



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (RFEI)

**Research Grant to Conduct a
Comparative Assessment of
Artist Employment Models**

**EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST DUE:
May 19, 2023 at 5:00 PM Eastern**

Table of Contents

- 1 | Summary of Opportunity 3**
- 2 | Timeline 3**
- 3 | About Creatives Rebuild New York 3**
 - Introduction..... 3
 - About the Artist Employment Program.....4
 - CRNY’s Values and Commitment to Equitable Evaluation.....4
- 4 | Research Purpose and Priorities 5**
 - Overview 5
 - Baseline data 6
 - Budget 6
 - CRNY Coordination and Reporting Requirements..... 7
- 5 | Submission Requirements 7**
 - Format and Delivery 7
 - Content..... 7
- 6 | Selection Criteria..... 8**
- 7 | Proposal Review 8**
- 8 | Questions 9**
- 9 | Appendices 9**

1 | Summary of Opportunity

Through this open-call solicitation, Creatives Rebuild New York (CRNY) seeks to provide up to \$400,000 in grant funding to researchers to conduct a comparative assessment of artist employment models based on data and the experiences of participants in CRNY's Artist Employment Program (AEP). Research institutions or teams that are led by BIPOC individuals and/or based in New York State will be prioritized in the review process.

Expressions of interest are due by Friday, May 19, 2023 at 5:00 PM Eastern. Work is expected to begin July 3, 2023.

Please note that this is one of two solicitations for research related to CRNY's Artist Employment Program. View the other opportunity [here](#).

2 | Timeline

Monday, April 24, 2023	RFEI released
Friday, May 19, 2023	Deadline to submit interest
Wednesday, May 31, 2023	3-5 finalists notified
June 5, 6 and 7, 2023	Finalist calls with CRNY and Tribeworks
Monday, June 12, 2023	Deadline for finalists to submit budget and detailed timeline
Friday, June 16, 2023	Final selection/notification
June 19-June 30, 2023	Finalize grant agreement
Monday, July 3, 2023	Work to begin
Wednesday, July 30, 2024	CRNY initiative ends

3 | About Creatives Rebuild New York

Introduction

CRNY is a three-year, \$125 million investment in the financial stability of New York State artists and the organizations that employ them. Through our Guaranteed Income for Artists and Artist Employment Programs, CRNY supports 2,700 artists whose primary residence is in New York State.

CRNY was officially announced in Spring 2021 amidst a national movement of broad-based employment programs that put artists back to work following the global COVID19 pandemic. Our two funding programs were designed to alleviate unemployment of artists, continue the creative work of artists in partnership with organizations and their communities, and enable artists to continue working and living in New York State under less financial strain.

Looking beyond the context of emergency relief, CRNY believes that artists are workers who deserve equitable, sustainable support structures, and that improving the lives of artists is paramount to the vitality of New York State's collective social and economic wellbeing. As a time-bound initiative, CRNY is conducting a range of research, advocacy, and narrative change efforts designed with an eye towards replicability and integration of learnings into policy and practice at the local, state, and national levels. **Understanding and highlighting the range of employment experiences of artists in the Artist Employment Program is central to supporting the lives and livelihoods of individual artists long after CRNY's programs have ended.**

Fiscally sponsored by Tides Center, CRNY's funding is anchored by \$115M from the Mellon Foundation and \$5M each from the Ford Foundation and Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF). Learn more at creativesrebuildny.org.

About the Artist Employment Program

CRNY's Artist Employment Program (AEP) is a 2-year program that funds employment for 300 artists working in collaboration with 115 community-based organizations, municipalities, and tribal governments across New York State. Participating artists receive a salary of \$65,000 per year (commensurate with median household income in New York State) plus benefits and dedicated time to focus on their artistic practice. Community-based organizations receive \$25,000-\$100,000 per year to support their collaborations with these artists.

Of the 300 artists selected for the program, 163 sought to work in collaboration with grassroots organizations that did not have the capacity to hire the artists through their existing Human Resources infrastructure. To meet this need, CRNY partnered with Tribeworks—a cooperative, worker-owned payments and employment platform built to support creatives and the organizations who rely on them. Learn more about CRNY's partnership with Tribeworks at <https://www.creativesrebuildny.org/2023/03/29/collective-care/>.

Learn more about the artists and organizations selected to participate in AEP by visiting creativesrebuildny.org/participants/artist-employment-program/.

