CREATIVITY PIONEERS FUND

2025

CREATIVITY
PIONEERS
FUND

APPLICATION GUIDELINES IN ENGLISH

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INTRODUCTION

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The Creativity Pioneers Fund

The Creativity Pioneers Fund (CPF) catalyzes transformational social change by investing in, connecting, and championing cultural and creative organizations that advance bold and unconventional practices for building a more just, inclusive, and equitable world. Working with and alongside organizations, donors and other stakeholders across the creative ecosystem, the Creativity Pioneers Fund aims to mobilize a collective effort to advance Creativity for Social Change.

The CPF was launched in 2021 by Moleskine Foundation to provide flexible funding in the amount of € 5,000 to creative and cultural organizations to help sustain their essential functions and programs. Today, the CPF represents a coalition of Partners who believe in the transforming power of creativity and the need to use a new philanthropic approach to social change. Leveraging the creative ecosystem of partners and stakeholders, the CPF aims to offer various learning and development opportunities for its participants/recipients.

The micro-grant represents only a starting point for a more extensive and long-term collaboration system towards a platform model that provides the Creativity Pioneers with access to more financial opportunities, in-kind and know-how support, mentoring and learning opportunities, peer-to-peer exchange and networking.

The CPF intends to invest in bold, inspiring and intersectional organizations close to the challenges and communities they seek to address. Through the CPF, we are promoting a more progressive philanthropic approach based on trust, unrestricted funding, valorization of intersectionality, simple and inclusive paperwork both at the selection process and reporting, and a strong focus on building long-lasting networks and ecosystems.

GUIDELINES

I. Eligibility Criteria

- Support is exclusively granted to **legally registered, non-profit organizations** that are actively operating, with no restrictions on geographic origin.

- Eligible organizations must:
    - Place **creativity at the core** of their mission and programming, demonstrating its pivotal role in driving **social transformation** within their target communities.
    - Prioritize **disadvantaged and/or marginalized communities**, with a primary focus on youth aged 16-27.
    - Possess an **organizational bank account** in the organization's name, as donations cannot be made to individual accounts due to regulatory constraints.

    Important Note:
    If your organization faces political or regulatory restrictions preventing it from receiving donations from the EU or US, we encourage you to propose alternative solutions aligned with our guidelines. Each exception will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

- Organizations are **not eligible** to apply if they:

    - Have already received the micro-grant from the Creativity Pioneers Fund.
    - Represent political parties, religious organizations or engage in lobbying activities.
    - Are not legally registered.
    - Are for profit entities.
    - Have founder(s) and/or any legal representatives involved in events prejudicial to their reputation and/or legal status, including but not limited to breach of criminal laws, malfeasance, tax evasion (even if not criminally relevant), discrimination, hate speech, or dissemination of fake news.

II. Eligible Expenses

- 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 fulfil 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:
    - Expenses inherent to programming.
    - Personnel costs, whether newly hired or for paid work of existing staff.
    - Travel and subsistence costs, e.g., airfare and ground transfers, for meals and lodging.
    - Promotion costs, such as costs for marketing and distribution of related materials or advertising on media platforms.
    - Evaluation costs, including the collection, storage and analysis of data and the production of evaluation reports.
    - Fees charged by professionals.
    - Overhead expenses to support business growth and development to ensure long-term sustainability.

The Grantee **shall not use the Grant to cover the following activities:**
- Illegal activities: any activity that violates local, state, or international laws, such as fraud, money laundering, or bribery. This includes both direct illegal acts and projects that indirectly support illegal actions.

- Political party activities and campaigning: activities that support specific political parties, candidates, or campaigns. This includes any events, material, or program that explicitly promotes a political party or supports political figures.

- Religious activities: activities that involve religious worship, proselytizing, or other religious practices.

- Personal or individual expenses: such as personal loans, debt repayments, accommodation, or general living expenses.

III. Application Process and Key Dates

- Applications undergo review by a selection committee comprised of experts, partner organization members of the Creativity Pioneers Fund, and previous Creativity Pioneers, ensuring diverse perspectives and a participatory process.

