



CA\$H Theatre GRANT

Spring 2026 Guidelines: CA\$H Creates and Performs

CA\$H THEATRE is a program of Theatre Bay Area and is funded by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Gerbode Foundation.

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OVERVIEW

PRO TIP: Be sure to review the CA\$H Theatre worksheet that applies to you. Our CA\$H worksheets list every question on the application, along with **important requirements not listed here** and tips to make your application more competitive.

Download the [application worksheet for INDIVIDUALS as a PDF](#).
 Download the [application worksheet for INDIVIDUALS as a Word doc](#).
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Download the [application worksheet for ORGANIZATIONS as a PDF](#).
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Types of CA\$H Grants

PRO TIP: Since you are only allowed to submit ONE CA\$H Theatre application per round, review all three to determine which CA\$H Theatre program best fits your needs.

<u>CA\$H Creates</u>	<u>CA\$H Performs</u>	<u>CA\$H Sustains</u>
Funds development projects and capacity-building projects	Funds fully-produced performances of theatre projects open to the public	Funds general operating support for small orgs
Both individuals and small companies based in the Bay Area are eligible to apply	Both individuals and small companies based in the Bay Area are eligible to apply	Small companies based in the Bay Area are eligible to apply
The grants are for \$2,500	These grants are for \$5,000	These grants are for \$5,000
		<i>The guidelines for CA\$H Sustains are available on our website.</i>

Applicants may submit only ONE application in each granting round. Submitting multiple applications for the same project, individual, or company will result in all applications being **disqualified**.

- **CA\$H Creates** supports **development projects** and **capacity-building projects**.
 - **Development projects** are projects that develop material for performance. Examples include script development, workshops, staged readings, development work with a dramaturg, or a devising process.
 - **Capacity-building projects** improve the applicant’s ability to create or present theatre, but aren’t tied to developing a specific production. Examples include professional development, updating your computer or lighting equipment, EDI training for your staff and board, hiring a consultant to help you start a new theatre company, or improving disability access for your space and/or website.

- **CA\$H Performs** supports **fully-produced performances** of theatre projects open to the public.
 - This can be a traditional staged theatre production, a festival of several plays, an immersive theatre/dance/film hybrid experience, or any other theatre work that is fully produced and open to the public.
 - **Yes, we support improv, musicals, and operas!**

DEADLINE

ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE by **5:00 PM Pacific, April 29, 2026**. We are unable to grant extensions, so please plan ahead!

ELIGIBILITY

CA\$H Theatre is open to Bay Area **theatre artists** and **small organizations that CREATE and PERFORM theatre**.

You may apply as an organization or as an individual.

Your organization is eligible to apply for a CA\$H Theatre Grant if:

You are a small company...

- Your company's annual operating budget does not exceed \$100,000 in the most recently completed fiscal year and in the current year at the time the application is submitted.

You do theatre...

- Your company has a documented history of at least two professionally-oriented works that were presented publicly this year or in the three years prior. Staged readings and streaming productions definitely count!
- Your company creates and performs theatre performances for the public, and is not primarily a performance venue or presenter.
- Your company or the project for which you are seeking funding is not an education program, religious organization, or political campaign, part of one, or primarily funded by one.

You are based in the Bay Area...

- Your company is located in any of the counties within Theatre Bay Area's Northern California service area: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma counties and primarily produces theatre in that area.

Your project is NOT being produced or co-produced by a CA\$H-ineligible organization...

- You are NOT applying for a project scheduled to be produced or co-produced by an organization with an annual operating budget over \$100,000.
 - Individual aspects of a project, such as script development, design research, or orchestration are also ineligible for CA\$H Theatre if the project is scheduled to be produced or co-produced by a CA\$H-ineligible organization.
- You are NOT applying for a project that takes place outside the Bay Area.
- You are NOT applying for a project that takes place within a school, university, or other arts education program. Renting a venue from an educational institution is OK.

- You are NOT applying for a project produced by a religious organization or political campaign. Renting a venue from a religious organization or political campaign is OK.

You do not have a conflict of interest...

- No one currently employed by your company or under contract with your company is serving on a CA\$H Theatre panel for that round.
- Your project does NOT have a current TBA staff member or board member as attached personnel.

If you have received a CA\$H Theatre grant before...

- Your company was NOT a CA\$H Theatre grantee from the previous CA\$H Theatre round.
- Your company has closed any past CA\$H Theatre Grants it has received, meaning the CA\$H-supported project has been completed, the appropriate CA\$H Theatre Impact Assessment form has been filed, and it's been at least a year since you were awarded.
 - If you were awarded in Fall 2025, you are ineligible to apply until Fall 2026.

