



New & Experimental Works (NEW) Program

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Kenneth
Rainin
FOUNDATION

The Kenneth Rainin Foundation enhances quality of life by championing the arts, promoting early childhood literacy and supporting research to cure chronic disease.

The NEW Program supports small and mid-size dance, theater and multidisciplinary arts organizations to produce timely, visionary projects relevant to community.

NEW Program Priorities



*David Herrera Performance Company's "Órale."
Photo credit: Marisa Aragona*

- ❖ Small & mid-size orgs
- ❖ New works
- ❖ Compelling & timely
- ❖ Boundary pushing
- ❖ Community connection
- ❖ Artist compensation
- ❖ Outdoor, site-specific, alternative venues

NEW Program Eligibility

The NEW Program supports organizations that:

- ❖ Are a 501(c)(3) or fiscally sponsored
- ❖ Have a \$10,000 minimum annual budget
- ❖ Are located in the Bay Area, with priority given to those in San Francisco & Oakland
- ❖ Are grounded in dance and/or theater



KAMBARA+'s "IKKAI means once: a transplanted pilgrimage." Photo credit: Bruce Mui Ghent

NEW Program Timeline



*Risa Jaroslow & Dancers' "Talking Circle."
Photo credit: Robbie Sweeney Photography*

- ❖ **Application Period:**
March 3 - 24, 2026
- ❖ **Application Deadline:**
March 24, 2026, at 11:59 PM
- ❖ **Panel Deliberation:**
May 2026
- ❖ **Award Notifications:**
June 2026
- ❖ **Grant Period:**
July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2028

NEW Program Criteria Explanations

New	New work is not fully developed or has not yet been presented in the Bay Area.
Experimental	Experimental work is boundary pushing or cutting edge.
Boundary Pushing	Projects that expand the boundaries of dance and/or theater and support artists in advancing their own practice.
Relevant and Timely	Projects that address timely and compelling issues relevant to the artists and communities they intend to serve.
Community Connection	Projects that consider, reflect and/or meaningfully connect to the unique communities they seek to serve.

Tips For Writing A Strong Application



Write your application in a simple and straightforward manner. Be specific about how your project meets the three primary criteria.



Provide enough context that someone less well-versed in your artistic discipline can easily grasp the project's concept and alignment with the NEW Program criteria.



If you are writing the application on behalf of an organization collaborating with an artist on a project, make sure the artistic vision is coming through in your narrative.

Tips On Articulating The Project Vision



When describing your artistic vision for the project, don't forget to describe what the piece will look and feel like in practical terms.



Address the "Who? What? When? Where?"

Tips On Preparing A Thorough Budget



Make sure your budget supports what is outlined in your project description.



Use budget notes to provide additional clarity and detailed information.

Strong Example Addressing “New & Experimental”

“We want to experiment with audience interaction and invite them into the piece, perhaps in ways they have not experienced before. Ideas include teaching a song to the audience that they sing while the dancers dance, making the audience/performer boundary malleable, and inviting the audience to tell or write their own story, while dancers move in response...And, unlike most dance performances, we will run this for several weeks like a play would, allowing the work to mature and become more cohesive, a rare experience in the dance world.”

What makes this strong?

- ❖ **It includes specific examples:** "Ideas include teaching a song to the audience that they sing while the dancers dance, making the audience/performer boundary malleable, and inviting the audience to tell or write their own story, while dancers move in response."
- ❖ **It is intentional:** "We want to work in a small, intimate way, where breath can be heard, and people can be felt kinesthetically."
- ❖ **It offers context:** "...unlike most dance performances, we will run this for several weeks like a play would, allowing the work to mature and become more cohesive, a rare experience in the dance world."

Strong Example Addressing “Relevance & Timeliness”

“Over the last year, with the escalation of inexcusable violence in the Middle East, there has been a systemic silencing of Middle Eastern voices in the American theater with only a handful of companies producing work from and for these communities. There couldn’t be a more appropriate time to help develop and present our project, which speaks to these issues with humor and directness. The play directly speaks to the knots that immigrant and Muslim artists of Middle Eastern descent must tie themselves in to make a career in the American theater.”

What makes this strong?

- ❖ **It addresses timeliness by uplifting the project's social and political context:** "Over the last year, with the escalation of inexcusable violence in the Middle East..., there has been a systemic silencing of Middle Eastern voices in the American theater with only a handful of companies producing work from and for these communities."
- ❖ **It makes a specific connection to how it is relevant to the community:** "The play directly speaks to the knots that immigrant and Muslim artists of Middle Eastern descent must tie themselves in to make a career in the American theater."

