



ALLIANCE for  
CALIFORNIA  
TRADITIONAL ARTS



Center for  
Cultural  
Innovation

## Hardly Strictly Music Relief Fund: Bay Area Guidelines

*“With this effort, we seek to recognize, appreciate, and care for the people who lend their creativity, heart, and hard work to the American roots music ecosystem in the Bay Area.”*

—Hardly Strictly Bluegrass

### Summary

The Hardly Strictly Music Relief Fund (“The Fund”) is a \$1.5 million philanthropic effort that includes \$450,000 to support individual musicians. The Fund is made possible by Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, which founders Warren and Christine Hellman began in 2001 and remains a free, non-commercial, and beloved annual event in Golden Gate Park. This relief effort is realized in the spirit of the founders and is intended to respond to the ongoing economic crisis and ensuing financial needs of Bay Area roots musicians resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic—a federally recognized “qualified disaster.” Recognizing that the large-scale shutdown needed to stem the spread of the virus has put the entire arts sector on hold, disrupting the ability to earn income, the Fund recognizes the unique contributions of individual musicians as an important backbone to the arts and culture sector.

**Applications open:** August 24, 2020 at 9 a.m. PDT

**Application deadline:** September 14, 2020 at 5 p.m. PDT

**Notification:** September 25, 2020 by 5 p.m. PDT

### What is Roots Music?

Our definition acknowledges that the landscape of American music has evolved from a wide variety of musical genres and peoples. Broadly, roots music is shaped by American social, cultural and environmental landscape. Roots music is characterized by its deep connection to people and the communities that practice them, reflecting a sense of place, history, values, language and aesthetics. This includes genres such as Native/Indigenous music, blues, bluegrass, Cajun, zydeco, gospel, old-time music, spirituals, Tex-Mex, western swing, and hip-hop. Additionally, successive waves of immigrants whose musical traditions have taken root over time enhance the diversity of the U.S. musical landscape and include genres such as mariachi, taiko, bomba y plena, and klezmer music. These widespread practices and evolving

traditions are essential to this definition of roots music. What all of these musical forms share are roots in a cultural community of practice.

## Who is eligible? How much funding is available?

- The applicant must be a practicing roots musician
- Applicants must be current, full-time residents of the following Bay Area counties: **Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, or Sonoma.**
- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.
- Individuals who meet eligibility requirements and with urgent financial need will receive **up to \$2,000 in unrestricted funds.** You may apply only one time.

Funding is limited. Please apply only if you are in dire financial need. If demand exceeds funding available, priority will be given to musicians from populations that have suffered historically from economic disadvantages and, therefore, will be disproportionately impacted by Covid-19: Black, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrant, trans, and disabled communities.

## Who is not eligible?

- If you are currently receiving CA-state unemployment benefits you are ineligible. However, applicants receiving CARES benefits through the [Pandemic Unemployment Assistance](#) (PUA) program are eligible for funding.
- You cannot have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationships) with the boards, staff, and directors of the Hellman Foundation, Hardly Strictly Bluegrass\*, Center for Cultural Innovation, or Alliance for California Traditional Arts. *\*Past Hardly Strictly Bluegrass performers are eligible to apply.*

## How do I apply?

Applicants will be asked to describe their financial needs and vulnerability through a series of confidential questions. We ask that you apply only if you are facing immediate need so that the Fund reaches those who need it most.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your application and information will remain confidential by the administrators of this Fund. We respect the hardship of artists at this time and will not share private information publicly or to any entity outside of the administering organizations. The Fund will be administered by the [Alliance for California Traditional Arts](#) (ACTA) and the [Center for Cultural Innovation](#) (CCI). Both organizations bring their long commitment and experience as grantmaking intermediaries supporting individual artists and cultural communities towards advancing racial and cultural equity.

**WHERE CAN I FIND THE APPLICATION?** Applications will be available online at [www.actaonline.org/hardlystrictlyfund](http://www.actaonline.org/hardlystrictlyfund). Applications are available to read and submit in English and Spanish, and will be accepted in both languages. Before you are directed to the application, you will be asked to register with the Submittable platform, which is a simple process of providing

a valid email, creating a password, confirming your password, and adding your first and last name as directed.

**APPLICATION WINDOW:** The Fund will accept applications beginning on August 24 at 9 a.m. PDT through September 14, 2020 at 5 p.m. PDT.

**NOTIFICATION:** Applicants will be notified about their award status on September 25, 2020 by 5 p.m. PDT. Disbursements of funds will follow immediately.

## Review Process

The criteria for funding is based on financial need and eligibility as a practicing roots musician living in the six Bay Area counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, or Sonoma.

If the Fund receives more eligible requests than the available funding of \$450,000, a lottery system that is weighted to prioritize applicants of historically vulnerable communities (Black, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrant, trans, and disabled) and to distribute the funds throughout the designated Bay Area counties as broadly as possible, will be used to determine awards.

## Preparing Your Application

You will need to prepare the following for your application:

Proof of name and address: You will be asked to upload any document that shows your name and address as the one listed in your application. This can be a driver's license, utility bill, or bank statement. **Make sure to block out any sensitive information like your social security number or bank routing number.**

Proof that you are an artist: A link to your website or to another website where you and your artistic work are featured are acceptable. You can link to YouTube, Soundcloud, Instagram, Facebook, etc.

Optional support material: IF you are unable to link to a website, then you have the option to upload a single attachment that demonstrates your artistic and cultural practice, such as a photo of a public performance, news article, or a marketing materials, which further helps us understand your artistic and cultural practice if it is not easily recognizable in the URL(s) you provided.

## Technical support? Contact Submittable!

Email: [support@submittable.com](mailto:support@submittable.com)

Phone: (855) 467-8264

## Questions? Contact Us!

Email queries: [musicrelieffund@actaonline.org](mailto:musicrelieffund@actaonline.org)

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