

INTRO TO GRANT WRITING FOR ARTISTS

REYES RAMIREZ



PART I

- Who am I?
- Grants vs. Residencies vs. Fellowships
- Pros & Cons of Each Opportunity

PART II

- Intro: The Practice of Applying
- Anchor Text – What is it?
- How to Apply the Anchor Text
- Budgets
- Work Samples

WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?



CONTEXT

PART I



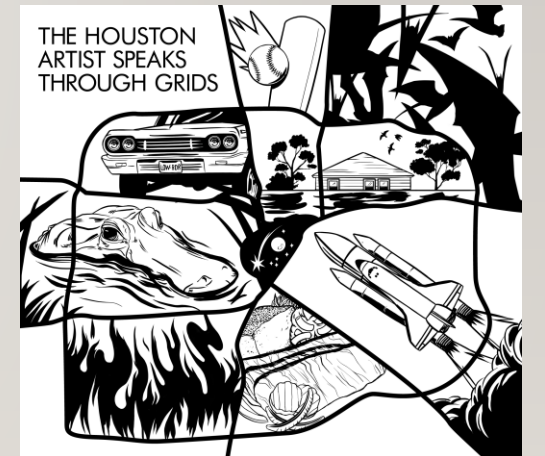
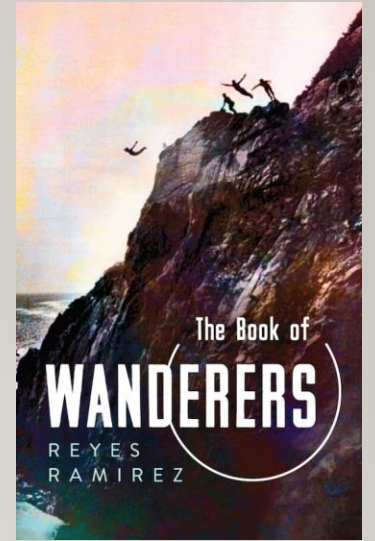
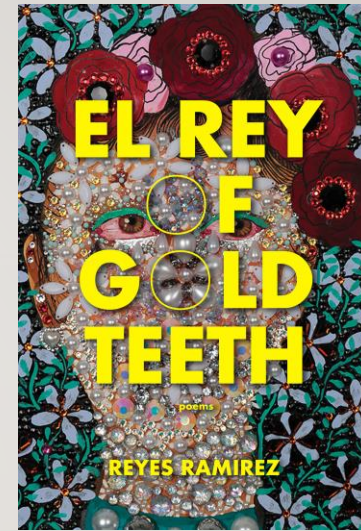
WHO AM I? REYES RAMIREZ!

GRANTS

- 2024 *Houston Arts Alliance* Support for Artists and Creative Individuals
- 2023 *Houston Arts Alliance* Let Creativity Happen Express Grant
- 2022 *The Idea Fund* Grant
- 2021 Interchange Artist Grant, Mid-America Arts Alliance
- 2020 Poets & Writers United States of Writing Initiative Project Grant
- 2019 *Houston Arts Alliance* Let Creativity Happen Express Grant
- 2019 *Houston Arts Alliance* Let Creativity Happen Express Grant
- 2019 *The Idea Fund* Research & Development Grant
- 2019 *Y.ES Contemporary Arts* Writers Grant

FELLOWSHIPS & RESIDENCIES

- 2024 Speculative Play and Just Futurities Residency Fellow, IUPUI Arts & Humanities Institute
- 2023 Jesse H. Jones Writing Fellow, Dobie Paisano Fellowship Program, University of Texas at Austin
- 2023 Finalist, Emily Hall Tremain Journalism Fellowship for Curators, Hyperallergic
- 2023 Finalist, Houston Poet Laureate, Houston Mayor's Office for Cultural Affairs
- 2022 Writer in Residence, Crosstown Arts Residency Program
- 2021 Runner-up, Dobie Paisano Fellowship Program, University of Texas at Austin
- 2020 Fellow, *Desert Nights*, *Rising Stars* Fellowship, Arizona State University's Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing



