

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

307 DANCE ACADEMY

WWW.307DANCEACADEMY.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 307 Dance Academy

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

Mission Statement: 307 Dance Academy is the only non-profit dance, tumbling, and cheer studio in Natrona County, dedicated to providing exceptional instruction across a variety of performing arts disciplines. Our mission is to inspire and empower students by fostering creativity, discipline, and a strong sense of community through high-quality training in ballet, pointe, tap, jazz, musical theatre, contemporary, modern, hip hop, tumbling, and cheer. Beyond technical excellence, we are committed to instilling essential life skills, including responsibility, self-motivation, integrity, fairness, and kindness. We strive to make the performing arts accessible to all, ensuring every student has the opportunity to grow as both an artist and an individual.

#### Strategic Goals:

-Enhancing Arts Education – Continuously improving the quality of instruction by investing in professional development, innovative teaching methods, and varied curriculum offerings.

-Expanding Performance Opportunities – Increasing student exposure through local performances, competitions, and community events to promote confidence and artistic expression.

-Fostering Character Development – Prioritizing values such as discipline, teamwork, and perseverance to help students develop skills that extend beyond the studio.

-Strengthening Community Engagement – Collaborating with local schools, community centers, and organizations to make performing arts more accessible.

-Increasing Outreach – Expanding efforts to reach underserved populations and ensuring all students, regardless of background, feel welcome and supported.

-Growing Studio Capacity – Strategically planning for facility and program expansion to accommodate a growing student population while maintaining high-quality instruction.

Through these goals, we aim to enrich our community's cultural landscape by nurturing young performers, fostering a love for the arts, and ensuring that dance, tumbling, and cheer remain accessible to all.

### **Community**

307 Dance Academy serves a diverse range of communities across Wyoming, including Casper, Mills, Evansville, Glenrock, Bar Nunn, Midwest, and Douglas. With its main studio in Casper welcoming approximately 150 students aged 2 to 18, the academy also attracts participants from surrounding towns. Recently, expansion efforts in Glenrock introduced 28 new students, reflecting a growing demand for accessible dance, tumbling, and cheer programs.

The Firecrackers Adaptive Dance Class provides specialized instruction for individuals with disabilities, offering a space for skill development, self-expression, and inclusion. Financial barriers are addressed through Need-Based Scholarships, ensuring that tuition and recital costs do not prevent low-income families from participating.

Collaboration with local nonprofits further extends the academy's reach, creating meaningful opportunities for engagement. Partnerships with organizations such as Jason's Friends and the Boys & Girls Club enable students to participate in community events and initiatives that support diverse needs. The academy also prioritizes accommodations to ensure all students, regardless of ability or circumstance, have the opportunity to thrive. Whether adapting for physical accessibility, providing communication support, or tailoring instruction to individual needs, the focus remains on fostering a supportive environment. Commitment to accessibility and community engagement is central to 307 Dance Academy's mission. By actively identifying and addressing barriers, we strive that all students can experience the joy of the performing arts while creating a welcoming and enriching space for personal growth.

## **Evaluation**

307 Dance Academy utilizes a comprehensive approach to evaluate and measure the impact of our programs and services within the community.

-Parent & Student Feedback – We conduct year-end evaluations, gathering input from parents and students to assess satisfaction, identify areas for improvement, and measure progress toward program objectives.

-Faculty Assessments – Instructors provide ongoing evaluations tailored to each class and age group, focusing on individual development, technical growth, commitment, and overall progress.

-Enrollment Metrics – We track key indicators such as student retention, new enrollments, and yearly completions to assess program effectiveness and community engagement.-

Performance & Community Engagement Reviews – Attendance and feedback from major events, such as our Holiday Show and Spring Recital, help us gauge program impact and ensure performances remain relevant and meaningful to our audience.

-Program Adaptation & Growth – We continuously refine and expand our offerings based on evaluation findings and community needs. For example, our recent addition of competitive cheer teams was a direct response to student and parent interest.

These evaluation methods allow us to make data-driven improvements, enhance training programs, and support faculty development, ensuring we continue to provide high-quality performing arts education. Our commitment to

continuous assessment and responsiveness enables us to enrich the lives of our students and strengthen our connection to the community.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

307 Dance Academy seeks operating support to sustain and enhance our programs. As the only nonprofit dance, tumbling, and cheer studio in Natrona County, we provide high-quality instruction while ensuring accessibility for students of all backgrounds. Our operational expenses cover essential costs needed to maintain our facility, support faculty, and expand community engagement.

Our key operating costs include:

- Faculty Payroll – Our highly qualified instructors provide weekly training that builds students' skills, confidence, and discipline. Competitive compensation is critical for retaining top talent.
- Rent & Utilities – Our studio rent and utilities exceeds \$46,000 annually, making it one of our largest expenses. Utilities are essential for maintaining a safe, welcoming environment.
- Office & Classroom Supplies – These resources support effective instruction and administrative functions.
- Venue Rental for Performances – We rent performance spaces for our Holiday Show and Spring Recital, providing students with professional stage experience.
- Costuming – An essential part of our productions, costumes enhance student performances and bring artistic visions to life.
- Marketing & Outreach – Raising awareness ensures community engagement and program sustainability.
- Insurance – Liability and accident coverage safeguard our students, faculty, and staff.
- Travel & Guest Faculty Expenses – We bring in specialized instructors and workshops, enriching students' learning experiences.
- Facility Maintenance & Repairs – Routine upkeep ensures a safe, functional space for all participants.
- We also seek support to expand our Glenrock location, covering faculty time and travel costs to sustain and grow this new program.

### **Funding Priorities**

The requested operating funds will primarily support our two largest expenses: rent and faculty payroll. Maintaining a high-quality learning environment and retaining exceptional instructors are essential to our mission. Additional funding will help cover:

- Guest faculty, equipment, and specialized training opportunities (e.g., tumbling & cheer clinics, master workshops) to keep these programs affordable.

-Performance-related costs, ensuring all students can participate regardless of financial barriers.

Your support will allow us to continue providing a safe and inspiring space for students to develop their talents and express themselves through the performing arts.

### **Project Support Narrative**

307 Dance Academy is launching two key initiatives for the upcoming year.

1. Expanding our Glenrock location to provide greater access to dance education.
2. Introducing a homeschool/preschool program to serve students with flexible, high-quality training.

#### **Glenrock Location Expansion**

Project support will help establish a dedicated dance space in Glenrock, covering:

- Facility expenses (rent, utilities, and materials).
- Faculty payroll to staff qualified instructors.
- Travel costs for instructors commuting between locations.
- Community engagement initiatives such as recitals and master classes.

Currently, we operate in a temporary, discounted space at the local recreation center. However, costs are expected to increase, requiring sustainable support to continue serving Glenrock's students with consistent, high-quality training and performance opportunities.

#### **Homeschool/Preschool Dance Program**

This program provides structured dance education for homeschool or daycare students with classes tailored to their schedules and learning styles. Funding will support:

- Faculty compensation for additional instructors.
- Classroom materials & equipment for effective instruction.
- Facility expenses to ensure a safe, engaging learning environment.
- Qualified Team & Instruction

307 Dance Academy employs highly trained faculty with expertise in ballet, jazz, contemporary, hip hop, tumbling, and more. Our instructors bring extensive experience and a passion for student development, ensuring that each student receives exceptional training and mentorship.

#### Fund Allocation & Community Impact

Project support will be allocated toward:

- Facility costs (rent, utilities, maintenance) for Glenrock and homeschool programs.
- Faculty compensation to maintain high-quality instruction.
- Classroom resources & equipment to enhance learning.
- Travel expenses to support program expansion.
- Marketing & outreach to raise awareness and grow enrollment.

These initiatives will expand performing arts access for students in Glenrock and the homeschool community, providing opportunities for creative expression, personal growth, and community involvement.

#### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

307 Dance Academy is committed to enhancing arts education in Casper and surrounding communities by offering high-quality, hands-on learning experiences in dance, tumbling, and cheer. Through specialized workshops and clinics, we aim to deepen students' technical skills, artistic understanding, and real-world application of the performing arts.

This summer, we are expanding our programming with a Master Dance Workshop and Tumbling & Cheer Clinics, providing students with:

- Expert instruction from industry professionals and college-level athletes to broaden their skills.
- Exposure to diverse styles, techniques, and teaching approaches beyond regular classes.
- Mentorship and career insights from artists actively working in the field.

#### Enhancing Artistic Growth & Community Engagement

These workshops will strengthen participants' technical abilities, creativity, confidence, and teamwork through:

- Skill-building sessions tailored to different experience levels.
- Artistic development exercises focusing on self-expression and performance quality.

- Live feedback and coaching to refine technique and stage presence.

- Increasing Access & Impact

We plan to host these workshops at 307 Dance Academy, but due to high demand, a larger venue may be secured to accommodate more students from the broader community. By bringing in outside educators, we:

- Expose students to new techniques and perspectives to expand their artistic growth.

- Foster networking opportunities for future training and career exploration.

- Strengthen community engagement by making high-caliber instruction accessible.

Through these immersive learning experiences, 307 Dance Academy seeks to bridge the gap between local talent and global expertise, ensuring meaningful arts education that inspires, educates, and empowers the next generation of dancers, tumblers, and cheerleaders.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The specific arts learning goals for this initiative were identified through a comprehensive assessment of our students' needs, aspirations, and feedback from the broader community. By evaluating student progress, gathering input from families, and consulting with industry professionals, we have defined key objectives that support technical growth, artistic expression, and professional development.

Key Arts Learning Goals:

#### **1. Develop Technical Proficiency for Live Performance**

- Provide rigorous training in dance, tumbling, cheer, and performance techniques.

- Ensure students build strength, precision, and confidence to perform effectively on stage.

- Incorporate individualized feedback and skill assessments to track progress.

#### **2. Foster Creativity & Artistic Expression**

- Encourage students to explore movement and storytelling through their art.

- Offer opportunities to create and perform original works that push artistic boundaries.

- Host workshops, clinics, and collaborative projects to spark innovation.

#### **3. Expand Cultural & Historical Understanding**

- Teach the rich traditions and histories of dance, theater, tumbling, and cheer.

- Encourage students to analyze and interpret various performance styles.
- Instill a deeper appreciation for the cultural significance of the performing arts.

#### 4. Encourage Collaboration & Community Engagement

- Provide opportunities for students to work together on performances, recitals, and competitions.
- Promote teamwork, leadership, and shared creative expression within group settings.
- Showcase student work in community performances to deepen their impact.

#### 5. Inspire & Connect Students with Industry Professionals

- Bring in guest artists, master instructors, and professional mentors to guide students.
- Provide career insights and real-world exposure to performing arts professions.
- Demonstrate that a future in the arts is attainable and sustainable.

#### Inspiring the Fire

Our overarching goal is to “Inspire the Fire”—igniting passion, confidence, and perseverance in every student. By equipping them with high-caliber training, creative opportunities, and industry connections, we empower them to pursue their artistic dreams and develop skills that will serve them beyond the stage.

Through these initiatives, 307 Dance Academy remains committed to transformative arts education that enhances individual growth and community cultural enrichment.

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

307 Dance Academy is excited to collaborate with a highly qualified team of master instructors and industry professionals for our upcoming workshops. These instructors bring a wealth of experience, a diverse range of artistic expertise, and a passion for sharing their knowledge with our students.

-Rosero McCoy is an internationally recognized choreographer and artistic director in the entertainment industry. With a career spanning over two decades. He has worked with top-tier artists and performed on major platforms like the 2020 VMAs, Netflix's Family Reunion, and the Soul Train Awards. His choreography credits include films such as Step Up, Hairspray, Honey 2, and Alvin and the Chipmunks, as well as iconic TV shows like Shake It Up and Austin & Ally. Known for his versatility across dance styles, Rosero’s workshops will provide students with unparalleled insight into commercial dance and creative artistry.

### McKena Silva

A proud native of Casper, Wyo, McKena brings a wealth of knowledge from her diverse career in musical theatre and dance. She holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Millikin University, and a Master's of Health Science from Touro University. She is currently a professional dancer and cheerleader for the Las Vegas Golden Knights Hockey League. She has performed and taught across the U.S. As an award-winning choreographer for dance and theatre productions, and created acclaimed work for productions like High School Musical and Margaritaville. McKena's extensive experience in competitive dance and theatre, coupled with her current academic pursuits in Physician's Assistant school, make her an exceptional mentor for students seeking a career in the performing arts.

### Austin Marquez

Austin Marquez, a New York City-based choreographer and MFA degree in dance, has a diverse portfolio that spans hip hop, jazz, contemporary, and popular culture dance. His choreography has been featured Off-Broadway, in immersive theater, and dance festivals across the U.S. Austin brings a wealth of experience in dance and cheer education, and his passion for making dance accessible to all levels of students make him an outstanding resource for aspiring cheerleaders and dancers.

### Jason Pickett

Jason Pickett is a dynamic choreographer and mentor based in Utah. He is the owner of No Starving Artist and director of The Collective Performing Arts Center. Jason has worked with renowned companies like Hermes, Toys R Us, and America's Got Talent. His choreography has gone viral on YouTube and is featured in nationally ranked competitive routines. Jason's mentorship style focuses on building artistic skills and is also growing an online training and mentoring platform.

These instructors were selected for their exceptional qualifications, real-world experience, and dedication to cultivating young talent. Each artist brings a unique perspective, spanning across multiple dance styles and performance genres. Their extensive professional experience, both as performers and educators, ensures that students will receive high-quality, cutting-edge instruction. By inviting artists who are actively engaged in the industry, we provide our students with direct exposure to contemporary trends and professional pathways in the performing arts. The selection process focused on ensuring that these instructors align with 307 Dance Academy's mission to provide innovative arts education and foster creative growth in students.

### **Budget Narrative**

307 Dance Academy's budget is strategically structured to ensure the sustainability of our mission and the effective delivery of our programs. We rely on a variety of funding sources, including tuition, workshop fees, grants (such as from the Wyoming Arts Council), private donations, and fundraising events. In-kind donations, including costumes, supplies, and volunteer services, play a key role in reducing costs and enhancing program delivery. Our partnerships with local businesses and schools further extend our reach and resources. Funds are allocated to



cover expenses such as faculty salaries, studio rent and utilities, materials for classes, and the operation of both our Casper and new Glenrock locations. This diversified financial helps us to maintain high-quality instruction, expand our offerings, and ensure fiscal responsibility, while making performing arts education accessible to all members of our community. This strategy supports our long-term success and sustainability.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ACTION RESOURCES INTERNATIONAL

[WWW.ACTIONRESOURCES.ORG](http://WWW.ACTIONRESOURCES.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: This is Us On a Higher Ground

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Action Resources International (ARI) supports and advocates for community organizing that strengthens neighborhoods, communities and regions. We are a Wyoming-based, grassroots organization dedicated to community activism that promotes safety and prevention of violence; social and economic justice; sustainable food security and sovereignty; and access to overall health and wellness for everyone. We believe that lived experience as expertise is essential for achieving positive, effective social change. Based on this philosophy, we support, develop, and sponsor community programs that help raise the voices and self-empowerment of individuals living with the problems being addressed. ARI programs focus on the arts and culture as a means of helping distinctive communities recognize, articulate and amplify issues that speak artistically to their history, challenges and contributions in the Rocky Mountain region. Higher Ground Fair has established a solid presence and individualized identity as a unique, continuously growing and evolving event featuring accomplished professional artists of all kinds while simultaneously creating space and accessibility for emerging artists who dare to introduce their talent, products and vision to the world while still in their infancy. Higher Ground greets 2025 with fresh investment in a creatively cultivated aesthetic that highlights and supports the richness of Rocky Mountain culture and lifestyle, emphasizing self-made sufficiency, ability to thrive under the most complex circumstances, while displaying a soaring determination to meet a changing world's realities head on. At its core, the goal of Higher Ground Fair is to provide an opportunity to exhibit, interpret, educate, entertain, share, celebrate and learn from all the best of what comes from the traditions and innovations made manifest by the highest elevation, most rugged, rural and frontier influences of the Rocky Mountain region.

### Community

ARI's programs across Wyoming provide self-empowerment opportunities for marginalized and underserved communities facing social, economic and health-disparity barriers to self-actualization. Since 2016, ARI has offered the Higher Ground Fair (HGF) as an annual event that nurtures and showcases the often unrecognized diversity of the Rocky Mountain region, celebrating wide-ranging tradition and innovation in this high elevation, rurally-influenced culture. HGF provides a unique cross-section of the arts and a celebration of regional culture that serves as the creative weave bringing it all together. Over the years, participation and audience variety continue to rise toward each other in a way rarely available in the rural Rocky Mountains. Fairgoers have responded in delight, expressing awe and appreciation for walking into an event that presents them a glimpse of the world as it really is but not often seen in one place at the same time. As participation at HGF continues to grow and response to the varied celebration of art and culture widens, its call for a large regional audience continues to push on what fair

participants and fairgoers want to see and experience as a venue that uplifts the mix of sophisticated artists and tentatively novice performers or exhibitors. This mix of community members — one of wildly varied individuals, find themselves with an audience of fairgoers just as diverse. This request for operational support is designed to strengthen the infrastructure capacity to welcome and serve its great mix of artists, performers and exhibitors, with a venue worthy of what they have to offer as a collaborative community of individuals ready to embrace and strengthen community made up of differences essential to creating a magnificent whole.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation of Higher Ground Fair's impact has relied on traditional methods of counting audience and participant numbers, interviewing those who attend, gathering feedback from participants to inform the next year's efforts. But with this year's primary objective and project focused on capacity building through an enlivened infrastructure that invites and serves the varied needs of a truly diverse group of participants, evaluation will come from reviews from the project's participants even more so than its audience of fairgoers. The project's theory of intended change will also be tracked by an unique version of Action Resources' Collaborative Pathway Modelling method of program development and evaluation - creating data capture that reflects community vision of project goals in a way that not only provides a visual rendering of objectives and outcomes, but is in and of itself a beautiful work of art. Evaluation will be divided between assessing the improved infrastructure and examining the impact of expanded use of the fair's infrastructure.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Requested operating funds will be allocated specifically to the capacity-building and infrastructure's aesthetic enhancement of the Higher Ground Fair venue in order to support and promote audience appreciation of displays, educational workshops, demonstrations, artistic performances, artisan sales and purchases, agricultural , shelter and environmental exhibits - all effectively promoted through facilities that are beautiful, comfortable, weather-accommodating and designed for high-volume audience participation. Also included will be an allocation of funds dedicated to targeted marketing and advertisements designed to reach specific communities and interests for increased participation and audiences overall.

Operating costs include: facilities rental, \$5,000; specialty tent rental, \$25,000; display stands, divider curtain and indoor lighting rentals for art exhibits, \$2,500; table, chair and curtain rentals, \$3,500; stage, lighting, sound equipment rentals for morning and concert stages, \$7,000; audio-visual equipment rental for workshops and presentations, \$3,000; 24/7 security \$2,800; event insurance, \$1,800; materials and supplies, \$2,500;

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

In-Kind donations of volunteer hours are the largest type of funding source that supports ARI and Higher Ground Fair. Key partnerships include local business employee volunteer days; student volunteers from the University of Wyoming SLCE office and independent community members.

Grant funding including from the Wyoming Arts council supports arts and cultural work by ARI, including for Higher Ground Fair. Other grants include those from the Wyoming Humanities; Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund; Wyoming Dept. of Agriculture; Wyoming Community Foundation; Laramie Tourism Board; USDA NIFA grants including USDA Marketing Services; Environmental Justice grants.

ARI and HGF are supported by small and large cash donations, typically restricted to a certain program.

Both grant funding and donations to Action Resources International are done so while also indicating the specific program the donor would like their funds to be allocated to.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ADVOCACY FOR VISUAL ARTS, INC.

WWW.AVACENTER.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Visual Arts Access and Advocacy in Campbell County

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

AVA Community Art Center is a twenty-four year old non-profit organization focusing on advocacy for visual arts education and programming in the Campbell County region. AVA's mission is creating the bridge between the Visual Arts and our Community.

AVA hosts a professional ceramics studio with various technologies and materials, open to artists during studio days to explore ceramic arts and develop their individual skills. Several instructor-led workshops in a spectrum of mediums are programmed throughout the year based on needs indicated by the creative community via public surveys and direct feedback. AVA also provides a gallery space featuring rotating monthly exhibitions that include open calls to the public, invitationals, and two juried shows each year. An Artisan Market is accessible for artists to display their inventory of locally made artisan items available for purchase on a long-term schedule.

AVA provides multiple events and programs annually, as well as planning new programs and services dependent on the indicated interest of patrons and artists. In 2024, AVA hosted 2,475 attendees during 131 individual art programs and events. Private partnerships with community organizations such as YES House, NEW BOCES, Boys & Girls Club, CC Public Library, CC Recreation Center, and Gillette College are a means in which AVA facilitates arts access to targeted groups, such as non-dominant individuals (low income, at risk youth, aging populations). Partnering with local non-profits ensures AVA's engagement with and meaningful impact on individuals in the community seeking a broad range of services and support due to many extenuating circumstances.

AVA staff develop yearly schedules based off three pillars of access: Create environments for artists to grow, Inspire creative practices through skill exploration and enhancement, and Connection through community building in a welcoming space.

### Community

Between 7/1/23 and 6/30/24, AVA hosted 2,475 attendees during 131 art programs and events, collaborating with organizations like YES House, BOCES, Boys & Girls Club, the Visitation and Advocacy Center, CC Public Library,

Gillette Area Leadership Institute, Eat. Read. Grow., Campbell Co. School District, homeschool communities, and more. AVA also presented 14 diverse art exhibitions, showcasing solo artists, group shows, and public art calls.

AVA's goal is to engage non-dominant communities meaningfully. Our longest partnership is with YES House, which supports at-risk youth in Campbell County. In partnership with Campbell County Public Library, AVA's Creative Aging Program engages older adults (55+) with ceramics, fused glass, watercolor, gnome house designing, and leather work. Our partnership with Eat. Read. Grow. helps provide art programs for Boys & Girls Club youth, particularly those from low-income backgrounds, with 200 young artists served in Summer 2024.

AVA also collaborates with NEW BOCES to offer weekly art programs for young artists with intellectual and/or physical disabilities, focusing on inclusivity and accessibility. Our Summer Art Camps, designed for youth aged 5-14, explore various media such as mixed media, painting, drawing, paper-making, beading, and ceramics. Homeschool students participate in these camps and throughout the school year during private programs and open studios.

AVA provides accommodations as needed, with a fully ADA-compliant facility. Accessible parking, entrances, and restrooms, as well as emergency and accessibility plans, ensure inclusivity. Personalized accommodation plans are available for members requesting services. AVA remains committed to expanding arts access, education, and fostering strong community connections.

## **Evaluation**

AVA's mission is to bridge the visual arts and our community, ensuring we provide arts opportunities that meet the community's needs. A key method for gathering input is our open-door policy at the community center, where patrons are encouraged to share ideas and contribute to shaping their visual arts journey. Sub-committees of volunteers often lead initiatives, with AVA staff providing support to bring these visions to life. Our priority is creating lasting impact through the visual arts, and the partnerships we've built ensure we engage with the community in meaningful ways, reaching as many people as possible.

AVA's program and event calendars are shaped by community feedback through digital surveys, public forums, and direct conversations. Success is measured by both qualitative and quantitative standards, such as attendance paired with participant retention, digital surveys, and anecdotal feedback. Our ceramics studio has seen significant retention, with a dedicated group of potters using the space daily. The Summer Art Camps also show strong retention, with many returning students. In 2024, the camps were so popular that we nearly doubled available slots, though some remaining students were still waitlisted. We are planning for a more inclusive strategy for Summer 2025 to accommodate even more young artists.

Not every program succeeds solely based on attendance or retention. For less successful programs, AVA staff reflect on potential issues—such as timing, event concepts, or workshop offerings—and use community feedback

to adjust future plans. Direct conversations and surveys help us understand how to best design and promote programs at AVA moving forward.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

AVA's projected expenditures from 7/1/2025 - 6/30/2026 total \$219,900.00. This encompasses all expenses related to:

**Staff Wages** - AVA currently employs one full-time employee as the Executive Director. Two part-time employees, each allotted 35 hours weekly, are employed in the roles of Program Coordinator and Marketing Coordinator. AVA's three employees work cooperatively to manage day-to-day operations, coordinating weekly program and event schedules, marketing and outreach strategies, inventory management, digital platforms and website maintenance, patron engagement, and donor and artist relations.

**Artist Instructor Fees** - Classroom instructors are compensated for their time estimated at rates no less than the prevailing minimum compensation as required by the Department of Labor Regulations. Artist instructors are responsible for developing their own compensation structure, which is regularly reviewed by AVA staff and board to determine alignment with AVA's budget and strategic goals.

**Paid Artist Commissions** - Goods sold at AVA, including artworks, reproductions, and all items displayed for sale throughout each year, are owned solely by the artist who produced them. AVA pays commission percentages to artists after each resulting sale. Commission rates are determined based on each artists' AVA membership status.

**Payroll Taxes**

**Administrative Expenses** - postage, printing, office supplies, dues and subscriptions.

**Utility Services**

**Professional Services** - Accountant & Legal

**Sale and Services Expenses and Fees** - Materials and Fees related to major fundraisers, such as space rental and catering.

**Building Repairs and Maintenance** - Weather mitigation, property maintenance such as lawn care and snow removal, building improvements, construction costs related to security and public access.

**Technology Maintenance and Fees** - Software subscriptions, technology upgrades

**Property Insurance**

All operating support provided by Wyoming Arts Council is allocated towards the retention of skilled employees in major operational positions, as well as expanding their knowledge and professional development via trainings, conferences and networking opportunities. Three staff members complete the majority of daily tasks required to keep the community center operating and properly maintained for public use, as well as developing and executing over 130 diverse programs throughout the calendar year. Any funds allocated from WAC and/or the NEA for AVA operating support will be distributed throughout the entire fiscal year to supplement only the specific expenses described above.

## **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, AVA engaged 2,475 attendees across 131 art programs and events. Through partnerships with organizations such as YES House, BOCES, Boys & Girls Club, the Visitation and Advocacy Center, Campbell County Public Library, Gillette Area Leadership Institute, Eat. Read. Grow., Campbell County School District, and other private and public initiatives, AVA expanded its outreach. AVA also hosted 14 unique art exhibitions, featuring diverse themes and mediums, including solo artists, group shows, and public calls for art. Each exhibition ran for a month, including public Artists' Receptions that allowed community members to interact with artists and attend lectures and demonstrations.

One of AVA's core strategies is to establish meaningful connections with underserved communities. Our longest-standing partnership is with YES House, which supports at-risk youth in Campbell County. AVA provides bi-weekly art programs during the school year and weekly sessions in the summer, ensuring that YES House clients have continuous access to visual arts education. These programs offer young people a chance to explore mediums, visit AVA exhibitions, and develop coping skills while imagining future careers in the arts.

In partnership with Campbell County Public Library, AVA hosts the Creative Aging Program for adults aged 55 and older. These eight-week programs offer education and skill building in ceramics, fused glass, watercolor painting, gnome house designing, and most recently leather working. The workshops build art practices while fostering a sense of community among individuals who may feel isolated. Many participants continue their artistic journey, becoming active AVA members.

Each summer, AVA collaborates with Eat. Read. Grow to provide art programs for youth at the Boys & Girls Club, serving a portion of the local low-income population. In Summer 2024, this program reached 200 young artists, offering them an opportunity to engage in creative activities and develop their skills.

AVA has also partners with NEW BOCES (Northeast Wyoming Board of Cooperative Educational Services), providing weekly art programs for young artists with intellectual and/or physical disabilities. BOCES' mission to develop academic, physical, social, and behavioral skills aligns with AVA's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that underserved groups, like BOCES clients and YES House youth, have access to creative expression.

AVA hosted six weeks of Summer Art Camps in 2024, offering youth ages 5-14 the chance to explore mixed media, painting, drawing, paper-making, beading, and ceramics. These camps provide students an enriching experience



during their summer break. AVA also accommodates homeschool students with private programs, open studio days and monthly exhibitions.

AVA is dedicated to accessibility for all. Our facility is fully ADA compliant, with accessible parking, well-lit entrances, wheelchair-accessible public spaces, and restrooms equipped with accessible stalls, handrails, and braille signage. We also provide individualized accommodation plans for members who request them.

Through inclusive arts programs and community partnerships, AVA ensures that underserved individuals have access to the transformative power of art. Our focus on accessibility, engagement, and inclusivity allows AVA to foster positive change, helping individuals develop their creativity while making a lasting impact in the community.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **1.) Ensuring Access to Creative Expression for All Community Members**

AVA believes in fostering opportunities for creative expression that are accessible to everyone in the community. Our workshops, ranging from youth art programs to Creative Aging sessions, provide participants the chance to create and revise their art to express their personal experiences and ideas. Students explore and apply a wide range of materials, tools, technologies, and techniques to communicate through art. With guidance from skilled instructors, participants deepen their understanding of design principles, elements, and artistic processes. Collaboration is strongly encouraged, creating an environment where students engage with others in creative endeavors. AVA's staff ensures the safe and responsible use of art tools and materials. At the conclusion of workshop series, AVA hosts student exhibitions and public receptions to showcase the completed works, providing a platform for artists to present their creativity to the broader community. (FPA8.1.A.1-6)

#### **2.) Cultivating Aesthetic Perception Among Students and Patrons**

AVA's Gallery, Artisan Market, and community events feature an ever-changing array of local and national art exhibitions, offering a broad spectrum of mediums and artistic styles. This exposure invites visitors to observe, reflect, and analyze the physical properties of art. Artist demonstrations and lectures provide patrons with opportunities to engage with the themes, subjects, and symbols embedded in works of art. Within the classroom, students are encouraged to articulate their creative processes and describe both their work and the works of others using artistic language. This practice nurtures a deeper understanding of the aesthetic qualities of their art, and enhances their ability to critically evaluate both their creations and the work of peers. (FPA8.2.A.1-4)

#### **3.) Connecting the Arts to Other Disciplines, Careers, and Everyday Life**

AVA promotes the arts as a viable career path through regular programming for the public and clients of partner organizations. These programs provide practical demonstrations of the artistic skills necessary for success in the field and expose participants to the reality of art as a professional career. Additionally, AVA continually offers opportunities and spaces for artists to display and sell their work, underscoring the economic potential of the visual arts. Public calls for art on diverse themes encourage artists to respond creatively, reinforcing the role of visual art as a form of personal and cultural expression, both locally and globally. (FPA11.4.A.2-3)

In the coming year, AVA staff, volunteers, and artist instructors will execute a wide variety of visual arts programs and events, with the goals outlined above at their core. Classroom conversations and prompts will encourage students to engage with the principles and elements of design, refining their understanding of successful art. Instructors are carefully selected to expand students' knowledge and skill sets, fostering growth in both technical proficiency and conceptual exploration. Through AVA's ongoing exhibitions, the public is provided diverse opportunities to view and engage with art, deepening their understanding of visual arts as both an aesthetic and cultural practice. Visitors are encouraged to consider the various ways in which art can be interpreted, appreciated, and integrated into their own creative processes.

Ultimately, the strategies embedded in these goals are consistently reflected in all AVA workshops and events. They are aligned with our mission to serve as a bridge between the visual arts and our community, ensuring that we provide accessible, inclusive, and educational opportunities for all. AVA remains steadfast in its commitment to creating an environment where creativity thrives, where diverse voices are heard, and where the power of art to transform lives is realized in meaningful ways.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Kate Hendrickson - AVA Program Coordinator and Instructor, Professional Artist

John Werbelow - Ceramicist, retired CCSD Teacher with 30+ years teaching experience

Shirley Burke-Franz - Ceramicist, Instructor, Volunteer of the Year

Rede Ballard - CCSD Faculty Coordinator and Community Artist

Irene Daly - BS of Education, UW, Masters of Early Childhood Education, BHSU - Experience includes art education at CCHS and Westwood High School

Joan Sowada - Textile artist, Curator and AVA Volunteer

Mark Paxton - Professional Oil Painter and Framing Instructor

Chris Amend - Professional artist, muralist and medium consultant, retired CCSD Teacher with 30+ years teaching experience

Blanche Guernsey - Professional Artist

Anugraha Norstegaard - Mixed Media Artist and National Exhibitor

John Dumbrill - Painter and national exhibitor

Leanne Erickson - Youth Art Instructor

Georgia Ostrowski - YES House artist instructor, AVA Volunteer

Gerald Gardner - Artist Instructor and Bonsai Groomer

Angela Dragseth - YES House Residential Programs Director

Carla Dittus - Recreational Therapist, NEW BOCES

Meghan Gruman - GRTC Assistant Coordinator, YES House

Mikel Scott - Executive Director, Council of Community Services

Jessica Seders - Executive Director, Gillette Chamber of Commerce

Quinn Goldhammer, AVA Executive Director - BFA, UW - emphasis in Exhibition Strategies and Museum Studies. Experience in administration and operations in the for-profit sector combined with a passion for fine art advocacy.

Kacey Perez, Marketing Coordinator

Dr. Verlyn Velle (AVA Board Director) - Recently retired from Campbell County Board of Higher Education Services, previous Director of Career and Technical Education for CCSD.

Dara Corkery (AVA Board Director) - Local watercolor artist who studied with a number of nationally known artists. An early and ongoing supporter of AVA, Dara is a collector and major patron of the arts.

Sara Olsen (AVA Board Director) - The University of Wyoming Extension Community Vitality and Health Educator in Campbell County

Adaneal Ruiz (AVA Board Director) - Loan Officer, First Northern Bank

Chris Ringer (AVA Board Director) - Ringer Law

Gina Hoogendoorn (AVA Board Director) - Artist Instructor, Volunteer, Visitation and Advocacy Center employee

Lisa Jackson (AVA Board Director) - Campbell County Health

Miriam Hilton - Homeschool Community Coordinator

Dana Miller - Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Coordinator, Gillette College

Mary Melaragno - Executive Director, YES House Foundation

Nachelle McGrath - Executive Director, New Community Health Foundation

Samara Johnson - Foundations Professor, University of Wyoming, AVA Juror

## **Budget Narrative**

AVA's primary funding comes from annual fundraisers, artwork sales, program fees, private and corporate donations, event ticket sales, local and state grants, and interest from investments and endowments. The organization hosts two major fundraisers— the Annual Art Matters Gala in January and the Summer Bash in August—along with smaller events like WyoGives and Music & Mugs, collectively generating at least a quarter of AVA's annual revenue. Artworks sold via monthly exhibitions and ongoing Artisan Market account for nearly one-quarter of AVA's revenue. In-kind contributions, including volunteer hours and donations, accounted for nearly one-sixth of revenue in 2024. Key funding partners include the Wyoming Arts Council, Campbell Co. Public Recreation District, Wyoming Community Foundation, and private local and international donors. Proceeds from

artwork sales and program attendance directly support AVA's mission, with nearly half allocated to artists and instructors.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ALBANY COUNTY THEATRE, INC.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Platte County Theatre Outreach

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The arts have long served as a way to discover who we are. ACT's troupe's mission is to provide ways of new thinking through theatre. The arts help shape the future for every community. The infusion of creativity is essential for any generation and provides meaning in a troubled world. It is through nurturing new actors that children grow into forward thinking adults. This is achieved by a well-rounded education that includes the arts. It is a way of laying the foundation of successful students, successful adults which leads to a successful nation. The primary purpose of the standards in education is to clarify the learning needs of all of our students and guide them toward improvement. This is done by consistent tri-weekly rehearsals, routine set, costume and make up design meetings and regular check-in's with theatre professionals that help push our program forward. To realize our end goal of two main stage productions per year, we frame our preparations with artistic progress and creative practices. These are anchored in feedback from our production team. The arts have often been helpful as a bridge between math to science to language to civics. There is a connectivity that the arts have that is evidenced by impact on the brain. Scientific studies have supported this idea because of the congruence found from the arts to other areas of study. We have aspired to the idea that art has a measurable outcome on brain waves and their structure. As new creative endeavors take shape, then new synapses are formed. Studies show that music can expand the cerebral cortex and that growth is expedited by creation. A brain can "rewire" past trauma in response to learning a new dance step, a new song or fabricating a new character on stage. These skills result in the brain's ability to acquire comprehension of new skills such as math or science. It is our goal to provide a theatre program in a very closed and restricted community.

### Community

Guernsey is a rural community in Platte County, Wyoming, with approximately 1,100 residents. Located along the North Platte River, this historic town faces unique challenges, particularly regarding youth engagement and development. The median household income in Guernsey (\$45,625) falls significantly below the Wyoming state average (\$65,204). Over 15% of residents live below the poverty line, with a higher concentration among families with school-age children. This area has limited access to cultural and artistic opportunities, with the nearest performing arts center located over 80 miles away.

Our needs assessment, conducted through school partnerships and community surveys, reveals that there are high rates of youth risk behaviors, particularly substance use and school disengagement, a desperate need for creative outlets and structured mentorship opportunities. Students have a desire for programs that bridge generational and cultural divides within the community.

Our theatre program addresses these challenges through: Accessible Programming, Inclusive Outreach, Cultural Responsiveness and Community Co-Creation. Our approach emphasizes building lasting relationships within the community rather than simply providing services. We recognize that meaningful engagement requires sustained presence, cultural humility, and genuine partnership with community members.

Our theatre program is able to offer free participation for all youth participants, flexible scheduling to accommodate working families. Also because of our connections we can offer direct collaboration with school counselors and social workers to identify at-risk youth, partnerships with the Camp Guernsey military community and regular presence at community events and local gatherings.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation is an ongoing process in our theatre program. Each show and class is evaluated by the participants in the program. We will also be inviting our students' parents to give their feedback as well. This feedback will help us to identify ways we can improve on artistic vision.

1. We offer written audience surveys to gain perspectives on our work.
2. We have surveys for the actors' parents to reach a clear understanding of their children's thoughts on the class and performance process.
3. We hold a final meeting for our core group of volunteers to evaluate what worked or needed improvement for the season.

This three step approach has been helpful to gain clarity and reinforce positive performances. Our goal continues to be to help our theatre program by inviting critique and focusing on where our attention should be placed in the future. Performance Review Highlight: During the past year, we have set up an electronic survey to be sent to our audience members one week after the performance. This allows the audience to ruminate on the performance and reply to the survey with their own thoughts, intentions and suggestions. An online survey allows us to consistently track the audience's pulse after our performance. We will collect these emails at the entrance of the play on the performance date. Our electronic survey helped us to narrow in on the needs to be met for the next production. The audience can include notes if they wish to see more productions by this troupe in the future. Moving forward, we continue to work with our community partner of the area, Tri-City Parks and Recreation. They have been helpful in the documentation of sustained community engagement and offering analysis of program influence on school engagement and peer relationships.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

We are seeking project support for Theatre in Guernsey WY. Our mission is to better the lives of the students and volunteers involved in our rural theatre program. Our theatre troupe has been a catalyst for change in individual lives, an influence in the local schools and an impact on bringing arts to the community. Our clear vision is to host theatre classes and produce two full productions within the 2025-2026 season. We offer basic acting, blocking, prop design and costume design classes.

Our project funding has three main goals: 1) To encourage our acting students to rehearsal and performance opportunities in production and play experiences. 2) To expose our students to captivating scripts and acting techniques which will initiate interest in acting, theatre history and the artistic community. 3) To engage our students in our local community and bring that community into our theatrical setting.

Our involved artists include our community theatre team: We accomplish these goals by building toward weekly classes and rehearsals. These are building toward two main stage productions for this 2025-2026 Season. Those productions include "Orpheus & the Underworld" & "The Swan Princess." These family friendly shows have been written specifically for the actors in our classes. Our Project Costs revolve around costume, makeup, set design and sound equipment. Our students are free to join our program without cost and therefore we are responsible to provide their costumes, scripts, make up as well as anything needed in our production. We have encouraged our local parents to donate what they can but we have also stressed that it's not a requirement. Instead, many of our parents donate their time in helping our productions become a reality.

All of our members are volunteers but were invited to work with us based on their ability and interest in working on young-adult's theatre. They have each been an important part of Albany County Theatre Productions. All of our members have completed or are in the process of completing their Bachelor's in Fine Arts at the University of Wyoming. We also recruit from the University of Wyoming for all of our directing, costume design and make up volunteers. Each of these artists is committed to teaching classes and completing our shows. We are extremely grateful for this core group of talented artists who have agreed to give their experience, time and abilities to the students in our program.

In addition to the college student volunteers, we also rely on the local volunteer community in Guernsey, Wyoming. In the past three years, we have uncovered a variety of parents, friends and active occupants of the area who want theatre to thrive. It is thanks to their kind support that we have been able to combine and grow better and larger productions.

The nature of the area has made us very careful who we ask to work with our young-adults. We are asking for funds to continue to enlarge our main stage productions. By having more costumes, set design funds and make design materials, we are then able to include more students in our productions.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Arts Learning Grant will enable our theatre group to implement a comprehensive youth development program that addresses the critical needs of at-risk youth in Guernsey through immersive arts education. Funding will support the launch of our "Stage Bridges" initiative, which combines technical theatre training, performance opportunities, and social-emotional learning components. This multi-dimensional approach will provide participating youth with hands-on experience in playwriting, acting, stagecraft, lighting design, and costume creation—building practical skills while fostering creative expression. The program will culminate in seasonal performances that showcase participant-created works reflecting local heritage and contemporary youth experiences, effectively creating a platform for youth voices while developing essential artistic competencies. Additionally, grant funds will support our professional development component, allowing us to bring teaching artists from regional theatre companies to Guernsey for intensive workshops and mentorship opportunities. These visiting artists will not only enhance the technical quality of our programming but will also provide crucial role modeling for local youth with limited exposure to professional artistic careers. By combining structured arts instruction with community engagement elements—including intergenerational story circles and collaborative public art installations—our program will strengthen both individual participant outcomes and community cultural vitality. This grant will be instrumental in creating sustainable infrastructure for ongoing arts education in our underserved rural community, with particular emphasis on reaching youth who have historically lacked access to quality arts programming. There is a connectivity that the arts have that is evidenced by impact on the brain. As a community troupe, we have aspired to the idea that art has a measurable outcome on brain waves and their structure. As new creative endeavors take shape, then new synapses are formed. Studies show that music can expand the cerebral cortex and that growth is expedited by creation. A brain can “rewire” past trauma in response to learning a new dance step, a new song or fabricating a new character on stage. Children who engage in the arts are known to have greater brain elasticity and the ability to adapt. They are also far less likely to drop out of school and learn to seek positive recognition.

There are four goals in our curriculum that guide our students and volunteers. The first is to build intellectual understanding of the craft of theatre. It is a craft that requires hard work and dedication. The second is to engage productivity in the collaborative process. The third is to develop a respect and appreciation of the various aspects/roles that are housed in the theatrical process. The fourth is to produce diverse productions that challenge students and engage the local community. These goals are obtained by tri-weekly rehearsals and bi-weekly design meetings. We hold rehearsals for the actors after school on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays. We hold design meetings and construction times after school on Tuesday and Thursdays. We have already had great success with this program for the past three years. We are working with the Guernsey Parks and Rec as well as Platte County School District #2 to achieve our theatrical goals.



## **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our theatre program has established three core Arts Learning goals that directly respond to the identified needs of Guernsey's at-risk youth population. Our primary goal is to develop comprehensive theatre literacy among participants, encompassing both performance and technical production skills. This includes mastery of fundamental acting techniques, script analysis, character development, and storytelling principles, alongside practical skills in stagecraft, lighting, sound design, and production management. These competencies were identified through consultation with regional theatre educators and aligned with Wyoming Fine Arts Standards to ensure participants gain transferable artistic skills that enhance academic performance and future opportunities. Through structured skill-building workshops and graduated responsibility in productions, youth participants will develop measurable proficiency in multiple theatre disciplines while discovering their unique artistic strengths.

Our second Arts Learning goal focuses on fostering creative expression and authentic voice through devised theatre techniques and original content creation. This goal emerged directly from youth focus groups that revealed significant barriers to self-expression and identity exploration among Guernsey's adolescent population. The program will guide participants through structured creative processes—including community story gathering, collaborative script development, and ensemble-based performance creation—that transform personal and community narratives into meaningful theatrical works. By centering youth experiences and perspectives, this goal addresses the critical need for validation and representation among marginalized youth while developing essential creative thinking skills applicable across disciplines. The iterative nature of theatrical creation also builds resilience and adaptability as participants learn to refine their artistic choices through constructive feedback.

The third Arts Learning goal centers on developing cultural competency and community interconnection through exploration of diverse theatrical traditions. This goal was identified through community asset mapping sessions that highlighted Guernsey's rich but often untapped cultural heritage, including indigenous storytelling traditions, military community experiences, and agricultural heritage. Program activities will include research into regional historical narratives, intergenerational interviews, and study of diverse theatrical forms from multiple cultural traditions. This approach will not only broaden participants' artistic horizons but also strengthen community bonds by creating opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-generational dialogue. By positioning youth as both learners and cultural documentarians, this goal addresses community cohesion challenges while developing participants' abilities to appreciate and synthesize diverse artistic influences in their own creative work.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Our theatre program is built on a foundation of strong community partnerships that provide critical infrastructure and support. We've established collaborative relationships with key stakeholders including Principal Liesl Sisson of Guernsey Schools, Choir Teacher Robert Parker, and Parks and Recreation Director Lori Ibarra. These partnerships have been instrumental in securing program space, facilitating youth recruitment, aligning with educational objectives, and integrating our work into the broader community ecosystem. Through these relationships, we've gained deep insight into the specific needs of Guernsey's youth population while securing the operational foundation necessary for sustainable programming. Our community-embedded approach ensures that our theatre initiatives complement existing youth services while addressing critical gaps in creative arts opportunities.

The artistic vision and implementation of our program is guided by a core team of skilled theatre professionals with deep connections to Wyoming's arts community. Amy Hollon, our Producer and lead instructor, brings extensive experience from producing and writing sixteen major productions across the country, along with her current role as an ELA Teacher in the Platte County #2 School District. Jacob Marquez, our Sound Design specialist,

contributes professional technical expertise from his work at Cheyenne Civic Center while drawing on his experience directing productions at Cathedral Home. Cody Mock leads our set construction and design elements, bringing over a decade of technical design experience alongside specialized skills in costume design. Laura Green completes our core artistic team, contributing her background in visual arts and seven years of professional acting experience to guide our prop and stage set design. All team members were selected for both their artistic expertise and their demonstrated commitment to youth development, creating a multidisciplinary leadership team uniquely qualified to deliver high-quality theatre education while mentoring Guernsey's next generation of creative leaders.

Amy Hollon - Producer: Amy has produced and written over sixteen main stage productions at various theaters across the country. She is a graduate of the University of Wyoming and the founder of the Queen's Players Theatre. She will teach basic acting classes, direction, musical theatre and improvisational acting classes. She is currently employed as an ELA Teacher at Platte County #2 School District.

Jacob Marquez: Sound design. Jacob is a graduate from the University of Wyoming and has directed five of our Cathedral Home shows. He is currently employed at University of Wyoming and works as our sound designer and technician.

Cody Mock: Set construction: Cody is a set, costume and props designer from Central Wyoming Community College. He comes to us with over ten years of acting, technical direction and scenic design experience.

Laura Green: Acting Instructor: Laura is a graduate from the University of Wyoming. Although her educational background is in art, Laura has years of community theatre work. As a past performance actor, she brings over seven years of professional work to our troupe. She will help guide our prop and stage set design.

All of our members are volunteers but were invited to work with us based on their interest in working in children's theatre. Each of these artists is committed to teaching classes and completing our shows.

## **Budget Narrative**

The Albany County Theatre Outreach is unique due to our continued community involvement in remote areas. Our theatre program's sustainability are significantly enhanced through strategic partnerships with Guernsey's local business community. The Guernsey Gazette has provided invaluable promotional support through feature stories. Guernsey State Bank has established a dedicated youth arts fund that community members can contribute to directly. These partnerships extend beyond financial considerations, as local business owners often volunteer specialized skills. By intentionally sourcing materials and services locally, our theatre program simultaneously strengthens Guernsey's economic ecosystem while building community investment in youth development. This reciprocal relationship transforms local businesses from mere vendors into invested program stakeholders who recognize that supporting youth arts programming contributes to community vitality and future economic stability.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

## ALTERNATIVE ARTS PROJECT

[HTTPS://WWW.THELINCOLNCHEYENNE.COM/ALTERNATIVE-ARTS-PROJECT](https://www.thelincolncheyenne.com/alternative-arts-project)

## FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Building Community Through Music and Entrepreneurship

### Application:

#### **Mission/Goals**

The Alternative Arts project was created with the goal of providing a variety of music based experiences, education, and programming for the youth of Laramie County. These experiences occur outside the classroom in a professional music environment at The Lincoln music venue, where participants have an opportunity to interact with locals working in the music, sound, and concert industry. Our mission is to 'provide music access, education, and programming to all teens in the Cheyenne area, regardless of their circumstances.' The Alternative Arts Project partners with The Lincoln venue, which is fully staffed and owned by the same individuals who manage the Alternative Arts Project.

Our core programs include:

**Jam Night:** Jam Nights are open for all musicians ages 16 and up to come build their skills and learn to play alongside others. Instruments are available for anyone who needs one to be able to jump in successfully.

**Local Showcases:** This program is an opportunity for our up-and-coming bands and musicians to perform to an audience, helping to educate them on what it's like to be on a stage, working with sound engineers, and performing for a crowd.

**Free tickets for Teens:** this program helps encourage teens in our community to experience a broad set of live music for free, exposing them to new and diverse genres outside of their norm.

**Guitar Lessons for teens:** A program providing weekly guitar education for Jr. High and High School students looking to learn or expand their knowledge.

**Musician Development Series:** an intermittent series covering topics for emerging and up-and-coming musicians to learn how to be more successful in the business of music.

## **Community**

The Lincoln was born with a desire to enrich the lives of the Cheyenne community creating experiences centered around music, helping to build a sense of community and belonging. We host shows from all genres of music and create opportunities to develop local musicians. Our staff are a range of individuals/demographics in the music and arts industry. Many of our program participants are students who want to dive deeper into the music industry, and/or emerging musicians hoping to create a career in music. The Lincoln team is quick to respond to feedback, adapting to make everyone's experience better. The staff holds weekly meetings to discuss and evaluate feedback so that positive changes can be implemented quickly and efficiently.

The Lincoln is fully accessible with a seating area that is adjusted when needed. For our workshops and educational programming we work with parents on any considerations we need to make. We donate up to 20 tickets per show to VET TIX, which "provides tickets to all branches of currently-serving Military and Veterans, including immediate family of troops KIA." Our 'Free Tickets for Teens' program provides opportunities for teens to experience live music and to see music professionals in action. On average, we give out around 10 tickets per applicable show, averaging around 60 tickets/year. Any guests that need additional accommodations can reach out via a contact form on the website so that we can offer assistance.

Laramie County is 91% white, 16% Hispanic or Latino, 2.5% Black or African American, and 1.4% Asian individuals, from a total population count of 100,984 (from the 2023 Census data). Of this, our general programming audience is made up of a mix of young adults, ages 15-25, who are emerging musicians just learning the industry.

## **Evaluation**

As a concert venue, we're able to look at ticket sales, fee structures, attendee zip codes, and other basic quantitative information gathered at the point-of-sale to understand many details about our general audience base. We also leverage our social media and website analytics to understand more about who's following and communicating with us, and when that converts to a participant in our programming.

When evaluating the individuals who attend our education-based programming, we use qualitative methods through conversation to understand the age, interests, backgrounds and needs of our participants so that we can better grow our programming. Keeping teens engaged can be challenging, and in our teen programs we ask for their input on what songs or projects they would like to learn. Creative thinking is encouraged throughout all of our programs.

Event attendees complete pre and post surveys, such as in the case for Musician Development Series, which help us to understand what more needs to be offered in a particular area. As we work to grow these programs, we are always re-evaluating data that we can gather and track to better reach our audience and their needs.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The Alternative Arts Project, which launched in 2012, has had pauses over the years to allow for growth and development changes to take place in other areas. The non-profit started with the first program, 'Free Guitar Lessons', which successfully ran for 3 years. During that time and after, we ran other businesses where we worked to support musicians, but began diving deeper into our educational and community driven mission when we purchased The Lincoln in 2018. With this purchase, we of course wanted to create a music venue with entertainment that our community and surrounding region could enjoy, but we also wanted to come back to our original vision with the Alternative Arts Project: where we help teens and emerging musicians find their path in the music industry.

Our programs in this area have largely been self-funded through earned income, donations and sponsorships, but in order to grow, we want to better define our budget as a non-profit. This year we have begun utilizing grant resources and other opportunities to help us generate a stable environment for our operations. We've also added a contract Operations Admin to help us solidify programming, funding, and organizational material.

The Alternative Arts Project is a component of the Lincoln, and is the owner of the property, so it is responsible for the mortgage and property insurance. The Lincoln has a lease agreement that provides funds to cover those costs. The Lincoln assumes all other costs associated with managing the venue. The operating costs for the Alternative Arts Project consist of intermittent contract staff, guitar instructors, our educational programmatic needs, and support to cover our free ticket programs.

### **Project Support Narrative**

As noted, we provide programming in a variety of educational areas for teens and emerging musicians in our community. Through the monthly 'Jam Night' events, participants can come and sign up to play with other musicians, learning how to play along with one another, and practicing their own individual skills. This also gives musicians who don't have a band or live outlet a chance to play in front of a crowd and grow in their performance. We provide free instruments for anyone who has a need. We average around 30 attendees each month who participate to perform, as well as another 20-30 who come to listen and enjoy the evening as audience members. These are held on the second Thursday of each month.

Similarly, our 'Local Showcases' (six events per year) help emerging bands and individuals get used to being on a stage, performing in front of a crowd, and with professional backline, lighting, etc. Not only do these individuals and groups get the opportunity with our stage, but we also utilize this to help us find talent who can open for some of our touring acts. This helps to propel these groups further into their career, and gives them a chance to work with professional musicians as well. This seasonal series is themed each night, with groups performing by genre such as metal, indie, hip-hop, etc. These shows provide experience for 30-40 bands/performers per year. On average, Local's Showcase events bring in 150-200 attendees.

One of the things we became aware of with both of these programs is the need for music business education. Last fall we launched our 'Musician Development Series' in partnership with Arts Cheyenne, which provided a learning

series where we discussed the do's and don'ts of marketing yourself as a musician, building a fan base, and creating content. We also covered getting booked and re-booked through how to reach out to venues, what to discuss, and what to prepare to perform. These sessions were widely popular, and we'd like to offer them again year round, inviting guest speakers and industry professionals to join us. Continuing this series will help strengthen our local music economy, preparing more individuals for performing and communicating professionally. Future sessions include guest speakers from National touring bands, where we hope to leverage lived experience with real-world educational content we can't always find locally.

The organizers and instructors involved in helping to facilitate these programs are music professionals who've worked in the industry for many years. Jam Night is facilitated by the Lincoln staff and Brooks Hoover as a band leader, while the Locals' Showcase is facilitated by the Lincoln staff. Funds for this portion of the grant will help to cover payment for Musician Development guest speakers and hosts; production support for Jam Nights and for the Local's Showcase.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Guitar Lessons Program was launched in 2012 as a way for local teens with an interest in learning the guitar to have a unique group and/or one:one instruction with an experienced guitarist. This program quickly took off, providing educational services to around 10 students/week, roughly 40 students a year. From 2012 to 2015 the program served just over 100 students total.

The Alternative Arts Project is excited to relaunch this program as a part of our efforts to increase music education in our community. In the relaunch of the program, participants meet weekly after school for one hour with a guitar instructor, who can reach each participant at their current learning level. The instructors guide participants both individually and as a group through basic guitar practice, and help them to develop skill and understanding to reach proficiency at their desired level. Each week we assess the learning goals of our participants, check in with their progress, how they're feeling about the lessons, and course correct when needed. Participants are also given homework to help with practice between the lessons. The Alternative Arts Project provides guitars and other supplies on loan to participants, helping participants to overcome any financial barriers that may exist.

This program is geared towards students in the middle and high school age groups, and supports those looking to expand their music knowledge and practice. While most of our local schools have band programs, many do not offer education specific to learning guitar. Additionally, homeschool children also have the opportunity to take part in these lessons, providing music opportunities that may not otherwise be available. Currently we are instructing around 12 participants per week with the recent re-launch in March, 2025. The program runs with the school calendar from March-May, then picks up again for the following September-May.

Funds for the Arts Learning grant would go towards payment of our instructors. We've obtained grant funding to help offset supplies and materials, but are seeking funding to help cover the time the instructors give to educating the participants.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our goal with this program is to increase the participants' knowledge and skill set around understanding and learning the guitar. This includes an understanding of posture, hand positioning, and strumming techniques; chord progression and scales; finger strength and dexterity. We also assist with basic music understanding through tuning, note reading and rhythm. A priority goal for this program is to help with confidence building through the social and emotional intelligence aspects of this program. Music can help participants with problem solving, stress management and communication, and we work with our participants on many of these aspects as well.

Holistically, we hope that this program reaches a wide audience base and creates a broader sense of the importance of music and arts in our community. By exposing young individuals to our team, the instructors, and by hosting these sessions at The Lincoln, we hope that participants start to understand the local ecosystem around the music industry, and how this can also support local community arts development. We achieve this through conversation and exposure through attendance at the Jam Nights and Local's Showcase events, which participants are invited to attend and take part in.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

We have several individuals involved across our programming, helping us to educate participants, manage the events, and coordinate marketing. These individuals were selected based on their knowledge base, skill-set and ability to work with our audience base.

Kenna Ortiz: 5 years of marketing and management experience for The Lincoln. She coordinates and executes all marketing campaigns.

Jon Jelinek - Founder of Alternative Arts Project, created the guitar lesson curriculum. Oversees all lessons. Directs and coordinates the Jam nights.

Brooks Hoover - Very well respected musician in the local music community. He was a music major at LCCC and has helped us with Jam nights since we started them in 2021. He is skilled in multiple instruments, and is able to guide others well. He has been a guitar instructor for over 15 years.

## **Budget Narrative**

Currently, The Alternative Arts Project is funded through a variety of earned income, local grants, donations, and sponsorships. These various income streams are fairly fresh over the past year as we've gathered momentum with our programming, and as we align the funding source with the most applicable program, depending on a sponsor or donor's request, and where we need the most support. All expenses are maintained at a bare minimum.

Financial reviews are done quarterly by the Board of Directors, who are all experienced business owners with 30+ years in entrepreneurship. While the Alternative Arts Project has existed for several years, in many ways we are like a new non-profit just gaining momentum and structure in our budget.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ARK REGIONAL SERVICES, INC.

ARKREGIONALSERVICES.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Ark's Creative Arts Program at the Cooper Center for Creative Arts

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Ark supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to actively engage in their lives through new opportunities, healthy relationships, and lifelong learning.

### Community

Ark Regional Services began in 1963 and has expanded its services over 60 years to support and serve 100 adults with disabilities. Ark offers a wide range of services, including Community Living Services, Community Support Services, Adult Day Services, equestrian services, employment support, and a curriculum-driven arts and education program. While primarily focused on supporting individuals with disabilities, Ark's services also extend and benefit the broader community. This includes providing opportunities for community involvement in events hosted in Ark's publicly accessible spaces.

The Cooper Center is a publicly open standalone Arts and Education Center featuring programs in Visual Arts, Theatre, Dance, and Music with a functioning black box theatre, art gallery, music room, and dance studio. The center welcomes all community members to engage in Theatre and Live Performances, Art Exhibitions in the Gallery, and interactive events like Festivals. Ensuring accessibility for all, including marginalized individuals and groups, Ark hosts visual art shows with free admission and keeps ticket prices for theatre productions affordable at \$7-10, enabling participation from older adults, veterans, individuals of lower socioeconomic levels, and individuals with physical or developmental disabilities.

### Evaluation

At the Cooper Center, staff utilize a range of assessment methods, including observations, interviews, focus groups, and video documentation, to track progress toward both individual and group objectives. Throughout every stage of their projects, students receive feedback tailored to their needs and engage in peer evaluations, providing and receiving constructive input, and participate in interviews after the completion of performances or projects.



Once a project or performance concludes, the Artistic Director, instructors, and other stakeholders come together to assess its overall impact. This evaluation process includes production notes, verbal feedback from students, ticket sales for performances, and attendance at art shows or events. Ark evaluates its projects on whether they provide opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to actively engage in new opportunities, healthy relationships, and lifelong learning. The success of the Creative Arts Program is measured when students can enjoy the rewards that come from hard work, take on and fulfill responsibilities that are critical to the success of the project, learn new skills that can be generalized into daily life, collaborate with others in the performing arts field, better understand the world around them, and have fun.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The Cooper Center for Creative Arts' operational expenses are detailed in its budget, covering personnel, program costs, marketing/publicity, accessibility, facilities/overhead, and other necessary expenses. As a publicly accessible space managed by Ark, personnel costs make up the largest portion of expenses. This is due to the specialized human support services provided by Ark and the Cooper Center, which require close, personal, and time-sensitive assistance. While these services are costly, they are essential in creating an environment where individuals with disabilities can thrive and succeed.

Program expenses and facility/overhead represent the next largest expense. These funds support various programs, including Visual Arts, Dance, Theatre, Performances, and Music classes. Although grant funding makes up a small percentage of the Cooper Center's overall budget, support from the Wyoming Arts Council is vital in maintaining these programs, especially given fluctuations in funding from the Wyoming State Government and other sources. To ensure financial sustainability, Ark actively seeks multiple grants each year, many of which require demonstrated community support through matching funds. This particular grant serves as a crucial matching award, strengthening the program's long-term viability and success.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Ark's Arts Learning Program -- the Creative Arts Program, was established in the early 1990s to address the need for individualized opportunities for advancement among individuals with disabilities beyond traditional day habilitation and sheltered workshops offered at the time. Currently, the program provides over 100 individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities the opportunity to participate and engage in an average of 30 hours of Visual Arts and Performing Arts programs per week throughout the year. While there is no specific income requirement for participation, most students come from low-income backgrounds, with many classified as extremely low-income.

The primary objective of the Visual Arts Program is to provide students with artistic experiences and opportunities for creative expression, fostering appreciation for, exploration of, and skill development in the arts. The program

offers personalized arts activities to enhance independence by communicating ideas, emotions, and meaning while facilitating social and educational learning. The Cooper Center hosts up to 13 visual art classes each semester, typically meeting 2-3 times weekly. These classes, integral to the Visual Art Curriculum, include 2D Design, 3D Design, Drawing, Color Theory, Mixed Media, and Painting, with regular critique sessions designed to develop students' talent in assessing formal and technical aspects of art. Elective classes such as Artistic Identity, Drawing with Pastels, Illustration, Printmaking, Art Critique, Hand-Building, Resin Creations, Portrait Drawing, Photography, and Watercolor. The Performing Arts Program includes an array of courses such as Ballet, Theatre Rehearsal, Comedy Improv, Lyrical, Country Music, and Dance & Movement. Similar to the Visual Arts curriculum, these courses are subject to change each semester based on student preferences and the availability of resources. Together, both programs place significant emphasis on providing diverse experiences to students, recognizing the importance of such opportunities as most individuals with cognitive disabilities miss out on formal education in any form, let alone in the arts.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The Cooper Center defines merit through a deliberate and comprehensive approach to programming, ensuring equitable access to multidisciplinary arts, fostering professional growth with art as a valuable resource, and embedding engagement and inclusion within the Laramie community. Students benefit from a variety of Visual Arts classes that explore the Elements of Art and Principles of Design, as well as a Performing Arts Program that focuses on artistic expression through theatre, music, and movement/dance. These classes provide opportunities for students to develop fine motor skills, interpersonal communication, problem-solving, decision-making, project planning, and critical thinking—both individually and collaboratively. Engagement in the arts allows students to cultivate self-expression, pursue meaningful employment, set and achieve goals, build relationships, create connections, gain independence, and better understand and interpret the world around them.

The benchmarks within the Creative Arts Program are tailored to the unique needs of the individuals served by Ark Regional Services. All participants in the Creative Arts Program are aged 21 and above, independently selecting classes without the typical constraints imposed by conventional educational frameworks. Nonetheless, the Visual Arts and Performing Arts curriculums consistently develop students' artistic skills through practice and performances, critical thinking of various art forms and expressions, exploration of historical and cultural reviews of artists and artwork, and promotion of interdisciplinary connections within the curriculum.

Students in the visual arts program, with support, are encouraged to engage in the process to:

- Persistently apply skills and knowledge to create artistic pieces.
- Communicate the meaning and purpose of their artistic work, utilizing adaptive equipment as necessary.
- Analyze and interpret the historical and cultural context of the arts with assistance and adaptive tools.
- With assistance, explain connections between the arts, other disciplines, and their community.

Instructors and educators within the Creative Arts Program ensure students achieve the goals set above using diverse instructional strategies tailored to the specific needs of individuals with disabilities. Unlike

conventional educational frameworks, students participating in the Creative Arts Program are not graded or expected to meet advanced benchmarks. Instead, emphasis is placed on active participation, engagement,

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Kayc DeMaranville is the Artistic Director at the Cooper Center for Creative Arts and Chief Operating Officer at Ark. Kayc has been employed by Ark since 1999. She holds a Master of Arts in theatre history and criticism and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in theatre performance. She taught theatre at Chadron State College for four years. She worked semi-professionally as an actor in regional and repertory theatre for 15 years. Additionally, she was the Assistant Managing Director of the Post Playhouse at Fort Robinson State Park for eight years. Kayc has directed 27 performances produced at the Cooper Center, and she teaches a variety of classes.

Carissa Isom is the Director of Education at the Cooper Center for Creative Arts. Carissa began working at Ark Regional Services in 2014. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Wyoming and has extensive knowledge of literature and theatre performance. Carissa teaches a variety of classes, especially theatre literature.

Bob Sell, CEO of Ark Regional Services, holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Western Michigan University and has worked professionally as both a Stage Manager and Director. Bob has worked on over 60 live theatre productions and provides Stage Management for the Cooper Center. Bob also oversees technical aspects of productions, including lighting, sound, and set construction.

### **Budget Narrative**

Ark actively pursues grants from governmental agencies and private foundations as available. In addition to past WAC grants, during FY25, Ark received financial support from United Way of Albany County, Guthrie Family Foundation, City of Laramie, Wyoming Community Foundation, the Daniels Fund, Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, Wyoming Breast Cancer Initiative, Wyoming Home and Community Based Services, and the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund. Ark's organizational budget aligns with the services it provides, including Ark's funding commitment to providing excellence of care through a range of supports that promote individualistic, merit-based services. Ark receives funding through the Wyoming Home and Community Based Services Waiver. Despite being underfunded by this program, Ark continues to provide services of the highest standards through outside funding and in-kind support.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ART ASSOCIATION OF JACKSON HOLE

[WWW.ARTASSOCIATION.ORG](http://WWW.ARTASSOCIATION.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Art Education at the Art Association of Jackson Hole

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Art Association of Jackson Hole mission statement:

The Art Association of Jackson Hole is dedicated to encouraging a vital, creative community through education, engagement with, and enjoyment of visual art.

Strategic Goals 2023-2026

We value creativity, collaboration and inclusivity.

Our strategic priorities are to

Be a place for community members to learn and practice new and familiar art mediums in a variety of well-equipped studios.

Communicate our mission through comprehensive marketing campaigns and relevant, dynamic programs.

Embrace a culture of philanthropy where all team members contribute to the financial health and stability of the organization.

### Community

Local youth are served through classes and camps. Parents of pre-school aged children need instructor-led art making opportunities as part of their developmental enrichment efforts. Parents of school aged children need a variety of high-quality, affordable programs for their children to participate in after school and during the summer. For many children, out of school programs are a highlight. For their parents, these same programs provide opportunities to engage with peers in a safe, supervised environment. Art Association programs are the only visual art-making focused options held in studios dedicated to a variety of mediums and led by professional instructors. The majority of children served by our programs are ages 5-12. We offer scholarships for economically disadvantaged families.

Adults of all abilities, ages, socioeconomic status, and cultural backgrounds are served through classes and workshops. We provide adult instruction in a wide variety of mediums, and community members enjoy the use of our studios. Our scholarship fund provides access to economically disadvantaged adults who participate in our programs.

Community members from various backgrounds and ability levels are served by our Creating Hand-in-Hand program granting access to art experiences through partnerships with five local organizations, including those that serve people with disabilities, older adults, and veterans. These members of our community benefit from therapeutic art-making programs, but are not able to attend our on-site classes. We are able to make accommodations because our studios are accessible, we have an art therapy practitioner on staff and we offer remote programs.

## **Evaluation**

Education Department staff measure progress across all programs with a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods such as collecting student and teacher feedback, tracking enrollment trends, through pop-up interviews with youth participant's parents during pick up, and with adult participants at the end of a class session. Participants are provided the opportunity to evaluate programming in the final session. Students are given a likert-based rating scale, adapted to their grade level and offered in both English and Spanish, to gauge their enjoyment in, comfort with, and interest in returning to future programming. Through a direct assessment procedure, students are provided the opportunity to identify areas of future programming that would be more beneficial and accessible, including topics or projects that they would like to explore and items/activities that they would like to change. Results from direct and indirect assessments, direct observation, and enrollment numbers inform future programming. Goals for participants are process based, and partner organizations are included in the evaluation process. Educators and coordinators outside of the organization receive evaluation reporting from their participants and assist in shaping future programs. Staff also work closely with instructors to evaluate each class. Evaluation is performed in-house using surveys designed by staff. We also gather testimonials from members monthly and feature them in our newsletters. We publish the results of our evaluation efforts in a variety of ways, such as word walls and videos and on a variety of platforms such as newsletters and our annual report. Finally, we use the data to determine the success of our programmatic strategic goals.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Our operating costs from July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 will consist of Administration, Programs and Special Events expenses. Our total expenses will exceed \$1,500,000.

Administrative costs include rent, utilities, supplies, and salaries. Those expenses make up 10% of the operating budget. Our largest operating expenses are people and space. We rent over 10,000 square feet of studio and gallery space in the Center for the Arts. Our facilities constitute the majority of the programmatic spaces in the entire facility. Our administrative costs are lean and salaries are reasonable. We have ten staff members.

Program costs account for 53% of the operating budget and include class materials, camp supplies, and artist/instructor fees. As the only local arts organization that offers visual art classes and workshops for youth and adults throughout the year, we pride ourselves in including unique and high quality materials and supplies in those programs. We are also committed to offering our many qualified instructors adequate payment for their expertise.

Finally, our operating budget includes special event expenses, amounting to 37% of the operating budget. We host five events, two ceramic sales, a Fall Arts Festival awareness raising event, and a Holiday Bazaar each year. The expenses associated with events include auction platform fees, venue rental, artist commissions, and event supplies.

The \$10,000 requested operating funds will be allocated to a combination of our administrative, programmatic, and event expenses. Our request is less than 1% of our operating budget. It will primarily be dedicated to rent, program supplies, and event materials.

We are lucky to work with numerous local artists in the delivery of our mission and vision. Some of the artists we work with are Charley Daveler, Katy Fox, and Jon Stuart. Charley Daveler is a fantasy artist and writer, best known for her ongoing online serial, *Stories of the Wyr*, and debut novel, *Making the Horizon*. She has been teaching acting, writing and drawing for over a decade, prioritizing decision making, confidence and communication in her methods. Though raised in Jackson Hole, she has lived in Los Angeles, Western Australia, and New York City, packing nothing but a violin, a laptop, and 10 tons of fabric each time her wanderlust hits. She teaches many of our youth classes. Katy Ann Fox wanders through the West witnessing windblown mountains and sunlight to gather emotion and imagery for her landscape paintings. Her oil paintings host a feeling of peace and respect for her subject as she focuses on texture and color harmony. She grew up in north central Idaho, moved to San Francisco, California for her Masters in Fine Art degree at the Academy of Art University and now makes her art at the foot of the Teton Mountain Range. In addition to painting she does woodblock printing and hand thrown pottery and some sewing. Jon Stuart teaches some of our photography courses. His photographs examine the modern West. He began teaching as an assistant to Ansel Adams' Yosemite Workshops. His work has been exhibited at the National Museum of Wildlife Art, the University of Wyoming Art Museum, Nicolaysen Museum, Wyoming State Museum, and the Wyoming Arts Council Gallery.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Art Association has made visual art a vital part of creative life in Jackson Hole for 60 years, and is the leading visual arts education resource in Northwest Wyoming. Throughout 2025 our youth programs will invite pre-k through high school aged children to experience our dedication to encouraging a creative community through art education. Preschool art classes are offered weekly from 10-11 am in our Children's Art Studio focused on building basic art skills in a hands-on environment where children explore different materials. Instructors use process art to

help children grow in their artistic expression and bring home a new art piece each week. We limit the class size to seven students because parents and caregivers attend as well. We offer four semester long sessions annually, serving 28 children and their families. We also offer after school and summer camp art education programs throughout the year. After school classes are offered for children ages 5-15 in the fall, winter, and spring. Students explore mixed media, ceramics, digital illustration, drawing & painting, design and printmaking. Ten weeks of exciting summer camp sessions will also be held. Grades K-2 students will explore Wearable Art, Nature Lovers, Junkestra, Art of Storytelling, Plein Air, Artist Explorers, Toys & Games, Wild About Animals, Liquid Art, Paint/Print/Play, Magical Mythology and Mural Masters camps. Grades 3-5 students will enjoy Photojournalism, Plein Air, Construct/Sculpt/Build, Dream Home Design, Stop Motion Animation, Wearable Art, Puppet Master, Photography and Junkestra camps. Middle and high school have opportunities in Plein Air, Photography, Fashion Design camps. All five of our studios will be utilized, and instructors will regularly take kids onto The Center Lawn. Our Creating Hand-in-Hand outreach program also serves local youth. Our goal for outreach is to partner with local organizations to provide art education and therapeutic art to community members from various backgrounds and ability levels. Through all of these programs we expect to serve over 1000 local youth with 2000 hours of instruction in 100 unique classes and programs.

