

Researcher/Interviewer

Critical Minded is looking for a contract researcher/interviewer with knowledge of popular music criticism to assist with a research project on the current conditions, opportunities, and challenges faced by popular music critics of color in the United States. The researcher/interviewer will be involved in planning for and conducting interviews with critics of color and transcribing and summarizing them for use in a report. Similar interviews formed the basis of our previous report, [*Topdogs and Underdogs: Critics of Color and the Theatrical Landscape*](#).

“Popular music” includes genres of music with wide appeal such as hip hop, rock, country, salsa, techno, etc.

Popular music criticism involves critically interpreting or analyzing recordings or performances of popular music for newspapers, magazines, websites, podcasts, online videos, or other media. *We are especially interested in candidates who have demonstrated experience and networks among critics who work in audiovisual and social media spaces such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and podcasts.*

The work will take place primarily over a period of approximately 5 months, beginning in May 2025 and continuing through the end of September 2025. There will be some additional work reviewing a draft of the report in December 2025 or January 2026.

This is a part-time, temporary contract that is fully remote.

Responsibilities:

- Collaborate with project team in formulating interview questions and identifying prospective interviewees
- Contact interviewees and schedule interviews
- Conduct and record interviews of at least 60 minutes in length with at least 8 different critics of color.
- Review and correct interview transcripts
- Write one-page summaries of interviews
- Review and provide feedback on a draft of the report
- May also be asked to contribute to additional research on the state of cultural criticism by critics of color

Desired qualifications:

- Familiarity with the field of popular music criticism in the United States
 - Especially encouraged to apply: practicing music critics with knowledge and contacts among critics of color who produce *content for social media and podcasting*

- Personal network of music critics of color
- Experience conducting and recording interviews
- Experience using transcription software, such as otter.ai, to create and correct transcripts
- Experience working collaboratively as part of a geographically distributed team
- Ability to work independently to manage timelines and meet deadlines

Requirements:

- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must be located in the United States
- Must have access to teleconference software such as Zoom or Google Meet that allows for recording of hour-long interviews, or recording equipment for in-person interviews

Compensation is a flat fee of \$4,000.

To apply, please send:

- A current resume
- A cover letter
- Three references

Send to: sharon@sharonmizota.com

Please include “Critical Minded Researcher/Interviewer” in the subject line of your email.

Application review begins April 18, 2025.

[Critical Minded](#) is a grantmaking and learning initiative that supports cultural critics of color in the United States. Our purpose is to build the resources and visibility of cultural critics of color through: direct support to publications and individuals, research, advocacy, and convening.

Founded by the Nathan Cummings Foundation and Ford Foundation, Critical Minded launched with a national convening of critics in 2017. It emerged from the belief that engaging critically with the ideas and images that surround us is a prerequisite for transforming our cultural landscape and preserving democracy.

[Sharon Mizota](#) is an independent consultant and art critic based in Los Angeles.