Review the archived AEP program guidelines—including context and vision, eligibility, selection criteria, and application questions—at creativesrebuildny.org/apply/artist-employment/ or in [Appendix A](#).

CRNY's Values and Commitment to Equitable Evaluation

CRNY is committed to confronting racial and wealth inequities and to developing effective strategies that move the New York State arts and culture ecosystem toward an equitable future. Both the Guaranteed Income for Artists and Artist Employment programs were designed to reach

artists deeply rooted in and reflective of populations that face structural barriers to financial security, with specific attention to addressing the pandemic’s startling and disparate impact on artists who come from, and serve, communities of color.

CRNY’s ethical framework prioritizes:

- transformative, caring support for artists;
- trust in and respect for program participants;
- worker solidarity and labor acknowledgement;
- reparative, equitable access to funds and opportunities; and
- an invitation to challenge and reimagine existing systems and institutions.

Applying this framework to our impact and narrative change work, CRNY believes in advancing equitable evaluation practices and artist-centered storytelling. We are committed to research that centers equity in its processes and methods—prioritizing the perspectives of program participants and ensuring that they are the ones best positioned to use or benefit from the findings. As articulated by the [Equitable Evaluation Initiative](#), we “embrace new concepts of objectivity, rigor, validity, and complexity” and commit not only to compensation of research participants but also care, trust, and respect for the beliefs, ideas, and expertise they bring to our learning processes.

4 | Research Purpose and Priorities

Overview

CRNY seeks to identify a research team or institution to design and implement a research study using CRNY’s Artist Employment Program (AEP) data and participant experiences as the foundation for a comparative assessment of employment models for artists.

Within the AEP program itself, artists are employed in two ways: (1) **direct employment** by a community-based organization, or employment through a (2) **worker cooperative** platform (Tribeworks). Many of the participating artists also earn income through ongoing (3) **gig or independent contract work**, as they did prior to the AEP program and will likely continue to do after the program concludes.

CRNY believes there is a rich opportunity to conduct qualitative and quantitative inquiry into the experiences of these artists and organizations to better understand both the unique and the more generalizable needs of artists as workers within the broader labor market.

Research questions that have emerged in the first year of the program include: Do artists have any unique or specific employment needs that make them better suited to one model over another? How does each model enable or prevent access to public and private benefits (e.g., health insurance, unemployment, disability, etc.)? What are the variables that affect the success of each model (e.g., size or mission of the employing organization, artistic discipline, or the specific role an artist holds within an organization)?

Rather than overly determining the direction of the research, however, CRNY is interested in partnering with researchers who bring expertise and an agenda of their own to this study. Our priority is to embed this study and findings in an institution or network that will continue to build support and infrastructure for the artist workforce in New York State long after CRNY closes in 2024.

Researchers are invited to design and implement the study, data collection methods, and ways of working with artists, organizations, CRNY staff, and Tribeworks representatives to assess the advantages and challenges of these three different work models for artists.

Researchers are also invited to define the deliverables of this research, the intended users of the deliverables, and how they anticipate results being used.

Baseline data

Of the 300 artists, 163 are employed by Tribeworks (78 of which have become members of the cooperative), and 147 artists are employed directly by community-based organizations.

Employment began in July 2022 and will end in June 2024. AEP co-directors have been conducting and documenting check-in calls with all collaborations every six months. CRNY and its program partners, including Tribeworks and other consultants brought on to support the collaborations, have also been tracking progress, changes, and challenges throughout the first year.

CRNY launched the Portrait of New York State Artists survey in March 2022 to build a portrait of the needs, circumstances, and experiences of artists across New York State. Upon submission of an application to the Artist Employment Program, artists were invited to answer additional questions, all optional, about their artistic practice, financial circumstances, well-being, pandemic experience, and attitudes about policy and advocacy matters.

46 of the 300 selected AEP artists completed the survey. These responses have the potential to serve as baseline data for those artists, as well as a framework for inquiry and discussion with the remaining artists in the program. See [Appendix D](#) for the full set of “Portrait of New York State Artists” survey questions.

Budget

The maximum budget available for this research grant is \$400,000, including research fees, subcontractors and partners, IRB approvals, data collection, travel, compensation for participating artists and organizations, production of deliverables, and all other costs associated with carrying out the study.

CRNY allows a 12% indirect cost rate on all direct costs.

A detailed budget is not required with expressions of interest, but will be requested of all finalists no later than Monday, June 12, 2023 (following informational calls with CRNY and Tribeworks).

