



2025 Transformation Award Guidelines (Stage 1)

The Leeway Transformation Award provides unrestricted awards of \$15,000 to women, trans*, and/or gender nonconforming artists and cultural producers living in Greater Philadelphia who create art for social change and have done so for the past five years or more, demonstrating a commitment to art for social change work.

2025 Application Deadline

The Leeway Transformation Award is a two-stage process; Stage 1 is open to all eligible applicants. A national peer review panel will evaluate applications and select applicants to invite to Stage 2.

Stage 1: May 15 • Stage 2: By invitation only

Applications (electronic or hard-copy) must be **received** by the deadline. If the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the application must be received by 10:00am the following business day. We do not accept applications sent by email or fax.

Application Submission

HARD-COPY APPLICATIONS

Drop off or mail applications to:

Leeway Foundation
The Philadelphia Building
1315 Walnut Street, Suite 832
Philadelphia, PA 19107

ELECTRONIC APPLICATIONS

Applications may be submitted online at leeway.org/LTA. If you do not receive an email confirmation within five minutes of sending your electronic application, it has not been successfully submitted.

LANGUAGE/ACCESS NEEDS

If you have language translation or access needs that make our application inaccessible to you, please contact staff to talk about alternative ways to submit your application. Contact information is below.

APPLICATION SUPPORT

Throughout the year, Leeway staff will host several Information and 1-on-1 Applicant Support sessions. For a list of upcoming sessions and to RSVP, visit: leewayfoundation.eventbrite.com or call 215.545.4078.

Leeway's Other Grantmaking Programs

In addition to the Transformation Award, Leeway offers other streams of funding. To find out more, visit: www.leeway.org/grants or call 215.545.4078.

CONTACT INFORMATION

PHONE: 215.545.4078
EMAIL: info@leeway.org
WEBSITE: leeway.org
INSTAGRAM: [@leewayfound](https://www.instagram.com/leewayfound)
FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/leewayfoundphl](https://www.facebook.com/leewayfoundphl)

**Leeway is a trans-affirming organization committed to gender self-determination, and we use the term "trans" in its most inclusive sense, as an umbrella term encompassing transsexual, transgender, genderqueer, Two-Spirit people, and anyone whose gender identity or gender expression is nonconforming and/or different from their gender assigned at birth.*

Art for Social Change: What We Mean

Leeway supports artists and cultural producers involved in art for social change that positively affects and engages communities and audiences. Creating social change must be integral to the ideas, beliefs, and goals that are woven throughout your art and your process of creating and sharing your art.

IMPACT OF ART WITH VISION

Art for social change is art with a vision and an intentional analysis. It is an artistic or creative cultural practice that may operate in traditional or nontraditional mediums, modes, or disciplines. Art with a vision impacts people in many ways. It can:

- Raise consciousness
- Alter how we think about ourselves, our society, or our culture
- Create a vision of a more just world
- Be a tool or strategy for organizing and movement building
- Preserve or reclaim traditional cultural practices using your artistic practice as a form of resistance or empowerment
- Create space for expression and build a sense of community
- Challenge racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, ableism, or other oppressions
- Question mainstream culture and beliefs
- Shift or transform the perception of power and/or privilege and the dynamics associated with justice, equality, and/or accountability
- Value healing justice practices focused on strengthening communities, not just individuals
- Engage and utilize a reciprocal process — where there is teaching and learning simultaneously and the consent for engagement is mutual, as is the benefit for yourself as an artist and the community you are engaging

Social Change Intent/Vision

We ask you to identify **at least one but no more than three** social change categories that best describe the intent or vision behind your work. There is no correct or incorrect way to choose; you should pick one that resonates with you as the core intent or vision of your work. You will have an opportunity to define further what that vision is for you in question 3 of the application.

- Cultural preservation
- Decarceration
- Demilitarization
- Disability justice
- Economic justice
- Environmental justice
- Feminism
- Housing justice
- Immigrant justice
- Indigenous sovereignty
- LGBTQA social movements
- Racial justice
- Transgender justice/gender self-determination

How to Apply

The Transformation Award is open to individual artists and cultural producers creating art for social change in any medium, including traditional and nontraditional as well as multimedia and experimental forms.

ELIGIBILITY

- Transformation Award applicants may apply and receive the Art and Change Grant in the same year.
- Transformation Award applicants may not apply for the Media Artist + Activist Residency in the same year.
- If you receive a Transformation Award, you may not apply for the Art and Change Grant and/or the Media Artist + Activist Residency during your award year.