- Following the initial evaluation by this panel, the Creativity Pioneers Fund team conducts an internal review. Additional materials, like videos or interviews, may be requested from shortlisted applicants during this phase.

- Selected organizations will receive notification of their acceptance by the end of July 2025.

- Final award decisions will be publicly announced in July, with agreements finalized and funds disbursed by December 2025.

- Due to the anticipated high volume of applications, detailed feedback will not be provided to organizations that are not selected.

Timeline and deadlines	
Opening Open Call	March 10th
Deadline Open Call	April 7th (**5:00 pm CET**)
Due diligence and interviews to shortlisted organizations	June - July
Notification of proposal outcome	By the end of July
Public Announcement	July 28th
Completion of contracts and disbursement of funding	By the end of December

IV. How to Submit Your Application

- To submit the application, you need to create a free account on the idea360platform, which you will use every time you login to the portal. You can save a draft of your application and can keep returning to it, up until the deadline and before submission.

- Please make sure that all the information included in your application is complete, as you will not be able to make any changes to your application once it is submitted.

- After submission, you will receive an email confirming receipt of your application.

- The application form is available in four languages (English, Spanish, French, Italian). **Please ensure that you are completing the form in the same language you are using to write the application.** This helps us process your application accurately and efficiently.

- **Please make sure to submit your application, otherwise your application will not be considered.**

- For any technical problems, please contact info@creativitypioneersfund.org

Important note: The application process adopts an inclusive approach, featuring a straightforward form where you're invited to delve into your organization holistically, rather than submitting a project proposal. We strongly encourage you to describe your organization in its entirety, sharing what really moves you, and the motivations driving your interest in joining the Creativity Pioneers Fund platform. Step beyond the confines of conventional grant writing language and share with us the essence of what makes your organization unique.

V. Grant Agreement and Payment

- Moleskine Foundation will draft a Grant Agreement to be signed by the recipients of the selected financial grants.

- The Grant Agreement 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.

- Beneficiaries receive 100% of the financial contribution as the first payment upon completion of the contract.

- The organization receiving a financial contribution must indicate an active bank account qualified to receive international funds.

- 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.

VI. Selection Criteria

- Decisions are the prerogative of the Selection Committee, which include experts, members of the Creativity Pioneers Fund team, and Creativity Pioneers beneficiaries of past editions of the program, to guarantee a **peer-to-peer dimension** in the evaluation process.

- 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.

- Proposals will be evaluated based on the **selection criteria** listed below.

  1. **Mission Alignment** – The organization places creativity for social change at the core of its mission and strategy.
  2. **Relevance of Social Challenge** – The organization addresses a significant social challenge that is both locally relevant and connected to broader global issues. The problem statement is clearly articulated, demonstrating a strong understanding of the issue.
  3. **Originality and Innovation** – The organization employs unconventional or innovative approaches, such as unique processes, intersectional and multidisciplinary methods, or compelling narratives.
  4. **Clarity of Target Audience** – The organization has a clearly defined, credible, and aligned target audience that matches its goals, structure, and budget.
  5. **Impact and Potential** – The organization demonstrates a strong track record of impact or has a clear and compelling potential for success.
  6. **Creative Skills Development** – The organization directly or indirectly fosters creative skills among youth (especially 16-27 y.o.) and/or underserved communities.
  7. **Vision and Ambition** – The organization exhibits an inspiring vision and the ambition to drive meaningful change within its community and the broader sector.
  8. **Leadership Potential** – The founder or leader has the potential to serve as an exceptional ambassador for the Creative Pioneers Fund.
  9. **Added Value of Support** – The organization would significantly benefit from CPF support, including funding and platform services, enabling it to achieve its goals more effectively.
  10. **Contribution to the Network** – The organization possesses expertise and experience that could add value to the Creativity Pioneers network, fostering collaboration and shared learning.

