

Submission Guidelines

THE DEMOCRACY CYCLE

Welcome to The Democracy Cycle Submission Guidelines. We invite you to review the following information and submit a proposal if you feel your work is aligned with the goals of the project. Please note the resources section at the end of the page if you have additional questions. Thank you for your interest.

Overview

Over a 5-year period, The Democracy Cycle – a collaboration between the [Perelman Performing Arts Center](#) (PAC NYC) and [Galvan Initiatives](#) – will commission and develop 25 new performing arts works across the fields of theater, dance, music, opera, and multidisciplinary performance that express themes related to the nature, practice, and experience of democracy, particularly as it is practiced in the United States.

Purpose

Our hope is that the commissioned projects will enrich and expand discussion of and participation in democracy – be it in the national, state, regional, or hyperlocal community realm – as it is practiced within the United States and worldwide. The Democracy Cycle project is inspired by the following beliefs:

- Democratic values are a global expression of humanity's striving to live with one another with respect and in peace.
- Democracy, as practiced in the United States, includes a history of founding exclusions. It has been, and must continue to be, the ongoing work of our society to expand upon the ideals of inclusivity embedded in our founding documents.
- Democracy faces significant perceived and actual threats in the current moment, both domestically and internationally.
- The Intersection of capitalism and democracy creates both opportunities and tensions
- Artists are the beating heart of democratic values because of their ability to imagine new worlds, envision new possibilities, and provoke meaningful discourse across divides.

The primary focus of The Democracy Cycle will be on democracy as it is currently being practiced in the United States. However, commissioned projects may include references to democracies worldwide provided they have potential for informing and deepening our understanding of American democracy.

The Commission

Artists will receive a commission of \$30,000 to create the new work and an additional \$30,000 in support of the work's development (research, readings, workshops etc.).

The Timeline

January 16, 2024: Application portal opens for Round One Open Call

February 15, 2024, 1:00pm EST: [Live webinar](#) where the Democracy Cycle staff will give an overview of the steps to apply and the application elements, with an opportunity for questions and answers at the end. This session will be recorded and posted on The Democracy Cycle's web page on the PAC NYC website.

April 15, 2024, 11:59 PM EST: Application deadline date for Round One Open Call

May-June 2024: Applications are screened for eligibility by TDC staff. Eligible proposals are reviewed by a minimum of two Readers. Using Reader's evaluative scores, a list of finalists is developed.

Spring/summer 2024: A peer panel drawn from the fields of performing arts and the study and practice of democracy reviews finalists' proposals and selects 8 projects to receive the 2024 commissions.

September 2024: All Round One Open Call applicants notified of their project's status

Early 2025: Round Two Open Call timeline and guidelines announce

Early 2026: Round Three Open Call timeline and guidelines announced

Eligibility Requirements:

Eligible applicants must:

- Be generative artists working in the field of theater, dance, music, opera, or multi-disciplinary performance
- Have completed and presented at least 2 full-length prior works of performance publicly, as evidenced by their bio, CV and/or work samples.
- Propose a new live performance work which may be at any stage of development, but may not be planned to premiere before November 1, 2024. (Remounts of previously completed/premiered works are ineligible.)
- Propose a new live performance work which is planned to be completed in 2025, 2026, or 2027.
- Be prepared to manage the income-tax implications of accepting a commission from a U.S.-based arts organization. (U.S. citizenship is not a requirement.)

Proposals are not eligible if

- The lead artist is enrolled as a full-time student in a degree-granting program

- The lead artist is under the age of eighteen
- The main purpose of the project is the curation or documentation of existing work(s)
- The proposed work advocates by name for the success or failure of a partisan candidate for office or a political party
- The lead artist or any of the main collaborators are employees of, immediate family of employees of, or consultants to PAC NYC or Galvan Initiatives

Selection Criteria

Readers and panelists will consider the following in selecting the commissioned projects:

- How does the proposed work model, hold accountable, expand, critique, or celebrate democracy, the practice of democracy, and democratic ideals? How has the artist or artists identified and responded to ideas or themes related to democracy, including core democratic principles and values (ex. political equality, majority rule, minority rights, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, among others).
- Does the work demonstrate clear potential for generating meaningful reflection and discourse on democracy as demonstrated by project narrative, samples of prior work, and artistic history of its collaborators.

