2015 ABOG FELLOWSHIP FOR SOCALLY ENGAGED ART

OVERVIEW

Our Mission
A Blade of Grass nurtures socially engaged art. We provide resources to artists who demonstrate artistic excellence and serve as innovative conduits for social change. We evaluate the quality of work in this evolving field by fostering an inclusive, practical discourse about the aesthetics, function, ethics and meaning of socially engaged art that resonates within and outside the contemporary art dialogue.

What We Fund
- Socially engaged projects in which art is a catalyst for social change.
- Projects that feature artists in leadership roles.
- Dialogue-based projects that emphasize sustainable partnerships with communities.
- Projects in which artists engage community members as equal partners.
- Projects in which co-creation with non-artists is part of the process.
- We value process over product: relationship building and problem solving are key goals.
- We provide funding with minimal restriction, and budget line items may include things like living expenses that are not direct project expenses.
- We fund artists both locally and nationally. Four of the eight fellowships are earmarked for artists working in New York City, and four are open to all applicants.

What We Don’t Fund
- Projects in which the focus is on producing an exhibition, theater production, or objects for display.
- Residencies or studio practice, except as they directly relate to achieving outcomes of a community-based project.
- Projects that lack co-created outcomes and/or community engagement.
- Artists or artist collectives registered as 501c3 nonprofit organizations.

Meet the Current Fellows
The current ABOG Fellows for Socially Engaged Art are working in leadership roles and in partnership with communities, in ways that are relevant in everyday life, at ambitious scale, to enact social change. Learn about their projects and the type of work ABOG supports at www.abladeofgrass.org/people/fellows/

Eligibility
Eligible applicants for the ABOG Fellowship for Socially Engaged Art:
- Are artists or artist collectives working independently. Artists or artist collectives registered as 501c3 nonprofit organizations are not eligible to apply. If you are a collective, please submit a single application under the name of the collective.
- Are not currently enrolled as students.
- Are legal US residents or US citizens. If applying as a collective, a legal US resident or citizen must be the primary contact for the group.
• Are at least 25 years of age.
• Have not received an ABOG Socially Engaged Art Fellowship as an individual or as part of an artist collective in the last 3 years.
• Have projects that engage directly with a specific community or communities.
• Have a website with contextualized examples of past work that a selection panel can review.

Kindly note, ineligible applications will not be reviewed. If you have questions regarding your eligibility, please contact: info@abladeofgrass.org

About the Fellowship
The ABOG Fellowship for Socially Engaged Art is an active, year-long funding relationship.
In 2015, ABOG will select eight Fellows to become active members in a cohort and participants in a program that features a range of services, including:

• Project support of $20,000 with minimal restriction (budget line items may include things like living expenses that are not direct project expenses).
• A two-day orientation that explores ABOG’s documentation and assessment models, and includes workshops on strategies for community engagement.
• Quarterly co-assessment meetings with other Fellows to share progress and challenges, and offer feedback to one another.
• Support and feedback for ongoing self-assessment in the form of collaborative action research.
• Assessment by an outside evaluator. We want to understand how the projects we fund impact communities, and capture and share innovative ideas and successful models for future use.
• ABOG production of a short video documentary on each project.
• Access to our broad network of specialists outside the art world. Ask us how we can help you connect with experts in issues your project addresses!

Fellows submit interim and final reports, each including a narrative description of activities to date and a budget update, to ABOG.

Commitment to Local Artists
Beginning this year, ABOG will earmark four of the available eight fellowships for artists living in New York City.
We recognize that there is a growing and vibrant community of socially engaged artists in our own backyard and we have a particular investment in strengthening our local artists and neighborhoods. We also see the mutual benefit of supporting artists who can work with us locally to co-create public programming and refine the fellowship in its early stages of development.
The remaining four fellowships will be open to all applicants, regardless of geographic location.
Application Timeline
This is a two-step application process. Semi-finalists from the first round will be invited to submit a full application with an extended narrative, budget, and a timeline with specific benchmarks for realizing each stage of their project.

- Fellowship Workshops: October 1 & November 4, 2014
- Deadline for submissions of Letter of Interest: November 24, 2014
- Notification of all applicants; invitation to semi-finalists to submit full application: Begins December 18, 2014
- Deadline for full application: January 16, 2015
- Notification of semi-finalists: Begins February 2, 2015
- Interviews with finalists (in-person or via Skype): February 2-13, 2015
- Notification of selected Fellows: Begins March 10, 2015
- Fellows’ Orientation (mandatory): April 24-25, 2015

Writing Your Letter of Interest
We value your time and effort! Please read our Eligibility Requirements before applying. Ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

The ABOG Fellowship for Socially Engaged Art is intended to fund artists who take a leadership role, and engage directly with communities to develop projects of ambitious scale that promote social change. *We do not fund projects focused on exhibition outcomes, artist residencies, or studio practice unless explicitly geared toward direct social engagement.*

Be sure to frame your project in these terms as you address the following questions in your 500-word statement:

- What is your proposed project? Clearly articulate project goals and explicitly describe how you intend to achieve them.
- What is your artistic vision, and why is your project best framed as an art project?
- How does your project enact social change?
- Will the project be realized in the course of a year? If not, what do you expect will happen during a one-year fellowship?
- Who will you be working with, and how will you be working with them? Describe your process for collaborating, and outline the relationships you’ve established with members of that community.

All applicants must submit the following via online form:

- Eligibility screening
- Link to website with examples of past projects. (You must have a website to apply.)
- 500-word Letter of Interest
- CV (or CV’s if applying as a collective) in PDF format
- Make sure to submit your application via our online form only. Applications received via other means will not be reviewed:
Semi-finalists will be invited to submit a full application with an extended narrative, budget, and a timeline with specific benchmarks for realizing each stage of their project in mid-December.

**Helpful Tips!**
Collectives should submit a single application under the name of the collective. To submit multiple CV’s, please consolidate them into one PDF document prior to uploading.

Special characters, such as ampersands, quotation marks, and apostrophes, take up extra characters when translated into HTML code in web-based application forms. If you notice a higher than expected word count when you copy and paste from your word processing program into the online application form, try the following:

- Transfer your text into a text-only utility like TextEdit or Notepad before pasting it into the online form. This will delete hidden HTML code to ensure the proper capture of your text.
- Try to avoid using special characters if possible. For example, instead of using quotation marks for titles of works, put them in italics.
- Use only one space after the end of sentences. If you enter two spaces after a period, HTML coding adds extra spaces. You can also save character space by limiting the use of tabs.

**How We Decide - available for download as a separate PDF**

**Fellowship Workshops**
Prior to the November 24 deadline, ABOG hosts two Fellowship Workshops that are free and open to the public with RSVP. We strongly recommend attending a workshop before applying. They are a great opportunity to meet staff, ask questions, learn more about our mission and how we consider applications, see great examples of the type of work we fund, and get practical information about the methods socially engaged artists use. Fellowship Workshops also connect you with a small group cohort for mutual assistance with writing your fellowship to improve your chances of success.

Fellowship Workshop dates are October 1, 2014 and November 4, 2014, respectively, and take place at The 8th Floor (17 W 17th St) in New York City. To reserve your space, please RSVP with the date you wish to attend to: rsvp@abladeofgrass.org

*Not in New York?* Don’t worry! We will post videos of the workshops on our website, approximately one week after each event.

**Contact Us**
Not sure whether your project is a good fit? Have questions about the application process? Send us a short description via email (not the whole application document), and allow 2-3 days for a response: info@abladeofgrass.org