

# ROCKET GRANTS

## TIMELINE FOR **ROCKET GRANTS** 2012-2013:

January 22, 2012 - Applications open via <http://www.callforentry.org>

April 1, 2012 - Applications close online at midnight MST

April 2, to May 4, 2012 - Selection panel process

May 15, 2012 - Award recipients announced

June 14, 2012 - Awards gathering, funds released

June 15, 2013 - All projects must be complete

## VISION:

**Rocket Grants** receive support from the **Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts**, and are implemented through a partnership between the **Charlotte Street Foundation** in Kansas City, MO and the **Spencer Museum of Art**, at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS. These grants are designed to fuel the dynamism of the Kansas City region's art ecology by providing direct support for innovative, experimental, artist-driven, and artist-centered projects.

**Rocket Grants** fund projects that:

- happen outside of established institutions or arts venues
- may not attract traditional forms of support
- challenge mainstream methods of production or presentation
- add energy and diversity to regional visual arts activities
- encourage the development of new kinds of audiences
- and provide opportunities for the creative growth of both artists and audiences.

## ELIGIBILITY:

- Artists, curators, collectives, collaboratives, partnerships, and artist-run spaces residing within an 80-mile radius of the Kansas City metropolitan area are eligible to apply. See map at: <http://wp.me/PY46T-Lg>
- If applying as an artistic group, this group can be long-standing or created specifically for this project.
- Nonprofit, 501c3 organizations are NOT eligible to apply.
- All artists must be over 21 at the time of the application, and may not be full-time students at any time during the application or award period (April 1, 2012 to June 15, 2013). If college graduates, applicants for 2012 must have graduated from undergraduate school prior to June 30, 2010 (note, applicants need not have attended college).
- All exclusions apply for the entire period of the application and award (April 1, 2012 to June 15, 2013).

- Artists may not be awarded **Rocket Grants** for two sequential rounds of funding: 2011 awardees may not reapply in 2012.

#### DESCRIPTION:

The **Rocket Grants** program for 2012-13 will provide \$40,000, in cash awards of up to \$4000 each, to area artists, curators, and writers - as individuals or groups - to support the creation and presentation of new work/projects.

Supported projects may include **visual art, performance, film screenings, video, new media, writing, programming, social practice and interdisciplinary projects**. Performing artists and writers are eligible to apply, but **all work should include a compelling visual component**, and performers/authors are encouraged to form collaborations with visual artists to achieve this end.

#### PROCESS:

A panel composed of local and national artists and arts professionals will review applications and select projects for funding. **The first round of jurying will be based on digital images, one other type of work sample (if desired), the project title, and a brief description of the proposed project** (see below).

#### Selection criteria:

All proposals will be evaluated based on criteria including:

- Creative and conceptual strength of proposed project (innovative quality)
- Overall vision of the applicant(s) (context)
- The capacity of the applicant(s) to realize the project (feasibility)
- The project's potential for meaningful impact in/on the community, regional art ecology, and other artists, which may include:
  - Relevance of the project to the public
  - Engagement of others in the community in and with the project
  - The project's commitment to addressing a regional constituency
  - The project's demonstration of support for and from other artists in the community
  - The use of venues that will encourage a different kind of audience

#### Funding Priorities:

**Rocket Grants** are intended to enable individuals and groups of artists to **take new risks** with their work, **push the scope and scale** of their activities, develop and pursue **collaborative projects**, and **engage with members of the public, the public realm and other artists** in inventive and meaningful ways. Ongoing projects may be funded, but evidence of new experimentation and growth will present a more persuasive proposal.

Through this focus, **Rocket Grants** seek to **create ripple effects** - so that supported artists, processes, and projects will engage, inspire, and propel other artists; spark new ideas and ways

of working; and contribute to a regional culture characterized by unconventional and expansive forms of interaction, exchange, provocation, and surprise.

