



2025 Performance Plus Program

Application Deadline:

February 6, 2025

11:59 PM, E.T.

Notification: April 2025

A component of the Doris Duke Jazz Ensembles Project, Performance Plus program is funded by the Doris Duke Foundation.

About *Performance Plus*

Chamber Music America's *Performance Plus* program recognizes the contributions and diversity of perspectives that U.S.-based gender minorities and women bring to the field of jazz.

The program provides grants to U.S.-based gender minority and women-led jazz ensembles to engage an experienced jazz artist-mentor for six mentoring sessions with the goal of further developing the ensemble's performance. The mentoring sessions will culminate in a recording session resulting in a high-quality demo for use by the jazz ensemble.

About *Performance Plus*

The bandleader and primary contact for the application must be a woman or gender-minority individual.

Artist-Mentors must be selected and confirmed before the application is submitted.

Funding Priorities

Chamber Music America gives priority to projects that demonstrate how the applicant will use the grant funding to:

- Create opportunities for the ensemble to engage with current and new audiences
- Work with the artist mentor to create a recording that showcases the work of women and gender-minority-led jazz ensembles
- Mentorship and professional development opportunities for women and gender-minority individuals in the jazz music field
- Create more access to jazz music
- Foster a sense of respect and appreciation for jazz music.

What are the funding amounts and what is the grant period?

Grants will fund up to 100% of the eligible expenses starting at \$11,900 for a duo and up to \$21,500 for a dectet.

All Performance Plus grant projects must take place during the grant period between April 1, 2025 and September 30, 2026.

A *Performance Plus* grant is made up of three components:

- Ensemble Member Payment: \$1,200 per musician (\$2,400 for a duo and up to \$12,000 for a dectet)
- Artist-Mentor Payment: \$3,000
- Demo Recording: \$6,500

Please Note: Grant funds are taxable income; grantees must comply with all applicable city, state, and federal laws, ordinances, codes, and regulations regarding the reporting of grant funds.

Ensemble Eligibility

An ensemble is eligible if:

- it is a professional gender minority and women-led jazz ensemble consisting of 2-10 musicians that includes improvisation as an integral part of composition and performance. (The ensemble bandleader must be a gender minority or woman professional jazz musician);
- it is based in the U.S., Indian Country, or U.S. territories

Ensemble Eligibility (continued)

- the ensemble bandleader is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident;
- the ensemble bandleader or the ensemble have no overdue reports or financial obligations to CMA
- the bandleader must be a CMA member or the ensemble must be a CMA member at time of application;
- *Current primary contacts/bandleaders for New Jazz Works and Artistic Projects recording grants cannot apply.*

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Choosing an artist mentor

The Artist-Mentor:

- must be an accomplished jazz bandleader with demonstrated experience in performance, composing, arranging, instruction, and recording;
- must be a citizen or permanent resident of the U.S.
- will mentor the ensemble and bandleader on technical aspects or composing, arranging, instruction, ensemble cohesion, and other aspects related to success in the jazz music industry
- Must work with the ensemble for six sessions totaling 540 minutes or nine total hours (each session should be minimum of 90 minutes)

What types of mentorship have artist-mentors provided past ensembles?

- Sharing their knowledge of jazz history, songwriting, and their lived experiences with the music industry
- Insight on how the ensemble might better emphasize a unified stylistic direction
- Insight on how individual members might highlight differentiated styles
- Insights on improvisation and arrangement; For example, are improvised sections appropriately structured, and do scatting phrases and instrumental lines align harmonically?
- Insights on group cohesion; For example, are the rhythm section players achieving a cohesive and synchronized tempo?

What is the goal of working with the artist-mentor?

- Gain new insights through learning from the artist-mentors knowledge of jazz history, songwriting, and their lived experiences with the music industry
- Working with the artist-mentor should help the bandleader and ensemble overcome artistic challenges and elevate their work to a new level
- Working with the artist-mentor should help the bandleader and ensemble with planning the recording session
- Working with the artist-mentor should help the bandleader consider marketing/business planning connected to the release of the recording

Does CMA provide artist-mentors?

