



Pandemic Relief & Recovery

Emergency Funding & the Bay Area Arts Community

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A note from the authors



The *Pandemic Relief & Recovery* report provides an analysis of the COVID-19 relief support grantmakers provided to Bay Area artists and cultural organizations, how it helped mitigate the crisis, and what the regional arts community needs now to recover.

Through multiple research methodologies, we aspired to be both broad and deep in our investigation. However, our report does not purport to offer a comprehensive list of all relief funds created or a complete review of the arts community's diverse pandemic experience.

The *Pandemic Relief & Recovery* report concludes by affirming what readers may already know: relief funds for artists and arts organizations are winding down, but the Bay Area arts community will need recovery funds for years to come.

We hope this research inspires conversations that lead to sustained pandemic recovery support and evolved grantmaking practices that reflect the insightful feedback provided by the 250+ artists and cultural workers who contributed to this study.

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THE EAST BAY
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



Kenneth
Rainin
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WALTER & ELISE HAAS FUND

Zellerbach
FAMILY FOUNDATION

And includes perspectives from
250+ Bay Area artists and cultural workers

Methodology



1

Scan of COVID-19 relief funds for Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco

- COVID-19 relief resources from arts service organizations and artist associations
- Grant data from Candid's *Foundation Center Online Grant Directory*
- Datasets shared by funders
- 200+ grantmaker websites

2

Conversations with **11** field experts & arts community leaders

3

Interviews with **14** individual artists

4

Survey of **223** small and mid-size budget arts organizations

Overview of 223 arts organizations surveyed

Organization County



59%	San Francisco
31%	Alameda
5%	Contra Costa
5%	other

Organization Age



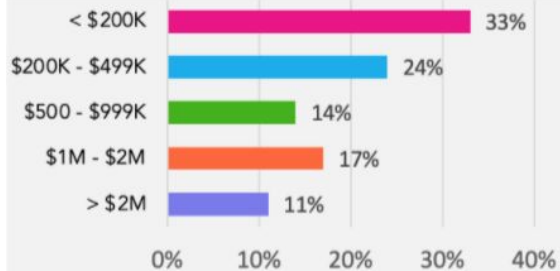
62%	>20 years
17%	11-20 years
12%	6-8 years
9%	2-5 years
0%	<2 years

43% identify as BIPOC-led

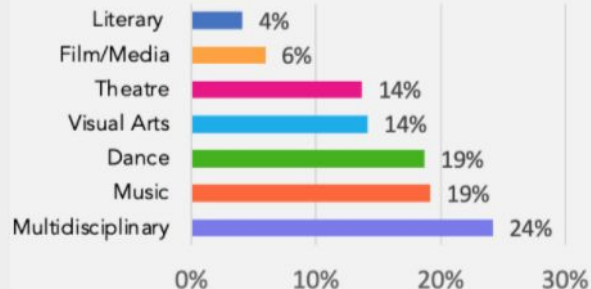
Or have a combined senior leadership (as defined by the organization) and Board of Directors in which 50% or more identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color.

- 38% primarily serve BIPOC audiences and participants
- 37% have a mission explicitly rooted in creating, presenting, interpreting art by BIPOC artists
- 36% primarily serve a marginalized community other than the BIPOC community

