

Chamber Music America

ENSEMBLE FORWARD PROGRAM 2021 GUIDELINES

Deadline: Friday, October 16, 2020, 9:00 PM ET

Grant Notification: December 2020

Grant Period: January 1, 2021-December 31, 2021

This program is supported by the New York Community Trust.

Chamber Music America's *Ensemble Forward* program is an initiative for young ensembles that perform Western European classical and contemporary chamber music and are based in the five boroughs of New York City. The goals of this program are to support ensembles at a crucial time in their career development and to help them navigate an increasingly competitive cultural landscape.

CMA will provide grant funds for ensembles to work with an established chamber music coach to help them develop their distinctive ensemble sound; make information resources available for building their careers; and create networking opportunities for ensemble musicians to meet each other, as well as composers and presenters, further enlarging their professional circles.

CMA acknowledges that, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing is preventing most ensembles from rehearsing and performing together. Through the Ensemble Forward program, however, CMA continues its commitment to supporting the artistic development of emerging groups during this time. In this way, chamber ensembles can maintain their relationships and plan their next steps, artistically and strategically, for a post-pandemic career.

The Board of Directors of Chamber Music America has made diversity, inclusion, and equity a primary focus of the organization's work. CMA's goal in this program is, through the panel review process, to arrive at a final slate of grantees that is representative of the field in terms of race and gender. Read CMA's [Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity](#).

ELIGIBILITY

An ensemble is eligible if:

- It consists of 2-10 musicians;
- It is based in one of the five boroughs of New York City;
- A minimum of one member of the Ensemble is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident;
- It performs Western European classical and contemporary music.

Its members:

- May be recent conservatory, college, or community college graduates or have reached a high level of performance through other music instruction;
- May include a member that is a matriculating student, however, student ensembles are not eligible;
- In general, are in their mid- to late-20s.

THE COACH

Applicants to the program must apply with an ensemble coach. This may be a coach of their choice, or applicants may consult with CMA staff to help identify one for them. The coach must be a citizen or permanent resident of the U.S.

GRANT COMPONENTS & FUNDING

An *Ensemble Forward* grant is made up of the following components:

1. Ensemble Coaching Sessions
A fee of \$200 per ensemble musician for each of four sessions with the Coach. Sessions must be completed by December 31, 2021.
2. Coach's Fee
A fee of \$500 for the Coach for each of four sessions with the Ensemble. Sessions must be a minimum of 90 minutes.
3. CMA National Conference
Complimentary registration for the complete ensemble to attend the 2021 CMA National Conference, taking place virtually January 11-15, 2021
4. Spring Skill-Building Workshop
A career workshop for the participating ensembles, led by industry experts, will feature topics relevant to the current career environment.
5. Consultations with CMA Staff
Check-ins with CMA staff on the group's progress will take place throughout the grant cycle.
6. CMA Membership
The grant will include a one-year CMA Organization-level membership.

GRANT AWARD AND PAYMENT

Payments will be made after scheduling and documentation has been submitted to CMA by the grantee for each coaching session as follows: \$500 coach's fee and \$200 for each ensemble member, paid to the Ensemble Leader, who is responsible for management of the grant and disbursement and reporting of grant funds.

Ensemble members and coaches must provide government-required documentation showing their U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status.

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.

PANEL REVIEW PROCESS

Ensemble Forward applications are reviewed by an independent panel of professional chamber musicians; CMA staff and board do not participate in the deliberations ([Representative list of previous CMA panelists](#)).

Applications are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- reason(s) why the ensemble believes the coaching sessions will be beneficial to its career development and in defining its group identity;
- the ensemble's proposed repertoire for their coaching sessions and the reason(s) for the choice;
- reason(s) for choosing a particular coach and their plan for working with them;
- potential for artistic growth based on the ensemble's audio samples.

THE APPLICATION

CMA uses an online application through Submittable. Only online applications will be accepted. Go to <https://cma.submittable.com> to create a free Submittable account if you do not already have one.

- You may type directly into the online form or draft your responses in an offline document and cut/paste your information into the online application.
- To save the work you have done on your application, you must click **SAVE DRAFT** at the bottom of the form before exiting.
- You may return to your saved application to continue working on it by following the log-in instructions. Submittable maintains your draft for 21 days.
- CMA recommends that you also save your draft in an offline document as backup.
- The application will close promptly at the stated deadline of **9:00 PM ET on Friday, October 16, 2020**. Late submissions will not be accepted. Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications in advance of the deadline to avoid any last-minute complications.

Uploads

Audio Uploads

Two audio samples of the ensemble are required and must be uploaded to the online application. The samples should be up to 5 minutes each and feature works for small ensemble (2-10 musicians). They should demonstrate the ensemble's performance level and must feature either the full ensemble or a majority of its musicians (greater than 50 percent of the group's members). Include contrasting works, if possible. Soloistic works are not recommended.

Acceptable audio file types are mp3 and m4a. The samples do not need to be of studio quality but should be representative of the ensemble's recent performance.

Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ensemble and the proposed coach must be uploaded to the application. A sample letter is provided in the application.

To submit an application

- Go to <https://cma.submittable.com> and click on "*Ensemble Forward*."
- Complete all required fields, including text boxes, the Funding Request, and Audio Sample information.
- Prepare your audio samples and MOU attachment.
- Save audio files as indicated below:
Applicant Ensemble Name (e.g., XYZ Ensemble); acceptable file types: mp3, m4a.
- Upload the audio files to the application.
- When complete, sign and date the application.
- Click "Submit" to send application to CMA; you will receive a confirmation email.

OTHER INFORMATION

[FAQS](#) | [APPLICATION](#) | [APPLICATION WORKSHOP SCHEDULE](#)

SUPPORT

Program: [Susan Dadian](#), (212) 242-2022, x102

Technical: [Submittable Help Center](#)

Application Deadline: October 16, 2020, 9:00 PM ET.

CHAMBER MUSIC AMERICA, the national network of ensemble music professionals, was founded in 1977 to develop, strengthen, and support the chamber music community. With a membership of nearly 6,000, including musicians, ensembles, presenters, artists' managers, educators, music businesses, and advocates of ensemble music, CMA welcomes members representing a wide range of musical styles and traditions. In addition to its funding programs, CMA provides its members with consulting services, access to instrument and other insurances, conferences, seminars, and several publications including *Chamber Music* magazine and the weekly e-newsletter, *Accent*.