

**BELONGING IN OAKLAND: A JUST CITY CULTURAL FUND**  
**A Partnership of City of Oakland's Cultural Affairs Division, Akonadi Foundation,**  
**and East Bay Community Foundation**

**GUIDELINES**

*Progressive art can assist people to learn not only about the objective forces at work in the society in which they live, but also about the intensely social character of their interior lives. Ultimately, it can propel people toward social emancipation.*

*- Angela Y. Davis, [Women, Culture, and Politics](#)*

[Note: See definitions of terms in **BOLD** in the [Glossary of Key Terms](#) on line and at the end of this document]

**OVERVIEW**

Great imagination is needed in moments of profound crisis. It is needed to help us see beyond a bewildering present and a troubled past to embrace an uncharted future. What collaborative ideas, designs, and tools will we need to craft the just, healthy, and whole city we dream of? To generate an array of answers to that question, we turn to our visionaries, artist activists, and resilient culture keepers to help us imagine new landscapes and narratives, liberate unrealized potential, recover old wisdoms, and spark radical hope.

*Belonging in Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund* is a new multi-year program that will fund Oakland cultural practitioners of color to radically reimagine a racially just city. In Year One of the program, Reflect & Reimagine grants will support breathing space and idea generation for what a just Oakland could look like, feel like, and be.

The Fund is a unique public-private partnership inspired by the values lifted up in the City of Oakland's cultural plan, [Belonging in Oakland](#). The partnership brings together the cultural equity vision of Oakland's Cultural Affairs Division, the racial justice mission of the Akonadi Foundation, and the power building commitment of East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF).

*Belonging in Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund* is made possible with major funding from [the Surdna Foundation's Thriving Cultures program](#) and additional funding from the Akonadi Foundation. [Radical Imagination for Racial Justice](#) is Surdna's national regranting initiative to enable artists of color in partnership with communities to develop imaginings and actions that foster racial justice for those most impacted by systemic racism.

**ABOUT THE FUND**

The COVID-19 pandemic has given rise to unprecedented challenges and has laid bare long-standing structural inequities of our society - evidenced in the repeated targeting of Black lives by state-sanctioned power, the continued invisibilizing of indigenous peoples, and the dehumanization of undocumented workers. We acknowledge the extraordinary circumstances that the cultural sector of communities of color are facing and recognize that undermining the culture of a people is an attack on their very being. We believe that lifting up the cultural imaginations of our Black/Indigenous/**People of Color** communities will create the visions that our society so deeply needs.

In its first year, this program will offer Reflect & Reimagine grants to support the sector as it navigates these uncertain waters and dreams of the tools, methods, and solutions not only for keeping our most vulnerable communities afloat, but visions for their ability to thrive.

Year One: Twelve Reflect & Reimagine grants of \$25,000 will be awarded in this round.

For Years Two and Three, the Fund will seek applications for the implementation of community-centered cultural projects that amplify the voices of people most impacted by systemic racism and inequality. Though Year One grants may help to strengthen applications for Year Two and Year Three implementation grants, applicants need not have received a Year One grant to be eligible to apply in later years.

Funding Match Requirement: There is no funding match requirement for this grant.

Peer Learning: Awardees will be invited to participate in peer sharing and learning activities. (Frequency and content will be determined by the cohort of awardees in collaboration with the Fund leadership team.)

Project Requirement: At the end of the grant period, awardees are to submit a work in their preferred medium or a written piece that expresses or explains their idea for a **radically imagined, racially just** Oakland related to the community they are rooted in.

**Racial Justice:** The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice—or racial equity—goes beyond “anti-racism.” It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures. (Definition adapted from Race Forward)

**Radical Imagination:** The ability to imagine the world, life, and social institutions not as they are, but as they might be in a just world. It is the courage and the intelligence to recognize that the world can be changed. *Radical imagination* is about calling on the past, telling different stories about how the world came to be the way it is, and remembering the power and importance of past struggles and the way their spirits live on in the present. It calls on our capacity to imagine how to make common cause with other people, and undergirds our ability to build solidarity across boundaries and borders, real or imagined. (Definition adapted from writings by Alex Khasnabish and Max Haiven)

## WHO CAN APPLY

The purpose of the program is to support **cultural practitioners** of color to creatively reimagine Oakland as a truly racially just and culturally equitable city. The Fund acknowledges and values the complexity of **intersectional** experiences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, faith, class, and other identities and encourages projects that honor these complexities as assets for a just Oakland.