Projects must **have a public life** – i.e. they must engage and be made accessible to the public via **process, presentation, production, or publication**. Manifestations may include:

- exhibitions and curatorial projects, with a strong and innovative public component, occurring outside of traditional or established arts venues/districts
- site-specific installations in public spaces
- temporary public art projects
- public programs
- events
- performances, outside of traditional or established arts venues/districts
- screenings
- online projects
- publications
- residencies
- programming and development of artist-run spaces, residencies etc.

Support for **curatorial and publication projects** will be for **original** projects involving significant collaboration with artist(s) from the **geographic region** and substantially contributing to this region's contemporary art and cultural discourse.

Projects that will reach or **connect artists and/or communities** from different parts of the region (e.g. Kansas City and Lawrence) are strongly encouraged, as are those that **directly stimulate a stronger and more critical artists' community**.

#### **Venues:**

Elevating the presence of unconventional or under-recognized art forms is a strong priority for this grant program, but encouraging artists to **develop new kinds of audiences** is of equal importance. Consequently, projects that propose the use of traditional or established arts venues – such as galleries, museums, theaters, arts districts and so on – will not be strong candidates for funding. All artists are recommended to specifically address their choice of venue in a deliberate and meaningful way, and to explore how a well-chosen location could introduce new and surprising experiences to a chosen audience, large or small.

Artists are also encouraged to consider how entry fees or other charges connected with any events they schedule might affect the public accessibility of their projects.

Exhibition venues operated by either of the regional partners (Spencer Museum, CSF/UCP Paragraph and La Esquina galleries and the Project Space) are specifically NOT allowable for events connected to the Rocket Grants program.

## FAQs:

Answers to frequently asked questions, intended to help clarify the funding priorities and application process for this grant, may be found here: <https://rocketgrants.org/about/faq-2/>

Further information may be gained by viewing projects by previous **Rocket Grants** recipients: <http://rocketgrants.org/rocket-grants-projects/>

## Artist Responsibilities

Awarded artists will be expected to maintain prompt communications with the Program Coordinator. They will also be invited to make regular brief entries on the **Rocketblog** to track the progress of their projects, and asked to prepare publicity materials in a timely manner.

Awardees will be required to complete a short report after completion of the project. 10% of each grant will be withheld and released upon the completion of this report, with the intent that it will serve as seed money for future projects or as support for further leveraging of the completed project.

Artists will be held legally responsible for all events, materials and outcomes connected with their projects.

## Summary of kinds of projects that will NOT be funded:

- Projects proposed by a 501c3 non-profit organization
- Projects in which the lead artist/organizer, or the majority of artists, or the key visual artist live outside the 80-mile radius zone, or are not resident in this area at the time of application.
- Projects that do not have a public component, that are not accessible and presented to the public, that are a continuation or completion of traditional, private studio practice, or that do not exemplify innovative or experimental practices.
- Projects that request funding solely or primarily for travel or equipment purchase.
- Projects that request the use of venues run by partner institutions (Charlotte Street/Urban Culture Project and the Spencer Museum of Art), or that propose to use traditional or established arts venues without a compelling reason for doing so.
- Projects in which the lead artist/organizer/curator or any of the key participants is under the age of 21, is enrolled in any full-time or undergraduate study program at the time of application (or will be at any time during the period of the award), or has graduated from an undergraduate program since June 30, 2010.
- Projects or artists that received funding for the second round of **Rocket Grants** will not be eligible for this third round.

## **ROCKET GRANTS** PARTNERS:

Charlotte Street Foundation  
Spencer Museum of Art  
Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

**APPLICATION GUIDE**  
**Applications open January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012**  
**<http://www.callforentry.org>**

If applying as an artistic group, organization or curatorial project, the group can be long-standing or created specifically for this project. Please identify one participant to serve as the lead contact for the project. It will be assumed that the artist/curator who is making the online application will be serving as the lead artist/contact for the group.

