

THE NATIONAL **OPERA** CENTER **AMERICA**

Opera Grants for Female Composers Commissioning Grants (2017)

Supported by The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation

2017 Guidelines and Application Procedures

Important Dates

- **Intent to Apply available:** March 2017
- **Intent to Apply deadline:** April 19, 2017 (required for access to full application)
- **Application deadline:** May 17, 2017, at 11:59 p.m. EDT
- **Applications adjudicated:** June 2017
- **Grantees notified:** June 2017

Apply at grants.operaamerica.org

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Opera Grants for Female Composers 2017 Guidelines and Application Procedures

OPERA America has long been committed to increasing the quantity and quality of new American operas, granting nearly \$13 million to member companies in support of the creation, production and enjoyment of new works over the last 25 years. Until 2014, fewer than five percent of those grants had been awarded to works by female composers. Opera Grants for Female Composers will provide support for the development of new operas by women, both directly to individual composers and to OPERA America Professional Company Members, advancing the important objective to increase diversity across the field.

Goal

In 2017, Commissioning Grants will help support the commissioning of works by female composers by OPERA America Professional Company Members. Grants of as much as \$50,000 will cover up to 50 percent of a female composer's fee for a full production of a commissioned new work.

Funder

Opera Grants for Female Composers is funded by The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

Supported Activity

Commissioning grants are intended to help offset the composer's contract fee relating to the commission of a fully produced new work.

Eligibility

- The applicant must be a Professional Company Member (PCM) of OPERA America.
- The work's composer must be female and a United States citizen or permanent resident.
- The commissioning agreement, if not already signed, must be fully executed by June 30, 2018.
- The work cannot premiere before **July 1, 2017**.
- The work must be scheduled to premiere no later than August 31, 2020.
- The applicant must be actively involved with producing the work and serve as the fiscal agent for this piece.
- A piece that has already had its premiere is not eligible for consideration.
- Commissioning Grants **do not fund** lab productions, workshops, readings or working performances.
- Works that have received past developmental support from OPERA America are eligible for Opera Grants for Female Composers: Commissioning Grants.
- Applications will be advanced for consideration only if the applicant is current in membership dues, the submission of required surveys (including the Professional Opera Survey) and the submission of reports from prior grants.
- Applicants must have OPERA America's logo, including a hyperlink to the OPERA America website, in a prominent location on their website.

Funding Parameters

- Grants of up to \$50,000 will be awarded to cover up to 50 percent of the commissioning fee paid to the composer.
- Grant funds cannot be used to defray transportation and/or accommodation expenses related to the composer's travel in relation to the project.
- Grant funds cannot be used to offset any rehearsal, production or performance costs.
- Grant funds cannot be used to cover any administrative or overhead budget items.
- Grant funds will be disbursed in two installments: 50 percent upon receipt of a fully executed commissioning agreement and 50 percent upon the submission of a complete final report.

Timeline

The following timeline is in place for 2017 Commissioning Grants:

- **Intent to Apply available:** February 22, 2017
- **Intent to Apply deadline:** April 19, 2017 (required for access to full application)
- **Application deadline:** May 17, 2017, at 11:59 p.m. EDT
- **Applications adjudicated:** June 2017
- **Grantees notified:** June 2017

How to Apply

- Read these guidelines carefully before completing application materials.
- Applications must be submitted online at grants.operaamerica.org.
- Applicants will be advised of the suitability of the project for support and counseled on the eligibility of proposed expenses once their applications are submitted. Early submission facilitates the review and counseling process.
- Submit a complete, final application including all supplementary materials by **May 17, 2017**. Applications that are incomplete, late, or sent via fax, mail or e-mail will not be accepted.
- Contact Noah Stern Weber at 646.699.5240 or NSWeber@operaamerica.org with any questions.

Application Review

All final applications for Opera Grants for Female Composers are reviewed by an independent panel drawn from a pool of experts approved by the board of directors of OPERA America. No current board member or employee of OPERA America may serve on any panel. Individuals who stand to benefit from a grant are also ineligible to serve. Each panel represents the diverse disciplines involved in creating and producing new works. Panelists are also selected to reflect geographic diversity. Decisions of the panel are final.

The following review criteria are weighed equally by panelists to determine which applications will receive funding and at what level. Works eligible for support through Opera Grants for Female Composers must meet all criteria:

- **Artistic Merit:** Applications are judged on the artistic excellence — or the potential for excellence — of the work.
- **Quality and Distinction in Concept and Planning:** Applications are evaluated on the appropriateness, effectiveness and thoroughness of the planning process guiding the commissioning, development and production of the opera.
- **Evaluation:** Applications must articulate plans for evaluation of the work.

- **Organizational Resources:** Applications must convey the degree to which the applicant organization is able to carry out the proposed production. Managerial and artistic support, staff experience and financial resources will be considered.

An application is more likely to receive funding when it reflects the commitment of the company's professional leaders to the work. The company's leaders and other key individuals should be involved in the development of the application. These individuals should be available to OPERA America staff to answer questions about the application.

The most competitive applications will include examples of recent compositions that demonstrate the composer's ability to write a theatrical work for classically trained voices and orchestra.

Grant Announcement

- All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their requests when the panel completes its review.
- All grant letters will contain an end date for the grant period. Requests for extensions must be made in writing.
- Funds may be withheld by OPERA America if a company is not current in its membership dues, the submission of required surveys or the submission of reports from prior grants.
- In general, advances of up to 50 percent of the grant amount will be extended upon request. The balance of the grant will be paid upon satisfactory completion of the narrative and financial reporting requirements following opening night of the production.
- All Opera Grants for Female Composers are restricted to the work described in the application. Funds advanced to the grantee by OPERA America must be repaid in the event the approved production is not carried out.
- The receipt of a grant at any stage of a project or activity does not guarantee continued support from OPERA America.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will receive an award letter explaining the grant's terms and conditions, including financial documentation and narrative reporting requirements. These reports will be reviewed by the OPERA America staff. All reporting requirements must be completed before the grant will be fully paid.

Grantees are required to acknowledge OPERA America and other funders in the manner described by OPERA America in the award letter. Opera Grants for Female Composers recipients must maintain OPERA America's logo, including a hyperlink to OPERA America's website, in a prominent location on their websites and in program copy for performances of the work. Proof of these acknowledgments is necessary for the grant to be processed.

Opera Grants for Female Composers recipients may be asked to submit additional documentation or cooperate with OPERA America in sharing the results of their projects with the field. Applicants may be invited to provide information on the results of projects, even when not supported by Opera Grants for Female Composers.

Staff Contact Information

For more information, contact Noah Stern Weber at 646.699.5240 or NWeber@operaamerica.org.