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Center for Craft Introduces Craft Futures Fund

A new grant supporting creative responses to COVID-19 for craft communities

Asheville, NC (May 6, 2020) - A new opportunity established by the Center for Craft will support the collective re-imagining of the future of craft, providing both economic relief as well as purpose and community-driven resolve in the wake of the coronavirus. The [Craft Futures Fund](#) will provide one-time, unrestricted grants of \$5,000 to craft-based education projects that seed resilience, foster community, and amplify impact.

According to a survey conducted by Americans for the Arts, the arts and culture sector currently estimates incurring a 4.8 billion dollar economic impact due to the coronavirus. The craft community has been directly affected through increased health risks as well as school, university, craft campus, museum, gallery, and other business closures. These foundational changes have resulted in mandatory online learning for craft students, as well as loss of current and anticipated income for artists due to canceled trade fairs, gallery sales, and teaching opportunities, among other impacts.

At present, there are numerous funds dedicated to emergency relief for artists and arts organizations affected by COVID-19. Currently, there are far fewer funds serving the craft community exclusively, and there are few to no funds exclusively serving adjuncts or teaching artists. The Craft Futures Fund fills a critical need to serve, strengthen, and foster growth in craft by focusing on educators.

Priority will be given to projects that serve communities who have been impacted by COVID-19 in the United States as identified by applicants. These communities might include seniors, the homeless, LGBTQ+, students, adjunct teachers, K-12, people with disabilities, service industry, and communities of color. Additionally, we acknowledge that new needs arise daily and encourage applications that will be responsive to these yet emerging constituencies as well.

The Craft Futures Fund will award up to six project grants, or \$30,000, each month from May – October 2020 and applications will be selected by lottery and reviewed by selection panels on a monthly basis. Generously initiated by a grant from the Windgate Foundation, the Craft Futures Fund will be expanded by additional donations. Gifts of any size will allow the fund to award additional grants. To make a donation, please visit centerforcraft.org/support.

"We are impressed with the Center's quick response to steward resources to this overlooked yet critical segment of the craft sector," says Patricia Forgy, Director of the Windgate Foundation. "The shared findings provide an opportunity for us to demonstrate the importance of education and community."

"The Coronavirus (COVID-19) will impact craft communities in ways that we have not yet begun to understand," said Center for Craft Executive Director, Stephanie Moore. "As a national arts nonprofit with

a nearly twenty-year history of grantmaking, the Center for Craft has the unique opportunity to help the field nimbly respond during this pandemic.”

Grant development began in early April, when seven national thought leaders in the fields of art, craft, education, and philanthropy were engaged to review and make recommendations on grantmaking strategies to support craft communities during COVID-19. Advisors provided guidance to optimize the grants to achieve the greatest impact, efficiency, and equity. Participants included:

- Carrie Cleveland, Education and Outreach Manager, CERF+ — the Artists Safety Net
- Kathleen Collier, Visual Art Director, North Carolina Arts Council
- BA Harrington, Artist, Director of the Wood Center at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Center for Craft 2020 Craft Research Fund - Artist Fellow
- Bernie Herman, George B. Tindall Professor of Southern Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and a member of the Center for Craft Board of Directors
- Carly Jones, Senior Program Director, North Carolina Arts Council
- Al Murray, Director of Engagement and Organizational Development, Campaign for Southern Equality
- Andres Payan Estrada, Artist and Curator of Public Engagement, Craft Contemporary

“We are living in an extraordinary moment where the thoughtful, meaningful, creative work of craft is absolutely central to our everyday lives,” said Bernie Herman, the George B. Tindall Professor of Southern Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and a member of the Center for Craft Board of Directors. “As we find ourselves quarantined and negotiating a digital landscape, craft provides a powerful means to connect, imagine, inspire, and share through the wonder of made things.”

For the purposes of this grant, craft education is understood through a broad and expansive lens, focusing on projects that will share knowledge, skills, and values, as well as support critical thinking, gather and circulate resources and tools, and facilitate curiosity and learning about or through craft. Educators may include artists, curators, makers, writers, community organizers, activists, museum educators, scholars, teachers, professors, and others. By investing in learning, sharing, and thinking led by an expansive group of educators, this grant opportunity aims to catalyze craft to meet societal needs.

Application Deadline

To apply for a Craft Futures Fund grant, please submit an interest form [here](#). To be considered for the May application round, please submit your interest form no later than May 12, 2020. For more information please visit www.centerforcraft.org.

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ABOUT CENTER FOR CRAFT Founded in 1996, the Center for Craft (formerly The Center for Craft, Creativity & Design) is the leading organization in the United States identifying and convening craft makers, curators, and researchers, and matching them with resources, tools, and networks to advance their careers. Over the years, the Center has become a vital community resource, serving thousands of visitors annually. As a national 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the field of craft, the Center administers more than \$300,000 in grants to those working in the craft field. For more information on all grants administered by Center for Craft, click [here](#). www.centerforcraft.org