



**Request for Proposals**  
**2025 Fall Grant Program**  
**Theme: Finding Freedom**  
**in the Wilderness**

**Supporting expressions of the Christian story and faith**  
**inspiring moments of awe and wonder through art and art experiences**

The Creative Arts Collective for Christian Life & Faith (CAC) grantmaking initiative supports expressions of the Christian story and faith that inspire moments of awe and wonder through art and art experiences. The grant program seeks to support projects and programs across the nation that **create** and curate works of art, **educate** and nurture Christian imagination, and cultivate and sustain a thriving **network** in Christianity and the arts.

The CAC is pleased to announce its 2025 Fall Grant Program. This competitive initiative is open to applicants who reside or operate in the United States and are individual artists, artist collaboratives, church leaders, scholars/theologians, arts-affiliated organizations, faith-based nonprofit organizations, or institutions. Projects or programs proposed must take place in the United States. Applicants may submit proposals ranging from **\$50,000 to \$250,000** that may be used **over a one-year period**.

The CAC anticipates awarding approximately **10 grants** to applicants who will be selected based on previous creative work and/or promise of future work, experience, engagement, and the quality, relevance, and explanation of the project or program idea. Grant funding can cover costs such as: artist/creator and design fees, required materials and supplies, production, venue rentals, installation and storage costs, technical support such as audio-visual expertise, honorariums, and travel expenses. Costs related to general operating expenses and capital expenses are not eligible for grant funding. Please read the RFP thoroughly and follow its guidelines. The CAC anticipates announcing grant awards in **November 2025**.

**Objectives & Outcomes**

The CAC seeks to support projects or programs meeting **one or more** of the following **objectives**:

- **Create** – Creating and curating works of art
  - **Outcome:** An increased visibility of the arts and appreciation of diverse forms of artistic expression that inspire people to encounter God
  - **Examples:** architecture, dance, filmmaking, music and compositions, visual art, and writing
- **Educate** – Educating and nurturing Christian imagination
  - **Outcome:** A re-enchanted Christian imagination, character, and spiritual formation in people fostered by experiencing the awe and wonder of God through the arts
  - **Examples:** workshops, courses, webinars, expert engagement, and speaker series
- **Network** – Cultivating and sustaining a thriving network in Christianity and the arts
  - **Outcome:** A vibrant nationwide movement that inspires people to discover and live the beauty and wisdom of the Christian story and encounter God through the arts
  - **Examples:** showcases, art exhibits, live performances, speaker series, festivals and celebrations, convenings, and conferences

## Creative Arts Collective for Christian Life & Faith

The CAC's **aspirational aim** is **to inspire people from diverse contexts to discover and live the beauty and wisdom of the Christian story and encounter God through the arts**. To advance this aim, the CAC seeks to catalyze an awe- and wonder-filled movement for the arts that will reinvigorate Christian arts traditions across the United States. The CAC is accomplishing this through shared **core values** and reflection on an annual Biblical **theme**.

The **Core Values** of the CAC are:

- **Theological Ecumenicity** – conversation and cooperation among diverse Christian groups, celebrating the deep and persistent elements of Christian belief
- **Diversity** – commitment to nurture and showcase the nation's full range of diversity in the arts and among artists and communities (e.g., ethnic, racial, socio-economic, generational)
- **Collaboration** – a spirit of creative collaboration across business sectors, churches, nonprofits, and diverse academic contexts and platforms
- **Traditioned Innovation** – holding the tension of the rich wisdom found in historic traditions of Christian faith and the arts and the need and space for innovation that allows seeing that wisdom in fresh ways

### Reflecting the Theme

#### **Finding Freedom in the Wilderness: Learning to follow the God of surprising deliverances**

In the book of Exodus, Moses tells Pharaoh to release the Hebrew slaves, “that they may celebrate a festival to [the LORD] in the wilderness” (5:1). Israel is called from slavery to freedom. But this call also means journeying from a place of security and familiarity into a wilderness of uncertainty.

In fact, in a way, the people aren't simply traveling toward a particular piece of land. Their ultimate destination is nothing less than the Divine Presence. This, God says, is why the people have been freed: “They will know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of Egypt *so that I might dwell among them*” (Exodus 29:45-46). The second half of the book of Exodus has mostly to do with the building of the tabernacle and culminates with God filling the tabernacle, and this is precisely because the tabernacle is where God will dwell in the midst of the people. Exodus, then, is not just a story of what God's people are saved *from*. It is also a story of what they are saved *for*.

But perhaps the most startling aspect of the Exodus story is found in the first few chapters of the book. At the beginning of the story, we are introduced to a conflict between Pharaoh and the Hebrew people; a conflict, in other words, between the wealthiest and most powerful person of the time and an impoverished and culturally despised group of slaves. The truly shocking thing, particularly for an ancient person hearing the story of this conflict, would have been that God should take the side, not of Pharaoh, but of the slaves! Here is a God who sees the misery and hears the cries of the poor, the needy, and the overlooked.