- The Selection Committee will **prioritize** organizations that:
    - Ask bold questions and effectively tackle major social challenges.
    - Operate with a hybrid, highly intersectional approach—recognizing the interconnected nature of social issues (e.g., education, public health, climate change) and embracing an impact-driven model rather than strict specialization.
    - Focus on processes rather than just outputs, emphasizing long-term systemic change.
    - Have a global perspective—deeply rooted in their local context while maintaining global relevance and connectivity.
    - Aim to inspire and equip a new generation of creative thinkers and changemakers by fostering essential skills such as critical thinking, lifelong learning, and a transformative mindset.
    - Work with underserved communities, with a particular emphasis on youth (young adults, not children).

- A strong track record or large organizational size is **not** a deciding factor; we welcome applications from small and emerging organizations that demonstrate a compelling vision and potential for impact.

- **Context matters**: we recognize that the significance and effectiveness of certain practices vary depending on geographic and social contexts.

- **Clarity and consistency** in an organization's narrative are crucial. While language barriers are acknowledged, applicants should be able to clearly articulate their mission, work, and impact within the communities they serve.

The CPF does not look for:

- **Art for art's sake**: We do not support organizations that focus solely on artistic expression or the promotion of creative industries without a clear social impact component. For example, initiatives that primarily serve the commercial interests of the contemporary art world, creative residencies with no broader community engagement, or programs exclusively supporting the career development of individual artists fall outside our scope.

- **Traditional NGOs with conventional approaches:** We are not looking for organizations that operate strictly within the conventional frameworks of international cooperation or social work, such as those focused on charity-based aid, service delivery without fostering systemic change, or programs that apply a one-size-fits-all

model without considering local contexts and creative methodologies. Examples include large-scale humanitarian relief organizations that provide resources without an emphasis on creative problem-solving, or NGOs that run traditional education programs without integrating creativity as a transformative tool.

- **Amateur or improvised initiatives:** While we do not require organizations to be large or highly structured, we are looking for initiatives with a clear vision, commitment, and continuity in their work. We do not support projects that operate only occasionally, rely exclusively on sporadic volunteer efforts, or lack a defined approach to programming and impact. This includes organizations with no long-term planning, those that implement activities in an improvised or inconsistent manner, or initiatives where leadership and programming are not developed beyond a hobbyist or informal level. For example, groups that occasionally organize creative workshops without a structured methodology, or initiatives that depend entirely on non-specialized volunteers with no strategic oversight, do not align with our priorities.

VII. Application Form Questions

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

Please select the language you are going to use to fill out the form.
Please complete all parts of the form in the same language. The form is only available in the following language(s), and responses in other languages will not be considered.

- Italian
- English
- Spanish
- French

Non-profit status.
If your organization is not a non-profit, you are not eligible to apply, as we can only offer financial support to non-profit organizations.
If your organization is in the process of registering as a non-profit and expects to complete the procedure by June 2025, you may still proceed by selecting the checkbox below. You will be required to upload the relevant documentation at the end of the form.
- **My organization is registered as a non-profit**

SECTION 2 - GENERAL INFORMATION

Information about your organization

Legal name of your organization (as registered)
Public name of the organization (only if different from legal name)
Address (where the organization is legally registered) *Full street name*
Country
Is your organization legally registered in any other country other than the one stated above? (Yes/No)
If yes, please indicate how many other countries your organization is registered in.

Contact details

CEO/Founder contact details: Name / Last Name
CEO/Founder email
Person submitting this application: Name / Last Name / Role
Organization Website *(if available)*
Please include links to all social media platforms used by your organization (Facebook / Instagram / YouTube/ Vimeo / LinkedIn / TikTok / X / Other).
Select the languages used to deliver your programs and activities. English / French / Italian / Spanish / Other (please specify)
The activities of the Creative Pioneers Fund will be conducted in English. Are you confident your organizations' core team is able to participate fully in English? (Yes/No)

SECTION 3 – ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

What term below best describes your organization?
Please select one option.
- Association
- Civil Society Organization (CSO)
- Community Based Organization (CBO)
- Foundation/Trust
- Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)
- Religious organization
- Research center / Academic institution
- Social Cooperative
- Social enterprise
- Voluntary Organization