Well before the application deadline (**April 1, 2012**), you should register at <http://www.callforentry.org> (CaFE) and create a username and password for logging in. If applying as a group of any kind, please create a username for the group (this could be the same as your project name), but use the lead artist/curator's information for the contact name and email. Also, at the bottom of the registration page, indicate that you are a team, and enter the names of up to three partners. If there are more than four people in your team, including the lead artist, you will find space on the actual application form to enter all the names. By doing this you will be able to upload work by multiple artists without confusing authorship. You should allow plenty of time for preparing and uploading your images to the CaFE site, because the system requires you to follow specific guidelines. You will find easy to follow instructions (including a tutorial) on the site after you register. You will also need to prepare time-based, web-based and written work samples as described below.

You are advised to locate and prepare the following information as a word processing document before completing the online application. Be sure to keep a backup copy of your written materials, for reference and in case your computer system crashes. All writing should be persuasive, relevant and concise. **Please respect all length limits.**

## 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Describe the project you would like to develop. Please include:

- **Project title\***
- **Project summary\*:** Summarize your project in one paragraph (maximum 75 words)
- **Description of your project** (maximum 500 words) including:
  - Description of the form your project will take (exhibition, public art project, series of public programs, performance, publication, etc.)
  - Motivations for the work, concepts behind the project, and relationship to past work
  - Anticipated impact in the area community including:
    - Specific target communities you plan to engage
    - Support for/involvement with other local artists in or through the project
    - How the project might serve as model/inspiration for other projects
- A brief **project timeline** (100 word paragraph or a bullet point list)
- **Project mechanics:** a description of how and where the project will be realized, including how it will be made accessible to the public (100 words)

- If your project requires a **venue** but one has not been secured, please explain (one sentence, maximum 30 words)
- If your project is a print or internet-based publication or project, please talk about your plans and **timeline for distribution/dissemination** (100 words)  
**\* Please note that the project title and project summary, together with your work samples, will be the only information that jurors see in the first round of the selection process.** You are advised, therefore, to pay great attention to making this writing clear and compelling in order to convey the essence and value of your idea.

## 2. WORK SAMPLES

Both the professional quality and the relevance of this material to your project will significantly impact the success of your application. There is a requirement for this grant that all projects should have a strong visual impact. Therefore, artists working in **all media** are required to submit **compelling visual documentation** connected with their project. Submit **up to TWO** forms of support material from the list below (i.e. digital images, and one other type of work sample if desired). You will notice that the application also allows you to enter a single URL elsewhere, as part of your contact/basic information (this could be a personal or group website). You may wish to consider how you could use this to provide jurors with access to more extensive work samples should you reach the final stage of the selection process.

- **5-10 digital images (required for all projects)** – Please prepare your images as described on the CaFE site at [https://www.callforentry.org/image\\_prep.phtml](https://www.callforentry.org/image_prep.phtml). You will need access to photo-editing software that can resize images, change image resolution, create new images, and save images as JPEGs. The Kansas City Public Library system has laptops that can be checked out with a library card for use in the building, and these machines are equipped with Gimp software that will perform all the required functions (<http://www.gimp.org>). It can also be downloaded free to your Mac or Windows machine, and Get Paint (<http://www.getpaint.net>) is available free for use on Windows systems. Other options are listed on the CaFE site. You can also view a tutorial on how to do the formatting using Adobe Elements (free 30-day trial) at <http://tinyurl.com/2d9m3dz>.

This year, watch for new hands-on **help sessions** offered through Charlotte Street that will assist you in formatting still images and video for this opportunity. Check the **Rocketblog** (<http://rocketgrants.org/about/outreach-sessions/>) and Charlotte Street emails for these. Workshops **after Feb 15** are provided for applicants to the **Rocket Grants** program, and you will need to sign up and reserve a spot.