Organization Budget Size



Organization Primary Discipline



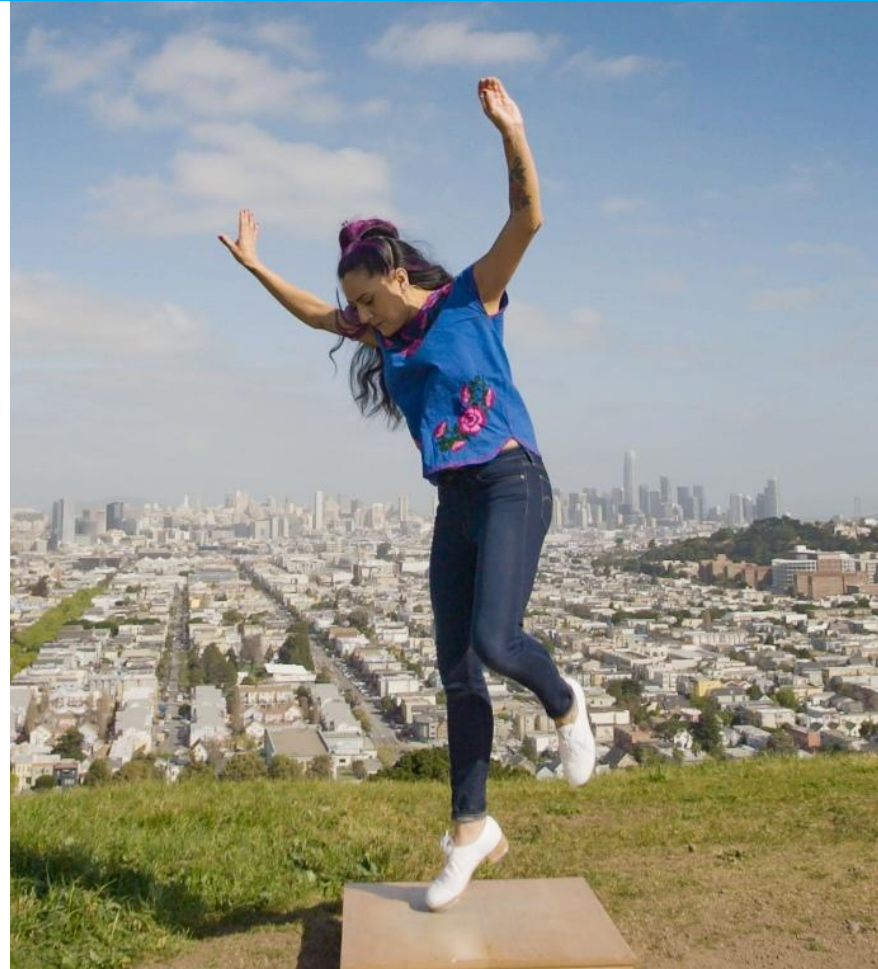


Response

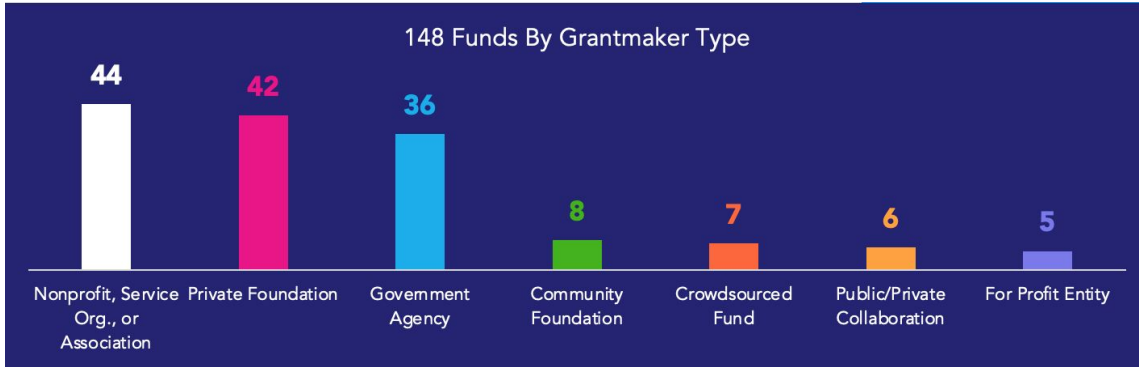
5 things you need to know about the
COVID-19 Relief Funding Landscape



Section 1 of 4



1. Grantmakers created over 140 relief funds for artists and organizations



20 still active and deemed locally significant as of July 1

- 60% of funds closed
- 51% not mentioned by experts or survey participants
- 22% not explicitly emergency relief grants