We also offer over 600 hours of instruction to adults through classes and workshops, from beginner through master level instruction in painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, sewing, digital and traditional photography, animation, videography, ceramics, glass fusing, and silversmithing. Some courses are multi-week formats for extended learning, while others are three hour Try-Nights requiring less commitment.

Our painting studio contains easels, tables, drawing horses, matte board cutters, and dry mount presses. Printmaking offerings include a Takach press and materials for woodcut to solarplate printing. Classes in relief printing, monotype, and broadside printing are offered as well. Photography facilities include a full darkroom, as well as a digital lab equipped with scanners, iMac computers and Adobe software. Our ceramics studio is equipped for wheel thrown, hand built, slip cast, and sculptural ceramics. The multi purpose studio is home to silversmithing, glass fusing, flameworking, and wood work.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our youth education Arts Learning goals reflect Wyoming State Fine & Performing Arts Content & Standards for Visual Art in the following ways.

Kindergarten - 11th Grade; Standard 1: Creative Expression Through Production: Students create, perform, exhibit, or participate in the arts. FPA4.1.A.1: "Students create and revise original art to express ideas, experiences and stories" will be followed throughout our 2025 summer camp programs, and fall, winter, and spring after-school programs.

Standard 2: Aesthetic Perception: Students respond to, analyze, and make informed judgments about the arts. FPA 11.2.A.1 "Students observe and describe in detail the physical properties of works of art" is adhered to in all of our programs.. For example, students in the grades 3-5 after school program Illustration on Procreate will gain a solid foundation in the processes and techniques of the digital art form. Students will learn the foundations of graphic design using an iPad pencil and the program Procreate with projects inspired by contemporary artists.

Standard 3: Historical and cultural context: Students demonstrate an understanding of the arts in relation to history, cultures, and contemporary society. FPA 4.3.A.3 “Students understand that history, environment, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other” is exemplified in all of our lesson plans by the inclusion of work by artists from diverse cultures and time periods.

Standard 4: Artistic Connections: Students relate the arts to other disciplines, careers and everyday life. FPA 4.4.A.4, FPA 8.4.A.4, and FPA 11.4.A.4. “Students demonstrate appropriate behavior in a variety of art settings” is reinforced across all classes, camps, and workshops, as students are taught safety practices in each studio around equipment and tools. FPA 8.4.A.2 and FPA 11.4.A.5 standards regarding visual arts career and recreational opportunities are addressed through our Artist Studio programs for middle and high school students.

For adult students, we have identified the following internal arts learning goals:

- 1) Offer instruction for a wide range of abilities, so students can progress through different levels of coursework at the Art Association. We offer beginning throwing in ceramics with multiple instructors throughout the year, in addition to more advanced classes such as Intermediate Wheel Throwing.
- 2) Bring acclaimed visiting and guest artists to the Art Association to give students access to the highest level of professional training and critique. We will invite local professional artists and artists from outside of Jackson to teach intensive workshops in a variety of mediums and techniques.

The goal of our Creating Hand-in-Hand programs is to offer therapeutic art making activities in an inclusive manner, regardless of ability level, background or skill. The benefits to community members of the target demographic are numerous, including mentorship, peer relationship building, problem solving and self discovery. We measure progress in these programs using student and partner organization feedback and through consistent communication with collaborators. Participants are given a likert-based rating scale to gauge their enjoyment in, comfort with, and interest to return to programming in the future. Because our programs prioritize inclusion, students are supported to participate at a level that is appropriate to their needs. Students are provided, through a direct assessment procedure, an opportunity to identify areas of future programming that would be more beneficial and accessible to them. These areas include topics or projects that they would like to explore and items/activities within current programming that they would like to change.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Art Association maximizes teaching capacity in each studio. Recruitment, training, and retention of quality instructors is a priority. There is great demand for advanced classes and workshops by guest and visiting artists, and we schedule a diverse roster of these artists each year who are known for expertise within their field. Our youth and adult instructors have teaching experience and degrees in art. They work closely with our Education staff to determine the course content and materials. Amy Goicoechea and Cara Allen, our Director of Development & Education and Education Manager, continually invite local artists to become instructors ensuring a dynamic and exciting roster of both youth and adult programming.



Below, you will find a selection of Art Association instructors, guest and visiting artists scheduled for 2025-2026:

#### Creating Hand-in-Hand Outreach:

Shana Stegman holds a BA in Fabric Design and is a certified art therapist. She leads classes with partners Community Entry Services, Red Top Meadows and more.

#### Photography & Digital Arts:

Jon Stuart has been a leading photographer in Jackson, WY for more than 30 years. He studied with Ansel Adams in the 1970s and was an assistant at the prestigious Ansel Adams Workshops in Yosemite Valley. Shannon Corsi also teaches landscape photography.

Painting, Drawing, and Printmaking: Dahee Kim and Sharon Thomas

Ceramics: Theresa Lundquist, Alice Pang, Katy Ann Fox

Sewing: Krista Gorrell

Youth Programming: Abby Paffrath, Ana Romankowski, Tessa Bennett, Ava Reynolds, Hannah Habermann and Charley Daveler. Ms. Reynolds holds a BA in studio art with a focus on printmaking from the University of Virginia and has participated as a muralist in JH Public Art's Wildwalls program. Charley Daveler is an artist and writer most recognized for her online serial, Stories of the Wyrld and her debut novel, Making the Horizon.

Visiting Artist: Assistant Professor of Art Education, Massachusetts College of Art and Design Laura Reeder is a visual artist and seasoned facilitator for arts education communities. As assistant professor of art education at Massachusetts College of Art Design, she coordinates practical and foundational experiences for emerging artist-teachers. She has been active nationally in arts education leadership as executive director of Partners for Arts Education, Newsbreak ALT/space editor for Teaching Artist Journal, arts education council member with Americans for the Arts, and currently as curriculum coordinator with eastern Suffolk BOCES Arts Education Model Documentation Dissemination research project.

#### **Budget Narrative**

The Art Association has four primary income sources: programming, fundraising, special events and other income (facility rentals, sale of art supplies).

We have a diverse, well-balanced fundraising model, seeking contributions from individuals, businesses and foundations. We also have a robust grant research and application schedule.

Membership fees and special event sponsorship are part of fundraising income.

Class tuition also provides a portion of our revenue. Tuition income fluctuates throughout the year, with influxes at key enrollment times.

We secure additional revenue through facility rentals and art supply sales.

We have committed and reliable in-kind partners and a wonderful group of volunteers. Local businesses support special events with food and beverage donations.

Local artists donate original artwork.

We often receive donations of studio equipment and various materials.

We have two endowment funds that grow annually.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ART PARTNERS

[WWW.PARTNERSJH.ORG](http://WWW.PARTNERSJH.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Art as a Foundation for Learning!

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

pARTners' mission is to integrate the arts into Teton County K-12 curriculum, sparking creativity and self-expression in students.

Our strategic goals:

1. Provide Quality Arts Education for ALL students. (Ensuring creative opportunities for all students, especially those who can't afford art classes.)
2. Secure Resources to Expand and Sustain Arts Education. (Writing grants and fundraises for additional art supplies and equipment in public schools.)
3. Raise Awareness of the Value of Arts Education. (Through social media outreach and communication, demonstrating the positive impact of arts on students, aiming to garner support.)

### Community

Jackson is a rural community with a small yet affluent population, alongside a larger low and middle-class demographic. Unfortunately, the Latino population in this area has limited access to the arts and recreational activities due to high costs. Teton County School District (2025) reports 33% of its population is Hispanic, with 28% of those students being English Language Learners (ELL). Additionally, 26% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, and 10% qualify as IDEA. These statistics determine the needs of students and guide our creative programming.

pARTners supports nondominant communities by facilitating projects for English as a Second Language (ESL), Special Education (SPED), and at-risk students. We engage teachers through targeted email correspondence, staff meetings, and individual meetings to address specific challenges. When working within the school system, pARTners collaborates with TCSD#1 and private schools to provide inclusion services. We adhere to accessibility, inclusion, and intervention guidelines set by public and private schools. We are fortunate that the schools already

have systems and IEP's in place for students with additional needs, so we can use that framework to increase access for all students. Our project and workshop locations outside of school facilities are fully accessible to everyone. We embrace diversity and accept participants without regard to race, color, sexual orientation, or disability.

## **Evaluation**

pARTners measures program success using a five-step protocol:

1. Lesson plans, with specific learning targets aligned with Fine Art and Wyoming Department of Education standards, provide objectives.
2. Formative Evaluation in a rubric ticket used by artists and teachers, which allows them to assess students based on a range of skills. This part of the assessment determines whether the learning objectives/standards have been met.
3. Student and teacher surveys collect qualitative and quantitative data via Google Forms with objectivity and anonymity, encouraging direct feedback. Collecting this data electronically enables pARTners to gather demographic and population numbers, and is an effective method for feedback, assisting in future program planning.
4. In-person debrief meetings open the door for subjective input. The team reviews learning objectives and evaluates student progress towards learning targets. These debriefs use information gathered in all three previous steps to identify areas of improvement and outline potential curriculum changes.
5. Data compilation and reports to the Board of Directors and school administrators give projects ample time to grow and improve. In the first year, we focus on successfully completing the project, and in the second year, we refine the project. If the project isn't meeting all objectives by the third year, it is discontinued and replaced.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

pARTners' greatest expense is the 30 plus hours/week Executive Director (ED) salary, associated payroll taxes, and contractor wages. All of these are higher this year due to a salary increase to better align with the cost of living in Jackson. Historically (10 years), the Executive Director's salary fell well below what other EDs are paid in Teton County, so now the current salary is fair and more congruent with the community. pARTners does not pay for health benefits at this time, but does provide a yearly HSA contribution to help offset medical costs. Additionally, local artists are hired for approximately 40 projects annually, with wages raised to \$30–\$35 per hour, up from \$28–\$30 per hour, to attract qualified artists for project facilitation. pARTners remains committed to paying fair wages to reflect the high living costs in Jackson, and continues to secure funding for these expenses independently from WAC funding.

Other notable costs include technology, marketing, and fundraising. The ED leads programming, oversees fundraising efforts, and pARTners contracts a graphic designer to produce materials and manage the website to support these initiatives.

Bookkeeping through QuickBooks Online and professional services, like tax preparation, empower a single staff member to manage all non-profit operations. A QuickBooks subscription ensures accurate record-keeping, though its annual cost consistently rises. Tax preparation, essential to compliance with IRS and Wyoming State regulations, is an inevitable expense.

Additional operational costs include rent, liability insurance, phone, internet, office supplies, and photocopies. Rising rental costs at the Center for the Arts reflect Jackson's increasing rents. Liability insurance is a necessity for operating both at The Center and in schools. Reliable phone and internet connections facilitate communication with teachers and community partners, while office supplies and photocopy expenses remain relatively minor.

The requested grant funds will primarily cover professional fees, our QuickBooks subscription, phone services, and marketing efforts. The ED will maintain alignment with the budget by monitoring monthly expenses against the proposed financial plan. Any required adjustments will be reviewed with the Board. Known for being a resourceful non-profit, pARTners achieves significant impact with a modest budget.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

For the upcoming 2024-2025 school year, pARTners plans to continue to serve 2,500 K-12 students in both public and private schools. Our program is made up of two parts: Educator Project Grants and Integrated Arts Projects.

Educator Project Grants enable individual teachers to design and deliver arts-based educational projects that align with their curriculum. Through Educator Project Grants, students receive hands-on arts instruction to deepen student engagement with what they are already learning. Fully funded, this program helps pARTners produce fresh, creative projects, with a goal of 8-10 projects for each school year. Upcoming projects through Educator Project Grants cover diverse topics, are dispersed across numerous grade levels, and are taught in multiple languages. So far this school year, pARTners has funded 4 different grants: Understanding Bees through Art, Ledger Art, Biomimicry and Parfleches, and Indigenous Beading. This year, pARTners is focusing on bringing Native artists from the Wind River Reservation to teach about N. Arapahoe and Shoshone culture through the arts. It is important to learn about the tribes that used to inhabit this region, and creative education authentically engages students.

Integrated Arts Projects are recurring programs fully integrated into Teton County schools across all grade levels (K-12). Integrated Arts Projects are vital programming in schools, aligning arts education with all academic disciplines. These projects are built by a network of teachers and qualified local artists for grade levels K-12, serving approximately 200 students per grade. Examples include: Dancing Alphabet, Kaleidoscope Art, Native American Animal Masks and Shields, Bison Hide Paintings, Wyoming Topography Maps, Teepees and Buffalo Education, Family, School and Community Flip-book, Careers in the Arts, Oregon Trail Flash Fiction and Photo Transfers, Fossil Art, Variables in Art, Symbolic Portraits, Vision Boards, JHHS Rapture Project, Photography and Photoshop Workshop, and Artist Up-Close series. We are also in the process of developing a new project, Create Your Own Dog, that uses genetics concepts and art to teach students about inheritance.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

pARTners is committed to achieving our primary goal of providing every student with the opportunity to engage in integrated art activities that support their classroom learning. Through our numerous and diverse programs, we aim to foster creativity, performance, exhibition, and participation. Utilizing the arts as a modality, we empower students to explore information in innovative ways, nurturing both their artistic and creative mindsets.

Additionally, we strive to expose every student to the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design throughout their K-12 journey. To accomplish this, we align our learning targets and success criteria with the Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Content and Performance Standards, as well as the core classroom curriculum. Classroom teachers establish specific project goals, which are then enhanced by pARTners' Executive Director with the appropriate fine arts standards.

The Fine Art standards identified by artists, educators, and pARTners' Executive Director serve as the foundation of all our projects. They include: FPA 4.1.A.3 Students apply the elements and principles of design to their artwork; FPA 4.4.A.3 Students recognize visual artists in their family and community, and explore how these artists create their work; FPA 4.4.A.2 Students identify careers and recreational opportunities in the visual arts; FPA 8.2.A.2: Students interpret art, identify subjects, themes, and symbols that communicate their knowledge of context, values and meaning; FPA 11.3.A.3: Students analyze relationships of works of art in terms of history, aesthetics, environment, and culture, and place their work within the continuum of the visual arts; and FPA4.1.D.2: Students practice and demonstrate balance, coordination, strength and range of motion in basic loco motor and non-locomotory/axial movements, moving in a variety of directions. pARTners uses these arts learning goals to provide students multiple opportunities to assess and meet their artistic and creative learning goals.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

pARTners collaborates with five local contract teaching artists, all professionally trained in the arts, along with additional specialty artists who bring unique expertise. This talented team works across 14 schools in Teton County, delivering projects that range from 4 to 25 hours of student engagement. These projects span various subjects, including art, music, physical education, history, English, math, and science. Each artist was carefully selected through a formal interview process led by the Executive Director and a board representative, based on their qualifications in art education and their experience working with children aged 5-18.

Our core artists are:

Charley Daveler; B.A. University of La Verne (concentrations in theater, set design, props and puppet making); 7 years of teaching experience at the Art Association of J.H. and a pARTner's artist for the last 4 years

Abby Paffrath; BFA University of Montana (concentration in painting, drawing, batik and design); M.A. Lewis and Clark College; 12 years of teaching experience

Emily Boespflug; BFA University of Wyoming; Post-baccalaureate study in painting and drawing; exhibiting visual artist since 2009; former Outreach Education Director at the Art Association for 5 years; implements visual arts projects K-12 for pARTners for over 9 years

Miga Rossetti; B.F.A. University of Michigan, concentration in painting and graphic design, 15 years of teaching experience and her second year with pARTners

Oona Doherty; BFA San Francisco State, concentration in dance choreography, with a minor in photography and painting. Certified in documentary studies, production and art. 25 years of experience.

## **Budget Narrative**

pARTners receives funding from diverse sources, with 9% from TCSD #1, our main partner, providing in-kind support like facilities. Old Bill's contributed 60%, while grants, foundations, and local businesses made up 32% collectively. We prioritize programming, directing most funds to artist contracts, supplies, marketing, and coordination. Operational costs, impacted by inflation, are a growing expense, with the ED's salary as the largest. Local artists earn \$30–\$35/hour to ensure fair wages. With ~40 annual projects, contract services remain a major cost. This year we are partnering with Dancer's Workshop, Public Art, and CWC to collaborate on programming and costs. Other expenses include a HSA account, a graphic designer, bookkeeping/tax prep, rent, insurance, and office essentials. Despite limited resources, the ED manages expenses carefully, ensuring pARTners still delivers quality programming.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ARTCORE, INC.

ARTCOREWY.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: ARTCORE Concerts & Outreach 2025-26

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

ARTCORE's mission is to provide opportunities for Wyoming artists and audiences. We know from input at concerts and online that we have several different audiences, and we work to present excellent performers in many styles. This gives the dance lovers, those who love popular music or classical, Western, Bluegrass, etc., valuable and fun experiences.

The public and private schools, as well as home school families and assisted living residents are invited to attend daytime 45- to 60-minute presentations by the artists who give the evening concerts, and the children are given passes for three to come free with a paying adult to the evening events. Thus, the youth can create opportunities for family outings, where they will encounter the joy of

sharing live events in community.

### Community

The Casper Area is five hours from Denver, four from Billings, and six from Salt Lake City, metropolitan areas where the performing arts thrive. Many of our citizens make trips to take advantage of the opportunities, especially to Denver and even Fort Collins and other Northern Colorado cities. And, many go beyond to New York or Chicago, New Orleans, etc. Those folks have wonderful experiences and special meals and nice stays in lovely hotels, and spend a great deal of money.

ARTCORE works to bring the world of the Arts to our people for modest prices in accessible halls. We invite the students and teachers of public and private schools, home school families, and assisted living residents to attend our daytime programs free of charge. In addition, we invite the children to gather their families and friends and return for the evening concerts by the same artists with three students admitted free with a paying adult. The schools are site-based with small budgets, and we want everyone to be able to come to our programs, so we do not charge the schools for bringing their students. The Administrators, Teachers, and Bus Drivers are our partners to arrange for 10:30 and 12:45 daytime programs. The mix of elders, arriving with their walkers and chairs and the elementary students is fun to see, and our venues work also for young students with disabilities. We are happy to help with any special needs. For instance, teachers will let us know if students have sight problems, and we will



see that they and their mentors have the chance to sit close to the performers to have the best chance to participate and enjoy.

## **Evaluation**

We invite attendees to fill out evaluation pages telling us where they learn about our performances, which concerts they attend, including giving the performers a score from 1 to 5 and adding comments. They are welcome to suggest possible performers. The forms also are available online, and the folks who regularly receive emails about upcoming events also are urged to provide evaluations.

The ARTCORE Board Members work the shows and evaluate the performances and the reactions of the audience members at each event. As people arrive, they share their excitement to hear performers again or to experience ones that are new to them. At intermissions and after the performances, they tell us their favorite songs or stories. Sometimes we are sure of artist popularity, like with the Glenn Miller Orchestra. We were surprised at the number of people who came to hear Duo Two Accordions, a father and daughter team, and happy to find that several of them had played or still play accordion!

I recently visited a new doctor and was surprised and delighted that he and his nurse wife recognized me. It turned out that their son loved the Taiko drums so much one morning that they HAD to take back to our evening performance. At the Movie Palace, a woman with teenagers stopped to say she remembered when I introduced ARTCORE shows when she was growing up - and I told her that still was happening.

It is nice to know that our programs make a lasting impression.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

The grant funds will go directly to the honoraria of ARTCORE's performers.

To begin the season on July 6th, five-time Emmy winner Mark Oblinger and the local Cory McDaniel Duo with Eric Moon will perform folk, pop, and original compositions, after meeting and performing together last year and forming a friendship.

Golden Bough performs audience favorites from 4.5 decades of recording and international touring, singing in three-part harmony and playing an array of acoustic instruments: Celtic harp, guitar, octave-mandolin, accordion, violin, penny whistle, and bodhran. With melodies, instrumentals, and stories, Golden Bough captures the essence and joy of traditional folk music. With their performances, Calle Sur immerses audiences in the soundscapes and rhythms rooted in many Latin American cultures. Edgar East's and Karin Stein's work on stage and in educational settings is shaped by their life-long personal and professional experiences: both are immigrants to the United

States who have undergone firsthand the process of adaptation to a new culture. Both of these groups will do school outreach, and Calle Sur will give a panpipe workshop.

In ARTCORE's fifth year of collaboration with David Street Station's FIEST WYO, we will present the headliner Mariachi Garibald of Los Angelesi. This is a chance for us to connect with the Spanish community and provide a free outdoor event for the whole community to enjoy.

Our community loves Western music, and after the Bar J Wranglers retired, we were grateful for a patron to introduce us to the Cody Cattle Company. This will be their second appearance, and at the first, we found out that three of them perform in Arizona during the winter - and we have locals who love hearing them there.

We will present two tribute artists - Jim Curry's wonderful JOHN DENVER, including some of the video John used with his songs, and the Key of G Live! developed after AJ Bisto was recruited by a cruise line to perform as Garth for one of their variety shows. Due to AJ's natural vocal having an uncanny resemblance to the sound of Garth Brooks he has been encouraged by numerous industry professionals to create a tribute show to the #1 solo selling artist of all time. Rich history comes along with another group. The Folk Legacy Trio are George Grove, formerly with the Kingston Trio for 41 years, Rick Dougherty, former member of the Limelites and Kingston Trio for 25 years and Jerry Siggins, former lead singer for 27 years of the legendary doo-wop group The Diamonds."

TAKE3 performs over 60 concerts in the U.S. each season. They are loved for the variety of repertoire they offer, their top-notch technical and musical skills, as well as their amazing on-stage presence and energy. In 25/26, TAKE3 will be offering their new production, JUKEBOX ROCK: A Tribute to Hits from the 70's. They will also be touring with their show "Where Rock meets Bach". We just got a deal on this one today and don't know which show.

Rounding out our variety of offerings, with many giving school programs, we have Denver Taiko, from London with Opera and Broadway - Tenors UnLimited, cello and guitar/banjo with Acoustic Eidolon, original works with Bettman & Halpin, and Casper native, now in England, soprano Lila McConigley.

We hope people will enjoy the variety of our touring programs, and we also will champion many locals in concerts and in our Music & Poetry Series.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

ARTCORE is committed to providing opportunities that will augment the work that teachers do in their classrooms and in their studios. We are forever grateful to the administrators and teachers who realize the extra planning and energy expended in bringing students to our programs are worthwhile. We carefully choose performers who are excellent in their disciplines AND who are teachers. The students are taught about the style of music or dance and its history. Frequently, volunteers get the chance to go to the stage and try out steps or instruments.

Our outreach programs take place in the same venues as the evening concerts, so the students learn about acting respectfully and finding a sense of community, as they gather. Recently, hundreds of children were streaming into Highland Park Church to hear and see the dancing of the Colorado Children's Chorale. The elders of Mountain Plaza Assisted Living arrived with their walkers and canes and chairs, and all action stopped in respect, while they entered the hall and took their seats.

Question and answer sessions frequently follow the performances, and it is apparent from the questions that teachers and home school parents have given the young people some background about what they will be seeing and hearing. When the elders of Mountain Plaza or Primrose or Meadow Winds are in attendance, performers sometimes ban them from answering questions they pose, to give the children the chance to show their knowledge.

With dance companies, we ask for school programs and beyond that, master classes. Whenever there are enough dancers in a company, we request pairs of dancers go to the Casper College Dance Department and individual studios. If that is not possible, we invite community dance students to come to the stage after the school programs for class, and sometimes, advanced students are allowed to take class along with the dancers of the company. It is exciting when local dancers can be involved in the performance of the traveling company,

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

We bring a variety of performers for students to experience different styles of music and dance. By coming to our programs, students learn the disciplines of concert etiquette, listening skills, and following directions, if they get to go on stage or do movements at their seats. In addition, they have a blast, enjoying the performances and seeing their teachers connect with the music and dance. We want to help them develop a love of live performance and the joy it can bring!

With secondary outreach, the performers teach individual classes about their music and instruments and get into more detail of composing and performing. We hope youth will be inspired to hone their own skills and follow their dreams.

With dance, the masses in the daytime programs get the chance to learn about dance styles and the way they fit music and the excitement when the two are joined. The master classes students get specific lessons to help support what the local teachers are having them do and help them move farther toward excellence.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Denver's Ballet Ariel will bring its production of THE LION, THE WITCH, & THE WARDROBE to elementary students, home school families, and elders, as well as the technical theater classes of Natrona County High School in two sessions on November 5th. ARTCORE Board Member Rebecca Hebert danced with that company for five years. She will collaborate with a representative from the company who will audition local dancers to be included in the evening concert, and they will have rehearsals with Rebecca before they get to work with the company on November 4th and 5th. The young dancers will have the excitement of learning choreography, wearing costumes, and, hopefully, being inspired to work hard to attain the skills of the professional dancers.

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The members of Soul Street Dance are from inner city Houston and they are fabulous street dancers who present the whole history of how that art form was developed. They have come every other year since the 1990's, and their first activity here, by request of the Juvenile Detention Center, was to share dance and the scary stories of their lives with the inmates. The dancers could have lived lives of crime, but they chose to become amazing artists who have represented the United States State Department over seas. They challenge the inmates directly, and the students in two elementary shows in a more gentle way to find what they love and work hard to succeed. They will give master classes on stage at the concert venue after the school shows and at Casper College.

Possessed by Paul James is the name Konrad Wert uses, because of his huge respect for his grandfather. A full time special education teacher in Texas, he will use part of his Spring Break to give two elementary programs, one secondary outreach, and a concert in Casper. He plays fiddle, banjo, guitar, and stomp box with great enthusiasm and sings of positive values and optimism, even when times are tough.

Australian Paul Taylor will bring the culture of Australia to elementary students and delight them with his stories and didjeridoo playing. He will be joined by Laramie's musical group Lights Along the Shore for two elementary programs and an evening concert. At the Nicolaysen Art Muaeum, he will teach all ages of the community to make and play didjeridoos they make from pvc pipe and paint.

Cleo Parker Robinson Dance from Denver will include elements of Black history in its school programs and concert. The dancers will split up to give students at the local dance schools the chance to learn and be inspired in small class settings. The buoyant personalities of Cleo and her dancers draw audiences into their love of dance and give students fun experiences on stage.

The universal message of the performers is to work to discover what you love and strive for excellence.

## **Budget Narrative**

ARTCORE is very fortunate to have huge support from the hotels, restaurants, and venues that support our work with reduced fees and trade-outs. 200 businesses and individuals purchase ads in our series book, give donations, and donate their time. One summer week has teams of volunteers following routes to place thousands of series books on doorsteps, saving postage and helping mail another 1700 to the state legislators, media, and out-of-town folks on our mailing list.

Natrona County School District No. 1, the Wheeler Foundation, Rocky Mountain Power, the Wyoming Community Foundation - Casper, Creative Arts West, and the Wyoming Arts Council, which is stellar among state agencies in its work to reach the full state, are our critical partners.

Ticket sales have been very interesting this year! We always sell at the door, but many people are purchasing online.. Operating expenses are very low, with everything going toward providing excellent experiences.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ARTS CHEYENNE

[HTTP://WWW.ARTSCHEYENNE.COM](http://www.artscheyenne.com)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Empowering Cheyenne Arts Development

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Arts Cheyenne's (AC) mission is to "create opportunities for community enrichment through arts and culture programming and advocacy." We provide arts and culture services through 5 program areas: The Cheyenne Artwalk, the Cheyenne ArtHaus, the Cheyenne Arts Celebration, the Cheyenne Creativity Center, and the Art in Public Places program.

In 2024, our board updated our 5-year Strategic Plan for the next phase of organizational development. With an emphasis on sustainability, fund development, and growing the programs that we already have, the organization sought to ensure that our impact and storytelling become stronger, and that we become the organization our community looks to for arts and culture. AC is working ensure that our Director and staff have adequate pay that is commensurate with national standards of wage. Currently all parties are below this threshold and in order to retain staff talent and avoid burnout, one of the our key priorities is to reach this goal quickly. The organization is utilizing a robust year-round fund development strategy, growing donors, supporters, and friends that can convert to dedicated sustainable annual income. Additionally, the Cheyenne Creativity Center (our local arts center, opened 2 years ago) remains paramount to the success and earned income capabilities of the organization. The current location of this center has been listed for sale for several years, and AC will take a stronger look at understanding what makes the most sense for a permanent home for this facility.

Regarding programming, the organization has been successful at facilitating thoughtful, engaging programming that reaches a wide breadth of the community. AC will continue to grow programming based on what we already have and do well, before adding new programs. Regarding arts advocacy, AC will improve organizational storytelling around the arts, demonstrating the impact of local economic growth in the industry and generating arts entrepreneur support.

### Community

AC serves the broader Laramie County and surrounding areas with all of our programming and activities. This area is generally composed of 91% white, 16% Hispanic or Latino, 2.5% Black or African American, and 1.4% Asian individuals, from a total population count of 100,984 (from the 2023 Census data). 49% of our community

members are female, with 17% over the age of 65, and 22% under 18. Our population is generally well educated, with 94% having a High school diploma, and 30% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Our median household income is \$76k, and 63.4% of our population is in the civilian workforce. This data set is key to our understanding of who we serve and who we see attending our events, workshops, and other activities, and falls in line with our found audience group, which is often female, working-class and professional workers, and older adults, close to or in retirement.

For accommodation, the Creativity Center facility is fully accessible for all physical needs and can be rearranged in a variety of ways for additional accommodation. We have access to interpreters and multi-faceted forms of communication for teaching if needed. Our online accessibility will be improved with a website update coming this spring, and will list all of the opportunities for inclusion that we have available across all of our programming. We offer low-cost ticket options for our workshops, no call-for-art application fees, and low-cost vendor fees for the annual Arts Celebration. The Arts Celebration is held outdoors, with accessible access to parking, vendors, and all festival aspects. The ArtHaus (a mobile art gallery) requires a ramp upgrade for accessibility, and we are hoping to add this accommodation this year.

## **Evaluation**

Throughout all of our programming, our focus is on providing a wide range of artistic resources and cultural exposure throughout the community. We track a large set of quantitative data, including impact numbers from foot traffic and visitations; sales purchases; event attendance; social media and website analytics. We offer pre and post surveys with certain courses and events, and measure attendance and retention rates year over year across our programs.

We utilize qualitative data found through conversations, workshop surveys, community outreach campaigns, and through social media. We solicit feedback surveys for our teachers and facilitators, ensuring that the pedagogy used in our workshops and other areas is effective. For our annual report, we reach out to specific individuals to learn more about what keeps them engaged and participating with our activities, leveraging these insights as case studies for local engagement. These 'human' methods of understanding our impact are spread across all of our programming, ensuring that we have good knowledge around who attends what arts and culture activities, and what those activities mean to the members of our community.

All evaluation is collected by AC staff and on occasion a volunteer or board member. These individuals have been guided in what to look for and how to engage the audience so that data is collected effectively. Data is then interpreted by our Executive Director, who has a background in community and economic development and is able to interpret data trends over time, understanding how to adjust and make changes based on community feedback.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Arts Cheyenne has a 12-person board of directors, and is staffed by one full time and two part time individuals. All programming and organizational activities are facilitated by the staff, with support from the board. Much of staff

time is spent in administrative tasks such as organizing exhibits and workshops, programming, attendance at events, marketing and communications, and ensuring that internal operations run smoothly.

Our annual operating budget is around \$270,000, with about \$80,000 applied towards staff salaries. Our Executive Director is currently only supported by \$30,000 in operational support from our local tourism entity, and that amount is included in the \$80k mentioned. Our physical location at the Cheyenne Creativity Center averages around \$10k to operate annually, including utilities, general maintenance, workshops, and consumables. We are fortunate that we do not currently pay a monthly rent and that the utilities payment equates to a 'rental' amount for the building. However we have set aside funds in the event of a move and for future need should these costs arise. The remaining amount in our budget is used to support our five program areas. A partnership with the City of Cheyenne covers our public art agreement. Artwalk is supported through venue fees and sponsorships for the monthly event. Various local, state, federal grants, sponsorships and donations, and earned income cover the Creativity Center, the ArtHaus, and the annual Arts Celebration.

For this grant, operational support will be allocated towards staff to help bolster salaries, contributing to the effort to bring these three individuals closer to a livable wage. This will be combined with earned income, which is not inhibited by a particular use, as well as any sponsorships and donations that are also not restricted to a specific use.

### **Project Support Narrative**

WAC CSG funds for projects will be utilized to support two key program initiatives of Arts Cheyenne: The Cheyenne ArtHaus and the Cheyenne Arts Celebration.

The Cheyenne ArtHaus, a mobile art gallery in the form of a tiny home, was launched in 2021. The gallery is constructed on a trailer base with interior gallery walls and an internal hanging system. The ArtHaus is programmed with monthly calls-for-art that are free to apply to, and features unique show themes such as the popular 'Fiber and Found' show, which features fiber and found object artworks. This 11,000 lb trailer is hauled to various events, activities, schools and other areas of the county (including a few trips to Colorado and Laramie) in order to bring an art gallery environment to areas of the population not always exposed. Our average annual attendance for the ArtHaus is around 2500.

For 2025, the ArtHaus is expanding programming to go beyond just the viewing of art, but to include make-and-take workshops, pop-up demonstrations, and other engagement activities. This will be staffed by a seasonal intern (who is covered through other grant means), and requires a driver knowledgeable in maneuvering the 22' trailer. Funds for this portion of the grant will support the driver, who is paid per haul. Generally drivers utilize their own vehicle and these funds help to cover gas, time, and any other expenses that may be incurred.



The Cheyenne Arts Celebration is an annual single day arts festival event, featuring around 40+ visual artist vendors and around 20 musicians, with an average annual attendance of 2000 individuals. This is the only arts festival of its kind taking place in Laramie County, and continues to grow as a local and regional favorite. 2025 marks the 13th year for the event, having undergone several iterations and changes over the years. New this year includes a set of artist demonstrations such as woodworking, pottery/wheel throwing, printmaking, weaving, and more. Funds through the CSG grant will support performing musicians and artist demonstrations, ensuring that everyone sharing their craft is supported.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

At the Cheyenne Creativity Center, we provide weekly workshops covering a wide range of arts education concepts and skills-based courses. Our general audience is made up of adult arts learners between the ages of 25-70, as well as emerging artists who are exploring work on a more professional level. We have specifically chosen not to focus on children's education since there is a wider variety of resources for this education in our community.

Our workshops occur in two formats: monthly drop-in sessions that are donation-based and utilize an on-hand facilitator for the content, and instructor-led, ticketed workshops that focus on learning a specific subject. An example of one of our drop-in sessions include our 'Monthly Open Studio' led by board member Steve Knox. A live model is available and Steve is present to work alongside participants, answer questions, and provide feedback as requested. Participants come with their own supplies and materials and have an opportunity to engage with others while practicing the anatomy of the human form. This drop-in session solicits for an optional \$5 donation to participate.

Our instructor-led workshops focus on skills-based arts education, and on subjects that range through all media: from painting, drawing, printmaking, collage and assemblage, paper arts, book making, and fine craft. We also host workshops on color theory, arts entrepreneurship (such as business skills for artists), and other topics of interest based on feedback. In each of our instructor-led workshops, we ask that historical context, education on supply and process, and skill, are all presented and taught as a part of each session.

We also frequently rent the Center out for a fee, allowing area teaching artists to facilitate workshops during the afternoons, reaching a wider audience and taking a deeper dive into topics like 'Beginning and Intermediate Drawing' and general painting practices. Many of these courses started as a part of our Creative Aging programming, and demonstrated a defined need for more for this group, also offering practical skill development. Adding these courses during the afternoons have filled this need and livened up the Center.

The instructors providing our workshops are a combination of AC staff and board members, as well as local and regional artists with capability and background in arts instruction. We book 1-2 teaching artists (outside our staff and board) per month, and this, combined with ongoing concurrent programming, fills the Center with a wealth of arts education. Each non-Arts Cheyenne staff or board instructor is provided with a \$200 stipend per class, which breaks down to \$50 per hour for a two hour class, and up to \$100 towards planning time. AC staff and board

instructors are not provided payment outside of regular earnings for their courses, but instead provide this as an opportunity to gain more earned income for the organization.

While all of our courses are offered for fun and engagement, at our core we want to ensure that participants come away from each course with new art skills and techniques, and a renewed sense of love for art creation. It's important to us that participants have a positive experience in the arts, and are therefore more likely to support community arts efforts based on their own personal values and experiences.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

With each workshop we teach, we want our participants to come away with a finished project and a new technique or skill. That simple format is the basis of how we plan and what types of workshops we look to provide. From there, we build on that core idea to include introducing new media, revisiting basic techniques, and finding projects that are exciting and innovative to our participants.

Many of the people who attend our workshops come from a wide variety of creative backgrounds: from novice creators, people revisiting skills they've lost, people looking for new techniques, or advanced creatives who want to be a part of a community. As we program our workshops for each week, we develop ideas and reach out to teaching partners to help fulfill this wide range of needs.

In our monthly drop-in's, the prime goal is to get people in a room together, creating. From there, we hope to impart a new experience or skill based on the use of a model or a prompt. Over time, we've found that the same participants attend over and over, and welcome newcomers easily, creating a network and climate of acceptance in the creation of art.

As indicated, our instructor-led courses are more focused on a specific subject, and we ensure that the teachers we invite to teach are knowledgeable and advanced users of that subject. With each teaching artist, we discuss what techniques, skills, and materials they would like to share, and ensure they are comfortable with the process of teaching. The goal is to make sure both the instructor and the participants have a positive experience in the workshop, and come away wanting to either teach or create more in the future.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The following artists are our prime instructors via Arts Cheyenne. These individuals have a background in education and workshop programming.

Steve Knox

Steve is an art teacher at East High School in Cheyenne, a successful visual artist with an art business, and the Board President of Arts Cheyenne. He regularly participates in local and regional art vendor events, and has built

his art business up to include several local and regional collectors. At the Center, Steve facilitates our monthly Open Studio and has taught workshops on vendor education, basic drawing, and basic painting techniques.

Tati Thompson

Tati is the Program Manager for Arts Cheyenne, and facilitates our gallery shows and exhibitions, manages our gift shop, and teaches several workshops. Tati's specialty is heavy body acrylic and watercolor, and she has also led workshops in papercraft, mono printing, and urban sketching.

Desirée Brothe

Desirée is the Executive Director of Arts Cheyenne, with a background in community and economic development, public art programming, and arts education. Also managing an art business on the side, Desirée primarily works in acrylic and watercolor, mixed media sculpture, and printmaking. In addition to teaching lessons on these subject areas, Desirée has taught workshops on assemblage, bookbinding and teaches many of our arts in business education courses.

Other community Artists, past and future:

We are always looking to expand our workshop offerings and provide teaching opportunities to more artists, and we want to broaden our reach to include individuals with unique styles and skills. These relationships are facilitated through direct outreach as well as artist-led inquiries. Through each conversation, we establish a partnership based on our teaching contract. Below is a list of some of the individuals we have had conversation with for future workshops in 2025:

Tracey Swaim--Stained glass

Mary Cunningham--Intaglio and etching

Sadie Clarendon--Relief Printing; intaglio; fiber arts

Elsie Arntzen--color theory; basic drawing/painting children's art camp (summer, 2025)

Kelsey Giroux--Van Dyke Brown Process Photography; bookbinding

Izabella Tysver--Book binding, paper making, and collage

Dante Lumsden--Monthly comics club and character workshops

Cathie Chadwick--food-based courses for entertaining

Sandie Whitman--Oil painting

Deena J. Harkins--Watercolor

## **Budget Narrative**

Arts Cheyenne has a diverse income mix. Sixty percent of our budget comes from individual donations, corporate sponsorships, and grants. The remaining forty percent derives from earned income through workshop fees, retail sales, and artist studio rentals. Additionally, that forty percent is made up from public art management service fees, a partnership with Visit Cheyenne and the City of Cheyenne, event concessions and other small revenue sources.

While the mix of funds we receive allows us to run the basics of all of our programming, it does not allow for future growth. Arts Cheyenne has created a fund development plan that leverages events, activities, and other areas of fundraising opportunity to help offset administrative and operational costs. Our goal continues to be to diversify our funding streams to strengthen our overall financial health, ensuring that we can continue to provide the diverse level of programming we currently deploy, and avoid staff burnout and turnover.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ARTS IN ACTION

[WWW.ARTSINACTIONWY.COM](http://WWW.ARTSINACTIONWY.COM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Peter Mawanga Residency

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Arts in Action, started in 1966, promotes arts, artists, and arts education in the Riverton Wyoming area. We produce arts and crafts fairs as well as local- and visiting-artist clinics, concerts, and residencies. We are especially focused on providing cost-free opportunities for k-12 and college students to engage with artists and the arts. Activities in the last three years especially focused on arts education have included in-school clinics in Riverton and Pavillion by Dave Munsick the Songteller, annual productions by Missoula Childrens' Theatre, and free performances/master classes for students by the BYU Living Legends Dance Ensemble and the Seraph Brass Quintet.

### Community

Riverton is a community of approximately 10,000 residents. Nearby communities to whom we market also include Lander, Shoshoni, Pavillion, and the Wind River Reservation. There are several needs in this area that we seek to meet. The first relates to the geographic isolation in our area, and the resulting lack of access to professional arts programming for the public and young students. Ability to pay is also an access issue in this area, as this area has a high level of income inequality. While our budget does not allow us to provide all experiences to the public free-of-charge, all of our educational programming is offered to students at no cost as well as several of our public events. Those events that are ticketed are done so at a rate far below what would be paid for a similar-quality product in a major metro area. Additionally, even at ticketed events, we have never turned away someone (especially students) who have been unable to pay. A second need is for the the skilled artists who live in our local area to receive exposure and fair compensation for their art. Day in the Park, Winter Art Fair, and our local artist recitals all provide local artists and craftspeople the opportunity to market their creative work to the public. Types of accommodations requested recently relate to access for vendor fair participants (mobility limitations, etc.) or concerned difficulty with paying to participate in certain programs. We have handled these requests on a case-by-case basis. Examples of accommodations we've provided include assistance with loading/unloading, change of artist location to be closer to doors/parking, and allowing individuals with financial challenges to participate in ticketed events without charge.

## **Evaluation**

Criteria for community impact differs based on the type of event. For the arts/crafts fairs, we are looking to see high quality AND high-quantity engagement between vendors and the publics. Ways for measuring this range from informal (how crowded does the fair look compared to other years?) to our formal post-event survey we send to vendors to solicit their descriptions and feedback of the event. Some answers in the survey are organized in a way that we receive quantitative data that can be compared from year to year.

For in-school clinics and residencies, we are looking to see students being engaged and inspired by the arts and artists. We try to always have an Arts in Action board member at these clinics in order to count the number of students participating and to observe the student experience. We also follow up with cooperating teachers after the experience both to receive the teachers feedback on how valuable the activity was for students (and often find that students have continued to talk about it for days after).

For public performances and concerts, we look at both the quality of engagement exhibited by the audience and the quantitative impact in terms of how many members of the public attended. The former is largely assessed informally through observation during the production and conversation with attendees. This is often the most authentic way to gauge public reaction to an event. We have recently begun using the Zeffy platform for ticketing and tracking event attendance, which will make it much easier to view how participation numbers change over time. This also allows us to survey attendees after the event if we have specific feedback we're looking for.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

We are planning to bring Peter Mawanga to Riverton in September 2025 for a public performance and in-school residency. Peter is a musician and cultural ambassador from the African nation of Malawi and will be traveling along with an instrumental trio. The planned schedule will consist of two days of workshops in Riverton schools and an evening concert in the CWC Peck Arts Center which will include students from the daytime clinics performing alongside Peter and his band. Costs to Arts in Action will include the performance and clinic fee as well as lodging expenses for the musicians. Project support funds would be used to cover 50% of the estimated lodging expense as well as 50% of the performance fee cost.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

We are planning to bring Peter Mawanga to Riverton in September 2025 for a public performance and in-school residency. Peter is a musician and cultural ambassador from the African nation of Malawi and will be traveling along with an instrumental trio. The planned schedule will consist of two days of workshops in Riverton schools and an evening concert in the CWC Peck Arts Center which will include students from the daytime clinics

performing alongside Peter and his band. Costs to Arts in Action will include the performance and clinic fee as well as lodging expenses for the musicians. Arts learning funds would be used to cover 50% of the in-school clinic cost.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Desired learning outcomes for students in the clinic:

- 1). Learn about the history and culture of the African nation of Malawi.
- 2). Learn about the music practices and influences in Malawi.
- 3). Sing, perform on instruments (or body percussion) music led and arranged by the artist.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Artist: Peter Mawanga. In addition to being a successful worldwide touring musician, Peter has extensive experience working with school groups, most recently in Lander in 2024.

Schools/Teacher: The core clinic experience is being planned for the instrumental students, particularly in the percussion and jazz areas, at Riverton High and Middle Schools where the instructors are Andy Peeks and Dan Foster. The choir program at RMS and RHS will have a new teacher in Fall 2025, so that individual will need to be consulted at that time regarding participation of vocal students. The option exists to invite students from other schools to attend these events as well, or if there are schedule downtimes, to have Peter visit other schools in Riverton/the surrounding region.

### **Budget Narrative**

Arts in Action funds its activities through a combination of fundraisers, event ticket sales, and grant funding. Our spending falls into four categories, that are listed below in order of greatest to smallest.

- 1). Artist/performance fees for visiting AND local artists. This is always the largest part of our budget as costs for high-quality presenters from outside of the state/region are substantial. The large percentage of our budget that this represents aligns with our core mission of providing access to high quality experiences in our geographically isolated location.
- 2). Other costs associated with our core activities include venue rental charges, insurance, and advertising/promotion.
- 3). This year, Arts in Action provided a scholarship to a local student to defer the expenses of traveling to the University of Wyoming for an audition. This is something we hope to continue in the future.

4). Administrative taxes and fees (Wyoming Sec. of State, etc.)



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ASK AFTER SCHOOL FOR KIDS

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: After School for Kids (ASK) - Creative Community Development Starts with Youth

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of ASK (After School for Kids) is to provide safe and effective after school and out-of-school time programming that inspires and empowers youth, aligns with the school day, supports families and strengthens the community.

ASK serves over 200 students per year. We are in 6 elementary schools including pre-school programs in three schools. We are in Title I schools where most students receive free or reduced lunch. We engage students in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math programming. We provide homework help and healthy snacks after school. We go beyond what seems possible in an after school program, and we inspire students to think big too.

We are also at Triumph high school, working with Cheyenne's most underserved teen population. At the high school level, we provide a comprehensive curriculum that combines academic support, career readiness training, and life skills development. Our goal is to create a stimulating environment where students can explore their passions, build confidence, and prepare for a bright future.

Thanks in large part to the WAC grant, the ASK program has built an ongoing arts program for our students. It is hands-on, consistent, and aligned with project based learning. We do a crafting and project making with tangible supplies, in addition to tech and digital arts projects. We utilize the creative process to support youth mental and emotional health.

The work that we did this past year to document our program and impact shows more than we can tell:  
<https://youtu.be/072y4eZxE7c>

### Community

ASK supports families and the broader community of Cheyenne, by focusing on providing safe and meaningful space for young people after school and out of school. Most of our direct programming is with youth who are on free and reduced lunch. There are no specific program requirements that exclude specific groups of students. All families are welcome to apply.

Our staff includes former and current high school students, college students, young and middle age mothers, professional educators, and elders who are in the last stages of their careers. We are a women-lead organization. Our staff includes men, women, non-gender conforming individuals, people with disabilities, and people from all walks of life. Our students come from all corners of society, from varied identities and backgrounds; we partner with artists whom they can relate to.

ASK works with students whose families struggle in a variety of ways, beginning with their economic situations, which often creates additional social barriers. ASK serves students who have mental, emotional and physical disabilities. ASK serves a high percentage of lower income and working class students, in proportion to the state.

In addition to daily after-school and summer programming, we host various community events throughout the year. Students' adult family members are invited to these events. We observe disability support guidelines and host events in accessible spaces. Grandparents are welcome. Military veterans and other folks who are often forgotten by society are often in attendance at our events. Several of our Eat Read Grow events in recent years have been emceed by or hosted by military veterans.

## **Evaluation**

ASK utilizes a variety of data collection sources to determine academic and program outcomes:

1). Survey of Academic Youth Outcomes, developed by National Institute of Out of School Time (NIOST).

SAYO Evaluation System: Pre and Post Teacher Survey are completed in the following areas: Behavior, Engagement in Learning, and Homework Completion.

2). Our Program Outcome Report measures Fall, Spring and Summer outcomes, based on the following two overall goals:

a). Programs demonstrate Academic Improvement and Continuous Quality Improvement for Student Targeted Assistance in Language Arts and Math. Average below basic reading and math scores as measured by WYTOPP inform curriculum development along with project based learning and creative arts. The two mesh to ensure high level interest activities are readily accessible through our comprehensive program design.

b). Programs develop after school activities and educational opportunities that positively affect student outcomes.

- 3). Student Demographics and school needs assessments also inform programs and activities we can align with school day learning goals.
- 4). The ASK Educational Consultant administers English/Language Arts/Reading and Math Assessments in Fall and Spring.
- 5). The ASK Program Staff works with in-school teachers, ASK Teachers and paraprofessionals to complete end-of-the-year Classroom Teacher Survey to ascertain data reflecting student improvement . Annual Classroom Teacher Surveys measure homework completion, class participation, school day attendance, improvements in Language Arts and Math, grades and proficiency. These measures are recorded in the Fall, Summer, and Spring also inform summer learning and reading and math program delivery for fall.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

We documented our work in 2024 and produced this 14-min mini-documentary: <https://youtu.be/072y4eZxE7c>

ASK is seeking support to sustain creative programming across six elementary schools sites and one alternative high school site, including:

- Weekly arts programming within the areas of poetry and creative storytelling, visual arts projects, STEAM curriculum, and music appreciation. This happens every day after school and during out-of-school time in the summer.
- Arts journaling practices multiple times per week across various academic disciplines. All students will receive their own individual journal funded by this WAC Grant, along with arts journaling supplies to support personal documentation practices and self-expression
- Guest artist visits and arts residencies (more information about partner artists provided in other sections of this grant)
- Project-based learning work that includes creative processes and practices.
- Summer programming that focuses on blackout poetry, painting, collage, and collective art making practices. (Ex project: students explore and create mythical creatures and habitats, encouraging imagination, storytelling, and improvisation)
- High school students explore various creative practices and processes, and engage with artists and creative professionals in workshops and projects. Past field trip highlights include visiting Meow Wolf Denver, music education workshops at Youth on Record, and a terrarium workshop at Sunshine Plant company in Cheyenne. ASK high school students also regularly practice culinary arts in a commercial kitchen. Numerous former program participants have entered college at LCCC or joined ASK staff to support elementary student programming.

ASK maintains an ambitious after-school curriculum. We are not a baby sitting program. We strive to support educational and academic growth. Through arts integration and specific arts projects, we are able to make more of our programming hands on, to encourage imagination and innovation. We aim to provide as many entry points as possible to support different student learning needs and interests.

Strategies:

- The implementation of a unified curriculum across all sites that incorporates all core academic areas of early childhood education.
- Establishing empowering learning centers where kids feel safe, respected and supported to exhibit curiosity, ask questions, collaborate, take healthy risks, and find their voices.
- ASK provides professional development for our staff teachers, artistic experience for students, and we partner with artists to deliver inspirational curriculum and programming.

All funding will be used to support arts curriculum and youth creative projects. Program and Project target populations include:

1. Children: To provide free, positive & safe after-school and OST (Out of School) environments for students, kindergarten through 6th grade, and high school programming at Triumph High School.
2. Families: The ASK program provided free after school care serving over 280 students, impacting approximately 280 families who struggle with economic barriers to quality after school.
3. Schools: We currently serve seven total LCSD#1 Free and reduced and Title I schools. Our programs support the work of school-day staff and assist the Principals of our host schools in fulfilling their missions to assist families in need.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

These are the programs and services broadly planned over the course of our project timeframe. These program elements are regular and ongoing:

- Providing arts journals, canvasses, and art journaling supplies for approximately 225 students (elementary and high school)

- Engaging all elementary student participants in visual arts, storytelling, poetry and craft-making experiences
- Engaging all high school student participants in arts and entrepreneurship seminars for career industries preparation
- Engaging in summer participatory outdoor mural art projects, along with other school renewal, garden and beautification projects
- Exploring creative culinary practices from around the world, and hands-on culinary work with Triumph high school students

2025-2026 Program priorities:

Camp Invention: A program designed to help students create, collaborate and gain confidence through building prototypes and solving real-world problems.

STEAM Project Based Learning Mini-Projects: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math - Integrating and finding connections between these academic fields is a focal point for ASK. Making it fun, relevant, and approachable for elementary kids is a challenge that we love.

ASK Mentoring Program and H.S. Creative Industries Training: Through our partnership with Triumph High School, we have identified strong H.S. and early college leaders who work with ASK to support elementary student programming. They are paid for their work, and they receive college prep and career readiness support from ASK.

Financial literacy / Small business creative pop-up venture: Students will design their own pop-up venture and discover how to attract customers, make strong financial decisions, and develop marketing strategies. Students are prompted to think about city planning, business management, marketing, energy, and design.

Stop Motion Animation Project Based Learning: Students step into the mesmerizing world of optical illusions, where things aren't always as they seem! They discover how special effects work in art, movies, theater and animation, and they invent moving props with inspiration from real-life inventors behind special effects technology. Students will learn how to capture and edit digital footage, and how to tell stories through film. Finally, they will learn how film television and film industries operate and how projects are funded.

ASK staff priorities:

- Establishing positive learning centers where kids feel safe, respected and supported.

- Encouraging curiosity.
- Creating classroom environments that encourage student learning, creativity, and critical thinking in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math.
- Maintaining an aquaponics program for creative environmental learning
- Engaging students in learning games, hands-on activities, and collaborative work.
- Exposing students to new ideas, new cultures, healthy risk-taking, and a broader appreciation of music and art.
- Improving students' experiences in reading, writing, speaking, storytelling, and listening.
- Enhancing students' sense of Technological Literacy through multi-media education.
- Nurturing students' interests in plants and caring for the natural world.
- Nurturing and encouraging student appreciation of poetry, which supports literacy, writing, vocabulary growth, positive self-identity, and understanding of the human condition.
- Concluding semester and summer programs with inclusive community events.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

These goals have been identified in trial and error over years of program implementation. Various professional development sessions and experiences helped us to develop this framework:

ASK's arts program focus is to provide as many opportunities as possible for practical, everyday applications of art. If students are regularly in process with their creativity, they will seek out art and engage in it throughout their lives. We are not seeking artistic excellence from our students; that is not our mission. We practice process-based arts engagement and enrichment to better students' lives and education experience. We want our students to explore the arts broadly in relation to civics, technology, and humanity. Success in any field requires creative and critical thinking.

Following are seven intentions and outcomes for ASK immersive arts programming. These goals have been identified by ASK administration, with input from parents, students, artists, and consultants for best practices around creative engagement and social and emotional learning.

1. To engage students in visual art-making experiences (mural and canvas projects) that invite them into the creative process together. In this work, the process is more important than the product. Students are invited to co-create as they learn, and are challenged to accept their peers contributions while embracing the collaborative process.

2. To engage students in storytelling experiences as a regular part of their education. We want our students to practice self-expression, develop deeper understanding, build vocabulary, learn healthy communication, and practice critical thinking on a day-to-day basis.

3. To maintain and expand ASK's Arts Journaling efforts. One hundred percent of our students are participating regularly in arts journaling work, with an abundance of age appropriate materials and found materials that allow students to engage creatively with their educational experience. We know that when students are able to create something that relates to what they are learning, they are more likely to retain what they are learning, because they are taking ownership of it.

4. To Utilize the arts to engage ASK youth participants about Wyoming, U.S., and World histories and cultures. Visiting artists have included Wyoming Arts Council artists Paul Taylor and Willie LeClair. Local folkloric dancers, Mexican folk artists, and regional hip-hop artists and songwriters have also contributed to our arts and music programming.

5. To Incorporate music into all aspects of broader ASK curriculum, which is centered around S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) principles. This includes using music as inspiration and lesson content, and working with students to understand how music and sound shape the world around us. After School for Kids has hosted artists from Denver music education programs Youth on Record and Swallow Hill, as well as more locally based artists from Cheyenne, Laramie, and Fort Collins.

6. To Engage students in Project Based Learning that incorporates design thinking and their creative work. All ASK students participate in several 6-week Project Based Learning units throughout the academic year.

7. To host end-of-semester community presentations, which allow students to showcase performances skills learned, as well as information and outcomes from Project Based Learning experiences.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Staff members poll students about their interests. Admin map these interests to learning interests and goals. We then determine what arts are most relevant to our program goals for a unit, season, semester or year. We then research relevant artists, in addition to drawing from our artist network.

Specific artists who contribute to ASK's arts program:

- Wyoming Arts Council roster artist Willie LeClair, who has traveled from the Wind River Reservation. Mr. LeClair visited elementary school classrooms and gave a keynote talk and performance at a community event with 250 + people in attendance.
- WAC roster artist and Aussie/Wyoming legend Paul Taylor, who completed a mural with us at Triumph High School and visited our elementary schools on several occasions
- Adrian H Molina, Wyoming born artist and U.W. Honors professor, poet and multimedia artist, has been involved with ASK since 2015. He holds two B.A.s and a Juris Doctor, and regularly supports ASK programming with lesson planning support, professional development with staff direct student engagement, and multimedia projects
- Jay Michael Jaramillo and his father Jerry Jaramillo (Denver area Muralist Elder/Legend). They created a mural that lives in one of the main corridors of Triumph High School
- Felix Ayedele, multi-instrumentalist based in Denver who works with Denver's Swallow Hill Music Program
- Joshua Abeyta, Diego Florez, and Elias Garcia, Denver bandmates and contributors to Denver's Youth on Record program
- Various additional Cheyenne, Fort Collins, and Denver-based musicians have contributed to our music education efforts, too numerous to name
- ASK has also worked with local folklorico dancers, Mexican folk artists, local and regional hip-hop artists and singer songwriters on specific one-off programs or class visits.

ASK has been providing high quality arts education opportunities for Cheyenne youth for almost a decade. This video documents one of our music education programs from 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJlhh8-eYgs>

## **Budget Narrative**

Our budget aligns 100% with our mission to provide a safe and meaningful environment for our students.

ASK's principle funding source is 21st Century Community Learning Centers / Wy. Dept. of Education. LCSD#1 provides classroom space and Nutrition Service provides free after school and out of school meals. United Way funding helps support program areas not funded by 21CCLC (staff/operating support). All funding aligns with program goals associated with the Department of Education, academic improvement and family support.

Family needs for safe and engaging spaces continue to increase. As a 21CCLC Learning center, it is our responsibility to provide as much access to after-school and out of school programs as possible. In centering arts in our programming, we are always dealing with the reality that many foundations and governmental funding agencies do not directly fund arts or arts education. This WAC Grant opportunity is an essential funding source for our creative programming.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BASIN CITY ARTS CENTER

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Operating Costs for the Basin City Arts Center (BCAC)

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the BCAC, as a non-profit organization, seeks to develop and support the arts in Basin and surrounding communities, an area that is rural, underserved and has a low socioeconomic population. The BCAC offers a venue for concerts, theatricals, local talent shows, and melodramas. The Second Floor Ballroom and serving kitchen are used for art and quilt shows, music programs, social gathering fundraisers, book signings, and local private functions. The Children's Resource Center uses the BCAC to enhance their programs. The BCAC seeks to provide a center that is available to respond and support any activity that meets the needs of our community.

### Community

Big Horn County is primarily rural with small low-population towns. A significant percentage of the population is in the low socioeconomic category (18% below poverty line, 40% at high school and 42% elementary school on free or reduced meals). In addition there are a substantial number of retired and/or senior citizens with mobility challenges. There are few amenities outside of the local school programs. Basin is the county seat, and the Basin City Arts Center provides a variety of cultural activities that otherwise would not be available to the community. Local amateur and professional music, art and theater are offered at low cost or by donation. The ballroom and serving kitchen provide a low cost venue for private local functions. The BCAC hosts special events for Veterans. Because the BCAC is in a three-story building, an elevator is provided for patrons needing assistance. BCAC has an extensive email list to keep seniors and others engaged along with Facebook, posters, and articles in local newspapers. Space is provided for nursing home patients to attend events. BCAC contacts local quilt guilds to coordinate Quilt Shows and support for Library Friends Murder Mystery which draws home schooled and public school children. BCAC hosts Mother's & Father's Days meals. Monthly Bingo draws another special crowd as does local piano, trombone, and jazz concerts. The Annual BCAC Festival of Trees engages local businesses and The Christmas Home Tour delights the entire town. Professional Concerts like Dan Miller's Cowboy Revue and The Rewinders attract a wide variety of patrons. Besides the schools the BCAC is a valuable amenity which broaden the cultural choices for Big Horn County.

### Evaluation

Evaluation tools will vary as the programs and services proceed throughout the grant year. Community support is measured through yearly donations to support the wide variety of programs offered at the BCAC. Further many of our events are donation only. The amount freely donated will suggest that our patrons appreciate the programming. Attendance counts are monitored at each function including Professional Productions, Donation Only events such as the BCAC Talent Show, and entrance fee events such as the BCAC Biannual Soup & Cookie

Dinner. Reaction to our newspaper articles and flyers posted throughout the towns served will be noted. Our Facebook Page has been very active and followers and likes will be recorded. Anecdotal Response offered to our board members and great volunteers will reflect the success and the needs of our audiences. Surveys and Questionnaires will be carefully reviewed to determine if the BCAC offerings are meeting the needs of our community. The BCAC will use a variety of methods to evaluate the impact of the programs and services provided.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The Basin City Arts Center is responsible to pay the monthly bills to keep the doors open. Estimated annual costs for Electricity is \$3800,; Natural Gas \$2800; Telephone \$2100; Elevator Maintenance \$3600; Fire System/Protection \$360; Roof Maintenance \$450; Insurance,\$1055; HVAC/Furnace \$1600; Artistic Fees \$3100; Supplies- printer cartridges, cleaning and sanitary supplies \$500; Marketing \$450. The WAC Operating Funds will be allocated flexibly over the 12 months as the bills come due. For instance the elevator maintenance contract is a quarterly payment over the span of the funding year. Electricity varies month to month but averages at \$320. Every month we pay the natural gas company \$224 then settle the difference at year's end. The telephone with internet service bill remains the same throughout the year. The Fire Alert System is a biannual payment. The major part of our insurance bill comes due in August. Purchasing supplies varies throughout the year as our program needs month to month. Roof maintenance usually occurs during the winter months. Marketing with flyers, emails, online posts including Facebook, and newspaper ads will vary as the artists are scheduled throughout the year. The BCAC Board hopes to increase the number of professional programs including those offered by WAC for free as this grant will help address the day to day maintenance of this historic building. As is evident the Board will have to allocate the funds as each month's bills come due.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The BCAC is responsible for monthly bills & basic maintenance of this historic building. The WAC Operating Grant will be used to help pay the electric, gas, phone, elevator & fire system maintenance, insurance, & supplies. Key partnerships include Town of Basin, Children's Resource Center, Library Friends, a Local Bank, and several local patrons. Sponsorships, Rentals, ticketed & donation-only events provide a significant source of income. Our budget requires the BCAC provide popular & enriching events for our community that will in turn provide operating funds. Pick any of our programs and behind each one is a healthy in-kind donation to make it successful. Creating & printing color flyers, hosting events, donating refreshments, washing the dishes & linen, balancing the checkbook - name it and its done by our volunteers. Even with all this energy behind each project, BCAC struggles to stay in the black. A WAC Grant will help BCAC provide enriching programs to our rural community.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BIG HORN COUNTY LIBRARY

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Big Horn County Library System Summer Reading and Arts Program

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission Statement-Big Horn County Library System encourages lifelong learning by providing resources to enrich our communities.

Big Horn County Libraries have several strategic goals for the upcoming year.

#### 1) Public Awareness

A. Creating a logo with the help of local students in the form of a contest.

B. Increase our participation by 5 percent by promoting our Summer Reading and Arts program on social media posts, flyers posted in the library, as well as around  
our community and newspapers.

#### 2) Organization Health

A. Foster a cohesive staff throughout the library system in order to share ideas to make all the libraries successful.

B. Communication between all the libraries in BHC by having regular staff meetings.

#### 3) Education and Learning opportunities.

A. Pursue more local artists to engage with their communities and share their talent. We have found that artists are very generous in providing this information and  
letting us know who their fellow artists are.

B. Reach out to nondominant groups and offer more programs tailored to their needs. Each library will offer at least 2 adult/young adult  
art activities geared towards their interests.

C. Provide quality supplies for our patrons both in programs and take-home art kits.

#### 4)Community Connections

A. Each library will offer the participants the opportunity to display their art in the library exhibits. This not only makes our patrons feel proud it promotes the library

programs and what we offer.

B. Pursue in-kind contributions by reaching out to more community members and asking them to volunteer.

C. Request donations from our Friends of the Library groups and Big Horn County Library Foundation.

D. Network with other libraries. Starting with the youth services consultant at the Wyoming State Library we will reach out to at least 4 other libraries to find out what

art projects and programs have worked for them.

## **Community**

Located in north-central Wyoming, Big Horn County has a population of 11,521 citizens, which is a decrease from the previous census. Although our towns are sparsely populated each have many opportunities to offer their residents. Bentonite mining, sugar beet processing, railroading and farming are the main industries. Basin is our county seat and therefore is home to the courthouse, sheriff department, and county jail. All three of the larger communities in our county have their own schools. There are two hospitals and two nursing homes within our county. Our libraries serve all patrons of these diverse vocations. We work hard to engage and encourage lifelong learning through our free programs and activities for patrons of all ages and interests. However, the most predominant demographics visiting our libraries are young children, with 5.1% being persons under 5, 23.6% under 18, and 48.5% women. We offer a wide variety of services and accommodate those with special needs. Improvements have been made over the past year to serve patrons with disabilities better. Our Greybull branch had new entry handicap doors installed while the Lovell branch added a wheelchair assessable picnic table. Other ways we serve people with disabilities is by moving furniture and adjusting shelves to increase accessibility. The population of persons 65 and over in our county is 22.1%. We encourage our older population to come to the library for technology assistance, checking out large print books, and socializing. Homebound individuals can contact us to let us know what library materials that they would like to have delivered. Our goal is to make everyone feel welcomed and valued when they visit or associate with any of our Big Horn County Libraries. Sources cited: US Census Bureau

## **Evaluation**

Big Horn County Library System gathers statistics and analyzes the results to measure the value of our programs. Participants register for our larger events so we have a count on the number who participate. Door counts are recorded to measure how well these activities are received and if we should repeat them. Surveys are designed in house by the individual manager's and staff because the Director feels that they are the most familiar with their communities. Comment forms for all library patrons, not just Summer Program participants, will continue to be available at the front desk and verbal comments will be noted as well. We have also received feedback from our artists/instructors on how to improve future classes. Surveys completed at the end of the Summer Reading and Arts Program will be given to the director to compile which will allow constructive input on ways BHCLS can improve and add additional programs for the coming year. In addition to written comments, we will document verbal feedback and compile the information to increase the value of our future programs. This information will then be graphed so that we are able to see clearly where there are opportunities for growth, enhancements and adjustments. Our staff collaborates with patrons to determine the elements of art they would like to learn and

practice. We gather age information to determine appropriate programs and activities. Again, this year we will have three groups for our summer reading and arts program to ensure that all patrons are included. These groups are children, young adult, and adult. We also do a closure survey to help determine future programs. Library staff and participants post on social media which promotes and builds connections in the community with their local libraries.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Unearth a Story is the 2026 Summer Reading and Arts theme. This is the largest program that we offer at Big Horn County Library System and requires many months of planning and preparation. Generally, we begin brainstorming and putting our plans together the previous December. We strive to have the program completely in place by the end of March. This leaves a couple of months to fine tune everything or come up with a contingency plan if something falls through. The program will run from May 1-June 30, 2026. We estimate that if a single patron participates in three art learning events it will cost our library system approximately \$18-\$20 per person. Classes average length is 2 hours or less, usually offered in late afternoon or early evening depending on the targeted age group. Each library facilitates a minimum of 4 programs in the elementary and preschool ages, 4 programs for middle school, and 2 programs in the YA/Adult category. In order to tie in our Summer Reading program with our classes in art we supply books on the subject in our libraries to check out. These are kept on display at the libraries along with the other books relevant to our Summer Program theme. Attendance for our programs last year was 435 youth and 92 adults, so our need of project support continues to grow.

Through engaging events and promotion of the arts, Big Horn County Library System patrons are introduced to local artists and have an opportunity to engage in fun experiences. This also gives the artists the opportunity to show case their work. Unfortunately, our small towns do not have any venues for the public to go to for art classes or instruction. We do however have many talented artistic people in our communities who are willing to come in and share their talent with our patrons and we give them a venue to showcase their work. It is our hope to provide several opportunities for patrons to practice varied elements of art.

Programs will be provided at Basin, Greybull, and Lovell libraries during the months of May and June 2026. Each library will set their own time schedules in accordance with their individual community schedules. We have learned what these are from past experience and audience surveys. We also take into consideration the schedules of our program facilitators, as they are mostly volunteers, while also keeping it within our library hours, if at all possible, because of budget constraints.

Artists:

Jerry Moffitt- Do Art Productions Comic Book Workshop

Angela Reddick-Washakie Museum and Cultural Center- Museum Educator

Dan Close-Geologist- Retired School Teacher

Chloe Gwon- Lotus Lantern Craft Workshop

Dee Barnes - retired art teach from UW

Lee Workman-Alchemist of Stone

Bryant's Bees- multi generational business

Jill Carpenter- Professional artist

Denny Neville-Local Artist

Karen Spragg-North Big Horn County Senior Center Art Instructor

Kristina Herrera-Owner of My Blooming Art

Chevy Jolley- Lovell Elementary School Art Teacher

Bill Matthews - Photographer and Retired Forest Service Archeologist

Funds will be allocated to buy materials to support our artists in their programs.

Supplies included but not limited to:

Bee's wax

wicks

glass and plastic containers

Modge Podge

Epoxy

Fabric

Plaster

Modeling clay

Colored sand

Lotus Lantern kits

Canvas

Brushes

Paint

Geodes

String art supplies

Wood blocks

Soap making supplies

Sketch pads

Charcoal pencils

Pastel chalks

Dot markers

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Surveys and verbal communication are used to determine the elements of art that our patrons would like to learn and practice. We have selected art projects for the 2026 Summer Reading and Arts Program to reflect what our patrons are interested in and have shown the desire to learn. Through displays, engaging events, and promotion of the arts, Big Horn County Library System residents will have the opportunity to have new experiences. Everything from making candles to hieroglyphics will be explored along with more traditional art. Local artists from the three communities will present and instruct for free or a very reasonable cost. We have also procured future promises of funding from our Big Horn County Library Foundation and each of our libraries Friends groups for more expensive programs coming from outside our area. Most will supply their own materials so that will not be an added cost to the libraries.

#### **Projected Projects for 2026**

Candle making- Learn how to make candles using bee's wax and also using scents if desired. This will be a project for older groups because of the process using heat.

Plaster Animal Excavation "Dino Dig"- Fun way for the younger kids to "unearth a story" using toy dinosaurs and plaster while learning about dinosaurs. More advanced age group will be using modeling clay to make their own.

Sand art-using colored sand in a container to create an object of beauty to look at and enjoy.

Hieroglyphics- Learn how ancient cultures used the tools available to them to create a story with art. The older children will get sandstone and tools while the younger group will use canvas and paint. Students will also learn how to make paint out of berries etc.

Book Boxes- Use old and non-pertinent books to create a box by hollowing them out and then covering them with fabric etc. to make a useful and fun item.

Grow your own crystal- these come in kits and children will learn to read and follow directions, create an interest in science while doing a hands-on experiment and end up with a colorful art project to display.

String art- Children will have kits where they can be creative with colors and learn to follow a pattern. Older participants will have the materials to create their own design and learn skills in woodworking.

Geodes- Children of all ages will break open geodes and discover the wonder within while an instructor teaches them about how they came to be.

Suncatchers- combining different textiles to create a work of art and also learn about different cultures.

Soap making- young adults can get creative and make useful art to use at home.

Create a mask- children love masks and they will be able to let their personality come out when they participate in this activity.