Applicants must be:

- a cultural practitioner of color who is based in and rooted in Oakland
- a group/collective of cultural practitioners led by people of color based and rooted in Oakland
- an Oakland-based cultural organization led by people of color

**AND** must have

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, **or**
- a mission-aligned 501(c)(3) **fiscal sponsor**.

Groups/collectives of cultural practitioners may include non-Oakland-based members, but must be led by Oaklanders; and may not be exclusively made up of people of color, but must be led by people of color.

501(c)(3) fiscal sponsors are not required to be led by people of color nor does it have to be located in Oakland.

If awarded a grant, the fiscal sponsor of a project must be prepared to submit a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the mutual obligations of the fiscal sponsor and the person or entity it is sponsoring.

Please click [here](#) for more information about responsibilities of fiscal sponsors, and/or how to create an MOU for a sponsored project, or contact Katherin Canton at 510-999-4137 or [justcityfund@eastbaycf.org](mailto:justcityfund@eastbaycf.org).

**Cultural Practitioners:** Artists, artist-activists, traditional culture bearers/keepers, griots/storytellers, craftspeople, creative placemakers and -keepers, cultural strategists, community historians/elders, or other visionaries.

**Intersectionality:** The concept of one's being disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression based on the intersections of social identities such as race, ethnicity, class, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, and religion. Intersectionality recognizes that identities do not exist independently of each other, and that each informs the others, often creating a complex convergence of oppression. (Definition adapted from [YW Boston](#) of a term coined by [Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw](#))

**People of Color:** People who are not of exclusively European parentage or White identified. For the purposes of this program, people of color will include inter-racial people with both White and non-White heritage and who identify as people of color.

**Fiscal Sponsor:** A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that is mission-aligned with the project it is sponsoring and is willing and able to assume the legal responsibility to receive and administer grant funds in compliance with requirements.

## WHAT WE WILL FUND

Grants will be awarded to individual artists/cultural practitioners as well as to artist collectives or cultural organizations that work with multiple artists. We hope these awards will seed as much imagination as possible. Grant funds may be used for the expenses that will make your reflection and reimagination possible. We value fair compensation for cultural labor. We also value providing cultural practitioners (particularly independent contractors) with funds for life sustaining expenses -- such as wellness, healthcare, childcare, food, student debt, rent, utilities, etc. -- in addition to payment for labor.

## WHAT WE WILL NOT FUND

We are unable to fund activities intended to influence the outcome of any specific election for candidates to public office.

## HOW TO APPLY

### APPLICATION PROCESS

Please read the guidelines and application text carefully before starting an [online application](#). PDFs of these guidelines and the application text can be found at the bottom of this page. The [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) will be updated during the application process, so please check back periodically for new information. **The Application deadline is Monday, July 13, 2020, at 11:59 pm.**

Applying to the Fund may only be done through East Bay Community Foundation's [online portal](#). Only applications submitted through the portal will be eligible for consideration. **Late applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications may be deemed ineligible.**

Please review the program timeline for important dates.

### APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

We will host two how-to-apply webinars, during which attendees will be able to ask questions.

1. Monday, June 22, 10:00 am - 11:30 am: [Register for the Zoom webinar](#)
  - a. This webinar will be archived on the program website, by Thursday, June 25, 2020 for viewing should you be unable to attend.
2. Wednesday, June 24, 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm: [Register for the Zoom Webinar](#)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend or view the webinars before applying to the program.

Application questions will be answered by phone or email up to the deadline, as possible. We encourage you to begin your application at least a week before the submission deadline. For assistance contact Katherin Canton at 510-999-4137, [justcityfund@eastbaycf.org](mailto:justcityfund@eastbaycf.org).