- Other (please specify)

When was the organization established? *Please indicate the year.*

If different, when did the organization start to deliver programs? *Please indicate the year.*

Indicate your geographical scope.
Please select all that apply.
- Local (operating in a neighborhood or district)
- Citywide (operating in a specific city)
- Regional (operating in a specific region)
- National (operating in one country)
- International (operating in multiple countries)
- Global (not having a place-based approach)
- Glocal (rooted in a specific local community but with a global outlook and network)

In how many countries do you mainly implement your programs and activities?
The organization operates in:
Please select all that apply.
- Small village in a rural area
- Small town (from 10,000 to 50,000 inhabitants)
- Medium-sized city (between 50,000 and 250,000 inhabitants)
- Large metropolitan area (more than 250,000 inhabitants)
- Other (please specify)

Tell us more about the context in which you work. How does being located in that specific context influence your work both in terms of constraints and inspirations? *(Max 800 characters)*

Does your organization have a governance structure in place? *(Yes/No)*

If YES, please select all applicable governance structures/roles
- Board of Directors / Board of Trustees / Executive Board
- CEO / Managing Director
- President
- Assembly of Members
- Advisory Council
- Committee
- Collective
- Other (please specify)

If NO, Please describe the decision-making process in your organization *(Max 600 characters).*

Describe briefly the composition of the core team running your organization *(Max 800 characters)*

Staff: how many people does your organization employ?
Please provide a number below each applicable category. If none, indicate 0.
- *Full-time staff (paid)*
- *Part-time staff (paid)*
- *Volunteers (unpaid staff)*

Please provide a brief biography of your founder(s). *Include links and/or references to specific content if relevant. (Max 1000 characters)*

Please describe how much your organization relies on voluntary and/or non-paid work. *(Max 600 characters)*

SECTION 4 - TARGET AND AUDIENCE

What is the number of people that you directly engage in your organization's programs annually? *Indicate the approximate number.*

What is the age target for the participants that engage in your program?
- 0-5 years old
- 6-10 years old
- 11-14 years old
- 15-18 years old
- 19-25 years old
- 26-40 years old
- 40-65 years old
- Over65

What category best describes your target audience?
- Youth
- Women
- Elderly

- Families
- Creative professionals
- General public
- Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants
- Socio-economically vulnerable
- LGBTQAI+ communities
- Disabled people
- Conflict and post-conflict communities
- Indigenous communities
- Neurodivergent people
- Racialized groups
- Prisoners and detainees

Please provide a brief description of your primary target audiences and why you chose to focus on them. *This answer will allow us to have a qualitative understanding of the number of beneficiaries that you serve (Max 600 characters)*

SECTION 5 - PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Purpose & goals

Describe your organization's purpose: why was it established? *(Max 1000 characters)*
What are your organization's main objectives? *Share maximum 3. (Max 1000 characters)*

Examples of programs/activities

Please provide a concrete and synthetic overview of the main actions for impact (up to 3) carried out by your organization *(eg. permanent initiatives, projects, events, campaigns, etc.).*

Indicate for each program/activity:
- Title
- Challenge you want(ed) to address
- Period of activation
- Primary target audience involved
    - Youth
    - Women
    - Elderly
    - Families
    - Creative professionals
    - General public
    - Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants

- o Socio-economically vulnerable
- o LGBTQAI+ communities
- o Disabled people
- o Conflict and post-conflict communities
- o Indigenous communities
- o Neurodivergent people
- o Racialized groups
- o Prisoners and detainees
- Short description (what did/do you do) - (max 600 characters)

How many project(s) would you like to add?