Strong Example Addressing "Community Connection"

“The intended audience for this project is an intergenerational South Asian community...The work draws from South Asian cultural expression, but expands its scope by combining elements of Western dance forms and club dance forms...With its focus on queer expression and incorporating Waacking and Vogue, this work is geared towards the LGBTQ+ community, especially LGBTQ+ communities of Color...Through partnerships with various nonprofits like the LGBTQ+ Asylum Project and Maitri Bay Area [and] collaborations with other dance organizations, we have been expanding our outreach.”

What makes this strong?

- ❖ **It clearly identifies its intended communities:** The intended audience for this project is an intergenerational South Asian community." and "With its focus on queer expression and incorporating Waacking and Vogue, this work is geared towards the LGBTQ+ community, especially LGBTQ+ communities of Color."
- ❖ **It offers specific examples of community partnerships:** "Through partnerships with various nonprofits like the LGBTQ+ Asylum Project and Maitri Bay Area [and] collaborations with other dance organizations, we have been expanding our outreach."

Navigating GivingData – Logging In

Returning Users: Sign in with your current credentials. If you don't remember them, [submit a Grants Management support ticket](#).

New Users: Click the link to create and activate your account.



[Sign In](#)

2026 New & Experimental Works (NEW) Program Application

Welcome to the 2026 New & Experimental Works (NEW) Application. For more information on the New & Experimental Works (NEW) program, including eligibility requirements, please visit our website [here](#).

NOTE: If you are a previous applicant or grantee, and you don't remember your login information, please submit a [support ticket BEFORE](#) creating a new account.

Sign In

Sign in or [create an account](#) to submit a form for 2026 New & Experimental Works (NEW) Program Application.

* **Email Address**

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Navigating GivingData – Starting An Application

+ Start a new 2026 NEW Program Application ×

Select Organization

Select the Organization for which you are submitting this 2026 NEW Program Application. If the Organization does not appear in the list, you can [add a new Organization](#).

* Organization + Add New Organization

Alex's Test Organization

Cancel Start 2026 NEW Program Application

Existing Organization

If you're a returning user, the organization is tied to your account.

New Organization

As a new user, you can add your organization's name. For fiscally sponsored projects, this should be *your* organization's name.

Navigating GivingData – Eligibility Quiz

You'll be prompted to take a three question quiz. You must answer "yes" to every question to proceed to the application.

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

Please complete the short eligibility quiz below. You must answer "yes" to every question to proceed to the application.

We encourage you to read through the [eligibility and grant requirements](#) and [frequently asked questions](#), and then [use our contact form](#) to email Arts Program Staff with any remaining questions.

*** Does the public presentation portion of your project take place between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2028?**

Grant period: Project activities must take place within the 24-month grant period, July 1, 2026-June 30, 2028

Performances must have production dates after July 1, 2026. The developmental phase of projects may begin prior to the start of the grant period.

*** Is the project's primary artistic discipline dance, theater, or multi-disciplinary?**

The Foundation primarily funds dance, theater and multidisciplinary projects. However, multidisciplinary projects must be grounded in dance and/or theater to be eligible for support.

The Foundation is unlikely to fund predominantly music-focused projects, including musicals, operas and/or other musical performances. However, many of the projects supported through the NEW Program incorporate musical elements.

*** Are you based in and/or do you have a demonstrated history of operating in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo or Santa Clara counties?**

If you're fiscally sponsored, your sponsor does not need to be based in the Bay Area.

✓ Submit

🔒 Save and Come Back Later

Navigating GivingData – Question Types

* [Common App 5a-3] In which of the following counties will the project take place?

Alameda

Contra Costa

Marin

San Francisco

San Mateo

Santa Clara

Select at least 1 and no more than 6.

Nothing Selected

* Rainin Specific: If you selected "Alameda" above, is your project proposed to take place in Oakland?

Common App

These fields come directly from the Common App. They may be ordered a little differently in the PDF.

Rainin Specific

Questions specific to the NEW Program. These don't appear on the Common App PDF, but they're on the Word Doc.

Photo Credits For The First Slide



Left: *We Love Like Barnacles: Crip Lives in Climate Chaos*. Photo courtesy of Sins Invalid

Middle: *Oaklash 2023*. Photo credit: Edgar Ruiz

Right: *Water.Bodies.Land.* at SOMArts. Photo credit: Robbie Sweeney Photography