



IDEA Opera Residencies  
(Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access)

*Supported by the Katherine S. and Axel G. Rosin  
Fund of The Scherman Foundation*

2022–2023 Guidelines and Application  
Procedures

**Important Dates**

- **Application available online:** July 2022
- **Intent to apply deadline:** September 7, 2022
- **Application deadline:** October 7, 2022
- **Adjudication:** October 2022
- **Grantee notification:** November 2022
- **Grant activity period:** January 1 – December 31, 2023

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Since 1984, OPERA America has been committed to increasing the quantity and quality of new North American, granting \$20 million over the last four decades to support the work of opera companies and creators.

## Purpose

IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) Opera Residencies are OPERA America's first grant program designed to support creators of Color living in New York City who are new to the opera field. The residency provides direct grants, residencies, mentorship, and career support to artists. This initiative, generously supported by the Katherine S. and Axel G. Rosin Fund of The Scherman Foundation, is the first artist residency program offered by OPERA America at its state-of-the-art facility, the National Opera Center in New York.

## Definitions

### IDEA

- **Inclusion:** authentic representation, empowered participation, and a true sense of belonging, beyond numerical diversity.
- **Diversity:** breadth of representation; it can mean different races and ethnicities, gender identities, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, geographies, budget sizes, or works presented.
- **Equity:** acknowledging that not everyone is starting from the same point, actively ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to succeed, and working to achieve fairness with consideration of current and historic barriers to participation in opera.
- **Access:** equitable admittance to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience.

### Opera

OPERA America defines opera as a music-theater experience with a dramatic arc, written for trained voice(s) of all genres and accompanied by instruments.

### Composer and Librettist

In this document, the author of the music will be referred to as the composer, and the author of the text will be referred to as the librettist, although applicants may have prior experience as songwriters, poets, or playwrights.

### Artist Identity

IDEA Opera Residencies are available to individual composers and/or librettists of Color, who identify as:

- **Black** — racial identity that includes those who identify with nationalities or ethnic groups originating in any of the Black racial groups of Africa, including African American, Latin America, Caribbean, etc.
- **Latinx** — includes those who identify with nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America, and other Latin nations.

- Asian — racial identity that includes those who identify with nationalities or ethnic groups originating in the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent
- Pacific Islander — racial identity that includes nationalities and ethnic groups originating in current Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- Arab — includes those who identify with one or more nationalities originating in the Arabian Peninsula and neighboring territories, inhabiting much of the Middle East and North Africa.
- Native American — racial identity that includes those who identify as Indigenous peoples, First Nations, Aboriginal peoples, and/or Native peoples of the Americas with tribal affiliation or community attachment.

This program is open to creators from all performing arts disciplines. Previous experience writing for the opera medium is not required.

## Residency Awards

Grant recipients will receive awards of approximately \$25,000 including:

- A \$10,000 direct grant to explore opera as an artistic medium through the creation of songs/arias, scenes, monologues, or a full work;
- A stipend of up to \$5,000 in career or promotional support, such as website development, graphic design, photography, portfolio recording, travel, or other resources;
- A one-year residency at OPERA America's National Opera Center in midtown Manhattan for use of the state-of-the-art rehearsal and performance facilities and recording services (valued at \$7,500);
- Mentorship from field leaders and training, including a two-part Opera Entrepreneurship Workshop; and
- Complimentary registrations, transportation, and housing stipend (valued at \$2,250) at OPERA America's Opera Conference and New Works Forum between June 2023 and January 2024;
- Announcement in the *Opera America Magazine*.

## Supported Activities

IDEA Opera Residencies will support the exploration of opera as an artistic media through the creation of songs/arias, monologues, scenes, or even a full work that culminates with any of the following:

- A Libretto Reading: a reading in which the devised literature is read aloud for evaluation.
- A Workshop: an informal performance of some/all of a work to obtain feedback on specific elements of the piece. Workshops might be performed with piano and/or instrumental accompaniment.
- Working Performance: a partial or full run-through of a work, with piano or instrumental accompaniment, to obtain feedback for the further development of the piece.

NOTE: These are examples of typical developmental activities and are not meant to limit the goals of any application.

