

# CREATIVITY PIONEERS FUND 2023

## OPEN CALL GUIDELINES

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Creativity Pioneers Fund

The Creativity Pioneers Fund (CPF) is a microgranting program that catalyzes transformative social change by investing in, connecting, and supporting cultural and creative organizations that promote bold, innovative, and unconventional practices to build a more just, inclusive, and equitable world.

The Creativity Pioneers Fund was launched in 2021 by Moleskine Foundation to provide flexible funding, through a grant worth €5,000, to creative and cultural organizations, helping them sustain their core functions and programs and strengthen their ability to continue to serve their communities over the long term.

The Creativity Pioneers Fund is the result of a collective effort of partners and donors who believe in the transformative power of creativity and the need to take a new philanthropic approach to social change. Leveraging the creative ecosystem of partners and stakeholders, the Creativity Pioneers Fund aims to provide a variety of learning and development opportunities for all its recipients (beneficiaries and supporters).

The Creativity Pioneers Fund is a unique philanthropic fund that aims to provide economic resources, learning and development opportunities, and targeted network connections, to cultural and creative organizations operating in disadvantaged areas of the world with the goal of revealing the transformative power of creativity for social change. Through a trust-based, intersectional, highly inclusive approach, the Creativity Pioneers Fund supports organizations that create great value but elude traditional philanthropic tools.

Together with the contribution of Partners who joined the Creativity Pioneers Fund, in the first two editions we were able to support 47 organizations chosen from more than 1,200 applications from 90 countries. Leveraging existing and emerging networks and opportunities, over the next 3 years the Creativity Pioneers Fund will seek to scale, reach approximately 5,000 applications, and directly support 250 networked organizations around the world.

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#### I. Eligible Organizations

- Support is granted only to non-profit organizations that are legally registered and operating in the countries in which they operate, with no limits on geographic origin.
- Organizations that place creativity at the center of their mission and programs, demonstrating how they strengthen the role creativity plays in the social transformation of their target communities.
- Priority is given to organizations focus their work on disadvantaged and/or marginalized communities and that work primarily with youth.

Organizations are not eligible to apply:

- If they have already received grants from the Creativity Pioneers Fund.
- If they represent political parties, religious organizations or engage in lobbying activities.
- If are not legally registered or are supported by a fiscal sponsor or sponsored project.

#### II. Eligible Expenditures

- The Creativity Pioneers Fund focuses on the organization's achievements over the years and its potential both in fulfilling its mission and in terms of its vision for change.
- The purpose of the call is to support organizations by providing unrestricted funding to cover the expenses necessary to more effectively fulfill their mission.
- We believe that organizations engaged on the front lines are best qualified to determine where to allocate the funds provided, so the grantee organization has decision-making autonomy over the use of resources.
- The application should report all costs incurred directly for planned activities and programs during the year-which may include, but are not limited to, the following items:
  - o expenses inherent to programming;
  - o personnel costs, whether newly hired or for paid work of existing staff, provided such costs are vital to the operation and programming of the organization;
  - o travel and subsistence costs, e.g., airfare and ground transfers, for meals and lodging, must be congruent with the policy on expenses adopted by the organization, if any;

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- promotion costs, such as costs for marketing and distribution of related materials or advertising on media platforms, if any;
  - evaluation costs, including the collection, storage and analysis of data and the production of evaluation reports, including overtime worked by staff or appointments given to external consultants;
  - fees charged by professionals: payments made to organizations or individuals for professional services of a financial, legal or marketing nature;
  - overhead expenses to support business growth and development to ensure long-term sustainability.
- No funds will be provided to retroactively cover expenses incurred prior to receiving funding.
  - All financial contributions must be recorded as expenditures by November 2024.

### III. How to apply

- All queries, expressions of interest and applications are handled by Moleskine Foundation based in Italy. Evaluation parameters will be based on criteria and recommendations built from discussions with colleagues, partners and professionals in the creative world.
- Participation in the Creativity Pioneers Fund begins at the same time as the expression of interest (Expression of Interest), which will allow us to assess your eligibility to submit a Full Application.
- To submit the Expression of Interest and Full Application form, you need to create a free account on the Optimy platform.
- You can save a draft of the already completed part if you wish to complete the form at a later date. Before the submission date, the draft can be saved and edited. Once the application has been submitted, you will not be able to reopen it to edit it. The Optimy platform works best on Google Chrome, Firefox, Edge or Safari. Internet Explorer is not supported. Verify that your browser is supported.
- Throughout the process we will keep you constantly updated on the status of your application. Make sure that Optimy notification emails are categorized as "no spam" and regularly check the email box used to create your Optimy account. For any technical problems, contact Optimy's customer service department.