You are eligible to apply if you:

- Have lived for the past two years or more (since April 2023) in Bucks, Camden, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia County
- Are at least 18 years old
- Identify as a woman, trans, and/or gender nonconforming person
- Have been creating art for social change for the past five years or more

You may not apply if you:

- Are a full-time student in an arts degree program
- Have previously received a Transformation Award
- Have received a Media Artist + Activist Residency in 2024
- Have not turned in all reports due from previous Leeway grants and residencies

AGE AND RESIDENCY DOCUMENTATION

All applicants must verify that they:

- Live in Bucks, Camden, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia County
- Are at least 18 years old

Should you move forward to Stage 2, you will be asked to provide proof of both your age and current residency before receiving any funds. This documentation is confidential and will not be shared with anyone other than Leeway staff. You may mask any financial or sensitive information in these documents.

- For proof of age, you will need to provide one of the following: Drivers license, passport, birth certificate, non-driver's identification card, voter registration card, immigration registration or papers
- For proof of current residency, you will need to provide one of the following (which should match the address on your application): Utility bill, rental agreement, mortgage agreement or payment coupon, house deed, tax return, or other verification of residency (cleared by Leeway staff)

If you are unable to provide any of the above documents, call 215.545.4078 or email info@leeway.org to discuss.

COLLABORATION: APPLYING WITH OTHER ARTISTS

You may apply collaboratively with other artists for the Transformation Award. We understand that most work is done in collaboration with others, so you are only required to submit an application with a collaborator if you are playing similar leadership roles for the project. Applicants may only apply once per cycle, whether submitting as a part of a collaborative or as an individual.

- Each co-applicant must meet Leeway's basic eligibility requirements.
- You must have worked with each other for the past five years or more creating art for social change.
- Each co-applicant must submit separate Artist Information and Experience sections.
- Co-applicants must jointly submit one Description of Your Art for Social Change Work section. Make sure to describe the experience and work of the collaboration, not your individual practices.
- If submitting a hard-copy, materials must be submitted together in one envelope.
- If submitting online, collaborators (who are not the main applicant) should complete a [co-applicant form](#).
- If you are selected for a grant, each co-applicant must provide both age and residency documentation. Grant funds are usually awarded to the main applicant, who will submit a W-9 and hold tax liability for the grant. See "Finalist Notification Status" section on page 4.

Award Review Process

PEER REVIEW PANEL

An independent peer review panel will evaluate applications. Keep in mind that members of the review panel may not be familiar with your particular artistic practice or cultural context so describe them clearly. They will consider:

- Breadth and depth of your experience creating art for social change for five years or more
- Whether or not social change is an intentional part of your artistic practice
- Your relationship to the communities you work with
- Audience and/or community engagement

The review panel will look at the “Description of Your Art for Social Change Work” section (application pages 5-6) to get a sense of the following:

- Why you are doing this work
- Whether a clear vision and social change intent is an integral part of your practice
- How you are and how you identify play a role as it relates to the audience/communities you work with
- What role audience or community has in your work
- What the trajectory of your art for social change work has been over time
- What impact your work has on the Greater Philadelphia region

AWARD PERIOD

The 2025 Leeway Transformation Award period is from January 2026 to December 2026.

AWARD PERIOD RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for the 2025 Transformation Award must have lived in Bucks, Camden, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia counties continuously since at least April 2023. **Awardees must maintain residency in one of these six counties throughout the award period ending December 31, 2026.**

STAGE 1 FINALIST STATUS NOTIFICATION

If you are selected as a Stage 1 finalist, a notification letter will be mailed to you 10-12 weeks after the application deadline.

To keep our process transparent, every applicant receives feedback, based on the panel’s deliberations. This offers a view into the process and gives information applicants can use as they think about their work. Applicants may opt out of receiving feedback — and can always request it at a later date. We offer feedback with the understanding that grantmaking is a reductive process, where there is never as much money as qualified applicants, so please consider if you are prepared to receive this feedback.

If you are awarded a grant, you must fill out a W-9 tax form and provide your legal name so that Leeway can send you a 1099 form for tax purposes. Leeway is required by the IRS to issue 1099 forms to grantees. Contact Leeway staff if this presents difficulties for you.

Artistic Disciplines

We ask you to choose the primary category, as well as a secondary category if needed, that best represents your artistic practice. This will allow us to group applicants by discipline for the purpose of evaluating our programs. The application provides an opportunity for you to talk more about the multidisciplinary or hybrid nature of your work, should you feel constrained by these categories.

Below is a list of categories and examples of disciplines. If your disciplines are not listed or you have questions about which category to choose, call the Leeway staff at 215.545.4078.