2. Government programs and flexible support from local funders were critical

Federal Government Programs

For organizations

**Paycheck
Protection
Program**

For individuals

**Unemployment
Benefits &
Stimulus Checks**

Flexible Support from Local Foundations

For organizations

**Emergency Relief
Grants**

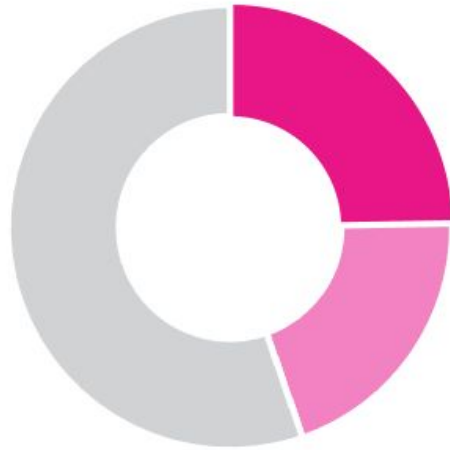
For organizations

**Non-Emergency
Grants
Converted to
Gen Op**

3. Increased acknowledgement of BIPOC need



115 Relief Funds By BIPOC Priority



59% **don't specify**
22% **BIPOC only**
19% **BIPOC priority**

4. Overwhelming number of funds and scattershot communication

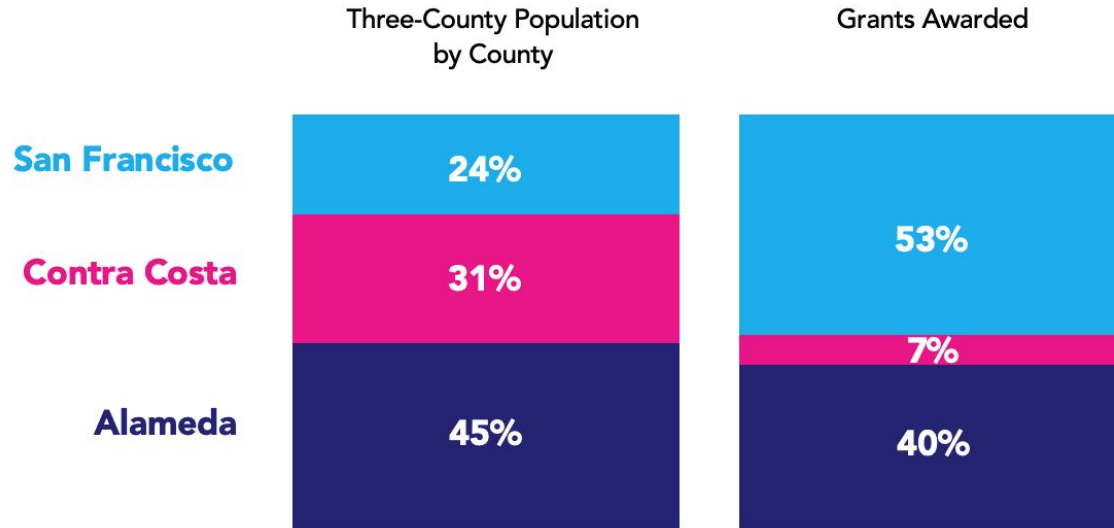


“Funds were quickly gone and highly competitive. And it was a job within itself to apply and keep up with who turned you down.”

