

**MINUTES**

**Grants and Funding Committee**

**Monday, September 13, 2021**

**12:30AM - 1:30PM**

Metro Office Building

Nashville Room

800 2nd Ave S.

Nashville, TN 37210

If you have any questions, please e-mail [arts@nashville.gov](mailto:arts@nashville.gov).

**Committee Members Present:** Jim Schmidt (Ex-Officio), Sheri Nichols Bucy (Chair), Marianne Byrd, Clay Haynes, Matia Powell

**Committee Members Absent:** Bonnie Dow, Marielena Ramos

**Staff:** Caroline Vincent, Janine Christiano, Marysa LaRowe, Grace Wright

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:38 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes: August 9, 2021

***A motion to approve the minutes from August 9, 2021 was offered by Commissioner Haynes, Commissioner Byrd seconded, the motion passed.***

1. Action Item:
   1. FY22 Thrive Cycle 1 Allocations

Marysa LaRowe presented the Committee with the proposed funding allocations recommended by the community review panel. This year because of COVID-19 the idea of community has been expanded beyond physical location.

Cycle 1 Application Overview:

* **Total Number of Applications:** 17
* **Number of Awards Recommended**: 11
* **Total Amount Requested:** $155,620
* **Recommended Award Total:** $101,820

Recommended Allocations:

* **The Blueprint Project: Laying the Foundation for a Successful Career in Music**
  + **Lead Artist**: Rick Johnson
  + **Community Partner:**Nashville Is Not Just Country Music
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Davidson County youth 9th-12th grade
  + **Participants Expected:** 25
  + **Request Amount:**$9,500
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500
* **Creative Girls Rock Mobile Mural Project (Public Art Project)\***
  + **Lead Artist:** Donna Woodley
  + **Community Partners:** Creative Girls Rock
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** North Nashville, moving to neighborhoods around Nashville
  + **Participants Expected:** 75
  + **Request Amount:**$9,500
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500\*(conditional)
    - **\*Conditional Award**
* **The Story of Jubilee**
  + **Lead Artist:** Rossi Turner
  + **Community Partners:**Dream 7 Theater Productions, Casa Azafran, Z. Alexander Looby Theater
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Jefferson Street Corridor, 37208 and 37228. Casting and participation open to all.
  + **Participants Expected:** 3,200
  + **Request Amount:**$9,500
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500
* **Gilda’s Club’s Expressive Arts Cancer Support Program**
  + **Lead Artist:** Jennifer Wilkins
  + **Community Partners:** Gilda’s Club of Middle Tennessee
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Individuals with cancer and family members
  + **Participants Expected:** 1,500
  + **Request Amount:**$9,000
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,000
* **Where I’ve Been, Where I’m Going: Voicing Stories Untold While Watching New Ones Unfold**
  + **Lead Artist:** Ashley Mintz
  + **Community Partners:** FiftyFoward (Madison, Knowles, and Donelson locations), Looby Community Center, Watkins Community Center
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** North Nashville, Madison, Donelson
  + **Participants Expected:** 125
  + **Request Amount:**$8,220
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $8,220
* **Genderbend: The Naughty Tree and Heroic Couplets**
  + **Lead Artist:** Daniel Jones
  + **Community Partners:** Kindling Arts Festival, Woven Theater Company, Defy Film Festival
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** District 20 (West Nashville); women and LGBTQ+ artists
  + **Participants Expected:** 825
  + **Request Amount:**$9,500
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500
* **Paragon Mills Elementary and Community Mural (Public Art Project)**
  + **Lead Artist:** Nuveen Barwari, supporting artist Woke3
  + **Community Partners:** Freedom Arts Collective, Paragon Mills Elementary School\*
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Paragon Mills (Antioch)
  + **Participants Expected:** 700
  + **Request Amount:**$9,500
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500
    - *Note: an MNPS teacher will assist in project coordination but all funds will be going to professional artists and related supplies for the project.*
* **Jardines de Color/Colorful Gardens (Public Art Project)**
  + **Lead Artist:** Andrés Bustamante
  + **Community Partners:** Personal Contemporary Artist Collective, Merengue Café
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** South Nashville, Antioch
  + **Participants Expected:** 30
  + **Request Amount**: $9,500
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500\*
    - **\*Conditional Award**
* **Let Me Tell You: Stories of Resilience and Belonging\***
  + **Lead Artist:** Kristen Chapman
  + **Community Partners:** Poverty and the Arts\*\*
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Individuals experiencing poverty and unhoused individuals
  + **Participants Expected:** 100
  + **Request Amount: $9,500**
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500 (conditional)
    - **\*Conditional Award**
    - *\*\*Note: while Poverty and the Arts is a Metro Arts grantee, no Thrive funds will be going directly to the organization*
* **Now and When: Love Letters to Nashville (Public Art Project)**
  + **Lead Artist:** Lindsey Laseter
  + **Community Partners:** Nashville Design Week
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Lower Broadway/2nd Ave
  + **Participants Expected:** 2500
  + **Request Amount:**$9,500
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $9,500
* **Messiah Immersion Initiative**
  + **Lead Artist:** Patrick Dailey
  + **Community Partners:** Early Music City, W. Crimm Singers, First Lutheran Church, Big Blue Opera Initiatives at Tennessee State University
  + **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Based in Downtown Nashville, this project will connect the following: 1. Youth from Nashville high schools (and possibly some middle schools) and their family members 2. Members of the LGBTQ community via The Table and LaunchPad, programs of First Lutheran Church. 3. Members of faith communities of color that have historically rendered the work. 4. Local Nashvillians and Middle Tennesseans who attend arts events 5. Persons staying with Room in the Inn, Nashville Rescue Mission, and elsewhere.
  + **Participants Expected:** 300
  + **Request Amount:**$8,600
  + **Recommended Award Amount:** $8,600