CRAFTS AND TEXTILES

Book art
Costume design
Crocheting
Doll making
Fashion design
Furniture making
Knitting
Puppetry
Quilting
Scenic design
Sex toys
Weaving

FOLK ARTS

Capoeira
Culinary art
Hair braiding
Heritage gardening
Storytelling
Traditional dance
Traditional music

LITERARY ARTS

Creative nonfiction
Creative writing
Playwriting
Poetry
Prose
Short stories

MEDIA ARTS

Animation
Audio
Film
Interactive design
Multimedia
New media
Podcast
Video
Web-based work

MUSIC

Composition
Deejaying
Hip-hop
Instrumental performance
Jazz
Opera
Producing
Rapping
Singing
Songwriting
Vocal performance

PERFORMANCE

Acting
Dance
Movement
Musical theater
Oral history
Performance art
Spoken word
Theater

VISUAL ARTS

Cartoon/comic illustration
Digital art
Drawing
Graphic design
Illustration
Installation
Mixed media
Murals
Painting
Photography
Printmaking
Screenprinting
Sculpture

MULTIDISCIPLINARY

Please be advised that this category is for artists for whom multiple disciplines are integral and necessary for the execution of the work.

If you choose multidisciplinary, do not choose a secondary discipline.

Examples of Previous Transformation Awardees

Refer to www.leeway.org/grantees for examples of previous Leeway Transformation Award recipients. If you have trouble accessing the website, contact Leeway to request a list of examples of past awardees.



2025 Transformation Award Application (Stage 1)

Before you begin, review the Transformation Award Guidelines.

INSTRUCTIONS. Type or print neatly in blue or black ink. Do not write in cursive or all capital letters. Do not staple any page. All sections must be completed in order for this application to be considered for an award.

Artist Information

Artist name or preferred name (to be shared publicly if you receive an award)

Legal name

This is the name associated with your Social Security number and/or bank account. It will not be shared or associated publicly with your artist/ preferred name and will be kept confidential among Leeway staff.

To which name should correspondence be addressed? Artist/preferred name Legal name

CO-APPLICANT(S). List the names of any other artists with whom you are applying. Note that each applicant needs to complete their own Artist Information and Experience sections (pages 1-4).

Are you the main contact for this collaboration? Yes No

Email address

Social media handle(s)

Age

Phone number(s)

Street address

City

State

Zip code

Neighborhood

County (choose one):

Bucks

Delaware

Camden

Montgomery

Chester

Philadelphia

How long have you lived at this address?

MONTH/YEAR

to

MONTH/YEAR

List your previous residence if you have lived at your current address for less than two years.

Previous street address

City

State

Zip code

Previous neighborhood

County (choose one):

Bucks

Delaware

Camden

Montgomery

Chester

Philadelphia

How long did you live at this address?

MONTH/YEAR

to

MONTH/YEAR

Name:

As a trans-affirming organization, we ask applicants to indicate their pronouns. Providing this information is optional. If you do not provide your pronouns, you will be referred to by your name in all Leeway materials.

I wish to be addressed as:

- She/her
- He/him
- They/them
-

How did you hear about this award? (Check the appropriate box below and fill in a name for an organization if applicable.)

- Email
- Mailer
- Website
- Word of mouth
- Friend
- Past recipient
- Staff
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Organization:
- Other:

AGE AND RESIDENCY DOCUMENTATION

Should you move forward to Stage 2 of this application process, you will be asked to provide proof of both your age and current residency by submitting one item from each of the following two checklists:

- | Age | Residency |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Driver's license | <input type="radio"/> Utility bill |
| <input type="radio"/> Passport | <input type="radio"/> Rental agreement |
| <input type="radio"/> Birth certificate | <input type="radio"/> Mortgage agreement or payment coupon |
| <input type="radio"/> Non-driver's identification card | <input type="radio"/> House deed |
| <input type="radio"/> Voter registration card | <input type="radio"/> Tax return |
| <input type="radio"/> Immigration registration card or papers | <input type="radio"/> Other verification of residency (cleared by Leeway staff) |

If selected, will you be able to provide proof of both age and current residency? Yes No

Have you ever received funding from Leeway? Yes No

If yes, list any grants/awards/residencies & years:

If yes, have you turned in your final report(s)? Yes No

Have you attended an information or application support session this year? Yes No

If yes, where?

Do you want to receive feedback from panel deliberations with your notification letter (refer to guidelines on page 4)?

Yes No

Name:

ARTISTIC DISCIPLINE OF YOUR WORK

Choose a discipline from the choices below that best represents the nature of your artistic practice. You may also select a secondary discipline if needed. The multidisciplinary category should only be used if multiple disciplines are integral to the work. **If you select multidisciplinary, do not choose a secondary discipline.** For more information and examples, refer to guidelines page 5.