Dot It art- our younger artists will enjoy making pictures by using only dots.

Fossil drawing- pencil and paper are the only supplies needed for any age to learn how to draw fossils.

Modeling Clay- patrons will learn fun and new techniques to create a character.

Wooden model building- older children will build confidence after seeing the finished product.

Comic Book Workshop- learn how to create a comic using art and literature.

Lotus Lantern Craft Workshop- this will combine art and literature both.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Each year patrons register for the annual Summer Reading and Arts program. We do this so that we know how much growth or loss has occurred from year to year and for planning purposes in years to come. We like to adjust our programs to address the community effectively. Goals are identified through public and staff surveys. We create spreadsheets to keep track of the information that we gather. We use verbal input and feedback to determine if our goals have been met. It is important to us here at the Big Horn County Library System to create and offer programs that bring patrons through our doors and stretch their minds. We use door counts to guide us in knowing if our programs are attended when we do a program intended for a general audience that does not require registration. Our goal is to be able to offer art classes to all that are interested instead of having to restrict class size or only offer instruction one time due to limited funds. Because of budget constraints we have had to cut down on some of our programs. We strive to be creative and use resources that are available to us.

Arts Learning Goals 2026:

(1) Patrons will find enjoyment and satisfaction through learning new artistic skills offered through the Big Horn County Library System.

(2) Build community awareness of a wide variety of different art forms produced by individual artists that live in Big Horn County.



(3) Participants will develop art skills and produce creative works while being guided by staff and local artists.

(4) Patrons of all ages will be introduced and educated in elements of art and be able to recognize these same elements in their daily lives.

(5) Individuals will discover new skills and where their talent lies.

(6) Attendees will have a good understanding of acrylic paint and how to use it by the end of the BHCLS Summer Reading and Arts Program.

(7) Provide social interaction through varied mediums of arts in Big Horn County.

(8) Create a variety of art kits available for patrons to check out or take home and keep from the library after learning new skills.

(9) Teach participants to use woodwork and textiles in combination.

(10) Learn how to take things from nature that can be used to make art such as beeswax, berries, and geodes.

(11) Discover how to make your own color palette for new projects.

(12) Techniques and processes will be taught in how to use modeling clay.

(13) Learn how to conceptualize, plan, and organize artistic work.

(14) Complete and display artistic work for show at the library.

#### Additional Goals:

- (1) Increase retention of previous participants, both patrons and volunteers.
- (2) Greater responsiveness to community needs.
- (3) Improved visibility in the community.
- (4) Greater staff participation and satisfaction.
- (5) Big Horn County Library System (BHCLS) would like to see a participation increase of 5% in our Preschool-5th Grade Summer Reading and Arts Program in 2026.
- (6) BHCLS would like to see a participation increase of 20% in our Young Adult Summer Reading and Arts Program in 2026.
- (7) BHCLS would like to see a participation increase of 25% in our Adult Summer Reading and Arts Program in 2026.

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Big Horn County library utilizes many sources to have a successful Summer Program each year. The theme for 2026 is "Unearth a Story" so we have not only reached out to the art community but also the science community. We have blended the idea that art encompasses many forms and can be found just about anywhere. Whether it's the beauty of the earth or the artistry of the insects. Of course as we are libraries we have also incorporated the written word while continuing to provide what some would consider traditional art. In this vein of thought we have tapped a wide variety of local artists, business owners, and educators as well as outside sources.

Dee Barnes is a retired professor from the University of Wyoming where she taught art. She has taught a couple of classes for us in Basin already and is a great asset to the community. Dee came in to the library as a patron and after talking to her she was enlisted to do a program and we are happy to supply whatever materials are needed for the reasonable amount that she charges.

Lee Workman owns a business called Alchemist of Stone in Lovell and travels the county teaching children about rocks and minerals. Her business will benefit from the program that she will provide so it will be a beneficial partnership.

Dan Close is a retired geologist who also taught H.S. for many years. Dan is very involved with the library as a patron and as a member of our Foundation Board. He is committed to the success of our Library System and helps out whenever he can. All of the materials will be provided by the library for his program.

Angela Reddick is a paleontologist who works for the Washakie Museum and Cultural Center in Worland as their Museum Educator but also goes to the Big Horn County library every week to help out students getting their GED. She is passionate about her work and educating all ages about the wonders of Wyoming. Angela actually approached us and this will also be a free program that we will supply the materials for.

Bryant's Bees has an outreach program through their business to educate the community at large on the importance of bee's in our lives. They also will bring examples of the beauty of a bee hive, discuss the life cycles of bees, and all the products that they provide us. They were selected for the education value that teaches children about the world around them, even the humble bee. In order to make the program beneficial to both parties we will buy needed materials for a bee related craft to follow from them.

Jerry Moffitt is the owner of Do Art Productions who offers a Comic Book Workshop. Participants will explore the different languages of comics, from the eyes, to body posture, to the actual language within speech bubbles. A comic book will be completed with all of the skills learned. All materials will be provided by the presenter and the Library Foundation has agreed to pay for this program.

Chloe Gwon is a program coordinator with the Korean Spirit and Culture Promotion Project and will be giving a Work Shop combining Art and Culture. This is a free program except for the materials that we will purchase from them to make the Lotus Lanterns.

Jill Carpenter- Professional artist

Denny Neville-Local Artist

Karen Spragg-North Big Horn County Senior Center Art Instructor

Kristina Herrera-Owner of My Blooming Art

Chevy Jolley- Lovell Elementary School Art Teacher

Bill Matthews - Photographer and Retired Forest Service Archeologist

### **Budget Narrative**

Big Horn County Library System receives all of its funding from the county mill levy which can vary every year. Additional financial support comes from patron donations, memorial funds, and library revenue. Other entities that give assistance to our libraries include the Big Horn County Library Foundation and Friends of the Library at each location. The libraries also have book sales and independent fund raisers by the librarians at each of our locations to raise money for our Summer Reading Programs. We offer free activities every week in each location to provide information, encourage learning, and create positive spaces for socializing. Funding these events can be challenging. We try to be creative and use the resources on hand as our county is economically one of the lowest in the state. Talented members of the community volunteer to help with a variety of tasks and with donations when they can. Local business's are also willing to donate goods and services to help reach our goals.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

## BIGHORN BLUEGRASS CAMP

### FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: BigHorn Bluegrass Camp Summer Camp , January Jam, and Spring Jam

#### Application:

#### Mission/Goals

The formal mission statement of BigHorn Bluegrass Camp is "BBC's Mission is to Provide Music Education and Performing Arts Activity via Camps, Classes & Concerts." BigHorn Bluegrass Camp seeks to fulfill its mission by increasing opportunities for children and adults to build musical skills in order to create a life-long, multi-generational, vibrant musical community which learns, performs, and teaches bluegrass, folk and other kinds of acoustic music. To that end, BigHorn Bluegrass Camp seeks to provide instructional and performance opportunities in our community through camps, retreats, and concerts. Our goals are to provide instruction that focuses on the skills of playing acoustic instruments by ear so that students can participate in informal, student-driven jams, and public performances.

All student concerts and all professional concerts are open to the public. Our events provided focused instruction and opportunities designed to give participants additional musical skills so that they can join our community's many musicians in both formal and informal settings. Students from our camp often play in our community's weekly jam held at a local saloon. The community offers many performing opportunities for artists throughout the year. Students from our camp perform at churches, restaurants, jams, and other community events.

Ultimately, we strive to create lifelong musicians who will seek to create and or participate in a musical community wherever they go. We encourage our students to learn the etiquette of jamming and to learn how to invite other players into their jam circles. Our unofficial (unoriginal) camp motto is "You can't say 'You can't play.'"

#### Community

The Community we Serve: Our camp primarily serves children ages 7-18 in the town of Buffalo, Wyoming and adjacent towns in Northeast Wyoming. Our town has a population that hovers around 5000 and is situated in Johnson County, which is classified as "Frontier" due to its sparse population. Our camp is open to all kids and we have a very generous scholarship program that enables students of any economic background to attend. We contact school counselors and music teachers so that they can help us reach economically disadvantaged students who might need a scholarship. We also have a very active tourist population in the summers, some of whom plan their visits to our community around our camp dates. In the past few years, we have opened classes to interested adults as well. Our winter and spring events have classes for all age groups.

Our camp serves the elderly in our community by helping young musicians gain skills so that they can perform at our local weekly jam, an event whose audience is largely older adults. Our students also perform at other community events including church gatherings and outdoor concerts. We received many comments about community on our camp evaluation sheet this year including one of my favorite comments: "This camp supports the community as much, if not more, than the community supports the camp."

We try to be very responsive to requests for accommodation which, in our case, is frequently dietary. We also hold our camp in a public school which is handicap accessible. Our culminating event in July and our January Jam final concert were held in a handicapped accessible building as well.

## **Evaluation**

We typically use surveys, anecdotal information, and participation data to measure the impact of our programs. We have developed a survey for both students and parents that we collect on the last day of our summer camp event. We also invite feedback via email after events and, in so doing, we obtain many anecdotal reports on the impact of our camp programs. This year's survey contained some of the following responses: "This is such a wonderful confidence booster and exposure to many things"; "I am amazed at how much they learned in a week"; "I am very thankful to have an opportunity like this in Buffalo"; "Absolutely love this camp. Great thing for kids in the community"; "The love of music is really established here"; and "They say it's highlight of their summer." We also evaluate our success by the continued pursuit of music education: several of our former campers have gone on to pursue music degrees and/or professional careers in music. Several of our campers have pursued further music education by attending Montana Fiddle Camp, by participating in our local music programs, and by pursuing music education or music performance at the college level.

As part of our participation with the Johnson County Tourism Association, we also keep track of out of town, overnight guests. We also collect information about our students and families on our camp registration forms. We keep records of concert attendance; we consistently sell out the venue. Our camp numbers have increased every year. We receive many in-kind donations, instrument donations, and scholarship donations from our community which is a significant indicator of support for our camp.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

BigHorn Bluegrass Camp offers three main events. Our summer camp is a five day long day camp, and, because of its length and size, it requires is to rent a facility for the week. Currently, we are renting space at Buffalo High School at the rate of \$200/day for a total of \$1000. In addition, the High School is now requiring us to carry event insurance which we anticipate will cost an additional \$500-\$1000 dollars. Our Executive Director receives a yearly stipend of \$2000 to compensate for time spent promoting camp, scheduling events, booking artists, and running events. This year our summer camp will be divided into two separate age groups, our traditional kids camp and a teen camp for more advanced players. Each camp will have a separate on site director, each of whom will be paid

\$1000 to plan, organize, schedule, and promote camp throughout the year as well as manage their camp on site. Our camp does not offer lunch for campers, but does provide camper snacks and lunches for instructors (instructors are unable to leave camp for lunch). Last year's food costs were approximately \$2000. We supply camp song books for each student and instructor. The songbooks cost approximately \$10/book to print, so that cost is approximately \$900. We typically spend \$1500 for instrument rental; we spend at least \$400 on instrument repair and maintenance. Each year we have to purchase new harmonicas (harmonicas cannot be re-used) and other instruments as needed; we anticipate spending between \$500 and \$700 for these purchases. Camp supplies t-shirts for campers and instructors; last year's shirts cost approximately \$1500. Our camp is simple in nature: kids come; they learn to play music; however, we know that in order to keep our camp tradition going, we have to promote camp events and provide music opportunities year round. We try to keep instruments in kids hands in as many ways as possible.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Our Summer Camp Faculty Artists will teach classes, host our final concert, and stage a community performance.

Local Musicians: Lynn Young (Fiddle, Harmonica, Ukulele); Brady Holzemer (Advanced guitar, Fiddle); Tessa Taylor (Advanced Banjo, Vocal Harmony); Cindy Soltis (Fiddle); Jill Flikkema (Fiddle); Wes Holzemer (mandolin); Kylie Hart (mandolin); Cindy Barlow (Fiddle). The local instructors are all returning instructors who have had a long-time commitment to our summer camp. These artists will receive a stipend for their week. In addition, we have four artists flying in from Nashville, two of whom got their start at our camp. Nashville Musicians: Morgan Blaney--upright bass, B.A. from UNC Greeley, Double-major in Upright Bass, Jazz and Bluegrass Performance; Erinn Pete Lukes--ukulele, vocals; Sage Palser--Mandolin; B.A. Degree from ETSU in Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Roots Music. Fiddle Instructor TBA. These traveling musicians will receive a teaching stipend as well as travel expenses. Our summer camp is popular with local and out of town students. Last year we had 70 students.

Our January Jam Event and Spring Jam feature multiple performances for which we contract the services of professional musicians. We typically fly in two to three professional musicians. The musicians are compensated \$1000; flight expenses vary but have been typically about \$700 per musician. Our artists typically fly in from the southern region of the United States. We invite one to two artists to headline Friday and Saturday concerts as well as to offer workshops or kids courses. This event has become very popular with bluegrass artists and we have had to develop a waiting list of performers. Several songs have been written at this event including Greg Blake's recent "Cold Wyoming Morning." Housing for the artists is comped by The Occidental Hotel. BigHorn Bluegrass Camp provides the air and ground transportation as well as the artists stipends which adds up to approximately \$2000 per artist. The winter event does not bring in much revenue, but the opportunity it provides our community and the connections it creates between the professional bluegrass world and our amateur bluegrass haven have paid off in numerous ways. The January Jam "winter camp" attracted 35 students this past January. We typically hire between 6 and 10 instructors at approximately \$150 per instructor.

Our Spring Jam event cost \$2500 for our professional artist, including airfare. We host several workshops for both high school age students and adults. This event also provides jamming opportunities for all ages. The event will include songwriting and guitar workshops, an evening of all-ages jamming with our professional artist, and a culminating concert. We have invited Adam Greuel of Horseshoes and Hand Grenades for our Spring Jam 2026 (barring any scheduling conflicts).

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

BigHorn Bluegrass camp is all about learning. Our most recent summer camp had a record-high 70 students enrolled. From the moment the doors open on Monday morning, kids are immersed in an environment that supports learning. We provide instruments for students who do not have their own, and we structure the camp so that students can take three different "courses" during the week. We offer courses in upright bass, banjo, ukulele, fiddle, mandolin, guitar, harmonica, vocal harmony, and songwriting. Where appropriate, we offer beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. During breaks between courses, we offer workshops on jamming, forming a band, busking on the street, and other topics proposed by either campers or instructors. After Day 1, the doors open an hour early, and we have students arriving to practice, to get help from instructors, or to just jam with old and new friends. At the end of each camp day, kids can choose to sign up on a white board to perform a song in front of the camp. At the end of the week, we have a day of rehearsals, street performances, and a culminating concert that regularly attracts around 250 adults.

Camp Faculty consists of a combination of local musicians and 'imported' musicians. All of our faculty are excellent instructors who love to invite younger players into the music community, and we make it a point to send some of our camp alumni to a more advanced music camp before we hire them as camp instructors. For many of our events, we fly in professional musicians who both perform at concerts and teach classes and workshops for the kids and for the community. This summer we will be importing four instructors from the Nashville area, two of our camp alumni who are now professional musicians in Nashville, and two additional instructors. This will add additional transportation costs, but will help us to continue offering high quality music instruction. We also provide music books to each camper; our music books have been compiled by one of our camp instructors, and they focus on folk songs that our students can learn to play by ear.

In addition to faculty, camp has to shoulder much of the cost of instruments. Camp has acquired quite a few instruments which we must maintain; we also rent instruments from a local music store in order to meet the demand. Occasionally, we have to pay for instruments to be repaired or replaced. David Stewart, a hotelier and musician, allows us to store our instrument collection in the basement of his performing venue, The Playhouse.

Our January Jam provides an 'off-season' opportunity for kids to get more instruction and more jamming and performance opportunities. We invite camp instructors and professional musicians to provide our program. Students participate in a band that is appropriate for their level. Those bands practice over the course of two days



and then perform a song or two in a culminating concert. We fly in professional musicians who often teach kids classes, offer instrument and songwriting workshops, and perform in our evening concert series.

Our Spring Jam focuses on songwriting. High school age students in the region are invited to explore regional and historic topics and write songs with professional songwriters. We typically hire one professional musician to lead workshops and to perform a concert. For the 2024 and 2025 Spring Jam, we hosted highly acclaimed guitarist and IBMA Award-Winning male vocalist Greg Blake.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our Arts Learning goals are clearly aligned with the structure of our camp. Because bluegrass is an acoustic genre that depends heavily on its musicians ability to play by ear, each instrument instructor is focused on teaching students the aural and observational skills necessary to play music with others. Our camp is primarily divided into three levels in each instrument: beginner, intermediate, and advanced.

In beginner classes, our instructors aim to teach at least two to five basic chords to go along with one or two songs. To showcase these songs at the end of camp, beginner students need to move semi-fluently between chord shapes, listen to harmonic context of the musicians around them, and alter their own performance accordingly. Beginner students also typically leave their classes with a basic understanding of the Nashville Number System and how that relates to the chords they've learned.

Students at the Intermediate level expand their chordal knowledge and deepen their understanding of the Nashville Number System by studying how it applies to musical keys as well as individual chords. Intermediate classes tend to spend more time on the arrangement and song structure of their performance pieces, and they may even begin to 'pick' out basic melodies and patterns on their instruments in addition to the chords they've already learned.

Advanced Level classes at Bighorn Bluegrass Camp start treading into the land of improvisation. Bluegrass music is a genre rich with many improvisational styles. Depending on the instructor and the instrument, students at this level might begin to experiment with improvisation in the form of modifying well-known tunes and melodies, changing the chords underneath an existing melody, or even writing new songs. Instructors at the Advanced level typically strive to have the class week be as interactive as possible so that students are able to replicate the experience on their own as they choose to. One of our Bighorn Bluegrass Camp mottos, especially relevant at this class level, is "teach them how to teach themselves."

But regardless of class level or previous experience, our biggest goal in Bighorn Bluegrass Camp is always to ensure our students are equipped to experience the love of playing music with other people. At camp, we build a community of musicians who are adept at creating opportunities to play music solo, in small groups, or in large jam circles. This community spills out into our larger community, as many of these students host jams in their own neighborhoods throughout the year or join our community jam on Thursday nights at the Occidental Saloon. Several of our camp alumni are pursuing professional careers as musicians.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

We've been lucky, year after year, to host many incredible instructors and artist at our events, all with a wide-range of experience in the music industry and relevance to our goals.

Lynn Young, with decades of experience in sharing musical knowledge with the young people of Johnson County, is a Bighorn Bluegrass Camp gem and an irreplaceable piece of our Camp staff. He brings with him the ability to teach beginning and intermediate classes in almost any instrument, and the remarkable ability to imbue fun in the driest of musical theory conversations. David Stewart, a long time venue-host and new instructor, has a lifetime of songwriting experience that very few others can boast. He has knowledge of song structure and a lyrical mastery that allows Bighorn Bluegrass Camp to offer higher levels of Songwriting classes than ever before.

Morgan Blaney, along with Sage Palser, was born and raised in Johnson County and grew up knowing the community's rich love of art and music. Both have relocated to Nashville after procuring music degrees, and offer a modern, practical understanding of the music industry while they still connect deeply with the Johnson County magic that got them where they are.

A host of local instructors represent the very much still beating heart of Wyoming's musical community, while remaining familiar faces to the students and families of our Camp. These instructors are a staple, including Tessa Holzemer, Brady Holzemer, Cindy Soltis, Kylee Hart, and many more.

Erinn Peet-Lukes, a Colorado-native and current Nashville artist, has years of teaching experience on guitar, voice, and ukulele in which she specializes younger children. As a supporter of bluegrass camps around the country and of music education in general, we look forward to having her on the camp staff this year and anticipate that her expertise will be invaluable.

Our winter and spring events have hosted many talented, and award-winning musicians such as Dale Ann Bradley, Donna Ulysses, Greg Blake, Junior Sisk, Nick Chandler, and Jerry Salley. We do not select the artists until later in the fall, but we receive inquiries about the event from artists throughout the year. We host artists who regularly appear in the bluegrass charts and on venerable stages such as the Grand Ole Opry. We have become a go-to destination for bluegrass greats. The common response of visiting artists to our camp events is the phrase "Y'all have something special here." We agree. Not every kid who attends our camp will become a professional musician, but we hope that every kid who leaves our camp will become a lifelong supporter of music.

### **Budget Narrative**

Our project is funded by the Wyoming Arts Council, the Johnson County Recreation District, camp tuition, donations and ticket sales. The Historic Occidental Hotel and Saloon to host concerts and the winter and spring events. The Occidental donates space and hotel rooms. We receive donations from community members and from the Ray and Kay Littler Trust. A camp instructor donates a raffle quilt which supplements our scholarship fund. Our summer tuition generates the most non-grant income. We have an "honor" scholarship policy; parents can apply for a scholarship and pay the amount that they can afford. Due to the generous support of our community, we have been able to fulfill 100% of our scholarship requests. Our January Jam and Spring Jam are well attended, but the fees do not cover the costs. The income from grants and from summer tuition offset the losses. Our organization generates enough money from grants, tuition, tickets, raffles and donations to cover expenses.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BODYLINES DANCE THEATRE, INC.

[HTTP://WWW.BODYLINES.ME/DANCE/](http://www.bodylines.me/dance/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Ruby's Bodylines Dance Theatre Adaptive Dance & Movement Program

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission statement is to develop strong, young individuals of all levels of abilities, including those with disabilities and delays, with artistic and technical skills in dance, movement and performance, giving them the emotional and physical confidence they will need in life.

Bodylines Dance Theatre is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, which offers Ballet, Pointe, Jazz, Modern and Contemporary classes which have a set of curriculum from beginning to advanced levels; special programs include BDT Sponsor Program which funds low income families with dance classes and costumes and a Senior and Youth BDT Performing Group which performs biannually at a large theater venue as well as community service performances such as performing in front of the capitol building for National Dance Week and at long term nursing home facilities and independent living facilities where residents do not have the opportunity to leave their facilities to attend performing arts events. Ruby's BDT Adaptive Dance & Movement program focuses on serving dancers with disabilities, delays and special health care needs.

### Community

The program is designed to create a safe, fun, educating and most importantly, an artistic dance and performance atmosphere where children and youth with developmental and physical disabilities and delays and special health care needs can be together on as equal terms as possible in a positive environment and space, learning dance and movement with youth and children, with the same needs.

This program is important to my organization and the local Cheyenne, Wyoming community because I am not aware of another dance/movement performance program being offered like this program which is free to participants and offers children with disabilities and delays the chance to experience the positive self-esteem and self confidence gained which is often experienced with dance, movement and performing. The community will be able to visually experience dance and performance by children with special health care needs who do not have access or who normally do not have the opportunity to use their bodies like able-bodied children and the community will be able to see first hand how the performing arts are enhancing the lives of these amazing children.

A major task of the planning process of the program involves ensuring that the space for the classes are accessible for the participants with disabilities and special health care needs. An accessible space that meets these needs with American with Disabilities Act (ADA) has been located for this program. We are able to rent a local church gym/social hall which meets all ADA requirements in all areas, parking entrances, lobby, restrooms and gym space for the purpose of holding this class once a week.

## **Evaluation**

There will be an evaluation form which parents and all assistants will fill out at the end of the 30 weeks which will rate the program. The form will ask what improvements and changes could be done to improve the program as well as what was learned during the 30-week program and if they would like the program to continue and if they would recommend the program to others. The information obtained from the evaluations are always helpful to improve the program and reach more families with children with disabilities and special health care needs. I share the information with my assistants so they may be able to see what we need to improve or change but they can also see that their work with the program is positive, important and appreciated by the parents and students.

I learn a great deal from the parents involved in the program on how important all Adaptive programs are for the parents and for their children. They would like for all these programs to be sustained because there are such limited Adaptive programs offered in our community because funding is difficult to find to sustain the programs and also it is very difficult to find people to work, organize and keep these programs going.

I am fortunate to have many patrons in our community who support my organization who do not even have children dancing in any of my current programs but they love to attend all of our performances and they give wonderful feedback or constructive feedback on what they experience and see in our performances each season. These people are such an important part of my organization and we would not be able to sustain without their generous support.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The operating costs for the program include the cost of the rental per session for the ADA accessible church gym/social hall space for one hour a week for 30 weeks, cost of purchasing/downloading music, printing materials, planning hours and instruction hours for the main instructor for 30 weeks, hours of the adult and student assistants including 10 instructional meetings, additional hours worked for biannual rehearsals and performances, cost for partial rent of theater for two different performances.

## **Project Support Narrative**

This program will be in session for 30 weeks, the class will teach dance technique and movement. Participants will learn to execute balance exercises, crossing the midline movements and spatial skills. They will learn to make patterns such as moving in a circle, using steps to move into lines and crossing diagonally across the floor. The wheelchair dancers will learn to move their heads and moveable limbs. They will learn to make patterns with their wheelchairs to music. This group will learn rhythm work, clapping, stomping, clapping while seated or kneeling in

different tempo patterns. They will learn to follow each other in a line, maintain the line as it moves in different formations or moves backwards or sideways. The children will learn to sequence steps and movement to different types of music, Jazz, Classical, Pop, Rock, Alternative and learn different disciplines of dance. The movements and steps will be modified to accommodate each child's abilities and needs. They will sequence and put combinations together which will be choreographed to music to create a dance piece which they perform onstage. The group will perform a public performance in our biannual spring and fall performances.

Leslie O'Hashi, Director of Bodylines Dance Theatre, created Ruby's BDT Adaptive Dance & Movement program in 2009 and she will be the key instructor. Kelly Kamarad, Pediatric Physical Therapist, will be the consulting and referring individual for this project.

There will be four other key people in addition to the main instructor on the floor for all the sessions. They are chosen by their abilities to work with and assist children and youth with physical and developmental disabilities and delays, their reliability, responsibility and their ability to dance and perform. It is important for some of our children to have one on one assistance during each class. Each assistant is interviewed by the main instructor. All the assistants must be CPR certified and they must have basic sign language skills.

Taylor Poynter, the lead adult assistant for Ruby's BDT Adaptive Dance & Movement program for 7 seasons, she is also an instructor and main assistant at BDT studio.

Jayden Riddle, will be an alternate adult assistant with Taylor Poynter, she has been with the Adaptive Dance program for 5 seasons. She was chosen for her calm presence, her skills and enthusiasm to work with children with special needs.

Adrianna Sprakties, a student assistant for 4 seasons, she has experience with the hippotherapy program at Family Physical Therapy. She has great skills and connects beautifully with the children.

MaKaylah Rentner, a student assistant for 2 1/2 seasons, she is our youngest student assistant who was chosen for her strong desire to work with children with disabilities and her wonderful consistency and work ethic.

Molly Emerine, is our newest student assistant who came on when our current began last September, she also has a strong desire to work with children with special needs.

Craig Grenvik, is a longtime board member of Bodylines Dance Theatre and he is recently retired so he is volunteers his time to work with our children when he's available. You can see the joy he gets when he's in class working with and encouraging our children.

We need at least five assistants to work and assist on the floor of this program in case one of them cannot be in class so we can alternate in when needed.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

My Adaptive Dance & Movement program has been fortunate to receive grants, the first one in 2008, from the Wyoming Arts Council to help sustain the program with Bodylines Dance Theatre providing the remaining funds for those years. Seasons 2018 and partial seasons of January to May 2019, donations from Cheyenne Sunrise Rotary helped sustain the program. Cheyenne Women's Civic League donated for the performance shirts. The UW WIND Family to Family mini grant helped sustain part of 2022 season. The Community Support grant from WAC is partially funding our current season with BDT funding the remainder of the program.

The budget aligns with program and services by accounting for the cost of the rental per session for the ADA accessible church gym space for one hour a week for 30 weeks, planning and instruction hours for main instructor for 30 weeks, hours for adult and student assistants, 10 instructional meetings, additional hours for biannual tech rehearsals and performances.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF SWEETWATER COUNTY

WWW.BGCSWEETWATER.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Colors of Healing: Artful Creations and Expressions

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission: To enable all young people, especially those who need us most to reach their full potential s productive, caring responsible citizens with a pay it forward attitude. Our organization is concerned with youth's social-emotional development. We have begun to increase our awareness of Trauma Informed and Social-Emotional Training to better understand and promote coping strategies. One of our goals is to include art as a therapeutic technique to involve youth in their journey of self-expression and encourage healthy coping strategies. To do this we will document the process of transformation into tangible forms of art through guided lessons, self-evaluations and staff assessments after each section is complete. We have begun to build a curriculum, with a volunteer therapy councilor, on how to create session for members. We have also partnered with community volunteers such as art teachers and studio owners to build on our knowledge of composing artwork for youth, and lesson to better their knowledge and skills. Our second goal, to incorporate the artwork(s) and their transformations from beginning to end in our annual art show, with a bio and self-reflection piece from each member who participated in the program.

The mission and core beliefs of Boys & Girls Club fuels our commitment to promoting safe, positive and inclusive environments for all. With empowerment to promote them and communicate their needs, feelings and experiences. As a community partner we ask for other organizations to aid in our promotion to increase awareness, with family nights and workshops on social-emotional development and understanding coping skills, and therapy lead group talks.

### Community

The Boys & Girls Club provides after school and summer programming to youth ages six to eighteen. The Club is located in an area considered at-risk due to the low-income status of the neighborhood 13.4% poverty, 25% higher than the entire state (Financial Welfare for Americans, US Census). We also serve all schools in Sweetwater County School District #1; 50% or higher, with students on free and reduced lunch (WDE). Our statistics show, 65% of members live in a single parent household that makes under the median wage, 53% live in two income households (family of 4 or more) that are still making less than \$50,000 a year. Our organization has also seen an increase in parent deaths, 5% increase of members in foster care (2% being grandparents as guardians), and a 3% rise in English as a second language in which we hired a bilingual staff. The mission and core beliefs of Boys & Girls Club fuels our commitment to promoting safe, positive and inclusive environments for all. Boys & Girls Club supports all youth and teens – of every race, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, and religion – in reaching their full potential. We ensure all members, and their families are valued and

included in the Club. The Club provides family nights, community speakers, low membership fees, scholarships for low-income, meals, food bags for at home use and community resources to help with day-to-day living. In an event that one needs an accommodation our online sign-up form does have a section to request accommodations. Our office staff then contact parents to better understand the situation, and a meeting is held with staff and note made in member file to document accommodations made notes when adjustments were needed.

## **Evaluation**

We will evaluate the impact of the program in multiple methods. One being Increased member participation in the art room throughout the school and summer programs. This can be attained through our attendance tracking system, we will be able to track the increase or decrease of the art room participations, as well as which member(s) participated at duration.

The second evaluation will be the impact art has on the emotional awareness of our members, once they start to create art through personal experiences with visual skills and clarity. These evaluations will come from a rubric judging skills created by art room staff and programming directors, and self-evaluation on how the artwork and artist has progressed, in skills, emotions, and personal growth. Club staff, parents and volunteer counselors will evaluate members Social-Emotional Development through surveys conveying characteristics like; has the member formed and sustain positive relationships, manages and expressed emotions, managed their feelings of frustrations, rise in confidence, school and club behavior improved? Survey created in collaboration with club directors, and counselors.

Our club will also measure the impact of our services with increased community engagement raising awareness on the services and mission we provide to youth in the community. This will be defined with community service surveys given out at community events, fundraisers, partner meetings and through our parent portal. We will also assess the impact of our services with the delivery and outcomes on the annual National Youth Outcome Initiative, where members and parents are asked to answer questions regarding opinions on the importance of club, their feelings about the program, staff, school, safety and the mission of the program.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Operations of the Boys & Girls Club of Sweetwater County include the daily use of utilities, gas, power, and water for a minimum of 100 people per day. With the 30% increase in member registration, we have also seen an increase in utility usage. The club now occupies both sections of our building to house members after school, and during the summer creating the use of more power, and with the winter months more gas to keep our large building warm for the youth who enter the building.

Supplies are endlessly in need. Examples: toilet paper, you do not want to know the amount, promise; hand sanitizer, soap, cleaning supplies, arts, crafts, programming material, furniture, board games, the list goes on and on. There is always a need for new educational material and supplies can run out quick, especially when the members are having fun and are engaged. We know that everyone is feeling the increase in all aspects of life, that is no different for us a non-profit organization. Not only have the utilities increase 20% from our previous year of operations, but our insurance has doubled, both are necessary to run a fun, safe and reliable organization. Food has increased and the grant funds to buy healthy meals has decreased leaving non-profits like us buying meals and snacks we serve to come out of other budgets that might have funded a new program, provided a scholarship to a member to register, upgraded technology or even refurbished a room badly needed to create more space for more members throughout our community.



## **Project Support Narrative**

The Boys & Girl Club of Sweetwater County work with many volunteers, mentors, community partners and staff to create our art program, offered year-round to our members. This year our program will consist of three staff: our Program Director Jodi Barnum, Grant Director Jennifer Kendall and Teen Director Stephanie Lewis. Jodi Barnum has always advocated for art as a form of healing and expression and has made it her goal to create access for all youth to step foot in the Art Room. Jodi used to own and operate own photography business, toy store and was an early learning educator for the school district. Jodi has also volunteered in numerous craft and hobby businesses teaching the public how to create their own home decor, use acrylic paint and organize large paint nights for fundraisers. Jennifer Kendall started her artist career as an art student in high school at both Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming and then at Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs, Wyoming. She has continued her love for art at the club teaching members as much as possible on techniques and strategies. she learned during her time as an art student. Her passion includes the use of watercolor, acrylics, pastel, charcoal and brining impressionism to life with her lessons. Jennifer is also very fluent in curriculum and instruction as she has a degree in Secondary Education. Stephanie Lewis is new to our program but has been a great asset to our organization. Stephanie owns her own balloon and face painting business; she also teaches and guides participants through her paint and sip fundraiser nights teaching other to paint nature and landscape scenes.

Alongside our volunteers, Jessica Castillo as our volunteer counselor who will help guide children through art therapy, as well as create lessons with staff throughout the program to support youth, mental health and Social-Emotional Development help. Hallie Riskus is our volunteer art teacher, she has been teaching with the school district for over 20 years, she has donated multiple pieces of art for auction items and will be assisting staff on advance skills to teach our members. Hallie has also provided lessons on brush stroke techniques and watercolor tutorials.

Funds granted to the Boys & Girls Club will be allocated in two different categories for project support: supplies, and art exhibition. If granted these funds, \$5,000 will go towards art supplies for all three sessions and monthly family night events. These funds will also aid in transforming a space into an immersive space for the audience to enjoy. To create masterpieces we must have supplies, not all in-kind donations or supplies on hand are usable or in the quantity needed for projects. We project to have 250 members signed up for the summer session, and another 350 members during the school year. Thus, we will need to buy supplies such as acrylic and watercolor paint, paper, pencils, erasers, easels, canvas, paint brushes, charcoal pencils, artists palettes, and extra supplies along the way in case we run out. We will also be purchasing ink and copy paper for rubrics, surveys, lesson plans and instructions.

Art exhibit funds will provide our Annual Art Exhibit with money to use for facility rental, Hors d'oeuvres, refreshments, extra exhibit displays and fixtures, mat board framing, and the transportation cost of transferring artwork, displays, fixtures, exhibition decor, and lighting fixtures to and from club to our exhibition.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Boys & Girls Club of Sweetwater County work with community youth 6 to 18 years of age. We provide after school and summer programming to members in areas of Character & Leadership, Education, Career & College Readiness, The Arts, STEAM, Health & Wellness, and Recreation. Last year was a record making year in terms of our Artist in the Making Program, with over 3,000 pieces of artwork created by our members for our 5th Annual Art Exhibition.

Staff, directors and volunteers worked tirelessly throughout the year to teach members new skill and techniques while creating fun and innovative lessons that kept our youth intrigued and wanting more. Our organization is determined to keep our art program going, with an annual art show showcasing all our member's great work. We had over four hundred attendees present,

and twenty local artist donations given for raffles and art auction for parents and attendees to enjoy.

As an organization we are proud of our members and what they had achieved last year, our staff are learning new techniques and working on lessons to advance our program. However, this year we are designing the program with two new objectives. One, members will refine and advance their talent and knowledge about fine arts, specifically 2-Dimensional artwork in pencil drawing, acrylic and watercolor painting through Art History and in-depth lessons on the element of art. In our program members will learn concepts of art, historical presence of techniques and organization of design. Second, lessons will implement the use of art as a coping mechanism and Social-Emotional development tool to help our young people navigate their daily lives and futures. Through creative processes like drawing, painting people can explore and release feelings of stress, sadness, or anxiety in a safe and constructive way, as well as express feelings and self-reflect.

All lessons have been designed for multiple ages with adaptations and alternative supplies to help those in need of accommodations and beginners in mind. Staff have also created lessons within the program for members who may need advanced challenges with supplies readily available to them. Staff and volunteers want every member to experience the joy of creating their own piece of art, and in doing so have created a safe and positive area in which all members can express themselves. With the funds generated by the 5th Annual Art Exhibition, new brushes, acrylic paint, watercolors, and canvas were bought for future work.

We plan to start our new program with the summer session beginning in June and ending in September, then restarting this process every three months when new members register for each session. Members registered all year round will be taught advanced techniques and evaluated throughout each session to adjust their learning and skills. By the end of the program(s) we hope members have learned to use the skills and techniques as both a learning tool to appreciate art, collaborate with peers, personal achievement and as a coping mechanism.

Though we do mainly work with youth, we are planning on providing family art nights and community art nights to let other join in the fun, and feel the therapeutic qualities of art. These nights include food, fun and insight as to what youth are doing inside our organization to help spread the word of our organization and the quality services we provide to the community.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Members will gain foundational skills in various media that enable them to explore principles and concepts of two-dimensional design and drawing. Members will demonstrate a basic understanding of visual techniques, methods and principles through design and drawing, with an evaluation rubric created by staff and art teacher volunteers from local school district. Member should also be able to express one's personal experience and through visual skill and clarity; allowing for members to create their artwork through their own personal experience with theme, techniques, meaning and artistic ideas to help with their social-emotional development.

Our younger members will learn how to generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work (WDE; 2.FPA.C1) in order to express their feelings and explore their emotions through guided therapeutic lessons created in

conjunction with counselors' and club directors. These members will also be able to develop and refine artistic ideas and work (WDE.2.FPA.P1) to improve self-awareness, cope with stress and anxiety, and promote insight to coping and social skills. Finally, members K-2 will be able to perceive and analyze artistic work (WDE.2.FPA.R1), enabling them to self-reflect and evaluate their artwork, encouraging problem solving skills.

Older members will learn to organize and develop artistic ideas and work (5.FPA.C2) develop technical skills, creativity, communication and mindfulness through guided lessons and self-determination, that will eventually lead to each member being able to interpret intent and meaning in artistic work (5.FPA.R2). Evaluations of each members' work will be self-reflective, with the help of probing questions to delve deeper in meaning, analysis and generate relatable connections; allowing for each member to synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art (2.FPA.CO1).

Members will be able to handle materials effectively through use of responsibility and efforts with lessons on visual elements and technical skills. All members should show progress in their designs, creativity, and evaluations through the after school and summer programs. Staff and volunteers will evaluate by critiquing artwork, throughout the program in a rubric styled evaluation on progress, skills, work ethic and self-management and organization. Members will also be assessed on Social-Emotional Development with the aid of volunteer counselor, on the following: self- management, social awareness, responsible decision making, collaboration, and mindfulness. Along with Social- Emotional Development, staff and volunteers hope to see progress in each member coping skills, with the added use of art and its meditative act of helping with stress, anxiety, anger, etc. A survey will be conducted by staff to parents, teachers and volunteers on the state of members progress in Social-Emotional Development and the use of art a coping skill to reduce negative feelings when overwhelmed or stressed, as a preventative action.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Jodi Barnum; Programs Director/ Art Room Director, prior teacher with SCSD#1. As the main Art Director Jodi was selected due to her previous teaching career, and her enjoyment to create lessons for the Boys & Girls Clubs members. Before coming to the club, Jodi worked as an early childhood educator and owned a small business teaching art and crafts lessons to community members. Jodi has also helped to create our annual Boys & Girls Club Art Exhibition, which has been a huge success for our members as well as the community. Jodi is also the lead on Art Therapy as she has been certified to perform the lessons under guidance of our volunteer counselor, guiding members to use self-expression and learn coping skills through the creation on art.

Jennifer Kendall; Grant Coordinator, former Art Director, Minor in Western Art History. Jennifer is an avid advocate for The Boys & Girls Club of Sweetwater County and the fine arts. She has studied and applied her techniques to her artist space, as well as teaching members the fundamentals of drawing, watercolors, acrylic, and pastel chalks.

Stephanie Lewis, Teen Director; Stephanie has been with the club for over a year and has background in education and owns her own business with face painting, balloon art and teaches paint nights for community members for local businesses and fundraising events. She brings her enthusiasm for teaching art techniques that help to develop beginners or those who want to try new styles of painting.

Hallie Riskus; Junior High Art Teacher and volunteer. She has helped to create original pieces of art for the Boys & Girls Club of Sweetwater County Art Exhibit and Art Program. Hallie has also helped with small projects and art instruction at the club for members and family events.

Jessica Castillo; youth advocate, self-employed entrepreneur at her youth mental health clinic and counseling Root to Rise. Jessica has worked with youth for over 15 years with Sweetwater County School District #1, and has just recently opened her own counseling clinic to better aid more youth and their families. Jessica has been a great help with our youth and staff to identify areas of trauma and provide support to youth and guidance to our staff in trauma informed trainings.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Boys & Girls Club of Sweetwater County is supported by numerous in-kind donations, fundraisers and generous donations made by community members and local businesses. Our organization is operational through available grants, sponsorships, individual and corporate giving and fundraising events. Our key partnerships allow our organization to operate on a daily basis, in general operations, employee wages and programming. United Way of Southwest Wyoming provides funds for educational programming such as reading, STEAM, cultural awareness, food security and employee wages. Wyoming Community Foundation, Sweetwater County Commissioners, and City of Rock Springs funds are used for general operation expenses, and summer hire wages. We do have multiple fundraisers throughout the year to help fund other programs, member scholarships, employee wages, meal provisions and general operations. As an organization we do try and ask for grants to keep membership cost affordable for our families.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF CENTRAL WYOMING, INC.

BGCCW.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Creative Arts Exploration

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Wyoming (BGCCW), also known as The Club, is "to inspire all youth, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens." The organization's strategic goals are categorized into three areas: Operations, Resource Development, and Support Services, each with specific objectives.

Creative art exploration aligns most closely with the Operations goal of implementing effective, impactful programming that fosters a safe, supportive environment through continuous quality improvement. The arts are particularly appealing to middle and high school students, serving as a valuable outlet for self-expression. This directly supports the strategic objective of increasing membership and daily attendance.

Research from Boys & Girls Clubs of America shows that the more frequently a child participates in after-school programs at the Club, the greater the impact on their development. By offering creative arts exploration, the Club provides an additional incentive for youth to choose a positive, enriching environment over less desirable alternatives.

A key component of this impact is the integration of the five essential elements of positive youth development: a safe environment, fun, supportive relationships, opportunities and expectations, and recognition. Showcasing a child's artwork in a culminating art exhibit fosters self-confidence and instills a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

### Community

The Boys & Girls Club of Central Wyoming serves thousands of at-risk youth in Natrona, Converse, Fremont, and Johnson Counties, providing low/no-cost programming to ensure access for all. Many of our underserved youth do not have access to any sort of arts programming outside of the few classes they take in the school setting. At the Club, youth are provided art programming every single day and are developing a passion and reverence for the arts, learning how to express themselves through this medium.

2,283 youth are served in Natrona County, 325 are served in Fremont County, 325 in Johnson County, and 221 in Converse County. In Natrona County, 68% of Club youth come from low-income families, with 12% living below the poverty line. In Johnson County, 50% are from low-income households, and 13% live in poverty. Fremont County

sees 68% from low-income families and 13% in poverty, while Converse County has 69% from low-income households, with 12% in poverty.

BGCCW welcomes a diverse population from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, ensuring equitable opportunities for all youth. Many teens face a lack of role models and career exposure, with 2,000 Wyoming teens currently unemployed and not in school. Through the Club's Formula for Impact, we provide programming in the areas of Academic Success, Good Character & Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles, offering mentoring and a safe, structured environment.

The Club meets all accessibility requirements and ensures accommodations for those in need. No child is turned away due to an inability to pay, and over 50% of families receive financial assistance to attend the Club. We actively engage underserved communities through inclusive programming, diverse staff, and targeted outreach, ensuring every child can thrive.

## **Evaluation**

Attendance is the cornerstone of BGCCW's measurement and evaluation strategy. To effectively demonstrate impact, we track who is in the building, how often they attend, and which programs they engage in. A strong sense of connection to the Club is essential for recruiting and retaining members, as well as maximizing the Club's positive influence on youth.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America equips Clubs with the National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI) survey, which assesses members' perceptions of their Club experience, including feelings of safety, enjoyment, and connections with adults.

BGCCW utilizes both the NYOI and Vision software to monitor progress in closing achievement gaps, increasing educational proficiency, and enhancing community outcomes. NYOI results, reported annually to the board, help track impact and inform staff training, program improvements, and facility enhancements to ensure every child experiences the Optimal Club Experience. Vision software is used to track attendance and program participation, while member, parent, teacher, and community testimonials provide additional insights into the Club's impact.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The bulk of the operating expenses for running art programs at BGCCW comes in the way of staff salaries. Per BGCCW policies, we have one staff member for every 20 members that attend the Club. At each of our Clubs, arts programming is offered on a daily basis during the after school and summer programs with the aim of instilling a passion for the arts in our youth and to provide them opportunities to express themselves. Artifacts are collected throughout the year to be presented at the Boys & Girls Club Annual Art Show.

## **Project Support Narrative**

BGCCW is seeking funding to support its annual Club Art Show, a highly anticipated event showcasing the creative talents of our youth. Throughout the year, Club members actively engage in a variety of artistic disciplines,

including monochromatic drawing, color pencil, crayon, marker art, photography, 3D art, painting, pastels, and mixed media.

All 11 BGCCW sites are invited to participate in this culminating exhibition, which features artwork from youth ages 5 to 18. The event, held at the Main Club, provides an opportunity for families, friends, and community members to celebrate the artistic achievements of our young members. The arts are a foundation of our programming, fostering creativity, self-expression, and confidence among participants. Each year, local artists are invited to serve as judges for the art show, ensuring a professional evaluation. Every member who submits a piece is recognized and celebrated as an artist, reinforcing the value of their creative expression.

With art supplies in constant demand, securing adequate materials remains a priority to ensure that every child has access to high-quality resources for artistic exploration. Support from the Wyoming Arts Council would be instrumental in helping us provide essential supplies for both the creation of artwork throughout the year and the successful execution of the annual Art Show. This grant would directly contribute to enriching the creative experiences of our Club members, allowing them to showcase their talents and develop valuable artistic skills.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

At each of our 11 Club locations, we are committed to fostering patience, focus, and creativity in our members as they develop their artistic skills. Through hands-on learning and thoughtful guidance, we teach new art techniques and how to apply them carefully. Most importantly, we emphasize that every piece of artwork is special because it reflects the unique ideas, feelings, and hard work of its creator. Every brushstroke, color choice, and creative decision adds value and meaning to their work.

We engage our members in art talks, where we explore famous artworks and encourage critical thinking. By asking questions such as, “What do you see?” and “How does it make you feel?”, we invite thoughtful reflection and open dialogue. Our members are also empowered to make their own artistic decisions, reinforcing the importance of their ideas and creativity.

After completing a project, we encourage members to reflect on their creative journey by sharing what they enjoyed about their work and the lessons they learned. We also celebrate their achievements by showcasing their artwork, helping them feel proud and recognize the value their art holds for themselves and others.

We guide our members through a structured creative process:

Planning and Sketching:

Members begin by brainstorming ideas and creating rough drafts. This step encourages creative exploration and thoughtful design.

Building the Artwork:

Using their chosen materials, members follow their plans carefully while learning to layer colors, add texture, and refine details.

#### Craftsmanship and Precision:

We emphasize the importance of attention to detail—clean lines, vibrant colors, and a polished final presentation. This focus on craftsmanship helps members take pride in producing high-quality work.

#### Reflection and Sharing:

Upon completing their projects, members reflect on their artistic process and share what they are most proud of, fostering self-awareness and confidence in their abilities.

By combining technical instruction with creative freedom and reflective practices, we strive to nurture not only artistic skills but also self-expression, patience, and a deep appreciation for the value of their work.

Some recent art projects from members at BGCCW:

Our Teen members recently hosted a Teen Night where they experimented with pendulum painting, a hands-on, interactive project that was a huge success. They also gave new life to hundreds of old science fiction novels by transforming them into intricate origami creations inspired by their stories. Some members painted iconic characters on torn-out pages, merging literature with visual art in a unique and meaningful way.

Our younger artists have been equally busy exploring new techniques. They sculpted their favorite characters out of clay, blended pastels to create stunning Northern Lights scenes, and experimented with unconventional painting methods. Instead of traditional brushes, they used Q-tips, rubber stamps, pencil erasers, cotton balls, and eye droppers. They also explored different paint consistencies, using water dyed with food coloring and fruit juices, testing the effects of thick versus watered-down paint.

Hopefully, many of these unique projects will be featured at our Annual Club Art Show, giving members the opportunity to share their creativity and artistic growth with the community.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

1. Provide members with a comprehensive understanding of various art forms, techniques, and art history to foster an appreciation for artistic expression.
2. Encourage self-expression through art-making, helping members develop confidence in their creative abilities and personal identity.



3. Use art as a tool for emotional regulation, self-reflection, and social connection to support mental well-being and positive peer relationships.

4. Equip members with technical skills in different artistic mediums and introduce them to potential career paths in the arts.

5. Create an opportunity for members to engage in collaborative projects and exhibitions at our annual Club Art Show to promote community involvement.

These goals were determined through our mission statement to inspire all youth, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

This is an area where we continue to grow. We would like to create more partnerships with artistic leaders in the communities we serve. We would like to form stronger partnerships with Art 321, Nicolaysen Art Museum, Pottery By You, and Artisan Alley, to name a few. BGCCW employs staff members who are passionate about helping youth develop new hobbies, with our chief arts coordinator residing at our Main Club. At our school based sites, Club staff partner with the educators at their school for providing art programs to youth. BGCCW also asks local art teachers and/or artists to be judges at the Annual Art Show.

### **Budget Narrative**

BGCCW utilizes a diverse funding model to ensure that there is not an over reliance on a single source of funding. BGCCW receives contributions from private and public foundations, State and Federal grants, as well as individual donors. Some key partnerships are the Daniels Fund, the McMurry Foundation, and the Ellbogen Foundation. BGCCW operates from a \$5.6 million budget with 86% of all expenses being dedicated towards youth development.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF SOUTHEAST WYOMING

[HTTPS://BGCSEW.ORG/S/](https://BGCSEW.ORG/S/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Empowering Young Voices: The Art of Expression

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission is to inspire and enable all Laramie County youth, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential. At the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeast Wyoming, members can explore a variety of youth programs tailored to their interests, providing opportunities for growth, learning, and fun in a supportive environment. Our vision is to create a world where every young person who walks through our doors feels empowered to achieve their full potential. We're committed to guiding them toward high school graduation with a clear plan for their future, instilling strong character and citizenship, and encouraging healthy, fulfilling lifestyles. We aim to inspire BRIGHTER futures for all.

### Strategic Goals:

1. Growth
2. Financial Stability
3. Brand Enhancement
4. Program Quality

### Community

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeast Wyoming play a crucial role in supporting the communities of Cheyenne, Pine Bluffs, and Burns by providing under-served youth with access to valuable programs and resources. We have six total club locations, three in various parts of Cheyenne, one in Pine Bluffs, and another in Burns, Wyoming. Our main site on the South Side of Cheyenne serves as a key hub, offering a welcoming and engaging environment for youth who may not otherwise have access to such opportunities. Creating spaces where kids feel safe, supported, and excited to participate is essential to fostering positive development. At our Meadowlark location in Cheyenne, we also serve military families, which brings a unique dynamic to our club, as many of these children experience frequent relocations and transitions. Our Pine Bluffs and Burns locations, both situated in rural areas with limited resources, face additional challenges, which makes providing high-quality programming and resources all the more important. By addressing specific requests for accommodation and ensuring no child is left behind, we demonstrate our commitment to meeting each youth where they are and supporting them based on their

individual needs. Our mission is to provide a comprehensive, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all youth, regardless of their background or circumstances.

## **Evaluation**

The Club follows the evidence-based formula for impact set by Boys & Girls Clubs of America: Young People Who Need Us Most + Outcome-Driven Club Experience = Priority Outcomes. Based upon this formula, the Club recognizes that a program's impact on young people depends on how frequently and how long they participate, couple with the five key elements of a Safe, Positive Environment; Supportive Relationships, Opportunities and Expectations; and Recognition.

To gather feedback surrounding the five key elements, the Club utilizes the annual National Youth Outcomes Initiative annual member survey, providing youth with a platform to share their perceptions of the Club. These responses, coupled with regular grade monitoring and teacher check-ins, allow the Club to see how well the programming is delivering a high-quality Club experience that promotes positive youth development.

The Art Programs are measured by daily attendance by staff. For the Arts Programs, the Club will measure the number of youth entering pieces into the local, regional, and national BGCA art shows, as well as the number of youth participating in art-based workshops and other learning opportunities. With a focus on Art as a positive outlet, the Club will also analyze NYOI data surrounding social-emotional skills, mindfulness, and overall well-being.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeast Wyoming are grateful for the opportunity to seek support from the Wyoming Arts Council in order to enhance our existing Arts Education program and provide transformative, immersive artistic experiences for local youth.

While participating in the Club, members engage in weekly art lessons that foster the development of foundational skills across a variety of creative mediums. Under the guidance of our Art Coordinator, Amber True, members explore techniques in drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, mixed media, and sculpture, creating works for the National Fine Arts Exhibit that are submitted to BGCA's local, regional, and national art shows. In addition to the ongoing Arts Education Program, the Club offers quarterly BGCA-designed initiatives such as ImageMakers and MusicMakers to further enrich the artistic experience.

The Club will fully adopt these proposed programs, as they serve as a solid foundation for fostering creativity, self-confidence, and academic success. Additionally, the Club will enhance creative expression by connecting emerging learners with established artists, thereby enriching existing programs and creating unique, once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. These initiatives aim to level the artistic playing field by offering creative outlets beyond the typical school day and providing extracurricular activities that are often inaccessible to underserved families. The Arts Education program will leverage out-of-school hours to help young individuals develop problem-solving skills,

explore diverse cultures, and build positive self-esteem. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, young people continue to face significant social and emotional challenges, and the arts offer a source of hope, positivity, and connection.

Specifically, the Club plans to expand partnerships with local artists to expand into the fields of theatre and ceramics, as they require resources beyond the walls of the Club's art room. This includes collaborating with Silver Sage Ceramics, Wyoming's most comprehensive pottery retail store and studio. Tamara Rodgers, the owner and primary instructor at Silver Sage Ceramics as well as an award-winning photographer, will guide members through an in-studio ceramics lesson. Taking place during the summer program, Tamara will work with small groups of elementary students, guiding them through hand-built, age-appropriate projects. During this one-day lesson, members will complete a project from start to finish, inspiring them to push beyond their artistic comfort zones.

The Club will also collaborate with the LCCC Theatre Department to offer an interactive theatre program, guiding members through the process of creating, producing, and acting in their own theatrical sketch. This program will take place over a week, with practices held at the Club and the final performance on the main stage at LCCC. This collaboration will open members' eyes to the world of theatre and allow LCCC theatre students to apply their skills in a new setting and inspire the next generation of performers.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeast Wyoming are grateful for the opportunity to request support from the Wyoming Arts Council, enhancing the existing Arts Education program and creating eye-opening, immersive artistic experiences for local youth.

While attending the Club, members participate in weekly art lessons, building foundational skills in a variety of creative mediums. With guidance from Art Coordinator Amber True, members explore drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, mixed media, and sculpture, ultimately crafting pieces for The National Fine Arts Exhibit that will be entered into BGCA local, regional, and national art shows. To complement the ongoing Arts Education program, the Club offers quarterly BGCA-designed programs such as ImageMakers and MusicMakers.

The Club will embrace these outlined programs, as they provide a foundation for creativity, self-confidence, and academic achievement. The Club will also amplify creative voices by connecting emerging learners with established artists, bringing a new dimension to existing programs as well as creating once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. These opportunities level the artistic playing field, offering creative outlets beyond that of the typical school day while providing extracurriculars typically out-of-reach for underserved families. The Arts Education program will also utilize out-of-school hours to help young people develop problem-solving skills, explore diverse cultures, and build positive self-esteem. In the post-COVID world, young people continue to struggle with heavy social and emotional burdens, and art provides a beacon of hope, positivity, and connection.

Specifically, the Club plans to expand partnerships with local artists to expand into the fields of theatre and ceramics, as they require resources beyond the walls of the Club's art room. This includes collaborating with Silver Sage Ceramics, Wyoming's most comprehensive pottery retail store and studio. Tamara Rodgers, the owner and primary instructor at Silver Sage Ceramics as well as an award-winning photographer, will guide members through an in-studio ceramics lesson. Taking place during the summer program, Tamara will work with small groups of elementary students, guiding them through hand-built, age-appropriate projects. During this one-day lesson, members will complete a project from start to finish, inspiring them to push beyond their artistic comfort zones. Amber True plans on attending the LCCC ceramics lab so her students can paint with Ron Medina and the student Art Union.

The Club will also collaborate with the LCCC Theatre Department to offer an interactive theatre program, guiding members through the process of creating, producing, and acting in their own theatrical sketch. This program will take place over a week, with practices held at the Club and the final performance on the main stage at LCCC. This collaboration will open members' eyes to the world of theatre and allow LCCC theatre students to apply their skills in a new setting and inspire the next generation of performers.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Clubs serve as an extension of the school day, transforming out-of-school time into learning opportunities and creative outlets. Because of this, the Clubs closely follow the artistic vision of local school districts and BGCA guidelines.

For example, LCSD#1 outlines the following:

Goal: Students will achieve academic success, graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary education, be career ready, and be responsible citizens.

Mission: in cooperation with students, parents, staff, and community, is to guarantee a high-quality Art education in a safe and orderly environment for all students, inspiring them to become lifelong learners.

Purpose: is to prepare students who will independently use their learning to:

- Be visually literate.
- Be resilient and accepting of learning opportunities.
- Be able to transfer Art skills to real-life situations.
- Be aware and appreciative of Art's cultural and educational value as it influences their lives.
- Be creatively involved citizens who examine their community and the world from different perspectives.
- Be solutions-oriented citizens who use creative and critical thinking skills when presented with problems.

In addition, BGCA is committed to keeping art inclusive and responsive by approaching Arts Education in three different ways: 1) Arts Specific, 2) Arts Enhanced, and 3) Arts Integrated. The 2023 National Arts Contest will focus on Arts Integrated, engaging youth in the creative process by exploring connections between specific art forms and another subject area to deepen their understanding of both fields. BGCA has also introduced new thematic categories such as Setting Expectations, Speaking Up, and Wellness Inside & Out.

Throughout the Arts Education program, the Club will utilize these principles to inspire stunning art pieces while engaging youth in critical conversations about the impact of positive self-esteem, leadership, personal development, and joy.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The Clubs strive to provide high-quality afterschool and summer programming emphasizing artistic expression and creativity. By integrating art as a platform for student success, the Club's goal is to spark creativity and imagination among Laramie County youth, especially low-income and vulnerable youth who don't typically have the opportunity to enroll in extracurricular classes or pursue their artistic passions. The Club helps "level the playing field" for these underserved youth, while also boosting math and literary achievement, building critical thinking skills, and developing their own personal interests and goals.

Artistic outlets are especially critical in the aftermath of COVID-19, as it provides a sense of community, connection, and self-expression, ultimately serving as a powerful tool for self-care and mental wellness. To measure the social-emotional impact of art within the Club setting, the Club will utilize the NYOI annual member survey, which includes reflection questions such as:

- I have at least one friend my age who helps me when I am having a hard time
- Understanding how my feelings influence how I act
- Staying calm when I feel stressed
- Getting through something even when I feel frustrated
- Controlling my temper when I am upset
- Thinking carefully about what I say before I speak
- Knowing ways I calm myself down

Specifically for Arts Learning, the Club's goal is to provide an Arts Education program that is thoughtful, professional, and inspiring. The Club strives to create an environment where the arts are visible and valued, complete with dedicated creative spaces, near-professional equipment, well-trained program staff, and regular enrichment opportunities. The Club also seeks to show youth that art expands far beyond the walls of the Club, as

it is especially meaningful to draw from the rich cultural history of Cheyenne, Pine Bluffs, Burns, and Wyoming as a whole.

Within the Club, members can learn from and appreciate the beautiful pieces of artwork in the local community, while also developing their own styles and exploring new platforms such as theatre and ceramics, made possible with support from local arts organizations including Silver Sage Ceramics and LCCC. The Club will track participation in these hands-on opportunities, as well as implement pre and post-surveys to best understand the increase in artistic knowledge, highlights, and youth perspectives of the overall program. Because the ceramics workshops will be designed for elementary-age youth, the Club will also offer an internal, smaller-scale program to provide all members with a surface-level introduction to ceramics. The Club also plans to have older members and teens document these artistic opportunities, creating video series, newsletters, and social media content to engage a larger number of youth and share the program's impact with the greater community.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Boys & Girls Club of Cheyenne's Art Coordinator, Amber True, will be the primary artist involved in the Arts Education program. Amber is highly involved in the local True Troupe Theatre. True Troupe Theatre does things like Christmas caroling, performances through acting, Christmas stories for the members, etc. Amber has experience as an art instructor and educator, and she brings experience in countless mediums including painting theater, set design, recycled art, sculpture, and more. She is also currently planning the Boys & Girls Club's Spring Craft show, taking place on Saturday, April 12, 2025. For this event, 30-40 local artisans registered to have a booth, with the registration fee supporting the Club's Arts Education program. Amber will also train and work closely with youth development professionals across the Club's six sites, as well as collaborate with the Club's unit directors, director of resource development, community impact officer, chief executive officer, and other administrative staff.

Community partnerships will also ensure the success of the Arts Education program, providing diverse perspectives and expanding art resources beyond the walls of the Club. With support from the Wyoming Arts Council, the Club will partner with Silver Sage Ceramics owner Tamara Rodgers, who is also an award-winning photographer and adjunct photography professor at LCCC. She has experience working with young artists of all ages, exposing them to age-appropriate ceramics projects that will eventually progress to wheel throwing and other more intricate projects. The Club will also collaborate with Jason Pasqual and the LCCC Theatre Department, bringing LCCC theatre students into the Club environment to teach an introductory drama program. This program will also foster a relationship with the LCCC Art Program, with the goal of eventually expanding into various media and concepts encouraging young people to consider a career in the arts.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Club is funded through diverse streams including grants, private donations, events, membership fees, and in-kind donations. Key partnerships include BGCA, Blue Cross Blue Shield, The Daniels Fund, Microsoft, and many other local businesses. With art offered on a daily basis and a full-time art coordinator on staff, the Arts Education program represents a significant portion of the Club's budget. This includes staff time, art supplies, equipment, marketing, and other art essentials. With support from the Wyoming Arts Council, the Club will continue to grow the internal arts program, while collaborating with local artists to offer one-of-a-kind workshops and programs.

Specifically for the ceramics program, funding will support the artist and supply fee for Silver Sage Ceramics, as well as transportation and staff time at the studio. For the theatre program, funding will support set building materials, costumes, and staff time, in addition to stipends for participating LCCC students.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BUFFALO CHRISTIAN SCHOOL DBA BUFFALO CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

[HTTPS://WWW.BUFFALOCHRISTIANACADEMY.ORG/](https://www.buffalochristianacademy.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Operational Support and Arts Learning Activities

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission Statement: Buffalo Christian Academy strives to glorify God by providing an excellent Bible-centered education that equips students spiritually and academically to courageously serve God and others.

At BCA, we offer a high-quality, faith-based education that integrates hands-on learning and character development to prepare students for purposeful lives, as future leaders of our community. Our goals are:

Expand Arts & Culture Education – Strengthen arts programs and integrate music, visual arts, STEAM, journalism, dance, and culinary arts to enhance students’ creative development

Enhance Access & Opportunity – Ensure all students can access arts experiences by funding instructors and programs for equitable participation.

Foster Community Engagement – Partner with local artists and organizations for real-world learning that connects students to the community and allows them to give back.

Develop 21st-Century Skills – Foster critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity through arts and STEAM projects.

Sustain Operational Excellence – Secure funding to maintain affordability and grow BCA’s arts initiatives, ensuring long-term success.

We integrate arts into a well-rounded education, emphasizing hands-on experiences through our “Specials” program. Instructors like Tessa Holzemer (a bluegrass musician and dance instructor) and Khara Lockman (an engineer-turned-teacher, journalism and design specialist) bring expertise to their subjects, fostering creativity and technical skills. Our two science educators enhance STEAM learning with hands-on experiments, engineering projects, and student-led innovations like building go-karts.

This grant supports BCA's mission to expand the arts, provide supplies, sustain instructors, and foster creativity through a comprehensive education, while strengthening the cultural fabric of our rural community and inspiring future generations of artists, innovators, and leaders who will contribute to the town's growth and vibrancy.

## **Community**

Community:

BCA serves a diverse community in Buffalo, WY, with families from varying socio-economic backgrounds, including working-class, agricultural, and military families. While BCA is a faith-based school, it welcomes both church and unchurched students, creating a learning environment that supports a wide range of beliefs and backgrounds. BCA is not tied to any single denomination, and our students and staff belong to several local churches. Our small, personalized setting provides a strong spiritual foundation.

BCA students engage in the community through middle-school sports, 4H, and volunteering with organizations like the animal shelter and Friends Feeding Friends. They assist with yard work, cleanups, and the Wood Bank. Serving 53 students, BCA's impact reaches hundreds through extended families, businesses, and community events. The Buddy Program, where 4th-graders connect with Amie Holt Care Center residents, forms lasting bonds through weekly fellowship and crafting.

In our rural community, limited access to arts and culture—especially for students facing financial barriers—makes BCA's programs vital. We bridge this gap by providing creative opportunities in music, visual arts, dance, journalism, and culinary arts, ensuring all students gain valuable skills.

We foster inclusion by offering accommodations for students with learning differences. Classroom aides provide tailored support, helping students thrive. Our staff collaborates with families to meet diverse educational needs.

BCA's commitment to arts, service, and accessibility enriches students while strengthening our rural community.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation:

At BCA, we evaluate success and impact using qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure growth.

Qualitative Data:

We collect feedback through testimonials, surveys with open-ended questions, and verbal input from students, parents, and community. Events like the Festival of Trees received enthusiastic responses, with families

highlighting the significance of seeing students' creativity on display through centerpieces, wreaths, performances, and signage. This feedback helps shape future programming, ensuring activities resonate with our community.

#### Quantitative Data:

We track event participation, attendance, and engagement. The Festival of Trees drew about 1,000 attendees, featuring 15 trees and 25 creative masterpieces, with strong business sponsorship and growing interest for next year. We track participation in the BCA Talent Show and Rendezvous, where students present skills, art, and trade crafts, and evaluate ongoing interest to gauge program success. Repeated participation and student excitement confirm program success.

#### Program Adjustments & Impact:

This data informs strategic planning, partnerships, and funding. For example, strong feedback about hands-on learning in our STEAM program led to expanding project-based activities like engineering challenges and creative arts integration. Additionally, we assess accommodations for students with disabilities or learning differences, tracking progress through teacher observations and family input.

#### Accessibility in Evaluation:

We ensure all voices are heard by offering multiple feedback methods, including surveys, informal discussions, and direct communication with staff. This allows families of all backgrounds to help shape BCA's future programs.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Buffalo Christian Academy (BCA) seeks \$10,000 in operating support to sustain and enhance our arts education programs, which play a vital role in providing a well-rounded education to our students. Our commitment to fostering creativity and artistic expression is evident across our visual arts, STEAM programs, music, dance, drama, and pottery programs. These funds will help cover essential staff salaries, classroom supplies, facility costs, and insurance, ensuring that our arts programming remains vibrant, accessible, and sustainable.

#### Essential Operating Functions Relative to Arts

##### Staffing for Arts Programs

Our dedicated art teachers and contracted specialists provide instruction in visual arts, music, dance, drama, and crafts, offering students meaningful, hands-on experiences in artistic disciplines.

#### Current, Staff Expenses for Arts Education (10 months per year):

Staff Role	Monthly Cost	Annual Cost (10 Months)
Current Art Teachers	\$1,135	\$11,350
Contracted Music & Dance Staff	\$360	\$3,600
Total Staff Expenses	\$1,495	\$14,950

These educators are instrumental in delivering high-quality arts instruction, and operating support will allow us to retain and fairly compensate them for their work.

#### Current, Other Operational Costs

Beyond staffing, BCA incurs operational expenses necessary to maintain a safe and enriching arts learning environment. These include:

Office Supplies (software, postage, paper): \$2,500

Classroom Supplies (art materials, music sheets, drama props): \$1,200

Facility Rent: \$9,600

Printer Rental, Printing Costs: \$3,000

BCA Insurance: \$6,000

Total Other Operational Costs: \$22,300

Total Staff Expenses + Total Other Operational Costs: \$43,250

This \$10,000 request remains within the required 50% eligibility limit for operating support.

Overall Operational Budget: BCA's total annual budget is \$337,375

#### How the Requested Funds Will Be Utilized

The \$10,000 in operating support will be allocated to:

Staff Salaries – Supporting arts teachers and contracted specialists in music and dance.

Classroom & Office Supplies – Ensuring students have access to necessary materials for hands-on learning.

Facility & Insurance Costs – Providing a well-maintained, safe space for arts education.

By securing this operating support funding, BCA can continue providing high-quality arts instruction, ensuring that creativity remains a central and enriching component of our students' education. These funds will help us maintain and expand our programs while keeping operational expenses manageable, allowing students to thrive artistically and academically.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Buffalo Christian Academy (BCA) will expand its arts education offerings by launching a Pottery Program designed to provide hands-on, immersive arts learning. This program will increase students' knowledge, understanding, and skills in ceramic arts, aligning with the goals of the Arts Learning Grant.

#### Pottery Program Overview

**Instructor Expertise:** A professional pottery instructor with over 10 years of experience will lead the program, ensuring high-quality, standards-based arts instruction.

**Instructional Schedule:** The program will run from August through May, offering 5 hours per week of structured, hands-on pottery instruction, allowing for more in-depth learning and student engagement. Of these 5 hours, 3 hours will be dedicated to instruction for grades K-4, providing foundational pottery skills and creativity to younger students. The remaining 2 hours will be offered as an elective for more advanced instruction with grades 5-8, allowing for deeper exploration and mastery of ceramic techniques.

**Student Participation:** The program will be open to students across multiple grade levels, expanding access to quality arts education and creating an inclusive environment for creativity and artistic development.

**Skill Development:** Students will learn both foundational and advanced ceramic techniques, including hand-building, wheel-throwing, glazing, and kiln firing. These skills will help students connect to both the technical and artistic aspects of ceramics.

Interactive & Experiential Learning: The program will foster tactile engagement and creative problem-solving through clay work. Students will develop fine motor skills and artistic expression as they engage in the pottery process, encouraging them to explore new ways of thinking and creating.

#### Budget & Funding Request

Pottery Instructor: \$60 per hour for 5 hours per week, totaling \$1,200 per month (\$12,000 annually) over 10 months.

Materials & Equipment: Including clay, glazes, and kiln usage, totaling \$1,200 annually to ensure all students have access to essential resources.

The total project cost is \$13,200, which includes instructor compensation and materials. BCA is requesting \$5,000 from the Arts Learning Grant, which would cover 50% of the total expenses, with the remaining costs supported through school funds and community contributions.

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The primary goals of Buffalo Christian Academy's Pottery Program are to:

Develop Artistic Skills & Techniques – Provide students with hands-on instruction in ceramic arts, including hand-building, wheel-throwing, glazing, and kiln firing to build both foundational and advanced pottery skills.

Enhance Creative Expression – Encourage students to explore their creativity through clay work, fostering individual artistic voice and self-expression in a structured, supportive environment.

Expand Access to Arts Education – Ensure students across multiple grade levels have access to high-quality visual arts instruction, particularly in a medium (pottery) not currently available at BCA.

Foster Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving – Teach students to think critically about form, function, and design, developing problem-solving skills as they navigate the artistic process.

Increase Engagement Through Hands-On Learning – Provide a tactile, immersive experience that supports different learning styles, improving fine motor skills, patience, and perseverance.

#### Goal Identification

These goals were identified through:

Student & Teacher Interest Surveys – Students and teachers expressed a strong desire for expanded arts programming, particularly in hands-on, three-dimensional art forms.

Arts Education Best Practices – Research and state/national arts standards emphasize the importance of experiential learning in visual arts, including ceramics.

Limited Existing Arts Offerings – BCA currently provides limited structured fine arts programs, highlighting the need for expanded access to high-quality arts education.

Community & Parent Input – Parents and community members have expressed interest in additional creative outlets for students, particularly those who may not participate in other extracurricular activities like music or sports.