Partnerships

Has your organization formed partnerships with other organizations (non-profit, public, or private)? *(Yes/No)*
If yes, list up to 3 partners *- Indicate name and type (Non-profit/Public/Private)*

Social challenges & Sectors

What is the biggest social challenge you wish to address through the work of your organization? *Please try to summarize the problem statement into one sentence.*
(Max 200 characters)

Select the main social challenges that you try to address with your work.
- Active citizenship
- Democracy & Social Justice
- Environmental sustainability
- Food sustainability
- Health and wellbeing
- Human rights
- Migration
- Peacebuilding
- Quality education and cultural accessibility
- Reduced inequalities
- Strengthening the creative and cultural sector
- Youth employment / development
- Other (please specify)

Select the sectors that best describe your work
- Applied arts
- Cinema

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- Design & architecture
- Education & research
- Literary arts
- Music
- Performative arts
- Social & welfare services (eg. health, housing)
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Sport
- Visual arts
- Other (please specify)

Select the main activities you use for addressing the above-mentioned social challenges.
- Advocacy and storytelling
- Archiving and documentation
- Artistic practices
- Cultural heritage preservation
- Education and training
- Farming
- Funding (financial support)
- Making (crafts, DIY, fablabs, etc.)
- Network building
- Placemaking
- Urban regeneration practices
- Other (please specify)

<u>Organizational challenges</u>

What are the most significant challenges or obstacles encountered during your work?

- Access to funding
- Access to credit
- Complex administrative procedures
- Difficulty in reaching the target audience
- Difficulty in engaging communities
- Financial insecurity
- High risk of burnout
- Juggling various responsibilities
- Lack of contacts and networking opportunities
- Lack of governmental support
- Lack of infrastructures (space, digital tools, hardware, etc.)
- Lack of skills in the team

- Lack of staff
- Lack of visibility
- Not being considered as a credible actor in the sector
- Political instability and conflict
- Repression / intimidation
- Sense of loneliness and isolation

If you want to expand on the above answer, give us some examples or context-setting information. *(max 600 characters)*

<u>Creativity for social change</u>

Which statement best reflects the role of creativity in your organization's work?
Please select the option that most accurately describes your approach.

- Creativity, rooted in artistic and cultural practices, is central to our mission. We use arts and culture as strategic tools to address societal challenges and transform communities.
- While creativity is not our sole focus, we actively integrate artistic and cultural approaches into our programs. These practices are fundamental in designing initiatives that aim to foster change.
- Creativity is not the primary focus of our mission, but we integrate artistic and cultural approaches to enrich specific projects or activities where relevant.

How does your work contribute to developing creative skills in the communities you serve? (creative skills include critical thinking, creative doing, lifelong learning, change-making attitude, self-awareness, etc.) *(Max 1000 characters)*

SECTION 6 - BUDGET & FUNDING

What is the last annual operating budget of your organization? *(If you don't think the last year is significant, consider an average year)*

- Less than 10.000€
- €10.000 - 25.000
- €25.000 - 50.000
- €50.000 - 150.000
- €150.000 - €300.000
- €300.000 - 500.000

- More than €500.000

How is your organization funded? *Please specify the approximate % of funding per funder type below. The total must add up to 100%.*

- Type of funder:
    - Individual donor
    - Foundations
    - Government or public funds
    - Corporations and sponsorships
    - International agencies (UN, EU, World bank, etc.)
    - Earned income (e.g. rentals, fee for service, etc.)
    - Crowdfunding
    - Self-funding (personal resources)
    - Other (please specify)

Name your top 3 donors *(if any and if you can disclose it)*

What challenges do you usually face in attracting funds or when you have to describe your organization to potential funders? *Please select all that apply.*

- Limited resources for the sector in general
- Political sensitivities and/or misalignment with conservative government agendas
- Aligning with the priorities of funders
- Building partnerships / international networks
- Measuring impact (eg. intangible aspects or deep impact that escape traditional KPIs and metrics)
- Credibility
- Obtaining funding for ongoing activities, rather than one-time projects
- Complexity of funding application processes
- Funders' restrictions and conditions
- Competition for funding
- Lack of funding for newly established organizations
- Logistical issues related to fund transfers
- Other (please specify)

Have you ever received unrestricted funding? *(Unrestricted funding is a flexible grant that provides financial support not tied to a specific project or use.)*

- Yes, of a small amount and/or not systematically
- Yes, of a significant amount but only a single time
- Yes, of a significant amount and more than once
- No, never

If yes, please indicate the percentage of your annual budget that came from unrestricted funding (consider the last three years as a reference period).