As you upload your formatted images, please fill in all the relevant information (title, date, media etc.) for each one. **\* Please use the 300-character "Description" box to explain the relevance to your proposal of each image you have chosen.** This information will be visible to jurors when they complete the first round of selection. (Note: The first image you upload will be the one that appears most often on your application)

materials). IN ADDITION, if you are applying as a GROUP, organization or curatorial project, and are including work by **more than one artist**, PLEASE INCLUDE THE ARTIST'S NAME IN THE TITLE OF EACH SLIDE: e.g. Andy Warhol – Rocket Soup

- **Up to 3 works or 3 excerpts of time-based works.** This year, CaFE has begun to accept video/music uploads, and you can find specifications for this option on their site at [https://www.callforentry.org/image\\_prep.phtml#format](https://www.callforentry.org/image_prep.phtml#format). Just as for digital image uploads, please use the **300-character "Description" box** to write about the relevance of your work sample to your proposed project. The jury will be able to see this in the first round of selection. A **preferred method** would be to format your work and upload it to your own website, to Vimeo (for video) or SoundCloud (for audio). If you choose this method you will find space on the application form for noting the **URLs** that will link to your work and for writing about the relevance of the work samples you have chosen. You can download a document with links to software and online tutorials about uploading video and audio files, on the **Rocketblog** (<http://tinyurl.com/73d26z3>) and the hands-on workshops mentioned above will also be helpful in this regard. The panel will review up to **three (3) minutes** of work total, and you are strongly advised to prepare a sequence made especially for this application so that jurors do not have to switch from one sample to another or search for cues. This does not mean a "demo" reel or highlights of your work, but rather an edited compilation of excerpts from up to three works with a total length of three minutes. Samples that cannot be opened or played will disqualify your application.
- For **websites** you wish to be viewed as work samples, please submit **a list of URLs**. Please select material for viewing, bearing in mind that the selection panel will spend up to **three (3) minutes** looking at your selections. Work in this category may include documentation of previous work, work that uses the Internet as a public interface, or sites by or for others that demonstrate how you will develop your own project.
- **Writing samples.** The selection panel will view up to **five (5) pages of writing, or a maximum of 1,250 words** (12 point type, single spaced). You should format your samples into a **single .pdf** or Word document and upload this to the application when prompted to do so. You are encouraged to highlight the visual component of your writing by using the digital image options above. If there is some aspect of your written work that simply cannot be conveyed in this manner, you may mail or hand-deliver samples, including brochures, publications, books, etc., with excerpts clearly marked for priority viewing, AS A SUPPLEMENT TO the digital upload. Mail or hand-deliver to Charlotte Street Foundation or the Spencer Museum, to arrive **by 4 PM Friday, March 30, 2012**.

Please note that any hard-copy written work samples will only be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope/mailer is included with them, or if arrangements are made for pick-up. Please do not send any original materials unless they are disposable/multiples. Due to the volume of applications, we will NOT be able to confirm the receipt of these materials by phone or email. **Since the first round of selection is performed remotely, members of the jury will not see hard-copy materials at this stage of the process.**

**For mail delivery:** Charlotte Street Foundation, **Rocket Grants**, PO Box 10263, Kansas City, MO 64171

**For hand delivery:** CSF Office, M-F, 9 am-5 pm: 1000 W. 25th Street, Kansas City, MO 64108. Please mark your packet: **Rocket Grants**.

Or (**March 30, 2012 only**) Spencer Museum of Art, 1301 Mississippi Street, Lawrence, KS 66045-7500. Please mark your packet: **Rocket Grants**.

### 3. FURTHER INFORMATION FOR WORK SAMPLES

For **all** work samples, please carefully consider the **relevance** of the sample to your proposed project. Relevant samples show skills or experience that will be necessary to complete your proposal, or samples of work/sketches that describe the actual project you are planning. **For all types of work sample:** if the images are by multiple artists in your group, please explain how this is relevant to your project.