– Arts organization representative

5. Geographic disparity with Contra Costa trailing

*Per capita, **San Francisco** received 10x more grants than **Contra Costa**.*



Analysis of Two Prominent Bay Area COVID-19 Relief Funds

Resilience

6 things you need to know about

How the Arts Community Fared

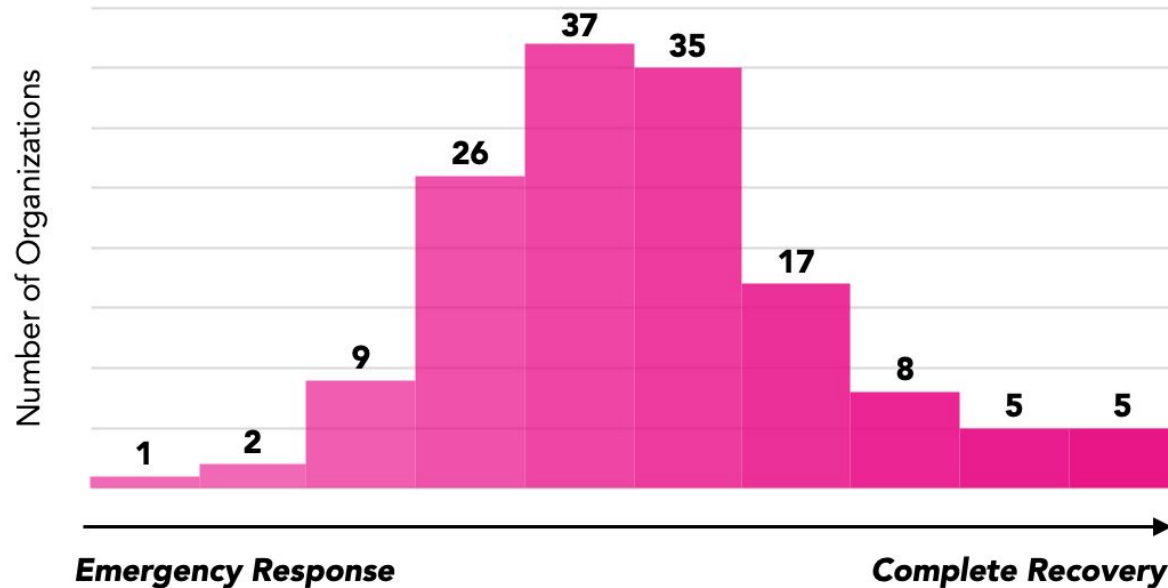
Section 2 of 4



1. Despite substantial challenges, the arts community is on the path to recovery

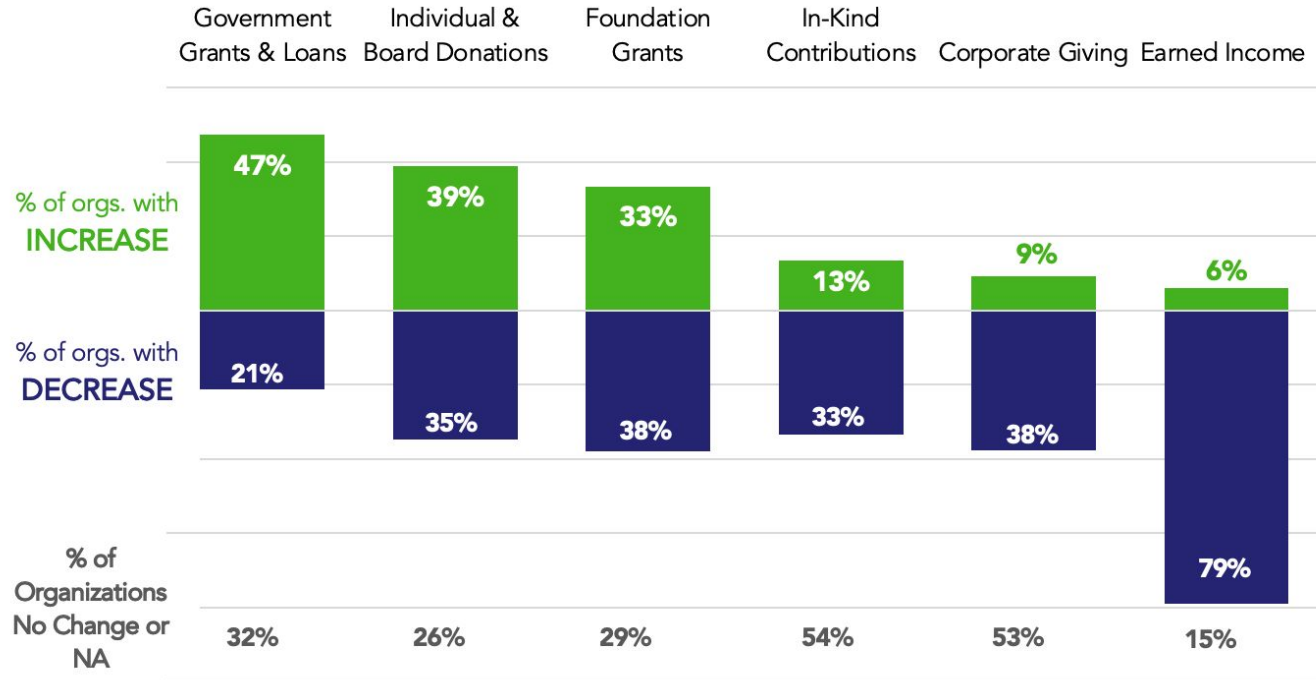


215 Arts Organizations Subjective Assessment of Where They Are on the Path to Recovery



2. Fundraising and cost cutting to offset earned income losses

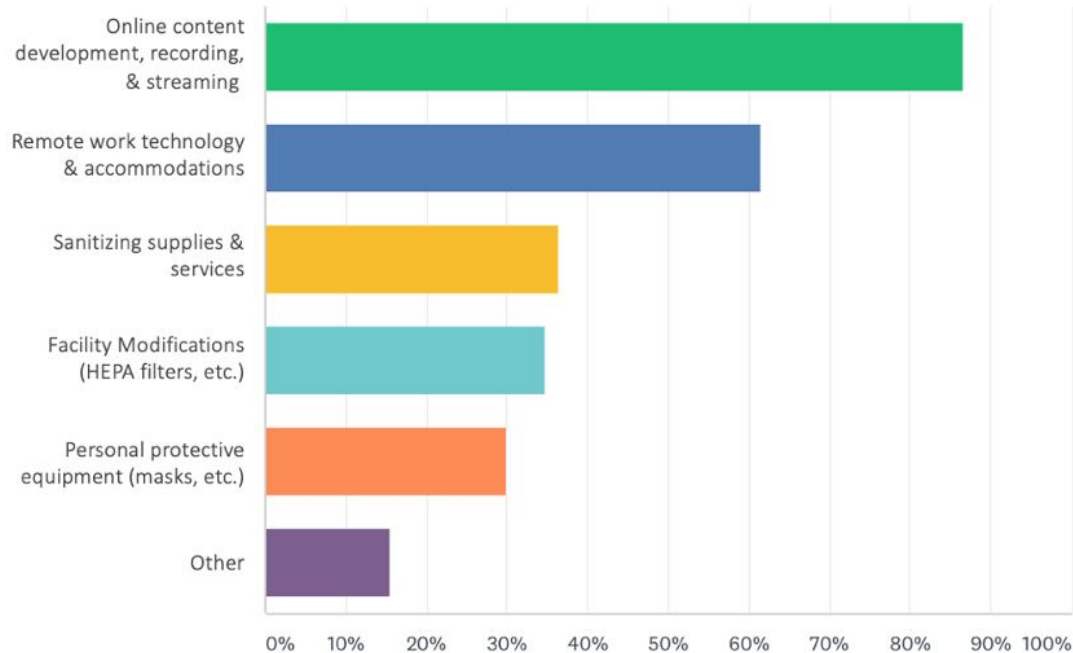
How Income Streams Changed for 199 Arts Organizations Over the Course of the Pandemic



3. New costs to adapt to a changing operating environment



Principal Ongoing COVID-19 related Expenses For Arts Organizations



4. Shrinking cash reserves and personal savings



“I want to be a full-time artist and I was saving to do that, but I was laid off in February 2020 and I completely depleted my savings. I used up what I called my Freedom Fund.”

– Artist

Our survey of 223 arts organizations found:

- Operating reserves shrank for 41% of organizations
- 54% of organizations had ≤ 3 months of operating reserves

5. Burnout makes 'getting back to normal' challenging



"I filed for bankruptcy because of the loss of revenue from my photography business... 2020 was the hardest year of my life."

- Artist


"Some artists are really hurting still and can't just go and get as many gigs as possible as quick as possible. We are not machines."

- Artist

6. Different experiences for BIPOC-led and white-led organizations

