

# Music Grants for Independent Artists

Real, verified funding - sorted for U.S. artists. No dead links, no grants you can't get.

**Verified June 2026.**

Grant deadlines, award amounts and open regions change every cycle. Always confirm the current details on the official site before you apply. This page just tells you what is real and who can actually get it.

## 1. For our people - justice-impacted & reentry artists

*Funding built for formerly incarcerated and system-impacted creatives. This is the part no viral grant list leads with.*

### Center for Art & Advocacy - Center Fellowship [TOP PICK]

**Who:** Formerly incarcerated artists. Music IS included - a current Fellow is a singer, rapper and songwriter.  
**Award:** \$10,000 unrestricted + \$10,000 project funds  
**Status:** Annual, open application  
**Apply:** [centerforartandadvocacy.org/programs](https://centerforartandadvocacy.org/programs)

### Detroit Justice Center - Formerly Incarcerated Artist Residency

**Who:** Formerly incarcerated artists, 18+, MICHIGAN residents only. Any medium incl. music.  
**Award:** \$20,000  
**Status:** Applications close Feb 15, 2026  
**Apply:** [detroitjustice.org](https://detroitjustice.org)

### Right of Return USA

**Who:** Formerly incarcerated creatives. NOTE: music is not a named discipline; not currently open (last cohort 2023).  
**Award:** \$20,000  
**Apply:** [rightofreturnusa.com](https://rightofreturnusa.com)

## 2. Emergency & relief funds (rolling - apply anytime)

*For working music people facing a medical, housing or financial crisis. No deadlines.*

### MusiCares

**Who:** Anyone in the music industry, U.S. + Puerto Rico (need 5 yrs in music OR 6 released recordings).  
**Covers:** Medical, mental health, housing, basic living, instrument repair  
**Status:** Rolling - email [help@musicares.org](mailto:help@musicares.org) or call 800.687.4227  
**Apply:** [musicares.org/get-help](https://musicares.org/get-help)

### Sweet Relief Musicians Fund

**Who:** Career musicians / industry workers (50%+ income from music) with a serious medical or health need.  
**Status:** Rolling  
**Apply:** [sweetrelief.org](https://sweetrelief.org)

### Jazz Foundation of America - Musicians' Emergency Fund

**Who:** Jazz, blues and roots musicians (genre-limited).  
**Covers:** Housing, medical/dental, disaster, utilities, food  
**Status:** Rolling - call 212-245-3999  
**Apply:** [jazzfoundation.org](https://jazzfoundation.org)

### 3. Open grants any U.S. independent artist can apply for

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#### Creative Capital

**Who:** Individual artists, all disciplines incl. music/jazz. Gates: 25+, 5+ yrs practice, U.S. citizen/PR.  
**Award:** Up to \$50,000 + career support  
**Status:** Annual open call  
**Apply:** [creative-capital.org](https://creative-capital.org)

#### New Music USA - New Music Creator Fund

**Who:** U.S.-based individual music creators. Eligible U.S. regions rotate each year - check the site.  
**Award:** \$3,000 - \$5,000  
**Status:** Open application (annual cycle)  
**Apply:** [newmusicusa.org](https://newmusicusa.org)

#### Foundation for Contemporary Arts - Emergency Grants

**Who:** U.S. artists incl. music/sound, for a confirmed public presentation of completed experimental work.  
**Award:** \$500 - \$3,000  
**Status:** Rolling, year-round  
**Apply:** [foundationforcontemporaryarts.org](https://foundationforcontemporaryarts.org)

#### USArtists International (Mid Atlantic Arts)

**Who:** U.S. performing artists incl. musicians - funds performances at international festivals abroad. 1:1 match required.  
**Award:** Up to \$11,000  
**Status:** Deadline Feb 25, 2026  
**Apply:** [midatlanticarts.org](https://midatlanticarts.org)

#### Puffin Foundation

**Who:** Artists incl. musicians whose work engages social/community themes.  
**Award:** Approx. \$1,000 - \$3,000  
**Status:** Annual request window (2026 closed; decisions roll through July)  
**Apply:** [puffinfoundation.org](https://puffinfoundation.org)

#### Black Music Action Coalition (BMAC)

**Who:** Black music creators - Music Maker Grants & Mentorship, business accelerator.  
**Status:** Check site for the current cycle  
**Apply:** [bmacoalition.org](https://bmacoalition.org)

### 4. Heads up - the ones the viral lists push that you probably CAN'T use

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*We would rather tell you the truth than waste your time. Most of these went around social media as 'grants for artists' - here is the catch.*

#### MAP Fund - CLOSED

**Why:** Retired its grant program in December 2024. It is not accepting applications. Do not apply.

#### ASCAP Foundation - mostly not for you

**Why:** Its grants are invitation-only, for 501(c)(3) organizations. Its one open individual program (Morton Gould) is ages 13-29, concert/classical music only - not for a typical independent or hip-hop artist.

#### Region-locked - a U.S. artist cannot get these

**Canada:** FACTOR, Canada Council for the Arts, Manitoba Music, Ontario Creates, Creative BC  
**UK:** Help Musicians, PRS Foundation  
**EU:** Culture Moves Europe

#### South Arts - Jazz Road

**Note:** A real U.S. program for jazz tours/residencies, but verify the current round at [southarts.org](https://southarts.org) before applying.

**A grant funds the work. We help you finish it - and get paid.**

Done Deal Digital gets independent artists' music recorded, released, and into places most distributors never reach - including across the wall to people inside. Free guide, done-for-you distribution, and real support at [donedealdigital.com](https://donedealdigital.com).