For **digital images** (required for all projects) please use the online application to supplement, if necessary, the information you entered in the image description box when uploading to CaFE, clearly explaining the relationship between them and your proposed project. (Approximately 50 words)

For *unedited time-based work samples* (not recommended), please indicate cue times. If you are submitting an *edited* sample (recommended), you may use this space to describe the longer work from which it was taken. If you uploaded your audio or video directly to CaFE, please use the online application to supplement, if necessary, the information you entered in the "Description" box. If you submitted URL links to video or audio samples, please use this space instead of the description box. For all work samples, please discuss the relevance of the samples to your proposal (Approximately 50 words).

If you are submitting one or more **URLs**, please direct the attention of the selection panel to **priority viewing**. Please also discuss the relevance of the samples to your proposal (Approximately 50 words).

For **written materials**, please discuss the relevance of the samples to your proposal. You may also give some brief information about longer works from which samples were drawn. (Approximately 50 words).

### 4. BIOGRAPHY

Please write a short biography (maximum 500 words) about yourself, your group, collective or organization. If you have additional key participants in your group please use the additional space to submit short biographies for all (maximum 100 words each participant). This application does not require a typical resume, so this is where you will indicate your experience and skill sets required to carry out your proposed project.

## 5. BUDGET

**Rocket Grants** will award up to \$4,000 to the selected artists or artist group for a project. The amount requested must be fully justified by a thorough, credible and balanced budget submitted with this application. Typically, selected projects are awarded the amount they request, though there may be exceptions when this does not apply. Ten percent of the award (up to \$400) will be withheld until the project is completed and final documentation has been submitted. Please include projected expenses, anticipated income (if any), and the total project budget. For anticipated income, indicate if you have applied for, secured, or anticipate additional funds for this project and list amounts and potential sources. If your project relies on additional sources of income not yet secured, please explain how the scope of project will change if that income is not secured.

- Your budget may include in-kind contributions (anything other than cash).
- You will need to download a **budget form** from the **Rocketblog** website (<http://rocketgrants.org/about/budget-forms/>), fill it out, and upload it to the CaFE website.
- There are three formats available: .xls, .doc, and .pdf. The .xls (Excel) file is the preferred format, and will do the math for you! Please modify the budget form in any way necessary to meet your project's needs.
- Please also download the **budget instructions** file in the same window, and carefully follow directions for filling out, saving and uploading. You will find additional information in the FAQ section that will clarify some questions about the budget process, and you may also view an online tutorial at <http://rocketgrants.org/about/online-tutorials/>.
- The most important things to remember are that 1) Your budget should **BALANCE (total income = total expenses)**, and 2) That it should be well enough researched to credibly reflect the sum you are requesting.

When you have completed the form, you should **save** it as **YourProjectTitleBudget.xls**, .doc or .pdf (e.g. SoupCansInTheParkBudget.xls), and upload it as part of your online application.

**In all sections of the application, you are advised to keep your writing brief, persuasive and to the point. Please proof well before submitting. PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO HIT THE "SUBMIT" BUTTON when you have completed your application, or it may not be received prior to the deadline.**

### **MORE INFORMATION:**

There will be a series of outreach sessions at various locations around the region in February and March, at which applicants will be able to make a one-on-one appointment to clarify issues pertinent to their applications in progress. There will also be one or two technology sessions offered after February 15 for individuals who are not familiar with formatting and uploading images, sound or video for their online application. Please check for information and an ongoing calendar at <http://rocketgrants.org/about/outreach-sessions/>.

Please note that **KU Spencer Museum of Art/Charlotte Street/Rocket Grants** staff do not vote on the jury panel, and can not advise you on ways to create a winning application – that will always, ultimately, depend on the quality of your work and ideas and their relevance to this particular opportunity.

Please be sure to check all sources of information available to you (including the FAQ pages and the **Rocketblog** in general: <http://rocketgrants.org>) before contacting staff for further assistance.

Thank You and Good Luck!

Contact: **Julia Cole**,  
**Rocket Grants** Program Coordinator,  
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