This Pottery Program will directly address these needs by offering a structured, high-quality arts learning experience, ensuring that students develop technical skills, creative confidence, and a deeper appreciation for the arts.

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Buffalo Christian Academy's Pottery Program will be led by a skilled ceramic artist or team with expertise in pottery instruction, ensuring students receive high-quality, hands-on arts education. We are seeking to partner with Bonnie Schlesserman or an artist of similar experience and expertise, along with potential collaboration with Potter's Depot, a respected ceramic supply shop and artist collective.

#### Instructor Qualifications & Role:

The selected instructor(s) will be an experienced ceramic artist with a strong background in pottery techniques, kiln firing, and arts education.

They will lead weekly pottery classes (5 hours per week) from August through May, providing structured instruction in hand-building, wheel-throwing, glazing, and firing.

The artist(s) will work with students to foster creativity, technical skills, and artistic confidence through hands-on engagement.

#### Potential Partners:

Bonnie Schlesserman & Team: A highly qualified ceramic artist and educator with over a decade of experience in both creating and teaching pottery. If available, she or an equivalent artist/team would lead instruction and curriculum development.

Potter's Depot: A trusted ceramics resource that could provide materials, kiln support, and access to guest artists or consultants for specialized instruction.

#### Selection Process:

We are currently identifying the best-qualified artist or team for this role, prioritizing candidates with:

Proven experience in ceramics education.

Strong teaching abilities to engage students across grade levels.

A commitment to fostering artistic growth and creativity.

By securing a qualified instructor, whether Bonnie Schlesserman or another expert of similar caliber, Buffalo Christian Academy aims to ensure a high-quality, immersive arts education experience that aligns with the goals of the Arts Learning Grant.

### **Budget Narrative**

Buffalo Christian Academy (BCA) is supported by a blend of donations, tuition, and fundraising events, ensuring the sustainability of our operations and the continued delivery of high-quality education. Additionally, BCA benefits from in-kind donations and volunteer efforts, such as time contributed by teaching staff and administrative support. These resources significantly reduce operational costs. The budget is strategically allocated to support key programs such as pottery, music, and visual arts, alongside essential operational expenses, ensuring that these offerings continue to thrive. Through robust community partnerships and the dedication of those who believe in our mission, BCA ensures that our programs remain impactful and sustainable over time. This collective support helps us continue providing enriching experiences that shape the next generation of creative thinkers and leaders.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BUFFALO SENIOR CENTER, INC.

WWW.BUFFALOSENIORCENTER.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Buffalo Senior Center Ceramics Program Support and Sustainability

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

At the Buffalo Senior Center, our mission is “Enhancing the Lives of our Aging Population.” We offer multiple art classes with a growing number of participants, providing creative expression, social engagement, and lifelong learning opportunities for seniors.

Our Ceramics Program, led by Pinky Kostenbauer, brings in about 10 participants per week, offering a welcoming space for seniors to connect, develop artistic skills, and improve their well-being.

### Community

The Buffalo Senior Center serves Buffalo, Wyoming, and the surrounding Johnson County area, a rural community with a large aging population. Many seniors face barriers such as mobility challenges, financial limitations, and social isolation, making accessible arts programs essential.

Our Ceramics Program and other art classes provide a welcoming space for older adults, veterans, and economically disadvantaged individuals to connect, express themselves, and support their well-being. We ensure inclusivity through ADA-compliant facilities, and flexible instruction to accommodate all participants.

This grant will help sustain and expand these programs, keeping art accessible to underserved seniors in our community.

### Evaluation

We measure the impact of our programs in a few ways. We conduct surveys throughout the year to get feedback from participants on what they enjoy, what could be improved, and how the program benefits them. We also keep track of attendance, participant retention, and new sign-ups to see how much interest and growth the program has over time.

Our staff and instructors pay close attention to how participants are engaging, noting improvements in their skills, confidence, and social connections. We also take informal feedback from seniors and their families to make sure we're meeting their needs and making adjustments when needed.

With this grant, we'll continue to evaluate our Ceramics Program and other arts classes to ensure they stay meaningful and accessible to our community.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

From July 1 – June 30, our operating costs include staff wages, utilities, facility upkeep, and supplies that keep our programs running smoothly. The Ceramics Program, in particular, relies on funding for instructor wages, clay, glazes, and other necessary materials to provide a quality experience for participants.

With local funding cuts impacting our budget, we are seeking support to help cover these essential costs. Ensuring we can pay our part-time instructor, Pinky Kostenbauer, and maintain the needed supplies will allow us to continue offering this valuable program to seniors in our community.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

In addition to keeping the ceramics program running, this funding will help support the arts learning experience for seniors in our community. Our instructor, Pinky Kostenbauer, leads every class, guiding participants as they paint and decorate pre-fired ceramic pieces, learning different glazing techniques and exploring their creativity.

This grant will help cover a portion of Pinky's salary, ensuring she can continue providing instruction and assistance during each class. It will also help purchase additional supplies like paints, glazes, brushes, and pre-fired ceramic pieces, so participants have a variety of options to work with.

With this funding, we can continue offering a fun and engaging class where seniors can learn, socialize, and express themselves through art.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The main goal of our ceramics program is to give seniors a creative and social outlet where they can relax, express themselves, and learn basic glazing techniques. The class is designed to be accessible and fun, allowing participants to explore different artistic styles while working on their fine motor skills. It also provides an opportunity for seniors to connect with others in a supportive environment, which is just as important as the art itself. These goals were shaped by feedback from participants, as well as staff observations, since we've seen firsthand how much

seniors enjoy having a space to create, socialize, and stay engaged. With this grant, we can keep offering that experience and ensure everyone has the materials and guidance they need.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The primary artist involved in this program is Pinky Kostenbauer, who has been the ceramics instructor at the Buffalo Senior Center for 22 years. Before that, she and her late husband owned and operated a photography business for 40 years, making art a lifelong passion for her. She brings decades of experience, not just in ceramics but in the broader creative world, and has been a dedicated part of our center for a long time.

Pinky was selected for this role because of her deep connection to the senior community and her ability to create a welcoming, engaging environment for participants. She teaches every class, guiding seniors through the painting and glazing process while encouraging them to explore their creativity at their own pace. Her experience and dedication make her an essential part of this program, and with this grant, we can continue to support her work and ensure seniors have access to her instruction.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Buffalo Senior Center is funded through federal, state, and local sources, along with community support. Federal and state funding help sustain senior services, while local funding from the Johnson County Senior District has been crucial for programs like ceramics.

With a 25% cut in Senior District funding due to a reduction in property tax in Wyoming, we are facing challenges in keeping this and other programs running at the same level. This grant will help fill the gap, ensuring seniors continue to have access to creative and social opportunities through our Ceramics Program.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

BY WESTERN HANDS

[WWW.BYWESTERNHANDS.ORG](http://WWW.BYWESTERNHANDS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Artist in Residence Summer Program

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

By Western Hands (BWH) is dedicated to preserving and continuing the rich cultural heritage of Western functional art and design by celebrating both past and present artisans. Our mission is built on three core pillars—education, preservation, and perpetuation—each embodied in our exhibit hall and archive, educational training programs, and legacy artisan gallery.

Through immersive events, hands-on workshops, live demonstrations, and specialized training, we ensure the continued creation of decorative and functional art inspired by the American West. Education is at the core of our mission, Western Functional Art is our passion, and our artisans and students are the driving force behind our vision—all within the newly established By Western Hands Institute for Functional Arts.

By integrating exhibits, archival resources, internships, workshops, and gallery experiences, BWH serves as the bridge between today's artisans and the next generation, ensuring that Western craftsmanship not only endures but thrives. Our demonstration shop, educational initiatives, and community outreach provide aspiring artisans with the skills, techniques, and mentorship needed to sustain and evolve this time-honored tradition.

As the leading hub for Western functional art, BWH is dedicated to equipping artists with the knowledge and resources necessary to carry this legacy forward, inspiring future generations to continue the artistry, craftsmanship, and traditions of the American West.

### **Community**

Located in Northwest Wyoming, just 58 miles from Yellowstone National Park's East Entrance, Cody is a vibrant community of 10,000 residents, serving as a cultural and artistic hub within the larger Big Horn Basin population of approximately 45,000. With a rich Western heritage, Cody welcomes visitors and residents of all backgrounds to experience and celebrate Western Functional Art.

At By Western Hands (BWH), inclusivity and accessibility are at the core of our mission. Our Gallery and Exhibit Hall offer free entry to all, and we actively encourage engagement through personalized tours, interactive artisan experiences, and hands-on workshops. Our summer programming strengthens the connection between artisans and patrons, providing opportunities to learn, create, and appreciate the craftsmanship of the American West. Financial assistance is available for those in need, ensuring that cost is never a barrier to participation.

BWH is committed to accessibility, with an ADA-compliant facility and a responsive approach to accommodating special requests. Our downtown Cody location provides easy access to both local residents and visitors. We promote our events, workshops, and programs through local outreach, social media, our website, and in-gallery marketing to maximize community engagement. Additionally, we collaborate with local musicians and artisans to enrich our events, further enhancing the immersive Western cultural experience.

At BWH, we believe in fostering a welcoming space where all individuals can explore, learn, and participate in the preservation of Western Functional Art.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation is essential to ensuring that By Western Hands (BWH) provides a dynamic, engaging, and educational environment that meets the needs and interests of our community. As education is a core pillar of our mission, we have developed a comprehensive evaluation process to assess the impact of our programs, particularly our Artist-in-Residence Program and hands-on workshops.

Written evaluations will be collected from patrons participating in workshops to assess their experience, skill development, and overall satisfaction. This feedback will inform future programming and allow us to tailor workshops to community interest and skill levels. Each artisan will provide feedback on their experience, including the effectiveness of the workshop space, participant engagement, and recommendations for program improvements. We will track attendance for workshops, demonstrations, and gallery interactions, measuring participation trends over time. Engagement will be measured through social media shares, video viewings, and website interactions, including content from the Artist-in-Residence Program and workshops. We will utilize these metrics to expand outreach and refine promotional strategies. We will monitor expenses associated with each Artist-in-Residence and compare them to attendance, participation rates, and program outcomes to ensure sustainability and efficiency.

By continuously evaluating our programs through direct feedback, engagement analytics, and artisan assessments, BWH ensures that we are fostering a meaningful educational experience that strengthens our community's appreciation for Western craftsmanship while refining our offerings for future growth.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

By Western Hands seeks \$10,000 in operating and project support for our Artist-in-Residence Summer Program, which will run from July 10 through September 30, 2025. This program will engage artisans in the Demonstration Shop and Gallery, allowing for direct interaction with the public three days a week. We anticipate that over 2,500 people will participate in live demonstrations and see the creation of handcrafted art from start to finish. Finished pieces will be available for purchase in the gallery, with all proceeds supporting BWH's educational initiatives.

The total estimated cost of the program is \$33,232, with expenses as follows:

Artist Stipends: \$14,000 (for compensating guest artisans)

Materials & Supplies: \$7,000 (for art supplies)

Advertising & In-store Displays: \$3,000 (for program promotion and gallery displays)

Travel & Lodging for Artists: \$3,000 (for out-of-area artists)

Miscellaneous Expenses: \$1,000

Part-time Coordination & Videography: \$5,232 (for part-time staff to organize and produce content)

The \$10,000 requested will specifically support artist stipends, materials, travel, and part-time videography staff. By covering these expenses, the grant will ensure that the program runs smoothly, engaging both artists and the community while showcasing the craftsmanship of local artisans.

This program offers educational opportunities for local media students in partnership with the Media Department at Cody High School. Students will produce video content documenting the creation of art in the Demonstration Shop, which will be used for future promotional materials and shared across social media platforms, websites, and YouTube. This partnership provides valuable hands-on experience for students and allows them to contribute directly to the promotion and visibility of the program.

In addition to the student involvement, patrons will have the opportunity to work directly with artisans, receiving personalized guidance on their own projects. This hands-on interaction will allow participants to observe the artistic process from start to finish, deepening their appreciation for craftsmanship and the creative journey. The program fosters a sense of community and provides an invaluable educational experience for all involved.

BWH is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the arts and craftsmanship of the region. We rely heavily on donor support, which has declined in recent years due to economic factors. Beyond this program, By Western Hands incurs significant annual operational costs, including:

Rent: \$43,200

Advertising and Marketing: \$10,300

Payroll: \$107,659

Utilities and Maintenance: \$15,000

Education, Workshop, and Event Expenses: \$45,000

Travel: \$7,500

Supplies: \$2,000

Other Operational Costs: \$33,500

BWH is committed to providing quality programming and educational opportunities to the community, despite ongoing financial challenges.

Funds from this grant will directly support the Artist-in-Residence Summer Program, contributing to the success of BWH's mission. The program will not only highlight the skills of guest artisans but also provide unique educational opportunities for local students and patrons. By supporting this program, you will help ensure the continued growth and impact of By Western Hands as a community-centered organization that values creativity, craftsmanship, and education.

### **Project Support Narrative**

By Western Hands (BWH) artisans represent some of the finest craftsmen in the nation. Each artist is required to apply by submitting a work for evaluation based on craftsmanship, quality, uniqueness, and functionality. The artisans participating in the 2025 Artist-in-Residence Program include the following and other guest artists:

John L. Blair a lifelong Wyoming resident, Blair was introduced to saddle making by his father, Neal L. Blair, in his Pinedale saddle shop. With deep roots in the western lifestyle, John has mastered the craft, becoming a respected name in the industry.

Tim Lozier's journey started in junior high and continued through high school woodworking classes. After moving to Cody in 1989, he worked at Sweetwater Ranch furniture before opening his own shop in 1997, he creates unique, handcrafted furniture pieces inspired by his surroundings.

Chris Chapman a leather artist since the age of five, has spent fifty years refining her skills. She specializes in historical research and reproduction, focusing on 16th-century European leatherwork and artifacts. Chris's work has been showcased in museums as high-quality reproductions, including bead and quill work.

Ernie Marsh a founding member of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association, Ernie has dedicated over three decades to preserving and advancing the skills passed down through generations. He has been a significant influence on the next generation of western craftsmen and continues to promote the traditions of cowboy arts in Oregon and Wyoming.

Jenny Booth embraces carving as a "backwards form of art," where she removes material from a solid block to bring her vision to life. Known for her dynamic designs, Jenny pushes boundaries with new subjects, patterns, and techniques, constantly challenging herself to capture the kinetic feel of life in her work.

Rip Caswell a world-renowned bronze sculptor, Rip has mastered capturing the human form and animals in his art. A passionate naturalist and conservationist, Rip's sculptures are deeply influenced by his love for nature and wildlife. His works often explore themes of movement, energy, and the interconnectedness of life.

Eric Shell, born and raised in Upton, Wyoming, Eric spent his childhood exploring the forests around him. After serving in the army and working as an aircraft electrician, Eric moved to Cody, where he trained under John Gallis for ten years.

Supaya Gray Wolfe, growing up on various Native American reservations, including the Cherokee, Lakota, and Navajo nations, Supaya draws much of her artistic inspiration from the elders and traditions of these communities. Her work incorporates themes and designs passed down through generations.

The Artist-in-Residence Program will feature these artisans in the Demonstration Shop and on the Gallery Floor three days a week, offering public demonstrations and workshops. The program will run for 14 weeks, with total estimated costs of \$33,232. expenses include:

Artisan Stipends: \$14,000

Materials and Supplies: \$7,000

Advertising and Displays: \$3,000

Travel and Lodging: \$3,000

Miscellaneous Expenses: \$1,000 (i.e. safety glasses, supplies, materials)

Part-time Coordination and Videography: \$5,232

BWH is requesting \$10,000 in Operating and Project Support to help offset these costs. The program will be promoted through a comprehensive marketing strategy, including social media, website advertising, in-store printed materials, and distributed advertisements.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

By Western Hands (BWH) takes great pride in its artisans, who represent the highest level of craftsmanship. Each artisan possesses significant expertise in their respective mediums, often evolving from apprentices to master artisans. Throughout their careers, these artisans collaborate regularly with peers, sharing knowledge and



mentoring others in their craft. For our 2025 Artist-in-Residence Summer Program, we will feature rotating artisans, each offering a unique perspective and skill set.

The Artist-in-Residence Summer Program will run three days a week, Thursday through Saturday, in the Demonstration Workshop, providing public access to live demonstrations. This schedule allows the community to visit at their convenience, making the program more accessible for a broad audience.

Select artisans will lead workshops during the three days, covering a variety of skills such as creating beaded works, sterling silver jewelry, leather mitts, and more. Lessons will focus on proper tool handling, material selection, traditional techniques, and innovative methods. Safety will be a top priority, ensuring a safe and enjoyable learning experience for all participants.

In addition to their work in the Demonstration Workshop and the workshops they provide, the Artist-in-Residence will also interact with the public on the Gallery Floor. Patrons will have the opportunity to sign up and bring their own projects to work on with the guidance of an artisan, receiving expert assistance in completing their work. Each artisan's process will be captured on video, allowing those unable to attend in person to benefit from the program. Videos will be made available on our website and YouTube channel, further expanding the program's reach and providing a valuable resource for those who cannot attend in person. Viewers will be able to submit questions to the artisans, who will address them in future sessions or contact individuals directly.

The rotating artisan schedule is designed to offer a diverse range of mediums and experiences, providing the public with ample opportunities to learn from master artisans. Previously, limiting artisans to one weekend created scheduling challenges and restricted exposure to only one medium. By rotating artisans throughout the summer, we can offer a broader array of skills and techniques, benefiting more people and enhancing the learning experience. Multiple artisans with different disciplines will be featured for one to two weeks at a time, offering a dynamic and varied program that allows for deeper learning and engagement with the public.

This rotation ensures that participants can experience different styles and approaches, fostering a richer, more inclusive educational opportunity. The extended duration of the program also makes it more user-friendly, providing the public with greater flexibility to attend and engage with the artisans.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

By Western Hands (BWH) is committed to preserving and promoting western functional art by expanding its educational programming and maximizing the use of our Demonstration Workshop. This fully equipped space allows artisans to create their work while mentoring apprentices, interns, and the public. It serves as a vital resource where artisans showcase traditional craftsmanship, teach hands-on techniques, and inspire future generations of artists.

From July 10, 2025, through September 30, 2025, BWH will host an expanded Artist-in-Residence Program, featuring an enhanced series of “How-To” workshops and instructional videos that provide in-depth learning experiences. The program will highlight a rotating roster of master artisans, including John L. Blair, Tim Lozier, Chris Chapman, Ernie Marsh, Rip Caswell, Jenny Booth, Supaya Gray Wolfe, Ashley Delonas, and Eric Shell, among others. These artisans will demonstrate their unique processes, offering participants the opportunity to learn a diverse range of techniques across multiple disciplines, such as woodworking, metalworking, sculpture, leatherwork and more.

Artisans have expressed a strong passion for teaching, and feedback from past participants has shown a growing demand for hands-on workshops. This year’s program will expand to include structured, project-based workshops, where participants will gain practical skills in design, tool use, and fabrication methods. Each artisan will provide step-by-step instruction, ensuring participants not only observe but actively engage in the creative process. Attendees will also have the opportunity to bring in their own projects and receive personalized mentorship from master artisans.

In addition to in-person instruction, BWH will develop a comprehensive digital learning component, ensuring greater accessibility to our educational resources. High-quality video content will be produced to capture workshops and artist demonstrations, allowing those unable to attend in person to benefit from the expertise of our artisans. These videos will be shared via social media, our website, and YouTube, further extending our reach. Additionally, the Cody High School Media Department will partner with BWH, giving students real-world experience in videography, editing, and content creation. Through this partnership, students will gain valuable technical skills while documenting the craftsmanship and artistry behind western functional art.

The Artist-in-Residence Program is strategically scheduled during our peak visitor season, ensuring maximum engagement with the community, tourists, and emerging artists. We estimate that over 2,500 individuals will be engaged, with many more engaging with the digital learning content. Our marketing strategy, launching in May and running through September, will include social media promotion, website features, in-gallery displays, and printed advertising. This campaign will highlight the featured artisans, workshop opportunities, and educational experiences available to the public.

Success will be measured through attendance tracking, participant evaluations, apprentice and intern feedback, social media engagement metrics, video viewership, and website analytics. This data will help us assess the program’s impact and refine future educational initiatives.

By Western Hands remains dedicated to bridging the gap between current and future generations of artisans by fostering education, innovation, and preservation in western functional art. This program not only provides

invaluable learning experiences but also strengthens the cultural heritage of western craftsmanship, ensuring that these skills and traditions are passed down to inspire future makers.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

By Western Hands features some of the finest artisans in the country, each highly qualified to mentor, teach, and demonstrate their unique crafts. The artisans' passion and dedication to preserving and educating the public about western functional art are key to the success of By Western Hands' educational programming. During the 2025 program, artisans will work in the Demonstration Shop, providing the public with an opportunity to witness their diverse skills and mediums. Artisans will rotate to offer a wide variety of experiences and knowledge, creating an engaging and inspirational environment for both in-person and online audiences.

The 2025 Artist-in-Residence program will feature artisans working in mediums such as leather, silversmithing, sculpture, furniture, jewelry, and beadwork. Artisans included but not limited to the following:

John L. Blair: A master saddle maker, carrying on his father's legacy and promoting the art of western leatherwork.

Tim Lozier: A furniture maker who creates stunning handcrafted wood pieces, blending traditional techniques with creativity.

Chris Chapman: A leather artist specializing in historical reproduction work, creating museum-quality pieces.

Ernie Marsh: A founding member of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association and expert in cowboy gear and related crafts.

Jenny Booth: A talented carver who creates intricate, life-like pieces, embracing the challenge of carving as a form of artistic expression.

Supaya Gray Wolfe: A Native American artist drawing inspiration from her cultural heritage, producing pieces rich in history and symbolism.

Eric Shell: An artisan skilled in creating functional art, with a focus on woodworking and metalwork.

These artisans will rotate throughout the program, offering diverse opportunities to learn from and interact with masters in their respective fields. By Western Hands artisans are juried into the organization by an anonymous panel, ensuring the highest quality workmanship and dedication to the western tradition. Many of these artists are represented in the Western Design Museum & Archive and serve as artists-in-residence at By Western Hands' onsite workshop and demonstration space.

In 2022, By Western Hands formed a valuable partnership with the Cody High School (CHS) Media Department. Each summer, a fellowship is offered to students, providing them with hands-on experience in media production. Under the guidance of their instructor, Betsy Kennedy Ryzewicz, students have the opportunity to produce high-quality media content, including video documentation of the Artist-in-Residence program. These videos will serve as "How-To" resources for audiences interested in learning more about the artisans' crafts.

The partnership with CHS Media Production is an invaluable opportunity for students to hone their videography, editing, and media production skills. Beyond the summer program, students will have continued access to By Western Hands for class assignments and projects, further enhancing their learning experience. This partnership will remain a key element of the Artist-in-Residence program, supporting the growth of both the students and the organization.

By Western Hands plans to expand and enhance the Artist-in-Residence program in the coming years, continually improving upon each year's success to reach a broader audience and support the preservation of western functional art for generations to come.

### **Budget Narrative**

The budget for July 10, 2025, through September 30, 2025, is crucial for achieving our goals. We plan to maintain a conservative approach until we secure sustained growth. Our funding sources include net proceeds from the sale of artisans' work, donations, grants, event sponsorships, fundraising, and artisan dues. Expenses make up about 95% of our total income, which aligns with previous years. We are requesting partial funding for the BWH Artist-in-Residence Program through this application. For special projects, we only proceed with full funding to ensure focus on securing resources before incurring costs. Although we have not received significant in-kind donations, we rely on volunteers, including artisans, to help staff the gallery, minimizing payroll costs and allowing us to direct more funds toward our programmatic goals.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CANYON CONCERT BALLET

[HTTPS://CCBALLET.ORG](https://ccballet.org)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cheyenne Nutcracker

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Canyon Concert Ballet's mission as a nonprofit educational organization is to expand, nourish, and enrich the artistic opportunities in classical dance through training, performance, and community outreach in service to the Northern Colorado region.

Canyon Concert Ballet School teaches almost 400 dancers each year the joy of dance. Our school faculty develops dancers of all ages and abilities in a safe and progressive way. All of our students develop character, self-esteem, and the self-discipline that will provide a powerful edge in any future endeavor. Live piano and percussion music accompanies many of our dance classes. Canyon Concert Ballet School offers multiple levels to support dancers of varying ages and their developing skills. We do not believe that financial limitations should be an obstacle to dance, so CCB offers a needs-based scholarship program which is available to current and potential students. The scholarship categories include Financial Aid Scholarships to students that qualify based on their eligibility for free/reduced lunch or by submitting tax return information; Compassion Scholarships for students who may not qualify for financial aid based on yearly household income, but may be experiencing an immediate hardship that makes dance tuition unaffordable; Diversity Scholarships; and Scholarships for children in the Larimer County Foster Program.

Our full-time professional ballet company will perform the following for our 46th Season: Ballet and Beer, Dracula, The Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Alice in Wonderland, Innovation: An American Celebration, a curated collection of works from some of the nation's most exciting emerging choreographers.. CCB recognizes that not everyone can afford tickets to a ballet, so CCB performs several times a year for free, and CCB annually donates hundreds of ticket vouchers to local low-income students.

### Community

While Canyon Concert Ballet is located in Fort Collins, Colorado, we consider the entire region or north-central Colorado and southeastern Wyoming to be part of our community. Outreach to Wyoming is part of our efforts to grow our reach and become more accessible to a greater variety of audiences. For the past two years, CCB

produced two performances of The Nutcracker in Cheyenne while casting thirty local Cheyenne dancers in supporting roles.

CCB strives to ensure that all aspects of our programs and services are accessible to people of differing abilities. Large print programs are available, and for audience members who are hearing impaired, a sign language interpreter and/or audio devices can be made available.

CCB's overarching goal is to open doors in our community. Our recently hired community engagement coordinator is developing ways to bring ballet into the community for free, abbreviated shows in schools and assisted living facilities. CCB offers a Spring Performance Ticket Voucher Program and the last two seasons added performances of Nutcracker Sweets, designed for audience members with sensory issues. New this year, CCB will offer the Colorado Choreographic Lab, an innovative competitive program in which four emerging choreographers will develop and present their work in collaboration with CCB's company dancers. The selected choreographers will engage in an intensive, five-week creative process and will culminate in five public performances held in Fort Collins.

### **Evaluation**

To measure the success of our productions we track ticket sales and a survey is sent out to all attendees of each show to capture where they are from, if they have attended a ballet before, their opinion of the show (music, costumes, venue), and if they would recommend the show to others. Based on the responses and reactions to the productions, we can gauge the impact on the community and use the feedback to make improvements in the future. Our survey of Wyoming audiences for The Nutcracker provides valuable feedback for our goal of increasing both total numbers and the diversity of the audiences year over year.

A particular goal of this project is to improve the dance skills of Cheyenne's up-and-coming young dancers. It is a high priority of CCB to identify and support young dancers in achieving their goals. We also conduct a survey of the Wyoming-based dancers in the production to assess their performance and learning experiences. It is important to CCB that dancers in our productions, especially young dancers, learn a range of skills, including enhanced technical capacities, performance skills, theater culture, and behavioral expectations for performers. A post-performance survey can help us determine our effectiveness in teaching these important skills.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Canyon Concert Ballet will produce two performances of The Nutcracker in December at the Cheyenne Civic Center. CCB will hold auditions and cast 30 local dancers for supporting roles in the production. For four weeks leading up to the production, CCB staff will teach Cheyenne dancers the choreography, lead rehearsals, and refine their dance skills in preparation for the performances.

The production will include full staging with sets designed and constructed by Wyoming stage technicians. CCB will use our costume designer, Elise Wilcox. CCB company dancers will have lead roles in the ballet and perform alongside local Cheyenne dancers. Performances will be advertised through CCB social media, the Cheyenne Civic Center, local news and radio outlets, and the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce. At the two performances, CCB will set up a lobby boutique with Nutcracker themed merchandise. Past performances of The Nutcracker in Cheyenne had high attendance and positive feedback from attendees and dancers that participated.

Our team will be led by Michael Pappalardo, Artistic Director and Choreographer. Pappalardo was appointed Artistic Director of CCB in early 2022. Prior to joining CCB, Pappalardo was the Artistic Director of Melbourne City Ballet as well as San Jose Dance Theatre. Pappalardo has performed and choreographed all over the world, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and all across the United States. His works have been nominated for numerous awards.

He will be joined by Brandon Welch, School Director. Brandon holds a BFA from SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance. He has an established career as a dancer and choreographer and has been teaching since 2017 at both the Dance Education Laboratory and Columbia College in Chicago.

Our final artistic team member is Anneke De Jong, Student Coordinator and Artistic Associate. Anneke provides excellent teaching and administrative work for Canyon Concert Ballet. She is also one of the company dancers. Her dance career and love of teaching make her a valuable member of the CCB team, particularly on the Cheyenne Nutcracker project.

Grant funds will be allocated to staff salaries accrued during the Cheyenne rehearsals and performances.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Canyon Concert Ballet consists of two primary components, the school and the company. Our school serves to provide exercise and opportunities for expression to students of all ages. It also provides training to serious dancers to prepare them for our professional company. Our students learn perseverance, discipline, expression, technique, and performance skills.

Returning to Cheyenne for our production of The Nutcracker is another opportunity for us to bring our proven and acclaimed dance education to the dancers of Wyoming. Auditions will be held in Cheyenne for up to thirty local dancers for supporting roles in The Nutcracker production. CCB's artistic director, student coordinator, and school director will attend rehearsals for four weeks leading up to the production. They will teach the dancers the choreography and provide dance instruction and coaching throughout the rehearsal process.

CCB has launched many dancers into professional dancing careers, serious dance programs at colleges and universities around the country, and dance adjacent careers. Some of the places our graduates have worked and attended include The Boston Ballet, the University of Arizona dance program, Cornish College of the Arts, the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, and The Washington Ballet. Our Artistic Director, Michael Pappalardo, has worked as a choreographer and instructor for companies from Australia to San Jose, CA to Cleveland, OH. He brings a wealth of experience in dance education and performance to the students and performers of Wyoming. Ultimately, Wyoming dancers who participate in our Nutcracker production will learn original and professional level choreography, enhanced technique, professional production expectations, and the culture of professional ballet productions.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Canyon Concert Ballet's production of the Nutcracker will engage and foster connections between Northern Colorado and Cheyenne region. The Nutcracker production will support 30 local young dancers who will have the opportunity to experience on-stage performances with professional dancers. CCB will travel to Cheyenne to work with the dancers for four weeks leading up to the performances and the following three main learning goals:

Improving the dancing skills of Cheyenne's up-and-coming young dancers. Throughout this project, we will be working with local dancers to refine their skills and provide career guidance. Through ballet classes, we will support the development of technique and coach them on refining their skills. This will be measured by pre and post assessments. The pre assessment will be the evaluation completed during auditions. Prior to the dress rehearsal, dancers will complete another assessment with feedback from CCB staff.

Develop the performance skills of local dancers - To be great artists, young dancers need the opportunity and the support to learn artistry and performance skills. The Nutcracker is an ideal way to engage youth in learning this skill. We will support the dancers by providing coaching with CCB's Artistic Director and CCB Company Dancers to learn how to perform on stage. These coaching sessions are incorporated into repertoire rehearsals and look at key aspects of artistic delivery and engagement with audiences. All dancers that participate in the performances will be given a survey regarding their learning experience.

Develop cultural awareness of dance in Cheyenne - Ensuring the community is engaged in the arts is a main focus of audience development at CCB. We will be providing community engagement opportunities for all ages to learn about dance. These community learning opportunities include lecture-demonstrations at schools and community groups, backstage tours, and a meet and greet with cast members. These activities teach community members the importance of the art form and develop a love for dance. A post-show survey will be sent to all that attended the performance. The survey will allow guests to rate their enjoyment of the show as well as provide feedback and indicate if they would like more information or for staff to follow-up with learning opportunities at their organization/community.

As a main priority of our organization, we want to ensure a healthy and sustainable dance industry for Northern Colorado and Wyoming. By identifying these main learning goals, we can ensure that we are providing an outstanding performance for the community and enriching the cultural landscape of our region.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**



Michael Pappalardo, Artistic Director, Choreographer:

Pappalardo began his dance training at the age of 6 and was accepted into the New Zealand School of Dance. After returning to Australia, Pappalardo worked with Queensland Ballet before launching himself into a very successful independent dancer career working with Leigh Warren and Dancers, Melbourne Ballet Company, Victoria State Ballet, Opera Victoria, and various independent projects. His love for creating ballets came to the forefront when he was appointed Artistic Director of Melbourne City Ballet in 2013. There he guided the organization to become Australia's largest classical touring company, performing over 100 shows across Australia, New Zealand, and Japan annually. In 2016, Pappalardo was also invited to work as co-director with Niconomiel dance company in Osaka, Japan. In 2020, he joined San Jose Dance Theatre as Artistic Associate and choreographed Dido and Aeneas for Opera San Jose in 2021. In 2022, Pappalardo was appointed Artistic Director of Canyon Concert Ballet.

Brandon Welch, Student Director

Brandon joined CCB in 2024 with an impressive background in both performance and dance instruction. He holds a BFA from SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance with a semester on exchange at the Western Australian Academy of the Performing Arts. His performance career includes being a company member of Momix Dance Illusionists, Doug Varone and Dancers, Hannah Kahn Dance Company, Helanius J. Wilkins/SALT and Gibney Dance Company. During his time with Doug Varone, Brandon participated in Dance Motion USA's cultural diplomacy program to South America and performed in Les Troyens at the Metropolitan Opera.

As an Artistic Associate of Gibney Dance, Brandon facilitated movement workshops for survivors of Intimate Partner Violence with guidance from Clinical Advisor Beth Silverman-Yamm. In 2017, he began bringing his movement practices into public schools as a teaching artist with the 92nd Street Y, home of the Dance Education Laboratory, and Columbia College Chicago. In 2020, Brandon created Moving Meditations in collaboration with Abby Corrigan, which offered continuing education credits for incarcerated men through the Denver University's Prison Arts Initiative.

Anneke De Jong, Student Coordinator

Anneke is originally from Minnesota where she began her Vaganova training at age 6 with St. Croix Ballet in her hometown of Stillwater. During high school She attended St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists. In 2013, she moved to NYC to train with Gelsey Kirkland in her Professional Program for two years. After completing her training in NYC she returned to MN and danced with St. Paul Ballet as an apprentice and then as a demi-soloist with Metropolitan Ballet. In 2017 she joined Texas Ballet Theater Professional Division. Anneke was a founding company artist with Magnum Opus Ballet in Madison, WI for two seasons. She had the opportunity to perform many lead roles and choreograph her first professional piece, Cherish, for MO. She has spent two years dancing with US International Ballet in Wilmington, NC.

Anneke has been a company dancer for three years with Canyon Concert Ballet and recently was appointed Interim School Director due to her excellent teaching skills and administrative work for the ballet company; after hiring a school director, Anneke took on the role of student coordinator.

### **Budget Narrative**

CCB's annual budget is made up of three primary sources of income: tuition revenue from our dance school, production revenue from our performances, and grants/donations. Our budget aligns very closely with our programs and services, as our mission is to promote dancing through education and performance. Our expenses are almost entirely for production costs, our studio facilities, teacher wages, an Artistic Director, part-time programming staff, an office manager, part-time bookkeeper and grant writer, and an Executive Director. We also pay our company dancers as well. Our financial outlook is positive as our ticket sales remain strong, and we continuously seek new supporters: sponsors, donors, and grant funders.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CASPER ARTIST'S GUILD, INC.

[HTTPS://WWW.ART321.ORG/](https://www.art321.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Art321 Operations and Arts Learning 2025

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Art321 is dedicated to fostering an accessible arts community, providing opportunities for artists of all backgrounds and abilities. We serve children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities through innovative arts programming that encourages creativity, skill development, and connection.

Through questioning, some community members expressed that in the past, Art321 didn't always feel welcoming. We are committed to shifting that culture, ensuring that everyone—regardless of experience, background, or ability—feels a sense of belonging. Our goal is to convince more people that creativity is for everyone and that simply engaging in the arts can lead to personal growth, healing, and a stronger sense of community.

#### Key Goals:

Expand Arts Accessibility – Ensure financial and physical access to the arts through scholarships, free and low-cost programs, and an accessible facility.

Support Arts Learning – Offer structured educational programs for children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, including after-school and homeschool sessions.

Strengthen Community Engagement – Build partnerships with local schools, organizations, and community groups to expand access and actively engage more people in the arts. This includes outreach efforts to make art feel approachable, encouraging those who may not see themselves as "artists" to explore their creativity.

Promote Sustainability & Growth – Secure funding for staff, facility upkeep, and program expansion, including transforming our basement into rentable artist studios and classrooms to support long-term financial stability.

Enhance Well-Being Through Art – Provide a creative outlet to combat social isolation and mental health challenges, especially during Wyoming’s long winters.

By achieving these goals, Art321 will remain a hub for creativity, cultural engagement, and community building, ensuring that the arts are accessible, meaningful, and impactful for all.

## **Community**

We serve Casper and surrounding areas through accessible arts programming. Our largest participant groups—children (8-13), seniors (65+), and adults with disabilities—have equal participation. With 11.2% of our residents in poverty, we prioritize affordability through scholarships, free groups, and low-cost programs.

Through direct feedback, engagement, and a survey created by a member/volunteer committee, we’ve identified the following key gaps:

Limited Arts Education for Youth.

Public school students get one art class per week. We offer structured homeschool and after-school programs.

Lack of Accessible Arts for Individuals with Disabilities.

Our Envision program is at capacity and expanding. This year, we added 2 extra sessions to meet the demand.

Limited Senior Arts Engagement: Older adults need creative and social outlets. Our programs support memory, mental health, and well-being.

Reaching Underserved Communities

Accessibility: Our facility has push-button doors, ramps, wide doors, wheelchair-accessible tables, and adapted throwing wheels.

Welcoming, Responsive Programming.

We serve children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income families. We reinstated student memberships with scholarships available.

Experienced Instructors.

Envision Leader is an artist with disabilities and was recently certified in art therapy. Our newest staff member leads kids' programming and holds an MFA and BFA in Fine Arts.

Responsive Expansion.

Community feedback led to expanding Envision, reinstating figure drawing, and launching kids' programs.

Accommodations

We proactively offer adaptive tools like accessible throwing wheels, easels, and large-print instructions and respond to requests by modifying seating, timing, or class structure to support participants.

## **Evaluation**

Our organization uses multiple methods to evaluate program impact, measure outcomes, and document effectiveness to ensure we are meeting community needs.

Attendance Tracking.

Instructors record attendance to track engagement trends and identify demand for specific offerings.

Last year, we served approximately 1,000 members through classes. We are halfway through our fiscal year and on track to serve 1,500. This reflects a 50% increase in participation over two years, demonstrating growing community demand.

Skill Development & Participant Progress.

Instructor's document observed skill growth, noting improvements in technique, creativity, and confidence. Last year, very few weekly class participants submitted open-call exhibits. This year, many submissions have come from them.

Outcome Measurement & Documentation.

Our programs align with the four core artistic processes: creating, presenting, responding, and connecting. Participants in these programs (e.g., Mini Masters, Envision, and homeschool art classes) create artist statements and present their work in exhibitions, demonstrating comprehension and skill application.

Community & Instructor Feedback.

Regular check-ins with participants, members, and instructors provide data on program success and areas for improvement.

Implementation of Feedback – Recent examples include:

- Canceling our Wednesday morning portrait class
- Reinstating Figure Drawing sessions
- Reinstating Programs for youth

We also now track daily visitors in addition to class attendance.

This past year, data showed low traffic on Wednesdays and high traffic on Thursdays, so we shortened Wednesday hours, extended Thursdays, and added Thursday evening community led workshops to better serve the community.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Art321 is the only nonprofit arts organization in central Wyoming that provides inclusive, accessible arts programming for all ages and abilities. Our ability to serve the community depends on maintaining a safe, functional, and welcoming space for learning, creation, and exhibition. This means keeping the lights on, the heat running, and the doors open—literally.

While we own our building and have no mortgage debt, our monthly operating costs total approximately \$3,000, covering utilities, insurance, security, technology, and facility upkeep. These expenses are essential to supporting over 400 classes, workshops, and community programs annually, engaging more than 1,500 participants.

For example:

#### **Utilities & Facility Costs.**

Keeping the building heated in winter and cooled in summer allows us to offer year-round classes, including ceramics, printmaking, and mixed media. Without this funding, evening and winter programming could be reduced due to high heating costs.

#### **Security & Accessibility.**

Art321 serves a significant number of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Maintaining push-button doors, ramps, and security systems ensures their safe participation. Security is also important due to the amount of member art that rotates through the building.

## Technology & Communications.

Reliable internet and phone services enable online class registrations, virtual exhibitions, and outreach to underserved rural communities. Without funding, our ability to engage digitally would be diminished, reducing accessibility for those who cannot attend in person.

## The Risks of Underfunding

Without stable funding for these essential operational expenses, Art321's programming could face significant disruptions. Reduced utility funding might limit our ability to offer evening or winter classes, directly impacting working families, seniors, and students. Inadequate security funding could put valuable community art resources at risk, and a lack of technology funding could limit our ability to promote and expand arts engagement beyond Casper.

Ensuring stable support for these essential functions allows us to sustain programming at its current level while expanding access to the arts for all. With the Wyoming Arts Council's support, Art321 can continue to foster creativity, learning, and cultural engagement for the entire community.

We currently have 2 full-time staff and 2 part-time staff.

Payroll costs are approximately \$14,000 monthly.

The requested \$10,000 in operating support will directly cover our organization's annual utility expenses, ensuring that we can continue providing a safe, accessible, and functional space for artists, children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. These funds will support essential services such as electricity, gas, water, phone, and internet, allowing us to maintain daily operations and focus on delivering impactful arts programming to the Casper community.

We operate with a lean staff and careful budgeting, leveraging grants, sponsorships, endowment interest, and in-kind donations to stretch every dollar. Operating funds ensure that these essential services remain uninterrupted, supporting over 400 creative programs annually.

## **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Our Arts Learning programs provide structured and exploratory arts education for a diverse range of participants, including school-aged children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. These programs nurture creativity, develop technical skills, and foster meaningful artistic engagement.

#### Current & Planned Learning Programs:

##### Tuesday Morning Homeschool Art

A structured program following Natrona County School District Art Standards, allowing students to experiment with different techniques, develop concepts, and refine artistic expression. Taught by Abigail Schneider (BFA, MFA in Fine Arts), this program filled almost instantly after being reinstated due to high demand from our community.

##### Tuesday Morning Clay

This class has nearly doubled in size since last year, growing to 20-30 older adults.

##### Tuesday Evening Mixed Media

A free open studio session for artists of all levels, encouraging experimentation across multiple mediums in a supportive environment.

##### Mini Masters Afterschool Program

A structured six-week program for school-aged children, following Natrona County School District Art Standards and led by Abigail Schneider (BFA, MFA in Fine Arts). Students develop artistic concepts, create original works, refine techniques, write artist statements, and prepare their art for a public exhibit, culminating in a monthly student showcase.

In response to demand, we expanded the program from one to three sessions per week, ensuring that more children could participate in structured arts education.

Wednesday Night Clay is being added in response to community requests and the college pausing summer classes.

Taught by Tyler Moore and Tyler Sanner, it welcomes all levels, from first-time learners to experienced ceramic artists.

##### Envision (Adaptive Arts for Individuals with Disabilities)



A free, inclusive program designed for individuals with disabilities, serving iReach, Tuna's House, NOWCAP, The Able Program (Natrona County School District), and community members. Projects explore collage, pour painting, ceramics, and collaborative works. Envision expanded from one session per week to four, a 300% increase, allowing us to serve an additional 40 participants annually.

#### Saturday Watercolor

A longstanding peer-led group that has doubled in size since last year. Members share techniques, mentor new participants, and experiment with watercolor methods. Led by Ellen Black, former board chair.

#### Saturday Afternoon Figure Drawing

New this year, this class provides a paid live model, allowing artists to develop observational drawing skills, study anatomy, and refine figure drawing techniques.

#### Monthly Printing Press Class

A hands-on session exploring block carving and printmaking, using Art321's historic printing press to introduce traditional and contemporary printmaking techniques.

#### ClayFest: Community Engagement Through Ceramics

ClayFest is an annual, hands-on ceramics event that introduces individuals of all skill levels to clay. It creates a welcoming, low-pressure space where participants explore wheel-throwing and hand-building techniques in a fun, community-driven environment.

Each year, we welcome new participants who are interested in ceramics but hesitant to try. Many continue their artistic journey by joining weekly clay classes or engaging with other Art321 programs. ClayFest celebrates creativity, accessibility, and the power of hands-on learning, reinforcing our commitment to inclusive, engaging arts opportunities.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our Arts Learning goals focus on expanding creative exploration, developing technical skills, and fostering meaningful community artistic engagement across diverse age groups and abilities. These goals were identified through direct participant feedback, community engagement, and observed program growth, ensuring that our offerings align with community needs and national arts standards.

Key Goals & How They Were Identified:

### 1. Increase Access to Arts Learning for All Ages & Abilities

Identified Need: We asked Families and educators about gaps in structured arts education, especially in homeschooled and after-school settings. We learned that elementary schools have limited access to art classes. Due to a lack of art teachers, schools are sharing art educators.

Response: We reinstated Tuesday Morning Homeschool Art and introduced the Mini Masters Afterschool Program, following Natrona County School District Art Standards to ensure high-quality arts education. Our instructor holds a BFA and MFA in Fine Arts.

### 2. Foster Lifelong Learning & Creative Confidence

Identified Need: Adults, particularly seniors and beginners, sought a low-pressure space to explore the arts without intimidation. Many felt unqualified to submit to shows, sell work in gift shops, or join professional workshops, believing they weren't "real artists."

Response: Programs like Tuesday Morning Clay, Saturday Watercolor, and ClayFest provide a supportive environment for skill-building and artistic confidence. To encourage emerging artists, we host pop-up and featured artist talks, where members hear firsthand how many successful artists lack formal training, helping redefine what it means to be an artist.

### 3. Encourage Skill Development & Mastery through Hands-On Learning

Identified Need: Artists and community members requested more technical skill-building, particularly in figure drawing, printmaking, and ceramics.

Response: We introduced the Saturday Afternoon Figure Drawing Class with a paid live model, expanded Monthly Printing Press sessions, and strengthened ceramics offerings through ClayFest and additional clay classes.

### 4. Support Inclusive & Adaptive Arts Learning for Individuals with Disabilities.

Identified Need: The success of Envision demonstrated a need for more accessible arts opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

We expanded Envision by three sessions, serving iReach, Tuna's House, NOWCAP, The Able Program (Natrona County School District), and independent participants. Envision is our featured artist in March, with work covering the West gallery wall for National Disability Awareness Month.

## 5. Provide Opportunities for Artistic Presentation & Reflection

Identified Need: Youth and emerging artists benefit from opportunities to showcase their work and receive feedback.

Response: The Mini Masters Program includes a structured exhibition process, where students develop artist statements, curate their work, and present it in a monthly exhibit. Our community groups also share and critique work, fostering growth and reflection.

Our first Mini Masters session received enthusiastic parent feedback requesting expanded age groups. In response, we added younger and older groups to better serve diverse learners.

Our approach incorporates four key artistic processes:

Creating – Participants experiment with materials, refine techniques, and develop original works.

Presenting – Students and community members curate, display, and discuss their work in exhibits and critiques.

Responding – Artists engage in dialogue about their creative process, share feedback, and analyze their artistic growth.

Connecting – Programs explore personal, cultural, and historical themes, linking artistic practice to self-expression and community identity.

By maintaining accessible, skill-building, and inclusive programming, ART 321 ensures that community members of all backgrounds can engage in meaningful arts learning experiences.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Jennifer Johnson – Envision Leader

Jennifer Johnson, an artist and educator with a lived experience of disability, saw a need for more inclusive arts programming, leading her to establish Envision, Art321's adaptive arts program. Jennifer serves on our Board of Directors and has been involved in arts education for years, having homeschooled her children and taught in various community settings. She is a practicing professional artist and teaches art at a local mental health hub, fostering creativity as a tool for emotional well-being. Recently, she earned a certificate in art therapy, further enhancing her ability to provide meaningful engagement for individuals with disabilities.

Dee Lundberg – Clay Collective Instructor

Dee, a self-taught ceramic artist, began as a student in Art321's clay program almost a decade ago. When a previous instructor left, Dee stepped into the leadership role. Over the years, she has gained extensive knowledge in kilns, different clays and glazing techniques.

Tyler Sanner - Clay Instructor. Owns Two Ties - a local ceramic business in Casper, Wyoming.

Tyler Moore - Clay Instructor. Owns Two Ties - a local ceramic business in Casper, Wyoming.

Heather Watson and Kathy Dilgarde are experienced mixed-media artists who facilitate exploratory, hands-on workshops in painting, collage, and other art forms. Their backgrounds in community-based arts allow them to create supportive learning environments where participants feel encouraged to take creative risks.

Ellen Black – Watercolor Leader

Ellen is a watercolor artist and educator, bringing over 40 years of experience in teaching traditional and experimental watercolor techniques. She helps students develop technical skills while encouraging personal artistic expression.

Abigail Schneider – Mini Masters & Homeschool Art Leader. Current Education Development Coordinator, Abigail leads Mini Masters and Homeschool Art, ensuring that young learners have access to high-quality, age-appropriate arts education. Abigail holds a BFA and MFA in Fine Arts and Printmaking.

Ryan Atkins – Figure Drawing Class Leader

Ryan Atkins is a professional illustrator and fine artist specializing in figure drawing and anatomy. He leads Art321's Saturday Afternoon Figure Drawing Class, providing guided instruction with live models to help artists improve observational skills and technical drawing abilities.

Eric Coates – Printing Station Expert

Eric Coates is a master printmaker, bringing years of expertise and knowledge in vintage printing presses and printmaking.

Laura Hunter - Laura is a professional metalsmith and has run a successful jewelry business for over a decade before stepping into the role of Executive Director at Art321.

For ClayFest, Art321 brings in top ceramic artists and industry professionals to provide advanced workshops and hands-on instruction in ceramics.

Peter Jakubowski – As the owner and operator of Clay Arts Vegas, Peter has extensive experience in ceramic sculpture, wheel throwing, and glazing techniques. He teaches specialized classes during ClayFest, helping participants develop technical mastery. Peter is also one of our board members.

Dandee Pattee – A studio potter and educator, she owns Sanctuary Pottery in Casper, where she teaches wheel throwing, surface decoration, and glaze chemistry.

Connie Norman –An accomplished ceramic artist from Cheyenne, WY, brings her expertise in hand-building, functional ceramics, and firing techniques.

### **Budget Narrative**

Funding comes from programming revenue, grants, sponsorships, donations, fundraising, rentals, and endowment interest.

Our budget directly supports our mission.

70% of gallery and gift shop sales go back to artists in commissions.

Personnel costs ensure skilled educators and leadership.

Program funding covers classes, workshops, scholarships, and exhibits.

This year, restricted grants cover nearly 20% of expenses, funding key facility improvements like basement heating and a new kiln for our clay program expansion, which support long-term sustainability.

We paid off a large unemployment debt left by the previous administration, making us debt-free. We've also reinvested some of our membership dues into our endowment to strengthen financial stability.

In-kind donations like teaching and art supplies reduce expenses and expand impact.

Partnerships with Townsquare Media (free radio ads) and Oil City News (advertising) increase visibility and community engagement.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CASPER CELTIC IRISH FESTIVAL

WWW.CASPERCELTICIRISHFESTIVAL.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Casper Celtic Irish Festival 2025

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Vision Statement: "To foster a vibrant and inclusive celebration of Celtic and Irish Culture, uniting people with shared Celtic passions through music, dance, and traditions that endure through generations."

Mission Statement: "Our committee is dedicated to curating an authentic and immersive Celtic Irish Festival experience. We strive to showcase the rich tapestry of Irish/Celtic heritage, offering a platform for artists, performers, artisans and Celtic culture experts to share their talents and knowledge. Through meticulous planning and collaboration, we aim to create an atmosphere of camaraderie and joy, where attendees of all backgrounds can embrace the spirit of Celtic culture and forge lasting memories."

#### Strategic Goals:

A) Celebrate and increase awareness of Celtic culture through music.

1. Select high quality Celtic music performers that will showcase multiple genres of Celtic music, including traditional bands, Irish folk, Celtic rock, and contemporary music.
2. Showcase Irish dancers from local dance schools.

B) Educate the community on Celtic culture through seminar style talks with interactive and hands-on learning opportunities for all participants.

1. Select Celtic culture experts who will host seminar style talks on various topics, including but not limited to history, mythology, music, dance, and Gaelic languages.
2. Irish dancers will give participants an opportunity to join the dancers on stage to learn a traditional Irish reel.

C) Encourage participants to explore Celtic artistry, by providing an opportunity for up to 45 Celtic artisan vendors to display and sell their merchandise, drawing from local and regional artists, as well as vendors that participate in the Celtic festival circuit across the United States.

D) Draw tourism to Casper by providing a quality festival and advertising the event throughout Wyoming, northern Colorado, eastern Nebraska and South Dakota.

## **Community**

The Casper Celtic Irish Festival (CCIF) has been created to educate and foster appreciation for the Celtic culture, specifically persons of Irish heritage. With 11.37% of its population being of Irish descent, 66,800 people, Wyoming has one of the highest percentages in the United States. The city of Casper has the highest percentage in the state at 13.56%, 7,900 people. Although Wyoming has a significant number of Irish descendants, the Irish Dance schools are the only Irish cultural organizations identified by the region's Irish Consulate in San Francisco. The Consulate strongly supports the development of CCIF in Casper as a way of encouraging the creation of Irish Immigrant and Heritage associations in the state.

To engage Irish residents and educate the general population on the diversity of the Irish heritage and Celtic culture, CCIF will showcase a mix of musical genres, including Trad Bands, Irish Folk and Contemporary, Celtic Rock, and Irish Dance which will engage the community in high energy music and provide something for all ages attending the festival. Meanwhile, the Cultural seminars and artisans will provide the attendees with the opportunity to learn more about Irish and Celtic history and traditions.

To help enable all members of the Casper community to participate in CCIF, discount tickets will be available for children under 16, veterans, and adults 65 and older. An aggressive TV advertising campaign will reach most people in Wyoming. The venue, The Nicolaysen Art Museum, is fully handicap accessible and large letter signage will be placed throughout the grounds. Ticketing and website information includes email and telephone options to request accommodation, including sign language interpreters for the Culture Stage.

## **Evaluation**

Since 2025 will be the first Casper Celtic Irish Festival, there is no historic data specific to CCIF to assist in planning this year's event. Current feedback consists of verbal responses from Casper City Officials, community leaders, and the public when the board presents the plans for CCIF. Comments on social media posts and posts from similar festivals will help gauge the level of interest in the various performers and programs being offered.

During CCIF, board members and specially selected volunteers will engage participants in conversations, asking open ended questions regarding the venue, bands, cultural experts, artisan vendors, food, and overall enjoyment of the event. The volunteers will provide the board with feedback, especially for areas of improvement and ideas for future programs. The volunteers will also visit with the artisan vendors to ascertain what crafts the attendees are most interested in and what items may be missing from the selections offered.

After the event, surveys will be emailed to ticket holders asking for feedback on what they feel were the highlights of the event, what was less enjoyable, and ideas for future bands and seminars. These same questions will be posted on social media and the CCIF web page the day after the festival. Vendors will also receive email surveys asking how the vendor experience may be improved, attendee responses to their crafts, and the level of revenue they collected.

The number of ticket sales will provide the primary quantitative data on the level of success of the event. The host hotel will be able to provide an estimate of the impact the event will have on Casper tourism, and data from the ticket sales program will show the approximate number of tickets purchased from outside of Casper and Wyoming.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The operational expenses of the Casper Celtic Irish Festival make up approximately 2/3 of the total annual budget and consist of infrastructure, utilities, advertising and promotions, artist fees, permits and safety, and event supplies.

CCIF has no brick-and-mortar facility to house its operations, therefore, all of the infrastructure needed for the event must be rented at a total cost of approximately \$11,000 (thankfully, the Nicolaysen Art Museum has agreed to an in-kind sponsorship agreement, or the venue rental costs would be much higher). The venue needs to be large enough to accommodate 2,000 attendees over a two-day period with room for 2 stages and up to 50 artisan vendors. To provide quality music performances, a large stage needs to be brought in with sound and lighting systems and a qualified technician to operate them. The Culture stage will be located outdoors and will need a sound system and a canopy to protect the presenters and their equipment from the elements. Chairs will need to be rented for attendees to enjoy the programs in both stage areas.

The utility expenses, trash removal and portable restroom facilities are a relatively small, but essential, part of the budget at \$1,600. The venue does not have enough restroom and sanitation capabilities to adequately accommodate 2,000 people and the indoor facilities are only accessible to ticket holders and handicapped patrons. The Vendor Village will be located outside of the building and will be open to the public, not limited to just ticket holders. Therefore, portable restrooms will need to be located at each end of the Village. Large dumpsters will need to be rented to collect the waste resulting from the food and beverages supplied by food trucks.

To ensure CCIF can maximize its visibility to the Irish community within Wyoming and to bring tourism to Casper, an aggressive advertising campaign is needed. The campaign will begin in May and will consist of daily social media posts, advertising on television networks in Casper and Cheyenne, Casper radio stations, and event flyers posted throughout Casper. In addition to covering most of Wyoming, the TV commercials will reach northern Colorado, eastern Nebraska and parts of North and South Dakota. Frequent social media posts are already being made to showcase the performers and sponsors of CCIF. The current budget for advertising includes in-kind sponsorships, grants, and \$8,000.

A festival cannot be successful and fully showcase the beauty and diversity of Irish/Celtic culture without quality musicians, Celtic culture subject matter experts and a dynamic MC. Half of the total budget for the event, \$30,000, is made up of artist contractual fees and expenses. Some of the artists are traveling from Ireland and Scotland as well as from various parts of the United States. Their fees reflect their level of experience and the quality of their performances.

Operational expenses covering safety concerns and city regulations, totaling \$2,000, must be covered. For the safety of all attendees of CCIF, emergency medical technicians and security personnel will be provided by experts through contracted services. The city permits and insurance will need to be secured as well.

Other attendee-related operational expenses include signage, wristbands, programs, event schedules, and any requested accommodations for accessibility needs.

## **Project Support Narrative**



The Casper Celtic Irish Festival's objective is to raise awareness and appreciation for Irish and other Celtic cultures through showcasing their unique music, dance, history, mythology, and artistry. The Irish people are very proud of their long history and their culture contains many unique elements. CCIF aims to bring that culture to Casper. Additionally, Ireland is part of the greater Celtic culture, therefore, many of their customs and traditions are also reflected in the other Celtic regions of Scotland, Wales, Isle of Man, Brittany, and Cornwall. The Casper Celtic Irish Festival focuses primarily on the Irish culture but will include elements common to all the Celtic people.

Key to CCIF's success will be bringing exceptional talent to the Music and Culture stages. The artists selected for the inaugural festival reflect the variety of musical genres of Celtic music. They have teaching and educational experience on other elements of Celtic culture as well.

Trad bands are primarily instrumental groups that play traditional Celtic music. The music stage will host two Trad bands, On the Lash and Once Upon a Tune. On the Lash is a five-piece Trad band out of Texas that has played at Celtic festivals across the country. Once Upon a Tune is a three-piece band out of Northern Colorado. Both bands are high energy, playing jigs and reels and a variety of other sounds. In addition to fiddles and guitars, both bands feature traditional Irish instruments, including the bouzouki, bodhran, and tin whistle. On the Lash will include vocals in some of their songs as well.

Engrane and Laura form an instrumental duo featuring cello and keyboard. They will be performing their own original musical collaborations that demonstrate the depths of Celtic music. Their hauntingly beautiful music makes for easy listening and an emotional connection. Brian McGrane is from Navan, Ireland and in addition to being an accomplished songwriter and pianist, he is a producer who has worked with many Irish musicians. Laura Durrant is from Glasgow, Scotland and was a principal band member of Celtic Thunder for five years before getting her teaching license. When not on tour with her husband, Colm Keegan, she teaches music in Glasgow.

Colm and Laura Keegan (with Engrane) perform classic Irish and Scottish folk music, original compositions, and contemporary covers of Irish music. Colm Keegan, from Dublin, Ireland, is an award-winning Irish singer/songwriter. He was a principal singer in the internationally known group Celtic Thunder for three years and still performs with them periodically as a guest artist. The trio has been doing concerts together for the last three years, including performances at the largest Irish Festivals in the United States. Colm Keegan has been an integral part of the creation of CCIF as an advisor, collaborator, and supporter to the founder and chairman.

SYR is a five-piece Celtic Rock Band and has performed at festivals across the country. The band members are very high energy and demonstrate that Celtic music is not just part of Irish history but also has a strong presence in contemporary sounds. SYR's dynamic stage presence and Celtic persona will appeal to the 20-35-year-old demographics as well as the classic rock generation.

Colm and Laura Keegan (with Engrane) and SYR will be performing both Friday and Saturday nights, July 18 and 19. All groups will be performing 45 min sessions 10:00-6:00 Saturday.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

A key element of the Casper Celtic Irish Festival that will differentiate from some other Celtic festivals will be the opportunity to learn about Celtic culture from a series of educational seminars and hands on learning at the Culture stage. Seminar classes will include history, mythology, Irish instruments, Irish dance, and Irish language. The seminars will only be held on Saturday, July 19 and each of the 7 sessions will be 50 minutes long. By

combining storytelling, music, and hands-on learning, every class will be designed to appeal to all ages. Some of the lessons will be in a lecture format and others will include group participation for hands on learning.

The history seminars will be conducted by Davy Holden, author and Irish history expert. Davy will present different periods of Irish history through an examination of Irish rebel songs. Rebel songs have been written by the Irish to express their feelings regarding English repression during much of Ireland's past. Davy will break down the words of the songs to explain the symbolism and emotions within the words, going into the details of what was happening in Ireland at the time the songs were written, and the purpose intended by the writers. Davy's approach to his presentation makes the lessons feel more like the listener is getting a firsthand account of historical events instead of sitting through a history lecture. The topic of Rebel songs helps draw people in to listen by appealing to the strong and independent psyche shared by the people of Wyoming and Ireland, fostering a feeling of empathy and brotherhood.

Mythology is part of the vibrant tapestry that makes up Celtic culture. The stories are still actively taught in Irish schools and play a vital role in much of the art that is being created in Ireland today. Colm Keegan will share some of the Irish mythological stories and help the audience understand how those stories are still relevant in modern society. The magic of the stories, coupled with Colm's engaging presentation will draw in the listeners, enveloping them in the wonder of Celtic culture.

The Irish language, Gaeilge, is one of the few Celtic languages still actively spoken today. During English rule, the Irish were forbidden to speak in their native tongue, but pockets of Irish society kept the language alive. Today, Gaeilge is taught in all Irish schools and several communities in the country have it as their primary language. During his seminar, Colm Keegan will explain the history and challenges the Irish faced when England tried to eliminate their language. He will teach the attendees some common phrases and sing a song using the original Gaeilge words as well.

Members of the Trad bands, On the Lash and Once Upon a Tune, will give a talk on the unique sounds associated with Celtic music and the original instruments used to make them. Both bands have members that play the bodhran (an Irish drum), the bouzouki (similar to a mandolin), and the tin whistle. The band members will teach the audience how these instruments are played and how they combine with the more commonly recognized fiddles, flutes, guitars, and banjos to create the jigs and reels that make up traditional Irish music.

The MPG Irish Dance School's champion dancers will discuss their reasons for learning Irish dances, their experiences competing and what Irish dance means to them. The audience will then have the opportunity to join the dancers to learn a beginner level reel.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The long-term goal of the Casper Celtic Irish Festival is to influence people of Irish descent in Casper, and Wyoming, to come together and form organizations in support of their common heritage. The Irish Consulate in San Francisco has a mission to provide support for Irish immigrants and their descendants through supporting local organizations with the same mission. The Consulate is not aware of any formally organized groups within Wyoming, beyond the Irish dance schools, even though the state has one of the highest percentages of Irish descendants in the country. CCIF hopes to encourage the development of these organizations by celebrating Irish and Celtic culture and creating awareness and pride in their heritage. CCIF's music will unite people of all backgrounds in a moment of appreciation and joy. However, it is learning the details of the culture that will inspire

a sense of pride and encourage the community to come together after the festival is over. Those details will be taught on the Culture stage through a series of seven 50-minute seminars. Each session will focus on a specific short-term goal that will be achieved by showcasing a different element of Celtic culture. Those short-term goals will culminate in CCIF laying the groundwork for achieving its larger goal over the next several years.

The goal of the history seminars is to help attendees develop an understanding of the struggles faced by the people of Ireland throughout its past and the resiliency of its people to overcome those challenges while maintaining their unique identity as a Celtic culture. Through exploring the meanings of rebel songs and the reasons they were written, the history lessons will cover significant events in Irish history. This knowledge can help instill a sense of pride in the culture for the descendants and respect and understanding from the rest of the community.

The goal of the mythology seminar is not just to entertain the attendees with enthralling legends; but to help them understand the Celtic Irish culture by learning how these stories are still playing a dynamic role in current everyday life in Ireland. Ancient mythological stories are still taught in Irish schools and are frequently referenced in all forms of Celtic art.

The language seminar's goal is to introduce attendees to the native Irish language and to help them understand how the language not only survived but is thriving today. Language is a major part of a culture's identity, but the Gaeilge language was almost lost under English repression. That is why, historically, conquerors strip the people of their language and force the conquered to assimilate into the new society.

The goal of the music seminar is to demonstrate Celtic instruments to explain what makes Celtic music unique. Through this seminar, the participants can gain a better appreciation of the music they will hear on the Music stage. They may also be inspired to learn more about Celtic music and be excited to come back to the festival in future years.

The MPG's Irish Dance School will provide a lesson on the Culture stage with the goal of increasing the attendees' appreciation of the art of Irish dance and encourage community support for their school. The session will be taught by the senior dance members of the school, most of whom are qualifiers for the World Championship Irish Dance competition. They will tell their stories of why they started dancing, what dance means to them and their path to becoming world qualifiers. They will bring volunteers to the stage to learn a basic reel dance as well.

All of the seminars on the Culture stage will combine to teach the attendees some of the many elements that make up the rich Irish Celtic culture. Real time conversations to gain feedback from attendees and post event surveys will help determine if the short-term goals were met. The achievement of long-term goals will be seen as new organizations are created throughout Wyoming.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The instructors on the Culture stage of the Casper Celtic Irish Festival are all exceptionally talented individuals with many years of experience in their fields.

Davy Holden was raised in Harristown in South Kilkenny, Ireland. He is an Irish history expert who shares his passion for history through social media videos and live seminars. He is the author of the book "Top 10 Irish Rebel Songs". He has taken the songs and their stories from his book and developed a three-part seminar. He will be

presenting all three classes at CCIF. His YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok accounts have over 189,000 followers and his videos receive rave reviews for his ability to take moments in history and topics on Irish culture and present them in an engaging and informative format. Davy Holden was selected to teach the history seminars after the festival chairman sat in on his classes at the Iowa Irish Festival.

Colm Keegan grew up in Dublin, Ireland, but currently lives in Glasgow, Scotland with his wife, Laura Durrant. Colm started as a member of the choir for the singing group Celtic Women, then moved on to be a principal singer in the internationally acclaimed group Celtic Thunder. After his time touring with Celtic Thunder, he went back to school and earned the Irish equivalent of a master's degree in Irish history and as well as a teacher's certificate. Part of his studies included classes in Irish Mythology. All students working to earn a teaching certificate in Ireland must show fluency in the Irish Language. After finishing his degree and certification, Colm started an online Irish culture school, offering classes in Irish Language, History, Mythology, Music, and Current Events. The online school has been certified as a CPD Member. Colm also teaches short-term musical and educational projects for all grades in schools in Glasgow, Scotland. The chairman has been a student of Colm Keegan since January 2021 and asked Colm to present material from two of his most popular classes.

The band members from On the Lash and Once Upon a Tune are expert musicians who specialize in traditional Celtic music. They have experience playing instruments that are unique to the Celtic sound. Several of them have spoken at other festivals and in schools across the United States, discussing the elements of Trad music and demonstrating how to play the Irish bouzouki and bodhran. During negotiations for signing the bands, in depth questions were asked to determine the level of experience and expertise the band members have in giving classes on Trad music and instruments.

The MPG Irish Dance School is operated by Michael Patrick Gallagher, a former principal dancer with River Dance. Michael Patrick's students have demonstrated a high level of ability in Irish Dance. Across the United States, an average of 10% of the competing Irish dance students qualify to compete at the world championship level. At the Casper branch of the MPG school, 50% of their competing students have qualified for world competitions each of the last four years, with five students representing Casper on the world stage each year. These students are also assistant instructors at the school, teaching the dances to the younger students. To be an assistant instructor, the students must demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of all the traditional dances, including the names of each step, the correct terminology for different movements and how to break them down for teaching.

## **Budget Narrative**

The operating expenses for CCIF make up approximately 50% of the budget, while fees associated with the performers and cultural experts make up the other 50%. CCIF does not have any paid employees, so the event weekend will consist of over 230 volunteer hours.

The Nicolaysen Museum has agreed to an in-kind sponsorship, cutting the venue rental down to less than 30% of the rental fee. Colm Keegan's online school, CKTeaching, is providing 20 volunteers who will be available for the entire event.

Artisan Vendor fees and ticket sales are expected to bring in 45% of the revenue. To help ensure the desired level of attendees, a Wyoming TV company is sponsoring the event by providing over 12,000 commercial spots at the cost of only 4,000 spots. They are advising the board on social media usage as well.

The final 38% of the revenue will come from local business sponsorships and grants. Grant applications have been sent to the Irish Immigrant and Culture Department of Ireland and Walmart.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CASPER CHILDREN'S THEATRE, INC.

[WWW.CASPERCHILDRENTHEATRE.COM](http://WWW.CASPERCHILDRENTHEATRE.COM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: CSG: CCT Year 2025/2026

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

To inspire, educate, cultivate, and foster creativity and self-worth for all children ages 4 to 18 through quality theatrical programs, performances, and workshops that empower them to become successful and respectful members of our community.

Theatre empowers children to grow and become successful members of our community. We use theatre to teach our kids to work in teams, think critically, speak publicly, write, read, work on voice control/projection, construct, paint, learn how to light a set, costume, act, sing, dance, learn how to do hair and makeup, and much more. Theatre increases attention spans, memory, cultural relativity, and emotional literacy.

Theatre has also been found to help students succeed outside the realm of the stage in areas such as increased school attendance, better SAT scores, and increased reading comprehension. Our alumni are proof that this research is true.

Strategic goals established by the board to meet our mission include:

1. Create and maintain a sustainable development plan to provide financial support necessary to maintain and grow programming with a goal of building cash reserves.
2. Position CCT as a quality employer and lay groundwork to hire a part-time production team.
3. Ensure CCT becomes a visible, viable organization in the community by increasing community engagement, improving financial planning and reporting, creating an annual calendar of programs, & seek engaged individuals to help grow and diversify our board.
4. Improve the theater's functionality and usage and find opportunities to allow other performing groups to utilize our space.

5. Increase and enhance core theatrical programming such as: Artist-in-Residence/Guest Director programs, establish intergenerational opportunities for older participants to work with our younger participants, create more opportunities for technical training such as stage construction, props, and lighting, & provide scholarship opportunities for both productions and workshops.

## **Community**

The CCT is an inclusive environment that welcomes all children; we have built a safe environment in which they thrive. Recent improvements to our facility, including a outdoor mural, upgraded security system, upgraded costume, props, and painting rooms/areas, have improved our ability to welcome audience members and improve the experiences of our participants.

We continuously look for new opportunities to share information about our organization and programs with ALL children and families in the Casper area. Over the past year, CCT staff have made it a point to attend as many programs as time allowed in the local schools and community theatres to both support arts in our community and invite students to explore programming offered at CCT.

We have found that our best recruitment tool is our performances; many of our new participants have joined after attending one of our shows. Because of this, we work hard to promote each show through social media posts, email blasts, and word of mouth.

We offer full program scholarships to families who meet TANIF income guidelines. Funding for scholarships comes from grants, community donations, and we have been using our Stedillie Scholarship Fund to provide 9 scholarships (4 at our Main Stage level, 2 at our First Act level, and 3 at our Kinderdrama level). Local performance art professionals help us plan our workshops, camps, and productions in order to bring the highest quality instruction to our young participants.

All requests for accommodations are carefully considered and granted provided we have the staffing and infrastructure to ensure it can be done safely. For example, removable ramps have been build and installed on the sides of our stage to accommodate for students with physical or mobility-related challenges.

## **Evaluation**

This coming 25/26 season we will again be offering each student participant, each parent/guardian who has a student participant, each guest director, AND each audience member an opportunity to fill out a quick survey. This will be available by QR code at each of our performances and will be sent via email to students and parents/guardians after the completion of each production, camp, and workshop. This will allow us to continue to improve our services and gain valuable feedback on what people are wanting from the CCT. Samples questions from our survey include:

Asking participants to rate their satisfaction with the rehearsal process, the final performances, ticketing prices/process, our staff, our communication, the overall pricing & value of the program, etc.

