

Artists' Adaptability Circles



ARTISTS' ADAPTABILITY CIRCLES ANNOUNCES 2024 ARTIST CIRCLE AWARDEES

Bay Area funding and leadership development collaborative announces second cohort of artist circles creatively addressing issues arising in their lives and communities.

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San Francisco, CA (September 18, 2024) - The Artists' Adaptability Circles (AAC) is a community-driven granting and leadership development program designed to put Bay Area artists, culture bearers and arts workers to work. **Following two previous rounds, the initiative is now thrilled to announce its 2024–2025 cohort of five new Bay Area artist circles, including several returning individual artists.**

Unlike traditional grant programs, AAC did not request an actionable grant plan during the artist circle application and selection process. Each circle self-identified an issue area related to mutual aid



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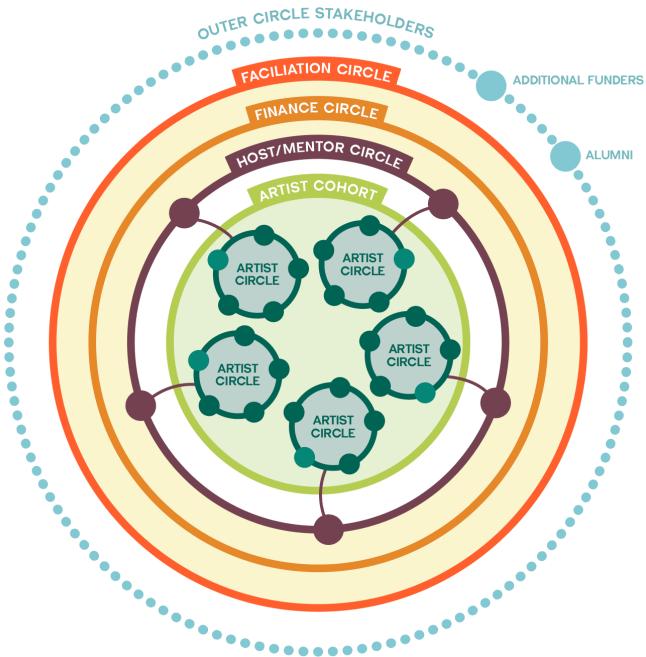
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arising in their lives and communities, and they were selected on the basis, not of worthiness or quality, but of timeliness, relevance, and capacity.

The initiative does not expect specific outputs of these circles either. Instead, participants are paid stipends to meet together and to attend cohort development sessions centering curriculum developed by Emerging Arts Professionals San Francisco Bay Area and individuals participating in their fellowship program. Simultaneously, they are guided through the process of exploring a modest solution addressing their issue area that mobilizes the program's financial, network, and professional development resources.

"We have noted desire for intentional incubation time and to be in practice of expansive collaboration that is not structured for production," writes Kim's Acebo Arteche's Artist Circle. "The potential to be in a larger circle of artists and cultural bearers who are actively invested in dismantling capitalist frameworks of collaboration is a welcome challenge."



Following a robust engagement period focused on togetherness, skill building, and sustainability, artist circles are provided with \$10,000 in flexible funding to create some small action toward addressing their issue area. While there is no outcome expected of this funding, artists are instructed to use this time and support to center their own and their communities' needs. In previous iterations, artist circles have dreamt up: retreats to rest, deepen relationships or plan future actions; programmatic activities like publications, events, residencies and workshops; increased individual artist stipends; or supporting basic needs for the circles' participating artists (like rent, transportation, childcare, etc.).

"In an act to deepen our 'communal power,' we see the next phase in our evolution as a shift out of survival mode, taking time to move together, write, make music, share artists and activists that inspire us, imagine, cook good food for each other and rest," writes Tiersa Nureyev's Artist Circle, known as R & R: Reflecting Reality, Releasing Restrictions.

"We want to continue our work as artists, activists, and abolitionists by supporting ourselves via self-care and sharing with the wider community what we have learned from our work together. We are excited for the opportunity to curate space to shape new structures and models of sustainable radical arts practices."

Since its inception in June 2020 in the wake of shelter-in-place when many artists and arts workers were struggling to return to work, AAC has been designed to support the kinds of rest and dreaming — or, "R&D" — that are vital for grassroots arts collectives but typically not funded. As a shared learning environment for historically under-resourced artists, culture bearers and arts workers, AAC also recognizes the relevance and priority for Black, Indigenous and People of Color, LGBTQIA2S+ people, individuals with disabilities, and other historically under-resourced communities to come together through professional and cohort development.

Central to the program's design and implementation is mutual aid. **AAC co-creator and BWP Director Rhiannon Evans MacFadyen says, "Mutual aid is the foundation of community care and has a deep history in BIPOC and under-served communities. It moves us toward equity by allowing diverse groups of people to provide for each other – from each according to their ability, to each according to their need – moving us from a singular, scarcity mindset to that of a vibrant, resourced ecosystem."**

Utilizing a distributed leadership and funding model, the AAC initiative is a collaboration between Emerging Arts Professionals San Francisco Bay Area, Black & White Projects, Movimiento de Arte y Cultura de Latino Americana, ARTTogether, Deep Breath Pilates, Independent Arts & Media, and funding partners the San Francisco Foundation, Kenneth Rainin Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Zellerbach Family Foundation, Walter & Elise Haas Fund.

2024-2025 Circles and Self-Identified Issue Areas



Participating Artists: Adriana Garcia (returning), Laura Diaz Tovar (returning), Jessica Castaneda Ramirez, Liz Gonzalez, and Anna Sánchez

Creating a Safe Space to Promote Health, Wellness, and Self-Care Through the Arts Among People of the Global Majority in the Southbay and Surrounding Areas



Participating Artists: B Dukes, Lalin St. Juste, Adeniji, KKINGBOO, and mello-Jahil

Creating Safe and Accessible Spaces for Black, Queer and Trans Community Members to Participate in Healing Modalities Centering Liberation, Capacity Building and Connection. Directly Addressing the Lack of Holistic Resources and Accessibility



Participating Artists: Tiersa Nureyev, Amie Dowling, Antwan Williams, and Reese
Imagining New Models of Artistic Practice and Building Toward a Platform for Sustained Creative Engagement that Acknowledges the Complexities and Needs of Artists Recently Released from Prison



Participating Artists: Kim Acebo Arteche, Peekaboo, Josh, Kim Requesto, and Jacob Walse-Dominguez
Building Right Relationship to Land, Spirit, and Indigenous Community as Filipinx Diasporic Artists Practicing and Reviving Pre-Colonial, Land-Based Rituals



Participating Artists: Mama Celeste, Mudd (the two spirit), Piss E Sissy, Alex Locust, and Ambrose Trataris
Creating Sustainable* Resources for Trans & Nonbinary Performers Working in Nightlife

*We define sustainability as building agency for BIPOC, disabled, and trans and nonbinary artists to access resources that they need to continue to live and create in the Bay Area.

Images can be accessed [here](#). For more information, visit: emergingsf.org/artists-adaptability-circles

AAC Program Facilitators



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A heartfelt **Thank You** to our funders and financial partners for making this program possible



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