



San José, December 06th 2023

## Catalyst Grant 2023 resolution

Since 2014, the Catalyst Grant has been an important part of TEOR/ÉTica's grants and support program and aims to empower artistic organizations and collectives that are playing an important role in the transformation of the cultural landscape of the Central American and Caribbean region, both locally and internationally. Contributing to the support of smaller-scale, non-formal or non-institutionalized initiatives is a way to strengthen an artistic community capable of responding to needs in a more rapid, coherent and experimental manner.

This year, again thanks to the generous support of the Arts Collaboratory network, we are awarding five grants of US \$3000 (three thousand US dollars) to organizations or collectives selected through an open call. The grant money can be used to continue the work that these organizations or collectives have been doing, expand their reach, implement new dynamics, among others.

We received **55 applications from 12 countries**, making evident the vitality of artistic practices in the region and the need for this type of support. The final decision is always difficult due to the power and relevance of most of the applications.

The jury based its selection criteria on the clarity of the conceptual approach, the level of detail on the history and trajectory of the organizations and/or collectives, as well as documentation that evidenced the consistency of the work carried out. It also took into account the capacity of the projects to generate communication and linkage between different agents in the communities in which they would operate. Attention was also paid to initiatives that blur the boundaries between artistic disciplines and push the limits of what is recognized as art. Finally, the jury sought to ensure that the selection reflected a balance that would benefit both population and conceptual diversity.

### The five organizations selected are:

**Cronologías de lo Invisible** (San José, Costa Rica), for being a collective that arose from the need to learn more about the artistic production of women of the last century in Costa Rica, specifically from 1900 to 1980. The grant will be used to create an itinerary in provinces of Costa Rica, such as Limón, Puntarenas, Guanacaste and/or Alajuela, with the exhibition that was presented at the National Library, in order to create links with the communities and thus begin field work that will allow them to expand their research and learn about women artists who created their works in the last century in those areas. The grant will enable them to conduct interviews and compile archives, among other activities. In parallel to the exhibition, conservatories, workshops and other mediation activities will be presented to enhance the curatorial narratives and create links through diverse creative languages with the works and the life stories of their creators.

**Malagana** (Managua, Nicaragua) for being an intergenerational, interdisciplinary and self-managed contemporary art collective based in Nicaragua created with the intention of promoting experimental art spaces, breaking out of the logic of official art, embracing new art forms, and making social and political commentary, as well as on

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the institution of art itself. The grant will be used to initiate the systematization, preservation and publication of the historical archive of Malagana and Artefacto, focusing particularly on the first foundational stage of Artefacto (1992 - 2002). This archive will be published in the form of a web page and a printed publication (anthology style) compiling the first stage of this historical space. Also planned is a physical exhibition of material from the same archive (historical work, publications, printed material, records, etc.), as well as a curatorship of artists who are members and current collaborators of Malagana.

**The Fresh Milk Art Platform Inc.** (St. George, Barbados) for being a platform that supports excellence in the visual arts through residency and residency programs that provide development opportunities for artists in the Caribbean in order to consolidate a strong artistic community. The grant will be used for the next edition of the Transoceanic Visual Exchange (TVE) an experimental film and new media project that aims to negotiate the in-between space of cultural communities outside of traditional geopolitical zones of encounter and commerce. The project focuses on developing a survey of recent film and video works (screenings, installations and expanded cinema) by contemporary artists and filmmakers that are shown in participating regions in each edition, with an accompanying digital exhibition space. It implements a curatorial community of practice as a design framework, fostering multivocal models of exhibition making.

**En una papa** (Ciudad de Panamá, Panamá) for being an inclusive contemporary art project, developed with the participation of artists who, for different reasons, work on the margins of the art circuit and, in some cases, also of society. The grant will be directed to the creation of workshops of the 2024 cycle with the group La Perseverancia, designed to deepen the work done with people with mental disorders, in which the aim is to carry out small performative presentations and photo-dramatizations of the characters created by the participants in different everyday situations in which they have experienced rejection and stigma due to their condition. The documentation of this workshop will be the basis for the third workshop of this cycle with La Perseverancia, which includes the plastic exploration of elements that help them represent some of the experiences that have to do with what they experience due to their mental disorders. These workshops are designed as a progression of work in which knowledge, experience and cohesion with the group will serve to develop their proposals in each case.

**Colectivo Rukotz'ijal Junajpu** (Santa María de Jesús, Sacatepéquez, Guatemala) for being a collective that seeks to promote art as a tool to keep culture alive and to vindicate ancestral knowledge and cultural rights as native peoples. Seeking to create awareness in its population through education, art and culture that generates opportunities for integral growth in the community to transform their current realities. The grant will be directed to the consolidation of art classes and the creation of a mural festival in 2024, the goal is to create a joyful and safe space for children and youth to explore their cultural ancestry, identity and self-expression. The classes seek to nurture community belonging, environmental stewardship, and the continued reevaluation and practice of cultural knowledge and traditions. By bringing community members together in shared cultural activities, the art workshops foster community bonds and intergenerational connections, creating a sense of unity and belonging. The artwork created through this initiative also serves as a means of resistance and raising awareness about indigenous culture and rights.

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The jury was composed of Sofía Villena (Researcher and Curator, Estado del Arte - Catalyst Grant 2022 recipient), Aldeide Delgado (Curator and Researcher), Esperanza de León (Creatorio Artístico Pedagógico - Catalyst Grant 2022 recipient) and Daniela Morales Lisac (Collective Artistic Direction)

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Sofía Villena

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Aldeide Delgado

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Esperanza de León

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