In the 23/24, we were not as successful as we would have liked to have been in distributing the surveys and reflecting on the feedback so this coming year we have a mission to make sure the surveys are distributed with every production.

CCT will know we are successful in our mission if we have at least 100 new children participate in our theatre productions, workshops, & camps in the 25/26 Season and if we meet our participant retention goal of at least

50%. Retention is determined on whether or not a child participates in 2 or more productions or workshops throughout the year.

In the 23/24 Season we saw 254 participants with 107 of those being brand new to the CCT. We maintained a retention rate of 51%.

We also measure success by tracking the number of audience members at our productions. Our goal for 23/24 Season was to have 2000 audience members and we exceeded this goal by having 2,595 people attend a total of 30 performances.

Staff are required to collect and record this data.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Revenue streams for CCT are made up of production, camp, and workshop fees, ticket and concession sales, sponsorships, donations, and grants. We also made a small amount of revenue renting out our space this year.

For the 2025/2026 Season our revenue goal is \$140,000 to meet all operating costs. Our operating costs are broken into three categories, program expenses, general and administrative expenses, and occupancy costs. Budgeted program expenses for our 2025/2026 season total \$54,320 and include guest/contract directors, costumes, scripts and royalties, sets, props, sound & lighting, programs, and other printing. General and administrative budgeted expenses for the year total \$45,820 and include advertising/marketing, bank and credit card fees, insurance, fundraising expense, office expense, professional (legal and accounting) fees, staff salaries & payroll taxes, and storage rent. Annual budgeted occupancy costs total \$38,527 and include mortgage payments, building maintenance and repairs, and utilities. Other expenses include debt service of \$1,200 annually on an SBA EIDL loan we received in 2020.

Requested operating funds will be allocated to programming costs including assistance in funding our guest directors (estimated at \$27,820 for the 2025/2026 season), script and royalty fees (estimated at \$8,000 for the 2025/2026 season), and acquiring costumes and materials to assemble sets, props for our classes and productions (estimated at \$13,550 for our 2025/2026 season).

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The programs and services planned for July 1 - June 30 range from camps to workshops to performance opportunities to community outreach.

During this time frame we plan to host 8 summer camps for kids ages 4-18. Camps include: 4 Kinderdrama Sessions, Monster Mashup, Slapstick, Character Creation, and Dance for the Fall Musical.

We will also be producing one summer production of Shakespeare for Kids for ages 10-18 which will run the month of July with performances on July 25-26.



1 Day, 2-3 hour workshops will occur throughout the year and will include instruction on stage make up, stage combat, dialects and accents, stage and set design, lighting design, prop design and construction, costume design, and character development. Workshops will be scheduled on weekends once a month.

Both camps and workshops provide young students the opportunity to learn about and increase their skills in all of these areas. Each workshop and camp is taught by a trained professional in the industry who will help guide students to explore, learn, and create.

We will also produce 3 main stage productions for ages 11-18. These productions are scheduled for the fall with 6 performances in November, the winter with 6 performances in March, and the spring with 6 performances in May.

We will also produce 3 first act productions for ages 8-10. These productions are scheduled for the fall with 3 performances in December, the winter with 3 performances in March, and the spring with 3 performances in May.

We will also produce 3 kinderdrama productions for ages 4-7. These productions are scheduled for the fall with 1 performance in November, the winter with 1 performance in March, and the spring with 1 performance in May.

All of our productions offer young performers the opportunity to build their skills and knowledge of theater performing arts. Performers who are a part of these productions not only learn about performing, but they also help with costumes, set, props, and sound.

Lastly, we plan on engaging in community outreach by having our young performers perform at community events such as parades, Nic Fest, Boys & Girls Club, The Elks Club, KidsFest, the Wyoming Fringe Festival, and various other events. These opportunities allow students to opportunity to work with a variety of community members in a variety of spaces with a variety of audiences. This hones their interpersonal skills as well as builds their confidence when speaking to the public.

One of our goals for the 25/26 Season is to work more closely with the kids and families in North Casper, where our theatre is located. Currently, we service kids from across Casper, Bar Nunn, and Evansville, but our closest neighbors are the most under represented on our rosters so we plan to focus on making community connections through community events that are free and open to the public.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our Learning Arts goals for the 25/26 Season are to provide a minimum of 9 summer camps, 10 workshops, 3 Main Stage productions, 3 First Act productions, 3 Kinderdrama productions, and 4 community outreach opportunities to students ages 4-18. Our goal is to have a minimum of 75% participation for each of these opportunities. Our goal is that a minimum of 50% of students who participate in one learning opportunity will return within the year to participate in at least one more learning opportunity.

These Arts Learning goals were identified by our Program Coordinators, Audrey Egan and Dominique Simmons, by looking at the data collected from previous years and striving to improve both our community outreach and to increase the number of students who gain invaluable theatre arts skills by participating in these learning opportunities.

The Arts Learning Goals for the student participants is for them to increase their knowledge of, understanding of, and skills in both onstage and offstage theatrical arts. Students will also be honing their interpersonal skills and team building skills by working with a cast to put on a production or complete a camp project or a workshop performance. Students will gain skills in public speaking, in performance art forms (acting, singing, dancing,

improv, dialect and accents, stage combat, etc), and in technical theatre (lighting, sound, set, props, makeup, and costumes).

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Our Theatre Educators include:

\*Dustin Hebert - Acting Instructor - Currently the Theatre Director and Instructor at Kelly Walsh High School with over 20 years of experience both on and off the stage. Holds a BS in Musical Theatre Performance with a minor in Technical Theatre.

\*Teri Heidemeyer - Set Painter, Puppet Creator, Prop Designer & Instructor - Owns her own art business called Degopunk, has been a fine artist for over 30 years, has created scenic art for over 20 theatre productions. Holds a BFA specializing in drawing and painting and a Liberal Arts Associates Degree.

\*Nicholas R. Johnson - Technical Director & Lighting, Set, and Sound Instructor - Has over 10 years of experience in technical theatre and currently works with a variety of theatres in Casper. Has an Associates Arts degree in Theatre Performance and in Technical Theatre.

\*Steve Grussendorf - Acting Instructor & Director - Currently a music and choir director at Natrona County High School with over 50 years of music experience and has directed the music for over 20 musical theatre productions at Natrona County High School and Summit Elementary School. Has a BA and Masters in Music and Music Education.

\*Robin Grussendorf - Acting Instructor & Director - Currently the music teacher at Summit Elementary School with over 50 years of music experience and has directed over 15 children's theatre productions. Has a BA and Masters in Music and Music Education.

\*Lisa Smith - Acting Instructor & Director - Retired middle school teacher and director with over 30 years of experience both on and off the stage. Holds a BA in English & Theatre with a Masters in Curriculum & Instruction.

\*Stephen Spicher - Acting Instructor & Director - A long-time director with the CCT with over 30 years experience both on and off the stage. Holds an AA in General Studies and in Theatre.

\*Audrey Egan - Executive Director, Director, Choreographer, Program Coordinator - Former teacher and director at CY Middle School with over 20 years of theatre experience both on and off the stage. Holds a BA in Theatre & English.

\*Dominique Simmons - Artistic Director, Director, Choreographer, Vocal Instructor, Music Director, Program Coordinator - Currently a teacher and director at CY Middle School with over 15 years of theatre experience both on and off the stage, 5 years professionally. Holds a BS in Interdisciplinary Studies.

\*Bill Conte - Acting Instructor & Director - 2024 WAC Fellow for the Performing Arts in Theatre. Holds a Ph.D. in Theatre and was the Instructor of Theatre History and Literature for the Department of Theatre and Dance at Casper College. Currently the founder and Executive Director of Theatre of the Poor.

\*Emily Quintana - Vocal Instructor & Music Director - 25 years of performing and voice instruction and 17 years of music directing. Holds a Masters in Mathematics and a Certificate in Vocal Jazz. Currently the co-founder and Artistic Director of Opera Wyoming.

\*Daniel Quintana - Vocal Instructor & Music Director - 37 years in the theatrical and circus arts. Holds an Associates in Musical Theatre and a BA in Elementary Educational Studies. Currently the co-founder and Executive Director of Opera Wyoming.

\*Michelle Hancock - Acting Instructor & Director - Retired teacher of 35 yrs with over 40 yrs of theatre experience both on and off stage. Holds a BA in English and a Masters in Curriculum & Instruction.

\*Karen Bullard - Costume Designer - 35 years of sewing experience.

### **Budget Narrative**

Revenue streams are made up of production, camp, & workshop fees, ticket & concession sales, sponsorships, donations, and grants. In the last year we have also rented out our theatre space as another small source of revenue. With limited reserves, it is necessary to secure funding for all operating costs as well as donations to support our scholarship program. In addition to the overall organizational budget, a budget is drafted for each individual program to identify both anticipated revenue (production, camp, and workshop fees based on enrollment and ticket sales based on number of performances), and all necessary program costs, including salaries to our instructors. These individual program budgets are used to identify strengths and weaknesses in our programming. We actively seek sponsorships for each season as well as for individual shows.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CASPER COLLEGE/MUSIC DEPARTMENT

WWW.CASPERCOLLEGE.EDU

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Kinser Jazz Festival @Casper College (CC)

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Kinser Jazz Festival (KJF) has been an annual event sponsored by the Music Department at Casper College since 1967. The festival creator Dr. Thomas Kinser promoted jazz as a standard component of music study in Wyoming. The KJF mission/goals are designed to support and enhance the mission/goals of CC.

CC Mission: Casper College is a public, comprehensive two-year institution with a primary focus on student success that provides learning opportunities to enrich the lives of our students and community.

Strategic Goals - CC promotes education for a lifetime by:

- (1) Strengthening the college's proactive culture that anticipates needs of the community through curricula, program offerings, and partnerships.
- (2) Sustain transferability of coursework/applicability of skills.
- (3) Improve retention, completion, graduation, and student success.
- (4) Create a supportive environment that encourages lifelong development rooted in critical thought and reflection.

KJF Mission: Provide world-class jazz education to student musicians by presenting high-quality jazz performances and offering jazz students, directors, and our Wyoming community's educational opportunities in jazz performance.

The strategic goals are:

- (1) Educate Wyoming students in the value of jazz.
- (2) Share information regarding business aspects of a music career.
- (3) Give students the opportunity to improve their musical performances and skills.
- (4) Improve student understanding of their performance.
- (5) Introduce new skills/strategies to students and directors.

(6) Learn teamwork/build self-confidence.

(7) Deepen cultural understanding of jazz music on American culture.

The festival's primary focus is on students and their musical success whether it be for a career in the field or for their personal enrichment. It is part of the colleges' as well as the Music Department's plan to create an environment in which lifelong learning and personal development is encouraged and supported.

## **Community**

As of July 1, 2024 (US Census Bureau), Natrona County has a population of 80,410. Among residents, 10.5% live at or below the poverty level, and 11.9% of individuals under 65 have a disability. The county's mean annual income is \$71,247. Casper, the largest city, has a population of 58,720. Other communities within the designated Casper Metropolitan Statistical Area include Midwest (283), Edgerton (153), Bar Nunn (2,978), Mills (4,221), and Evansville (2,749). The predominant racial group is White (93.7%), while Black, American Indian, Asian, and Mixed-Race populations collectively make up 6.3%. Additionally, 9.6% of residents identify as ethnically Hispanic.

Casper is home to 15 museums, multiple performing arts venues such as the Lyric and the Rialto, dance studios, the Casper Symphony, and the Ford Wyoming Center, which hosts annual performing arts events. Casper College supports vibrant theatre, dance, and music programs offering options that address students' interests, goals, and skill levels. The programs provide flexibility/encourage creativity. The city's central location with 2,000 hotel rooms and 97 eateries make it an ideal event destination.

Strategies that foster meaningful engagement and ensure positive experiences for event participants include: gathering community feedback to assess the value of services such as accommodations and provide continuous improvement; representation of identified underserved communities; confirming that all public areas/campus seating comply with ADA accessibility requirements; ensuring that ALL accommodations such as listening devices, ASL interpreters, wheel-chair accessibility (etc.) are available through the college HR office; and, determining the specific needs of underserved populations (addressing these needs).

## **Evaluation**

Evaluations are critical in helping the KJF committee assess, improve, and demonstrate the effectiveness of the program. Both quantitative as well as qualitative assessments are used to analyze festival results. Quantitative data includes: number of schools attending, number of individual participants, number of ensembles, number of directors in attendance, and number of community members attending the evening performances. Numbers such as "community members attending" can indicate to committee members if the community has interest in the type of artist performing. Participants, directors, volunteers, and attendees are asked to complete a written or electronic evaluation about their festival experience. Survey questions include (but not limited to): (1) Was the registration easy to complete? (2) Were the volunteers helpful? (3) Were your room assignments satisfactory? (4) Please rate your satisfaction overall with the festival. (5) List any suggestion you have to improve your experience.

The committee evaluates these surveys to make meaningful changes. The feedback keeps the event focused on the musical needs of students as well as securing jazz artists with whom our students and directors can engage. Suggestions from festival participants are extremely important and have over the years lead to significant

improvements to equipment, venue, and programs. For example, six years ago, directors believed strongly that some of the instruments needed to be greatly improved. This led to the replacement and addition of instruments. Suggestions regarding the process, musical talent, and facilities are all considered by the committee and addressed in order to meet the mission. Evaluations are an important part of the process that have maintained this festival for 58 years.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The primary focus of the KJF is on students and their success in their musical undertakings whether it be for a career in the field or for their personal enrichment. It is part of the college's as well as the Music Department's plan to create an environment in which lifelong learning and personal development is encouraged and supported (overarching CC mission). The benefit to students as well as our community is considerable. However, the cost of such an undertaking grows each year. The KJF at Casper College must rely on funding sources such as the WAC in order to bring these services to Wyoming's aspiring artists and the general public who find joy in listening to the unique sounds and constructs of jazz. These activities help one connect with the genre's traditions, evolution, and significance in our history.

The KJF committee is requesting operating funding which will help to support and bring the festival's focus to reality. CC and other funding sources provide the majority of operational costs including but not limited to the use of CC facilities; salaries and benefits for faculty and staff involved in the planning and implementation of the festival; use of some instruments; some marketing services; and volunteers. The costs might also include the auditorium rent at the high school, piano tuning, marketing, and supplies and materials directly related to the costs of the festival.

Facilities used at CC are free for use by faculty and staff but the facilities for the evening performance at the high school require a rental fee. This auditorium is used because it has a seating capacity that will accommodate all participants and community members who wish to attend (approximately 777 seating capacity). The John F. Walsh Auditorium at the Natrona County High School is rented for the evening performance of the headline artist. The rental fee covers stage set-up and the janitorial fees for the evening. Equipment rentals including special instruments and /or sound/recording equipment that are required but not owned by the college are part of the operational costs. CC purchased over \$88,000.00 (grant funds) in sound/recording equipment this year and will use that equipment where appropriate.

All salaries and benefits for the CC faculty involved are paid for by CC including the Kinser committee members, and the instructors and staff who assist with the activities. The committee devotes a percentage of their time all year to plan and carry out the planned events. Supplies and materials include the cost of the on-line ticket/booking system used to reserve tickets for the evening performance and the on-line registration program used to register the schools attending the festival. Other

Marketing includes posters, mailings, print materials, and other advertising costs. The grand piano in the Wheeler Auditorium is tuned several times per year for major events. The KJF is one of those events. Each year, many volunteers assist with the festival. Lunch is provided for the volunteers for each of the three days.

Operating costs requested from the WAC will primarily be used for piano tuning, event marketing and supplies and materials.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The project is an educational event focused on jazz education for middle school, high school, and college students. The activities include bringing professional artists/educators to CC; providing students with opportunities to learn about jazz and its roots in American history and culture; helping students develop advanced musical skills and proficiency; encouraging student individuality and creativity; developing a critical thinking and problem solving ability as they learn to analyze and interpret musical elements in real time; and connecting with others through their music, gaining a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment.

A varied program of services is scheduled for the festival including instrumental and vocal workshop; live performances; and a concert performed by a renowned jazz artist. The focus of the KJF is to present authentic educational experiences for jazz ensembles, their directors, and the Wyoming community. In February of 2026, the KJF will celebrate its 59th year. Student from approximately 48 ensembles representing schools from across Wyoming perform live. Each group is given a 30-minute clinic from a nationally known clinician/adjudicator. In addition, the festival features an evening performance for students and the community by world renowned artists.

Primary artists/educators involved with this project on CC campus are: Dr. Joshua Mietz is the Executive Director of the Kinser Jazz Festival. He is currently an instructor at CC. Prior to CC, Mietz served as the Instructor of Clarinet at Fort Lewis and San Juan Colleges, the Instructor of saxophone at San Juan College, as well as the Director of Choirs at the First United Methodist Church in Durango, Colorado. He also coached and arranged music. His arrangements vary from rock/pop, church hymns for weekly worship, and re-orchestrations of large-scale works. Dr. Zachary Vreeman, Vocal Director, conducts the Collegiate Chorale, Men's and Women's Choirs, and the Casper College Contemporary Singers. Before coming to Casper, he served as the Assistant Choir Director at the University of Wyoming. He has directed a wide variety of both choral and instrumental ensembles at all levels, including school choral ensembles from elementary to college, and bands and orchestras at the secondary level, as well as community and church ensembles. He appears frequently as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the country, but has also sung professionally. He earned a D.M.A. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Larry Burger, Technical Director, has a lineage of audio production ranging from studio recordings, live sound venues, broadcast experience, and producing radio shows for weekly radio broadcasts featuring interviews and live musical guests. He gained experience working in broadcast trucks for regional and national presentations. Burger has performed live sound engineering for Concerts from jazz greats, concert bands, rock bands and percussion performances. Burger is the Sound Design Instructor at Casper College. Cynthia Harrison teaches the graphic design curriculum as well as 2D Foundations at CC. She works with the graphics and promotion for the festival. Other faculty (to a lesser degree) are involved in the three-day festival as are volunteer staff. These four individuals make up the core of the KJF committee. They plan year-round for the festival.

Project support funds will be used to partially assist with the adjudicators' expenses and contractual expenses.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Kinser Jazz Festival is an annual event which has taken place on the Casper College (CC) campus every February since 1967. All of the programs and services support the main goal to educate Wyoming students through a variety of settings. The event is an instrumental and vocal workshop for middle school, high school, and college students. The KJF is the largest of the three jazz festivals in Wyoming, and, regionally is second in size only to the Greeley Jazz Festival.

The activities, which focus on jazz music, brings professional artists/educators to CC, providing students with opportunities to learn about jazz and its roots in American history and culture; to help students develop advanced musical skills and proficiency; to encourage student individuality and creativity; to develop a critical thinking and problem solving ability as they learn to analyze and interpret musical elements in real time; and connect with others through their music, gaining a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment.

A diverse program of activities are scheduled for festival participants. Ensembles (vocal and instrumental) from across Wyoming perform in the premier Wheeler Concert Hall on the CC campus. This hall is an acoustically tuned venue that is well-furnished with a state-of-the-art sound system and instruments such as the grand piano that is at home on the hall's stage. It is one of the most beautiful and vibrant performance spaces in Wyoming.

Activities include: (1) Each ensemble plays or sings a musical selection before an audience and a professional adjudicator who, listens and evaluates the performance. The clinician provides a 30 minute work session with the students and directors following their presentation, during which time they make suggestions about the performance and then have students apply these suggestions to sections of their work. The students as well as the audience often can hear a marked improvement in their performance. In addition, the adjudicator also gives each ensemble a rating and a written critique which they can continue to work on when they return home. (2) Regularly schedules seminars, workshops, and performances are offered to expose students to quality jazz. Students are often given the opportunity to speak with the artists attending the festival about such things as pursuing music as a career/business.

Another activity includes the "headliner" artist who works with the student artists and directors in workshops and through presentation of their music. They also perform an evening concert for the community in the John F. Walsh Auditorium at the Natrona County High School. During this performance, the Wyoming State Jazz Band and/or the Wyoming State Choir also perform. This concert is always well attended by both the community and students. These artists have varied from nationally known such as Manhattan Transfer and the Gordon Goodwin Big Phat Band to regional artists such as Ben Markley Big Band.

CC is also an Essentially Ellington regional festival and the only school in the mountain west region to offer these workshops. It is a unique among educational resource for high school jazz bands. Schools/students who participate in this program are eligible to participate in non-competitive contests and have the portion to submit recordings for the national Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band competition and Festival at New York's Lincoln Center.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**



The focus of this project is to bring professional jazz musicians to Casper College as performance adjudicators and workshop leaders. These individuals meet the following general goals of the festival. (1) Critique student jazz performances and give each ensemble the opportunity to learn more about their music and to improve their performance. (2) Provide an authentic jazz performances by artists of the highest caliber and to offer a variety of educational experiences and workshops that improve and enhance learning for jazz ensembles, their directors, and the public to students and the community.

The goals of the KJF were developed by the Kinser committee and refined each year based on feedback from students, directors, and the public who participate in the festival. Over the 58-year history, the festival has tried to offer the highest quality jazz education to countless students many of whom come to CC to further their education in music. With each director the festival has grown and refined its format. The Kinser committee works year round to improve and enhance the learning opportunities of the festival. The committee responsible for meeting these goals are: Executive Director of the festival, Dr. Joshua Mietz; Vocal Director, Dr. Zachary Vreeman; Technical Director, Mr. Larry Burger; and Art Director, Cynthia Harrison. Dr. Mietz is the Instructor of Woodwinds and Jazz Ensemble 1. He has D.M.A. from the University of Montana. In addition his instructional abilities, Dr. Mietz has also coached and arranged music from pop/rock to re-orchestration of large scale works. Dr. Vreeman conducts the CC vocal ensembles. He has directed a wide variety of chorale and instrumental ensembles at all levels. He appears frequently as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the country and has sung professionally. He earned his D.M.A. from the University of Nebraska. Larry Burger has a lineage of audio production ranging from studio recordings, live sound venues, broadcast experience, and producing radio shows for weekly radio broadcasts featuring interviews and live musical guests. Burger has performed live sound engineering for concerts from jazz greats, concert bands, rock bands and percussion performances. Cynthia Harrison teaches the graphic design curriculum as well as 2D Foundations at CC. She works with the graphics and promotion for the festival. These four make up the core of the Festival Committee. Numerous other CC faculty are involved at various levels and a team of student/community volunteers help to make the festival successful.

Common goals for the festival are: (1) Provide education to Wyoming students in the value of jazz music; (2) Share information regarding the business aspects of a music career; (3) Give students the opportunity to learn from professional musicians and adjudicators; and (4) Provide students with equipment at the festival that offer them the best opportunities to perfect their musical abilities. Learning outcomes are: (1) Improve student understanding of their performance; (2) Introduce to students and directors new skills and strategies to incorporate into their performances; (3) Improve and increase their musical proficiency and skills in Jazz performance; (4) Increase their knowledge of Jazz as a career pathway whether it be performance, education, composition, and more; (5) Learn teamwork and build self-confidence; (6) empower students to overcome challenges and connect with others through music; and (7) Deepen cultural understanding of the influence of jazz music on the American culture.

The goals are student focused and are developed to support and enhance the goals of the college as well as the School of Fine Arts and Humanities. These goals are age appropriate for the target audience (students and directors), are measurable and achievable (realistic for the audience and time frame), and clearly define the purpose of the festival.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Three adjudicators/educators being considered are: (1) Dr. Ben Markley (Ben Markley Big Band) a pianist, composer, arranger, author, and educator. Markley has a Bachelor of Music /Fort Hays State University; Master of

Arts in jazz studies/New York University; and a Doctor of Musical Arts in jazz studies/University of Colorado. He is an associate professor/Director of Jazz Studies at the UW. Dr. Markley has successfully worked with students at CC on several occasions. (2) Alex Annan is a bassist, and composer. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Jazz Bass Performance from the University of Nebraska - Omaha and is currently working on a Master's Degree in Jazz Composition from the University of Kansas. Annan has released two albums under his name, Naeja in 2016 and Differences in 2019. (3) Dr. Eric Richards is Director of Bands and Jazz Studies at Sheridan College (SC). He serves as Music Director/ Lead Trombone of the Whitney Center Jazz Orchestra. He served as tenured Associate Professor of Composition and Jazz Studies/Glenn Korff School of Music at the University of Nebraska. He is the recipient of the 2012 Distinguished Teaching Award in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts at UNL. Eric has led numerous All State High School Jazz Ensembles including Wyoming. Education includes Doctor of Musical Arts, University of Maryland; Master of Music Degree in Composition, Duquesne University; and, Bachelor of Science in Music Education, Duquesne University. Selection is made by the committee based on their education, background, their teaching standing, and others educators' recommendations.

The featured artist being considered is SAJE (pronounced "sage"), a two-time Grammy award winning group composed of vocalists Sara Gazarek, Amanda Taylor, Johnaye Kendrick, and Erin Bentlage. The four individuals are world renowned artists, composers, and arrangers who explore, create, and celebrate jazz. They have been referred to as "one of finest vocal tandems you will ever hear in our lifetime." (Urban Music Scene) Sara Gazarek, internationally touring artist, has collaborated with artists such as Kurt Elling, Fred Hersch, and Larry Goldings. She is governor of the LA Chapter of the Recording Academy and was recently appointed Associate Professor in the Eastman School of Music. Amanda Taylor is an arranger known for her work with leading vocal ensembles, including Groove for Thought and The Manhattan Transfer. A graduate of Thelonious Monk Institute, Johnaye Kendrick has a repertoire of original and inventively arranged standards, jazz tunes and contemporary pop songs. She is a music professor at Seattle's Cornish College of the Arts. Erin Bentlage has been featured on albums by Jacob Collier, Kiefer, Kate McGarry, and Amber Navan. She is on the faculty at California State University, Northridge. Selection is done with input from the committee members, other directors, and the community. The selection process includes: an interview; the performers' experience and musical reputation within the jazz world; their involvement in the jazz genre; the miscellany they can bring to the event; and their reputation as educators. These selections are made by May 1st, in the year preceding the festival.

Key partners for this project include Natrona County BOCES, Natrona County School District #1, CC Foundation, and the Natrona County Recreation Joint Powers Board. Other contributors include private individual donations.

## **Budget Narrative**

The CC Grants Director (GD) and the festival Executive Director (ED) develop the budget. Program costs aligns with current market value in Casper area. Prior year's budgets are taken into consideration. The GD researches operational/project support costs, and the KJF committee focuses on the artists and clinicians. The costs of these expenditures are reflected as accurately as possible for February 2026. Barring a major change in programing, the costs have historically reflected the true cost of the program. Key partnership of the KJF include the Natrona County School District, Natrona County BOCES, the Natrona Count Recreation Joint Powers Board, the CC Foundation and various individual donors. The festival has also received funds for the NEA in past years.

CC is the fiscal agent for the KJF. The college has over 80 years of experience in managing state, federal and local funds and has been found to be in good standing with all of its funders. An audit is conducted each year.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CATHEDRAL VOICES CHAMBER CHOIR

[WWW.CATHEDRALVOICES.ORG](http://WWW.CATHEDRALVOICES.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cathedral Voices 2025-26 Concert, Education, and Cultural Advocacy Initiatives

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Cathedral Voices Chamber Choir's mission is to inspire harmony and community through musical excellence in performance, education, and outreach. Our vision is to enrich lives through music, nurture talent, and empower individuals to fulfill their potential.

Every year, CVCC realizes its mission and vision in both formal and informal settings. The excellence of the concert hall performance is balanced with the outreach of singing at senior centers, and assisted living centers. The informal community events for all ages are complimented by targeted activities such as singing in the public schools. Every program or event exemplifies our core values of accessibility, excellence, and joy.

CVCC's strategic goals for this '24-25 Concert Season include:

Be a cultural advocate, showcasing music's soulful nature as an art form through thoughtfully-curated performances. CVCC will collaborate with guest artists as culture bearers, ensuring music from diverse backgrounds is performed with integrity and respect. These concerts will celebrate a wide range of choral excellence, from classic standards to contemporary new works.

Nurture local talent and empower personal growth through a series of accessible and affordable education initiatives including individual and small group instruction. CVCC will be a catalyst for music literacy, specifically targeting those musicians (teen through adult age) with no (or limited) instrumental background. This strategic education goal is to support both CVCC choir members who desire deeper knowledge and skill building, while also including and inviting the less-experienced singer (non-member), to experience the pure joy of song while also developing their skills.

Build community relationships through participating in broader community events and engage directly with the marginalized and underserved members of the community by bringing live music to centers for the elderly, disabled, or at-risk, at least twice during the concert season.

## **Community**

According to recent statistics, the population of the town of Jackson is 10,600 people. The entire county has a population of 23,300. It is also well-known that Teton County is one of the wealthiest in the nation per-capita, and the level of high school and college educated adults is high. It also has serious housing shortages, socio-economic disparities, and ethnic-divides.

We know that music is powerful; it is a force for civil and respectful interaction within a community. Therefore, Cathedral Voices Chamber Choir (CVCC) is embracing opportunities to connect people together across cultural barriers and social-boundaries through the performing arts.

25% of the county population is under the age of 18. There is a broad young adult population (albeit often transient), and a robust elderly population. CVCC engages each of these communities to participate in music. For example, choir membership has become a place of connection and enrichment for young adults who found CVCC online and sing with the choir for authentic human connection. Some stay for years. CVCC collaborates with local educators, supporting music education in the public schools through an in-school mentorship program and hosting visiting guest artists for teacher professional development. This has brought families into the concert hall. Elderly members are involved in diverse ways as singers, volunteers, donors, and audience. CVCC has two Hispanic singers who are also ESL. Their participation has prompted the development of adult summer music courses to accommodate their needs and invite others. The choir has accommodated a physically disabled person who remains an active member. And for those who are not physically able, we bring the music to them, singing in care centers for the elderly.

## **Evaluation**

Cathedral Voices uses the following methods to collect feedback and assess program success in relationship to the choir's mission, and vision:

1. Membership Surveys. Choir members are invited to respond to an anonymous, online survey. We ask about the rehearsal process, music selection, and their overall experience as a member. We want to know if they find it valuable, meaningful, and engaging. We also have an open-ended question for comments and suggestions.
2. Membership retention. We monitor membership each season and take note of returning members. If a member doesn't return for the new year, they are contacted to understand why.
3. Attendance Surveys. Using our email database, CVCC sends out an annual anonymous survey to understand attendance and engagement trends, and provide an outlet for comments.

4. Attendance numbers. Cathedral Voices tracks attendance numbers at events, but we find it less valuable to compare from year to year, and rather, compare those numbers to venue capacity.

5. Annual Membership Meeting. This meeting is an important moment for the choir membership to collectively respond. The open dialogue among individuals offers greater insight into the membership's overall feedback on Cathedral Voices' effectiveness

6. Informal Conversations. The "conversation by the water cooler" is often the most honest conversation. When the Board of Directors meet quarterly, unsolicited comments and feedback are anonymously shared and discussed. They are often the success stories or reminders of missteps to improve upon.

All of these methods are part of the planning process for organizational growth. Every July, the Board of Directors meet for a debrief of the previous season, reviewing all the evaluation results before the upcoming season begins.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Cathedral Voices Chamber Choir's primary operating expenses are for 1 part-time staff member (Artistic Director) and basic rental, supplies, organizational marketing, and similarly related expenses. The choir is fortunate to have in-kind rehearsal space at the Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole for weekly rehearsals, and reduced office space rent at the Center for the Arts. As a resident of the Center for the Arts, CVCC receives discounted use of the theater and free use of the conference room. All of these venues accommodate access for those in need, which is needed for the choir does have requests for accommodation. Additionally, CVCC has greatly reduced bookkeeping and accounting fees donated by a board member.

Below are listed the anticipated operating costs for Cathedral Voices for 2025-26:

Performance Venues, Center Theater and/or lobby for concerts, \$5,500

Office space at the Center for the Arts, \$3,400

Insurance, \$540

Piano tuning, \$300 per tuning x 2

Marketing Design, \$5,200 for a full year of creative for general choir publicity, concerts, auditions, etc.

Advertising, \$4,000 for a full year of digital, radio, newspaper, and venue banners; \$2,000 for print collateral (postcards, programs, posters)

Accounting, bookkeeping, \$500

Office Supplies, \$425

Postage, \$750

Online subscriptions (Zoom, dropbox, etc.), \$475

Sheet music, \$1,800

Website maintenance & improvements, \$1,500

Salaries, artistic director & conductor, \$34,500

Artist Fees for musician honorariums, choir pianist, \$2,500

Professional Development, \$1,800

Funds allocated towards operating support would support the salary of our Artistic Director, who is also the conductor of all rehearsals (in addition to being the artistic leader of the organization). The position is part-time, but crucial and central to the choir's operation. To be transparent, it is easier to approach local business to underwrite hard costs such as a venue rental, or marketing costs. Personnel costs are much more difficult to raise funds for. Inflation is a concern, and cost of living in these uncertain times is extremely concerning. It is essential that we fund the visionary staff member who has guided this organization from a small group of 16 singers into a respected arts organization it has become within the Jackson community.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Cathedral Voices (CVCC) is extremely thrilled to continue broadening its programming, bringing Jackson and Teton County more connected to the global community of our world, through music. 2025-26 is the "Season of Soul," with music and programming celebrating the cultural heritage and musical traditions of the diverse community we call home--the melting pot of the United States of America. This project directly aligns with CVCC's goal of being a cultural advocate.

CVCC began this journey in its 2024-25 season, with the Spring Festival "East Meets West." The brilliance of Beethoven was united with music from China and South Korea, two nations well-represented within the choir membership of CVCC. In fact, Chinese immigrants played a pivotal role in westward expansion are part of Wyoming's history. Similar to '24-25, the 2025-26 Season will continue this journey of cultural and historical awareness.

The concert season begins in September, with a performance in October at the Center for the Arts. The performance is a collaboration coordinated by Jackson Hole Public Art. It is a wonderful opportunity for the choir to launch the season of "Soulful Song" in a visible way within Teton County.

In December, CVCC will program a "Soulful Celebration" introducing Gospel Music in the Center Theater as part of its annual winter concert. In February, during Black History Month, CVCC will launch rehearsals, a discussion group, and an awareness campaign for the May Spring Festival, inviting community members to join our "Immersion Choir." This supports CVCC's other strategic goal of building community partnerships and engaging community members to actively participate.

The concert season will conclude with a Spring Festival the first week in May. A visiting guest artist will rehearse and conduct the Festival "Immersion Choir," expanding singers' understanding of the music from the Black Diaspora to sing that soulful music with respect and integrity. Similar to past spring festivals, the weekend will include open rehearsals, an Artist talk, school visits (schedule permitting), and other interactive elements for community engagement. We have three potential guest artists under consideration, and pending availability, all are equally impressive with inspiring styles of conducting and moving singers to a place of joy. We've included the bio for one of them below:

Brandon A. Boyd is the Director of Choral Activities at the University of Missouri, with a PhD from Florida State University. Dr. Boyd is Director of the Graduate Choral Conducting Program. As a proponent of choral singing to build community, his research interest includes organizing choirs for the homeless, identifying the social and physical effects of choral singing on senior citizens, and creating authentic field experience for music therapy. He is a proud member of the National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM), American Guild of Organists (AGO), and Chorus America.



Funding for this project through Wyoming Arts Council will be central to its success. Funds would be directed towards Guest Artist expenses, additional musicians, and the project's research and planning process.

**Project-Specific Expenses:**

Guest Artist (fees, travel, lodging): \$3,200

Increased Marketing for Immersion Choir & Festival: \$1,600

Increased Venue rentals for Festival events: \$1,000

Additional Concert Musicians: \$400 (December) \$800 (May)

Project Research, Curation, and Planning: \$1750

**Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Music Literacy for All – no singer left behind

Anyone who plays a musical instrument understands the value of reading music. The ability to fluently read pitches, rhythms, and compositional markings is required in order to play the right note at the right time, with the right fingering, let alone play with a group of musicians. Singing is an “instrument” one can learn and use, without reading music at all. Singers who were never exposed to the discipline of reading and analyzing music notation and patterns (and there are many) rely upon ear training and experience instead.

Cathedral Voices (CVCC) is in a unique position to provide this much-needed skill development, in Teton County with two education initiatives, Summer Sing and Singing in the Schools.

“Summer Sing” is a summer session of weekly individual and small group instruction. It is offered at the Center for the Arts, July-August, during the choir's off-season. Summer Sing runs for 6 weeks, concluding with a recital (optional) for individuals to share what they've learned. Singers ages 12 through adult are welcome to participate. CVCC will offer these courses and private instruction on a sliding scale, with discounts for active CVCC choir members and students. All costs will be under the current market rates of private teaching studios, which are often unattainable or require a long-term commitment.

These summer sessions are not meant to replace year-round study in a school ensemble or community choir, nor is it meant to compete with private instruction. Summer Sing exists to reinforce foundational fundamentals and identify and address gaps in a person's general music literacy skills. We want to empower the individual to see their own ability to learn, and give them a nudge and some useful tools to continue on that path.

Individual instruction will be tailored to the individual and their needs. It is a private music lesson with a focus on comprehensive music literacy and singing technique. Small group instruction will be focused in two areas: basic theory and sight reading, vocal technique and musicality for group singing. Groups will be kept SMALL to ensure personal attention so all participants are making progress, together.

“Singing in the Schools” is a program designed to support the choir teacher at the high school level. CVCC places trained vocalists with comprehensive literacy skills and excellent vocal technique into the classroom on a weekly basis. These vocalists are ambassadors of excellent musicianship assisting with sectionals, note-learning, and ensemble harmony. Singing in the Schools (SITS) runs October – May, in partnership with Teton County School District. SITS was launched last year and the new choir director has requested this support as he rebuilds the choir program.

CVCC is incredibly excited to be launching Summer Sing and continue Singing in the Schools. Interest in group singing is on the rise in Teton County – school choirs and after school choirs are seeing increases in enrollment the past 3 years. Cathedral Voices has seen an increase in auditions and participation from adults. The local theater company has a budding musical theater program interested in partnering on this effort of music literacy.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

CVCC’s programs, Summer Sing and Singing in the Schools, have similar goals, although they each are serving different groups of individuals within Teton County.

Singing in the Schools (SITS) is a resource for the choir director at Jackson Hole High School, who is currently in his first year as choir director. Since Covid, Jackson Hole High School has struggled to retain a choir teacher and the music program has seen a drastic decline in enrollment. The new choir director is a gifted teacher and poised to rebuild the choir program from the ground up, but many students entering the program come with inconsistent and deficient music literacy skills. This inhibits their ability to understand and interpret the music more deeply.

The primary goal for Singing in the Schools is to support the choir director in addressing the gaps in the students’ knowledge base. These areas include building musical independence, enhancing aural skills, and develop sight reading skills, which all fall under Music Standard 1: Creative Expression Through Production: Students create, perform, exhibit or participate in the arts.

SITS vocalists work with students in small groups called sectionals, teaching them individual parts or melodic patterns in a song. As they learn a melodic pattern and sing it back, the students are building their aural skills. Similarly, SITS vocalists will demonstrate breath control, and intonation, and students will respond by mirroring what they hear and singing back to the instructor. Going further, students are asked to identify the symbols and notation on their music, track the notation and rhythmic pattern as they sing, which are essential skills for sight

reading. All of these skills support elements of Standard 1 Benchmark 2, “Students performing independently and with others, developing pitch accuracy, rhythm, and steady beat.”

The Summer Sing program is similar in scope, focusing on the 1st Standard of Music Education, benchmarks 1 and 2. The goal is to improve each student’s musicianship through practice, rehearsal and revision. Regarding curriculum, Summer Sing will focus upon pattern recognition (rhythm), symbol recognition (dynamic, articulation and other markings), and pitch accuracy (solfege). Throughout the course, singers will study and practice these three concepts and then connect them together in the process of sight singing a passage of music. By mastering these basic fundamentals, they will increase their musical dependence and enhance their cognitive skills. And once these skills begin to develop, they can examine and learn music on a deeper level, with greater accuracy.

Dr. Chantae Pittman, an adjunct professor at Georgia College put it best, “Literacy is built by recognizing patterns. If we learn the ‘sight words’ and develop the language skills, we will simply read better and more fluently.”

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Cathedral Voices Chamber Choir’s Education Initiatives will depend upon the involvement of several singers, teachers, and conductors. Laura Huckin is the Program Director of CVCC’s Education Initiatives, overseeing their success. She will also lead the development and execution of Summer Sing as the primary instructor. Collin Binko is the choir director at Jackson Hole High School and is focused on the development and success of Singing in the Schools. Sadie Frank is a local educator, actor, and singer, visiting the high school classroom through Singing in the Schools.

Laura Huckin has been involved in music education and performance throughout Teton County as a conductor, accompanist, performer, and teacher for over 20 years. Huckin is currently Artistic Director of Cathedral Voices Chamber Choir and has taken her ensemble to Carnegie Hall, Austria, and Dublin in recent years. In addition to choral conducting, she currently teaches general music (K-8th grade) in Swan Valley, Idaho and serves as Music Director at the Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole. Huckin is a classically-trained pianist, studying under the tutelage of the late-Connie Grabow at Lawrence Arts Academy in her youth. Prior to her position with Cathedral Voices, she operated a private piano studio with 25 students. Huckin graduated from Brigham Young University in Media Arts. She has served on the Board of Directors for Jackson Hole’s Center for the Arts and was honored for her contributions to the arts by receiving the Cultural Council of Jackson Hole’s Award for Creativity in 2014. She is a proud member of the American Choral Director Association (ACDA) and currently serves as R&R Chair on the Wyoming ACDA Board of Directors.

Collin Binko, previously the music teacher at Jackson Hole Middle School, was hired to transform the high school fine arts program after the JHMS program grew exponentially under his leadership, doubling choir enrollment in each grade level until there were no more seats available in the class. In guitar, band, choir and orchestra, Binko relates musical theory to core subjects including math and reading, helping his students connect learning across

the curriculum and increase their success. A lifelong learner with a solutions-oriented mindset, Binko mentors educators in the K-12 music department and serves in the district's two-year competitive leadership program. He is also a recent recipient of the 2025 Milken Educator Award. Binko completed his Bachelor of Science in music education from Duquesne University in 2013.

Sadie Frank is a producer and actor originally from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She moved to Jackson in 2020. She holds a BA in Drama, English, and Russian Studies from Vassar College. While in school, she studied acting at the Moscow Art Theatre in Russia and did a stint at Oxford University studying Shakespeare and James Joyce's Ulysses. Frank is a soprano in Cathedral Voices Chamber Choir, having sung in choirs throughout high school and college, and also extensive musical theater roles. She is passionate about education, leading Off Square's Theater Education programs and assisting Cathedral Voices with Singing in the Schools.

### **Budget Narrative**

The primary income sources for Cathedral Voices are local sponsors and the annual Old Bill's Fun Run organized by the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole. These sources contribute 70% of operational funding. All concerts are free; there is no earned income.

CVCC is fortunate to also have consistent support via choir membership dues, and our performance partners contribute to the hard costs of presenting a collaborative event.

Bookkeeping and accounting services are pro bono, and weekly rehearsal space is donated. This in-kind support allows us to divert fundraising efforts towards personnel and creative project expenses.

Personnel & Artists raise the bar of CVCC's programs & services. They are of paramount importance to mission success and need support from Wyoming Arts Council. Additionally, the Summer Sing outreach program requires a new digital keyboard and teaching supplies (books and digital tools) to convert the choir's office into a studio space for education.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CENTRAL WYOMING COLLEGE FOUNDATION

WWW.CWC.EDU

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Bridging Communities Through Theater: An Inclusive Arts Education Initiative

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

CWC Theatre is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and accessible theater program that welcomes individuals of all abilities. We aim to provide meaningful opportunities for self-expression, creativity, and collaboration through theater.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone—regardless of physical, cognitive, or sensory abilities—can fully participate and experience the transformative power of the arts. Our strategic goals focus on expanding accessibility by implementing best practices from inclusive theater models, such as offering sensory accommodations, adaptive performances, and engagement opportunities tailored to diverse needs.

Beyond production, we prioritize community engagement by fostering partnerships with local organizations, educators, and advocates to make theater more accessible to underrepresented populations, including individuals with disabilities and veterans. Through these efforts, we strive to create an environment that promotes empathy, diversity, and inclusion, empowering all participants to thrive in a supportive and creative space.

### Community

CWC Theater serves a diverse community in Central Wyoming, including rural residents, older adults, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Our region has a strong agricultural and Native American presence, with many residents facing geographic and financial barriers to arts and cultural programs. By engaging with local organizations, educators, and community members, we continuously assess needs and adapt our programming to ensure accessibility and inclusivity.

We actively invite and engage underserved populations by offering sensory-friendly performances, outreach programs, and opportunities for community involvement. Our open audition policy encourages participation from all backgrounds, leading to strong engagement from homeschooled students and seniors. Each fall, we honor veterans with a special concert, and in 2024, we donated over \$500 to our local VFW chapter. We collaborate with local artists to integrate regional culture into productions, such as translating a song into Arapaho, a language of one of our local Indigenous tribes.

To address accommodation requests, we provide assistive listening devices, wheelchair-accessible seating, and modified performances for sensory-sensitive audiences. We also partner with senior centers to offer free

performances and have arranged ASL interpreters for D/deaf audience members. By prioritizing inclusivity, we strive to make theater an enriching and welcoming experience for all.

## **Evaluation**

CWC Theater uses multiple methods to evaluate the impact of our programs and services. We gather audience feedback through surveys, tracking attendance numbers and demographics to assess community engagement. Post-performance surveys help us understand the audience's experience, accessibility needs, and overall satisfaction.

We also collect participant feedback from actors, crew members, and volunteers to gauge the effectiveness of our productions in fostering creativity, inclusivity, and skill development. Community partnerships provide additional insights, allowing us to adjust programming based on local needs.

Our financial impact is measured by tracking ticket sales, donations, and sponsorships, helping us evaluate sustainability and community investment. Additionally, we document outreach efforts, including free performances for seniors and veterans, sensory-friendly shows, and collaborations with local artists.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Our operating costs for the timeframe of July 1 – June 30 include essential expenses to maintain and support our theater program. A significant portion of our budget is allocated to salaries for professors and instructors, who provide valuable education and expertise in theater production and performance. This includes compensation for faculty members teaching courses, directing productions, and facilitating community engagement activities.

In addition to salaries, we cover utility costs for the theater space, including electricity, heating, and water, ensuring a comfortable environment for rehearsals, performances, and community events. We also allocate funds for supplies necessary for productions, such as costumes, props, and materials for set design.

Maintaining an accessible and safe theater space is another priority, with ongoing maintenance and facility-related expenses. These costs are vital to ensuring that our community has a welcoming, functional space to enjoy and participate in the arts.

## **Project Support Narrative**

### **Project Support Narrative**

Our organization plans to deliver an engaging theater season from July 1 to June 30 that includes various productions designed to enrich the local community. These performances will involve active community participation and collaboration with professional artists, fostering an inclusive space for all. Through these projects, we aim to enhance cultural awareness, foster creativity, and provide educational opportunities for theater enthusiasts.

## Artists Involved

Several accomplished artists will contribute to the success of our planned season. These include theater directors, set designers, musicians, and other technical professionals who will bring their expertise to our productions. For example, we will collaborate with local and regional musicians who specialize in live performance to provide musical accompaniment for our shows. These musicians will include well-established performers with years of experience in various genres, from classical to contemporary, ensuring the highest quality of musical performance for each production.

Additionally, we will engage a professional American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter to ensure that D/deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals can fully participate in our performances.

## Project Support Allocation

The requested project support funds will be allocated as follows:

1. **Costume Materials and Supplies (\$2,000):** A significant portion of the funds will go towards purchasing materials for costumes, including fabric, accessories, and custom tailoring, to ensure that the production values meet the artistic vision of each performance. This includes supplies for both main characters and ensemble members.

2. **Sound and Musician Supplies (\$2,000):** The funds will cover the purchase of essential sound equipment, such as microphones, music books, and related materials needed to support the live music components of our productions. Additionally, sound equipment will be used to enhance the audio experience for audiences and ensure high-quality production values.

3. **Contracting Professional Musicians and ASL Interpreter (\$5,000):** These funds will allow us to hire professional musicians to perform live during productions, as well as an ASL interpreter to ensure accessibility for D/deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. The musicians' expertise in various instruments will contribute significantly to the success of each show, while the interpreter ensures that all community members can enjoy the performances.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Arts Learning programs for the year will focus on providing inclusive, accessible theater experiences for students and community members in Central Wyoming. These programs aim to foster creativity, develop skills, and provide opportunities for self-expression in the arts, especially for underserved communities such as individuals with disabilities, veterans, older adults, and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Our Intro to Theatre Class will be open to students with no prior theater experience and community members looking to explore the basics of theater. Students will learn acting techniques, stagecraft, and performance etiquette, gaining hands-on experience in various aspects of theater. Sensory accommodations and assistive technologies will be available to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities. The course will focus on inclusivity, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds, including veterans and seniors.

Additionally, we will offer Theatre for Seniors and Veterans to engage these groups in arts learning experiences. The program will include free performances in collaboration with local senior centers and veteran organizations, and workshops where participants can share their personal stories through theater. These programs aim to foster creativity, connection, and a sense of community.

To further expand our reach, we will engage the broader community through outreach performances and collaborations with local artists. These efforts will bring theater directly to underserved populations, particularly those in rural areas with limited access to arts programs. Artists will collaborate with local schools, libraries, and community organizations to deliver inclusive and culturally relevant theater-making opportunities.

Inclusive Performance Opportunities will ensure that all individuals, including those with disabilities, have the chance to participate in theater productions. This includes offering accommodations such as wheelchair-accessible seating, sign language interpreters, and sensory-friendly performances to make the arts accessible to everyone.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

Learning Goals and Objectives for Intro to Theatre Class

Learning Goals:

### **1. Understand the Fundamentals of Theatre:**

Students will gain a basic understanding of theater as an art form, including its history, structure, and key elements. They will learn the roles of actors, directors, designers, and other production staff in bringing a play to life.

### **2. Develop Performance Skills:**

Through practical exercises, students will develop voice projection, movement, improvisation, and emotional expression. These skills will be honed through monologue performance, group exercises, and scene work.

### **3. Encourage Creative Expression:**



Students will use theater as a means of self-expression, engaging in activities like writing short scenes, improvisation, and performing in class. The course will emphasize individual creativity and collaboration with peers.

#### 4. Promote Teamwork and Collaboration:

Theater is a collaborative art form. Students will work in groups to create scenes and performances, learning to communicate effectively, support each other creatively, and respect diverse perspectives.

#### 5. Understand the Production Process:

Students will learn about the behind-the-scenes aspects of theater production, including set design, costumes, lighting, and sound. They will understand how these elements come together to enhance a performance.

### Learning Objectives:

#### 1. Active Participation in Rehearsals and Performances:

Students will attend and actively participate in rehearsals for scenes and class performances. They will demonstrate professionalism by being punctual, prepared, and focused during these activities.

#### 2. Master Basic Acting Techniques:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic acting techniques, including how to create a character, deliver lines, use body language effectively, and interact with fellow actors. Performance in individual and group scenes will be assessed.

#### 3. Develop Analytical Skills:

Students will analyze scripts, understand character motivations, and identify themes. They will engage in discussions and written reflections to deepen their understanding of the text and its performance implications.

#### 4. Improvement Through Feedback:

Students will engage in constructive feedback sessions, both giving and receiving feedback, to improve their performances and understanding of theater. This process will help refine their acting and collaboration skills.

#### 5. Apply Technical Skills:

Students will participate in basic technical aspects of theater, such as assisting with set construction, lighting, sound, or costume design. They will gain an understanding of how technical elements support the storytelling of a production.

#### 6. Respect for Theater Etiquette and Professionalism:

Students will learn the professional conduct required in theater, including respect for fellow artists, adhering to rehearsal schedules, and maintaining a positive attitude toward the creative process.

By the end of the course, students should have a foundational understanding of theater and the confidence to participate in performances, both as actors and collaborators in the larger theater production process.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

CWC Theater program is proud to have a diverse and talented team of professionals.

Joey West (Director/Professor of Theatre): Joey serves as the director and professor of the program. With a Master of Fine Arts in Acting/Musical Theatre, Joey brings a wealth of experience in both theater education and professional performance. He has taught at the University of Wyoming, WWC, and CWC, where his leadership has earned him a reputation for inspiring students and promoting inclusivity and artistic growth. Joey's role includes guiding students through all aspects of rehearsal and performance, focusing on personal growth and creativity.

Kara Hancock (Costume Design & Construction): Kara is responsible for costume design and construction. With a background in teaching and a deep passion for creative arts, Kara brings valuable skills in visual storytelling. Her experience in art, theater, and costume design enhances the learning experience for students, offering hands-on exposure to the creative process. Kara's role is vital in fostering attention to detail and creativity in students involved in costume design.

Alec Henderson (Technical Director): Alec oversees the technical aspects of the program, including set design, lighting, sound, and crew coordination. Holding a Fine Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin, Alec's early experience at the Steppenwolf Theatre in Chicago has shaped his expertise in technical theater. His guidance ensures students gain practical knowledge in the complexities of technical production and collaborative work.

Matt Hartman (Box Office Manager): Matt brings a well-rounded perspective to the program with his background in music performance (trombone) and dance. He also offers valuable administrative support in box office management. His military background adds discipline and dedication to his role, enhancing both the artistic and logistical elements of theater. Matt's involvement offers students insight into the organizational aspects of theater production.

Jonathan Rummel (Choreographer): Jonathan serves as the choreographer for the program. With a Bachelor of Performing Arts in Dance Performance and a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies, Jonathan has extensive professional choreography experience, including productions such as Oklahoma, Beauty and the Beast, and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. He teaches students the art of movement, expression, and teamwork, which are essential components of physical performance in theater.

Kimber Tower (Music Director/Accompanist): Kimber, a lifelong music enthusiast with a master's degree in Public Administration, serves as the music director and accompanist. Her extensive background in music education allows her to provide students with a strong foundation in musical theater. Kimber's expertise ensures that students master songs, harmonies, and arrangements while learning the art of music direction.

Sam Tower (Accompanist/Acting Coach): Sam, an experienced classical and flamenco guitarist and improv comedy troupe member, brings his diverse talents to the program. He contributes both on stage and behind the scenes, providing students with exposure to various aspects of theater production, from performance to technical support. Sam's involvement enriches the learning experience by offering a broad range of insights into the theater world.

### **Budget Narrative**

Our organization is supported by a combination of public and private funding sources, including grants, donations, ticket sales, and in-kind contributions. Key partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, and educational institutions provide critical resources and support. In-kind donations, such as materials for productions and volunteer services, significantly enhance our ability to offer high-quality programs. Our budget aligns with the services we provide by ensuring adequate resources for programming, including production costs, educational initiatives, and operational expenses. This alignment allows us to deliver accessible and impactful arts experiences, while maintaining financial sustainability through diverse funding streams.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

FREMONT COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT, DBA CENTRAL WYOMING COLLEGE

[HTTPS://WWW.CWC.EDU/MUSIC/](https://www.cwc.edu/music/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Hot Notes Cool Nites - CWC Summer Concert Series

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

#### Our Mission

Transforming lives and strengthening communities through learning, leadership, and connection.

#### Our Vision

CWC cultivates vibrant, resilient communities as we:

- Inspire academic excellence, Empower individuals
- Serve as a community leader and role model
- Collaborate with partners
- Serve as a cultural and civic hub
- Promote economic development

Our Arts Department strives to present culturally relevant and accessible arts and humanities to the tri-country area of Fremont, Hot Springs and Teton Counties. We are often the only organization who has the capacity to provide free performing arts to small communities in central Wyoming and we take pride in our continued commitment to bringing performing arts to the people.

The goals of Hot Notes | Cool Nites (HNCN) include providing excellent performance opportunities for local artists in the Community Band, and Guest Artists, and providing high-quality concert experiences for Fremont County communities that have few such opportunities. Each week, local band musicians have the opportunity to rehearse and perform standard and popular works. It is a unique privilege for these musicians to perform new literature every week. Additionally, Wyoming and national artists - including folk, popular, classical, and jazz - have the opportunity to broaden their audiences and present unique performances. Our audiences include a full range of

ages and musical tastes. Because the artists provide a variety of musical genres we attract many different lovers of the arts. Our concerts take place in the

parks, free to the public, and families take advantage of the atmosphere to share time experiencing the arts.

This is one of CWC's ways of giving back to the communities we serve and helping expose the immense talent in Wyoming musicians. This is a much beloved concert series and each year we expand it's reach a little more.

## **Community**

Both Lander and Riverton have a rich history of producing exceptional musicians and ensembles. However, these communities face a significant challenge: little to no access to performing arts that is open to the public. This lack of free performance opportunities limits access for a new generation of concertgoers and aspiring musicians.

For nearly 30 years, Fremont County has been enriched by the presence of a community band and orchestra. The summer band tradition, which began in the early 20th Century in Lander, experienced a revival in 1994 thanks to the dedication of Tonia Burnette and Kelly Dehnert, who launched the Hot Notes / Cool Nites (HNCN) Concerts in the Park. This beloved program has created informal performance opportunities for musicians, allowing them to dust off instruments that have long been tucked away in closets. The HNCN concerts not only attract a diverse audience of both young and older concertgoers but also foster a love for the performing arts across folk, Americana, and classical genres.

The beauty of these concerts lies in their varied nature, taking place in different towns and being completely free to the public. Held in ADA-accessible parks, these performances resonate with the entire community, reaching individuals from all walks of life—young and old, affluent and impoverished, classical aficionados, folk enthusiasts, and rock lovers alike. Each concert offers a unique opportunity to experience live music at no cost, creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that celebrates community spirit. In a region where access to performing arts is scarce, the joy and appreciation for these free performances are palpable, as they not only entertain but also strengthen the bonds within our community, making the arts accessible to everyone.

## **Evaluation**

HNCN's primary means of assessment is rooted in actively seeking input from both the band musicians and the audiences we serve. We employ a multi-faceted approach to assessment that includes the following specific methods:

**Post-Concert Discussions:** We facilitate informal discussions with musicians after each performance. These conversations allow us to gather qualitative insights into their experiences, including what worked well and any challenges they faced. This feedback is invaluable in shaping future performances and ensuring a positive environment for our artists.

**Focus Groups:** Periodically, we organize focus groups that include a diverse mix of audience members and musicians. These sessions provide a platform for in-depth discussions about concert experiences, community needs, and potential programming ideas. By fostering an open dialogue, we can better understand the expectations and desires of our stakeholders.

Feedback Stations: At our events, we set up dedicated feedback stations where audience members can share their thoughts in real-time. This can include comment cards or digital kiosks that allow for immediate input, ensuring that we capture reactions while the experience is still fresh in their minds.

Social Media Engagement: We actively monitor and engage with our audience on social media platforms. By encouraging comments and discussions about our performances, we can gather spontaneous feedback and gauge community sentiment regarding our events.

By implementing these assessment methods, HNCN ensures that we are not only responsive to the needs of our musicians and audiences but also committed to continuous improvement in our programming. This robust feedback loop is essential for fostering a vibrant and engaged community around our musical offerings.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Our total project costs for HNCN are \$18,000. Those costs are for staff salaries, music, uniforms, stage managing, and honorariums for guest artists for this concert series.

This is our budget breakdown:

Musical Director - \$4,000

Manager - \$2,500

Sound/Stage - \$4,000

Guest Artists - \$4,300

Accommodations - \$750

Music - \$600

Librarian - \$350

Advertising - \$800

T-Shirts - \$700

The in-kind support includes approximately 500 hours of volunteer service and use of CWC-owned musical equipment. The HCNC band of nearly 30 musicians donate their time for all five concerts, approximately 450 hours total, and the 10 members of the board of directors meet 2-3 times each year for a total of approximately 45 hours.

To calculate the in-kind value, this time has been valued at \$20/hour.

Additionally, the value of the musical equipment is estimated at \$12,000.

Dr. Jeremy Cochran – Music Director: Director of Bands of Central Wyoming College.

Dr. Kelly Dehnert – Manager: Kelly was Director of Bands of CWC for 14 years and has managed the HNCN for seven years since.

Guest Artists this year will include:

WyoJazz

Davis and Maverick

Lost Springs Band and more

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The funding sources for the Hot Notes/Cool Nites Concerts in the Park are a vital blend of local Recreation Board grants, generous contributions from businesses, audience donations, and support from the WAC. Our budget is crafted to ensure we have the necessary personnel for successful concert planning, marketing, and execution. We engage professional musicians and arts managers who expertly coordinate the myriad of details involved in delivering exceptional outdoor performances.

Despite our commitment to enriching our community through these concerts, we face significant financial challenges, particularly with the decline in grant funding driven by broader economic factors. However, we are fortunate to have the unwavering support of area businesses, which has been instrumental in bridging the funding gap. Currently, Hot Notes | Cool Nites maintains a modest cash reserve, yet it is insufficient to guarantee the continuation of our beloved summer concert series in its entirety.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE ALL-CITY CHILDREN'S CHORUS

WWW.CHEYENNEACCC.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: General Operating Funds – Cheyenne All-City Children's Chorus

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of ACCC is to enrich, inspire and transform the lives of children by providing superior caliber choral music education and achieving performances of high artistic quality. ACCC's goal is to offer all youth in the Cheyenne area the opportunity to use their musical talents, through hard work and dedication, to grow musically, personally and professionally. Our method is to educate, inspire and encourage our singers to achieve their highest musical performance abilities while providing important musical services to Cheyenne and beyond. Our goal is to help turn out happy, productive and exemplary adults who appreciate the high importance of music and other arts in society.

### Community

ACCC is based in Cheyenne, WY and is a community based choir that is open to all students from grades four through eight. Singers currently come from 19 elementary schools, all 3 JH Schools and home schools. ACCC holds tryouts in May for the following season and tuition assistance is available for any singer who cannot afford the cost so that no singer is turned away for inability to pay.

ACCC performs four major concerts that are free and open to the public. These concerts are live streamed to allow those who cannot attend in person and for those who live outside the Cheyenne community to be able to view the concert. All of the rehearsal and performance venues are ADA compliant.

The staff of ACCC are all educators and work to make any adaptations necessary to meet the needs of the singers in the choir. In the past we have adapted rehearsals for a visually impaired singer, autistic and ADHD singers and other learning disabled singers.

One of the goals of ACCC is to take our music to the seniors in our community and performances are arranged as often as possible. The residents enjoy the performances and visiting with choir members following the performances. They are very appreciative of this outreach.

As part of the LCSD#1 music curriculum, ACCC performs for all 3rd graders in LCSD#1 and invites students from private and charter schools and schools in LCSD#2 to attend.

ACCC travels to 10 elementary schools each spring to perform concerts. 7 of the 10 schools this year are Title Schools.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation is a constant part of the choir. Staff, singers, parents, audience members and the community are all involved in this process.

ACCC staff constantly evaluates the progress after each rehearsal. This is used to prepare the lesson plan for the next rehearsal and evaluations after each concert are used to see what needs to be done to improve the overall choir performance.

ACCC singers have input in the evaluation process. Singers watch a recording of a concert to critique themselves and suggest what needs more emphasis and also what previous goals were reached. During the rehearsals, singers are asked about what can be done to improve performance, what can be changed to make it better, etc. and are also given the opportunity to submit a written evaluation of the concert.

The Board of Directors and Parent Board discuss the concerts as to what can be changed and improved, and community members who attend the concerts give their input regarding the concerts. The viewership of our live streamed concerts has more than doubled in the last two years with very positive comments.

Planning for the next season is done using these discussions as a guide. The demand for these choirs, the repeat program advertisers and the multiple second generation members indicates a high value of ACCC to the community.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Funding sources for ACCC include the following:

Tuition – paid by singer families – 37%

Corporate Sponsors and Advertisers - 22%

Donations – 19%

Grants – 18%

Fundraisers – 3%

Miscellaneous – 1%

In kind donations to ACCC are:

LCSD#1 - rehearsal space, concert venues, liability insurance, small stipend for 3 directors and 2 accompanists – would add 49% to budget

Other in-kind donations are:

Steve Schmerge - accountant

Dave Niemann - piano tuning

KFBC - radio advertisements

Civic Center - discounted rate

PBR Printing - reduction in printing costs

Val Rothwell - formal choir photographs

would add 14% to budget

ACCC is very fortunate to partner with LCSD#1 for the use of facilities, including utilities and liability insurance. This union allows ACCC to use its resources for other needed expenses.

The following are the line item expenses for ACCC:

Performance Venue - Civic Center

Instrumentalists for concerts

Live streaming of concerts

Publicity – for concerts and future recruitment

Season program book

Office Supplies

Music

Administrative Expenses

Uniforms - Performance Shirts

Website maintenance

Equipment

Fundraising costs

Staff

Miscellaneous

These expenses allow for costs of the rehearsals, the education of our young singers, the costs of our performances, and recruitment for the future choir. The allotted grant funds would help ACCC meet its general operating expenses and allow the choir to use the Civic Center for the May concert, which allows ACCC to reach a larger audience of community members, cover the cost of additional musicians that enrich the concert experience, and help cover the cost of live streaming the concerts.

## **Project Support Narrative**

August 2025-May 2026 is the 50th season of ACCC. Staff and parents are working on special activities for the four main concerts to celebrate this milestone. Some of the activities include the following:

Oct. 4 – “Gathering” Concert - Cheyenne Civic Center

Alumni Choir – mailings are being sent to as many alumni as possible

Information has been posted on social media

T-Shirts will be provided for the performance

Alumni Guest Directors –Marcia Patton,, Judy Harmon, Becky Tish, Kathy Borgaard,

Diane Hultgren, Marilyn Collins & Vince Mingils have all been contacted to

return to direct their favorite piece with the choirs

No-host supper for directors after concert

Memorial Commission – Former Alumni John Fritz is composing a special piece for the 50th celebration

Oct. 3 - No-host Reception for Alumni - an informal time for alumni to gather – scrapbooks and memorabilia from the past 50 years will be on display

Dec. 6 – “Rejoicing” Concert - South High School

Alumni – will join ACCC Choirs in singing Night of Silence

staff will select repertoire from the suggested favorites of the alumni

March 7 – “Jubilee” Concert - LCSD#1 Admin. Bldg. Auditorium

Alumnus Dr. Ryan Garrison has been invited to be the Guest Director for this concert

May 2 – “Celebration” Concert - Cheyenne Civic Center

Concert will include the 3rd Grade Choir and Alumni

Reception following concert

Alumni are being asked to send in memories which will be shared at the concert

Repertoire will be selected from alumni responses

John Fritz is a composer, music theorist, and conductor from Cheyenne, Wyoming. He received his Bachelor of Music in composition from the University of Northern Colorado in 2010.

As an adjunct professor at Laramie County Community College (LCCC), John conducts the Chamber Orchestra, teaches all levels of aural theory, and gives private instruction in composition, double bass, and clarinet. He began his position at LCCC in fall of 2022.

Prior to his employment at LCCC, John served as the Director of Music at Cheyenne First United Methodist Church from 2018-2022. There he directed the vocal and handbell choirs as well as orchestras for Easter and Christmas cantatas. He also performed as a cantor, clarinetist, bassist, and pianist.

Dr. Ryan Garrison is Director of Vocal Music at the Denver School of the Arts. He currently conducts the DSA Treble Choir (6th-7th grades) and Chorale (advanced high school). He has also taught courses as Lecturer (choral conducting) at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Prior to his return, he was a choral director at the Arizona School for the Arts (ASA), and Artistic Director of the Children's Chorus of San Antonio (CCSA). He began his career teaching middle school orchestra and choir in Colorado's Adams Twelve school district (2001-2004).

Dr. Garrison has been active as a guest clinician/conductor, leading honor choirs in Wyoming, Arizona, Texas, and Colorado, most recently conducting the Colorado Middle School All-State Cambiato Choir. He conducted the Wyoming ACDA Children's Honor Choir; June 2022.

Project Funds will be used to fund the Memorial Commission for the Oct. 4 concert, to fund the fees and expenses for the Guest Alumnus Director for the March 7 concert, and the use of the Cheyenne Civic Center. It will also be used to help pay for the expenses involved in the reunion celebrations.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The All-City Children's Chorus is an auditioned choir that is open to all 4th-8th graders in the Cheyenne area. Most of our singers attend LCSD#1 but we do have a number of singers from LCSD#2, charter schools, church and home schools. ACCC provides a comprehensive learning experience for singers involved in the program. ACCC consists of two choirs, Concert Choir and Lyric Choir, that rehearse and perform through the entire school year and a 3rd Grade Choir which gives young singers a 4 week choral experience. The 3rd Grade Choir joins the other choirs for two concerts in May.

Choir rehearsals start with warmups that include physical movement, body alignment, and breathing exercises in addition to vocal warmups. Sight singing using solfege syllables, reading rhythmic notation, breathing and phrasing, vowel shaping and production, intonation and tuning, dynamics, range, style, timbre, blend and posture are all covered in the warmups and throughout the rehearsals.

ACCC presents four major concerts on Oct. 4, Dec. 6, March 7 and May 2 with the singers having an average of fifteen rehearsals to prepare for each major concert. Concert Choir will also perform a holiday concert with the Cheyenne Symphony on Dec. 13. Other smaller concerts will be scheduled during the year and singers travel to assisted living centers to perform for seniors in our community.

On May 1 the choirs will perform for all 3rd graders in LCSD#1 as part of their music curriculum. Concert and Lyric Choirs tour to ten elementary schools in Cheyenne to perform assemblies for the students.

In June, ACCC sponsors a week long Summer FUNdamentals camp for students in grades 3-6. At the camp singers work with five experienced music teachers in the areas of solfege sight singing, rhythmic reading, movement and dance to music, vocal techniques and choral performance techniques.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

The music goals and standards used are in line with the music education program in LCSD#1. The following MUSIC standards are used in the ACCC Curriculum.

### **Music Standard1 – Creative Expression through Production**

#### **Creative Expression through Production**

Students demonstrate musicianship through individual practice, rehearsal and revision.

Singers attend two weekly rehearsals throughout the school year and rehearsal tracks are provided to each singer for individual practice at home.

Students perform independently and with others a varied repertoire of music, demonstrating correct posture, playing position, breath control, dynamics, intonation range and tone quality.

The repertoire of ACCC contains a variety of music – gospel, folk, classical, contemporary, foreign language, and ethnic music.

At rehearsals singers work on intonation, posture, breath support, dynamics, tone quality, vowel matching, blending, and increasing range.

Students develop musical literacy through reading, sightreading and notating music.

Sight singing and solfege are used at rehearsals to teach the vocal parts.

Dynamic markings are followed closely when reading music and pitch is closely monitored and corrected as needed.

Rhythms are clapped and counted when necessary.

### **Music Standard 2 – Aesthetic Perception**

Students discuss criteria and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and other's performances, compositions, arrangements, of improvisations.

Following each concert, singers watch and listen to the performance and discussions are held about the quality of each song. When learning the music, singers watch and listen to YouTube

performances of other choirs and discuss what they liked and did not like.

### **Music Standard 3 – Historical and cultural context:**

Students describe distinguishing characteristics of musical genres or styles from various historical periods and cultures.

When learning the music, singers have discussions regarding the genre and style of the music they are learning.

Historical and cultural information is presented when learning new music.

#### Music Standard 4 – Artistic Connections

Students demonstrate safe, responsible and appropriate behavior in a variety of music settings.

The All-City Children's Chorus has very high standards for singer etiquette during rehearsals, performances and tours. These standards are presented to parents and students at meetings in the spring

and fall and are found in the ACCC handbook.

The spring concert given for the LCSD#1 3rd graders is part of the district music curriculum. There are specific guidelines and standards for the students attending the concert and grades are given for

concert etiquette.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Janet Weisbrook – Artistic Director

Directs Concert Choir

Helps with the selection of the repertoire

2 years as Artistic Director

14 years vocal music director at Cheyenne South High School

4 years vocal music director at Johnson Jr. High

AVID instructor and Site Coordinator for South High

Directed the North Platte Middle School Honor Choir

Adjudicated for Wyoming District MPA festivals

Served as the Wyoming Jazz Ensemble Vocal chair

Received CBS News Channel 5 Golden Apple award in 2014

Associate Degrees in Music and Education from LCCC

Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal education from the University of North Texas.