## Eligibility

- Applicants must be individual artists who identify as composers and/or librettists.
- Applicants must identify with a racial or ethnic heritage as described on pages 2–3.
- Applicants must reside in one of the five boroughs of New York City, and have U.S. citizenship, permanent residence, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. (Proof of residency and citizenship will be requested.)
- Applicants must demonstrate their ability to write music and/or text by providing work samples.
- Applicants must be early-career or new to opera (i.e., those who have not yet received commissions, fellowships, or grants in the field of opera).
- This program is open to creators from all performing arts disciplines. Previous experience writing for the opera medium is not required.
- Applicants may only be affiliated with one proposal per application cycle.
- Recipients of IDEA Opera Residencies will serve as fiscal agents for the projects. If awarded, fiscal agents will disburse all funds received and provide all required financial and narrative documentation.
- Recipients of IDEA Opera Residencies may not reapply for IDEA Opera Residencies in a subsequent cycle.

## Funding Parameters

- Funding may not be applied to expenses incurred before January 1, 2023.
- Residency activities must be completed by December 31, 2023.

### Grant Award

- Grants will cover up to 100 percent of eligible expenses, not exceeding \$10,000; no matching funds are required. Additional expenses to complete the project are the responsibility of the creators.
- Eligible expenses include but are not limited to:
  - Vocalist, instrumentalist, and other performer fees;
  - Music director/conductor;
  - Dramaturg;
  - Orchestrator, arranger, copyist;
  - Stage director;
  - Vocal coach;
  - Sound designer;
  - Rehearsal and performance venue rental fees;
  - Stage manager;
  - Equipment rental (e.g., lighting, sound, instrumental cartage);
  - Living expenses for the applicant (up to 25% of grant request);

- Childcare and/or eldercare while creators are in rehearsal or performance;
  - Research materials (e.g., performance tickets, new work recordings, reference books); and
  - Transportation and housing for personnel related to creative meetings, rehearsals, and performances (airfare is limited to coach class).
- Ineligible expenses include:
    - Set, costume, or properties construction or rental expenses for a staged production;
    - Institutional overhead expenses if partnering with a producing organization;
    - Expenses that are not connected specifically to the project, including general administrative expenses and competition or contest application fees;
    - Tuition expenses; and
    - Fundraising expenses.

Note: Applicants will be required to outline the project expenses and upload the budget worksheet provided (in Excel format) [here](#).

#### Residency at OPERA America's National Opera Center

A one-year residency at OPERA America's National Opera Center for use of the state-of-the-art rehearsal and performance facilities and recordings services (valued at \$7,500). Credit may be used towards the rental of any of the National Opera Center's spaces or services. Please note that grantees are entitled to the member rate for bookings and add-on services. Rates and information can be found [here](#) ([link](#)). The credit will be treated as a declining debit, diminishing upon the use of space rental or additional services or the end of the residency.

- Eligible expenses include but are not limited to:
  - Room rental rate;
  - Costs associated with recording projects; and
  - Technical support for audio-visual needs, and other staffing.
- Ineligible expenses include:
  - Rental and recording costs associated with venues other than the National Opera Center.

Note: Although a specific budget is not required for residency-related expenses at this time, please describe the intended activities in the narrative portion of the application. Do not include these expenses in the budget template.

#### Career or Promotional Support

A stipend of up to \$5,000 in career or promotional support such as:

- Eligible expenses include but are not limited to:
  - Website development;
  - Graphic design;

- Photography;
- Portfolio recording;
- Travel.

Note: Although a specific promotional budget is not required at this time, please describe the intended activities in the narrative portion of the application. Do not include these expenses in the budget template.