<i>Greater Financial Burden for BIPOC-led Organizations</i>		
% of Organizations...	BIPOC-Led	White-Led
With \$2M+ budget	5%	17%
With more than three months of operating expenses	41%	47%
That experienced a significant decline in individual and board donations	23%	9%

6. Different experiences for BIPOC-led and white-led organizations



<i>Steeper Barriers for BIPOC-led Organizations</i>		
% of organizations that said ____ was one of their most significant barriers	BIPOC-Led	White-Led
Lack of connections to the philanthropic community	50%	17%
Explicit or implicit racial bias from funders	42%	15%
Not knowing what funds are available	30%	7%
Difficulty reaching or building rapport with funders	44%	22%

6. Different experiences for BIPOC-led and white-led organizations



Areas Where BIPOC-led Organizations May Have Fared Better

% of organizations that ...	BIPOC-Led	White-Led
Received increased foundation grants	32%	19%
Ended the year with a surplus or balanced budget	71%	68%

6. Different experiences for BIPOC-led and white-led organizations

<i>Qualities That Make Relief Funds Accessible & Impactful for BIPOC-led Organizations</i>		
% of organizations that said _____ is most important for their organization	BIPOC-Led	White-Led
Funds designated for BIPOC-led or serving organizations	53%	7%
Explicit policies to reduce racial bias	46%	17%
Multiyear support	56%	29%
Technical assistance	56%	39%



Needs

4 things you need to know about

Needs and Barriers to Overcome

Section 3 of 4



1. Relief funding is going away, yet recovery could take years



“In the spring, knowing we made it through pandemic, I felt triumphant... But now I am realizing that the relief grants that are floating our boat just won’t last, and it feels draining.”