Application Requirements:

You will submit your application through Submittable [here](#). To do so, you will need to have or create a free Submittable account.

The application requests the following information:

Name and contact information of Lead Artist

Each Democracy Cycle commission will be awarded directly to an individual generative artist. In cases where the work is being made by a collective, please select one artist to represent the application on the collective's behalf. All communication about the application will be directed to this individual via Submittable. Please ensure whomever is named is available to answer questions and receive updates from the time of submission to the time of notification. The allocation of award monies between collaborators will be their responsibility.

Lead Artist's Primary Artistic Discipline

Although you may work in multiple disciplines, selecting one helps us organize and assign applications to knowledgeable readers and panelists. Please select the discipline in which you would be most comfortable being reviewed. Feel free to use the project narrative section of the application to offer more information about disciplinarity in your creative process and how you define or make use of performing arts disciplines.

Name of company or organization

Applicants may be affiliated or unaffiliated with a producing or presenting organization. While we would love to hear about any affiliation, the presence or absence of partners will not impact the review of the proposed work in any way. We welcome all configurations and stages of performance creation consistent with eligibility criteria.

A narrative description of your project

We ask that the lead artist share the core ideas and intended creative process of the proposed work in a 3500 character narrative or a 5-minute video or audio submission. It's useful to remember that straightforward descriptions are most helpful to orient the Reader in this section. As artists and professionals themselves, they understand that the work is nuanced and may be challenging to capture in any narrative form. They will absorb its dimensions through the whole of the proposal, but the narrative is a place to ground them with as concrete a description as you are able to provide.

Please include the following in your project narrative in whatever sequence you prefer:

- What is the core form of the work: Scripted play? Musical? A dance work? Dance-theater piece? Multidisciplinary movement work? Or something else?
 - Note that The Democracy Cycle commission supports works that will be performed live in front of an audience. Proposals that include film or digital art as part of a live performance will be eligible. Proposals that lack a live performance element will be deemed ineligible.
- How do you intend the work to stimulate dialogue or analysis around the idea of democracy, or democracy's current state of practice, particularly as it is experienced in the United States?
 - This prompt is key to helping the selection committee understand the work's alignment with the goals of this commission. We established The Democracy Cycle because we believe democracy to be fundamental to humanity's efforts to live with one another with respect and in peace. We acknowledge that the subject is vast and complex, and that its expression in a work of art may be subtle, surprising, or full of contradiction.
- What is your approach to creating this work?
 - Please briefly describe your creative process. How does your work typically take shape? If you have already begun making the proposed work, what has your approach looked like to date? We understand that processes may differ from work to work, or that it may change within a single work. Any insights on how your works tend to develop are welcome.
- Who is the work's core audience, as you see it?
 - If there is a specific population or community that inspires your work, or whom you imagine as its core audience, please let us know. We understand that this question does not resonate with all artists. If questions of audience are not central to how you make your work, feel free to say so.
- Do you have other existing support, such as a producer or additional commissioners?

- This is for informational purposes. The commission is open to works at any stage of development or budget size.

Contact information for one professional reference

- Please share the name of a colleague you feel might speak best to your work and creative practice. This might be a collaborator or producer/presenter with whom you've worked in the past. Please do not include your collaborators on this project, or those who may have a direct financial stake in a positive outcome for this commission.

CV and narrative bios for up to 3 collaborating artists.

- Please upload an Artistic Resume or CV detailing artistic and/or professional experiences for yourself, and for up to three artistic collaborators. While we recognize that producers often play a strongly creative role, we ask that collaborators named here be generative artists. (Feel free to include your producer in the "Is there anything else you would like us to know about your work?" field.)
- Please also provide a short narrative bio for yourself, and for up to three collaborators.
 - If you are working as a collective, please provide an additional short bio for the collective itself.