Member of the Cheyenne Chamber Singers since 2002

Volunteers with the Cheyenne Little Theatre Players

Debbie Mathews – Associate Director

Directs Lyric Choir

29 years as Associate Director for ACCC

40 years teaching K-6 general music in Cheyenne – general music and band

45 hours post graduate credit

Bachelor of Music – University of Wyoming

Mary Ann Fritz – Executive Director

Assists with Concert Choir rehearsals and sectionals

Helps with the selection of the repertoire

36 years with ACCC 31 years - Executive Director and 5 years - assistant director

38 years teaching general music K-6 – Cheyenne - 32, Denver – 1, Rapid City – 5

Orff Levels 1 & 2

Kodaly Level 1

Master of Music – Ball State University – Muncie, IN

Orff Institute – Salzburg, Austria – 1 year on Fulbright Scholarship - 1974

Bachelor of Music – South Dakota State University – Brookings – 1973

Monica Huntington – 3rd Grade Choir Director

4 years with ACCC as the director of the 3rd Grade Choir

Music Specialist for LCSD#1

Masters Degree in Music Education from the University of Wyoming

Bachelors Degree in Music Education from the University of Wyoming



Level 1 Orff training

Presenter at WMEA conference – 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2024

Presenter for AOSA Wyoming Chapter - 2021

Presenter at the international Alpha Delta Kappa convention in Kansas City - 2023

2004 News Channel 5 Golden Apple award

2020 Wyoming Music Educator of the Year

Former President AOSA Wyoming Chapter

Alaina Niemann – Accompanist

Accompanies Concert Choir

Helps with sectionals

Masters Degree in Film Production from the University of North Carolina - Greensboro

Bachelors of Music degree in Piano Performance - The University of Denver

Private piano studio in Cheyenne, accompanies several choirs

Plays for several churches

Taught music and math as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Malawi, Africa

Jennifer Lyttle – Accompanist

Accompanies Lyric Choir

Helps with sectionals

10 years teaching K-6 general music – Cheyenne, WY

Bachelors of Music Education with emphasis in General/Choral

University of Northern Colorado – Greeley - 2013

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration with emphasis in Management and Marketing

University of Northern Colorado – Greeley – 2006

Level 1 Orff training

Amber Thompson – Rehearsal Assistant

Checks in singers, sets up equipment, plays parts on piano in sectionals, assists as needed in rehearsals and concerts

2 years teaching K-6 general music – Cheyenne, WY

Bachelor of Music Education – University of Wyoming - 2023

Member ACCC – 5 years

### **Budget Narrative**

Funding sources for ACCC:

Tuition 37%

Corporate Sponsors and Advertisers 22%

Donations 19%

Grants 18%

Fundraisers 3%

Miscellaneous 1%

In kind donations are:

LCSD#1 - rehearsal space, concert venues, liability insurance, small stipend for 3 directors and 2 accompanists

would add 49% to budget

Steve Schmerge accountant

Dave Niemann piano tuning

KFBC radio advertisements

Civic Center discounted rate

PBR Printing reduction in printing costs

Val Rothwell formal choir photographs

would add 14% to budget

Line item expenses for ACCC are:

Performance Venue - Civic Center

Instrumentalists for concerts

Live streaming of concerts

Publicity

Season program book

Office Supplies

Music

Administrative Expenses

Uniforms - Performance Shirts

Website maintenance

Equipment

Fundraising costs

Staff

The allotted grant funds would help ACCC meet its general operating expenses.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE CAPITAL CHORALE

[HTTP://WWW.CHEYENNECAPITALCHORALE.ORG](http://www.CHEYENNECAPITALCHORALE.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025-2026 Cheyenne Capital Chorale, Wyoming Art Council Grant Proposal

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The Chorale is a non-auditioned, community choir. For over 76 years the Chorale has shared music with Southeast Wyoming. Currently, members range between 19 and 85 years of age.

The Chorale's mission is to inspire excellence and bring vocal arts to our community through education, performance, and advocacy. Our strategic goals are to create music that inspires achievement,

deepens member and community connections, and broadens access to the arts.

In pursuit of this mission, the Chorale performs high-quality music of various styles and genres in Southeast Wyoming. The Chorale promotes the arts through performances throughout our community. Knowing the benefits of music, requests for special performances are granted whenever made. The Chorale has engaged in past performances with other groups.

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To further pursue its mission, the Chorale keeps its costs to a minimum, and all performances are free to the public, with voluntary donations, gratefully accepted.

The Chorale is a founding member of the Front Range Choral Alliance.

### **Community**

The Chorale plans membership and performances with an eye toward inclusion. The Chorale seeks to recruit members from a diverse population including seniors, youth, military service members, small business owners, single parents, and generations of families. The Chorale also seeks to accommodate members with limited ability to travel and those that may be disadvantaged.

The Chorale is a non-audition choir which encourages anyone 18 and older, with the love of music, to join.

The Chorale selects concert and rehearsal venues based upon ADA accessibility. The Chorale performs at a variety of locations in Southeast Wyoming to reach a wide cross-section of the community. The Chorale has employed an ASL interpreter, to provide concert access to those with hearing related challenges.

In order to reach populations unable to travel, small groups of singers perform on-site at nursing homes, private functions, and similar venues. To foster multicultural events and concerts, the Chorale has previously partnered with members from the Laramie County Community College Choir, the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, Chorale groups from Casper and Gillette, and other musical groups including the Cheyenne Brass and Fort D.A. Russell Post Band.

In order to reach more diverse audiences, the Chorale contacts local businesses, high schools, shelters, and churches to promote concerts.

Finally, the Chorale hosts an annual educational workshop, which is open to members of the Front Range community. These annual workshops provide attendees an opportunity to come together, explore music, and enhance performance in a larger choir setting.

In 2022/2023, the Chorale moved its Tuesday night rehearsal times up by a half hour to accommodate member needs.

## **Evaluation**

The Chorale evaluates the organization's progress through audience comments, performance attendance, choir membership, and written and verbal feedback from the Chorale and community. The Chorale Board prepares a Concert Evaluation Form, along with a gift basket for a concert goer to win. The Chorale Board also prepares an annual survey which it emails to all members, both active and former, seeking comments and evaluations of the past season and suggestions for future programs.

The Chorale Board analyzes and discusses the results of these surveys to make decisions for the upcoming year. Based upon the survey results, the Chorale Board changed rehearsal times, and expanded its recruitment strategy in the broader community.

After each concert, the director solicits member feedback regarding the performance. He specifically asks how the members think the concert went, and how the Chorale can improve and grow. The director, board members, and

general membership also reach out to professional musicians, and those who attend the concerts seeking feedback and critiques.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Cheyenne Capital Chorale Estimated Operating Budget for July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026:

Marketing Expenses: \$2,000

Other Operating Expenses (i.e. Liability Insurance, Website, Music Purchases, etc.): \$3,000

Outside Services (i.e. Concert Recordings and/or additional Orchestra support) : \$1,000

Director and Accompanist Salaries: \$7,500

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Chorale's funding is derived from the generosity of private and corporate donors.

For the past three years the Chorale has participated in the WyoGives non-profit fund raising program.

The balance of the Chorale's funding comes from member dues, concert donations, fundraisers, and grants. Nearly half of the Chorale's expenses are for staff, including the director, and accompanist. Their salaries are modest. The Chorale Board gave them a modest increase this past year. In addition to salaries, the Chorale incurs administrative expenses, music costs, marketing cost, venues rentals, and costs for outside musicians. In the past, other choirs have loaned the Chorale music. These in-kind contributions are assigned a nominal value on an annual basis.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE CHAMBER SINGERS

[WWW.CHEYENNECHAMBERSINGERS.COM](http://WWW.CHEYENNECHAMBERSINGERS.COM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Thirty-Five Years of Choral Excellence - Masterworks, Milestones & Memories!

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Cheyenne Chamber Singers (CCS) mission is to provide the region with a distinctive, well-blended, chamber-size choral ensemble, contributing to the cultural life of the community, to the organization's singers, and to global choral literature by programming traditional and new choral works.

CCS' long-term established goals are:

- \* bring important cultural messages to local and regional audiences
- \* grow in musical depth and difficulty
- \* create new choral works at least every other year
- \* perform an outreach activity at least every other year
- \* arrange two collaborations each year
- \* perform a low-cost or free performance regularly

The Cheyenne Chamber Singers has commissioned 11 major works in the last 18 years . . . unprecedented for a choral organization of its size.

CCS' long-term operational goals are to:

- \* manage and present at least three performances each season
- \* increase audience diversity
- \* develop alternative sources of funding
- \* operate with fiscal responsibility that supports organizational and program growth

Strategic Goals for this season are:

- \*Celebration of our 35th Season incorporating former singers, audience, patrons and community.
- \*Involvement of audience/patrons/singers in programming.
- \*Continued new audience development through creative and new venue use, contemporary programming, and collaborations with other performing ensembles.
- \*Growth of e-mail marketing to replace traditional methods of advertisement begun last season
- \*Commission of a new choral work to celebrate the 35th Season.

## **Community**

CCS provides programs for different communities within the area: church communities, governmental events, and student programs, as well as general audiences.

At all events, ushers are encouraged to watch for people with special needs and/or disabilities and to make every effort to see that those needs are met comfortably. Venues are chosen specifically to provide the easiest access for those with special needs. There is always a wheelchair seating area and ramp access to the venues of choice. Parking access at all venues has handicapped spaces available.

Any singer or audience member that requests help with visual, hearing, or physical impairments is accommodated.

Discounted tickets are available at most performances for seniors and students. Senior and student ticket prices are publicized in the season brochure, newspaper ads advertising each concert, and all promotional materials associated with each concert.

CCS has implemented a program to eliminate some of the economic barriers to attending choral music performances by offering one donation-based performance every year. This season due to one less concert we will re-implement a pay what you can model for our first concert.

For this season, we will again offer multiple performances in different venues to provide evening and afternoon opportunities to accommodate our audience members who may have difficulty attending a performance at night or when there is limited venue parking.

Sean Ambrose, CCS' Artistic and Managing Director has the authorization to give free or specially discounted tickets when an occasion to do so is presented. We will not turn away anyone who wants to see a concert but cannot afford it. Special accommodations are made for families.

## **Evaluation**



Artistic evaluation is the ongoing responsibility of the Artistic Director and is supported by the CCS Board of Directors.

Audience-based evaluation is conducted through interviews with key constituents, analysis of ticket sales, and measurement of donor support. Documentation of ticket sales, audience size, and donor support is a continuing effort. We also use our social media presence to encourage feedback and comments from the community.

Evaluation of singer performance is also ongoing with opportunities for constructive artistic exchange between the Artistic Director and Singers.

Evaluations are measured against program and operational goals to evaluate success. Evaluation begins immediately following each performance with a Board discussion of what worked and what didn't, including acoustics, balance, programming items, individual instrument/vocal performances, accessibility, and venue issues.

Artistic planning for the next season uses notes on what worked and what didn't from the prior season; program evaluation is done following each concert by the Artistic and Performance Committees.

Surveys created for target audiences as specified in the Strategic Goals above have been developed and include suggestions for programming, venue choices, accessibility, multicultural inclusivity, and general impact for the Greater Cheyenne Community. This will be used to guide programming for the next 3 - 5 years. A portion of the Operating Grant is used to develop these tools.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

CCS is comprised of 32 semi-professional and gifted amateur singers who invest thousands of practice and performance hours in their craft each season. Known for excellence and for their dedication to collaborations that showcase the talent of other vocal and instrumental groups in the community.

#### **Operating Support:**

Cheyenne Chamber Singers' day-to-day operations are managed by a part-time contract Managing/Artistic Director that is currently the same person. For this coming season, we are working to separate those positions and bring in a new Executive Director. Additional contract staff include an Accompanist. The CCS Artistic Director is responsible for artistic decisions, manages rehearsals, and conducts the singers in performances with support from the staff and board. CCS also hires point-in-time contract musicians to accompany the choir, typically members of the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra. Contract salary accounts for 35% of our annual expense budget. Additional operating costs include Marketing/Printing (20%), Sheet Music (15%), Membership in Chorus America (5%), Performance & Rehearsal Venue rental (20%) with Insurance/phone/PO Box/Office Supplies taking the last 5%.

Organizational operating expenses have increased significantly for CCS in the past three years. For many years, we were not charged for our rehearsal space, but that has now ended and we have had to add that to our budget. Sheet Music costs have almost doubled in the past 5 years, and as proponents of new music, we are continually buying sheet music for our ensemble.

We will be use 5-7% of the new operations grant to continue our survey needs as outlined in our strategic plan. We are also discussing the creation of a new website or a complete overhaul of our current one, so we will allocate 5% of the new grant towards that project.

The remaining portion of the operations grant will be used for Venue and Rehearsal costs, Sheet Music, Annual Brochure and Marketing/Design development, Staff Contract payment and payment for musicians to accompany CCS in concerts.

\*Our rehearsal venue for the coming season is a music rehearsal room at a downtown church facility. We share that space with other community and church groups, with a monthly rental fee.

\*Sheet Music is purchased through Wyoming based vendors primarily, occasionally from national or regional publishers. We maintain a library of purchased works, but in any given season we program roughly 50% of music we have not performed previously for which we purchase new music.

\*CCS provides a print mailing of an annual brochure, solicitation letter, concert specific mailings and concert posters. In addition to print marketing, we utilize Facebook and Instagram as our social media platforms, and provide press releases to local news media. We are also purchasing ads in newer types of digital media in Southeast Wyoming.

This coming season we will be hiring members of the Cheyenne Symphony as contract musicians for our spring event. We will also be hiring regional soloists, those artists are yet to be determined, but will be professional singers that we will provide final information about in our marketing and in our final report at the end of the season.

## **Project Support Narrative**

The Artistic Staff of CCS includes Sean Ambrose - Artistic Director and Conductor and Wade Holzapfel - Collaborative Pianist. Sean & Wade have degrees in Music, with decades of experience in Music Education, Performance and Community Performing Arts. CCS is a fully auditioned ensemble whose members are expected to maintain a level of vocal proficiency and are re-auditioned as needed to maintain a professional quality ensemble. Approximately one-third of the singers with CCS have a music degree of some sort, and work in Music Education or Performance, the remainder are gifted amateurs with a passion for choral singing. In addition, CCS regularly hires instrumental musicians of the finest caliber from Cheyenne Symphony, LCCC, UW and Northern Colorado.

Project Support: CCS is planning a spectacular season of 3 independent concerts and two collaborations with the Cheyenne Symphony. This being our 35th season, two of our concerts will involve presenting music that we have done over the course of our history; one newly commissioned work in celebration of this anniversary, and a Masterwork Concert featuring Andrew Lloyd Webber's Requiem, which has never been performed in Wyoming to

the best of our ability to determine. We will also be part of the world premier of 'American Patriot Hymn' being created for the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra by Jeff Lippencott in honor of America250.

The performances planned for the 2025-26 Season are:

Harvest and Holiday - Reflections of the season

Christmas with the Cheyenne Symphony, including the Cheyenne All-City Children's Chorus.

Requiem by Andrew Lloyd Webber

American Patriot Hymn - Premier with the CSO

35 Years of Chamber Singers - Music and Memories

Harvest and Holiday - Bringing together music that reflects on the shortening of the days and the coming of the holidays, this concert will include music by composers such as Aaron Copeland and Richard Rodgers, as well as contemporary works by Susan LaBarr, Ola Gjeilo, and Mac Willberg. This will also include some traditional 'Dickensian' carols that will hearken back to the founding of CCS as a Dicken's Chorus during a production of Amahl & the Night Visitors that took place December of 1990.

Christmas with the CSO - A regional favorite, we will once again join the Cheyenne Symphony, All-City Children's Chorus and the En Avant Dance Studio for a broad reaching holiday concert.

Requiem - This presentation of Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's remarkable Requiem will be the premier performance of this work in Cheyenne, and likely Wyoming. Requiem features Soprano, Tenor and Child soloists along with a 26-piece orchestra that will utilize professional players from the region. This magnificent contemporary work has been performed around the world, and we are excited to bring it to Cheyenne audiences for the very first time. This is a modern setting of the traditional Latin Mass, and will be the first Masterwork concert we have produced since the Covid Pandemic.

35th Anniversary Celebration- We will use this opportunity to solicit suggestions from former and current singers, decades of audience members and our devoted patrons to create a concert of music that 'speaks' to our legacy in Cheyenne. This concert will also feature the premier of a newly commissioned work to celebrate this anniversary season.

60% of the Project Support will go to the Requiem concert, with the remaining 40% used for the rest of the season.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Chamber Singers will continue our newly expanded mission to provide outreach and increased learning to our community in conjunction with our proposed Concert Season. Building on what was begun in the 2024-25 season, we will improve upon our student and youth outreach, as well as community engagement in choral music in our community and beyond.

Community Masterclass in Choral Singing for learners of all ages - Chamber Singers will host a season opening clinic day with planned presentations by University Vocal and Choral faculty that will be open to all choral musicians in the region, including secondary public school students all the way through senior citizens. This will be provided free of charge to all participants, designed to enhance singer knowledge of vocal production, blend, diction and choral balance. Designed to encourage life-long learning and participation in Choral music, this event will hopefully become a yearly tradition.

Community Education - We will develop a pre-concert talk for each performance, as well as collaborating with the CSO and others on the joint projects. One of the primary goals will be to introduce choral music to an audience that may know nothing about it, in the hopes of expanding community understanding as well as new fans of the Choral Art. Seed money from this grant will be used to have experts about certain aspects of the compositions as well as the composers themselves when possible, join us either virtually or in person to help our audience and performers better engage as listeners/performers.

Student/Organization interaction - We will use funding from this grant to send staff and singers to local school or community youth organizations to encourage participation in Choral Music both as listener and performer. We will provide tickets to youth/students that may not have the opportunity to attend a concert otherwise. We will solicit additional business support to underwrite the cost of these visits as well as the ticket provision.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

As a new initiative for CCS, these goals are somewhat in their infancy but have been regularly discussed by the membership as well as in conversation with local music teachers and patrons of the performing arts.

Season Opening Masterclass:

- \* We will use the training provided to enhance the knowledge and awareness of the singing voice. This will also provide intergenerational awareness for student singers as well as folks that are post-secondary to continue to sing in community choral ensembles.

- \* Training on Diction/Language/Blend - We are continually having discussions on how to improve our performances, and the most requested topics from our singers are in this area, as well as musical literacy. This

goal comes directly from performers to improve their individual performance, thereby enhancing our overall professionalism and performance. This topic has also been suggested by local Public School and Collegiate teachers as needed by their students.

#### Community Education:

\*Pre-Concert Talks - We will set a goal of one per concert, with a target of 20-30 participants. Utilizing venues such as the county library or YMCA/Boys&Girls Club/Community Groups (Kiwanis/Rotary/etc.) to engage with community members that may be unaware of the choral opportunities or lack understanding of what CCS does.

\*Hear from the Composer - When possible, we will set up a Zoom session with one or more of the composers on a given concert to have them share their thoughts and processes with the participants.

#### Student/Organization interaction:

\*Visiting Classrooms/Organizations - We will work directly with local educators to schedule times for Staff and Singers to visit classrooms and community organizations. We get regular requests for opportunities to share 'what can I do after I graduate' with students; this would allow us to create a more systemic approach to doing so.

\*Future Audience/Performer development - We are continually looking for ways to get younger people in our community involved. This need is both on the future performer side of the coin, as well as the future consumer. Engaging with the youth in our community expands their awareness that one doesn't have to go into music as a profession to enjoy it as an adult. And on the audience side, providing tickets to youth that might not otherwise have the opportunity may provide the 'hook' they need to pursue this art form more fully in time.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The primary participants in this will be Sean Ambrose - CCS Artistic Director and the musicians of Cheyenne Chamber Singers. The specific consultants, composers and guest speakers will vary from concert to concert, but will utilize expertise from UW, LCCC and the various colleges in the front range. Music Educators from Cheyenne will be consulted with regarding the timing and topics for all classroom visits and will be used to guide our exploration into this venue.

Key Partners outside of CCS will be the Laramie County Library, Cheyenne Symphony, Laramie Co. SD #1 & #2, and the corporate sponsors that will be engaged to support this educational outreach.

All participants that will engage in classroom/youth organization meetings will be vetted by the organization in cooperation with CCS and will primarily be made up of current or former Music Educators.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Cheyenne Chamber Singers relies on a mix of earned and unearned income. Roughly half its income is derived from individual donations, corporate sponsorships, foundation support, and grants. The other half comes from ticket sales and performance fees. CCS has enjoyed strong individual patron support in the past, although the last 4 years have been less robust. We participate in WyoGives and will continue to grow that opportunity. Individual giving is somewhat static, but new donors have been added.

Budget planning and monitoring is an important part of CCS' leadership philosophy, including managing its existing financial reserves.

CCS' strongest partnerships are with the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra as the hired 'Choral Core' and Laramie County School District #1 which provides CCS with storage space & sheet music. CCS remains fiscally secure through careful budget review.

All budgetary decisions are based on the artistic goals and planning, and are approved by the Board.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE FASHION WEEK

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cheyenne Fashion Week

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

To bring fashion and live arts to Cheyenne. With diversity and inclusiveness.

### **Community**

We have underserved communities such as black, Hispanic, women, lgbtq. All inclusive and diverse.

### **Evaluation**

Feedback from the audience, models and performers.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Venue and entertainment costs. Food for the volunteers. Host and dj costs.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Cheyenne fashion week has been a launching board for many models. This allows new models and performers to gain live experience.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Cheyenne fashion week fashion shows and live entertainment. Allows new models and performers a platform.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Posing. Walking. Confidence. Photography. Live entertainment.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Treva Roybal founder and fashion entrepreneur and expert of four years. Helps launch models and entertainers through experience.

### **Budget Narrative**

\$2,500 in total costs to cover venue and operating expenses. \$1,250 is requested for venue cost.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE FRONTIER DAYS OLD WEST MUSEUM

[WWW.OLDWESTMUSEUM.ORG](http://WWW.OLDWESTMUSEUM.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cheyenne Frontier Days™ Old West Museum

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission- The Cheyenne Frontier Days™ Old West Museum's mission is to preserve and share the heritage of the American West as experienced through the celebration of Cheyenne Frontier Days™.

Our vision is to strengthen our institution as a culturally dynamic community asset focusing on the humanities and Arts. Our 5-year strategic plan goals are to multiply our fan base and supporters, sustain our financial core, develop a competitive advantage, expand our facility, and receive accreditation through the American Alliance of Museums to help us leverage change, facilitate relevant loans with other institutions, and validate our Museum's impact.

Community partnerships are integral to our success, embodying the belief that collaboration yields more significant outcomes. By pooling resources with other non-profit and for-profit organizations, we amplify our impact within our community and institution. This collaborative approach enables us to expand our reach, offering a broader array of opportunities and serving a larger demographic. We can also offer scholarships for deserving children in our educational programming who otherwise would not enjoy these enriching experiences.

We achieve our strategic goals through responsible management, social responsibility, Professional cultural knowledge, care for our collections of the Western American legacy, community relationships, and expansion of our space to shape us into a deeper and richer cultural dynamic asset and an essential social resource for the diverse community we serve. We achieve our strategic goals through responsible management, social responsibility, Professional cultural knowledge, care for our collections of the Western American legacy, community relationships, and expansion of our space to shape us into a deeper and richer cultural dynamic asset and an essential social resource for the diverse community we serve.

### Community



We host 50,000 international visitors each year, driven to the mystique of the Western American culture and the discovery of the legendary Cheyenne Frontier Days™ (CFD). We serve as a cultural cornerstone, uniquely supporting the arts in Cheyenne and the Rocky Mountain Region, expanding our reach through three annual Western art shows, supporting over 250 diverse artists' voices. We offer enriching educational and cultural opportunities to different age groups, civic organizations, and tour groups without discrimination. School tours enhance history and social study curriculums with docent-led tours. We host professional and budding artist seminars to strengthen various skills in the trade. We welcome children into camps focusing on pioneer life, Western arts, and culture. Scholarships are available for the under-represented. Our galleries promise engaging exhibits of unique Western culture, heritage, and CFD history. Local businesses partner with monetary & in-kind event sponsorships and employee engagement.

Professional artists collaborate with Art Uncork'd to bring art classes to the community. We collaborate with other museums to share artifacts, interpretations, and professional support. Wheelchairs are available, we are ADA-compliant, and our docent program helps the visually impaired. Written descriptive interpretations are available for hard-of-hearing guests, navigating special accommodation requests to our ability. Special free admittance days ensure access for all. Educational programming scholarships are available for those who cannot attend due to fees.

## **Evaluation**

The Museum is committed to providing mission-based experiences to our members, volunteers, artists, and guests. The Museum collects feedback from the audience in verbal, written, and electronic forms

following each event. Surveys provide an opportunity to gather specific analytics about the satisfaction of current programming and user initiatives to develop richer and more meaningful content for the end-users. A survey box in the gallery invites visitors to provide feedback & suggestions.

Guidelines for evaluations shape both summative and formative assessments within and across efforts at the Museum. Evaluations have clear goals and purposes, are built upon prior work, and fit with and reflect the context of the Museum and its programming. We carefully frame key questions to connect with program goals, designed to be precise, robust, targeted, and logical.

These evaluations guide program design, development, and implementation and help assess program goals and educational expectations. We are interested in how our programs help extend and deepen learning and help identify the extent of equity and access across humanities and arts programs and educational experiences for all people.

Feedback is discussed and evaluated. We collect analytics from Facebook, Instagram, the Website, and Google, evaluating engagements, reach, sessions, business profiles, views, and referrals. This allows for an analytical approach to planning more effective events and a higher-quality guest experience.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

### Operations Budget Detail:

Salaries \$488,570

Benefits \$142,001

Rent: \$1,200

Collections: \$6,310

Education: \$7,630

Western Spirit \$58,700

Western Art Show: \$254,010

Hall of Fame: \$7,120

Programming Committee \$ 3,915

Trivia Night \$5,800

Exhibits: \$17,000

Utilities: \$83,672

Facilities: \$35,620

Development: \$25,650

Public Relations: \$23,611

Insurance: \$18,605

Contracts: \$27,230

Telephone: \$4,860

Office/Admin: \$7,300

Postage: \$4,955

Other: \$218,672

Total Expenses: \$1,254,231

## OPERATIONS SUPPORT

The requested operating support will directly offset the salary of our Art Coordinator, a pivotal role in ensuring the success of our two national Art Shows and programming events. This position is integral to our goal, mainly as art shows constitute 45% of our operations income. These shows serve as crucial financial support platforms for over 250 artists, upon whose livelihoods they depend. Our commitment to these artists and the prosperity of these shows is unwavering. The Museum stands out in supporting the arts within Cheyenne and the Rocky Mountain Region, primarily through its two nationally recognized annual Western art shows. Art education is presented through the following programming activities.

## KIDS ART CAMP

Our Kids Art Camp is a vibrant hub of creativity, inspiring young artists to explore, imagine, and express themselves through the power of art. These camps provide a dynamic learning experience where children engage in hands-on projects that stretch their imaginations and sharpen their creative instincts. Guided by professional artists and educators, campers experiment with painting, sculpture, mixed media, and other artistic techniques, gaining the confidence to bring their ideas to life. In a world increasingly driven by innovation, nurturing these young minds through artistic exploration equips them with the life skills, confidence, and imagination to shape their future.

## ART UNCORK'D

Art Uncork'd events offer a dynamic, enriching experience that blends creativity and community connection. Inspired by the popular paint-and-sip concept, these events go beyond casual art-making by featuring professional instruction from artists showcased in our prestigious exhibitions. By highlighting diverse artistic styles and mediums, we ensure a well-rounded and engaging learning experience that expands artistic knowledge and technique. More than just an art class, Art Uncork'd serves as a vibrant social gathering, fostering meaningful connections among participants who share a passion for creativity. These events provide adults with a welcoming space to explore their artistic potential, unwind in a supportive environment, and engage with others in the community. Whether attendees are lifelong artists or first-time creators, each session encourages self-expression, builds confidence, and strengthens the cultural fabric of our region through shared artistic experiences.

## WESTERN SPIRIT ARTIST SEMINARS

Artist Seminars are held each year. Jurors from our Western Spirit Art Show and other art professionals lead workshops or presentations, sharing valuable insights influenced by their diverse artistic backgrounds and

expertise. This seminar provides a unique platform for both emerging and established artists to refine their skills, gain professional guidance, and explore the evolving landscape of Western and contemporary art.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Project Support funding will be strategically allocated to sustain and enhance our Arts Learning initiatives, fostering meaningful artistic engagement across diverse audiences. This funding will support the operational and instructional costs of key programs, including the Western Spirit Art Show Artist Seminar, which provides invaluable professional development opportunities for emerging and established artists; the Kids Summer Art Camp, a transformative experience where young creatives develop foundational artistic skills, critical thinking, and self-expression; and Art Uncork'd, an interactive event designed to make art accessible and enjoyable for adults of all skill levels.

These initiatives are thoughtfully designed to enrich our community's cultural landscape by nurturing artistic talent, encouraging creative exploration, and fostering lifelong appreciation for the arts. Each program is carefully curated to ensure high-quality instruction, engagement with skilled professional artists, and opportunities for participants to connect with historic and contemporary artistic traditions.

The Arts Learning section of this proposal provides further details on these programs, including their structure, impact, and outreach. Additionally, we will outline the qualifications and contributions of participating artists, ensuring a high standard of instruction and reinforcing our commitment to transparency, excellence, and accountability in arts education. Through this support, we will continue to create dynamic, inclusive learning environments that inspire and empower participants of all ages.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Museum is committed to providing engaging, inclusive, and high-quality arts programming annually, serving learners of all ages—from young children to adult students—without discrimination. Under the guidance of our Arts and Education Coordinators, we offer a diverse range of programs designed to inspire creativity, foster artistic skills, and build a deeper appreciation for the arts within our community.

#### **Art Uncork'd**

To enhance adult art education and community engagement, we host four quarterly Art Uncork'd events, which are open to the public. These gatherings provide participants with hands-on opportunities to create art under the direction of featured artists from our three major exhibitions. Each session explores a different artistic medium,

ensuring accessibility for individuals with varied interests and skill levels. Beyond their educational value, these events are vibrant social hubs where participants connect, collaborate, and engage in creative expression. While the exact dates for these sessions are pending, all will occur within the grant cycle.

#### Western Spirit Seminar

On March 7, 2026, we will present the Western Spirit Art Seminar, a dynamic event featuring artist-led talks, workshops, and discussions open to the public. The Museum's Arts Coordinator and the Western Spirit Committee curate the seminar, ensuring a diverse and enriching selection of topics. Each year, our Western Spirit Art Show jurors and other art professionals contribute a workshop or presentation, offering unique insights shaped by their artistic backgrounds and expertise. This seminar serves as an invaluable opportunity for emerging and established artists to engage in professional development while fostering a deeper understanding of Western and contemporary art.

#### Kids' Art Camp

From August 11-15, 2025, we will host our annual Kids' Art Camp, a weeklong immersive experience designed to introduce young artists to influential American artists and their distinct styles, with a particular emphasis on Western art. Our camps prioritize empowerment through artistic expression, encouraging children to explore creativity while learning about art history, technique, and cultural storytelling.

Previous camps have featured:

- Vincent van Gogh – Sunflowers as symbols of gratitude, with children donating their paintings to the Grace For Two Brothers Foundation, a local suicide prevention organization.
- Laurel Burch – Exploration of her iconic Burch Cats, celebrating interconnectedness and individuality.
- Starr Hardridge – An introduction to traditional Muscogee tribal artistry, emphasizing the balance between humanity and nature.
- Bev Doolittle – Analyzing camouflage art and its representation of the natural world's empowerment.
- Harvey Deselms – A guided tour of the Downtown Cheyenne Bronze Project, highlighting the impact of public sculpture on the city's cultural identity.

This year's camp will introduce a fresh lineup of artists of similar stature, providing an equally rich and engaging experience. To ensure accessibility for all children, scholarships are available for those with financial need.

Through these programs, the Museum continues to serve as a cultural and educational hub, offering transformative arts experiences that inspire creativity, foster community engagement, and ensure accessibility for all.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our arts learning goals are designed to foster meaningful engagement, accessibility, and cultural enrichment while ensuring inclusivity for diverse learners. These goals were identified through community needs assessments, stakeholder input, and alignment with best practices in arts education.

We aim to enhance artistic skills and creative expression by providing participants with hands-on experiences that develop technical proficiency in various art forms, including visual arts, music, and performing arts. Through structured and open-ended artistic exploration, we foster creative problem-solving and self-expression. Increasing accessibility and inclusive participation is another key objective. We implement adaptive strategies, such as 3D touchable prints for visually impaired individuals and text-to-speech resources, to ensure equitable access to arts learning. Additionally, bilingual and translation services help engage non-English-speaking participants and diversify audience reach.

Deepening cultural understanding and strengthening community connections are priorities. By integrating Indigenous, Western, and other historically significant artistic traditions, we provide a broader cultural perspective. We also engage local artists, including those from underrepresented groups, to share their expertise and lived experiences, fostering a richer, more authentic learning environment. To develop critical thinking and artistic interpretation, we encourage learners to analyze and interpret art through historical, social, and cultural contexts. Interactive discussions, guided reflections, and digital tools such as QR codes linked to curated content enhance engagement.

Expanding opportunities for emerging and established artists is another essential component of our arts learning approach. We provide mentorship, workshops, and grant-funded opportunities for artists to develop teaching skills and share knowledge with the community. Artist-led initiatives introduce new mediums, techniques, and storytelling methods, further enriching the learning experience.

These goals were identified through community feedback and stakeholder engagement, including input from educators, local artists, cultural organizations, and accessibility advocates who helped identify gaps in arts learning. Needs assessments and surveys revealed a strong demand for enhanced accessibility, diverse artistic representation, and hands-on learning experiences. Our approach aligns with national and statewide arts education standards, ensuring high-quality, impactful learning experiences. Additionally, pilot programs and evaluations have demonstrated successful strategies in arts education, guiding the refinement of our current goals.

to ensure effectiveness and sustainability. By implementing these goals, we aim to create a robust, inclusive, and engaging arts learning environment that benefits individuals of all backgrounds and abilities.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Museum's Arts Coordinator, Amanda Byzewski, received her BS in Anthropology and minored in Museum Studies from the University of Wyoming (UW). She interned at the UW Art Museum, focusing on bridging the gap between the Anthropology and Arts side of the collections, and spent five years working on programming events. This background allows her to help expand the Museum's outreach and education programs. She oversees the art shows and coordinates with the art show committees.

Our Education Coordinator, Jean Krause, has 37 years of public school teaching experience. Her B.Ed. Degree from the University of Northern Colorado and an M.Ed. from Lesley College. She coordinates children's programming and instruction scheduling and hosts Art Uncork'd events.

Western Spirit Seminar: Each year, the presenters and topics are rotated for freshness and current impact. The March 2026 Seminar will have a similar caliber of art-related presenters and relevant topics. Presenters are show jurors and/ or selected by the art show committee.

Examples of presentations:

- Michelle Sunset: "Working with Museums 101"-University of Wyoming Art Museum curator presented about getting artwork shown in museums. She explained what sets successful exhibition proposals apart, the importance of building relationships, and what to expect when working with bureaucratic institutions.
- Bob Nelson: "The Ins and Outs of Gallery Representation"- How galleries look for artists and how to promote yourself to them. Bob is an Attorney at Law and a Private Appraiser for Fine Art, Indian and Western Collectibles for evaluation and donation purposes. He founded and operates The Nelson Museum of the West in Cheyenne, Wyoming.
- Harvey Deselms: "Framing Your Art"-Harvey owns Deselms Fine Art Gallery in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Harvey represents original art and provides custom framing and Art Consulting Services.
- Bria Hammock: "Marketing and Branding Artwork and Yourself as an Artist." Bria is a contemporary wilderness painter, muralist, and graphic designer. She exhibits across the western Front Range and works out of her west edge studio in Cheyenne, WY.

- Jenny Lang –" Marketing Yourself for Publication" Jenny Lang, Creative & Production Director at Art of the West magazine, will walk you through everything you need to know about marketing yourself and your art for publication purposes, from artist websites and advertising to social media and art photography.
- John Keeling: "My Life as a Gig Worker" I'll share the many avenues I've taken in building a life as a freelance artist/illustrator, including Western Art, Pet Portraits, Licensing Children's Books, and Teaching/Workshops
- Desiree Brothe: "Business Side of Artwork". Arts Cheyenne Board of Directors, Works at West Edge Collective in a creative environment, leveraging resources and partnerships to continue to enhance the creative sector in Cheyenne.

Art Uncork'd: Each year, we host 4 - 5 Art Uncork'd events similar to the popular paint and sip. We use artists who are or have been featured in our art shows to provide professional instruction. Artists and mediums are varied to give a well-rounded assortment for educational purposes:

- Melissa Cullen, Fiber Art; Western Spirit Artist, Cheyenne, WY
- Tiffany Miller Russell, Nature-focused Paper Art, Western Spirit Artist, Broomfield, CO
- Sarah Konrad, Printmaking Western Spirit Artist & Olympian, Laramie, WY
- Molly Box, Acrylics, Western Spirit Artist, Wellington, CO

## **Budget Narrative**

Operational Budget Funding Sources Supporting Operations:

1. Admissions
2. Memberships
3. General Donations
4. In-Kind Donations
5. Restricted Funds (Endowment, Capital Campaign, Carriage Preservation, etc.)
6. Sponsorships
7. Art Shows- Three diverse art shows.



8. Special Events-Community friend raising & fund raising
9. Grants & Foundation
10. Legacy Gifts
11. Educational Programming (Kids Camps- Ranch Tours- Art Uncork'd-Western Spirit Artists' Seminar)
12. CFD Gift Shop Space Rental

General Donations Include:

1. Annual Giving
2. Major Gifts
3. Legacy Giving
4. Memorials/ Honoraria
5. Facility Rental

Our budget aligns directly with the revenue sources listed above. Key partnerships include Cheyenne

Frontier Days™, Inc., Visit Cheyenne, Community businesses, non-profits, museums, and granting organizations.

The Endowment Fund provides supplemental income to be drawn upon as available and deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.

The Museum carries no debt.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE LITTLE THEATRE PLAYERS

[WWW.CHEYENNELITTLETHEATRE.ORG](http://WWW.CHEYENNELITTLETHEATRE.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cheyenne Little Theatre Players 96th Season Support

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Cheyenne Little Theatre Players (CLTP) mission is to, “Celebrate creativity and community enrichment through theatre.” Our strategic goal is to be the premiere community theatre in the region by providing educational opportunities for all, upgrading to state-of-the-art facilities, networking with other community organizations, and providing increased accessibility to the theatre. Over the next five years, our focus is on enhancing volunteer engagement/support, diversifying funding, and building organizational capacity. We plan to take the following steps to address these goals.

By Dec. 2025, CLTP will create a volunteer handbook and a professional onboarding approach for volunteers. By July 2025, CLTP will hold an audition workshop and by Dec. 2026 CLTP will have two consistent, scheduled workshops for community members interested in technical theatre and directing, as well as a plan for a technical theatre mentoring program. We hope to continue to expand and diversify the educational and training opportunities we offer volunteers.

By June 2026, CLTP seeks to broaden its donor base and increase show revenue. A targeted marketing initiative starting in July 2025, will focus on growing our audience by 20% and expanding our donor pool by 15%. To evaluate this initiative, we will compare annual ticket sales and donor numbers. CLTP will find new grant opportunities and present them to the board of directors by March 2026. By May 2026, CLTP plans to have recruited two new volunteers to assist with grant writing.

CLTP is focusing on creating clear succession plans, beginning with comprehensive committee handbooks. By July 2026, each committee will have a calendar and a draft handbook outlining deadlines, duties, policies, and procedures specific to that committee. To build organizational capacity, by June 2026 CLTP will evaluate what additional staff position would be beneficial to the organization and will develop a job description and handbook for this position.

## **Community**

Based in Cheyenne, CLTP uses feedback from surveys and information from the U.S. Census to ensure we are meeting the needs of our community.

To serve the 10.5% who live in poverty in Cheyenne, CLTP offers opportunities for free tickets, a Pay What You Can performance, free participation in productions, and scholarships to our summer theatre camp.

In 2024, CLTP welcomed 240 elementary school students to a matinee performance of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. CLTP has supported productions at schools in Cheyenne and Laramie through loans of costumes, props, and technical equipment. By connecting with youth-focused programs like Cheyenne LEADS, providing opportunities like our theatre camp, and producing a yearly show cast with students, CLTP continues to foster a love for performing arts in the 20.5% of the population under the age of 18.

Cheyenne has an 8.5% population under the age of 65 with a disability. CLTP produced two American Sign Language interpreted performances and provided free and discounted tickets to individuals with developmental disabilities who are served by The Arc of Laramie County. Volunteers with disabilities can be found at CLTP onstage, backstage, on committees, and on the board of directors.

Cheyenne has approximately 3,361 individuals in the military, a 12.3% veteran population, and an 18% senior population. Seniors, military members, and veterans help lead CLTP by volunteering for productions, serving on the board of directors, and directing shows.

CLTP is committed to inclusive theater experiences for all patrons and in the last year has made accommodations for wheelchair users, individuals with walkers, and those requiring oxygen tanks. Our accessibility information is displayed multiple places on our website.

## **Evaluation**

CLTP uses a multi-faceted approach to evaluate and measure the impact and efficacy of our services and programs within Cheyenne.

CLTP surveys our community annually. We are currently posting our programming and marketing survey on our website and social media accounts. We are also placing a QR code to our survey in upcoming playbills and sending our patrons the survey via email. CLTP is offering entry into a raffle for a season ticket for every person who completes the survey. We hope this raffle will allow us to hear from a wider cross-section of the community. Once

the survey closes in July, we will consolidate survey data and share it with all CLTP committees. The programming, fund development, and marketing committees, and the board of directors will be asked to use this data to inform programming and marketing decisions.

Ticket sales allow CLTP to track the popularity of our productions in our community. We have tracked ticket sales since 2011, allowing us to identify trends and changing tastes within Cheyenne. We evaluate what our community wants to see and what artists in our community want to create, striking a fine balance with each of our seasons.

This season, CLTP plans to track fluctuations in our website and social media traffic as this often correlates to the popularity of specific programming.

Direct verbal and written feedback are also used to assess our productions. This season we have had a lot of excellent feedback, causing us to re-examine the length of shows and starting times for our upcoming season.

The board of directors looks at the combined data from the previous year and uses that data to drive decisions for the upcoming season.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

CLTP operates on an annual budget of \$557,770.00. To maintain our facilities, produce theatre, sell tickets, and involve the community, CLTP budgets approximately \$263,050.00 for general operations. This includes a budgeted \$57,250.00 for utilities. To employ the staff that oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization, CLTP pays a budgeted \$122,250.00 in wages. This year we budgeted \$30,800.00 for insurance, however due to a raise in rates through no fault of our own, we are on schedule to exceed that number by about \$9,000.00. To ensure people know about our productions and events, we spend a budget of \$13,000.00 on marketing. Our Youth Summer Stock theatre camp and other educational endeavors have a \$24,000.00 budget. We budgeted \$65,167.00 this year for production supplies and event costs. This amount covers our sets, costumes, props, and miscellaneous production costs. Our royalties this year have cost \$28,487.56 as of March 20, 2025.

The operations grant funding we seek would be designated for covering utility expenses across both of our facilities – quite literally keeping the stage lights on. By reducing operational expenses, CLTP can redirect resources toward enhanced programming, expanded educational opportunities, and facilities upgrades, increasing our capacity to serve Cheyenne. Reliable utilities – electricity, heating, and water – form the essential foundation that enables all our programming and activities.

CLTP's impact extends far beyond our own theatrical productions, as our venues serve as vital gathering spaces for the broader community. Throughout the past season, we have opened our doors to East High School for a reading celebration, hosted screening events for the Youth Short Film Festival, provided meeting space for the Chamber

Singers, welcomed a Visit Cheyenne event, and facilitated an educational day for Leadership Cheyenne, all at no cost or just the cost of cleaning the space. We have further extended our community support by offering discounted rates to fellow nonprofits including the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, the ARC of Laramie County, and Black Dog Animal Rescue.

Your investment in CLTP's operational sustainability by assisting with paying for utilities would support not just our organization, but all the organizations we support. By providing accessible venues for diverse community events, CLTP's spaces create vital opportunities for connection, dialogue, and shared experiences. Offering reduced-cost or donated space to support youth programming and non-profit organizations provides support to community-driven efforts that might otherwise lack resources to flourish. Hosting events at the Atlas Theater that draw people downtown creates an economic ripple effect, as attendees naturally support local businesses. These approaches transform a physical space into a catalyst for community empowerment, economic development, and social innovation, ultimately building a more resilient, interconnected, and vibrant community.

### **Project Support Narrative**

CLTP annually brings together over 200 artists from diverse backgrounds. Artists who are involved with programming at CLTP include musicians from Laramie County Community College, Loveland Orchestra, and Cheyenne Chamber Singers; actors, directors and designers who have their degrees in theatre; woodworkers and painters creating our sets; and artists designing and sewing costumes. A small sample of these artists follows.

Sean Ambrose was the orchestra conductor and music director for our recent production of "Camelot". Sean has his B.M. from the University of Wyoming. He retired after 29 years as the music coordinator for Laramie County School District #1. Sean directs the Cheyenne Chamber Singers and the Cheyenne Civic Band.

Jeff Tish acts, directs, designs, and builds sets for CLTP. He has his B.F.A. in Theatre from the University of Wyoming and studied technical theatre at Moorhead State University. Jeff has worked as a theatre technical director. He has also taught stage craft at Laramie County Community College. Jeff has designed numerous sets for CLTP and regional theatres and recently won the Clever Technical Design Award at the American Association of Community Theatres (AACT) national festival. Jeff has acted in multiple productions that have won regional AACT festivals and has gone on to compete in AACT national festivals.

Blake Dorris recently directed our production of "A Christmas Story" and performed in our productions of "Camelot" and "Sondheim on Sondheim". He has his MFA in Theatre Performance from the University of Memphis. Blake has performed in multiple productions regionally and has assistant directed and directed.

CLTP is requesting assistance with paying royalties for our 96th season. CLTP's upcoming season is comprised of two musicals, a holiday show, two plays, a children's show, and a melodrama.

Opening the season is CLTP's 69th Old-Fashioned Melodrama titled "Chicken Plot Pie" which was written by a local playwright. The melodrama provides performance opportunities that appeal to those who have limited time or who are new to theatre.

This season's musicals are "Disney's Newsies" and "Legally Blonde". With catchy music and themes like compassion, kindness, and standing up for each other, these shows should appeal to artists and audiences alike. Musicals provide CLTP the opportunity to collaborate with musicians and dancers.

Our children's show is "Snow White and the Seven Dwarves of the Black Forest". This show will provide students with performance opportunities and a chance to learn about theatre.

Our holiday show is "Miracle on 34th Street". This show offers a unique opportunity for multiple generations to work together and be on stage at once.

CLTP's plays are "Almost, Maine" and "1984". "Almost, Maine" is comprised of vignettes about love, providing multiple artists the opportunity to examine the psychology of relationships. "1984" examines truth and facts within societies and the ways they can be manipulated. "1984" will feature a post-show talkback to encourage thoughtful discussion and a matinee for high school students, which will also include a talkback.

The estimated cost of CLTP's royalties for next season is \$40,531.89. As royalties increase with inflation, we're seeking funding from the Wyoming Arts Council to offset royalty costs allowing CLTP to continue creating diverse, high-quality performances.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

CLTP's Youth Summer Stock theatre camp offers two summer sessions for young performers, with a grades 3-6 production of "101 Dalmatians, KIDS" running from June 30-July 20th, 2025, and a grades 7-12 session planned for June 2026 for which the show has yet to be selected.

CLTP's Youth Summer Stock camp offers a full-day theatre experience from 9 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday, with performances falling on the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of the final week of camp. Morning classes immerse

students in the art of theatrical storytelling, teaching fundamental skills in costume and set design, technical stagecraft, script analysis, character development, and performance techniques that bring characters and narratives to life. Afternoons consist of rehearsal, allowing students to implement the techniques learned during the morning's instruction. We provide scholarships for Youth Summer Stock so that tuition is not a barrier.

In addition to Youth Summer Stock, CLTP is committed to fostering theatrical education by offering a series of free workshops and educational opportunities during the 2025-2026 season. By partnering with Laramie County Library and offering interviews with directors, casts, and designers, we aim to make theatrical education accessible, inspiring, and inclusive. During the run of our spring drama, CLTP plans to host a series of talkbacks that will start a conversation between the artists and the audience examining themes within the story and the artistic decisions that shape its presentation. CLTP will implement at least two training opportunities in technical theatre over the next year. CLTP will create a plan for a technical theatre mentoring program by June of 2026. In the late spring of 2026, CLTP will offer workshops that provide practical guidance in acting, singing, and dance auditions, hoping to inspire more community members to audition for CLTP productions.

The requested funds will be used to support all CLTP educational endeavors with a focus on Youth Summer Stock. Currently operating with an annual education budget of \$24,000.00, this grant would enable us to expand our educational outreach throughout Cheyenne, reaching more students, community members, and fellow artists.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Arts learning goals for Youth Summer Stock were identified by thoroughly examining the camp curriculum and comparing it to the Wyoming Department of Education standards and content for performance and performing arts that correlate to the age range of each session.

During the grade 3-6 session of Youth Summer Stock, the goals and metrics to evaluate are as follows. To meet the goal of developing collaborative skills through the creative dramatic process, all students on stage for a performance will work together to tell the story; students will assist each other in learning lines, music, blocking, and movement; and students will work together to create technical elements of the production. To fulfill the goal of improving theatrical skills and self-discipline through rehearsal, students will be actively engaged during rehearsals, fully memorized by a set date, and will continue to develop their character until the performance. Students will be able to discuss who their character is and what they want, tell instructors what happens in the show, and work with designer teachers to imagine where the show takes place. This will show that students have met the goal of being able to imagine and describe characters, plots, and settings. By fully participating in all aspects of camp, students will have to meet the goal of reading, understanding, and asking or answering questions about this script.

Arts learning goals for the Youth Summer Stock session for grades 7-12 and metrics for evaluation are as follows. Through observation and analysis, students will be able to articulate how technical, organizational, and theatrical

elements contribute to the ideas, aesthetic quality, and impact of the theatrical form by discussing why using certain styles and elements to tell a story make more sense than others and what making different choices changes within the production. Students will meet the goal of refining theatrical skills and self-discipline through rehearsal, practice, memorization, and revision by engaging in, asking questions about, and showing focus during rehearsals, running lines, and taking direction to change characterization and interaction as needed. Students will assist in building, painting, and decorating the set for the production fulfilling the goal of creating for a theatrical setting using technical theatre skills. Through being actively engaged throughout the camp session, students will be required to meet the goal of being able to read, analyze, and evaluate scripts.

CLTP also reviewed the organization's current needs and the interest of community members and decided to focus on the following arts learning goals. Before each CLTP production, the community is invited to the Laramie County Library for interviews focusing on different aspect of technical theatre and performance regarding the upcoming production, allowing the community a chance to engage with theatre artists and learn about the medium. CLTP currently has plans to assist in developing analytical skills by holding talkbacks with the community about our spring drama and will meet this goal by encouraging questions and observations from the audience regarding the themes and artistic choices in this production. By holding technical theatre training opportunities, CLTP hopes to inspire our community to tell a story with a technical element, whether it is set, costumes, lights, sound, or something else. We will know we have succeeded in this goal if people from these workshops choose to assist with the technical elements of a show or sign up for our technical mentoring program in the future. One of CLTP's goals for next season is to provide greater knowledge about and access to auditions by providing workshops that focus on the basic knowledge needed to audition for a play or musical, including instruction in acting, dancing, and singing. We will know that we have met this goal when more people begin to audition for CLTP productions.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Margie McLaughlin is the Producer for this season's Youth Summer Stock theatre camp. Margie will oversee overseeing the camp, mentoring teachers, and guiding content creation for each session. Margie has volunteered in a variety of theatres for over 20 years. In different CLTP productions, Margie has held many positions including assistant director, stage crew, and costumer, giving her a comprehensive knowledge of what those roles require. She has been involved in Youth Summer Stock for five years allowing her to observe what works well regarding this program. Margie has extensive experience working with children. She currently works as a librarian paraprofessional at an elementary school and has worked for the Boys and Girls Club of Cheyenne. Margie was selected through an interview process.

Blake Dorris will be directing the first session of our Youth Summer Stock program. Blake will be in charge of telling the story of the play and ensuring cohesion of designs, creation of truthful characters, and coordination of all facets of play production. Blake has previously assistant directed and directed for Youth Summer Stock which has allowed him insight into the program's innerworkings. Blake has a BFA in Theatre Performance from the University of Memphis and has directed multiple productions for the Cheyenne Little Theatre Players. Blake's professional training, experience teaching, and knowledge of directing make him an excellent choice of director. Blake interviewed for and was awarded this position.



Tenacity Bricher-Wade is the managing owner of En Avant Dance Studio. Her dance journey began at age 4, and she quickly discovered a love of teaching dance. Throughout her career, she has been privileged to train and collaborate with renowned dancers including Yoav Kaddar, Peter Pucci, Tony Coppola, Jay Franke, and Lawrence Jackson. Her professional performance credits include principal dancer roles with Ballet Wyoming and Reformation Dance Company from. Tenacity remains deeply committed to dance education, actively contributing to theatrical productions at CLTP and passionately bringing dance programming to the Cheyenne community. Tenacity was asked to assist with upcoming audition workshops, to which she happily agreed. She will be one of three teachers for these workshops.

Janet Weisbrook has her associate degree in music from Laramie County Community College and her B.M. from University of North Texas. Janet teaches choir at South High School and is the artistic director of the Cheyenne All-City Children's chorus. Janet teaches voice lessons to different ages and abilities and has vocal and music directed for multiple musicals at CLTP. Janet was asked to assist with upcoming audition workshops, to which she happily agreed. She will be one of three teachers for this workshop.

Other artists and educators will be chosen as we draw nearer to future educational events. All artists and teachers will demonstrate a high level of expertise in their field, and experience teaching.

### **Budget Narrative**

The majority of CLTP's funding is through ticket sales, public donations, and sponsorships from local businesses, showing that our local community supports us as a community theatre. Concessions sold at productions contribute to our annual budget. A percentage of our funding comes from fundraising events. A small percentage of our funding comes from grants, as we are a 501c3 non-profit. The small fraction of our remaining budget is made up of rentals, Youth Summer Stock tuition, and uncategorized income.

CLTP has several in-kind donors who provide services. These include video commercial recording, editing, and additional AV services donated by Midnight West Productions; show poster printing donated by Laramie County Community College; advertising provided by Traders Shoppers Guide; and rehearsal space donated by En Avant Dance Studio.

CLTP is largely funded through community donations and ticket sales.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

[WWW.CHEYENNESYMPHONY.ORG](http://WWW.CHEYENNESYMPHONY.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra 2025/26 Season Concerts and Education Outreach Programs

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

CSO's 25/26 season, Celebrating America, builds towards the 250th Anniversary of the USA on July 4, 2026. The Board recently underwent a strategic planning process and adopted a newly refined mission statement and guiding values: The Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra's outstanding professional performances and educational outreach engage, inspire, and enhance the quality of life for Cheyenne and surrounding areas. In pursuit of its mission, CSO values: artistic excellence, innovation, and growth; audience engagement, enrichment, and expansion; fiscal responsibility, sustainability, and advancement; cultural leadership, collaboration, and development.

CSO is an important cultural amenity helping to attract patrons to our community. Our main goals are: to reengage with audiences lost during the pandemic and to attract new, more diverse audiences, while remaining fiscally responsible. CSO's excellent artistic product and creative programming are key to meeting these goals. A recent audience survey undertaken at a concert attracting a large number of new/infrequent attendees shows that CSO's season ticket holders strongly prefer standard repertoire and composers, while infrequent attendees prefer more diverse programming. As a result, CSO strives to program a balanced season with repertoire and concerts appealing to both groups and has started closely monitoring first-time buyers and retention rates.

CSO will showcase all-American music, including traditional symphonic repertoire, contemporary works and incredible guest artists. Plus, we will offer two family-friendly concerts designed to attract new/infrequent patrons with steeply discounted tickets and pops-style repertoire: Holiday Magic featuring collaborations with local arts organizations and Movie Music Matinee, geared towards families with young children. We are also excited to participate in the City of Cheyenne's July 4th 2026 celebration, including a free outdoor concert replacing our biannual Symphony at Sunset.

### Community

CSO annually serves 10,000 people and is committed to being accessible to all. Our ticketing software shows 72% of recent ticket buyers are from Cheyenne, 9% from other places in WY, 15% from CO, 1% from NE, 3% from other states; 44% are season ticket holders and 39% first time buyers. In a recent audience survey created by CSO staff, 48% identified as over 65 and 63% as female. According to the US Census Bureau, 18% of the Cheyenne population

is over 65 and 50% are female, showing CSO serves a disproportionately high percentage of both. While we do not collect information on patron race, Cheyenne is 75% white, making it more diverse than WY as whole at 92% white.

The Artistic Advisory Committee includes the Music and Executive Directors, select board members, patrons, staff, and musician reps who make suggestions on programming. The input given through surveys, comments at board and committee meetings, and through the volunteer group, Symphony Friends, helps CSO plan programs that are appealing to both our established older demographic and to the younger patrons we hope to attract.

Older adults are engaged through noon-time lectures; the Friends are provided discounts to events and meaningful social interactions. We offer Military discounts and flexible, reduced-rate subscriptions so patrons can choose their concerts. CSO offers matinee chamber music concerts and livestreams most concerts. Educational programs are free and we offer free and/or discounted student tickets.

The Cheyenne Civic Center has accessible parking, a drop-off lane near the entrance, and wheel-chair accessible seating. Patrons are provided with free assistive listening devices and large print programs upon request at the box office. Accommodation information is in our program and on our website.

## **Evaluation**

CSO staff and musicians take on a wide variety of roles, including entertainers, educators, fundraisers, retailers, and advocates; evaluations provide constructive feedback to improve functionality. CSO staff create surveys designed to collect the specific data desired. A recent survey anonymously collected respondent demographics, the type of programming that is of interest, factors that contribute to attendance, and allowed additional comments. Patrons also frequently comment or send suggestions to board and staff members. Surveys are distributed after all education events to the teachers to evaluate their effectiveness at meeting standards and, after “YES” concerts, students complete surveys about their experience. Recent results show that our patrons recognize the high caliber of our performances and education outreach programs, and they enjoy experiencing both beloved classics as well as exciting new repertoire, artists and collaborations. Finally, our ticketing software provides attendance and patron residence data, allowing staff to analyze ticket sale trends, especially focusing on the number and retention rates of first-time buyers and new/lapsed subscribers.

Results are compiled, presented, and discussed with various board committees, the executive committee and full board, to help implement changes and/or plan for coming seasons. Correlations between the appeal of different types of programming and the various demographics we serve are extremely useful for planning. The Executive and Music Directors are evaluated by the board, giving an opportunity to confidentially express concerns. The staff is evaluated by the Executive Director. Finally, CSO’s Board just adopted a 5-year strategic plan and, along with the staff, are beginning the implementation process.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

CSO is a professional symphony, led by Dr. William Intriligator, one of the country's most engaging music directors, conducting nationally and internationally for over 35 years. He trained at Princeton and Aspen Music Festival and obtained a doctorate from the Univ of Minn. His friendly, approachable style contributes to patrons' enjoyment of CSO's concerts and outreach and his professional knowledge and relationships with guest artists are invaluable. He concurrently serves as Music Director of the Dubuque Symphony.

CSO's paid, professional staff include full-time Executive Dir. Dr. Lindsey Reynolds, Dir. of Comm. Engagement Christine Pelletier and Dir. of Marketing Bonnie Mance, supported by 2 part-time staff members, an Orchestra Manager/Librarian and Library Assistant.

CSO's 65 paid, professional musicians are selected through a rigorous, blind audition process and supplemental players are pre-screened by principals. 55% have a Master's in music and 13% a doctorate. 20% reside in WY; the rest travel from around the region. 40% have performed with CSO for 15+ seasons.

The 25/26 season, Celebrating America, includes a mix of traditional masterworks, contemporary pieces, family-friendly concerts and chamber music, all leading to a free outdoor concert on July 4, 2026. Beloved American composers like Bernstein, Copland, and Gershwin are paired with less familiar composers like Gould, Price and Emmy-nominated Composer in Residence, Jeff Lippencott. The season features unique guest artists, chosen specifically due to their accolades and expertise in the selected repertoire, including Artist in Residence Grammy-winning cellist Zuill Bailey, Grammy-winning pianist Michelle Cann, and principal tubist of the Chicago Symphony, Gene Pokorny.

All concerts feature full orchestra at 7:30pm at the Cheyenne Civic Center unless otherwise noted.

Of Thee I Sing, 10/11/25: Bernstein Candide Overture; Barber Knoxville Summer of 1915 and "Glitter and Be Gay" from Candide featuring soprano Christie Conover; Ives Symphony No. 2.

Hausmusik 1, 11/2/25 at 2pm: Women of The West recital featuring Christie Conover and pianist Jeremy Reger at the WY Hereford Ranch residence.

Land That I Love, 11/15/25: Gould Symphonette No. 2; world premiere of Lippencott Pasturelands featuring Zuill Bailey; Grofé Grand Canyon Suite.

Holiday Magic, 12/13/25: holiday pops concert featuring All City-Children's Chorus, Cheyenne Chamber Singers and En Avant Dance Studio.

Movie Music Matinee, 1/25/26 at 2:30pm: family-friendly concert featuring music from hit films and video games.

America The Beautiful, 2/7/26: Montgomery Strum; Copland Clarinet Concerto featuring CSO's principal clarinet, Kellan Toohey; Mason Princessa de la Luna; Copland Appalachian Spring Suite.

This Land is Your Land, 3/14/26: Zwilich Celebration; Schiffrin Tuba Concerto and Mission Impossible Theme, featuring Gene Pokorny, for whom the concerto was written; Giddens & Abels Omar Overture; Bernstein Symphonic Dances from West Side Story.

Rhapsody in Red, White & Blue, 4/11/26: world premiere of Lippencott American Patriot Hymn featuring TBD narrator, Cheyenne Chamber Singers and UW Collegiate Chorale; Ellington Harlem; Price Piano Concerto and Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue featuring Michelle Cann.

Hausmusik 2, 4/12/26 at 2pm: piano recital featuring Michelle Cann at the Surbrugg Prentice Auditorium at LCCC.

Baroque in the Barn, 5/21/26 at 7pm: solo cello recital featuring Zuill Bailey at the WHR Sale Barn.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

For over 30 years CSO has provided free educational outreach programs. Offerings include:

"It's a GAS" (Guest Artists in the Schools) and "It's COOL" (Conductor of the Orchestra Leads): In conjunction with monthly concerts, CSO's guest artists and conductor visit music classrooms of all ages, teaching about the upcoming concert and sharing their experiences as professional musicians. From these visits, students learn about different career paths in music, as well as tips to achieve successful performances.

"YES!" (Youth Educational Symphony) Concerts: Each Jan/Feb, CSO brings nearly 3,000 students to the Civic Center for a live symphony performance. Attendees of these educationally-g geared concerts include all 5th and 6th grade students from LCSD #1 and #2, Wheatland, and Glendo; parochial, private and home-schooled children from Cheyenne; and all junior high and high school orchestra students. CSO creates and distributes supporting materials to teachers prior to the event to help prepare students for the concerts. "YES!" concerts focus on creating valuable connections between history, cultural literacy and music appreciation, as well as introducing the basics about

symphony orchestras and concert etiquette. Over the student's two-year elementary experience, CSO provides well-rounded exposure to a range of composers and styles, with one year focused on classical repertoire and the second year on popular movie music.

"Take a SEAT" (Students Enjoy A Ticket): CSO distributes free tickets for each masterpiece concert to area students, including to junior high through college music classes, homeschool students, and the Boys & Girls Club; CSO also raises funds to provide discounted student tickets for all concerts. Matinee and holiday tickets are subsidized even further to encourage entire families to attend a family-friendly concert with accessible repertoire.

"FUSE" (Fine Arts Unlocking Student Excellence) programs reach students outside the music classroom, helping them make cross-disciplinary connections, using selected repertoire CSO will perform live as inspiration. "Art in Music" challenges 7th-12th graders to create both 2D and 3D works of art in conjunction with a spring concert. CSO's annual "Music in Words" writing contest invites 3rd-4th grade students to write a creative story connected to a piece of music performed on a separate spring concert. Both programs utilize a panel of expert judges in the fields of music and art or writing to select their respective winners. The winners are presented on stage before their respective spring concerts and invited to enjoy the concert, along with their families, free of charge.

"Musical Story Times" are free events held a few times a year at various local venues, including the Botanic Gardens and public library. These events are tailored to pre-K through 3rd grade students. CSO musicians perform music written to accompany a children's story read by a skilled narrator.

The "Instrument Petting Zoo" allows children to see, touch, and try instruments of the orchestra, provided by local music stores and demonstrated by volunteer high school musicians. Zoos are included in story times and at the family matinee.

"Classic Conversations" includes two programs for adults and advanced students: a free noon-time lecture by the Maestro and guest artists at the Laramie County Library the Friday before each masterpiece concert and a similar lecture a half hour before the concert for ticket-holders.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

CSO's education outreach can be divided into two areas: youth and adult programming. Each program has specific, age-appropriate learning goals. CSO staff selected areas of focus through review of state fine art standards, consultation with music educators and administrators, feedback from CSO's Board and education committee, and past participant survey results. Participants in most programs can expect enhanced knowledge of these standards: "historical and cultural context" of the featured composers, pieces, musical time period, and instrumentation; increased "artistic connections" through a glimpse into the life and training of a professional musician; and increased "aesthetic perception" by experiencing a professional-level performance.

CSO's youth programs reach about 6,000 pre-K through college students in LCSD #1 and #2 (including the communities of Cheyenne, Burns, Albin, Carpenter, and Pine Bluffs), Wheatland and Glendo. These programs reach city, rural, public, private and home-schooled students and have three main goals: 1) To expose students to the performance of professional musicians in classroom and concert settings. 2) To provide engaging and unique musical programs generating interest in music, history and relevant social issues. 3) To support the musical education being offered in the local school systems by bringing musical advancement to interested students of all ages.

CSO's adult programs impact hundreds of people annually. Through comments received, it is clear that our adult patrons have a particular interest in learning more about the music, musicians and composers than is possible to print in the program notes. CSO created the following goals for adult education outreach: 1) To enhance the concert experience of our audiences by offering information that explains and highlights musical passages, anecdotes about the composer and the historical context of the work. 2) To provide the public with an opportunity to interact with CSO's Maestro and guest artists through shared stories, and question and answer segments. 3) To elevate the audience's general level of music education allowing for the programming of new and unique works that may be challenging for audiences and offer significant growth opportunities for our professional musicians.

After participation in youth programs, CSO administers teacher surveys. They specifically ask if CSO's programs have been effective in meeting the learning goals/standards and provide room for comments on what can be improved. Students attending the "YES" concerts are surveyed and some write thank you notes. Student surveys ask about their enjoyment of the concert, whether they were inspired to begin or continue to play an instrument/sing, and what they might like to hear in the future. Parents of children at story times and petting zoos and participants at adult outreach events provide feedback to staff and musicians directly. The Director of Community Engagement tracks statistics, including the number of people reached through each program. The Education and Artistic Advisory Committees review the statistics, survey results, and comments received and report to the full board monthly. Changes to the next season's programs are implemented based on this feedback.

In addition to the outreach detailed above, CSO has two less formal programs with goals to reach people in rural areas and advocate for the arts in WY respectively. Wyoming Public Radio (WPR) rebroadcasts CSO's concerts, reaching many people around the state who do not have easy access to a professional orchestra. WPR estimates, for the timeframe when CSO concerts are rebroadcast, that they reach up to 1,500 listeners each time. These listeners are primarily 35 to 64 years in age, with an even split between the male and female. CSO's Music and Executive Directors and guest artists also speak at service clubs helping educate business leaders in our community about the importance of the arts and arts education.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

CSO's Artistic Advisory Committee programs each season. Potential guest artists and repertoire undergo a rigorous vetting process to ensure world-class artistic talent, charismatic speakers, audience appeal and fulfillment of educational objectives.

In Oct soprano Christie Conover will be back by popular demand to sing “Glitter and Be Gay” from Bernstein’s *Candide* and Barber’s *Knoxville, Summer of 1915*. Described by the San Francisco Classical Voice as having a “well-focused instrument with a lovely timbre, perfect trill, and soaring top,” her voice is perfect for these selections. A few weeks later, she will also perform a *Women of the West* recital.

CSO will embark on our first Guest Artist and Composer Residencies in Nov with the world premiere of a cello concerto, *Pasturelands*, written by Jeff Lippencott featuring Zuill Bailey. Jeff Lippencott is a two-time Emmy-nominated composer, earned the Western Heritage Music Award for Best Original Western Composition, and a producer Grammy nominee. Lippencott will also compose a new piece for a Musical Storytime and we will perform his cowboy-themed arrangement for the family matinee. Zuill Bailey, a Grammy Award winning, internationally renowned cellist, will also be featured on May’s *Baroque in the Barn* recital.

The “YES!” and Feb concerts will feature CSO’s principal clarinet, Kellan Toohey, performing Copland’s *Clarinet Concerto*. CSO values showcasing our own talented musicians; featuring a younger orchestra member will be engaging for the students. Toohey has received numerous awards, including winning 2nd Prize in the International Clarinet Association’s Young Artist Competition and 1st Prize and audience choice award in CU’s Ekstrand Graduate Performance competition.

In March, Zwilich’s *Celebration* will be the musical inspiration for the Art in Music program. Zwilich was the first female composer to win a Pulitzer Prize for music. The concert will also feature Lalo Schifrin’s *Tuba Concerto* performed by Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s principal tuba, Gene Pokorny, for whom it was composed.

Duke Ellington’s jazz inspired *Harlem* will be the inspiration for Music in Words in April. On the same concert, CSO will premiere *American Patriot Hymn* by Lippencott, featuring both a narrator and the UW Collegiate Chorale and Cheyenne Chamber Singers; and perform two piano concertos, Price’s *Piano Concerto in One Movement* and Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue*, featuring Michelle Cann. Recognized as a leading interpreter of the piano music of Florence Price, Cann performed both the New York City and Philadelphia premieres. Her recording of the concerto with the NY Youth Symphony won a Grammy in 2023 for Best Orchestral Performance. Cann will also perform a solo recital.

Collaborations with local artists and organizations is an important part of CSO’s mission. In addition to those above, CSO will collaborate with En Avant Dance Studio, All-City Children’s Chorus and Cheyenne Chamber Singers for the Holiday concert, and the City of Cheyenne’s “America 250” Committee planning the festivities for July 2026.

CSO’s Dir. of Comm. Engagement works directly with LCSD #1 Fine Arts Coordinator, dozens of music, art, band and orchestra teachers of all levels in LCSD #1 and #2, and music faculty at LCCC to engage students with CSO’s



programs. The teachers take time out of their regular curriculum and schedules for CSO's programs, believing the educational value and impact is extremely beneficial to their students.

### **Budget Narrative**

CSO remains in good financial standing, despite lower ticket sales, due to the generous support of our patrons and donors and healthy reserves built from unexpected estate donations. For the 25/26 season, CSO anticipates financial support in the following areas: tickets sales (22%); corporate support through concert and education outreach sponsorships and program ads (16%); individual donations to the annual fund, adopt-a-musician program, and guest artist underwriting (19%); CSO Foundation gift (12%); Annual Gala and Symphony Friends fundraisers (10%); grant awards (8%); reserves designated by the CSO Board (3%); and interest earned (2%). CSO has developed strategic partnerships in our community for in-kind services (8%), including trades for print and radio ads, concert rebroadcasts on WPR, guest artists' hotel rooms, and discounts on printing and facility rentals. CSO's expenses are strongly aligned with our mission, with 74% supporting concerts and educational outreach programs.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHEYENNE YOUTH SYMPHONY

[WWW.CHEYENNEYOUTHSYMPHONY.COM](http://WWW.CHEYENNEYOUTHSYMPHONY.COM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cheyenne Youth Symphony 2025-2026

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The mission of the Cheyenne Youth Symphony (CYS) is to provide an opportunity for string students in the Cheyenne area to advance their technical and musical skills through participation in the group. Students are exposed to a variety of musical styles which will provide teaching tools to help each student to improve technical and musical skills. Students also learn how to work together as an ensemble and feel an important part of the final outcome of the performance. The experience will provide students with the disciplines required to be involved with a higher-level music organization upon aging out of the CYS.

The goal of the CYS is to provide young string students with a more advanced performance experience. Students are taught the importance of correct posture and playing position. Students are taught listening skills that enable them to play together as a section and as an ensemble. They are encouraged to be leaders and take what they have learned from CYS rehearsals back to their school orchestra programs. Most CYS students are in the highest skill level orchestra class offered by the public-school programs. Several of these students have also been selected to perform with the All State Orchestra at the Wyoming Music Educators conference.

The CYS has been able to develop a strategic partnership with Laramie County Community College (LCCC) for use of facilities, lessons and coaching from faculty members, and opportunities to perform with the LCCC String Ensemble, which is for advanced students and community members. These opportunities will contribute to the sustainability of the CYS, provide opportunities for students both during their time with CYS and after they age out, and prepare them to move on to more advanced ensemble experiences.

We would also like to expand our outreach to people such as legislators and city officials. We have sent invitations to several of these people for our March concert. Staff will track response rate this season.

