2018 MAP Grantees, left to right: Lives on the Line; My Park, My Pool, My City; Bakanal de Afrique/Wey You Dey?

2019 MAP Fund Grant Cycle

Reviewer Guide

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October 15, 2018

Dear Reviewers,

On behalf of MAP Fund, I want to thank you for participating in the evaluation process. Your dynamic experiences, aesthetic interests, and demonstrated generosity to your colleagues in the field is of utmost value to us and our work.

Your review cohort shares the tremendous responsibility of interpreting MAP's funding priorities based on your expertise and observations of trends in the live performance community, and in the larger American socio-political landscape. I will be accountable to you and to our applicants to ensure that lines of communication are welcoming, clear, and open, and that the scoring process is fair and deeply considerate.

To that end, I will be available by Slack, Submittable's interface, and email to support your questions (both philosophical and technical). Do not hesitate to reach out for any reason throughout the review period! I'm particularly interested in checking in on the moments when your personal tastes and biases intersect with and/or complicate your ability to evaluate alignment. Please also reach out when you aren't sure if you have enough cultural familiarity with the forms in a project to evaluate it fairly. We'll talk it through together.

I thank you for reading closely this guide and the other materials you will receive. I also want to offer a gentle reminder that you will not be able to complete these in one weekend. Please make sure you get a head start right away out of respect for the artists and organizations that spent time putting them together, and so I may address any questions that you have as quickly as possible.

With excitement and gratitude as we move into this part of the cycle together,

Lauren Slone
MAP Fund Program Manager

TIMELINE AND PROCESS OVERVIEW

December 28, 2018: Signed Letters of Agreement and 1099s due

January 9, 2019: Participation checklist sent to all reviewers

February 1, 2019:
- All items on the participation checklist completed
- Invitation to join Slack channel sent. Please join the Slack channel by **February 6th.**

February 22 - March 15, 2019: Review One (three weeks)
- **February 22, 2019:** First docket available
  - Reviewers will receive online access to approximately 40-45 proposals.
- **March 15, 2019:** Deadline to submit scores
  - After all reviewers submit their scores, MAP staff will rank projects, make a cut based on reviewer scores, and create new dockets for each reviewer.

March 22 - April 5, 2019: Review Two (two weeks)
- **March 22, 2019:** Second docket available
  - Reviewers will receive online access to approximately 20-25 proposals.
- **April 5, 2019:** Deadline to submit scores
  - After all reviewers submit their scores, MAP staff will rank projects, make a cut based on reviewer scores, and create new dockets for each reviewer.

April 12 - April 19, 2019: Review Three (one week)
- **April 12, 2019:** Third docket available
  - Reviewers will receive online access to approximately 10-15 proposals.
- **April 19, 2019:** Deadline to submit scores
  - After all reviewers submit their scores, MAP staff will rank projects, make a cut based on reviewer scores, and create a final docket for each reviewer.

April 26 - May 3, 2019: Review Four (one week)
- **April 26, 2019:** Final docket available
  - Reviewers will receive online access to approximately 5-10 proposals.
- **May 3, 2019:** Deadline to submit scores
  - After all reviewers submit their scores, MAP staff will share the final list that the review cohort will have collectively recommended for funding.

May 10, 2019: Honorariums processed and mailed

May 13 - May 31, 2019: Period for review cohort to share process feedback with MAP staff

PROGRAM GOALS

The MAP Fund invests in artistic production as the critical foundation of imagining — and ultimately co-creating — a more equitable and vibrant society. MAP awards $1 million annually to up to 40 projects in the range of $10,000 – $45,000 per grant.

MAP supports original live performance projects that embody a spirit of deep inquiry, particularly works created by artists who question, disrupt, complicate, and challenge inherited notions of social and cultural hierarchy across the United States.

Funded projects address these concerns through the processes of creating and distributing live performance to the public, and/or through the content and themes of the work itself. MAP is committed to intersectional anti-racism, and does not support cultural appropriation or oppressive project language, structures, or content.

The program pursues its mission by annually welcoming applications for new live performance projects. Each year, MAP hires a different cohort of peer reviewers who recommend the projects they believe most align with MAP's goals through a rigorous, facilitated review process.

ASSESSING PROPOSALS FOR ALIGNMENT

MAP's program goals are annually updated through an iterative and responsive process, in an effort to support artists who are at the vanguard of artistic experimentation, language, and social practice.

Rather than imposing rigid definitions — which can in no way serve as an appropriate measurement for every project — we invite you, the 2019 review cohort, to expansively interpret the program goals according to your individual knowledge and expertise.

Evidence of strong alignment with MAP's goals can surface in any facet of the content applicants provide in their proposal. In assessing proposals, you are tasked with:

- Checking in on your own expectations and assumptions about artistic practice, process and product;

- Practicing openness in your reception of unfamiliar artists, organizations, and practices that you may be unfamiliar with;

- Looking for how each project may align on its own terms, rather than through side-by-side comparison of projects within the applicant pool;

- Looking for evidence of research, investigation, and/or experimentation within each unique application. Rather than expecting the artists to fit into specific constraints, how can your sense of what "inquiry" looks like expand, by virtue of encountering the applicants' ideas?

- Asking yourself questions about what you believe are some of the existing hierarchies or power inequities, both within the arts and within the larger socio-political climate in the U.S. today;

- Using this review process as an opportunity to advocate for projects that reflect a version of the live performance field you are working towards and/or would like to see realized, rather than upholding existing inequities and/or structures.

