



CANADIAN INDEPENDENT RECORDING ARTISTS' ASSOCIATION (CIRAA) EXPANDS ITS POPULAR GROUNDBREAKER GRANT PROGRAM

Bandzoogle to Add Funds to Grassroots Grant Pool for Canadian Indie Artists

TORONTO (August 31, 2011) – The Canadian Independent Recording Artists' Association (CIRAA) is pleased to announce that Montreal-based **Bandzoogle**, the rapidly growing band website platform, has signed on as a sponsor of the **CIRAA Groundbreaker Grant** program. **Bandzoogle** is the creator of a website development platform (containing hundreds of design layouts from which to choose) that enables artists to build their website in minutes with no web-design skills needed, including features such as selling merch, building a fan community, and much more.

“The Groundbreaker Grant is a perfect way for us to give back to the Canadian artist community that has helped make **Bandzoogle** the most powerful band website platform,” says **Bandzoogle** Founder **Chris Vinson**. “We regularly interact with our members and the music community at large through our popular blog and social networks, however the Groundbreaker Grant is a great opportunity to connect with thousands of active independent artists across Canada, and to directly support them with funds for their gigs.”

Starting tomorrow (September 1), this new partnership will add five more \$100 Groundbreaker Grants to the twenty that CIRAA currently awards each month to Canadian indie artists. The **CIRAA Groundbreaker Grant** program will now distribute \$2,500 each month to Canadian independent artists in the form of twenty-five \$100 ‘micro-grants’, rewarding artists specifically for live performances.

Due to the ease of the application process, and the fact that winners are selected by a lottery process (rather than a jury system), this micro-grant has opened the door to Canada’s funding chain for numerous worthy artists who may not previously have been able to access support for their art at the grassroots level.

“We have been very happy with – but not surprised by – the overwhelming and positive response to the Groundbreaker Grant program since we launched it back in May,” says **Dave Cool**, CIRAA’s Director of Member Services. “In just a few short months, we have been able to support dozens of indie artists at various levels of their musical careers in their efforts to develop their talent and build their fan-base through performing live. Now, with this additional support from **Bandzoogle**, we’ll be able to spread our reach just a little bit wider.”

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Here's how the **CIRAA Groundbreaker Grant** program works: each month, CIRAA members can apply for a \$100 micro-grant for each eligible gig that they have played during the past calendar month. Applicants who qualify only need to fill out a very basic online form providing details of each gig, and they will then be entered into the group of members from which twenty-five recipients will be selected in a monthly lottery draw. A member may not receive more than one grant per venue played, but may receive more than one grant in a month if more than one of their eligible applications are randomly selected from the lottery draw. There is a maximum of \$1,200 in funding available per artist/group per year.

The submission period for applications is from the 1st to the 10th of each month. Grant winners are selected in a lottery draw, and are announced via Twitter (www.twitter.com/theciraa), at 4 pm EST on the next business day after the 10th of each month. Winners are also listed on the CIRAA website and in the CIRAA e-newsletter.

For more information on CIRAA and on the **CIRAA Groundbreaker Grant** program's rules and regulations, please visit www.ciraa.ca.

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About CIRAA (www.ciraa.ca):

CIRAA is Canada's only national non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to Canadian independent recording artists. With over 6,500 members across Canada, their mandate is focused on advocacy, education and member services. CIRAA's educational audio series, *The New Indie*, features interviews with music industry experts discussing the new realities facing today's independent recording artists. It is available for free download at www.TheNewIndie.com.