Applicants are invited to engage with the story recounted in the book of Exodus, reflecting on the theme of “Finding Freedom in the Wilderness.” Additional details and information around the theme can be found at [creativeartscollective.com](http://creativeartscollective.com). **Projects or programs need to advance the aspirational aim and align with the core values of the CAC. Applicants are encouraged to reflect the theme of “Finding Freedom in the Wilderness” in the project or program, but it is not a requirement to apply for a grant.**

## Application Process

### Eligibility and Selection Criteria:

Interested individual artists, artist collaboratives, church leaders, scholars/theologians, arts-affiliated organizations, faith-based nonprofit organizations, or institutions who reside or operate in the United States are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants may submit proposals with requests ranging from **\$50,000 to \$250,000** that may be used **over a one-year period**. The CAC encourages interested applicants to request an amount appropriate to the needs of the proposed project or program.

The CAC intends to award grants to applicants who submit the most compelling proposals and demonstrate they have the capacity to design, implement, and sustain a quality innovative project or program that advances the CAC's aim and objectives. All proposals will first be screened by CAC staff to verify eligibility and check for minimum criteria, and then by a Review Board for consideration and review. Applicants must:

- Provide all required materials and documents by stated deadlines
- Offer work that exemplifies or adheres to the core values of the CAC
- Clearly communicate the connection of the proposed project to the Christian story and faith
- Commit to producing art not only in singular form, but also to become involved in the CAC network
- Demonstrate the ability to manage funds and maintain requirements associated with the grant

### Step 1: Submit a Letter of Inquiry

**Letter of Inquiry:** All interested applicants must first complete and submit the online Letter of Inquiry (LOI) form **by June 2, 2025**, through the CAC's website, to be considered to submit a full grant proposal in the competitive process. Precedence will be given to the first 200 LOI submissions received.

### Step 2: Submit a Full Grant Proposal

**Full Grant Proposals:** The CAC will offer the opportunity to submit a full grant proposal for the competitive 2025 Fall Grant Program to **approximately 20** of the strongest applicants who submitted an LOI. The selected applicants must submit full grant proposals online **by September 15, 2025**, through the CAC's grant portal. The CAC will provide instructions for submitting the full proposal to the selected applicants.

## Proposal Guidelines

These guidelines are for use only by the applicants selected to move forward in the competitive process and submit a full grant proposal. A complete proposal must include the following information and be submitted through the CAC's online grant portal by September 15, 2025.

### Summary Information

**Project Title:** The project title should communicate the main idea of the project or program and not exceed 150 characters. Please make sure the same project title is used throughout the proposal and on all supporting documents.

**Executive Summary:** The executive summary should not exceed 3,000 characters and describe the the purpose of the proposed project or program and highlights of key activities and outputs.

**Alignment with the CAC:** This section should not exceed 6,000 characters and answer the following questions.

1. **Aspirational Aim:** How does the proposed project or program advance the aspirational aim of the CAC?
2. **Core Values:** How does the proposed project or program align with each of the core values of the CAC?
3. **Objectives & Outcomes:** How does the proposed project or program meet the most relevant objective and fulfill the intended outcome of the CAC? If applicable, how does the proposed project or program meet and fulfill additional objectives and outcomes of the CAC?

### **Proposal Narrative**

**Project or Program Overview:** This section should not exceed 10,500 characters and answer the following questions.

1. Please provide a detailed description of the project or program proposed and the purpose, inspiration, and motivation behind it. If applicable, how does it reflect the theme of “Finding Freedom in the Wilderness?”
2. Describe in detail the key activities and outputs of the project or program. What will be created, produced, or delivered?
3. What are the desired outcomes of the project or program? How will progress toward the outcomes be measured and evaluated in both quantitative (objective and numeric) and qualitative (subjective and experiential) ways?
4. What change will occur if outcomes are met? How will constituents use the works of art or art experiences being produced? What does it mean for this project or program to be successful?
5. Who are the key leaders and what roles and responsibilities will they have in implementing the project or program?
6. What communication strategies, methods, or platforms will be used to communicate about the project or program?
7. If needed, is there a sustainability plan for the project or program beyond the life of the grant? What other revenue or funding sources does the project or program currently have in place or plans to pursue?

**Timeline:** Provide a timeline of the proposed project or program, including key activities, outputs, evaluation, communication, and sustainability activities (if needed).

**Project Budget:** Provide an overview of all expected costs involved with the project or program and a brief narrative description of those planned costs. Please use the budget template provided.

**Supporting Documents:** Please provide the following documents as applicable.

- CV / Resume of Project Leader
- Copy of Current Year Operating Budget
- Copy of Audited Annual Financial Statements
- Copy of IRS Exempt Status Determination Letter