- Less than 10%
- Between 10-25%
- Between 25-50%
- More than 50%

If the organization is selected for this grant, what would be the primary use of the funds? *Indicate max 3 answers.*

- Pay core team salaries
- Hire more people
- Cover costs of ongoing projects
- Expand ongoing projects
- Run a new project
- Improve website/communication
- Pay debts from previous years
- Other

Add any additional information about the financial situation of the organization that you consider relevant. *(max 600 characters)*

SECTION 7- CREATIVITY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE PLATFORM

What would you expect to find and gain from the platform? *Please list your main expectations and rank them in order of priority.*

- Access to resources
- Visibility and recognition
- Network expansion
- Know-how and competencies
- Belonging to an ecosystem of likeminded organizations
- Gathering opportunities

What experience or expertise would you like to share with your platform peers? *(Max 600 characters)*

Does your organization measure the impact of its activities?

- Yes, with continuous monitoring (regular collection of quantitative or qualitative data)
- Yes, with occasional monitoring (periodic assessments for specific projects or activities)

- No, we do not currently monitor impact, but we may develop this aspect in the future

(If Yes) How does your organization measure the impact of its activities?
Please select all that apply.
- Quantitative data (e.g., number of participants, visits, online engagement)
- Impact indicators (e.g., progress towards Sustainable Development Goals, industry benchmarks, key performance indicators)
- Qualitative feedback (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups)
- Measures of community involvement (e.g., participatory evaluation, community-led feedback)
- Other (please specify)

Can you share a specific impact story that illustrates the significance of your work? *(max 800 characters)*

SECTION 8- DOCUMENTS & DECLARATIONS

Proof of registration as non-profit. Upload a document that clearly indicates your organization's non-profit legal status (e.g., Statute or Incorporation Act). *Acceptable file types: .pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png). If the document is not in English, please provide a translation (certified translations are not required). (Max 2 files, max dimension files 5 MB max)*

Does the organization have audited financial accounts? (Yes/No)

(If yes) Please upload your last financial statement if available *(Maximum upload file size 20MB)*

Do you have a bank account registered under the name of the organization? *Please note that we cannot make any donations to individuals. (Y*es/No)

If no, how do you plan to receive donations?
- We are planning to open a bank account in the upcoming weeks
- We have a PayPal account registered under the name of the organization
- Other (please specify)

In your country are there any restrictions to receive foreign donations (from EU or US)? *(Yes/No)*

If yes, do you already have secured a fiscal sponsor? *(Yes / No)*

If yes, please indicate:

- o Legal name of the fiscal sponsor
- o Country of registration of the fiscal sponsor
- o Contact person name
- o Contact person email

Images

Please provide a link to a folder of selected images in JPEG or PNG format representing your work. The link should not expire after a few days but be always accessible. **We suggest using a Google Drive/Dropbox folder with open access and not a WeTransfer link that expires.**

Include copyright information in the file title (you must have permissions from the owner of the image and any identifiable individuals featured within them) and a caption describing the contents of each image. If possible, images should be high resolution (at least 300 pixels per inch).

Declaration

- By submitting the application form, I confirm that all information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- I understand and agree that the Moleskine Foundation will not be able to provide individual feedback on my application. (Unfortunately, due to the high expected number of applications received, we will not be able to provide individual feedback to applicants who are not selected for a grant)

SECTION 9 - LEAVE US A FEEDBACK

How and/or where did you learn about this opportunity? *Please select all that apply.*
Instagram / LinkedIn/ Facebook / Newsletter / Search Engine/ Grant websites (e.g. Grant Watch, FundsforNGOs) / Friend / Colleague / Other (please specify).

How much time did you spend working on this application?
- Less than 3 hours
- 3 to 5 hours
- 6 to 20 hours
- More than 20 hours