WHO AM I? CONTINUED

PANEL SERVICE

- 2023 Reviewer, Arts Action Fund, *Arts Connect Houston*
- 2023 Panelist, Support For Organizations Category 1 Grant, *Houston Arts Alliance*
- 2023 Panelist, Artists 360: Practicing & Student Artist Grant, *Mid-America Arts Alliance*
- 2023 Panelist, Catalyze Fellowship, *Mid-America Arts Alliance*
- 2022 Reviewer, Arts Action Fund, *Arts Connect Houston*
- 2022 Panelist, Cultural District Project Grant, *Texas Commission on the Arts*
- 2022 Panelist, Support for Artists and Creative Individuals – Multidisciplinary, *Houston Arts Alliance*
- 2021 Juror, Scholastic Writing Competition, *Harris County Department of Education*
- 2021 Juror, SinMuros: A Latinx Theatre Festival Play Selection Committee, *Stages Repertory Theater/Tintero Projects*
- 2021 Judge, Houston Youth Poet Laureate, *Writers in the Schools*
- 2021 Panelist, Cultural District Project Grant, *Texas Commission on the Arts*
- 2021 Juror, Art of Equality Art & Literacy Contest, *Juneteenth Legacy Project*
- 2020-2021 Panelist, Grant Application Evaluator for Emergency Fund, *Greater Houston Area Arts Relief Fund*
- 2020 Juror, Scholastic Writing Competition, *Harris County Department of Education*
- 2020 Juror, SinMuros: A Latinx Theatre Festival Play Selection Committee, *Stages Repertory Theater/Tintero Projects*
- 2020 Grant Application Evaluator, Arts Create Grant, *Texas Commission on the Arts*
- 2020 Grant Application Evaluator, Artistic Innovations Grant, *Mid-America Arts Alliance*
- 2019 Juror, Scholastic Writing Competition, *Harris County Department of Education*
- 2017 Evaluator, Arts Create Grant - Multidisciplinary Panel, *Texas Commission on the Arts*
- 2017-2018 Panelist, Houston Poet Laureate Program Selection Committee, *Office of the Mayor of Houston*

GRANTS VS. RESIDENCIES VS. FELLOWSHIPS

What are the differences?

GRANTS



Money

- Restricted vs. Unrestricted
- Matching vs. Nonmatching
- Project-based

FELLOWSHIPS



Access

- Institution-based
- Resources/Audience
- Looser definition – money vs. access vs. space or all three
- Often a package of benefits

RESIDENCIES



Space

- Location-based
- Timeline
- Vary in resources

PROS & CONS

GRANTS

Pros

-MONEY!

Cons

- Recordkeeping
- Conditions
 - Taxes
- Deliverables based

FELLOWSHIPS

Pros

- Networking
- Packaged resources

Cons


- Loose definition
- Not all resources are worth it
- Often labor based

RESIDENCIES

Pros

- Unique experience
- Time

Cons

- Time
 - Vary in financials/resources
 - Often project based
- 

THE PRACTICE OF APPLYING

PART II



HOW TO ENTER THIS PRACTICE

- Proposal: An act of putting forward or stating something for consideration.
- One thing to ask yourself when writing a grant proposal is:
WHO IS DOING THE CONSIDERING?
- This is a numbers game in that the odds are not often in your favor. Therefore, the objective should be refining your project and language to suit as many opportunities as possible versus recreating the wheel every time.
- Thus, we will create an anchor text to ‘anchor’ the project while keeping it adaptable to different practices/opportunities.

ANCHOR TEXT: DEFINITION

- a text that is read, used and referred to often to change and edit to be used as a model to create answers to a variety of application questions.

PROJECT BRAINSTORMING

1. WHO ARE YOU?

How would you define yourself artistically? What experiences have shaped your creative practice?

2. WHAT ARE YOUR PASSIONS?

How does that affect your creative practice?

3. WHAT IS A PROJECT YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOUR ART THAT GOES BEYOND YOUR USUAL PRACTICE?

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PROJECT?

Materials? Skills? Space? Do you wish to have your art featured in a non-traditional space? Do you want your work accompanied by other elements?

4. WHAT DISCIPLINE(S) DOES YOUR PROJECT ENGAGE IN?

Think as broadly or specifically as you'd like. Literary arts, poetry, performing arts, dance, clarinet, ensemble, etc.

5. WHO ARE SOME PEOPLE, EVENTS, OR SPACES YOU WOULD LIKE TO WORK WITH TO PRESENT YOUR WORK?

Other artists? Businesses? Communities? Centers? Event spaces?



WHO IS DOING THE CONSIDERING?

- Often, a panel is composed of several individuals who are either: experts, former grantees, and/ or volunteers. For the purposes of this workshop, we're going to assume that the panel is composed of individuals from various creative backgrounds. Thus, you should write your proposal in common, simple language that can be understood by a room full of people as equally as possible.
- The exceptions to this rule are grants, fellowships, residencies, etc. that are specifically for one discipline, i.e. a writing residency for writers will most likely have writers on the panel. In this instance, it would be okay to use writing terms.



WRITING THE PROPOSAL

- **WHO** IS APPLYING?
- **WHAT** IS THE MONEY FOR?
- **WHEN** WILL THE PROJECT OCCUR?
- **HOW** WILL THE PROJECT BE CARRIED OUT?
- **WHERE** WILL THE PROJECT BE EXHIBITED?
- **WHY** IS THIS PROJECT NECESSARY?