A detailed project budget for the creation process.

- Please submit a budget for the project's creation process on the form provided. Please include expense and income categories that balance (or show a surplus).
- We understand that you may be in the early stage of the work and that both income and expenses are prospective at this time.
- A sample high-level budget could use the below line items but could a) also use others and b) be more detailed, if you have that information now:

Expenses:

Personnel
 Creative
 Technical
 Administrative
Rehearsal space
Materials
Technical Production
Travel
Research
Administration

Income:

Individual contributions
Grants
Earned
In-kind

(All income marked either projected or confirmed)

A timeline for the development of the work

- Starting from the initial stages of the creation of the work through to the imagined completion, please identify major milestones and associated dates surrounding the project's conception, production, funding, and presentation. Please indicate where you are in this timeline at the time of submission.
- Example:
 - **Sept. 2021:** Writing residency at X
 - **Dec. 2021:** Collaborator Y joined the project
 - **Jan - December 2022:** conversations, writing sessions, and fundraising
 - **Jan 2023:** work-in-progress showing with feedback session
 - **Feb 2023:** awarded grant for project development
 - **April 2023:** Developmental residency with full company at Z
 - **July 2023:** Tech residency with work-in-progress showing
 - **October 2023:** Work premieres at X venue.
- We understand that milestones are subjective, and that there are likely many of them inside your process. Please include no fewer than 7 and no more than 15 milestones from beginning to completion of the project.

Work samples

- Please submit recent, relevant work samples in the form of images, videos, audio, pdf document and/or links. See Submittable for format specs.
 - Relevant work samples are those that speak best to your current practice and share some characteristics with the proposed work, either in form or content.
 - Although there are exceptions, typically samples that are more than five years old are not as helpful to the panel as those from more recent works. Feel free to reach out for guidance to democracy.cycle@pacnyc.org if you have questions.
- URL links are welcome. Please include cue points when pointing the panel to an online sample. Please include all necessary passwords.
- All files must be less than 20 MB.
- Please include a short description of all samples, including title and year completed.
 - If there is a clear connection in theme or form between the sample of a prior work and the proposed project, it can be extremely helpful to briefly articulate that for reviewers.
- If submitting two video samples, one may be a work-in-progress from the proposed project, if such exists.

• **THEATER and DANCE and MULTIDISCIPLINARY**

- Up to 2 video work samples, each cued to a 5-minute duration.
- If such exists, for theater works, 10-15 pages of the script.

• **MUSIC and OPERA and MULTIDISCIPLINARY**

- Up to 2 audio or video work samples, each cued to a 5-minute duration.

Anything else to share (optional question)

- Is there anything else you would like us to know about your work? Please use this open space to briefly offer relevant information that may not be covered elsewhere.

Request for demographic information (optional)

- This section is fully optional. The demographic questions and answers will not be available for panelists or reviewers during their evaluation process. The information collected from this section will allow PAC NYC to evaluate the effectiveness of our outreach in alignment with the organization's [mission and values](#). Specifically, this data will allow us the opportunity to strengthen future Request For Proposal / Open Call processes.

Resources

- The Democracy Cycle on www.pacnyc.org/the-democracy-cycle
- The Democracy Cycle Request for Proposals [here](#)
- The Democracy Cycle frequently-asked-questions or [FAQs](#). (FAQs will be continually updated as the process gets underway and new questions arise.)
- Sign up for a one-on-one consultation regarding eligibility [here](#)
- [Register here](#) for our live webinar on February 15 at 1pm EST. The Democracy Cycle staff will give an overview of the steps to apply and the application elements, with an opportunity for questions and answers at the end. This session will be recorded and posted on The Democracy Cycle's web page on the PAC NYC website.
- Email democracy.cycle@pacnyc.org with any questions not answered in these guidelines, on the website, in the webinar, or in the FAQs. Because our capacity is limited, plan to allow at least 7 business days for an answer to an emailed question

**Reminder: April 15, 2024, 11:59 PM EST:
Application deadline for Round One Open Call
[APPLY HERE!](#)**