ANIMATING DEMOCRACY: AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES

MAP uses Animating Democracy's **Aesthetic Perspectives: Attributes of Excellence in Arts for Change** as an additional resource for reviewers to support the efforts outlined in the previous pages. This framework was created to enhance understanding and evaluation of creative work at the intersection of arts and civic engagement, community development, and justice.

We require that all reviewers read the Short Take version of the framework. This is an essential reference for completing your scores. We also recommend reading through the **Full Framework** version, as time permits.

While not all of MAP's applicants and grantees would describe their work as "arts for social change" work (nor are they required to!), we have found that the eleven attributes in the framework provide helpful language for reviewers to think more deeply and broadly about how to look for alignment with MAP's goals across a vast range of aesthetic approaches within the applicant pool.

One question that surfaces often is, "Do all of the attributes need to be present in the proposal in order for it to score highly?"

No, not at all. Applicants have not been asked to address the attributes in any direct way in their proposals, nor is there any requirement for them to demonstrate that their project has "communal meaning," for example. Again, many applicants might not use any of the terms to describe their work or their intent. **Not all of the attributes may feel relevant or applicable to every proposal, nor do they need to be.** Presence (or lack thereof) of the attributes may or may not impact your scoring.

The framework does not replace MAP's goals as a new set of evaluation criteria. We've included this with the intention to provoke questions, act as a reference to move past "stuck thinking," and to encourage you to reflect upon and expand your own notions of aesthetics throughout the process.

Here are a few quotes from reviewers who have described evidence of program alignment in proposals from previous grant cycles, as examples of different ways to interpret MAP's goals:

- *Western influences / POVs / artistic techniques that surfaced in the proposal were articulated as one way of working among many, rather than as the default standard.*

- *Experimentation within artistic forms and/or social practices was evident in the project description and/or work samples.*

- *If the proposed project drew from existing repertoire or traditions, a compelling rationale for how the new adaptation contributed to a more equitable and vibrant society was included.*

- *When artists were not of the communities whose stories they were sourcing to create the project, an articulation of ethical practices and relationship-building was evident in the narrative.*

- *A plan to compensate all creative team members and/or project participants in some way was reflected in the project budget (honorarium, salary, in-kind, barter, meals, transportation, etc.).*

- *Research strategies and collaborative practices articulated in the project narrative were anti-oppressive.*

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

As you open each proposal in your online docket, the first question in the review window will be, "Do you have a conflict of interest with this proposal?"

- If the answer is yes, no further questions will open. Select "Finalize Review" and move on to the next proposal — no additional actions are needed.

- If the answer is no, the rest of the scoring questions will pop open in the review window for you to complete your review.

MAP's definition of "conflicts of interest":

A reviewer is considered to have a conflict of interest with a grant applicant if they have a relationship with that individual as:

- An employee;
- A fundraiser or public relations person;
- An independent contractor who has received fees or payments in 2018;
- Has had and or is having a relationship of an intimate nature with the grant applicant;
- Will benefit directly or indirectly from the grant applicant's funding from MAP Fund.

In the event of conflict of interest with an applicant, such person (in this instance, the reviewer) will not participate in:

- Any aspect of the decision-making process in connection with any matter that involves the applicant directly or indirectly;
- Any discussion or vote concerning the application;
- Attempting in any way to influence the votes or opinions of fellow MAP Fund board members, reviewers, staff members, or consultants;
- Soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept any gift of money, goods, loans or services, or entering into or participating in any other arrangements for personal benefits, which would improperly influence or have the appearance of improperly influencing them in their MAP Fund related duties and responsibilities.

SCORING RUBRIC

1) Do you have a conflict of interest with this proposal?
- Yes
- No

2) How well does the proposed project align with MAP's goals?
- "4" indicates that the project strongly aligns.
- "3" indicates that the project mostly aligns.
- "2" indicates that the project has very little alignment.
- "1" indicates that the project has no alignment.
  - If you select "1," you will be prompted to briefly describe why you believe the project does not align with MAP's goals.

3) Which of these attributes – if any – are vividly present in the proposal?
- Coherence
- Commitment
- Communal Meaning
- Cultural integrity
- Disruption
- Emotional Experience
- Openness
- Resourcefulness
- Risk-taking
- Sensory Experience
- Stickiness
- All of the above
- None of the above

5) Are you familiar with any artists listed on this application? *(Internal use only).*
- Yes
- No

6) Have you experienced the live work of any artists listed on this application? *(Internal use only).*
- Yes
- No

7) (Optional) Any other comments you would like to make about this proposal?
MAP Fund staff may share your notes anonymously with the applicant.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are there any restrictions on the numerical score?
Your voting is unrestricted, meaning that you may give as many 4s, 3s, 2s, and 1s as you feel correspond with the projects that are present in your docket.

Can I change my scores at any time?
Yes! You have the opportunity to save your scores as you go, and revise them as needed. However, once you submit your scores, you will not be able to change them.

I'm unsure if I have a conflict of interest with this proposal.
Please email MAP staff with the particulars of the circumstance. We will work with you to determine whether or not it's appropriate for you to score the proposal.

How should I account for things like grammar errors or poor audio / video quality?
These factors should not be taken into consideration in your scoring. Your scores should not be connected to whether or not an applicant has strong written English skills or access to the highest-quality documentation.

What if I'm not sure if a project is eligible?
Please reach out to MAP staff — we're available to read through the proposal and weigh in on unclear eligibility.

What should I do if I read problematic elements in the proposal, i.e. evidence of cultural appropriation?
Please reach out to MAP staff if you have concerns about a specific proposal. You may also use the Slack channel to connect with how other reviewers are identifying and scoring proposals that may be more challenging to assess.

Where can I find examples of projects MAP has funded previously?
Look through 2018 MAP grantees **HERE**.