Primary artistic discipline of your work:

- Crafts & textiles Folk arts Literary arts Media arts Music Performance Visual arts Multidisciplinary

Secondary artistic discipline of your work (optional):

- Crafts & textiles Folk arts Literary arts Media arts Music Performance Visual arts

SOCIAL CHANGE INTENT/VISION OF YOUR WORK

Identify **at least one but no more than three** social change categories that best represent the nature of your work. Be ready to explain how your artistic practice engages with and expresses the social change vision you choose.

- Cultural preservation
- Decarceration
- Demilitarization
- Disability justice
- Economic justice
- Environmental justice
- Feminism
- Housing justice
- Immigrant justice
- Indigenous sovereignty
- LGBTQA social movements
- Racial justice
- Transgender justice/gender self-determination

SHORT ARTIST BIO. Provide a brief bio highlighting your art for social change practice, 3-5 sentences maximum.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Experience

Provide a brief description (1-2 sentences or 325 characters max) and dates of 4-10 artistic, personal, political, professional, or social change-based experiences relevant to your art for social change work. Include experiences that reflect five or more years of an art for social change practice. This is not meant to read as a traditional resume and should reflect defining moments for you as an artist or cultural producer. The review panel values experiences that are often not included in traditional resumes and know that these experiences can be defining moments for artists. These experiences are shared with the review panel but will never be shared publicly.

Use this side only or share your project-related experiences and highlighted experience on one side of a separate sheet of paper (8.5" x 11", minimum .75" margins, 11-point font or larger). If using a separate sheet of paper, please make sure your name is on it.

Description of experience

Date(s) of experience

1. ....	.....
2. ....	.....
3. ....	.....
4. ....	.....
5. ....	.....
6. ....	.....
7. ....	.....
8. ....	.....
9. ....	.....
10. ....	.....

HIGHLIGHTED EXPERIENCE. Describe in more detail one of the experiences listed above. We recommend that your highlighted experience is the most compelling in terms of its relationship to your artistic practice.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Name:

Description of Your Art for Social Change Work

Do not exceed two pages of typed text for the six questions, or 1500 characters per question. To answer the following six questions, you can either use this application or two separate, single-sided sheets of paper (8.5" x 11", minimum .75" margins, 11-point font or larger). Please make sure your name is on every page and that you number the questions. **Do not include links to external websites in your answers.** Review the Transformation Award guidelines, particularly page 4, for instructions.

1. Describe your art for social change practice, giving a sense of what your artistic practice, discipline, or cultural content has been for at least the past five years. How has it evolved over time?

The panel understands that your artistic practice is grounded in intention, but don't forget to describe what your work looks, sounds, and/or feels like!

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Provide specific projects or examples of the art for social change work you have done in the past five years and prior to that, if applicable.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. As part of this application, you were asked to identify 1-3 social change intents. How does your art engage with and create action around those intent(s)?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Name:

4. Define your community or communities. What factors (ability, education, geography, gender, race, religion, etc.) have led you to identify with or become a part of this community? How do these factors and your identity influence your work?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

5. Define the communities your art for social change practices engages. In what ways is the community involved in your work?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. Describe the social change impact of your work in Greater Philadelphia — on the audiences who experience it and/or on the communities who engage with it. How is this impact being measured (if applicable)?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Name:

Application Checklist

Please review the application and guidelines to make sure your application is complete. **The review panel will not consider incomplete applications.**

YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY IF YOU:

- Have lived in Bucks, Camden, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia County since April 2023
- Are at least 18 years old
- Identify as a woman, trans*, and/or gender nonconforming person
- Have been creating art for social change for the past five years or more

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Pages 1-3: Artist Information
 - If progressing to Stage 2, all applicants (including any co-applicants) must provide proof of both their age and current residency (see guidelines page 3)
- Page 4: Experience
- Pages 5-6: Description of Your Art for Social Change Work
- Page 7: Application Checklist

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.
- Do not staple your application.
- All pages must be one-sided.
- Follow the page limit guidelines.
- All application pages must include your artist name at the top of the page.
- We recommend that you keep a copy of your application for your records.

CONFIRM AND SIGN. I certify that I have lived continuously in New Jersey's Camden County or Pennsylvania's Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia County from April 2023 to the present. I am applying for the award with the intention that I will continue to be a resident of Greater Philadelphia throughout the award year, ending December 31, 2026. I have reviewed the application guidelines and checklist carefully to ensure that I and any co-applicants meet all eligibility criteria and that I have provided all information necessary for this application to be considered for funding. I authorize Leeway to use my preferred name and submitted materials for publicity purposes.

.....
Signature (legal name)

.....
Date