## Important Dates

The following timeline is in place for the 2022–2023 IDEA Opera Residencies:

- **Application available online:** July 2022
- **Intent to apply deadline:** September 7, 2022
- **Application deadline:** October 7, 2022
- **Adjudication:** October 2022
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## How to Apply

- Read the guidelines carefully before completing any application materials.
- All materials must be submitted online via the [Grants Portal](#).
- Intent to apply forms must be submitted by September 7, 2022, 11:59 p.m. ET. Only applicants who submit an intent to apply may submit a full application.
- Applicants will receive notification if the intent to apply form has been advanced to the application stage.
- OPERA America will provide individualized support to applicants based on their intent to apply to guide them to the full application.
- Complete applications, including work samples, must be submitted by October 7, 2022, 11:59 p.m. ET. Applications submitted without work samples as specified in the application will not be considered. Applications that are incomplete, late, or sent via mail or email will not be accepted.
- No applications will be accepted unless an intent to apply form has been submitted on or before September 7, 2022, 11:59 p.m. ET.

## Application Review

All applications for the IDEA Opera Residencies are reviewed by an independent pool of experts approved by OPERA America's board of directors. The panel will consist of professionals of varied races and ethnicities with different areas of expertise and experience with diverse musical styles, as well as producers from OPERA America member companies.

No current OPERA America employee may serve as a panelist. Individuals who stand to benefit financially from a grant are also ineligible to serve.

All panel decisions are final.

Panelists evaluate the applications based on the following criteria:

- **Artistic Ability:** The artistic quality of the work samples.
- **Creativity:** The capacity to enrich the art form and the field.
- **Impetus for Opera:** Applicants' explanation of why they are motivated to express themselves through this medium.
- **Evaluation:** The articulation of realistic and achievable goals for evaluating the residency period in relation to the applicant's artistic practice.

## Work Samples

Applicants are required to submit work samples that best represent their voices and creative styles. Work samples need not be classical or operatic. Samples that demonstrate the creator's aptitude for theatrical storytelling are recommended.

- **Composers:** two samples (hosted audio or video on sites like YouTube, Vimeo, Dropbox, and SoundCloud) with at least one sample featuring voice(s) (not digitally generated). Combined samples must be no longer than 20 minutes. Neither sample should exceed 10 minutes in length. Scores or other forms of visual representation of a musical work are optional.
- **Librettists:** two samples (written and/or audio or video) that demonstrate storytelling abilities. These can include but are not limited to poetry, short stories, and excerpts of plays, operas, or music-theater works (score optional). Combined written samples should be no more than 20 pages in length. If submitting audio-video samples, combined samples must be no longer than 20 minutes. Neither sample should exceed 10 minutes in length. Scores or other forms of visual representation of a musical work are optional.

## Narrative Statements

Applicants are required to submit written narrative statements describing:

- Learning goals for the residency, including plans for experimenting with the art form or developing a specific theatrical work;
- Career skills that would benefit from targeted mentorship;
- Intended use of promotional resources; and
- Specific outcomes for evaluating the residency experience.

## Residency Announcement

- All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their requests after the adjudication.
- Awarded applicants will receive an agreement explaining the residency period and the terms and conditions. Requests for extensions must be made in writing.

- Residents may request up to 75 percent of the total direct grant in one or more installments for expenses incurred on or after January 1, 2023.
- The final balance of the grant will be paid after the completion of the activities proposed in the application and upon the submission of the final report.
- All IDEA Opera Residency awards are intended to support the activity described in the application. Significant changes to the activities or goals must be discussed with and approved by OPERA America staff.
- The receipt of a grant at any stage of a project or activity does not guarantee continued support from OPERA America.

## Reporting Requirements

Awarded applicants will receive an agreement explaining the residency's terms and conditions, including financial documentation and narrative reporting requirements. OPERA America staff will review these reports. All reporting requirements must be completed before the grant will be fully paid.

IDEA OPERA Residents are required to acknowledge OPERA America and other funders, including the Katherine S. and Axel G. Rosin Fund of The Scherman Foundation, in the manner described by OPERA America in the award letter. Recipients of IDEA Opera Residencies who have a website should feature OPERA America's logo, including a hyperlink to OPERA America's website.

Recipients of IDEA Opera Residencies may be asked to submit additional documentation or cooperate with OPERA America in sharing the results of their projects with the field.

## Staff Contact Information

For more information, contact Diana Hossack, director of grantmaking, at [DHossack@operaamerica.org](mailto:DHossack@operaamerica.org) or 646.699.5236.

## Funder

The Katherine S. and Axel G. Rosin Fund of The Scherman Foundation