### **Community**

The CYS serves string players in Cheyenne and surrounding areas such as Burns, Wheatland and even Rawlins. Public, private and homeschooled students who have had 1 year of instruction and are in 5th -9th grade are eligible to audition. The majority of the CYS students come from LCSD #1. The demographics of the district reveal that 80% of the students are white, 2% are African American, 16% are Hispanic and 2% are from another race. This is reflected in the membership of the CYS. A survey given to CYS families revealed that 87% are white, 9% are Hispanic and 4% are from another race.

The Cheyenne community has a wide variety of economic levels. The number of students on free or reduced lunch in the school district is 30%. The survey given to CYS families indicated that half of the students in the CYS are below the median income for WY. While there are no official scholarships available from the CYS, families who are struggling to pay the membership fee are encouraged to speak with the director. In the past there have been businesses willing to sponsor a CYS student if needed.

CYS has been a part of the Menorah Lighting ceremony at the Capitol for the past 13 years. Students perform traditional Jewish music. Over the years, CYS has developed a lasting partnership with the Rabbis who organize the event, and the students look forward to participating.

CYS members include students with disabilities. All students with disabilities, whether explicitly communicated to the director or not, are accommodated to help the student succeed. All concerts and rehearsals are held at ADA compliant facilities and accommodations for audience members can be made upon requests. An Accessibility Plan has been created for the use of the LCCC facility and is posted on the CYS website.

## **Evaluation**

The main method of evaluation used to measure the impact on the community is through monitoring the growth in membership. Records of membership numbers are kept for each year. Our goal is to continually increase membership. Because students need to have reached a certain level of proficiency on their instrument to be a part of the CYS, we are limited to those students who have participated in the public-school ensembles or had private instruction on their instrument; however, CYS actively recruits at all LCSD #1 schools with string programs.

The other method of evaluation used to measure the impact on the community is the number of people that attend the concerts. The final concert, which includes an afternoon tea and fundraiser has remained at approx. 400 attendees. The number of concert attendees for the other performances has increased by 118% so far this season, not including the students who performed.

As noted, CYS staff surveyed musician parents earlier this year to learn about participant demographics, economic levels, and it also included an opportunity for them to make suggestions or comments. The parents and their

students were excited about CYS's first skills workshop held on March 1, 2025. Several orchestra teachers from Cheyenne and Laramie lead 3 one-hour workshops on various skills such as bowing technique, counting, intonation and applying technique to the performance of their music. The students were very excited to participate in this event and their feedback was very positive. They are wanting to do it again. The students demonstrated a tremendous amount of improvement at the rehearsal after the workshop. There were 30 out of 48 students who participated in the workshop.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

CYS is requesting operating support to help the organization transition to a more professional level, to hopefully allow a new artistic director to be found in the next few years. Due to the grant support received in 2024, CYS is able to continue to employ an administrative assistant. The addition of this assistant has helped the artistic director to spend more time planning rehearsals and preparing for concerts. Grant funds will be used to continue to employ a part time administrative assistant and provide a stipend for the artistic director. The administrative assistant is responsible for bookkeeping, record keeping, communications, creating marketing materials and programs, organizing the parent volunteers, organizing board meetings, and event coordinator for concerts and the annual fundraiser.

CYS's annual expenses include paying the accompanist and rehearsal assistants, music purchases, licensing fees, fundraising expenses, program and marketing costs, liability insurance, storage space for music and supplies, trailer used for parades and transportation of equipment, concert expenses including purchasing and maintaining uniforms and reception supplies and cell phone usage. The CYS is in the process of looking for an office space to be used for storage and a work area for the director and administrative assistant. CYS has been fortunate that LCCC has allowed the organization to rehearse and perform in their facility free of charge.

### **Project Support Narrative**

CYS is an auditioned string ensemble, allowing students to build on their music education and skills they learn in the public-school environment. Students receive focused instruction and coaching allowing them to further develop skills on their instrument, in addition to learning ensemble repertoire to be performed in the concert setting.

CYS holds auditions for new members each April or early May and formerly begins the season with six weeks of instruction during the summer. New members are encouraged to participate in the summer program to provide the music director the opportunity to better assess their skills and development levels in preparation for the school year. Students who participate in the summer program learn fiddle tunes to perform for Cheyenne Frontier Days Parades and assisted living facilities.

CYS members are broken into elementary and junior high ensembles. Each group meets once a week for a one-hour rehearsal. During rehearsals, the students receive small group coaching, in addition to the full ensemble rehearsal of concert repertoire. Willhite selects the repertoire for each concert based on the needs of the ensembles, as well as to provide engaging, challenging, yet attainable repertoire for the students.

CYS has four scheduled concerts per year. The first three concerts are all free and open to the public, one in October, a holiday concert in December, and another in March. These concerts are followed by a reception for the students and the audience, and the December concert also includes a dessert auction. The final concert in May is also the annual fundraiser. This is an afternoon tea including a silent auction.

Students also perform at various locations around town throughout the school year, such as for a book fair fundraiser at Barnes & Noble, assisted living facilities, and for the Menorah Lighting at the Capitol. Students have performed for the last two years in the lobby of the Civic Center before a Cheyenne Symphony Concert.

CYS offered its first skills workshop in March of 2025. Orchestra teachers from Laramie and from Albany County School Districts provided small group instruction consisting of technical and musicianship skills. This was then applied to the rehearsal of their music. Students and parents were very excited about this opportunity and found it beneficial to the improvement of their skills. Following the hugely successful pilot of this program, it will be continued during the 2025/26 season.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

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### **Arts Learning: Goals**

CYS was founded to provide young string players with the opportunity to improve their skills while playing in a more advanced ensemble. Students are instructed in how to follow a conductor and play their part in an ensemble. Students are also instructed in correct posture and playing position, bowing techniques, listening for intonation and how to play pieces in a stylistically correct manner. Students will take the skills they have developed in CYS back to their school ensembles, allowing those ensembles to also benefit from the students' participation.

In addition to rehearsals and concerts during the school year, CYS also has a six-week summer program that begins in June. The summer program serves two purposes for the students. First, students who have had a successful audition to join the ensemble are encouraged to participate in the summer program. This enables them to meet some of the other players and start to feel a part of the group. This also helps the conductor to work on any skills that need to be worked on that weren't detected at the audition, so they are better prepared for the repertoire in the fall. The second purpose is to provide students an opportunity to continue playing and performing in the summer.

Students who participate in the CYS are meeting several of the Wyoming State Fine and Performing Arts Standards. First, under Standard 1: Creative Expression Through Production, students are being taught to perform independently and with others. They perform a varied repertoire of music while demonstrating correct posture,

playing position, intonation, and tone quality. Students are consistently working on refining their musicianship and technical skills through the rehearsal and performance of their music. Next, under Standard 3: Historical and Cultural Context, CYS students are taught the characteristics of different musical periods and styles. They are taught the technical skills necessary to perform each composition stylistically correct. Last, Standard 4: Artistic Connections, CYS students are taught to demonstrate safe, responsible and appropriate behavior during rehearsals, performances and other musical settings.

The school district has recently eliminated 4th grade orchestra from the curriculum. This has greatly impacted CYS. The skill level of string students has decreased, which affects the level of music the students are able to learn. The goal of CYS is to provide a more advanced level of performance for string students. Some of the rehearsal time is now spent teaching skills they previously would have had if the 4th grade level instruction had been maintained. The two CYS orchestras were structured around string students beginning in 4th grade. CYS is working to restructure how students are grouped in each orchestra due to this change.

Moving forward, CYS would like to create a preparatory orchestra. The orchestra will be a non-auditioned orchestra, consisting of beginning string students in the 3rd and 4th grade. Students will have the opportunity to audition for the CYS Junior Symphony after completing 1 year of the prep orchestra. This will require hiring new staff to coach the students participating in the program. CYS hopes to begin this prep orchestra in the fall of 2025.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

CYS was founded 25 years ago by Artistic Director, Jaylene Willhite, who was a music educator in the LCSD #1 for 33 years. Willhite recently retired from the school district as of June 2024. Willhite has also been in charge of all operational decisions for the past 24 years. It is still her goal to organize CYS in such a way that a new Artistic Director can be hired so the organization can continue to grow and thrive, serving students in the Cheyenne area for years to come. Willhite has a Bachelor of Music Education and a Master of Arts in Teaching and has taught a total of 43 years. She has been a member of the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra for 37 years.

Additional artists involved with CYS include an accompanist, 2 adult rehearsal assistants, and 2 student rehearsal assistants. Cathy Johnson, accompanist, is a retired elementary music teacher who taught for 27 years and has also been a church music director and pianist. Zoe Zieres is currently teaching elementary orchestra for LCSD #1 and taught general music the previous 2 years for the district. Logan Feezer is currently teaching general music for LCSD #1 and taught elementary orchestra the previous 7 years for the district. Finally, Cora Kang and Simon Wolf are high school aged former CYS students. They work with CYS students in small groups to help students better learn their music. Cora is a senior this year and plans to major in music education.

Administrative assistant, Melody Brewer was a choir director and computer teacher for LCSD #1 for 30 years. She also is now teaching music at St. Mary's School in Cheyenne.

This season, CYS began a new partnership with the LCCC Music Department, providing rehearsal space and use of their auditorium for performances. Professors from LCCC work with students to help them learn their ensemble part and know how it is played within the context of the entire ensemble. Professor Stephanie Flores Guerrero provides private cello instruction; Stephanie has a Masters in Cello Performance from the University of Nebraska. CYS students who are in high school are encouraged to participate in the LCCC's String Ensemble, conducted by John Fritz. John has a Bachelor of Music Composition from the University of Northern Colorado. Advanced students who age out of the CYS are encouraged to be a part of the LCCC's String Ensemble. Over the past 3 years, 28 CYS students have gone on to participate in the LCCC String Ensemble.

### **Budget Narrative**

CYS's funding comes primarily from annual fundraisers and donations, in addition to the student membership fee, which is kept as low as possible to allow students from all economic levels to participate. The final concert for the season includes a silent auction and has been funded by corporate sponsor NextEra Energy Resources for the past 4 years. CYS has two book fairs at the Barnes and Noble bookstore each year to help support the general budget. There is a dessert auction after the Holiday concert. In addition, parents are expected to donate 8 hours of volunteer time or make a \$100 donation.

CYS has formed partnerships with LCSD #1, LCCC, Crossbridge Alliance Church and Sutherland Trucking. The use of these facilities and equipment have been free of charge.

The artistic director has donated her time the majority of the past 24 years. It is necessary for the organization to work towards paying the artistic director in order to find a qualified replacement.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER REGION 2

[HTTPS://WWW.CDCREGION2.ORG/](https://www.cdcregion2.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Kindermusik Curriculum for Children with and without disabilities.

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

#### Our Mission & Community Impact

The Child Development Center serves over 500 children ages birth to five in Sheridan and Johnson Counties, providing early childhood education, developmental screenings, therapy services, and family support. Our mission is to support and strengthen children, families, and professionals by working together to provide developmental information and services.

#### The Value of Music in Early Childhood Development

Music plays a vital role in early learning, enhancing cognitive, language, motor, and social-emotional skills. Through programs like Kindermusik, we integrate music and movement into learning to foster communication, coordination, and emotional growth, benefiting all children, including those with developmental delays.

#### Strategic Goals

☐ Early Childhood Development & Education – Provide high-quality learning experiences and interventions to support cognitive, social-emotional, and motor growth.

☐ Inclusion & Accessibility – Ensure children of all abilities have access to enriching educational and therapeutic programs that foster learning and peer interaction.

☐ Community Engagement & Partnerships – Strengthen connections with families, educators, and local organizations to build a collaborative support network.

☐ Arts & Culture Integration – Use music, movement, and creative expression, like Kindermusik, to support language, motor coordination, and emotional well-being.

☐ Family Empowerment – Equip parents with resources, education, and training to support their child's development through play-based learning.

By integrating music into early childhood education, we create engaging, developmentally appropriate experiences that help children build confidence, communication skills, and emotional resilience while strengthening families and the broader community.

## **Community**

### Community Overview & Engagement

The Child Development Center serves Sheridan and Johnson Counties, providing developmental screenings, early intervention services, therapy, inclusive preschool education, and family support for children birth through five. Many families in our rural service area face barriers such as geographic isolation, financial hardship, and limited access to resources. We serve children with developmental delays and disabilities, as well as families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

We identify needs through conversations with families, educators, and healthcare providers, in addition to analyzing community data and developmental screening outcomes.

### Outreach to Underserved Communities

We actively reach underserved populations by:

- ☐ Attending community events like health fairs and 3rd Thursday to promote free screenings and services.
- ☐ Delivering services directly in local child care centers and preschools to reduce transportation barriers.
- ☐ Offering sliding-fee tuition and preschool scholarships.
- ☐ Collaborating with partners such as DFS, WIC, The Food Group, Women's Health, pediatricians, and the Child Protection Team for family referrals.

### Accommodations & Support

We provide sensory-friendly spaces, visual supports, adapted materials, and bilingual communication to ensure accessibility for all families.

### Accommodation Process

Accommodations are built into IEPs or addressed through teacher-parent communication for non-IEP students. Teachers coordinate with the Program Director to implement needed supports. Requests are welcomed during intake or any time through direct communication with our team.

## **Evaluation**

To assess Kindermusik's impact, we will evaluate child development outcomes and family engagement using multiple data collection methods. This information will be used to refine programming, adjust curriculum strategies, and ensure alignment with family needs and developmental goals.

Participation Tracking – We will document enrollment, engagement levels, and developmental needs, using data to identify trends and adjust outreach efforts.

Developmental Progress Monitoring – Pre- and post-program evaluations will measure growth in language, motor skills, social-emotional development, and early literacy. This data informs individualized support and aligns activities with children's specific needs.

Family Involvement & Home Integration – Surveys and interviews will assess how music activities are used at home and the perceived impact on language, social skills, and confidence. Families' feedback will help us create supplemental resources and adjust programming based on their priorities.

Educator & Therapist Observations – Teachers and therapists will document how children engage and respond. These observations guide modifications to lesson plans, support collaboration across disciplines, and help ensure sessions are inclusive and developmentally appropriate.

Using the Data – Data will guide continuous improvement by highlighting what's working and where to adapt. It allows us to evaluate the program's effectiveness in reaching goals, focus on areas families feel are most important, and ensure Kindermusik remains a meaningful resource for early development.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

n/a

## **Project Support Narrative**

We seek project support funding to implement Kindermusik, a research-based music and movement curriculum fully integrated into our preschool classrooms and home-based early intervention services. This initiative supports our mission to provide high-quality, engaging early education while strengthening family involvement. Kindermusik enhances developmental outcomes in communication, motor skills, social-emotional growth, and early literacy.

#### Program Setup & Rollout Timeline

Our phased implementation begins in July with the purchase of Kindermusik kits for each classroom and a digital subscription.

August: All preschool staff will receive initial training led by Dylan, our certified Kindermusik trainer.

September: Educators begin incorporating music into lesson plans and classroom environments.

November–December: Kindermusik lessons are introduced as part of daily routines.

January–June: Continued integration, with expanded family engagement and program evaluation.

Dylan will return for follow-up coaching to ensure successful implementation. New hires will receive training throughout the year to maintain fidelity.

#### Curriculum Purchase & Educator Training

Kindermusik’s curriculum includes structured, standards-aligned lesson plans, classroom instruments, movement-based activities, and digital access. Teachers will use classroom iPads to access materials and lead sessions. Home-use resources—songs, stories, and guided activities—extend learning beyond the classroom.

#### Operational Needs: Logistics, Partnerships & Infrastructure

Project support funding will also assist with:

Technology: Classroom iPads provide access to digital tools.

Support: Dylan will help with setup and be available as a curriculum resource.

Environment: Classrooms will be equipped with musical instruments and space for movement.

Partnerships: We plan to collaborate with local musicians for live music events and family experiences.

### Family Engagement & Community Outreach

Family involvement is essential to early learning success. Before launch, we hosted a Kindermusik Family Night, where families and staff explored the program and shared feedback. This helped confirm interest and guide implementation.

Throughout the school year, we will:

Host interactive music events for families.

Share playlists, activities, and print materials to support music at home.

Use the Procare app, newsletters, and lesson plans to keep families informed and offer tips.

Promote the free Kindermusik app to support continued learning at home.

### Staff Involvement

Key staff roles include:

Program Director: Oversight, coordination, and evaluation.

Lead & Co-Teachers: Daily facilitation of Kindermusik.

Support Staff: Assist with adaptation for diverse needs.

Therapists (Speech, OT, PT): Align music activities with IEP goals.

Home-Based Providers: Extend Kindermusik into early intervention homes.

This project supports child development, enriches early learning, and strengthens connections between families, educators, and the community.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

We seek Arts Learning funding to implement Kindermusik, a nationally recognized early childhood music and movement curriculum, into our preschool classrooms and home-based services. This program supports early artistic development by introducing children to music literacy, creative expression, movement, rhythm, and collaboration. It also strengthens home-school connections through shared music experiences and family engagement.

#### **Arts Learning Objectives**

Kindermusik fosters early exposure to music while supporting critical developmental areas. Through singing, movement, instrument play, and storytelling, children will develop:

Music literacy: Rhythm, tempo, pitch, and tone recognition

Creative expression: Confidence in exploring sound and movement

Motor skills: Fine and gross motor coordination through dance and instrument play

Language and literacy: Vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and listening skills

Social-emotional learning: Cooperation, turn-taking, self-regulation, and emotional expression

#### Curriculum Alignment with Best Practices

Kindermusik aligns with early education best practices by promoting whole-child development through interactive, play-based learning. It supports the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Common Core State Standards, PFCE (Parent, Family, and Community Engagement), CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), and DRDP (Desired Results Developmental Profile). The curriculum is research-based, joyful, developmentally appropriate, and inclusive.

#### Artists Involved

We will collaborate with local artists and musicians to enrich learning through live music and performance experiences. Confirmed contributors include:

Sheridan High School Band and Choir

Tyler Rogers Children and Youth Chorale

Chantelle Beastrom, early childhood music educator

Sheridan College music students

These artists will engage children with live performances, instrument demos, and participatory music-making, deepening their connection to the arts.

#### Family Engagement & Home Connection

Recognizing families as a child's first teacher, we hosted a Kindermusik Family Night where caregivers explored the program. Based on enthusiastic feedback, we will continue hosting interactive events throughout the year. To support at-home learning, we will provide:

Take-home kits with instruments and printed guides

Digital playlists and access to the free Kindermusik app

Curriculum updates via the Procare app, newsletters, and lesson plans

### Evaluation & Impact

Children's progress will be measured through educator observations, family feedback, and developmental assessments. Kindermusik will be included in our biannual assessments, which track growth across eight domains for ages 0–5: gross motor, fine motor, expressive and receptive language, social-emotional, musical, cognitive, and sensory development. Results will inform instruction, track outcomes, and strengthen programming.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

We seek Arts Learning funding to implement Kindermusik, a research-based music and movement curriculum designed to foster early childhood development through music literacy, movement, creative expression, and social-emotional growth.

#### Arts Learning Goals

Children will engage in joyful, developmentally appropriate activities that support growth in:

Music Literacy & Listening Skills – Recognizing rhythm, melody, pitch, and sound patterns, supporting early literacy and auditory processing.

Movement & Coordination – Developing motor skills through dance, rhythm games, and instrument play.

Creative Expression & Communication – Using music to build language, storytelling, and confidence in self-expression.

Social & Emotional Growth – Music-making encourages cooperation, empathy, and self-regulation in group settings.



These goals were identified through our work with young children and families, along with input from educators and therapists who recognize music as a powerful, engaging developmental tool. The curriculum aligns with national early learning standards and supports whole-child development.

#### How Arts-Based Learning Supports Development

Cognitive Growth – Music enhances memory, sequencing, and early reasoning.

Language & Literacy – Singing and rhythm increase vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and communication.

Motor Skills – Movement activities promote coordination and balance.

Social-Emotional Learning – Interactive music builds confidence, empathy, and group participation.

#### Curriculum Design & Implementation

Kindermusik provides structured, accessible music instruction through:

Lesson Plans & Materials – Songs, movement activities, and hands-on instrument play.

Educator & Therapist Training – All instructional staff will complete Kindermusik certification.

Inclusive Adaptations – Lessons are built into classroom routines and modified for children with additional needs.

Family Engagement – Parents receive take-home activities and attend music events that extend learning into the home.

#### Evaluation Methods

We will measure student progress and impact through:

Educator Observation – Teachers track participation and development in key learning domains.

Progress Monitoring – Developmental benchmarks guide evaluation of language, motor, and social-emotional growth.

Family & Staff Feedback – Surveys capture how children apply learning at home and areas needing further support.

Student Showcases – Children will demonstrate skills in low-pressure, interactive performances.

Evaluation data will be reviewed regularly to identify areas of growth and opportunities for improvement. If children are not showing expected development in a particular area, lesson plans and activities will be adjusted to better support learning goals. This reflective practice ensures the curriculum remains responsive to student needs and effective in promoting growth.

#### Artists & Educators Involved

This project is led by a team of qualified educators and specialists trained in early childhood education and music learning:

Program Director – Coordinates program implementation.

Preschool Lead & Co-Teachers – Facilitate classroom instruction.

Therapists (Speech, OT, PT) – Integrate music into individualized support.

Support Staff & Home-Based Providers – Extend music activities into one-on-one and in-home settings.

Community Artists – Guest musicians from Sheridan College and local high schools, along with a private early childhood music group, will lead live performances and rhythm experiences.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

This project will be led by a team of qualified educators and specialists trained in early childhood education and music-based learning. Their collective expertise ensures a high-quality arts learning experience that supports both developmental milestones and creative expression.

### **Educators & Therapists Involved**

#### **Early Childhood Educators & Classroom Teachers**

All participating educators will complete Kindermusik training to effectively implement the curriculum.

They will integrate music, movement, and creative play into daily classroom instruction, ensuring active participation and engagement from students.

Educators are selected for their experience in early childhood education and their ability to create dynamic, interactive learning environments.

#### **Therapists (Speech, Occupational, and Physical)**

Our trained therapists will incorporate music-based strategies into individual and group therapy sessions to support language development, motor coordination, and social-emotional growth.

These professionals are chosen based on their backgrounds in developmental therapy and their commitment to multi-sensory, arts-integrated learning approaches.

#### **Community Partnerships & Artists**

##### **Community-Based Artists & Musicians**

To enrich the Kindermusik experience, we plan to collaborate with:

Sheridan College and local high school music programs, inviting student musicians to share age-appropriate live music and introduce children to a variety of instruments and rhythms.

A private early childhood music group in the community, experienced in leading interactive music sessions for young children.

We also welcome interest from local artists and musicians who are passionate about early childhood and would enjoy performing or engaging with our students in meaningful, developmentally appropriate ways.

These visits will provide children with live music experiences that support creativity, movement, and cultural appreciation in a joyful, hands-on environment.

#### Selection Process

All educators, therapists, and community partners are selected based on:

Their experience in arts-integrated education and child development

Their ability to foster creativity, participation, and engagement in young learners

Their alignment with our mission to provide inclusive, research-based early learning opportunities

Through this collaborative approach, we ensure that children, families, and educators benefit from a rich and immersive arts learning experience that enhances early development and fosters lifelong appreciation for music and the arts.

#### **Budget Narrative**

Our organization is supported through a combination of state and federal funding, ensuring access to essential early childhood education and intervention services. In addition, we engage in community-based fundraising efforts, including our annual Holiday Letter Campaign, which helps sustain key programs. We actively pursue grants within the communities we serve, allowing us to expand services, update curriculum, and enhance resources such as inclusive learning tools and developmental programs like Kindermusik. Our budget is strategically aligned to ensure high-quality early education, therapy services, and family support, prioritizing accessibility for all children, including those with developmental delays. By leveraging multiple funding sources, we maintain financial stability while continuing to grow and meet community needs.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY CENTER

[WWW.PINEDALEDISCOVERYCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.PINEDALEDISCOVERYCENTER.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Early Childhood Arts

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The Children's Discovery Center (CDC) provides a quality, early childhood preschool education, and childcare program with a focus on the environment. Our mission is to maintain a safe, healthy, creative, and nurturing environment to address the developmental and educational needs of children, while providing daily learning and engagement inside and outside of the classroom in the natural world.

At the Children's Discovery Center, we believe every child deserves a high-quality education and plays an active role in their own learning journey. Our curriculum is shaped by children's natural curiosity and interests, fostering a dynamic, inquiry-based approach to education. We encourage young learners to explore their surroundings as natural researchers, engaging in hands-on activities, interactive experiences, and creative expression through art and specialized learning centers. By prioritizing the learning process over the final outcome, we nurture critical thinking, creativity, and a lifelong love of discovery.

### **Community**

Sublette County, home to approximately 10,000 residents, maintains a stable population while offering rich recreational, artistic, and cultural opportunities. The neighboring Wind River Mountain and Wyoming Mountain Ranges provides an abundance of outdoor activities, while organizations like the Pinedale Fine Arts Council and the Museum of the Mountain Man enhance the community's cultural landscape.

However, Pinedale faces two pressing economic challenges: a shortage of childcare options for children under three and a lack of year-round childcare. The Children's Discovery Center (CDC) is one of only three facilities in Pinedale that serve children under three, yet demand far exceeds capacity. While five preschools operate in Pinedale, the CDC is the only nonprofit childcare center open year-round. In fact, 94% of families enrolled at the CDC require full-time childcare during the summer months. In the spring of 2025 the Children's Discovery Center finished construction on an addition. With the additional space we can now accommodate 67 students ages 2-5 daily.

The Children's Discovery Center actively fosters interdisciplinary and intergenerational collaborations throughout the community, supporting the development of the Whole Child through physical, nutritional, and social engagement. One of the most innovative and long-standing partnerships is with the Sublette Center, a local nursing facility. Established in 1997, this collaboration remains a top priority, enriching both young learners and senior residents. Additionally, the CDC provides accommodations for students with special needs and facilitates regular visits from specialists in speech, occupational, and physical therapy—services that currently benefit 9% of enrolled children.

## **Evaluation**

As part of its annual evaluation process, the Children's Discovery Center (CDC) conducts a comprehensive parental survey to assess program effectiveness. This survey measures key success indicators, including activity levels, types of engagement, and communication between families and staff, while also identifying areas for growth. Each survey generates a quantitative score, which informs the team's discussions and goal-setting for the upcoming year. By comparing current data with previous years, the CDC pinpoints specific areas for improvement and ensures that past objectives have been met. Performance is evaluated not only through measurable outcomes but also by the overall quality of services provided. Parental surveys, family enrollment continuity, and informal community feedback collectively validate the strength of our program.

In the summer of 2024, the CDC engaged in 20 plus community collaborations, reinforcing its commitment to local partnerships. One such collaboration was another summer picnic with the Sublette Center, our long-standing partner in intergenerational programming. Additionally, we participated in multiple events organized by the Pinedale Fine Arts Council, further enriching our children's cultural experiences, enriched activities with the Mountain Man Museum, and so many more.

"I love that my gets get to enjoy enriched activities that us as parents can't always provide" -Megan

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The Children's Discovery Center (CDC) is seeking funding to enhance and sustain its daily and collaborative art programs, enriching early childhood education through creative expression. These funds will support partnerships with local artists, allowing students to explore a variety of artistic disciplines, including poetry, clay pottery, and stained glass. Additionally, the CDC collaborates with the Pinedale Fine Arts Council (PFAC), providing children with access to early childhood concerts and family-friendly outdoor performances featuring ballerinas, acrobats, string bands, shadow dancing, and more.

Music & Movement – Each day, children engage in music and dance activities tied to a specific theme. For example:

\*Animal Classifications (Ocean, Farm, Wild)

\*All About Me ("Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes")

\*Season (Winter, Fall, Spring, Summer)

\*Life Cycles (Plants, Insects, Water)

This program fosters rhythm, coordination, and self-expression through movement and song.

Play-Based Curriculum & Cultural Learning – A dedicated dramatic play corner and activity stations provide hands-on experiences using natural and artistic materials. Dramatic play encourages children to act out real-life scenarios, helping them process emotions and develop essential social skills like empathy and cooperation.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) – Children ages 3-5 participate in a daily 30-minute STEAM session, blending creativity with critical thinking. Activities include:

\*Engineering structures using sticks

\*Creating unique ways of painting with mud, or flower peddles

\*Observing chemical reactions by combining baking soda and colored vinegar

These activities enhance problem-solving skills and promote an understanding of cause and effect.

\*Dramatic Play Corner – Each month, this space transforms into a new themed environment, such as a house, enchanted garden, grocery store, space station, or community workplace. Dramatic play allows children to explore different roles, fostering imagination, storytelling, and social interaction.

The Wyoming Arts Council grant will support the expansion of our outdoor classrooms, creating new spaces designed to inspire creativity and exploration. Our goal is to enhance the outdoor art area, providing children with more opportunities to engage in hands-on artistic expression while immersed in nature. With this grant, the Children's Discovery Center will continue to foster imaginative, exploratory learning, encouraging young minds to create, discover, and grow in an enriching outdoor environment.

### **Project Support Narrative**

In addition to our robust preschool programming, community engagement is at the heart of the Children's Discovery Center (CDC) mission. We believe that learning extends beyond the classroom, which is why we offer enriching, hands-on experiences that connect children with local artists, educators, and intergenerational partners. These programs inspire creativity, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning.

With the support of this grant, we can continue to expand and enhance our community-based programs, which include:

\*Intergenerational Program – Every week, our 3–4-year-olds visit the Sublette Center, where they engage with senior residents through arts activities such as coloring, building with Magna-Tiles, playing games, and dancing with scarves, bells, and shakers. These interactions foster empathy, social connections, and a sense of community.

\*Stained Glass Classes – Since 2015, local stained-glass artist Hayley Ruland has guided CDC students in crafting stained glass Christmas ornaments. These treasured creations bring beauty to both families and our school community year after year.

\*STEAM Class – Our Preschool and Pre-K students participate in a weekly STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) session at the Pinedale Elementary School, where they experiment, problem-solve, and explore the wonders of hands-on science and engineering.

\*Character Counts- Ms. Tamara comes over weekly from the Elementary School to provide a Lesson on manners and feelings.

\*We currently are still seeking a yoga instructor again to come teach kids yoga once a month for our Preschool and Pre-K class.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

At the Children’s Discovery Center (CDC), community-based programs are a cornerstone of our mission, providing children with opportunities for growth beyond traditional preschool programming. These initiatives enrich children’s lives by fostering connections with the broader community while offering engaging, hands-on learning experiences.

One of our most beloved programs is the Intergenerational Program, which takes place every week throughout the year. Our 3-4-year-olds visit the Sublette Center, where they participate in a variety of arts-based activities, such as coloring, building with magna tiles, and dancing to music using scarves, bells, and shakers. This program not only allows children to interact with older generations but also encourages them to express themselves creatively while building important social and emotional skills. Next year will look a little different, the Sublette Center is moving to the new hospital and we will have an addition preschool class. They will have more space for us to enjoy our time with them including an outdoor playground.

Each month, we also collaborate with Ms. Kathy, a local Children’s Library Specialist to offer a Storytime class at the Children's Discovery Center. This program integrates storytelling with singing and moving, encouraging children to use their imagination and movement skills to bring stories to life.



In addition to music, the CDC offers Pottery Classes with Mae Orm, a local artist and owner of Pinedale Arts and Crafts. Mae works with our 4-5-year-old students during a two-week Art Week in the summer, where they create unique pieces of art, such as clay pottery and mosaic paintings. Mae has also been providing yearly art lessons to this age group since January 2020, offering children the chance to explore different art forms while building their creativity.

Another highly anticipated program is our Stained Glass Classes, led by local stained-glass artist Hayley Ruland. Each year, the students create stained-glass Christmas ornaments, a tradition that has been ongoing since 2015. These beautiful pieces of art are treasured by families and the school alike, showcasing the children's creative skills while introducing them to a unique and intricate art form.

Lastly, our Pre-K class attends a weekly STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) class at the Pinedale Elementary School. These engaging sessions provide students with opportunities to explore and experiment with a wide range of scientific and artistic concepts, helping them develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a love for discovery.

Together, these community-based programs offer our children a well-rounded, enriching experience that fosters both creative expression and connection to the world around them. Through these collaborations, the CDC continues to nurture the development of our students, preparing them for future success while creating lasting memories and skills that will last a lifetime.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

At the Children's Discovery Center (CDC), one of our primary Arts Learning objectives is to integrate interactive arts programs into our curriculum, providing young learners with hands-on experiences that support cognitive, social, and motor development. Arts education is vital for cultivating the next generation of creative and innovative thinkers, and at the CDC, we ensure that art is not just an occasional activity but an essential part of a child's daily life.

Early exposure to the arts has been proven to enhance children's readiness for academic success, particularly in STEAM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics). With the support of this grant, the CDC will continue to provide year-round arts education for children as young as two years old, embedding creative learning into daily, weekly, and monthly routines. Additionally, funding will allow us to expand hands-on experiences by inviting local artists to lead workshops, further enriching our students' artistic exploration.

Another critical goal of this initiative is to empower teachers to nurture children's artistic journeys. This includes encouraging artistic expression through open-ended conversations (e.g., "Tell me about your picture."), providing diverse creative materials such as watercolors, chalk, clay, scissors, and stamps, and focusing on the process rather than the product to emphasize creativity, effort, and discovery over perfection.

Beyond skill development, free artistic expression has profound benefits for mental health and emotional well-being. A creative outlet can help children process emotions, relieve stress, and develop resilience. By fostering artistic confidence, our teachers play a vital role in supporting children's growth both inside and outside the classroom.

By investing in arts education and cultural engagement, the CDC is committed to providing all children with access to high-quality early learning experiences that spark creativity, curiosity, and a lifelong love of the arts. With this grant, we will continue to inspire young minds and strengthen our connection to the community—ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

At the Children's Discovery Center (CDC), we believe that the arts are essential to a child's development, fostering creativity, self-expression, and critical thinking. Throughout the year, we collaborate with highly skilled artists and educators who bring their expertise to our classrooms, creating a rich, supportive environment where children can explore and develop their artistic abilities. These collaborations allow our students to engage with various art forms, from yoga and music to stained glass and abstract painting.

Ms. Kathy, a Children's Library Specialist at the Sublette County Library in Pinedale comes to read and sing to us once a month, our Pre-K class visits the library to participate in her engaging, movement-based literacy sessions, which help children connect storytelling with physical expression.

For several years, the CDC has partnered with local artist Hayley Ruland, who introduces students to the intricate art of stained glass. Each child creates a unique piece of art, learning to coordinate hand movements while carefully placing pieces together. While the idea of glass and toddlers might seem like an unusual mix, Hayley and our dedicated staff ensure a safe and enriching experience where children gain confidence in their artistic abilities.

The Pinedale Fine Arts Council (PFAC) has been a cornerstone of the Sublette County arts community since 1976, bringing high-quality arts programming to local residents. We are incredibly grateful for PFAC's dedication to promoting the arts and providing early exposure to creative performances. Throughout the year, we collaborate with this outstanding organization to bring school performances specifically designed for preschoolers.

Mae Orm, a talented local artist and business owner, has contributed greatly to the CDC's artistic atmosphere, having painted several murals at our center and hosted community art fundraisers. We hope to expand her involvement by offering a monthly abstract art class, allowing our students to explore color, form, and creative expression in a dynamic way. Twice a year, the CDC also hosts an art auction, where children create and showcase

their artwork to raise funds for the school. With Mae's guidance, we aim to enhance these projects, making them even more engaging and meaningful for our young artists.

Through these meaningful partnerships, the CDC is committed to providing children with enriching, hands-on artistic experiences that nurture creativity and self-expression. By continuing to collaborate with local artists and organizations, we ensure that the arts remain a vibrant and integral part of early childhood education in our community.

### **Budget Narrative**

The CDC is funded through 6 sources:

1. Grants: Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Community Foundation, Sublette BOCES, Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, and Sublette County Recreational Board. 2. & 3. Town/County Funding. 4. Tuition. 5. Donations. 6. Fundraising.

### **Expenses**

1. Operating costs: outdoor classroom maintenance, monthly classroom supplies, and specific classroom materials focusing on the monthly theme 2. Project support costs: Artist Fees: Art classes. Supplies for daily indoor/outdoor art materials (music and movement, STEAM, play-based curriculum, & dramatic play), and art supplies for an intergenerational program including bird houses and art supplies, 3. Two specific new projects. With continued construction of outdoor classroom such as costs include lumber, fence, concrete, tables, sensory bin, and blocks, and landscaping.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CITIZENS FOR A CIVIC AUDITORIUM

WWW.CASPERLYRIC.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2nd Annual Fringe Festival

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Lyric's mission is to become a central hub for arts and culture in Casper, offering quality programming, entertainment, and education for citizens statewide and beyond through the realization of a performing arts hall.

The Lyric's mission for the Wyoming Fringe Festival is to provide the time and space for artists to share their talents while also providing artist honorarium to support and build the performing arts community in Natrona County and beyond.

In its current capacity as a rental facility, the Lyric will be putting on the 2nd Annual Wyoming Fringe Festival August 8th-10th, 2025. Our goals for this second year festival include:

- Increase festival attendance by 25% (27 individuals) as compared to attendance from the 2024 Inaugural Wyoming Fringe Festival (average 110 patrons per day).
- Increase the number of Fringe festival performers by 20% (adding 2 performers or performing groups) as compared to the previous year which had 11 performing acts.
- Incorporate a festival opening night event on August 8th featuring a headliner act with the goal of bringing in 75 patrons for this specific event.
- Draw a wide variety of performers which may include theater, dance, magic, comedy, and music by advertising via social media, colleges & universities, and through the social networks of volunteers.

The Lyric has begun the call for performer applications with public ticket sales beginning June 1st, 2025. We anticipate drawing performers and visitors from across Wyoming and neighboring states. Last year's festival featured performers from Casper, Cheyenne, Laramie, and South Dakota.

### Community

This year's Fringe Festival will primarily serve Casper and Natrona County while attracting patrons from surrounding areas. Our target audience includes arts enthusiasts eager to explore new genres—like theatergoers discovering contemporary dance or experimental performances.

Natrona County Demographics: Population: 79,941 Median Household Income: \$71,247 Persons in poverty: 10.5%

Race:

- White (not hispanic/latino): 85.5%
- Hispanic: 9.6%
- Black: 1.2%
- American Indian: 1.4%
- Asian: 1%
- Persons with disabilities (under age 65): 11.9%

The Lyric meets ADA compliance for its era of construction, offering handicapped seating in all performance spaces. Large-print programs are available upon request. Notices at the venue and online inform patrons that accommodation requests can be made, with contact details provided for advance inquiries.

Last year's festival welcomed a diverse audience spanning all ages, including families and individuals. Performers ranged from elementary-aged children to adults. With a commitment to affordability, last year's \$25 ticket gave access to 11 acts over two days. To broaden accessibility, we will offer free tickets to senior residences and facilities serving individuals with disabilities (e.g., iReach2, Arc of Natrona County, Casper Senior Center). Discounted rates will be available for local high schools, Casper College, and Children's Theater participants.

Our planning committee includes The Lyric staff, Daniel Quintana (Opera Wyoming), Bill Conte (Theatre of the Poor), and Shea Ward (former Casper Theater Company Board Member). Last year, this group founded the Wyoming Fringe Festival to fill the state's need for a Fringe event and unite theater companies, aiming to establish a long-term theater consortium led by The Lyric.

## **Evaluation**

We will evaluate this year's festival by surveying attendees post-event. After the inaugural Fringe Festival, we sent a Google Forms survey to those with email addresses, asking about performances attended, ratings, and likelihood of returning. Performers received a separate survey to assess satisfaction, recommendations, and overall feedback. Open-ended questions allowed us to collect qualitative data, which we are using to plan for 2025. One key takeaway was the need for more concessions. To improve response rates, we'll collect contact info from in-person ticket buyers.

We will also track ticket sales and attendance at each performance to assess programming strengths and areas for improvement. Other quantitative data we will collect include social media metrics on posts leading up to and during the festival.

Further evaluation will come from in-person discussions with artists and patrons, allowing for candid, real-time feedback. To ensure accessibility, we'll offer multiple survey options, including online, phone, and mail-in.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

The 2nd Annual Wyoming Fringe Festival will take place August 8–10, 2025, at The Lyric in Casper, Wyoming. The festival kicks off Friday with a special event featuring Casper natives Playwright Matthew Spangler, Author Nina McConigley, and Denver Center for Performing Arts Director of Literary Programs Leean Torske. They will discuss the power of performing arts, adapting books for the stage, and their new play *Cowboys and East Indians*, including a live stage reading.

Fringe performances will run on Saturday and Sunday, with multiple showtimes for each production, each under an hour, allowing patrons to attend flexibly and experience a diverse array of performances. The inaugural festival featured 11 acts and 19 performances over two days, and we expect an equally exciting lineup this year. The festival lobby will serve as a gathering space for networking, artist promotion, and showcasing upcoming seasons from participating organizations.

Our planning partners, Daniel Quintana (Opera Wyoming) and William Conte (Theatre of the Poor), have helped launch the statewide performer application process and shared it within their networks. We are advertising applications via social media, our website, and artist directories through the Wyoming Arts Council, targeting theater, singer-songwriters, musicians, folk and native artists, poets, writers, and dancers. Direct email invitations are also being sent to potential performers.

In addition to our planning partners, we have invited Casper College, Kelly Walsh High School, and Natrona County High School to participate, expanding opportunities for students and emerging artists. Festival promotion will leverage both paid and earned media through Townsquare Media, Breck Media, the Casper Star-Tribune, Oil City News, and local radio stations. We will also engage community performing arts networks to broaden outreach once the lineup is finalized in June.

We are requesting \$5,000 in project support for the festival. These funds will be used to support bringing in special guests Matthew Spangler, Nina McConigley, & Leann Torske (\$4,500). It will also help support the artist honorariums (\$4,500, \$250 per performance for 12 artists and/or groups.) Our total cash expenses equal \$15,790. This figure includes the guest travel fees, artist honorarium, in addition to marketing and venue costs (insurance, cleaning fees, food, beverage, print, advertising, ticketing, etc.)

The performing arts and events like a fringe festival play a crucial role in enriching Wyoming communities, culture, and quality of life. Providing a platform for diverse voices, cultures, and stories, the performing arts have the power to foster cultural expression and understanding, offering audiences an opportunity to engage with different perspectives and appreciate diversity. They also strengthen community connections, bringing people together through shared experiences and creating a sense of pride and belonging.

The performing arts stimulate both the heart and the mind. Fringe festivals, in particular, are often more accessible, breaking down barriers by offering affordable tickets, inclusive programming, and opportunities for all to engage with the arts. Ultimately, The Lyric and the power of performing arts contribute to the cultural vibrancy of our community, enriching the lives of those who participate in and experience them.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The budget covers venue expenses, graphic design, marketing, staffing, and other expenditures. Festival artists will receive complimentary use of the facility for a week prior for rehearsals if needed. In-kind venue contributions account for approximately 47% of total expenses, while in-kind staff contributions account for about 18%.

Following the 2024 inaugural festival, sponsorships allowed us to provide artist honorariums of \$250 per performance. We plan to offer this honorarium again, with the potential for increased compensation depending on available funding. Currently, this payout for 12 artists, based on the number of performance days, accounts for roughly 12% of the budget.

We are applying for support from the WY Com Trust Fund, WY Community Found, the Myra Fox Skelton Fund, and the WY Humanities Council. Regardless of grant outcomes, we will seek corporate sponsorships and marketing grants from Visit Casper and local media to pay for additional advertising and honorariums.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CITY OF CHEYENNE/COMMUNITY RECREATION AND EVENTS

[WWW.CHEYENNEPRESENTS.ORG](http://WWW.CHEYENNEPRESENTS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cheyenne Presents Fridays on the Plaza - Cheyenne's Summer Music Festival

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Cheyenne Community Recreation and Events is to create community through people, parks, and programs by providing all recreational opportunities at the highest level that positively affects our quality of life, and that assists in the economic development of our community.

Strategic Goal: 1. To provide a variety of performance and entertainment opportunities to challenge and meet the cultural needs of the community, while also providing a multi-use venue to use for outdoors events to build a strong community through connections. 2. To provide a personable, professional connection between the community and the programs, events, and amenities provided through quality customer service. 3. The bring a diverse selection of bands throughout the thirteen weeks to engage all. 4. To bring families, community, and friends together to enjoy culture, arts, history, and social engagement.

### Community

Cheyenne, Wyoming, is a vibrant community with over 65,000 residents and a diverse demographic composition: 81.3% White, 16% Hispanic or Latino, 2.9% Black or African American, 0.8% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1.2% Asian, according to the 2023 U.S. Census Bureau. Despite this diversity, 9.3% of the population faces economic hardship, highlighting the need for accessible and affordable recreational activities that promote social connections and inclusivity. Programs that unify the community and support individuals with disabilities and older adults are essential for strengthening Cheyenne's sense of belonging.

A key initiative addressing these needs is Fridays on the Plaza, a free weekly event at Depot Plaza that has been bringing people together since 2005. This event offers family-friendly entertainment while promoting cultural exchange and inclusivity. With accessibility as a central focus, Fridays on the Plaza caters to all community members, including low-income residents and individuals with disabilities. The event creates a space for connection and ensures that everyone, regardless of background or ability, can participate and enjoy the experience. While the average attendee is around 36 years old, at least one event each season is designed to appeal to a broader audience, promoting inclusivity for all.



To further support inclusivity, we have a dedicated process for accommodating individuals with specific needs, ensuring their full participation in activities. We encourage attendees to request accommodations, and our team will try to fulfill these requests. By listening to the community's needs and providing appropriate support, we strive to create an environment where everyone feels valued, ensuring a truly inclusive and enriching experience for all.

## **Evaluation**

The success of Fridays on the Plaza is assessed through community feedback and its economic impact. Attendee engagement is monitored via social media, and in 2024, Fridays on the Plaza gained over 1,500 new followers. With 9,900 followers on Facebook and 1,500 on Instagram, all marketing efforts have remained organic. The highest-performing content in 2024 received over 281,000 views, 2,500 likes, 131 comments, and 196 shares, demonstrating the event's strong community presence.

In addition to engagement, the event has a significant economic influence. According to Visit Cheyenne (2024), 15% of attendees travel over 50 miles to participate, which highlights Fridays on the Plaza's regional appeal. Each event is estimated to generate \$75,000 in economic activity, totaling approximately \$1,125,000 over the 14-week season (15 shows).

By measuring outcomes through feedback and economic impact, Fridays on the Plaza continues to demonstrate its value, enhancing Cheyenne's cultural vibrancy while supporting local businesses. It remains a beloved, respected, and highly anticipated event within the community.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The grant funding will be strategically allocated to key areas to ensure the success and growth of Fridays on the Plaza. A significant portion will be dedicated to securing a diverse range of local, regional, and national artists, covering performance fees, travel expenses, and accommodations as needed. This approach will help attract high-quality talent that resonates with the community and enhances the festival's cultural offerings.

We will also prioritize event production costs, including rental fees for the backline equipment necessary for the artists to ensure seamless and professional performances. Sponsorships, along with a limited budget from the City, are essential funding sources to support the Fridays on the Plaza Summer Music Festival, which runs for ten weeks. The budget is carefully designed to align with the festival's vision, ensuring a diverse lineup of musicians and bands that provide exceptional entertainment for the community every Friday during the summer months.

We are actively working to secure additional sponsorships and are incredibly grateful for the support of the Wyoming Arts Council, which helps ensure the long-term sustainability of this remarkable festival. With the City's budget, the Wyoming Arts Council grant, and the generous backing of our sponsors, Fridays on the Plaza will continue to foster a strong sense of community and cultural enrichment through the arts.

## **Project Support Narrative**

Fridays on the Plaza enhances cultural access in Cheyenne by providing free, diverse, and inclusive entertainment. The event removes financial barriers and ensures Depot Plaza is fully accessible, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds, including low-income households, underserved communities, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Over 10 weeks, the series fosters cultural engagement and social connections through high-quality artistic experiences. Featuring local, regional, and national artists selected for their excellence, the event offers a diverse range of music genres. Local musicians will perform, and professionals, including Appaloosa Broadcasting radio hosts and Cheyenne Civic Center production staff, will help create a seamless experience. Community members assist with promotion and provide feedback to enhance engagement.

The dedicated Community Recreation and Events (CRE) marketing team manages artist bookings, contracts, and promotions, while the in-house production team executes the event. With an L-Acoustics sound system and a mobile stage, they deliver a top-tier production that elevates the audience experience.

Running from June 6–August 15, 2025, every Friday from 6:00–8:30 PM at Depot Plaza, the series will feature fresh performances each week. Collaborations with local nonprofits and food vendors further expand outreach, making Fridays on the Plaza an inclusive, enriching event for the entire community.

Our organization is committed to engaging underserved communities, ensuring everyone can benefit from Fridays on the Plaza. We recognize the diverse needs of individuals, including those with disabilities, older adults, veterans, low-income individuals, rural residents, non-native English speakers, and people from various cultural backgrounds.

We use multiple advertising channels to promote inclusivity, including radio announcements, print materials (newspapers, posters, and stickers), and the Cheyenne Presents social media platforms. We print 200 posters distributed to businesses throughout the city, alongside other promotional efforts. Our events also highlight diverse artists, creating a space where all attendees can connect with cultural relevance.

Our leadership and staff come from varied communities, enabling us to incorporate diverse perspectives and address the unique needs of Cheyenne during planning.

We prioritize accessibility at Depot Plaza, which complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), offering accessible parking, designated seating, and ADA-compliant porta potties. We encourage attendees to request accommodations in advance to ensure full participation in this inclusive event.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Our budget is strategically aligned with the vision of Fridays on the Plaza, providing a diverse lineup of musicians and bands that offer exceptional music to the community every Friday during the summer months. Grant funding will be allocated to essential areas that directly contribute to the success of Fridays on the Plaza. Producing this 10-week event involves significant costs, allowing us to feature local, regional, and national artists such as The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus, Los Lonely Boys, 3OH!3!, Saliva, Hinder, Daya, and more. The funding will cover performance fees, travel expenses, and hotel accommodations to attract top talent, as well as event production costs, including backline equipment rentals for the artists. While the City provides approximately a quarter of the overall budget, the rest of the revenue is generated through community support and sponsorships.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CITY OF CODY/PARKS, RECREATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES DEPARTMENT

WWW.CODYWY.GOV

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025 Concert in the Parks

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The City of Cody Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities will provide attractive parks, facilities, and innovative recreational opportunities to enhance the quality of life for everyone. The Concert series helps enhance the cultural arts climate in Cody by providing an opportunity for youth, senior citizens, families, residents, and visitors to come together and enjoy quality live music at no cost. These free concerts expose many individuals who may not normally have access to or be able to afford this caliber of entertainment to enjoy unique cultural and recreational opportunities. Each summer we are thrilled to reach out to local retirement and assisted living centers who bring their residents to the park to enjoy the lovely setting and live music. We welcome out-of-town youth tour groups who stop by City Park before the Cody Nite Rodeo or other outings during their stay. Each week the audience mix is eclectic and ranges in age from newborns to the elderly.

### Community

The sun's setting over City Park, live music fills the air, and the whole community comes together for another magical evening at Cody's Concerts in the Park. And the best part is it's completely free. These aren't just your average park concerts – they're weekly celebrations where everyone belongs. We've made it our mission to bring the whole community together, from our cherished seniors at local retirement homes (who get front-row views of the action) to visitors staying at nearby campgrounds. Just bring a chair or blanket, find your perfect spot on the grass, and let the music work its magic. If you need a hand getting settled or would prefer a designated seating area, our friendly staff is always ready to help. We've thought of all the details – easy-access parking spots right by the bandshell and convenient restroom facilities for folks with mobility needs. We're spreading the word far and wide, partnering with everyone from the Cody Country Chamber of Commerce to local hotels, the VFW, Elks Lodge, and Lions Club. Because here's the thing: these concerts aren't just about the music – they're about bringing our community closer together, one summer evening at a time.

### Evaluation

This season we are bringing back the collection box for feedback at the park to receive postcard evaluations during each weekly concert. We will also have an online link to the form to fill out electronically. These forms help identify how people find out about concerts, how many concerts they have attended or plan to attend, where people are from, as well as a spot to include comments or concerns. We use this feedback to target our marketing budget for the next series. Staff introducing that evening's performers will encourage concertgoers to provide their feedback as well as walk around during the performance to collect feedback from individuals or groups attending the

concert. We perform a head count at intermission to get our attendance for the show. We follow up with each performer to collect feedback following their show so we can provide better feedback for the next year. The concert coordinator compiles all feedback and shares it with the selection committee at the end of the season. The committee uses feedback data to plan for the next season.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The 2025 Concerts in the Park series offers free weekly outdoor concerts in Cody's downtown City Park band shell through July and August. The series begins July 10th and culminates with our Annual Ice Cream Social on August 14th. Artists slated to perform this year include, Little Jane and the Pistol Whips (Country/Folk-Livingston, MT), Fable of the Fall (Roots/Alt-folk-Denver, CO), Soul Skillet (Soul/Blues-Billings, MT), Jamie Hansen (Pop country-Pinedale, WY), Jarrod Turner (Country-Nashville, TN), and Rude Diary (Rock blend-Cody, WY). All artists have several years of performing together and have excellent references. These performers will be selected from a pool of more than 30 submissions this year and chosen by a selection committee based on their style, genre and musical variety; interest to the community; family-friendly focus; requested dates and fees; performance strength; and regional appeal. The committee meets in February to compile a preliminary schedule with first performer choices and alternates for each date of the concert season. Before the selection committee convening, the concert coordinator solicits submissions from interested performers by email, social media, websites, mass mailings, phone calls, and community recommendations. We also work closely with a handful of management companies and booking agents who annually send us a number of performers to consider who will be traveling through our area during the concert season. The City of Cody is a member of the Wyoming Arts Alliance and works closely with them to get the word out about our concert series and reviewed several submissions from that source. Some performers were not selected because the committee felt they may not be able to present a strong enough performance because they are a solo or acoustic act, or their genre may not appeal to our audience as well as others who were chosen. The committee is excited about the robust lineup for this summer's concert series.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Thursday evening, beginning on July 10 and concluding with the much-loved Annual Ice Cream Social on August 14- a signature event courtesy of The Cody City Council. The concerts offer an inviting atmosphere for families and individuals to revel in a diversity of live music without charge. Taking place from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, come rain or shine, these events not only provide unparalleled entertainment but also galvanize the local economy by attracting tourists and supporting our musicians. The series has successfully cultivated a dedicated base of both music and performers who eagerly anticipate its return each summer. Every year, the vibrant community of Cody comes alive with a much-anticipated outdoor concert series, which has become a cornerstone of summer festivities. This series, hosted in the heart of downtown at City Park, draws enthusiastic crowds each. The City of Cody Parks, Recreation & Public Facilities Department is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for everyone by providing attractive parks, facilities, and innovative recreational opportunities. Our concerts in the park series is a key part of our yearly offerings, contributing to the overall well-being of users of all abilities and ages. The beautiful park setting and live music are particularly enjoyed by residents of local retirement and assisted living centers. This project has been approved by the City of Cody annually and does not pose risks to the financial health of the organization. The Concerts in the Park 2025 project meets various goals in the City of Cody's master plan including fostering opportunities for social events & civic engagement for residents & visitors, supporting visitor experience to extend the length of stay of tourists and helping to support the Park County Travel Council by expanding outdoor recreation activities within Cody.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

## **Budget Narrative**

Funding for Concerts in the Park comes from multiple sources. Grant funding is usually received from Wyoming Arts Council, Park County Travel Council, Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, and the Shoshone Recreation District. Funding is also received from community members and businesses along with the City of Cody. The City of Cody pays for staffing fees and allows a budgeted amount annually in the event of low sponsorships or grant funding, which helps ensure the financial stability of the concert series. The Concerts in the Park series has had a handful of long-standing community sponsors, both businesses and private donors, as well as a few new sponsors year after year. Donors are able to make a donation through our website or can send in the donation by mail. We try to keep the donation process as easy as possible. The WAC along with other grants, and community sponsors will be able to provide a free, fun, outdoor concert series for people of all ages and walks of life to enjoy.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CITY OF RAWLINS / DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

DOWNTOWNRAWLINS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Cowboy Fest on the Divide

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Rawlins Downtown Development Authority (DDA)'s mission is to enhance a vibrant, historic downtown that creates economic vitality.

Rawlins DDA serves as the heart of the community where people come together to enjoy the convenience and friendliness of hometown businesses, local services, specialty shopping, and unique recreational and cultural activities.

One of our long-term goals of Downtown Rawlins is to continue to enhance the cultural experience by hosting various events, projects, and programs by providing opportunities for our community to congregate in our downtown district and to experience and partake in recreational, artistic, and cultural activities for the community and our guests. The volunteer committees who execute our programming understand the strength in having broad demographics with a mixture of genre. Another long-term goal is displaying and creating opportunities for art to enhance our community economically and educationally and to increase the quality of life for our citizens and their everyday life. We strive to maintain a friendly environment and promote a positive spirit.

### Community

Rawlins is located in the south-central portion of Wyoming in Carbon County. The City of Rawlins Master plan vision is: The City of Rawlins strives to develop and maintain a safe, economically viable, healthy and appealing community in which all citizens can take pride. Rawlins DDA structures events with diversity, equity, and inclusion always as a top priority. We started including Spanish/English translation on posters and the website which creates the ability for better accessibility to our non-dominant Spanish-speaking communities of Rawlins and enhances our ability to make our events more inclusive. Also, staffing and volunteers have become more diverse.

Rawlins DDA provides opportunities for our community to congregate in the downtown district to experience cultural and artistic activities – such as SummerFest, Tis the Season and now Cowboy Fest on the Divide. Our mission incorporates a wider focus than the arts, but we love to promote and incorporate these great resources

into our events whenever possible. Each event is hosted in venues that are ADA accessible. it is not often but when needed, Rawlins DDA takes into account direct requests for accessibility accommodations at our events.

Rawlins DDA partners with other organizations and through data informs the organization on changing demographics and needs of our community, and, in accordance with our attention to accessibility, we structure and guide all our events to be suitable for all ages, gender, ability, and mental abilities.

## **Evaluation**

Rawlins DDA documents all our programs through photographs, video, audio and other media whenever possible. Additionally, we track all costs through budget practices, participation at events, and gathering data for return on investment for each program. Questionnaires, surveys, and checklists are also a means that we use to evaluate our programs. These methods are best when we need to quickly and/or easily obtain large amounts of information from people in a non-aggressive way. This documentation, besides serving as a record of activities, will be a part of our evaluation data and be used for advocacy and publicity purposes.

Before planning any event, the Rawlins DDA volunteer committee members discuss the goals of each event, and how it serves our mission and vision. At the completion of each event, the Rawlins DDA volunteer committee members discuss and evaluate the outcome of each event. These methods provide increased depth and a greater extent of information allowing our evaluation process to be more thorough, detailed, and informative. This assists us in shaping aspects of our events and programs and if we should add or subtract based on the feedback we receive.

All the information and data gathered in our evaluation informs Rawlins DDA if we have met our objective for the event and determines impacts over time to the economic vitality of the Downtown District, City and County.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Rawlins Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is excited for the ninth year to bring a fall event, usually called ArtBeat to Downtown Rawlins. Each year this event brings more people downtown by adding artists and activities. ArtBeat has been a RESOUNDING SUCCESS over the last 8 years, and that is why this year Rawlins DDA has been asked by Wyoming Middle School and High School Rodeo to partner with them and the County to bring a bigger event to the downtown, the City and County. Last year's Middle and High School Rodeo 3-day event brought in over 1,000 people just for that weekend at the fairgrounds and with ArtBeat's participation last year at around 1,200, the combination of both events coming together will most likely push us over 2,500.

Rawlins DDA, in partnership with the Wyoming Middle School and High School, Discover Carbon County and the County will take our existing ArtBeat event and change the date – instead of October we are moving it to September to accommodate the rodeo schedule and to add some new events such as a Quilt Show, a Brand show and so much more. We will still feature local artists in downtown businesses, two live music performances, and displays from Rawlins High School, Middle and Elementary School students. We will continue to have opportunities for the community to "CREATE" art with their own hands, with a majority of them being provided for free. This year's event will definitely have a western and heritage theme.



Introducing Cowboy Fest on the Divide! Set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Continental Divide, this one-of-a-kind event celebrates the rich heritage, artistry, and community spirit of Carbon County and Wyoming. Stroll through vibrant merchants featuring talented artisans, admire the craftsmanship of the quilt show, and enjoy live music that captures the heart of the West. Savor delicious local flavors and experience the unique brand show honoring the deep ranching traditions of our region. Whether you're a rodeo athlete, a proud parent, or a local community member, Cowboy Fest on the Divide is a true celebration of western culture, creativity, and connection. Join us for a weekend of fun, tradition, and Wyoming pride in Downtown Rawlins!

Allocation of Fund will be dedicated into four categories:

- Fund 50% of allocation to local artists for music performances during the weekend
- Fund 20% of allocation to the "Create" activities that introduce APPROACHABLE ART at little or no charge to the community that may have not had the opportunity to create.
- Fund 15% of allocation for artists stipends or demonstration needs
- Fund 15% of allocation to marketing and promoting the event regionally and statewide.

### **Project Support Narrative**

NA

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The funding for Cowboy Fest on the Divide is a combination of cash and in-kind from the following: partnerships, sponsorships, donations and grants such as the WAC, as well as allocations from the City of Rawlins. Diverse funding sources for the event include event line-items, income from vendors, partner's in-kind donations, and Discover Carbon County for advertising.

As a nationally recognized Downtown, Rawlins DDA has successfully revitalized many aspects of our downtown and continues to grow these beneficial programs thanks to local, statewide, and national partnerships. Our yearly budget is created around the programs and events as outlined in our larger goals and overall mission. Rawlins DDA is financially sound due to attentive management, transparent accountability, support from the City of Rawlins, the Downtown Investment Program and grants.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CODY COUNTRY ART LEAGUE

[WWW.CODYCOUNTRYARTLEAGUE.COM](http://WWW.CODYCOUNTRYARTLEAGUE.COM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Community Outreach, Education and Marketing

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Cody Country Art League (CCAL) is dedicated to creating an environment for promotion, appreciation, and education in the visual arts.

Since 1964 we have provided a venue for artists- amateur to professional - to advance, learn, exhibit and sell their work. The Art League is a free place to connect our community with the visual arts as well as provide a place where they can begin or continue their art education.

Our strategic goals include providing art outreach to the community and developing more partnerships and opportunities for exposure to the arts and art education through these measures:

- 1) Offer more affordable art education opportunities including Art Camp and ART After School programs for K-12 students, and other educational programs for all ages. Our goal is to continually increase the numbers of students we service and the variety and diversity of classes we offer for artists of all abilities in all mediums. Rebuild our pottery studio.
- 2) Our 60th Annual Community Art Show - open to public participation. In 2024, we had 332 entries, which included 22 youth entries between the ages of K-12th.
- 3) Annual Membership and Friendship drive to increase revenue, participation, support and donations.
- 4) Establish and maintain a reserve account of at least 15% of total revenue annually.
- 5) Grow community participation in our annual Halloween fundraiser, "The Haunt", with a goal of \$20,000.
- 6) Further develop our Artist in Residence program and Brown Bag Lunch Talks for professional artist development.

### Community

Cody sits 50 miles east of Yellowstone. The population of Park County in 2024 was 31,082 people. We are open to the public all year long. We are handicap accessible in the gallery for ease of navigation. We have stepped up to build an exciting youth art program in a community that has eliminated art education in elementary schools. We are helping pick up that slack. We provide a venue for artists in this region to share their talents.

CCAL shares a doorway into the building that houses both the Cody Visitors Center and the Art League, who welcomed 90,268 visitors in 2024. We are open to the public year-round. Our artist members are either Wyoming or Montana residents of all ages and with a variety of talents. We are a space that welcomes people from all walks of life, from all over the world. Our doors are open to everyone. There is no fee to enter and experience the art produced by our members and on display in the gallery.

Our classroom space is on one level and accessible by all. We encourage and welcome everyone to take a class and work to keep our fees affordable.

We have an active and vibrant youth art program throughout the year including numerous Summer Art Camps and Art After School programs. We offer scholarships for kids to help ensure a broad range of students have the opportunity to participate in our programs. We have even helped provide additional art education for homeschooled children and students from Cooke City as well, further enhancing their art education. We provide supplies and materials for many introductory classes to help with the financial burden of learning a new art form.

### **Evaluation**

1) A key metric for us is membership growth, which has been on an upward trend since 2018. CCAL had 68 members in May 2018 and as of March 2025 we have 246 members. Membership support reflects community confidence in CCAL and results in strong support and positive impact for our artists and community. CCAL is the epitome of shopping local and we give artists and individuals alike the space to have a positive experience and a direct, positive effect on their community by supporting their friends and neighbors.

2) Increased attendance to our weekly classes and continued positive evaluations by participants

3) Increased donations and membership through our annual Friend Letter.

4) Increased participation in our Annual Show of both artists and guests.

5) increased fundraising from our annual Halloween event "The Haunt"

6) Increased sales of artwork.

7) Increased community support through event sponsorships and scholarship gifts.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

With over 246 artist members and friends, we have a strong pool to draw from to teach classes, provide free demonstrations, artwork for the gallery, and to participate in CCAL events, many of whom are professional artists or art instructors,

Supplemental funds from WAC will help us cover our expenses for supplies and advertising and promotion of our classes, special events and shows, as well as our annual fundraisers.

We offered 26 classes including Youth Programming in 2024. 19 members served as instructors for the classes. We anticipate close to doubling the number of classes we offer in 25-26.

We will also host a Master Class this year in conjunction with the Buffalo Bill Art Show, featuring one of their artists.

We also promote Featured Artists. Participating artists display and sell a larger body of work in the gallery when they are a featured artist. We host an opening reception which we advertise to the surrounding area and the show hangs for a month. We will host several openings in 25-26 which artists and the public alike enjoy and benefit from.

In 2024 the following 2-D and 3-D member artists were featured: John Moore, Sonja Jackson, Diana Barton, Kyle Hanson, Rachael Deyle, Holly Strum, Jesse Dzikowicz, Diana Scranton, Lorretta Derr, Melody and Olivia Christensen, Tim Proffitt, George VanBuren, Pat Snelling-Weiner, Annie McCoy, Shirley Shirley, Jeanne Whiteman, Trudy Fisher, Shawn Stewart and Linda Franson.

The 60th Annual Community Art Show is a huge, greatly anticipated event where we literally rehang the entire front gallery with all new work from participants. Any amateur to professional artist from 0-100+ is welcome to participate in this judged show. Last year there were 332 entries.

We provide multiple opportunities for the community to witness art in action with artist demonstrations at the gallery. Whether it's during Rendezvous Royale or the holidays or during the summer during our Artist in Residence program - the public is invited to come see and experience, for free, anytime.

Our Artist in Residence program was in full swing for 36 days last summer. Participating artists included Paige Bacon, Diana Scranton, Robert Nelson, Aaron and Denise Connelly, Steve Leonardi, Ted Richmond, Diana Barton, Michael Seib, Sherry Adams and Sonja Jackson. This gave artists the opportunity to show more of their work and also to demonstrate HOW they work as they converted our classroom into a studio space and extended gallery space for their tenure as Artist in Resident. We anticipate greater participation this year.

Many CCAL Artists volunteer.

Four host open studios in the classroom - Fern Bath, Tiffani Feeley, Steve Leonardi, and Paul Kethley.

Not-So Starving Artist Sale in September is to encourage artists to clean out studios and sell artwork, supplies and equipment no longer needed or used at discounted prices.

We have a Mini and Plein Air show.

Our Halloween fundraiser involves many artists and community members as we create an artistic experience for this event.

Holiday Open House with demos.

WAC funds are requested to help implement and market these programs and opportunities. Newspaper advertising, social media marketing, posters, radio, signage, brochures. If we need additional art supplies or materials, these funds can help there, as we like to include materials in some of our classes to help keep costs down to students, like some of our introductory classes, stained glass classes and ALL youth programs.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

We have great community support. Several businesses in Cody and private entities sponsor our Annual Show (helping provide prizes and awards) and also help underwrite our Halloween Haunt event.

We have instructors who donate their fees back to us.

Community members donate art supplies, tools and materials to CCAL.

We have applied for grant funding from Shoshone Recreation district to aid with major equipment purchases for our anticipated pottery studio.

Annual membership dues are key.

Donations.

Annual Friend Drive.

Artwork sales are a huge component as well.

These funding sources help us promote and encourage participation in the visual arts, whether as an experienced artist, a beginner or a child. We strive to provide lots of opportunities for inspiration, learning and professional development.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

CENTERFORTHEARTS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Center for the Arts: Maintaining a Community Landmark

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of The Center is to connect our creative community by providing a dedicated campus, supporting excellent programming, and nurturing a collaborative spirit. The vision of the Center is to make artistic experience central to Jackson Hole by embracing the values of stewardship, excellence, inclusion, creativity, and respect. Our work is focused on meeting the following strategic priorities listed below. The following accomplishments from 2024 are the first steps on our journey toward a sustainable future for the arts in Jackson.

1. Maintain and Enhance Our Facility: \$530,000 was invested in Phase 1 roof repair and replacement, Approximately \$100,000 was invested in Theater equipment upgrades
2. Support and Elevate the Work of our Resident Partners: Reduced Resident rent by 10%, Collaborated to co-present 12 events with Resident Partners
3. Promote Programmatic Excellence, Diversity, and Impact: 85 free events held on campus including Diverse Arts Initiatives
4. Build Operational and Financial Stability: Added \$1 million to The Center's Operating Endowment for a sustainable future for generations to come

The Center is proud to share its campus with 20 local, regional, and state-wide nonprofit Resident Organizations. The Center itself is also responsible for a variety of programming. The Center Presents series offers a varied selection of music, spoken word, film, and family programming. Campus Exhibitions add visual vibrancy by showcasing diverse visual artists through exhibitions and outdoor installations, many done in collaboration with other nonprofits and individual artists. The Center is rather unique. We are a nonprofit. We house other nonprofits. We partner with a variety of local, regional, and state-wide nonprofits. As such, collaboration is at the heart of all that we do. The shared campus allows diverse organizations to collaborate closely - with the sum so much greater than the individual parts.

## **Community**

Economic disparity is growing in Jackson, with a high concentration of wealth and high housing costs, creating a growing gap between the wealthy and those working in the local economy. In this growing economic divide, The Center is working hard to offer many free and affordable programs for all ages. Additionally, we are committed to reducing the overall rent paid by our Resident Organizations now and in the future. However, we face rising costs and significant repair and renovation expenses as our building ages, requiring ongoing investments to maintain a sustainable home for the arts.

The Center has many initiatives in place to better serve our community. In 2024, we launched The Discovery! Series, bringing a series of family-friendly acts to our stage at an affordable price. In April, we presented the Tlaxcala Cultural Celebration showcasing the cultural heritage of our Mexican community, in close partnership with numerous local, regional, and international partners. These two programs are emblematic of the power of community-driven programming that requires collaboration for the deepest impact. Inclusive and collaborative programming to expand our reach includes the Native Voices Series and Annual Pow-Wow; Thin Air Shakespeare; Annual Pride Fashion Show; Teen Takeover and so many more. We seek to provide access to the arts and remove barriers as much as possible, when accommodations are needed, we work hard to try to meet these requests. To improve accessibility and ease of navigation across campus, we are in the process of redesigning our entire campus wayfinding system in 2025-2026. This will result in updated interior and exterior signs, additional Spanish and handicap signage and ultimately provide visitors with greater ease while navigating campus.

## **Evaluation**

At the Center, we are constantly gathering feedback, evaluating and learning in order to better serve our community. For programs, this means looking at attendance rates, participant engagement and community impact. A recent example of this is the Teen Takeover. This event, presented by The Center in collaboration with Teton Music School, is a multifaceted evening where teen artists work for months to plan a one night takeover featuring music, art, theater, food and dance. Teens learn valuable event planning skills and are responsible for the schedule of events, marketing, set-up, clean up and wrap up. The event is now in its third year and in 2024 attracted over 200 youth. A survey was sent out to all participants and we collected some 200 survey results to help us plan for next year.

Campus operations is also evaluated including all maintenance and upgrades that benefit our many users including those that perform on the Center Stage. Operating the Center Theater is a large part of what we do, from programming to regular maintenance and technical upgrades. We take into account user feedback for theater operations and think of this valuable asset as our entire communities stage, one that impacts so many diverse constituents. In 2022, The Center, alongside several resident partners, formed the Center Arts Collective (CAC). The CAC members recognize the broader impact that can be achieved when working together in close collaboration to accomplish shared goals. The group meets quarterly to evaluate The Center as a whole, collectively and work towards a shared vision where all of the arts and cultural organizations on campus can thrive. The CAC is key to our efforts to consistently evaluate our model, systems and processes to make even greater impact collectively.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Operating support is directly in line with these strategic priorities for 2024-2027: Maintain and enhance our facility; Support and elevate the work of our Resident Partners; Promote programmatic excellence, diversity, and impact; Build financial and operational sustainability. The Center's operational costs include facilities, payroll, lease payments, mortgage payments, and professional fees (for example, cleaning & custodial support). Facilities maintenance makes up 23% of total spending, and include necessities such as HVAC and boiler maintenance, utilities, painting and roofing, and the cost of custodial services. Administration and Development spending account for 29% of total spending at The Center. Programs and Events make up 48% of total spending at The Center. The Center's programs and event expenses include theater supplies, concession supplies, staffing, box office and credit card service fees, and presenter and artist fees related to The Center's own programming and collaborations.