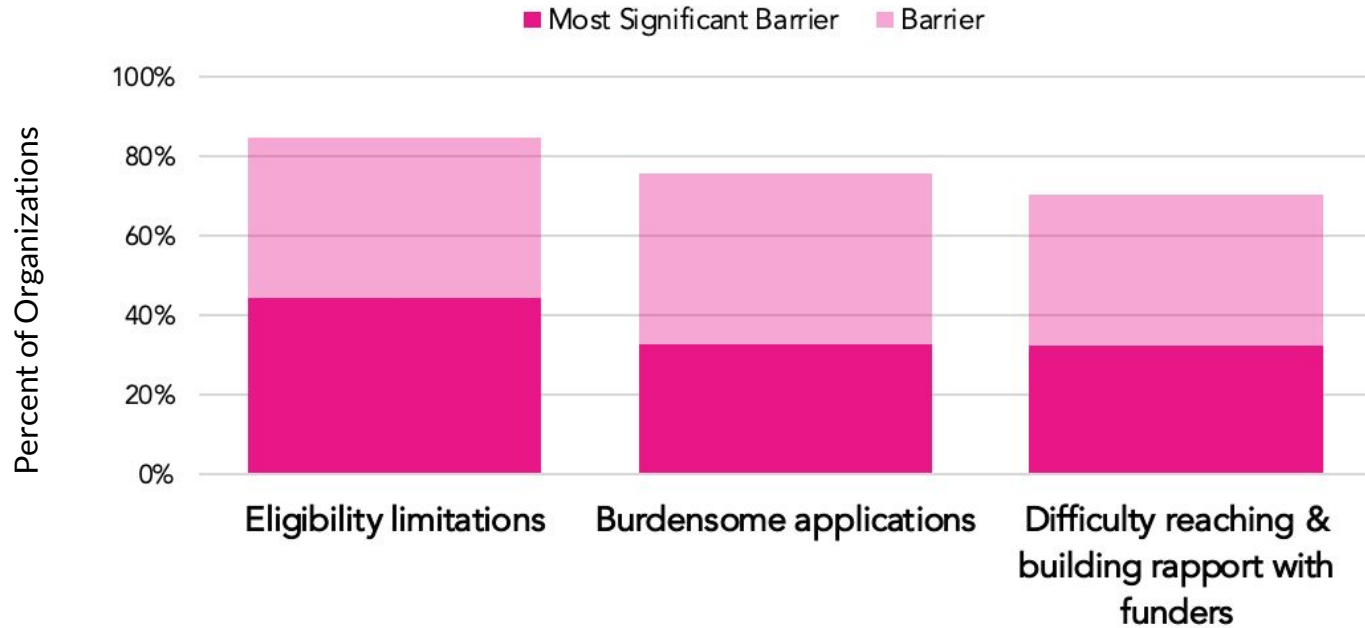
– Arts organization representative

2. Flexible sustained income needed to survive and adapt

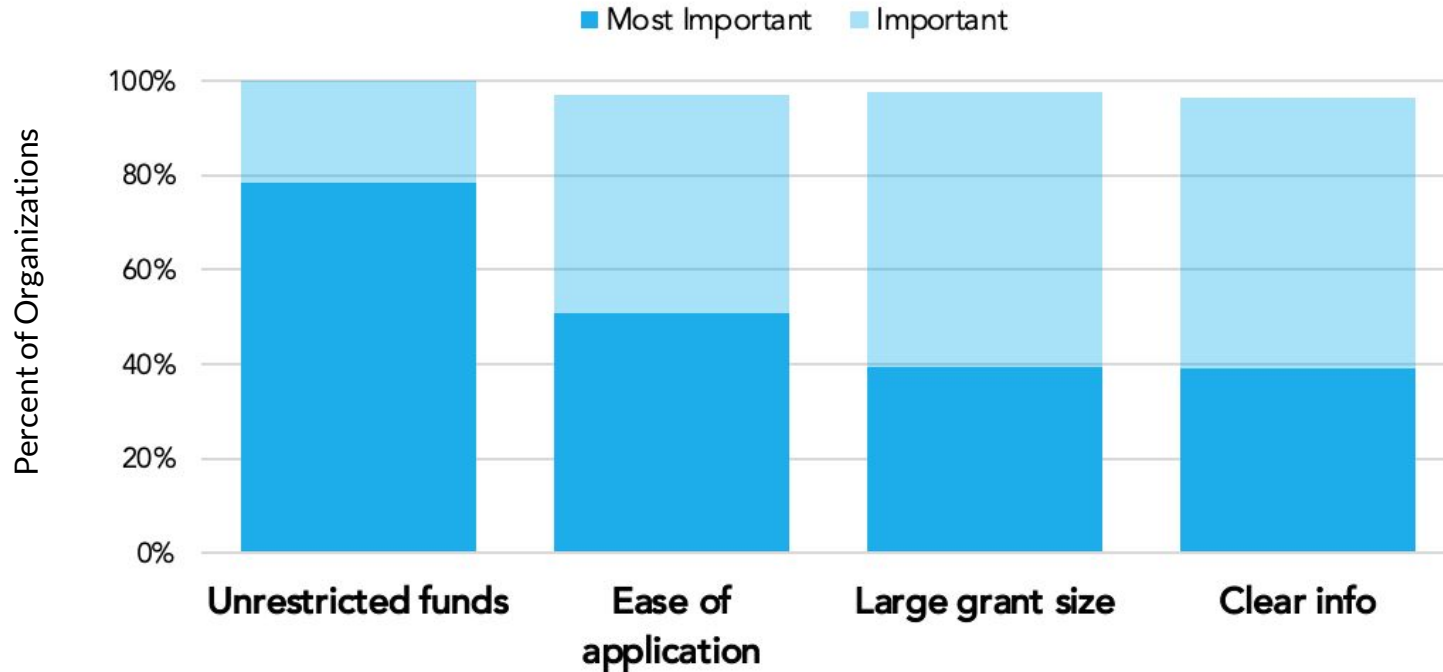
Most Significant Immediate Needs of 223 Bay Area Small-Budget Arts Organizations Surveyed

Top Needs	Percent of Organizations
<i>Obtaining Flexible, Sustained Funding</i>	39%
<i>Supporting and Hiring Staff</i>	14%
Rebuilding Audiences & Participants	9%
Accessing & Securing Space	8%
Adapting to Virtual/In-Person Hybrid Work & Using Digital Technology	7%
Clear Public Health Guidance	5%
Strategy & Contingency Planning Support	5%
COVID-19 Safety Equipment & Facility Modifications	4%

3. Top barriers to accessing relief funds



4. Most important relief fund qualities





Response



1. Tons of funds
2. Impactful government programs and local private funds
3. Acknowledgement of BIPOC need
4. Scattershot communication
5. Geographic disparity



Resilience



1. Arts community on the path to recovery
2. Offsetting drastic earned income losses
3. New pandemic expenses
4. Shrinking cash reserves
5. Burnout
6. Different experiences for BIPOC-led and White-led groups



Needs



1. Recovery could take years
2. Flexible, sustained funding needed
3. Top barriers to funding:
 - a. *Eligibility limitations*
 - b. *Burdensome applications*
 - c. *No rapport with funders*
4. Top qualities of accessible, impactful funds:
 - a. *Unrestricted funds*
 - b. *Easy applications*
 - c. *Large grants*
 - d. *Clear information*

6 Recommendations

Section 4 of 4



Recommendations Summary



Types of
Support
Needed

**Consequential,
Unrestricted,
Multi-Year**

**Targeted
“Start-Back”
Grants & Technical
Support**

**BIPOC & Contra
Costa County
Designated
Funds**

Evolved
Grantmaking
Practices

**Increased
Grantmaker
Collaboration**

**Simplified
Applications and
Reports**

**More Outreach
and
Transparency**



Read the report

bit.ly/PandemicReliefReport

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