2000

Link #2

Character Limit: 2000

Link #3

Character Limit: 2000

PART 2. BUDGET

Use the downloadable Excel spreadsheet template and edit it before submitting. This preliminary budget will be used to help the panel and OPERA America understand the key cost centers for the project and the overall scope of the activity.

Upon approval, grantees will be asked to submit a revised version, indicate the expected allocation of the award and other sources of income, as applicable (Indicated as shaded sections in the template).

This additional information will only be used to better understand your organization's practices for implementing or adapting to the project needs, not as an evaluation tool impacting future grant consideration

The template may be downloaded here: [INNOVATION BUDGET TEMPLATE](#).

Project Budget*

Please upload the project budget here. MS Excel format only.

File Size Limit: 1 MB

Your Application can be edited up until the point it is submitted. Please save your work before exiting.

Your saved Application can be found in the Applicant Dashboard, under the REQUESTS heading in the left-hand column at the top of the page.

Once your Application is submitted, the status on the Application Dashboard will change to SUBMITTED.

CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTIFICATIONS

Please provide contact information for your chief executive officer to receive official grant-related correspondence.

Salutation (Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc)*

Character Limit: 6

First Name*

Character Limit: 50

Middle Name or Initial

Character Limit: 15

Last Name*

Character Limit: 30

Suffix

Character Limit: 10

Title*

Character Limit: 30

Email*

Character Limit: 254