You are eligible to apply for a CA\$H Theatre Grant as an individual if:

You are a professionally-oriented theatre worker...

- You are at least 18 years old.
- You are able to document at least one professionally-oriented production featuring your work as an actor, director, playwright, designer, dramaturg, or technician, or one professionally-oriented production that you produced that was presented earlier this year or within the three years prior. Professional workshops, staged readings, and streaming productions definitely count!
- You are NOT currently enrolled as a full-time high school or university student.

Your project is NOT being produced by a CA\$H-ineligible organization...

- You are NOT applying for a project scheduled to be produced or co-produced by an organization with an annual operating budget over \$100,000.

- Individual aspects of a project, such as script development, design research, or orchestration are also ineligible for CA\$H Theatre if the project is scheduled to be produced or co-produced by a CA\$H-ineligible organization.
- You are NOT applying for a project that takes place outside the Bay Area.
- You are NOT applying for a project that takes place within a school, university, or other arts education program. Renting a venue from an educational institution is OK.
- You are NOT applying for a project produced by a religious organization or political campaign. Renting a venue from a religious organization or political campaign is OK.

You don't have a conflict of interest...

- You are NOT on a CA\$H Theatre panel for this round.
- You are NOT a current TBA employee or board member.

If you have received a CA\$H Theatre Grant before...

- You have closed any past CA\$H Theatre Grants you have received, meaning the CA\$H-supported project has been completed, the Impact Assessment form has been filed, and it's been at least a year since you were awarded.
 - If you were awarded in Fall 2025, you are ineligible to apply until Fall 2026.

CA\$H Theatre does NOT fund:

- The following types of organizations:
 - Education programs, training programs, summer camps, or schools
 - Religious organizations
 - Political campaigns
 - Theatre venues that don't produce theatre of their own
 - Organizations with annual operating budgets over \$100k
 - Organizations that have not produced theatre within the last three years
 - Organizations located outside of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, or Sonoma counties.
- The following types of projects

- Film
- Journalism
- Podcasts
- Music performances unrelated to musical theatre
- Static art installations
- Debt payments or recouping expenses from past projects. (Your project must open on or after the CA\$H Theatre application deadline.)
- Dance (NOTE: CA\$H Theatre funds dance theatre, but does not fund dance. Dancers' Group administers CA\$H Dance.)
- Projects that will take place outside of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, or Sonoma counties.
- Individuals who are:
 - Full-time high school or university students
 - Under 18
 - Without a recent history of theatre making (within the last three years)
 - Based outside of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, or Sonoma counties.

Applicants may submit only one proposal in each granting round. Submitting multiple applications for the same project, individual, or company will result in all applications being **disqualified**.

A NOTE ABOUT TAXES

While we wish our grants could be considered tax-exempt income, all grants disbursed by Theatre Bay Area (including CA\$H Theatre grants) are considered taxable payments by the IRS, and it is our responsibility to report the funds accordingly. If Theatre Bay Area disburses funds to you that meet or exceed the IRS reporting threshold of \$600, we are required by law to collect an IRS Form W-9 from you (reflecting your name, address, and identification number, which is your SSN for individuals and your EIN for organizations), and to issue the organization or individual named on the W-9 with a Form 1099-NEC after the end of the year. We want to make sure all of our potential grant recipients are aware of this so it doesn't come as an unpleasant surprise. If you have questions about this, please don't hesitate to let us know!

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

CA\$H Theatre is designed to be an entirely artist-driven program. TBA forms the decision-making panel by assembling a panel of theatremakers, all of whom are either individual artists or company members at organizations with annual operating budgets no greater than \$100,000, to ensure each application is reviewed by peers. It is our commitment to gather a group that is diverse in all aspects (identity, discipline, geography, and experience). Every panelist is given training on the panel process. All panelists are empowered to interpret the funding priorities through the filter of their own personal experiences and artistic views, while always staying true to the guiding principles on which the program was founded.

Priority for CA\$H Performs and CA\$H Creates will go to work that:

- has an impact on the artist, the organization, the community, or the field,
 - What makes this project important to do at this time?
- is innovative, takes creative risks, and has the potential for excellence,
 - What is unique about this project?
 - Is the applicant well-prepared to meet the goals of the project?
- and will result in some kind of tangible theatre-related activity.

How competitive is CA\$H?

Each round, approximately 15-25% of applicants are awarded, depending on the number of applications received.

TIMELINE

Notification:

- We do our best to ensure that all applicants will receive notice of the panel's decision within eight weeks of the application deadline.
- All applicants will be notified by email.