Chair Bucy opened the floor for discussion and suggested that the Committee review the action

The Committee asked questions and discussed aspects of each program. There was specific discussion around the application of religious elements and welcoming all faiths in the context of Metro Arts policies.

The Committee asked staff for clarification about how participant metrics were being gathered and how that could inform the Committee’s understanding of how communities are impacted. Staff clarified that anonymous participant information is collected in the Thrive closeout form and that they are working on developing a process for following-up with Thrive recipients in the long term.

The Committee asked staff about various methods of Metro Arts communicating with participants. Staff clarified that there are some privacy and technology challenges with that but would be interested in further development. The Committee recommended working on an update to the logo credit policy that would include Metro Arts contact information.

The Committee asked for clarification on whether funding recommendations were based on the ratio to participants. Staff clarified that some projects have a different level of impact so there is not an exact formula. The Committee recommended that this at least be a factor and plan to discuss more during discussion of FY23 Thrive Guidelines.

***A motion to approve the FY22 Thrive Cycle 1 Allocations was offered by Commissioner Byrd, Commissioner Powell seconded, the motion passed.***

1. Follow up on discussion items from June GFC and Commission Meetings
   1. Funding projections requested in August

Janine presented the Committee with an overview of current funding trends and funding projects for Metro Arts grants.

The Committee discussed the distribution of funds and how to demonstrate the positive impact of increased funds to all organizations with a particular focus on smaller organizations. The Committee also discussed the goal of funding and investing in development and sustainability but also not penalizing organizations for success and solvency.

The Committee also discussed a review of financial scoring criteria, budget type considerations, and revising the basic and core grant categories. It was discussed what changes should be made for FY23 versus FY24 (re-adjudication year).

The Committee requested staff provide the budgets of grantee organizations, the percentage that represent Metro Arts funding, and endowments. The Committee also discussed the various data needed to make financial reviews of arts organizations and the accompanying types of guidelines.

Staff noted that the Grant Guidelines and scoring criteria have been reviewed by CARE and will be discussed later in the agenda.

* 1. Data Arts Overview

Janine gave the Committee a presentation on the abilities of DataArts and proposed beginning to use in for FY24.

The Committee asked for clarification about the cost. Staff clarified that it was comparable to current software and also free for applicants.

The Committee noted their support for decisions made by whoever uses the software the most.

1. Other Grants and Funding Program and Process Updates
   1. Review of CARE recommendations for FY23 Guidelines

Janine presented recommendations from CARE that the Arts Commission continue:

* funding only operating support
* a 25% match

The recommendations are also support by a grantee survey.

* 1. 2Sigma Preview

Janine Christiano updated the Committee on the completion of the project and that the data from 2Sigma was under review. Staff will continue to review how to operationalize the report’s insights.

* 1. Discuss Scene Article as it relates to Grants/Funding Issues

The Committee discussed potential impacts on the Metro Arts grantees from the *Nashville Scene* articles with the recognition that due to the current HR investigation there were limits on what could be discussed.

Chair Bucy recommended a review of the following questions:

* + 1. In what ways does the article impact the health and well-being of our grantees?
    2. How does it affect our funding?
    3. What recommendations, if any, do we want to impart or recommend to the Commission?

The Committee discussed the potential ramifications of the situation for grantees and funding. It was noted that currently the Committee can reiterate its commitment to equity and Metro Arts’ grantees until an action plan can be decided when the results of the investigation are published.

1. Set next Committee Meeting

The next Grants & Funding Committee was tentatively set for November 8th from 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

1. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.