## REVIEW PROCESS & TIMELINE

### REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed based on the following characteristics:

#### Quality of radical imagination of a just Oakland

- For example, depth and resonance of the issues to be reflected on, the imaginings of a just Oakland, and their effect on the community/ies of color impacted by **systemic racism**; strength of the vision of social transformation

#### Depth of cultural/aesthetic practice

- For example, depth and resonance of the cultural/aesthetic practice involved with the project; depth of creativity, inquiry, and meaning-making; strength of interconnection between creativity, aesthetics, and values

#### Depth of relationship with community/ies impacted by systemic racism

- For example, participants' knowledge and experience of, relationships in, and sense of **belonging** in the community/ies of color centered in the project

In addition to these criteria, factors such as geographic, cultural, and issue diversity, may also be considered in selecting the final slate of awards.

**Belonging:** Within the civic realm, *belonging* is tied to people's ability to lead meaningful lives, to be connected to the place they live in, and the people they live among, and to feel a part of something larger than themselves. We believe to cultivate *belonging*, there must be more equitable racial, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions for self-expression, mutual respect, empathy, and acceptance. These conditions cannot be fulfilled without an understanding of the breadth of cultural diversity in Oakland and how different forms of expression have different needs. (Definition from the City of Oakland's [cultural plan](#))

**Systemic/Structural Racism:** Systemic/structural racism in the U.S. is the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics—historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal—that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. It is a system of hierarchy and inequity, primarily characterized by white supremacy—the preferential treatment, privilege, and power for White people at the expense of Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, SWANA (Southwest Asian, North African) and other racially oppressed people. (Definition adapted from [Structural Racism](#) by Keith Lawrence and Terry Keleher)

## REVIEW PROCESS

The Fund leadership team will convene an application review panel of cultural leaders and activists who understand the historical grounding and cultures of a wide range of communities of color in Oakland. The review panel will include members of communities most impacted by

racial injustice. In assembling the panel, the Fund will create a thoughtful mix of racial, ethnic, age, and gender considerations that is inclusive of LGBTQ+ people of color.

The review panel will make recommendations to the Fund’s leadership team, who will finalize a slate of awardees that respects panel recommendations and reflects the equity-centered values of the Fund. Proposed awardees will be reviewed and approved by the East Bay Community Foundation. Representative(s) from the [Surdna Foundation](#) may be present at the panel review meeting.

## PROGRAM TIMELINE

Application Portal Opens	Monday, June 15, 2020
Application Webinars	Webinars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday, June 22, 10-11:30 am: <a href="#">Register</a></li> <li>Wednesday, June 24, 5-6:30 pm: <a href="#">Register</a></li> </ul>
Application Deadline – late applications will be not be accepted	<b>Monday, July 13, 2020, 11:59 pm</b> Applications must be submitted online through <a href="#">EBCF’s application portal</a>
Award Notification	Mid-August, 2020
Funding Period Begins	August 2020
Awardee Convening	September 2020
End of Project Period	August 31, 2021
Reflection Piece/Work Due	August 31, 2021

## GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

**Belonging:** Within the civic realm, *belonging* is tied to people’s ability to lead meaningful lives, to be connected to the place they live in, and the people they live among, and to feel a part of something larger than themselves. We believe to cultivate *belonging*, there must be more equitable racial, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions for self-expression, mutual respect, empathy, and acceptance. These conditions cannot be fulfilled without an understanding of the breadth of cultural diversity in Oakland and how different forms of expression have different needs. (Definition from the City of Oakland’s [cultural plan](#))

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**Fiscal Sponsor:** A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that is mission-aligned with the project it is sponsoring and is willing and able to assume the legal responsibility to receive and administer grant funds in compliance with requirements.

**In-Kind:** An *in-kind* contribution is a non-monetary contribution of goods or services that are offered free or at a reduced rate. The time, skills, and knowledge that participants contribute to a project can be counted as *in-kind* contributions, as can materials and supplies.

**Intersectionality:** The concept of one's being disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression based on the intersections of social identities such as race, ethnicity, class, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, and religion. Intersectionality recognizes that identities do not exist independently of each other, and that each informs the others, often creating a complex convergence of oppression. (Definition adapted from [YW Boston](#) of a term coined by [Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw](#))

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