



Create Grants

Equity & Accessibility: Example Responses

Equity & Accessibility*

1. Briefly share what "equity" means to you as an artist or organization.
2. Describe how you are improving representation and access to the arts through your proposed project (for artists, audience members and/or participants). Make sure to specify which communities will have improved access or representation. Examples include but are not limited to: people of color, LGBTQIA+, those with disabilities or neurodiversity, low socio-economic classes, residents of different geographic locations, unhoused community members, immigrants, etc.

Example 1 - Alexandra Rocha-Alvarez, January 2024 Awards:

Farmworker autonomy is at the center of the work that I do. I want my community to reflect on our history, our resilience, and to begin the process of healing from systematic oppression. I want us to connect with each other, and in that, find relief. In the context of this endeavor, equity means that the individuals I interview won't serve merely as subjects of an artistic project, but co-conspirators in its creation. They can choose to engage in reflective conversation, share their stories at the event, have their portraits taken, or showcase their homes.

My commitment to equity extends to ensuring the representation of the vibrant diversity within Watsonville's farmworker communities. By intentionally amplifying the stories of queer and trans people, embracing intergenerational perspectives, and honoring the Indigenous identities of many of Watsonville's farmworkers, this project will foster greater understanding. By reaching out towards the periphery of Watsonville—Aromas, Pájaro, Las Lomas—where these labor camps have evolved into farmworker communities of their own, I seek to share the story of people who play a vital role in sustaining the heart of Watsonville.

Oral storytelling has long been the format through which Indigenous and Mexican communities honor their histories and connect with each other. It creates empathy and honors our cultural roots, this practice of making space to express ourselves and listen to each other. Equity goes beyond access; it's about healing. By making space for the cultural practice of oral storytelling, my project honors the immigrant community that makes Watsonville the city it is.

Example 2 - Rose Dayal, January 2024 Awards:

1. As an artist, equity means fair and inclusive representation, access to opportunities, and recognition of diverse voices in the art and entrepreneurial world. It involves dismantling barriers and ensuring that all artists have an equal chance to thrive, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances. Equity in art fosters a more vibrant and inclusive creative community where everyone's unique contributions are valued and celebrated.

2. Empowering through Lens is a project aimed at enhancing representation and access to the arts by providing free photo sessions specifically tailored for entrepreneurial BIPOC women. The project seeks to address the underrepresentation of BIPOC women (and those in low socio-economic classes) in both entrepreneurship and the arts. We will aim to capture and showcase the diversity of entrepreneurial women of color through photography. By highlighting their unique stories, achievements, and experiences, we promote a more accurate and inclusive representation of these individuals within the arts and entrepreneurship.

By offering free photo sessions, we remove financial barriers that may have previously prevented entrepreneurial women of color from accessing professional photography services. This accessibility allows them to enhance their personal and professional branding, contributing to a more level playing field in their respective industries. Professional photography empowers individuals, boosting their confidence and self-esteem. By showcasing these empowered women through photography, the project helps them gain visibility, recognition, and credibility within their communities and beyond. Through collaboration and engagement with the community, the project seeks to foster connections and support networks among entrepreneurial women of color. By creating a platform to share experiences and knowledge, we aim to amplify their voices and inspire others within the community.

The project utilizes photography to tell compelling stories, shedding light on the challenges, triumphs, and resilience of entrepreneurial women of color. These stories serve as advocacy tools to raise awareness about the importance of diversity and inclusion in both the arts and business sectors. Overall, "Empowering through Lens" seeks to bridge the gap in representation and access to arts by harnessing the power of photography to empower, celebrate, and elevate the voices of entrepreneurial women of color, ultimately contributing to a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable creative landscape.

Example 3 - Jessamine deLancey, January 2024 Awards:

Equity to me means solutions to addressing an imbalanced system. This proposed artist residency and performance project offers representation and accessibility to Black and Indigenous people of color and low-income community members. It does so by hosting and highlighting the work of artists of African American, Afro-Brazilian, and Afro-Peruvian descent. As a group we will create work that is informed by those artists' lived experiences, bodies of knowledge, and inherited wisdom, and inspired by various Afro-Indigenous traditions that connect us to the natural world. This work will honor the bloodlines from which the inspiration comes. It is rare to have the opportunity to work in the creative space with such caliber of artists in their field, and this project provides people in the Santa Cruz community that treasured opportunity.

Access to participation in the workshops will be offered at a sliding scale, allowing for students and low-income individuals to pay a lower workshop price. Tickets to the final performance will also be offered at a sliding scale. Additionally, ten tickets to the Saturday performance will be given free of cost to community organizations, Beach Flats Community Center and UCSC's Black Student Union, so that members of those communities can attend and experience the final product of the project. Advertisement for the performance workshop event will be emphasized in diverse locations throughout the county.

Example 4 - Melissa Marzan, June 2023 Awards:

To embrace equity is to recognize that life is not a level playing field for everyone. It is crucial to not only acknowledge these disparities, but to also take intentional steps towards adjusting them to make it fair for everyone and for all members of the community to feel represented and celebrated.

Through my mural project, I would love to honor the Filipino community by providing the public with the snapshot of not only the resilience of our people, but to share the history of what Filipinos have contributed to the city of Watsonville. I was born in that city, but I did not learn the history of how my people contributed to this community until I left to college. It was not until I was older when I learned of Larry Itliong and his part in fighting for farm worker's rights and along with the tragedy of the Watsonville Race Riots in the 1930s.

I have felt a deep shame from not knowing the history of the land that I was born in, and the impact Filipino farmworkers have contributed to these lands.

With this mural, I hope to ensure that current and future generations of the Filipino community understand, remember, and celebrate their roots and what our people have fought for.

Example 5 - Vivien Bassouamina, June 2023 Awards:

Equity does not mean equal. Equity offers fairness driven by justice. Everyone does not begin at the same starting point. Equity is an ongoing process to reduce the gap between those who have struggled due to racism and economic disparagement and those who have not.

The conference addresses these issues of equity in these ways:

The conference primarily improves access and representation for the BIPOC communities.

The conference focuses on elevating African dance, drum, song, and storytelling as authentic ancient art forms necessary to support the existence and continuation of African culture in the diaspora.

99% of the artists are from their underrepresented African countries of origin.

TWDC and The Black Health Matters Initiative provide scholarships for black dance participants.

The conference increases public exposure and raises social awareness through cultural exchange.

The conference inspires the artists to continue pursuing their art forms upon return to home.

The conference invites our under-served Black and African communities to connect, share knowledge, lift each other up, empower one another to strengthen themselves and their communities.

In order to teach the next generation ancestral knowledge and cultural traditions, the teachers welcome children to participate.

All people of every race, age, religion, sexual-orientation, physical ability, socio-economic background and culture are welcome.