SAMPLE ANSWERS

1. WHO: Reyes Ramirez
2. WHAT: The publication of a magazine and website based on the creation of literary pieces in response to beer, as well as a workshop series
3. WHEN: Fall 2024
4. HOW: By visiting Houston breweries and writing a series of beer review haibuns
5. WHERE: Houston
6. WHY: to inspire deeper connections to beer, get people to explore local businesses, expand conventions of reviews/food writing, and make beer writing more accessible to audiences. A form of history keeping in that breweries close, change identities/locations, or rotate/cancel beers.

NOW LET'S BUILD OUR STRUCTURE

- Put your answers together in an order to create an anchor text.
- The x-factor of every proposal is the ability to complete a narrative in such small, concise verbiage.

Reyes Ramirez (he/him) is a Houstonian, writer, educator, curator, and organizer of Mexican and Salvadoran descent. He authored the short story collection *The Book of Wanderers* (2022), a 2023 Young Lions Fiction Award Finalist, from University of Arizona Press' Camino del Sol series and the poetry collection *El Rey of Gold Teeth* (2023) from Hub City Press.

According to the Texas Craft Brewers Guild, the craft beer industry has a \$5,077,000,000 impact on the Texas economy, and Texas has 1.7 Breweries Per 100,000 21+ Adults. In Houston alone, I've been to over 30 breweries and still haven't seen all of them. How does one distinguish each brewery? How does the average person learn of new beer experiences awaiting them in a way that is quick yet insightful? In the tradition of the Japanese haibun as a travel journal form, I've started writing haibuns at every brewery I visit to establish deeper, poetic connections to the settings and beers I experience in seemingly fleeting moments.

Haibuns begin with a prose portion that describes the physical setting of the brewery (with details such as setting, weather, history or more flâneur-like details) and end with haikus that 'review' the beer through short, exact descriptions of the drinking experience; the first half focuses on smell and color while the latter half focuses on taste, mouthfeel, and/or after taste. The succinct nature of the haibuns make them easy and quick to read while providing a deeper, personal experience that aims to make readers wish to visit the brewery, try the beer, and compare.

I hope for this project to inspire deeper connections to beer, get people to explore local businesses, expand conventions of reviews/food writing, and make beer writing more accessible to audiences. This also could serve as a form of history keeping in that breweries close, change identities/locations, or rotate/cancel beers; for example, 2 Houston breweries have closed during this application process.

The final product will be a printed magazine with photos to be launched with a website, social media, and writing workshops where participants can write their own haibuns and have them published online on the site.



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TIPS

- Each sentence can serve more than one function and can provide answers without having to say everything. You can be direct, and you may even be incredibly detailed. But keep in mind the word length and the question being asked.
- Not every application is the same. Some applications may ask for the same information but in different ways. Your anchor text paragraph may be expanded upon, whittled down, or broken up.

CONSIDER THIS PROPOSAL AS A GUIDE AND/OR JUMPING-OFF POINT.

For example, a grant application may ask for a timeline, which is hinted at in the above sample proposal; I can take that hint and expand upon it more specifically. In other words, you can take a piece of information from the anchor text and adapt accordingly. Some may ask about community impact; the why can be expanded upon to answer that question. The how sentence can provide a basis for a budget narrative. Different applications may even ask for a longer description which, again, can be built from this anchor text.

In closing, this anchor text is a paragraph summary that can quickly tell the story of your project to a room of people who will then decide if it is to be funded. There is no perfect application, and many factors play in deciding what projects may be funded ex. Diversity of disciplines/backgrounds, alignment with grant's purpose, the panel's holistic experience and background, etc.



TIPS FOR BUDGETS

- The more detail, the better.
- It's good to have an anchor version of this too, but different granting bodies will have different templates.
- I recommend thinking of this in one of two ways: bottom to top or top to bottom.
 - Bottom to top: printing, photography, graphic design + layout, myself, event space, flyers
 - Top to bottom: Marketing, Administrative, Artistic Personnel, Production
- Grants are taxed! But expenses can be tax deductible!

TIPS FOR WORK SAMPLES

- Pay attention to all instructions!
 - Do not go over limits or submit in file formats not stated in the rules.
- Work samples should demonstrate your capability to complete the grant.
 - For example, if you are applying to put together an exhibition, provide samples related to your curatorial work as opposed to your art.
- It's ok to not have everything figured out in your project/application.
 - For example, in this grant I communicate that I will be hiring photographer and graphic designer to make up for my lack of talent in those realms.
- If you don't have anything specific to your project, give as much idea of it as possible.
 - Consider sketches, inspirations, photos, write ups, etc.



FINAL TIPS

Consider your needs and apply accordingly.

Apply often but strategically. Don't give up!

Weigh the costs & benefits, re: submission fees

Ask for feedback before & after.

Serve on a panel!

Don't feel like you have to oversell! Being realistic with your time and energy can look better on a grant than trying to overdeliver.



FINAL TIP

- Money comes and goes. A grant is not the end-all be-all of your practice.
- In my experience, all a grant can do is fund your process until another opportunity comes along.
- Sometimes, they just don't work out. And that's ok!