CRNY Coordination and Reporting Requirements

This study is one of several impact and narrative change projects related to CRNY's Artist Employment Program. Others include an implementation evaluation and learning community, a participatory action research study looking at the impact on artists and organizations, and a storytelling initiative focused on the community impacts of AEP collaborations.

As a grant funded project, CRNY will not provide ongoing oversight or management of this study as we would for a research contract. CRNY staff and relevant program partners, however, will dedicate time for planning and coordination across research efforts, facilitate communication with participating artists and organizations, and share data and insights as appropriate and desired by all parties.

We will request that the selected partner(s) allocate time for the following:

1. Onboarding and ongoing coordination meetings with the Director of Strategic Impact and Narrative Change and with the Artist Employment Program Co-Directors;
2. At least one 90-minute meeting with other CRNY funded research teams to coordinate data collection plans and compensation to participating artists and organizations; and
3. Monthly email updates that list (in bulleted form) research activities of the prior month, plans for the following month, any challenges or changes that have arisen, and any emerging findings or analysis.

Depending on the timeline and availability of findings prior to CRNY's close, CRNY will collaborate with selected researchers to disseminate them widely through the CRNY website and/or through strategic partners.

5 | Submission Requirements

Format and Delivery

All expressions of interest must be submitted electronically, addressed to Jamie Hand, Director of Strategic Impact and Narrative Change, Creatives Rebuild New York, at jamie@creativesrebuildny.org.

Please include the Subject Line: "Response to AEP Employment Models Research Grant RFEI" and clearly note the submitting individual's or organization's name, address, primary contact person, and phone number.

Content

Please attach to your email a letter of interest, no more than 3 pages in length, that addresses the following questions:

1. Provide a high-level description of the direction and focus you would bring to this study, including proposed methodologies and any theoretical or conceptual frameworks you will

draw upon in the design, implementation, and analysis of your study. Describe how you propose to collect data from artists and organizations, and include any research hypotheses or questions your team will bring to the research design.

2. Introduce the research team and any key partners you propose to engage in the work.
3. Explain how this study would fit into your team's or institution's broader body of research, advocacy, or other work.
4. Describe how your team or institution might leverage this research for broader policy or systems change. How would you make the results or learnings from this study relevant and actionable? For which stakeholders or communities?

6 | Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Strength of the proposing team's or institution's reputation for research related to labor, workforce development, gig economy, and/or social safety net policies
2. Demonstrated track record of using research as a mechanism for policy or systems change
3. Quality, depth, and creativity of proposed methods to engage participating artists and organizations throughout the research process
4. Degree to which equitable evaluation practices are integrated into proposed research design and activities
5. Qualifications of the project team:
 - a. Knowledge, desire and/or capacity to work with artists
 - b. Research, analytical, and facilitation skills appropriate to the project and proposed research designs
 - c. Demonstrated experience working with diverse stakeholders on issues of equity and culture

Additional preference will be given to:

6. Project teams or institutions based in New York State
7. Project teams or institutions led by BIPOC individuals

7 | Proposal Review

Expressions of interest will be reviewed by CRNY senior staff and select external advisors according to the criteria outlined above, as well as for quality of contents and responsiveness to the RFEI.

Three to five finalists will be invited to participate in an informational video call with CRNY and Tribeworks representatives on either Monday, June 5, Tuesday, June 6, or Wednesday, June 7.

The expectation is that the principal investigator, and any other key individuals who will be involved in the research study, participates in the call. We expect the calls to serve as an opportunity for CRNY and respondents to ask questions of each other and assess alignment of interests.

Following the call, respondents will be asked to submit a budget and detailed timeline by 5:00pm Eastern on Monday, June 12, 2023.

The selected researchers will be notified of CRNY's decision no later than 5:00 PM Eastern on Friday, June 16, 2023.

8 | Questions

Questions concerning this RFEI should be addressed to Jamie Hand, Director of Strategic Impact and Narrative Change, Creatives Rebuild New York, at jamie@creativesrebuildny.org with the subject line "AEP Employment Models Research Questions."

9 | Appendices

Appendix A: [CRNY Artist Employment Program Guidelines](#)

Appendix B: [CRNY Artist Employment Program - By the Numbers](#)

Appendix C: [CRNY Artist Employment Program - Participants by Region](#)

Appendix D: [CRNY Portrait of NYS Artists - Survey Questions](#)