For details on the 2 stages of application (Expression of Interest and Full Application) see items VII and VIII).

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Timeline and deadlines	
Opening Expression of Interest	April 24th
Closing of Expression of Interest	May 14th
Evaluation of applications	May 15th – June 9th
Notification of Expression of Interest outcome	June 12th
Opening Full Application	June 12th
Full Application Closing	June 26th
Proposal Evaluation	June 27th – July 27th
Notification of Proposal Outcome	July/August
Public announcement of outcomes	September
Completion of contracts and disbursement of funding	December

#### IV. Selected Candidates

- The names of selected applicants will be published on the Moleskine Foundation website following the final decision. Only grant recipients will be contacted individually by email with notification of the successful outcome of the selection process.
- Selected projects will be made public no later than October 2023.

#### V. Contract regarding the financial contribution

- Moleskine Foundation will draft a contract to be signed by the recipients of the selected financial grants.
- The contract will include the start and end dates of the contract, the amount of the financial contribution, financial requirements, payment deadlines, general provisions, implementation and amendments, and expected reports.

#### VI. Payment deadlines

- Beneficiaries receive 100% of the financial contribution as the first payment upon completion of the contract.
- At the time of project initiation, the organization receiving a financial contribution must indicate an active bank account qualified to receive international funds.

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- Organizations must be prepared to provide financial and project status reports.
- A due diligence check will be conducted prior to disbursement of funding.
- Moleskine Foundation cannot match payments to organizations subject to international sanctions or not legally registered.
- Funds received must be spent by the end of 2024.

### VII. Expression of Interest – Manifestation of Interest

- The Expression of Interest is a partial online form used to gather basic information about the organization and assess the suitability of the proposal as well as congruity with the Fund's goals and vision.
- Information will be requested about the organization and the context, partners, and communities with which it works.
- Questions of this nature will be asked:
  - o Is your organization contributing to Creativity for Social Change?
  - o What specifically is the challenge faced by your organization?
  - o How is creativity being applied to address this challenge?
  - o What are the organization's main target audiences?
  - o How does the organization want to make its mark and benefit whom?
  - o As an organization, how do you learn and improve from your past experiences?  
What is your approach?

### VIII. Full application - Full application form

- If the expression of interest is accepted, organizations are invited to submit a full application, at which time additional guidelines and instructions for completing the form will be provided.
- We will only accept full applications that have been invited through the Expression of Interest stage.
- The Full Application consists of a series of questions to which applicants must provide detailed answers.
- You may be asked to submit additional documents, such as a budget, supporting letters, and other materials.
- One-on-one in-depth interviews are also scheduled during this phase, at the request of the Moleskine Foundation team.

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### IX. Application evaluation criteria

- Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below.
  - Decisions are the prerogative of Committee Review Panels, which include experts, members of the Moleskine Foundation and Fund Partners teams, Creativity Pioneers beneficiaries of past editions of the Creativity Pioneers Fund.
  - Panel members will select which applications to support based on their judgment, taking into consideration the quality of the applications and the overall composition of the group of grantees.
  - Please note that applications need not meet all of the criteria listed below; however, selected applications should consider and incorporate each criterion within their project and scope of work.
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- a) **Nature of the organization:** enterprising, flexible, small size, run by young people, outside the mainstream of large donors/institutional grants, belonging to the third sector.
  - b) **Rigor:** an interesting idea, properly conceived, structured, produced and presented.
  - c) **Creativity:** unique, unconventional, adventurous and revolutionary ideas, perspectives and concepts, such as to offer new perspectives, generate new and meaningful ideas, raise new questions and present solutions to identified challenges.
  - d) **Social transformation and ecosystem impact:** ability to influence, directly or indirectly, at multiple (individual or collective) levels, triggering positive systemic change, through creativity, culture, and creative skills.
  - e) **Contextuality:** relevance at the local level in factual or discussion terms, with designs that enhance the local context and communities.
  - f) **Inclusiveness:** linkage (direct or indirect) to the ultimate goal of more inclusive societies, connecting people in ways that resist marginalization, oppression, and division. This can occur at different levels, e.g., through the people involved, the recipients, the program, and the context or organization.
  - g) **Influence and integrity:** ability to lead growth and predisposition to change perceptions around the "Creativity for social change" theme/key area. Ability to positively influence debate and integrity in carrying out one's work.
  - h) **Educational purpose:** programs or organizations that aim to directly or indirectly develop young people's creative skills, i.e., critical thinking, creative doing, lifelong learning, and a change-oriented approach.