



2024 Blackbird Creative Lab

Ensemble Application

Program description

The Blackbird Creative Lab is a two-week creative immersion hosted by Grammy-award winning ensemble Eighth Blackbird. The 2024 Lab will invite chamber ensembles and composers to join us at Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, Wisconsin from May 28th - June 11th, 2024. .

Created for artists / by artists, the Lab encourages, challenges, and supports participating musicians as they explore their artistic vision and expand their artistic practice as they create new work and hone their practical know-how in an exploratory, collaborative, and boundary-pushing environment.

Moving beyond the model of a brief one-time experience, the Lab aims to foster an ongoing community and share the commitment to mentorship amongst all of its participants. To carry out the Lab's vision, Eighth Blackbird draws upon their ever-growing network of collaborators, mentors, and mentees across disciplines and experiences.

Invited ensembles will have two 7-10 minute new works composed *for them* by Lab '24 selected composers.

Program application fees and tuition:

The application fee is \$50 per ensemble. Please reach out if you are in need of financial assistance or are in need of application accommodations.

The Lab offers a need-based sliding scale tuition from \$250 to \$2,500 per participant. In 2023, the majority of participants paid \$500 or less to attend the Lab. We encourage applicants to apply regardless of ability to pay. We will request information from finalists seeking financial aid around January 20th.

Eligibility/Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- openness to collaboration, risk-taking, experimentation
- artistic dedication and voice

- insatiable curiosity and vision
- capacity to communicate effectively, with a focus on clarity
- technical prowess

Ensembles with the following qualifications are eligible:

- Ensemble is between 2-8 players (*note, if you exceed 8 players but are still an uncondacted chamber group, please reach out before applying, we want to hear from you!*)
- Ensemble has been operational for a minimum of one year with the intention of performing together post-Lab
- All members of the ensemble will be 21+ years old before May 28th, 2024.

Application Timeline:

November 1st, 2023	Application Opens
November 29th, 2023	Information Session 1 (7:00p CT)
December 12th, 2023	Information Session 2 (9:00a CT)
December 15th	Information Session 3 (12:00 CT)
January 7th, 2023	Application Closes
January 20th	Financial Requests for Finalists
First Week of Feb	Notification of Status

Application Elements:

Basic Ensemble Information

Section One: Brief reflections about who you are as an ensemble, your approach to collaboration, and your interest in the Lab in either text or video format

Section Two: Work Samples with brief video introduction, including cue sheet if necessary

Section Three: Supplemental Form for individuals (*external application*) including basic information and brief reflection

Application Fee Payment via Stripe

Application

Please read the following before applying via the online portal. We encourage you to gather all materials, as application must be completed in one session.

Please Provide the following Information for your Ensemble:

- Ensemble Name
- Primary Email
- Primary Phone
- First/Last Name of all players
- Primary Address
- Year of Ensemble Formation

Section 1: Bio + Short Reflections

Please submit a brief biography/history for your ensemble, the way you would want it presented in program notes (300 word max)

You may submit the following in either video or written format. Please see maximum length/time below. Label files accordingly.

What is the vision of your ensemble? *What are your shared values? What is the impact you envision your ensemble will have in the arts and beyond?* (250 word max or 1 minute max)

What does collaboration look like for your ensemble? *How do you navigate decision-making, strategy, conflict, and change? How do you determine which projects you take on and which opportunities you turn down? What is your process for productive collaboration?* (250 word max or 1 minute max)

Share your decision to apply to the Lab as an ensemble and how you imagine this collective experience will impact your trajectory? *What are your ensemble's short-term (1-3 year) and long-term (3-5 year) career goals, and how do you envision the two weeks at The Lab supporting your goals? Think both practically (i.e. strategic planning) and creatively (i.e. artistic visioning).* (250 word max or 1 minute max)

Eighth Blackbird has spent much of their career collaborating across disciplines (movers, visual artists, theater performers, etc). What is your interest in multidisciplinary work, and your approach to collaborating with artists outside your own discipline?
(250 word max or 1 minute max)

Describe your dream project! *Do you have any ideas for specific repertoire, or dream projects of what to create at the Lab or elsewhere? Note: we can't guarantee these will be included, but would be excited to consider as we shape Lab's program, and will give us a sense of your imagination.* (250 word max or 1 minute max)

Section 2: Work Samples

Please include at least 2, and no more than 3, contrasting pieces in addition to a 1-2 minute video intro to your work sample, sharing why you have included these works. Please see additional requirements below:

- live video recording, unedited, and recorded in 2020 or later
- at least one video
- at least one of your submitted pieces should be by a living composer, preferably written within the last 20 years.
- 10 minutes max per selection (excerpts from longer performances acceptable) - *Please cue video to desired starting place by including a clearly labeled PDF*

Upload Instructions

Please submit application requirements of Sections 1 and 2 in a single google drive folder (preferred) or dropbox folder, labeled as follows:

- **Folder: Ensemble Name (Lab 2024 Application)**
 - Ensemble Name, Bio - PDF
 - Ensemble Name, Reflections - Video (see format) or PDF
 - Ensemble Name, Work Sample Intro - Video (see format)
 - Ensemble, Recording Cue - PDF *if necessary*
 - Ensemble, Recording 1 (Title of Piece) - video or mp3 (see format)
 - Ensemble, Recording 2 (Title of Piece) - video or mp3 (see format)
 - Ensemble, Recording 1 (Title of Piece) - video or mp3 (see format)

- **Format:**
 - For documents, please use PDF files.
 - mp3 audio files encoded at 256kbps minimum, less than 100MB each
 - Video file resolution should not exceed 1080p and be compatible with most major internet browsers. *Note: If video can be accessed on Vimeo or Youtube, you may substitute video files in the application folder with a single clearly labeled PDF that includes all links.*
 - Please provide URLs with password as needed
 - Please cue videos to desired starting point if necessary

If you need any formatting support, please reach out to Lab Director, Garrett Obrycki (garrett.obrycki@eighthblackbird.org).

Link Upload: Please provide google drive (preferred) or dropbox link. Reminder to make the link accessible for anyone with the link.

Section 3: Supplemental Application for Individual Ensemble Members

Each member of the ensemble is required to complete the **Supplemental Application for Individual Ensemble Members**, available directly on the Creative Lab website. Applications will not be considered complete without this form completed by all members.

Application Fee Payment via Stripe