Acceptance of the Award:

- If you are awarded, you must file your paperwork to accept the award within 15 days of receipt.
 - Failure to meet this deadline could result in forfeiture of the award.
 - If you need extra time, please reach out to Melissa at Melissa@TheatreBayArea.org
 - **If you are awarded in the Spring round, you must file your paperwork before the end of the fiscal year on June 30.**

Granting Period:

- **The granting period for CA\$H is one year.** You must complete your project within one year of notification of your CA\$H award.
 - If your project must extend past that deadline, please reach out to Melissa at Melissa@TheatreBayArea.org
- **If you are awarded, you are ineligible to apply for further CA\$H Theatre funding until your current grant has closed.** In order to close your grant, you must meet the following three conditions:
 - One year has passed since you were awarded
 - For example, if you were awarded in Fall 2025, you are ineligible to apply again until Fall 2026.
 - Your CA\$H-funded project has been completed.
 - Your Impact Assessment form has been filed.
 - As your granting period draws to a close, TBA will send you a link to the Impact Assessment form.

HOW TO APPLY

What's on the application?

The CA\$H Theatre Grant has joined the [Common App](#). You will find the same questions on the CA\$H Theatre applications as you will find on the applications for the Zellerbach Family Foundation Community Arts Grant, as well as many others. **Please note: there are also a few CA\$H-specific questions, so be sure to look at our worksheet even if you are working from the questions provided on the Common App site.**

The application is divided into numbered sections:

1. Organization or Individual Artist Information
2. Project Description
3. Work Samples
4. Budget and Financial Information
5. Application Certifications
6. Demographic Information (optional)
7. Review and Submit

Please download the application worksheet to see important requirements not listed here, as well as tips to make your application more competitive. You can review the questions and prep your answers on the worksheet before beginning the CA\$H Theatre application.

Download the [application worksheet for INDIVIDUALS as a PDF](#).
Download the [application worksheet for INDIVIDUALS as a Word doc](#).
View the [application worksheet for INDIVIDUALS on Google Docs](#).

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The online applications are available here:

[CA\\$H Creates Application Spring 2026](#)
[CA\\$H Performs Application Spring 2026](#)

Important information:

Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted. We can't be responsible for technical issues that prevent applications from being submitted on time, so plan on submitting early.

Applicants may submit only one proposal in each granting round. Submitting multiple applications for the same project, individual, or company will result in all applications being **disqualified**.

You can't edit the form once submitted, but if you submit early enough, we can delete your application to enable you to submit another one before the deadline. Unfortunately, the software won't allow you to save your progress and return to the application; you must complete the form in one sitting. TBA's recommendation is to review the worksheet with the application questions carefully before assembling the materials needed.

If there was a problem with your application, your form will not submit and you will receive an error message. After successfully submitting your application, you will see a confirmation message on your screen, and you will receive an email confirmation. If you do not receive this email confirmation, check your spam filter! If you still don't see it, contact Melissa Hillman at Melissa@TheatreBayArea.org to confirm that your application is in our system, and to double check the accuracy of the email address provided in the application.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Grantees must complete the [CA\\$H Creates/Performs Impact Assessment form](#) after the project is complete. We use this information to show funders how impactful their support of the CA\$H grant has been (or could be, for new funders), not to make sure you did it "right." You have nothing to prove – all we want to see is that the grant truly helped you, and that you were able to do some awesome things with it. You won't be judged or evaluated, and the information you provide on your impact assessment form has precisely zero impact on your future ability to get CA\$H funding.

GET SUPPORT

We have two free webinars scheduled to support CA\$H Creates and Performs grantseekers. We strongly recommend attending one, even if you have already applied for a CA\$H Theatre grant in the past.

[CA\\$H Creates and Performs Grant Walkthrough and Q&A](#)

[Saturday, April 4, 12:00 - 1:30 PM](#)

[Monday, April 13, 6:00 - 7:30 PM](#)

FREE

This Zoom webinar will walk you through the application and give you tips to make your application more competitive. There will be an extensive Q&A period, so bring your questions, or feel free to attend and just listen to the questions others ask.

Still have questions? Contact Melissa Hillman at Melissa@TheatreBayArea.org

GET INVOLVED

Interested in being a panelist? If you're eligible to apply for CA\$H Theatre, you're eligible to be a panelist! It's a great way to get an insight into the workings of the program, strengthen your future applications, and contribute to your community! Remember, you can't serve on a panel if you're applying for this round, but if you're planning to wait this one out and apply in future rounds, or if you're interested in serving on a panel in future rounds, register as a panelist! We have other grants in addition to CA\$H Theatre that need panelists, too. [Learn more about TBA's grant panels](#), what each one pays, and how to register as a TBA grant panelist.