No, CMA does not provide artist-mentors.

If needed, applicants can consult with CMA staff for recommendations. Applicants are still responsible for choosing their artist-mentor.

Grant Components and Funding

1. Ensemble Mentoring Sessions Payment

- Funding of \$200 per ensemble musician for each of the six mentoring sessions with the Artist-Mentor. (Total of \$2,400 for a duo to \$12,000 for a 10-member ensemble). Ensemble members must be present for the sessions. Sessions must be completed by March 31, 2026.

2. Artist-Mentor Payment

- Payment of \$500 for the Artist-Mentor for each of the six mentoring sessions with the ensemble. Sessions must be a minimum of 90 minutes. (Total of \$3,000 for six mentoring sessions.)

3. Demo Recording

- Funding (\$6,500) must be used for recording a demo of only the works rehearsed in sessions with the mentor. Demo recording must be completed by September 30, 2026.

4. Consultations with CMA Staff

For example, if you are a quartet

- $\$200 \times 6$ mentoring sessions $\times 4$ musicians = $\$4,800$ ensemble payment
- $\$500 \times 6$ mentoring sessions = $\$3,000$ mentor payment
- $\$6,500$ demo recording payment

Your Grant = $\$14,300$

Grant Application Timeline

- Application due: February 6, 2025 at 11:59pm EST
- Notification: April 2025
- Grant period: April 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026
- Mentoring sessions complete by March 31, 2026
- Demo recording complete & final report due by September 30, 2026



The written application



- Ensemble contact, demographic, personnel information
- Mentor information
- Grant Request Summary
 - Why the ensemble has chosen the artist-mentor. Why is their experience relevant to your ensemble and ensemble leader's work?
 - What is your plan for working with the artist-mentor?
 - Outcome- Why and how the artist-mentor working sessions will be beneficial to the ensemble's artistic development at this stage in its career.
 - Timeline for mentoring sessions and studio recording

Audio Upload

- Two ensemble audio samples are required and must be uploaded to the online application.
- Samples should be up to 5 minutes each and feature works for small ensemble (2-10 musicians).
- Samples must feature either the full ensemble or at least 50% of its musicians. A duo must submit works with both partners*
- Audio Summary: Instrumentation, track length, and cue times are required to guide the panel's listening.



RECORDING



Audio upload (cont'd.)

- Samples should be representative of the ensemble's performance within the last two years
- Longer works may be edited and/or excerpted
- Soloistic works are not recommended
- Samples do not need to be of studio quality but should be clear
- May contain music from a live concert, studio/home recording, and/or CD or online recording.
- Only mp3 and/or m4a file types are accepted

To Apply



Create a free Submittable account or log-in to your existing Submittable account



Type directly into the online form or draft your application in an offline document and copy your responses into the online application



Click SAVE DRAFT on bottom of application.

To Apply



Only online applications via Submittable are accepted



Upload items in accepted file formats in the application



Label Audio Files as follows:

Ensemble Name – Audio 1

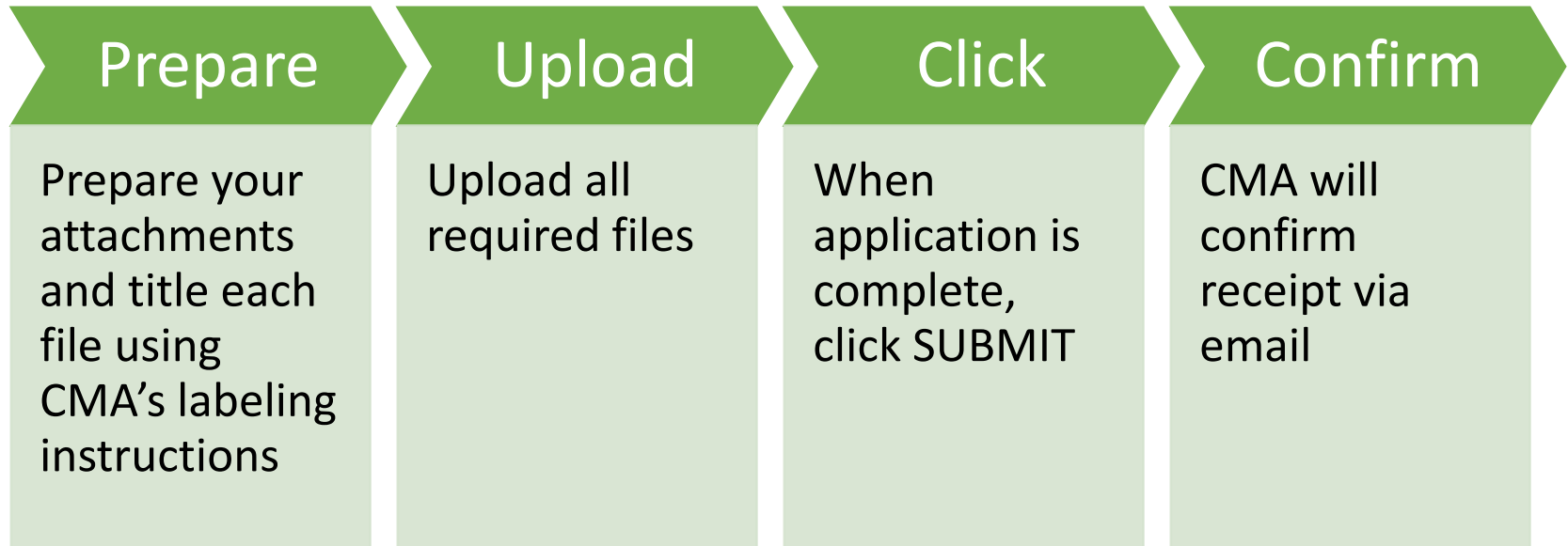
Ensemble Name – Audio 2

A complete application includes

- Complete written application
- Audio Samples for Ensemble
- Memorandum of Understanding between the bandleader and mentor



Completing the application



Panel Basics



- *Performance Plus* applications are reviewed by an independent panel of chamber music professionals; CMA staff and board do not participate in the deliberations ([Representative list of previous CMA panelists](#)).
- The panel will take place early March; applicants will be notified in April.



Panel Review Process

The panel will review written application based on clarity and thoughtfulness of responses to:

- why and how the mentoring sessions will benefit the ensemble at this stage in its career
- why the ensemble has chosen a particular mentor and its plan for working with them
- proposed timeline for the mentoring sessions and the studio recording. Include the months, city, and state where mentoring sessions will take place.




Panel Review Process (cont'd.)

Audio samples

- Ensemble audio samples are evaluated for artistic and technical strength, and cohesiveness of the ensemble in performing scored and improvised music.

Scoring, Notes, & Feedback

- The panel uses a scoring system of 10 (excellent), 7 (good), 4 (average), 1 (non-competitive)
 - 10- detailed and clearly defined
 - 7- general, but it is still a good project/idea that can be understood
 - 4- needs clarity and further planning, but it is still possible to understand the project
 - 1- unclear project description or lacks planning



Scoring, Notes, & Feedback

- Panelists also write notes on their review sheets
- Panel feedback—scores and notes are provided to applicants after notifications are made

Grant Award and Payment

If awarded, the bandleader must serve as the primary contact for the grant and is responsible for:

- providing government issued documentation as proof of their U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status;
- receiving and managing the grant funds;
- filing the interim reports, final reports, and associated documents including copy of the demo in mp3 or m4a format.

Grant Award and Payment (cont'd.)

Grant funds will be disbursed as follows:

- Ensemble payment in full; mentor payment in full; and \$4,500 of demo recording payment to be disbursed after signing the CMA grant contract;
- Remaining \$2,000 for the demo recording after receipt of interim report

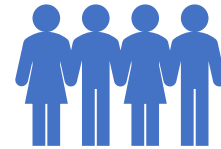
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CMA Resources

- [Grant & Award Recipients](#)
- [Press Room](#)
- [Composer List](#)

Past Projects

- [CMA Announces the Recipients of its 2024 Performance Plus Grant Awards | Chamber Music America](#)



Thank you!

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