Occupying 78,000 square feet, we provide performance space in the 525-seat Center Theater, our black box theater, the outdoor amphitheater, and the adjacent Center Park at heavily discounted rates for Resident Organizations and other regional nonprofits. Our Resident Organizations also lease dance studios, music performance and practice rooms, art studios, education spaces, as well as office spaces at The Center. Our goal is to provide affordable access to excellent facilities for our arts community.

As The Center approaches its 20-year anniversary, many of the facility's original building materials are reaching the end of their usable lives and this will increase our operational costs. A comprehensive roof assessment was completed in 2021 and a phased repair schedule has been in place since 2022 and we are now in a multi-year effort to replace our entire roofing system. In 2023, two large sections of the roof were replaced as part of a multi-year endeavor to repair our damaged roof system, which over time has deteriorated due to extreme mountain weather. In 2024, the single largest area was replaced at a cost of more than \$500,000. We also invested in significant theater light upgrades in 2024. Looking ahead, we are planning to replace three snow melt system boilers for an estimated \$45,000. We are gearing up for another large section of the roof to be replaced in 2026 for an estimated \$325,000. Funds will be allocated to assist with this major and ongoing upgrades and repairs to our aging facility.

This past year, we have increased staff from 14 to 17 in the areas of fundraising and event production. Due to the need for increased staff, as well as the cost for major roof repairs, operational costs are significantly higher. Programming continues to increase; in 2024, we had 295 days with events in the Center Theater. Our staff is now made up of the following positions: Development Team (4); Marketing Team (2); Programming (2); Theater, events, production, box office (5); Facilities (2); Finances and Executive Director (2). The Center staff is running at full capacity and is poised to make significant progress on our strategic priorities set for 2024-2027; these priorities provide us with a clear road map to the future.

### **Project Support Narrative**

In addition to general operating funds, project funds will be used to support the Diverse Arts Initiative focusing on showcasing local and regional Native American and Latino cultural heritage programming.



The Center strives to increase representation by diverse artists with a priority to better serve the Latino community. The Latino population is a large and growing group that is currently underserved and underrepresented in the arts locally. The Latino population in Teton County is over 20% and this does not include surrounding areas such as Teton Valley and Alpine. This population now includes first, second and third generation family members. The Center has identified ways to better serve the Latino community based on information provided by staff, community members, members of the Latino focus group that includes survey responses. We are working to better serve this population through increased representation by Latino visual and performing artists, providing space and support for existing groups such as Latin Dance Night, increased family programming along with affordable ticket prices, and in our marketing efforts to help reduce language barriers.

In September 2025, the Center will host La China Sonidera for a one-week artist residency. The residency will achieve the following program priority to present diverse artists and introduce new musical genres that celebrate the cultural heritage of our Latino community. In addition to the concert performance at the Center Stage, we will make an even greater impact with music and dance education workshops, art exhibit by band member Zaira Avalos and outreach to the schools. A musical group hailing from Oaxaca, the music of La China Sonidera has roots in the sounds of Cumbia, but seasoned with touches of rock, hip hop and funk that incorporates a brass section. The lyrics range from humorous themes from the popular Mexican imagination to compositions of a social and protest nature without losing that spicy flavor that is a defining feature. The band is a reflection of an eclectic and multicultural society inspired by the culture of Oaxaca.

The Center is now in its third year of selecting an artist to for the exhibit as part of the Native Voices Series. The series presented by Central Wyoming College along with several other partner organizations. Our role has been to showcase one artist that can exhibit work as well as participate in outreach and community engagement opportunities. Each year we work with Wyoming Arts Council staff to select the visiting artist, oftentimes that recipient of the Native Arts Fellowship. We are committed to providing support and a prominent venue for Native Artists through this collaborative effort.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

## **Budget Narrative**

Approximately 50% of The Center's annual revenue is generated through earned income (i.e., leases, facility rentals, ticket sales, concessions, etc.) and the other half is through fundraising (including individual donors, business sponsors, grants, and development events). The Center is supported by business sponsors who provide cash as well as those who give in-kind support (i.e. catering, advertising, cleaning services). There are currently more than 30 sponsors active with The Center at varying levels of support. As The Center approaches 20 years of much-loved use, the facility and the financial model to sustain it are in need of updating. The Center has embarked on a four year Comprehensive Campaign in order to renovate and upgrade key campus areas, build a robust endowment, and continue to deliver on our mission to be Jackson's creative hub. This campaign is dedicated to the future and sustainability of The Center for generations to come.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

CREEK SIDE PERFORMING ARTS

[HTTPS://CSPA WYOMING.COM/](https://cspawyoming.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025 - 2026 Creek Side Performing Arts Performance Season

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Creek Side Performing Arts is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to enrich, educate, and entertain by providing opportunities for creative community involvement. Creek Side Performing Arts promotes education for the general public in the theatrical arts.

Our main priority is to give our community opportunities to be exposed to and educated in the theatrical arts such as dancing, singing, stage managing, costume design, set design and construction, and directing.

We will create opportunities for participants to discover their creative gifts and how to apply them to everyday life and their long-term professional life. For example, using writing skills to create original scripts, applying art techniques to set design, marketing, advertising, etc., and acting skills to careers in public speaking and team projects.

Our long-term goal is to become self-sustaining and offer more productions and workshops to our region.

### Community

We are the only community theater organization in Johnson County that serves all ages, demographics, and experiences. 25% of our population in Johnson County is over the age of 65 and the mean household income is around \$58,000. We operate out of Buffalo Wyoming, a rural community with an approximate population of 4,500 residents. In order to reach the majority of our community, we invite for free the senior citizen residents at Amie Holt Care Center, Willow Creek Elder Care Communities, and Agape Manor, and the Veteran community at the Veterans Home of Wyoming. We keep costs low by offering presale tickets on our website where adult tickets cost \$8, seniors and students \$3, and children 6 and under are free. We continue to not charge an audition fee so that all ages and incomes have an opportunity to participate in our productions.

### Evaluation

We evaluate our productions in the community through a variety of methods. Our Profit and Loss statements via our Treasurer, and the analytics from our website and social media pages provide the quantitative assessment of each production. Our qualitative methods include verbal feedback from participants and attendees, our program survey collected at the end of each show, and through our sponsors via advertising, in-kind donations, grants, and volunteer hours. After each production we have an evaluation meeting with board members to assess the data.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

All of the numbers we have compiled for our 2025 - 2026 season have been compiled using recent pricing and an average estimate of past productions. First is our justification for operating support, followed by project support.

CSPA has adopted the policy of sharing resources with any entity and organization that needs them. Our primary needs for operating/support costs come in the way of storage costs. In 2022 we lost our storage and practice location requiring us to relocate. With no real viable options to rent for our needs we have had to resort to storage of supplies through Uhaul rental units. A total of 5 units are required. We have of recent found another non-profit that will store our lumber which gives us opportunities to get rid of some storage units-more to come. Rental fees of our headquarters and PO Box is based on our contract with the building owner and the USPS.

The allocation for postage is based on the average cost for envelope and stamps our Treasurer uses for bills and mailings over the past two years.

Our productions are only as good as the amount of advertising we do for each production. In addition to the regional newspapers and radio stations we have worked with in the past, we would like to implement a Johnson County postcard mailing campaign for 3 of our shows to determine if this will increase our attendance.

We designed a new program layout where we have a colored, seasonal program with B&W inserts for each play. We have utilized Facebook Advertisements and had a great response with new audience members. This was met with great success by our casts, attendees, and board members due to the cost effectiveness of it. These numbers would reflect our 4-show season for 2025 - 2026.

The dues and fees category reflects the necessary aspects an organization needs to be a successful, active, non-profit business. This includes our website hosting, Chamber of Commerce membership, and 501c3 status. We tried an Amazon Prime account for two years and have discovered the benefits of it being cost-effective for props, costumes, theater equipment, etc. We want to expand to a business account for more discounts.

### **Project Support Narrative**

CSPA's presenting the following shows: Theatre Intensive with Performances (youth/adult) Summer 2025, Popcorn Falls (adult) Fall 2025, Christmas Carol holiday show (adult/youth) Winter 2025, and The Wizard of Oz JR. (youth) Spring 2026. Our Creekside Ground Pounders (clogging dance troupe) is starting to take off and are in need of shoes and costumes for performances. We switch our genres to guarantee our participants are exposed to all theatrical forms. Past genres have included Melodrama, Comedy, Horror, Farce, Mystery, Musical, etc. All the shows will be presented by board members and community volunteers. Among our board members and volunteers, several have degrees in vocal performance and theater, while all have a cumulative performing arts knowledge and experience of several decades. We will be holding an acting workshop in the spring for our budding artist in collaboration with Arts Along the Bighorns. All of the expenses for each show are based on the average of

past production P&Ls. While funds are designated specifically for each show, props, costumes, and set pieces will be reused for future shows.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

We receive funding predominantly from the Johnson County Recreation District and through sponsorship ads in our season's programs. Last year we counted the Wyoming Arts Council as one of our main funding sources. We were excited to include the WAC as for the past few years, funding for the JCRD has deceased. We resolved that deficiency by seeking outside funding (WAC), increasing our sponsorships, and investing in the technology to create show DVDs for sale. In-kind donations have come through the sharing of mics, props, costumes, set pieces, etc. with church organizations, residents of Johnson County, Sheridan theater organizations, and the Johnson County School District. All of our board members and volunteers work for free for the love of the theatrical arts. All of the funding received therefore is invested directly into our productions and organization to promote and sustain the theatrical arts in our community.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

DANCERS' WORKSHOP OF JACKSON HOLE

WWW.DWJH.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: General Operating Support for Dancers' Workshop

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Dancers' Workshop (DW) enriches lives by offering excellence and diversity in dance and movement experiences through education, performance, and outreach for audiences and students of all ages.

In its 53rd year of providing dance education to the western Wyoming town of Jackson Hole, DW is a multi-faceted year-round dance and arts organization and offers youth and adult dance and wellness classes. DW's adult offerings include a Country Western Dance program that keeps Wyoming's country dance roots alive and well. DW presents world-renowned dance companies, teaches dance outreach in elementary schools throughout the state of Wyoming, and hosts the only professional Modern dance company in the state: Contemporary Dance Wyoming (CDW).

Our local CDW dancers (some of whom are from all over the world) are able to live in Jackson Hole and support themselves as professional artists/dancers and wellness practitioners. DW works to make classes accessible for all demographics with its scholarship program, and partners with public schools, Senior Center of Jackson Hole, Sage Living Center and other non-profits to better reach marginalized populations in the area.

### Community

DW strives to meet the needs of underserved populations in Jackson and the surrounding areas by offering programming that is accessible to all demographics, regardless of economic status. Although predominantly white, Jackson's population is roughly 30% Latinx; we print our marketing materials in Spanish and English and have bilingual staff. To further our commitment to accessibility, all events are held in ADA accessible venues with handicapped parking, wheelchair ramps, handicapped accessible restrooms, and elevators.

DW partners with One22 to reach low-income families. One22 provides  $\frac{1}{3}$  of tuition, DW provides  $\frac{1}{3}$  of tuition in scholarship support, and the remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$  is paid by the family. Close to 50% of our summer camp enrollment last year was made possible by One22 and DW's scholarship fund. In 2024 DW supplied \$54,000 worth of scholarships to local families.

Many communities in our surrounding area are geographically isolated from arts programming. To serve these constituents, DW's Outreach Program visits schools and communities in western Wyoming. DW serves over 2500 public school students annually, providing arts access for all abilities and economic demographics. Our outreach includes our movement-based "ABCs" alphabet curriculum for 200 kindergartners in 6 public schools in western Wyoming. Our outreach also includes bringing 1000 elementary students to the Center for the Arts Theater to see our annual Winter Production.

DW strives to respond to requests for accommodations whenever possible. We partner with the Senior Center of Jackson Hole to adapt our normal Pilates curriculum to provide weekly movement classes for seniors, in progress for over 9 years. We are in the beginning stages of creating a weekly program for our local Parkinson's group.

### **Evaluation**

For each program and event, DW's staff evaluates its successes and challenges by tracking enrollment, ticket sales, and audience response/feedback. DW analyzes attendance, participation and marketing data to determine who we are reaching and how. DW hosts weekly staff meetings and an annual staff and board retreat to facilitate the ongoing evaluation process, and applies all learning to future endeavors.

Youth students in our dance school participate in a more involved evaluation process. Annual progress reports measure student advancement according to Wyoming state standards of Dance Education. In return, students evaluate teachers and classrooms to provide feedback to DW and our School Director. Additionally, we ask students to record their experiences through anonymous journal entries. We use surveys to gather impact data from audience members and parents of students.

DW teachers are reviewed by our Ballet Master/Teaching Director on a regular basis: monthly for new hires and once per semester after tenure. Program evaluations happen after each session and modifications are made to the curriculum for the following iteration. These surveys and discussions invite open conversation about students' progress, behavior, needs and general feedback for both students and teachers.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Dancers' Workshop is located on the 2nd floor of the Center for the Arts in Jackson. DW's studios and office space are rented from the Center and make up a large sum of its total yearly costs, totaling \$149,637 a year. South of Jackson, Dancers' Workshop has storage space and a warehouse, totaling \$99,357 a year. Total for space rentals: \$248,994. In addition to paying rent at the Center for studio and office space, DW pays a fee of \$500 for rehearsals and \$1,000 per day for performances to rent the Center's Theater. DW typically spends between \$55,000-\$75,000 a year in theater rentals in order to present its productions. DW's largest annual cost is payroll at over \$700,000, supporting 11 full-time staff members.

Dancers' Workshop's staff is made up of artists, educators, program and administrative personnel, all of which are essential to the many programs and pillars that make up Dancers' Workshop. Other operating costs include marketing, production costs, financial aid, guest-artist fees and health insurance benefits.

Given Jackson Hole's socio-economic divide between tourists and residents, an inflated market for expensive vacation homes presents significant challenges in providing affordable workforce housing for Jackson residents and puts increased pressure on businesses and organizations to provide wages substantial enough to offset Jackson's cost-of-living. Dancers' Workshop strives to maintain a work force within Jackson knowing the existence of the organization depends on maintaining staff, however DW is in competition with more than 250 other local nonprofits for this same financial support.

Dancers' Workshop will utilize funds from the Wyoming Arts Council to support General Operating Expenses and Program Support. Funds from this grant will help DW support the staff salaries that lead the growth, success and operation of DW's programs, and help fund the studio and office space the organization requires.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Dancers' Workshop has contracted with Alonso King's LINES Ballet as a part of DW's Guest Artist Presenting Series. LINES Ballet will perform on August 6 & 7, 2025 at the Center for the Arts Theater. Funds from this grant will support guest artist fees for the performances, as well as 2 Master classes for our community taking place on August 4 & 5, 2025.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

In addition to our school that offers dance instruction year-round, DW presents an original, full-length production every holiday season. This beloved community tradition has been taking place each December for approximately 35 years and is an incredibly rich source of arts learning opportunities in our community. The purpose of this event is to train the next generation of artists while creating an opportunity for our town to gather in the spirit of community at the holidays. Our 2025 Winter Production will be an energetic and inspired original creation of choreography, music and set design for a cast of 110 students and DW's professional company in residence, Contemporary Dance Wyoming. Over the course of four months students go through the process of choreographing, rehearsing, producing and performing a full-scale dance production in a professional theater with professional support. Each year the cast of 120 participates in 200 hours of rehearsal and 6 performances that reach 3,000 community members.

The project begins with auditions in September 2025 for ages 8+. We make sure that every student that wants to participate has a role. DW staff takes the cast through 9 weekly rehearsals with staff choreographers which expose dancers to modern and ballet technique, creative movement and choreography. Rehearsals with a professional dramaturg expose students to character development, storyline and stage presence. Technical rehearsals expose students to lighting design, set production, costuming and stage management.



This project will include two student shows that take place during the day on Friday, December 12, 2025. DW partners with Teton County School District to transport 1000 public school students to the Center for the Arts Theater. 110 students get the thrill of performing for their peers, and 1000 students get to witness a professionally produced performance in a state-of-the-art theater.

Our Winter Production draws on existing fairy tales and stories, with past productions including Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz, Snow White and Cinderella. Dancers' Workshop's Winter Production is of professional production value, with lights, costumes, props, backdrops and original choreography. The process of creating a production from scratch every year provides a steady stream of arts learning opportunities in our community, nurturing the next generation of artists.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Dancers' Workshop's Winter Production directly addresses the Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards for Dance, following the progression for each: beginning students are expected to explore or practice the concepts (awareness), intermediate students perform, understand and apply the concepts (awareness and intent), and advanced students refine and analyze the concepts (awareness, intent and evaluation).

The Winter Production helps our students to understand and express themselves (Creative Expression Through Production, FPA4/8/11.1.D.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) by giving students instruction in various dance concepts, styles and techniques, allowing them to collaborate with others and to express themselves through movement.

The Winter Production also reinforces that the arts are significant to daily life (Artistic Connections, FPA4/8/11.4.D.1, 2, 3, 4, 5) by demonstrating that movement and creative expression have a positive impact on physical health, personal fulfillment and group dynamics.

Specifically, the Winter Production process addresses cross disciplinary concepts from visual art and theater. Exposure to a wide variety of dance genres and the opportunity to work with professional choreographers with a diverse repertoire of styles enables our students to experiment and discover what works best for them and also gives them a basis for developing their own preferences and making their own aesthetic choices (Aesthetic Perception, FPA4/8/11.2.D.1, 2, 3, 4).

With approximately 110 children, 25 adults and 50 parents/volunteers participating, this event is a true community endeavor organized around these arts learning goals. In addition to the above goals, young performers gain important skills applicable to everyday life: discipline, commitment, cooperation, creative problem solving, respect for others, self-confidence, and the ability to work under pressure. The DW creative team weaves conversations about these important life skills throughout the process to make the learning more explicit.

DW has chosen these goals by assessing what skills are needed for the next generation of artists to both make art and live life as a creative endeavor. This includes self-awareness, technique, and interpersonal skills.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

DW's Winter Production is choreographed by Dancers' Workshop's creative team, consisting of Artistic Director Babs Case, Obie award winner Bob Berky, and DW teachers, to create an original depiction of popular children's stories and fairy tales. All of our teachers come to us with extensive education and/or performance careers. Company relationships include Martha Graham Dance Company, Austin Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Gallim, Elisa Monté and more.

DW Artistic Director Babs Case has performed, choreographed, and taught modern dance and visual art throughout the U.S., Europe, Asia, Canada, and South America. As an educator, Babs has taught at universities throughout the U.S. and offers multidisciplinary residencies in schools and workshops for underserved youth. In 1999 she moved to Wyoming and formed Contemporary Dance Wyoming, which tours regionally performing lecture demonstrations in schools and formal concerts for the public. Case works with the School Director, Eric Midgley (previously of Austin Ballet and Ballet Florida), on all creative and staffing decisions.

The Production Director is Michaela Ellingson, who grew up at DW and went on to get her BFA from SUNY Purchase and her MA from London Contemporary Dance School. Michaela came back to DW to lead the DW's pre-professional training program (Junior Repertory Company) and perform with CDW. The dramaturg for Winter Production is Bob Berky, Obie-award winning performer, teacher, and master of clown arts. The Technical Director is Eric Midgley, School Director, was a former member of Ballet Florida and Ballet Austin. Additional choreographers for the production include Fran Romo, Gallim Dance co-founder and CDW Associate Artistic Director, Charlotte Landreau, former Martha Graham Dance Company member and Erin Whitesell, former Atlanta Ballet member. These artists were selected through an interview process, sample performance videos and sample teaching videos.

### **Budget Narrative**

Dancers' Workshop's budget is supported through a diverse range of efforts consisting of earned income (40% of revenue), individual donors (41% of revenue), grants (3% of revenue), grass-root campaigns (3% of revenue), and our annual gala (13% of revenue). Key Partnerships aiding in our success are the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, One22, pARTners and Teton County School District.

The two highest grossing programs are the School and the Adult and Wellness Program. We aim to have each of these programs at least break even, with the School being the only program that covers its own expenses and sometimes shows a net gain.

DW is currently coming out of a financially strained couple of years. With growing disruption and uncertainty around federal funding and a changing philanthropic landscape, we continue to be diligent in stewarding our resources. We are striving to build our audiences and donor pool, while also making efforts to trim our budget.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

DISCOVER CHEYENNE

[HTTPS://WWW.CHEYENNE.ORG/WATER-TANK-MURAL/](https://www.cheyenne.org/water-tank-mural/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Water Tower Mural Project

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our fiscal agent, Discover Cheyenne, the non-profit arm for Visit Cheyenne, strategically drives regional tourism by funding pivotal projects like the Trolley, Hell on Wheels Rodeo, and the Splash Pad, alongside signature events such as the Cheyenne Marathon and New Year's Eve Ball Drop. Their "Live Legendary" campaign, a testament to their dedication to community building, cultivates a robust sense of pride among Cheyenne citizens while extending a warm invitation to tourists, showcasing the unique spirit that defines our city. Discover Cheyenne's audience is broad, encompassing local citizens, visiting tourists, and the vital network of local businesses that thrive on the influx of visitors.

The Water Tower Mural Project's strategic mission extends beyond mere beautification. It aims to transform the Storey Boulevard water towers into a powerful cultural landmark, a visual narrative that honors Cheyenne's rich history and diverse cultural tapestry. By integrating iconic artwork onto these utilitarian structures, we seek to create a lasting impression, a point of interest that resonates with both residents and visitors. Our goals are deeply rooted in fostering community engagement, celebrating our heritage, and enriching the city's aesthetic landscape. To foster community engagement, we have hosted and plan to host several more events geared towards all demographics and socioeconomic levels within the population of Cheyenne. Achieving these goals hinges on pivotal collaborative partnerships, including the City of Cheyenne, Arts Cheyenne, Visit Cheyenne, the Board of Public Utilities, and the support of our community. We envision the murals as a catalyst for raising awareness of the arts through our events and opportunities to follow the progress. The murals' long lasting visual presence on Storey Boulevard will be a source of enduring pride and support of the Arts within Cheyenne. This project will not only beautify a city asset, but will be a lasting legacy.

### Community

Discover Cheyenne and Visit Cheyenne primarily serve the community of Cheyenne, Wyoming. This includes local residents, businesses, and visitors to the area. Cheyenne's population, which is about 101K is largely white, with the Hispanic population being the next largest segment. Visit and Discover Cheyenne focus their efforts on enhancing the tourism industry, supporting local economic development, and fostering community pride and engagement. They use a variety of tools to identify community needs, including community engagement events, surveys, interviews, partnerships and collaborations with various stakeholders, local businesses, museums, and community organizations. Discover Cheyenne strives to engage underserved communities by hosting free events

like the ball drop and horse carriage rides through downtown. They partner frequently with local entities to support projects that enhance community amenities like the addition of the Splash Pad downtown and promote tourism which benefits all citizens of Cheyenne. Someone who needs an accommodation could communicate with the office of Visit Cheyenne via email or phone. A comprehensive Tourism Master Plan was developed through extensive community feedback and data to ensure that proposed initiatives align with community needs. They actively work to make amenities accessible, affordable, and engaging for all residents. This public art project will be accessible via Storey Boulevard and its high visibility across town. Along Storey Boulevard, people can park and access the bench and educational information included on the plaque or walk to it as it will be easily accessible. Other events will be accessible to all with park and ride options and the opportunity to request accommodations through email or social media message.

## **Evaluation**

Project completion will be measured by tracking the project's progress through a detailed timeline with milestones for design finalization, material procurement, and final completion. Success will be reached when the project is dedicated in the Summer of 2026, as part of the 250th celebrations of our Nation. Successful fundraising will be achieved when \$130,000 is accounted for through grants, In Kind, and cash donations. Community Engagement will be measured by tracking attendance at community events, calculating the number of youth participants, and volunteer hours contributed. We will collect feedback through social media and track engagement with our QR code on the bronze plaque. The QR Code will connect to information about the project and water system education. Successful community engagement will mean hosting several outreach events in July that will invite youth and community members to learn about water education, the painting process and engage in an arts based activity hosted by Arts Cheyenne. These events will focus on education of the artwork, logistics of the process, and utilitarian function of the water tanks and their critical purpose to the population of Cheyenne. We will ask for feedback from key leaders and volunteers at these events. Public awareness and recognition will be measured through media coverage (local, regional, and national), the QR code on the bronze plaque, online mentions, shares, and social media reach. Success will be achieved when a majority of social media coverage is positive. Success will also be achieved if the artwork wins Water Tower of the Year from Tnemec Co. which will grant national recognition for our artist, project partners, and the Community of Cheyenne.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

The Cheyenne Water Tower Mural Project will transform the city's utilitarian water towers into iconic public art landmarks, celebrating the arts, local culture, and enhancing tourism. The project's goals are multifaceted: to enhance civic pride, create a unique cultural landmark, and to educate residents and visitors about water system education and how the art relates to Cheyenne's history.

Mural application and public engagement events will take place throughout the summer months, with several events planned in July. If funds are in place, the tanks are the appropriate temperature, and the weather cooperates, mural application of the first tank will be completed by July 1. Each tank will take an estimated eighteen working days to paint. Jordan Dean will work with CHP Paint Co. to ensure the project is held to the

highest professional standard. They have partnered alongside each other for over 10 years on more than 7 murals and over 100 projects in the design and marketing realm. By the end of 2025 Jordan Dean will have completed over 30 murals in 6 states. After July 1, we hope to begin painting the second tank with the bison and Native American imagery. Jordan chose this imagery because he wanted to pay homage to Cheyenne's history and naturally evident beauty before it was settled by man. We plan to host several outreach events during the time that the mural is being painted. These events would invite youth, families, and community members to learn about water education, the painting process and engage in an arts based activity hosted by Arts Cheyenne. Arts Cheyenne will facilitate an arts focused project while Jordan will share his creative process and experience. The goal behind these youth and family style events will be to enhance awareness of the arts, connect them in a memorable way to this iconic project, and offer a free and rare experience that will only be available during the Summer months of 2025. A separate event to honor the supporters of the project with an epicurean style dinner is also planned for mid July. This event will gather the supporters of the project and be open to the community for a cost. The cost will go towards the funding of the event itself. If weather allows, we hope the mural application process is complete in July but also understand it could take till October 2025. In the worst case, only one tank would be painted in the Summer of 2025 and the second tank in June of 2026.

In the Summer of 2026, to align with the plans set by the City of Cheyenne's 250th Celebrations Committee, we plan to have a grand dedication of the finished artwork that will honor the project partners, the artist, and those who supported the project financially. Exact dates are yet to be determined.

The funds contributed from the Arts Council would go towards the cost of Jordan Dean and CHP Paint Co's labor. For the time spent completing the second water tower these costs total \$65,000.00.

Through the Cheyenne Water Tower Mural Project we hope to instill a sense of community pride and ownership as citizens engage with the artwork on a regular basis. The artwork would serve as an iconic landmark within the community and a memorable visualization of what Cheyenne would have looked like 250 years ago.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The effort to "Paint the Tanks" has led to a significant amount of support from the community. Financial supporters include: private citizens, businesses like Microsoft, Chronicles Distilling, and Elite Oil Services. In Kind donations have been pledged from: WyoRents, HF Johnson Masonry, Wonderhorse Studio, and Trophy Creative. Organizations like Cheyenne Frontier Days and the JP Board of Economic Development have also supported the project financially. We hope grant funding will also be a major contributor to this project. Grants applied for include: Kiwanis, GFWC Women's Civic League, WY Community Foundation and WY Cultural Trust Fund. Project partners include: City of Cheyenne, Arts Cheyenne, Visit Cheyenne, and the Board of Public Utilities. Discover

Cheyenne is acting as our fiscal agent. This project will only proceed if funds are available. The water tower mural project is a major public art initiative that fits within Discover Cheyenne's goals in funding impactful projects.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

DONKEY CREEK FESTIVAL

[HTTPS://WWW.DONKEYCREEKFESTIVAL.COM/](https://www.donkeycreekfestival.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2026 Donkey Creek Music & Arts Festival

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of Donkey Creek Festival (DCF) is to provide an opportunity for the families of Gillette and surrounding communities to gather and enjoy the arts in all their forms. Thanks to the support of WAC and others, the Donkey Creek Music and Arts Festival is back for June 21, 2025. We are excited about this year's musical lineup and with the prospect of growing this event in year two and three. Our Artisan Village will allow community artists and organizations the opportunity to share other art forms like visual arts, spoken word, dance, historical interpretation, traditional and folk arts, etc. DCF remains the only free, publicly supported, music and arts festival in our county. These are the current strategic goals of DCF:

1. Continue to build our board, committees, and volunteer base while expanding local financial support. Our current board count sits at ten. We've come a long way since our two members in 2023, but we cannot rest here as we know these members will rotate off eventually. We need to constantly recruit and develop this team. We've been able to secure several local sponsorships for year two and we hope to continue to grow that support in year three.
2. Build on our success in the first two years and expand our one-day event to a two-stage event. Our goal is to host a second stage on the Third Street Plaza in historic downtown Gillette. There has been so much support for live music and so many Wyoming and regional artists interested in performing that we believe a second stage is possible for 2026. We are also discussing a Friday night open mic at a local museum to kick off the arts weekend.
3. Provide a venue for musicians, artists, and arts organizations from Gillette, NE Wyoming, and our state as a whole. Grow our Artisan Village to include as many artists and art forms as we can host.
4. Bring joy, fellowship, fun, and inspiration to our community through the positive, enriching experience of a summer music and arts festival.



## **Community**

Our festival serves the people, artists, and musicians of Gillette, Campbell County, and surrounding communities.

Population: 47,946 (per US Census Bureau, July 1, 2024)

Age groups: 26.3% - under 18; 13.8% - 65 and older

Gender: 48.9% female

Race/Ethnicity: Growing Hispanic population (9.9%), small percentage American Indian (1.9%), African American (.8%), Asian (.8%), and other races.

Veterans: 2,651 (US Census Bureau Estimate for 2019-2023)

Due to our energy economy, we have had a large transient worker population that may not be overly invested in our community. High median income (over \$95,000) allows residents to travel for entertainment. Our challenge is keeping people here. The arts in our community also face challenges with uncertainty in the energy economy, a struggling non-profit sector, and continued cuts to public arts funding. We believe that a free, summer arts festival is the best route for having an impact on our community. Ticketed events have not been successful in Gillette and we remove most financial barriers by being free.

We are working to reach nondominant communities which may include direct outreach to our senior living facilities, local day-habs and independent living facilities that serve people with disabilities, Veterans organizations, BIPOC organizations, and the Hispanic community. We are working on a diverse board and as we grow this event, we hope that a diversity in our musical acts will help attract a diverse audience and make everyone feel welcome. This venue is friendly to people with disabilities. We will have an ADA Viewing Area, accessible restrooms, and are exploring a space to take a relaxing break from the crowds and music. Specific requests for accommodations will be handled by our board through our website contact form.

## **Evaluation**

DCF has an annual self-assessment consisting of surveys to vendors, musicians, and attendees in an effort to identify those areas where the Festival can be improved. The survey this year will be completed via our website and QR codes at the event. We are planning a giveaway or prize for those who complete the survey to incentivize participation. A paper option will also be available. Announcements from the stage will ask guests to give us feedback via the survey. A long-term goal for DCF is to have a festival app that could have information, surveys, updates, safety info., etc. This will require further financial support. Maybe WAC could help facilitate an app for all festivals in Wyoming?

Last year's survey gave us valuable information. We learned that social media and word of mouth is our best marketing. We learned that parking is a barrier and are exploring solutions. We learned that our sound quality was excellent and have retained our same technicians from last year. We know that 80% of attendees surveyed visited

the Artisan Village, but that only 22% made a purchase. Every respondent used our food vendors and 90% of them were satisfied with the options. Generally we learned that we are on the right track. One comment from last year was "Please keep this up! We need more opportunities for people to share their talents! Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the hard work, time, and talent put into making this happen!"

Evaluation and feedback from the public, our partners, and our arts organizations is extremely valuable to us. We must constantly evaluate our product to make sure the public supports the event. We also want to make sure we are not growing too big too fast. We need to be cognizant of the financial limitations that hurt DCF in the past.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

DCF is requesting project support for our music and arts festival in June 2026. Project support funds will be utilized to hire Wyoming and regional musicians to perform at the festival in Historic Downtown Gillette, Wyoming. This will be our third year back at our new location and we plan to expand to a two-stage event utilizing the Third Street Plaza as our second location. We feel that this growth will allow the entire downtown to participate, expand parking opportunities, increase the economic impact of the event, and further the potential for collaborations with the community.

Our initial plan is to have Stage One at Big Lost Meadery remain the main stage. Stage Two on the Plaza will be mostly solo and/or acoustic groups. Also, since 2026 is our nation's semiquincentennial, we are contemplating the addition of more cultural music to the event and Stage Two may be the best place for these performers. This may include Native American performers, Basque musicians, cowboy singers and poets, folk music, etc.

The 2025 lineup has a strong Gillette and Wyoming feel. We have not yet announced this publicly, but the lineup will include Gillette's own Marlee Holdeman, winner of the 2024 Wyoming Singer-Songwriter Competition, Harpoon the Whale, Rock Band Camp featuring local high school students, Denizens of the Deep, a funk/blues band from the Black Hills, Nashville's Josh Dorr, originally from Gillette, bluegrass band The Fretliners, winners at Telluride and Rockygrass with Gillette's own Tom Knowlton on guitar, and finally Aaron Davis & The Mystery Machine. What a celebration of Wyoming musicians this will be! We are so excited to feature up and comers as well as welcome home some of the "Greater Wyoming Diaspora."

WAC support will be spent hiring musicians, which is over half of our overall budget. Sound, lights, and backline brings that figure to two-thirds. The remaining budget is event logistics, marketing, and administrative costs. We plan to increase marketing for 2026 to make sure we continue to grow our audience and community support for the event. We are continuing our "Artisan Village" and will be instituting a fully-refundable deposit to make sure artists follow through on their registrations. As in the first two years, we want to make sure we are providing a free space where local visual artists, arts organizations, street performers, cultural interpreters, and others can share

their art with our community. We feel strongly that this "new" Donkey Creek Festival be a better reflection of who we are as a community and highlight the fantastic art and artists that we have right here in Campbell County. We hope to partner with AVA, Rockpile Museum, Local Color, Powder River Symphony, the Gillette Chamber Singers, the Matachines dance troupe, and others.

Our growing board of directors includes Rockpile Museum Director Robert Henning, musicians, and other representatives from radio, education, and business. We have four musicians on the board including Steve Yount who works at an arts venue, J. B. King, a musician, visual artists, and former WAC board member who previously hosted the Prairie Wind Cultural Festival in Gillette, Tim Guernsey from the Powder River Symphony, and local rapper and hip-hop artist Faze (aka Ruben Garcia). The financial support of the Wyoming Arts Council would mean so much for our festival's ability to attract the artists and musicians we hope to share with our community. Thank you for this opportunity.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The "new" DCF has been primarily funded through grants. The 2025 event will be supported by more private investment from local sponsors. We are aiming for a 50/50 split and hope to grow that local support in 2026. Local government support has been non-existent as the politics of the day are making this a challenge. We received grant support from WAC and the local Community Public Recreation District (CCCPRD) for 2025. We will be applying again to the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund for the 2026 event to help support our growth to a two-stage event. Significant in-kind gifts are coming from local businesses Big Lost Meadery, Ranch & Roost, Two Guys Deco, and Basin Radio Network. We expect other in-kind donations for stage, tents, equipment, and marketing. We will be seeking donations from our festival-goers on June 21, 2025 through cash boxes, online/digital donations, and merchandise sales. Our goal is to keep administrative costs down and put as much funding into the event as possible.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ENCORE

[HTTPS://ENCORESVS.ORG/](https://encoresvs.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Anti-Grooming Animated Training for People with Developmental Disabilities

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission: Offering a unique approach to address the prevalence of skillset gaps by collaborating with community partners to co-create an ideal learning environment and quality content specific to their

workspace training demands.

Vision: Your first choice in creating flexible training solutions for your professional needs.

Values > Innovation: Having new ideas, staying at the forefront of what's current and embracing change, respecting all opinions and ideas.

Values > Partnership: Building relationships through respect, communication, and cooperation (co-operation).

Values: > Excellence: Having high quality standards in everything we do.

Values: > Leadership: Establishing a foundation of stability, responsibility, and honesty.

### Community

Encore creates learning solutions primarily for underserved populations. Our previous project that WAC partially funded, called Finding Your Voice, gathered people with I/DD from five local organizations and helped them write scripts, taught them how to do voice acting for animated videos, and helped them design their animated avatars.

According to the 2024 annual report of the Wyoming Department of Health, there were 1,804 people with I/DD who were recipients of Medicaid waivers in Wyoming. This constitutes a fairly large pool of potential, vulnerable targets for grooming and human trafficking.

Encore's parent company (bēkən Holdings) has encouraged Encore to start creating training solutions for veterans and survivors of human trafficking. The Anti-Grooming Training video is our first project geared toward people who have experienced attempts at--or fallen prey to--human trafficking. Because people with I/DD are particularly vulnerable to grooming attempts, we are accommodating their comprehension level by creating the script for the training video for 9- or 10-year-olds. Encore will use an online tool named "Readability Checker - Reading Level Calculator" to make certain we are accommodating the people with I/DD. The animation will provide captions for viewers with hearing disabilities.

The Wyoming organizations and agencies that will be contacted in this project include: Achieving Greatness, Ark Regional Services, Conscious Care, Goodwill, Humankind, Overture, Parent Information Center (PIP), Treasure Abilities, Wyoming Community Service Providers, the Wyoming Department of Education, Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities, The Wyoming Attorney General's Division of Victim Services, The Wyoming Human Trafficking Task Force, and the Wyoming GCDD.

## **Evaluation**

If the Anti-Grooming Training is successful, participants will be able to recognize and avoid grooming attempts. It is not really feasible to measure activity that doesn't take place. Additionally, grooming attempts--and human trafficking in general--are underreported. Therefore, even if a participant succumbed to a grooming attempt, it would likely not be reported. These factors make results-based evaluation difficult.

Evaluation step #1: When the Anti-Grooming training video is in its final phase of development, Encore will secure several reviews from the SMEs at Uprising to evaluate the appropriateness and projected effectiveness of the training video.

Evaluation step #2: After publishing the video, Encore will consult with Uprising staff quarterly to ascertain the effectiveness of the animated training video.

Evaluation step #3: Encore will use YouTube analytics to determine how many times the video has been viewed, the count of the "thumbs up," and read the comments under the video.

Evaluation step #4: The description under the posted video will include a link to a survey created with Office 365 Forms, which will accumulate responses for as long as the training video is on YouTube. The survey results are tabulated by the Forms tool, and will be consulted regularly after publishing to June 30, 2026.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 Expenses

\$13,506.12 = Encore's office space lease is \$1,125.51 per month, x 12 months.

\$39,000 = Tim Munyon's salary per year.

\$9,750.00 = The employer's financial overhead for Tim Munyon. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration (<https://www.sba.gov/blog/how-much-does-employee-cost-you>), an employee typically costs a company 1.25 to 1.4 times their salary, to pay for things like payroll processing, marketing, liability/disability insurance, FICA, federal/state unemployment tax, worker's compensation, and 6.2% for social security tax. Using the lower 1.25 amount, the financial overhead cost for Tim is an additional \$9,750.00 per year.

\$1,104.00 = The Vyond software license at \$92 per month x 12.

\$719.88 = The Adobe Create Cloud software (Audition and Premiere Pro) license at \$59.99 per month x 12.

Total Expenses for July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 (12 months)

$\$13,506 + \$39,000 + \$9,750 + 1,104 + \$719.88 = \$64,079.88.$

July 1 - October 31 Expenses (4 months)

(The duration of the development of the animation project.)

Note: Encore is requesting \$8,779.48 from the "Bright Ideas" grant from the WY Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, and \$10,000 from the Community Foundation grant from WAC. Encore originally submitted the GCDD grant application thinking the project would take 3 months. Since then, however, Uprising and Encore have added an extra month for the "day-in-the-life" scripting and voice acting testimonials that will be added to the animated video for realism here and there.

The breakdown for WAC (after deducting the amounts requested from GCDD application) is as follows:

\$92 = one extra month of the Vyond license (GCDD will hopefully fund 3 months)

\$59.99 = one extra month of the Adobe software license (GCDD will hopefully fund 3 months)

\$3,000 = one extra month salary for primary animation developer (GCDD will hopefully fund 3 months)

\$4,502.04 = \$1,125.51/month office space lease x 4 months (not included at all in GCDD application)

\$3,187.50 = financial overhead for employee (Tim Munyon): 17 weeks @ \$750/wk = \$12,750 x 25%. (not included at all in GCDD application)

Total expenses for the 4 months projected for this project (minus the amounts requested from GCDD):

$\$92 + \$59.99 + \$3,000 + \$4,502.04 + \$3,187.50 = \$10,841.53$

Total cost of 4 months of development and delivery

$\$8779.48$  (requested from GCDD) +  $\$10,000$  (requested from WAC) +  $\$3,768.02$  (Encore's costs not covered by any grant) =  $\$22,547.50$ .

Encore is not including costs for Tim Munyon's managing supervisor for this grant application.

Tim Munyon wanted to share a budget table that broke down what Encore requested from GCDD and what Encore is requesting from WAC, but did not find a way to upload it.

Because this Anti-Grooming training video will be posted to YouTube (and perhaps the internal websites of organizations and agencies), it will generate no income for Encore.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The animation artist is Tim Munyon (B.S., M.A.), who has over 30 years of experience in instructional design, including creating different kinds of training videos. For examples of his recent animated videos, see the following on YouTube:

- "Encore - Finding Your Voice" [Duration is 27:25, but start viewing at 9:23 to see the short segments individuals scripted and then performed the voice acting.]
- "Encore - Virtual Reality and 2D Animated Training Solutions Customized for You" [Duration 4:41, a video that summarizes all of what Encore can do for an organization.]

The animation artistry for the Anti-Grooming video will be very similar to these two publicly available videos.

For the information explanatory portion of the video, Encore will use the AI voice acting from <https://elevenlabs.io>. For the "day-in-the-life" testimonial portions, staff and volunteers at Uprising will write the scripts and do the voice acting, after which Tim will use Adobe Audition to trim and normalize the volume of the recordings prior to importing the MP3 files into the animated video.

Each 1 to 2 minute animated segment is created as its own MP4 video. When all of the segments are done, Tim Munyon uses Adobe Premiere Pro to stitch them all together to create the final, full video. The video segments go through many review and editing cycles over the course of development, as does the production of the final, complete video.

The animated video aligns with Encore's stated mission and values, because Encore will work with a client to gather requirements and then publish a customized solution that accommodates the comprehension level of the target audience.

The artistry required includes: [1] writing scripts tailored to people with I/DD, [2] creating the characters/avatars that will be the "stars" of the animated video, [3] incorporating animations that are as realistic as the limitations of the animation software allows, and [4] combining all of the short MP4 segments into one finished product with appropriate visual transitions between them.

The target audience for the animated video is people with I/DD in Wyoming who are the most vulnerable segment of the population who might be groomed for human trafficking. That said, the anti-grooming training can be reviewed by anyone.

As this application mentioned previously, the community partners we will engage include Achieving Greatness, Ark Regional Services, Conscious Care, Goodwill, Humankind, Overture, Parent Information Center (PIP), Treasure Abilities, Wyoming Community Service Providers, the Wyoming Department of Education, Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities, The Wyoming Attorney General's Division of Victim Services, The Wyoming Human Trafficking Task Force, and the Wyoming GCDD.

The outcome we are striving for is that people with I/DD--and indeed anyone--will be able to recognize and avoid grooming attempts, to prevent human trafficking from taking place.

The funds will be allocated as described in the answer to the previous question: Operating Support Narrative and by the Budget Narrative section.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Anti-Grooming Animated Training video will (hopefully) be partially funded by the "Bright Ideas" grant from the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, partially funded by the "Community Support" grant from the Wyoming Arts Council, and partially funded by Encore. Encore has no ongoing source of income.

The budget for this project aligns with Encore's stated mission in that Encore collaborates with the client (Uprising) to create a very customized training video for a specific audience.

Financially, Encore is a very small 501(c)3 organization, whose income derives from grant funding from government entities. Presently, Encore's operating expenses exceed budget, and finds itself in an undesirable dependent relationship with its parent company, bēkən Holdings. In July 2024 one of the two full time employees was laid off to reduce costs, and a part-time grant pursuer was reallocated to another role within the company. There is definitely a need for this grant funding.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

EVANSTON STARS

WWW.EVANSTONSTARS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Evanston Stars! Performs!

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission statement: We seek to provide opportunities for the children in our community, to develop and showcase their talents, through performance and visual arts, in a nurturing and fun environment.

Evanston STARS! is a young program which began through the community recreation system before moving out on its own. We offer afterschool classes in musical theater, voice, dance and more. Currently we sublease space in a local church. We recently did a review with a business coach and created a three year plan. Our goals include: .

1. Implement visual arts. We are performance based and oriented right now, but students and parents have expressed a desire for visual arts options.
2. Scholarship program established. We work on an as needed basis now, but would like to have a better system in place.
3. Competition camps are being attended. We host dance teams as well as provide classes and performances, and they thrive at camps.
4. Synergistic with school sports. Our goal is to work with school sports so students who wish to participate can do both.
5. Youth Club partnership activities. Grow partnership activities for our Youth Club
6. Plan and budget for building. We are growing and our space is clearly insufficient, especially if we add visual arts.
7. Upgraded sound system & tech. Our tech is old, and an upgrade would be good for students and audiences.
8. Instructors are paid more. We would like to pay fair wages.
9. Costumes and set are organized and documented. We need to be more organized about our assets so we are not recreating or purchasing when we already have something.! We also intend to purchase larger set & costume items that can be used or rented out for multiple years.

### Community

Evanston is in Uinta County in Southwest Wyoming and is considered an under-served area due to its sparse population. With roughly 20,000 people in the county, the census reports the county is 95% white with a strong Latter Day Saint population. Evanston (pop. 12,359) is the largest town in the county; any other town of size is 100+ miles away. While Evanston has fairly strong music programs in the schools, the visual arts are struggling in the lower grades with students receiving one class or less per week. Theater is non-existent except in high school. This district maintains strong sports programs, but not all children thrive in sports, and the arts provide another medium. There is also a significant portion of homeschooled students who lack access to arts programs. We do serve some Hispanic families, who found us about us with the help with the community recreation and school system. Aside from students being underserved in the arts generally in Evanston, we strive for affordable programs so families with multiple children can afford to have as many as wish to participate do so.

Accommodations are provided on a case by case basis. We have welcomed students with mobility and developmental concerns, and found ways for them to be successful in our programs. We are fortunate to have two board members who are involved with the disability community in Evanston, and they help us find ways to accommodate anyone who wishes to participate.

## **Evaluation**

- 1) Twice annual performances provide a strong evaluation of student learning in the classes. We work hard to challenge our students in their classes with the choreography which is then performed in the musicals.
- 2) Other performance opportunities. We are regularly invited to perform, and these regular invitations let us know that our programming is enjoyed by audiences. We also compete with our dance teams, and competitions provide important programmatic feedback that we use to improve.
- 2) Parent feedback. Our parents provide excellent feedback to us, and many of them volunteer significant time and can see ways in which we can improve.
- 3) Ticket sales. We have a dedicated audience who comes to our musicals who are not families of the participating students. We continue to grow these audiences, and that growth tells us if our marketing is working.
- 4) Annual surveys. We survey kids and parents annually to learn what they would like to see, what they feel can be improved, and what they are enjoying.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Evanston STARS works hard to keep its operating expenses down, and like many young non-profits, we have people who put their heart and soul into the program for very little financial return. We rent our space from a local church, who gives us a very good deal; we also pay for a cleaner to take care of our areas, as part of our agreement with the church. We have administrative expenses including software for student registration and bookkeeping, as well as advertising, insurance, copying and more. As an organization deeply involved in theater, we have music licenses and some script royalties. We pay our teachers, but not what they are worth, and we have only just begun paying our President, who serves as the program director. We also have production costs for sets, costumes, programs and the like.

While we are currently covering all our costs with tuition, we cannot grow this way. Thus, we are requesting operating support to help us better pay our director and instructors. We are currently writing most of our scripts, and that has been donated by a loyal staff member, who should be paid for her time and creativity--and we would like the flexibility to consider paying royalties to use a script we don't have to write! Production costs continue to rise, and are highly dependent on significant parental donations of services, and we would like to better utilize this volunteer time by purchasing some items instead of making them. Finally, we have long term goals for finding a bigger space. With some ease in our budget thanks to grant funding, and the ability to better pay staff, we can begin to fundraise and save for a bigger space.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Evanston STARS! Primary purpose is to increase access to arts learning opportunities, specifically performing arts, for children and youth. While music is strong in our schools, theater is not available until high school, and dance is not available at all except through private studios. Our goal is to make it available to every student who wants to participate! We offer a variety of classes, most of which culminate by participating in a performance. Classes range from musical theater, jazz dance and hip hop to creative dance, tumbling, cheer, clogging, voice and acrobatics. We offer various levels of classes, allowing students to grow in skill and strength through their time with us. Classes shift each semester, partly in response to the demands of the upcoming performances. The vast majority of classes participate in each musical theater performance (two per year). Some classes are also competition teams, who travel to camps and competitions to compete and learn.

Students are divided by skill instead of age, especially in competition classes. We serve students from ages 2-18 and offer all classes after school to ensure both school children and homeschoolers can participate. Our programs draw students from across the community, providing a common mixing ground regardless of schooling. We keep our pricing reasonable to ensure that families can afford our classes for all their children, and offer scholarships.

In addition to our two regular performances each year, which draw audiences unconnected to our students, we actively perform at a variety of events in the community, including high school basketball games, at preschools, and festivals. Each summer, we perform in the Stadium of Fire as part of a Brigham Young University production. We are always looking for more ways to involve our students in the community and share their talents more widely.

We have received numerous requests to add visual arts to our roster of programming, and are exploring ways to do so. Currently, we do not have sufficient space to add this programming, but we are working with the church we

sublease from to possibly rent another room. We hope to add visual arts programming next fall if we can acquire space and an appropriate instructor.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

At Evanston Stars we believe every child is a star and provide opportunities to help all children grow and shine. While we are not in the school system, our classes speak directly to the state arts standards, specifically Create, Present/Perform, and Responding. Students conceptualize and generate artistic works and then refine it for performance. They develop and refine techniques for conveying meaning through performance. They apply criteria for analyzing and responding to artistic works. We consistently hear from music teachers, and the high school theater teachers that students who participate in our classes are assets to their programming, and often far ahead in their skills.

In our classes, students will:

- develop their talents in one or more performing arts areas, including voice, dance and theater
- increase self-confidence by mastering new skills, participating in productions and getting out of their comfort zone
- have a creative outlet that they may not find elsewhere
- improve cognitive skills. The way we instruct improves memory and the abilities to organize and prioritize. This in turn can support academic improvement
- be active! Students move in our classes, which increases flexibility, motor skills, strength, improved posture, poise and balance
- increases social skills through collaboration, working on communication skills, making friends and developing emotionally

In the classes, students will:

- gain knowledge and skills in the arts through participating in classes and performances
- build arts skills that are developmentally appropriate
- understand the importance of practice to improve
- watch performances in person and on screen and discuss them
- collaborate by working in pairs, small groups and as a whole on choreography or music

Dance classes consistently work on:

- fine motor skills
- spatial awareness skills

Theater classes consistently work on

- learning to take direction
- learning to create a character
- reading comprehension
- collaboration with others

Music classes work on

- reading music
- strengthening and improving singing
- understanding musical cues

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

We are fortunate to have 10 dedicated instructors.

Caddie Welling is a seasoned dance instructor and director of the Evanston STARS! program. With over 20 years of experience teaching various dance styles, including ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop, and more, Caddie brings high energy and expertise to her classes. She holds degrees in business management and dance, and has owned dance studios in Hawaii and Evanston. As a devoted mother of eight, Caddie values hard work, positivity, and fun.

Diana Wilkinson is a passionate music educator and vocalist. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the University of Utah and currently teaches music at Aspen Elementary. With a love for teaching, reading, knitting, and singing, Diana brings enthusiasm and expertise to her students. As the instructor for the Pop Stars! class, she helps young singers develop their skills and confidence.

Kayle DeGraw is a passionate and experienced cheerleading coach with a strong background in tumbling. She is a former Mountain View High School Cheerleader and All American Cheerleader.

Chessney Moon is a lifelong Stars program participant. With over 9 years of experience in various dance styles, including jazz, hip-hop, and lyrical, Chessney brings passion and expertise to her teaching role. She has competed in dance competitions, performed at Stadium of Fire, and assisted with various Stars classes.

Ashley Valentine is a passionate entrepreneur, dance enthusiast, and devoted mother of three. As the owner of Timeless Beauty, a local spa business, Ash has built a successful brand over the past decade. With a lifelong love for dance, Ash joins the STARS team as Assistant Dance Director and teacher of the Radiant STARS and Lyrical Ballet classes.

Whitney Mills is a passionate dance educator with a lifelong love for dance. With over 15 years of dance experience, including cheerleading, drill team, and dance company, Whitney brings enthusiasm and expertise to her teaching role. By day, she teaches 3rd grade at Aspen Elementary, and by night, she shares her passion for dance with her students.

Shandra Johnson is a passionate dance instructor with 15 years of experience in tap, ballet, and pointe. She's been teaching for three years and is excited to share her expertise with the Shining Stars and Creative Dance classes. As a set director for Stars productions, Shandra enjoys thinking creatively and bringing performances to life.

Ashli Johnson is a dedicated dance instructor and Director of the STARS dance program. Raised in Utah, Ashli began dancing at age three and went on to perform with various teams, including the North Summit Drill Team. She resides in Evanston with her husband and four children. With seven years of experience instructing with STARS, Ashli loves inspiring young dancers.

Tina Troumbley is a vibrant dance instructor with a lifelong passion for music and movement. Holding an Associate's Degree in Dance, Tina has explored various styles, including ballet, tap, clogging, and more. She's competed, choreographed, and toured, and plays multiple musical instruments.

Jenni Hogman is a multi-talented music educator, directing Musical Theatre and teaching voice at STARS. She is also the mastermind behind the program's productions, writing the scripts that bring the shows to life. By day, she's the music teacher at Clark Elementary and a bookkeeper at the Lumberyard.

### **Budget Narrative**

Our largest and most reliable source of income is tuition. There is a yearly registration fee of \$30/child. After that, there is a monthly cost which is based on how many classes students take between \$35 (for one 30-60 minute class) to \$80 (unlimited classes). Additional siblings are charged at 50% tuition. We receive some income from performances (ticket sales) and competitions. We also raise significant funds, both specifically for competitions and generally for our programs and receive some sponsorships. We are fortunate to have significant parental

involvement, which offsets many costs. Businesses in town donate a lot of supplies to us. Our budget is 100% focused on providing excellent arts education programming for our students, and every line is carefully reviewed to ensure it is a necessary expense. Any savings we create are focused on our goal is to find, and hopefully purchase, a larger space to better serve our students and audiences.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

EVANSTON YOUTH CLUB FOR BOYS & GIRLS

[WWW.THECLUBOFEVANSTON.ORG](http://WWW.THECLUBOFEVANSTON.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Youth Art Programs - Explore, Create, Inspire

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The mission of the Evanston Youth Club (EYC) is to enable all youth to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens. Strategic goals for the Evanston Youth Club include providing quality programs, a safe place for teens to learn and grow, ongoing relationships with responsible, adult professionals, life-enhancing opportunities, character development, and hope. EYC strives to show youth a better way, better use of their time, and that they are capable, smart, and needed.

One program used to reach our overall mission and strategic goals is our Youth Art Programs. The mission of the Youth Art Programs is to build knowledge, skills, confidence, community, and appreciation of the arts for at-risk youth. Strategic goals of the Youth Art Programs include providing well-rounded fine arts, digital arts, STEAM, performing arts, and other applied arts classes and camps year-round during out-of-school time. Youth Art Programs build and reinforce art skills, spark creativity, and increase art skill levels. Classes are in-person and hands-on. Additional strategic goals for the Youth Art Programs are to strengthen youth's social and emotional capacity through art experiences by building confidence, creativity, and to provide a positive outlet for emotions. EYC Youth Art Programs follow the rationale of the Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards that "Making art is making connections".

The Evanston Youth Club works to inspire teens to be their best self. All programs and experiences are intentionally designed to benefit youth and the greater community.

### **Community**

Our program is in Evanston, Uinta County. With a rich culture and history, Evanston was once a booming oil town with a busy railway system. The economic bust took a hard hit on Evanston, leaving our country among the poorest in the state. Evanston has a population of over 11,000, with many residents residing in outlying areas of Evanston.



Our programs are for all youth in grades 6th- 12t; with the majority of our members being classified as low-income. Additionally, nearly 50% of our enrolled members are from ethnic minorities. Through communication, partnerships, and trusted consistency, our program has built relationships with these non-dominant populations. We work with families, schools, businesses, the Department of Family Services, and other organizations to ensure that our services are meeting the needs and providing the opportunities needed for our community. EYC is actively involved in events and has become a pillar and respected program in our community.

According to recent surveys, youth are still indicating that they are suffering from social, emotional, and mental struggles, as well as a lack of support, decreased engagement, and lower academic performance. Our program is the only out-of-school program for youth this age, as such, we work hard to make sure all youth receive the best services and opportunities while participating in our programs. Any special needs are addressed quickly and diverse backgrounds and abilities are welcomed, appreciated and celebrated. All art programs are handicap accessible. Through scholarships, all youth can participate, free from financial constraints. EYC art programs create a positive environment for youth to flourish in the arts and life.

### **Evaluation**

The Evanston Youth Club formally and informally evaluates programs frequently. EYC takes attendance at programs and events, including demographics and participation levels. Our system also tracks the number of art programs and events provided. The program used for attendance is called "After the Bell". EYC also used the National Institute on Out-of-School Time software to distribute pre-surveys in the fall and post-surveys in the late spring to participants. This measures youth skills, knowledge, and experience in the program, evaluates the instructor/artist from the participant's perspective, and gives an overall rating of the art programs. An annual survey is given to parents, artists, and staff that collects information on experience, perception of youth understanding, and growth in the arts. This survey is electronic and distributed through email and QR codes. The administration and art staff reviews results from evaluation methods. This information helps make needed changes for the art programs' success.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A - Project Support

### **Project Support Narrative**

Art classes are offered at our teen out-of-school program at least twice a week during the school year, and at least three times a week during summer camps. Classes include:

- Fine arts, which teach the basic concepts of art, while building youth confidence. Youth are instructed and inspired to create visual arts such as paintings, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, mixed media, mosaics, and more.

- Digital arts include using two and three-dimensional components. 3D printing, photography, game design, and graphic design are some of the classes offered in the digital arts.

- Applied art activities help youth think beyond the typical art form, into youth seeing art in the world around them. Some of these classes include jewelry making, woodworking, fashion design, culinary arts, and creative writing.

- Performing arts involve acting, dancing, and instruments. Classes offered include piano, guitar, vocal, and drama.

The Youth Art Programs also have culminating events/performances and field trips.

Contracted artists, paid staff, and volunteers work in collaboration to create lesson plans and goals of the art programs. Key artists include:

-Laura Prete, a highly sought-after local photographer with 10+ years of experience. Laura teaches photography twice a month throughout the year.

-Taia & Eric Hillstead, volunteer local dance instructors with 20+ years of experience. The Hillsteads teach fox trot, waltz, and country swing to youth twice in school year and summer.

-Sara Horn, volunteer local Professional Intuitive Artist and Life Guide. Sara teaches a four-part class creating abstract art while releasing emotions. Art pieces are showcased at a culminating event.

-Holly Slade-West, paid staff, piano teacher, vocal and choral coach

-Jayson Bailey, paid staff, marketing degree, teaching classes in digital and applied arts

-Ashlynn Rhodes, paid staff and local artist, professional artist in fine arts, digital arts, and applied arts. Teaches classes weekly during school and summer.

-Isaiah McLemore, paid staff who teaches vocal and choral classes as well as applied arts in woodworking, jewelry making, STEAM, and culinary arts.

The requested funds will be used to pay for artists, instructors, supplies, overhead expenses, marketing, and culminating events. EYC operates under an approved budget, overseen by the Administration, Board of Directors, and a paid accountant. All expenses and revenues are coded to the appropriate programs and monitored to ensure proper usage of funds.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Evanston Youth Club strives to provide quality art programs to at-risk youth so they can learn, build skills, and gain a better understanding and appreciation of the art. Weekly classes are taught by professional and local artists. Youth are given foundational exposure to a variety of art forms. Then those skills are developed and enhanced. Youth are also able to perform and showcase they they learn, and most of them would not have this opportunity if they did not come to the youth club's art programs. Teenagers begin to learn the value of art and how art is around them in their everyday lives as they become young artists. Arts learning happens twice per week during the school year and three times a week in the summer. These classes include visual arts, theater, dance, and music.

Through visual art classes, youth study fundamental art skills and develop their artistic expression, style, and vocabulary. Classes include graffiti art, photography, printmaking, drawing techniques, sculpture, painting, and

design. Youth learn about visualizing, using different mediums, exploring a variety of art that may not be familiar, and creating their own masterpieces.

In theater arts, youth focus on drama, collaboration, expression, acting, technique, and costuming. Youth apply these skills while rehearsing, creating, and performing.

Music classes held include piano, singing, and guitar. In these classes teens learn rhythm and styled as they develop skills, communicate with others, practice creativity, and gain confidence. Classes are designed for youth to learn - free from a school grade requirement, practice by themselves, practice as a group, and perform independently and with others. Youth will learn posture, breath control, and dynamics. They gain confidence and support as they perform musical pieces for the community.

Youth are guided through mixed media, digital, and other art forms as they learn vocabulary and skills pertaining to the arts. Youth compare and contrast art and are free to interpret art and it's meaning.

The program also takes participating teens on field trips, such as to Pickelville Playhouse, a local art show, and a concert. Teens see professionals perform and learn from observation just how magical and important the arts are. Our young, amateur artists get to work with professionals and grow into their abilities.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Because our target population is a vulnerable group, art programs can have far-reaching, positive impacts. Through our art programs, youth can learn empathy, compassion, and emotional intelligence. As they develop these skills, social skills are also cultivated alongside actual skill development.

How Goals are Identified: At-risk youth typically have less exposure and opportunities for art. Research shows that youth who are exposed and emersed in art typically perform better in school and have fewer mental health problems. EYC has used The Wyoming Fine and Performing Standards to help create goals and provide a foundation for targets and goals of the program.

Goal #1: Increase youth artistic connections as measured by pre and post-surveys.

Strategies: Youth members learn how important art is. This is taught through exposure and interpretations in weekly art classes. (FPA 8.4, A.1, FPA 11.4, A.1) Students attend museums and performances. (FPA 8.4, A.1, FPA 11.4). Local art professionals frequently lead art programs, helping youth be exposed to a variety of art forms and given guidance to develop their own craft. (FPA 8.4, M.3, FPA 11.3, M.3)

Goal #2: Increase youth art aesthetic perception and art understanding as measured by pre and post-surveys.

Strategies: Youth observe a variety of art. Youth interpret and analyze themes, subjects, and symbols. Youth are exposed to various art forms by guest artists and through outdoor arts programs. Youth are guided through mixed media, digital, and other art forms as they learn art vocabulary and are taught to view art in different perspectives. Youth compare and contrast art and are free to interpret and discuss art and its' meaning. (FPA 8.2, A.3, FPA 11.2, A.3). Club members perform dances, short drama plays, and musical performances. Youth learn how to perform in a theatrical setting (FPA 8.1, T.1, FPA 11.1). Drama programs are at the beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. (Theatre all of Standard 1 for grades 5-8 and 9-11)

Goal #3: 125 youth will create and/or perform a new art skill/piece as measured by attendance and observation at culminating events.

Strategies: Developing craft through practice. This is planned into the program through professional, consistent exposure to Fine Arts classes, Digital Arts classes, Applied/STEAM classes, and Performing Arts classes. (FPA 8.1, M.2, FPA 11.1, M.2) Classes also include singing classes where youth learn rhythms, melodies, accompaniments and arrange their own pieces (FPA 8.1, M.3, FPA 11.1, M.3, FPA 8.1, M.4, FPA 11.1, M.4). Classes are designed for students to learn, then practice by themselves, practice as a group, and perform independently and with others. Youth will learn posture, breath control, and dynamics. Finally, students will compose and arrange their own songs to be performed. Youth are taught by artists about visualizing, using different mediums, exploring art, and creating their own masterpieces of art either in drawings, painting, or other art forms.

Goal #4: 80% of youth participating in EYC art programs will be on target for grade progression and/or graduation as measured by PowerSchool reports.

Strategies: Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in math, reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skills. Youth will gain confidence by exploring, discovering, and creating through multidisciplinary art programs.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Contracted artists, paid staff, and volunteers work in collaboration to create lesson plans and goals of the art programs. Key artists include:

-Laura Prete, a highly sought-after local photographer with 10+ years of experience. Laura teaches photography twice a month throughout the year.

-Taia & Eric Hillstead, volunteer local dance instructors with 20+ years of experience. The Hillsteads teach fox trot, waltz, and country swing to youth twice in school year and summer.

-Sara Horn, volunteer local Professional Intuitive Artist and Life Guide. Sara teaches a four-part class creating abstract art while releasing emotions. Art pieces are showcased at a culminating event.

-Holly Slade-West, paid staff, piano teacher, vocal and choral coach

-Jayson Bailey, paid staff, marketing degree, teaching classes in digital and applied arts

-Ashlynn Rhodes, paid staff and local artist, professional artist in fine arts, digital arts, and applied arts. Teaches classes weekly during school and summer.

-Isaiah McLemore, paid staff who teaches vocal and choral classes as well as applied arts in woodworking, jewelry making, STEAM, and culinary arts.

### **Budget Narrative**

EYC has been established now for over ten years, proving to be a strong and needed non-profit in Uinta County. This success has been based off of financial responsibility and proven success in our program outcomes. EYC has diversified funding to ensure sustainability. EYC is building an operating reserve while still strategically providing innovative programs and building capacity. Funding streams include:

\*Donations from individuals, businesses, organizations, and foundations=27%

\*Government support from City of Evanston, Uinta County, and Federal from 21st Century Community Learning Centers = 28%

\*Grants=19%

\*Fundraising=18%

\*Fees for services & rentals=5%

\*In-kind donations=3%

In line with our mission, the art budget includes funding for art program personnel, expenses and supplies, and marketing efforts. EYC has great success with partnerships including City of Evanston, Uinta County School District, Trona Valley Credit Union, Spire Energy, and an anonymous family foundation.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

FRIENDS OF PAC

WWW.WELOVEPAC.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Pinedale Aquatic Center Arts Spark – Igniting creativity in Pinedale’s youth

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Friends of PAC is dedicated to enriching lives through arts and recreation by providing vital funding and community engagement for the Pinedale Aquatic Center (PAC). We believe in the power of creative expression to inspire, connect, and strengthen our community.

Our goals are to:

To promote whole-community wellness by integrating arts and recreation.

Expand access to engaging youth arts programs that spark creativity and confidence.

Establish PAC as a vibrant regional hub for recreational and artistic enrichment.

Founded in 2018 (with official nonprofit status in 2019), Friends of PAC emerged in response to reduced recreation funding, striving to diversify financial support through private donations, grants, and partnerships with local organizations, including Sublette County School District #1.

Our goal is to expand the number of high-quality arts enrichment opportunities at PAC with our Arts Spark program, ensuring that youth of all backgrounds can explore creativity, develop new skills, and experience the arts as a vital part of their overall growth and well-being.

With a commitment to bringing dynamic arts experiences to Pinedale, Friends of PAC has proudly supported:

Wyoming’s only mermaid/artistic swimming program, featuring the first synchronized swimming performance in Pinedale.

Professional arts instructors in drumming, movement, and visual arts for Little Wrangler Day Camp (LWDC).

A public ballet barre, available for instruction and community use.

Custom sound baffles, designed by local youth, permanently installed around PAC's indoor track.

Ukulele instruction, introducing young learners to the joy of music.

STEAM-focused activities, blending science and art to enhance creative learning.

Specialized art curriculum for summer camp, led by a local artist.

Through these initiatives, we champion the arts as a powerful partner to recreation in fostering youth development and community well-being.

## **Community**

Pinedale has 2,262 residents (2021 Census) and is the hub for Sublette County's 8,697 residents. Known for its natural beauty, outdoor recreation, ranching, and energy economy, the county faces challenges such as limited arts access, childcare shortages, and financial barriers to extracurricular activities. Friends of PAC is committed to ensuring all children, regardless of income or ability, have access to arts enrichment.

PAC is the county's primary youth activity hub, offering after-school programs and Little Wrangler Day Camp (LWDC), with a new Friday program launching next fall due to the school district's shift to a four-day week. These programs fill a critical childcare gap. In 2024, 14% of LWDC participants came from TANF-qualifying families, aligning with federal free and reduced lunch guidelines. Friends of PAC collaborates with schools and conducts targeted outreach to raise awareness of financial assistance.

PAC is a fully ADA-compliant facility with handicap-accessible pools, changing rooms, an elevator, adaptive climbing equipment, and trained staff experienced in working with children with disabilities. The center has a history of welcoming autistic youth and wheelchair users, with staff trained to adapt programming for meaningful participation.

PAC offers a clear process for accessibility accommodations: Families can indicate needs during registration, contact staff and participate in pre-program meetings. Staff proactively engage caregivers to ensure every child can participate fully.

Pinedale is a community that values youth development, but geographic isolation and financial barriers limit arts access. Friends of PAC is dedicated to expanding enrichment opportunities and ensuring financial need is never a barrier to enjoying arts and recreation.

## **Evaluation**

Friends of PAC collaborates with supported programs to evaluate the Arts Spark Program's engagement and impact through a multi-pronged approach:

Parent Surveys (Mid & Post-Program): These assess whether the program met family needs and measure growth in children's confidence, skills, and new interests. Surveys have open ended questions to encourage story telling. Staff also have conversations with parents and record them on a Google drive.

Student Surveys (Pre & Post-Activity): Used to evaluate knowledge gained, interest development, and overall experience. Open ended questions encourage testimonials.

Student Journaling: Each child receives a personal journal (theirs to keep) for free expression through words or drawings. Structured prompts, such as reflections on an artist's visit, provide insights into student engagement, emotional responses, and personal growth.

Instructor Evaluations: Visiting instructors provide structured feedback on their sessions, assessing student engagement, content reception, and program impact.

Quantitative Records: Tracks the number of students served and total days of arts exposure to assess program reach.

All evaluation tools are designed in-house, with surveys incorporating best practices from national youth arts programs to ensure consistent, comparable data collection. Reports are shared with elected officials, PAC leadership and Friends of PAC to inform strategic planning, audience growth initiatives, and program improvements. Data-driven adjustments help ensure the program remains impactful, inclusive, and responsive to community needs.

## **Operating Support Narrative**



Friends of PAC is dedicated to expanding arts access for youth in Sublette County by integrating arts enrichment into recreational programming. As a volunteer-driven nonprofit, we work to remove financial and logistical barriers to arts participation, ensuring that all children, regardless of income or ability, can experience creative learning opportunities. The requested operating support will help fund the essential operational functions of the Arts Spark programs, which pair art with recreation in a youth learning environment.

Key operational costs include personnel. While primarily volunteer-led, limited administrative funds cover part-time coordination, program planning, and grant management. Also, facility costs and utilities continue to rise. PAC's ADA-compliant facility is 42,000 square feet and requires upkeep and maintenance. Program supplies are purchased for each program. Marketing and Outreach includes targeted efforts to reach rural, low-income, and underserved families, including social media, printed materials, and school partnerships. Finally, financial aid scholarships ensure cost is never a barrier for families who qualify for free or reduced-cost participation. Friends of PAC offers 50% and 75% scholarships to LWCD and the Friday program with special consideration for 100%.

The requested funding would be spent on the following:

Artist Fees of payments to local and visiting professional artists for the delivery of specialized arts experiences.

Program Materials such as art supplies, journals, and stained glass, to facilitate hands-on creative activities for children.

Marketing and outreach efforts, ensuring broad access and participation, especially for low-income and rural families.

Financial assistance and accommodations for children with disabilities, ensuring that all participants can fully access the program.

Administrative costs and ensure the smooth operation of the arts programs, including registration management and coordination.

This funding will help Friends of PAC continue to grow arts engagement in its youth programs.

### **Project Support Narrative**

PAC seeks project support funding to expand its Arts Spark Program, integrated into both the Little Wrangler Day Camp and the new Friday Program. These programs provide structured, age-appropriate artistic activities for elementary-aged children. LWDC is a full-day program divided by grade level, each with two dedicated counselors in PAC's classrooms. The Friday Program addresses the school district's new four-day week, offering supervised enrichment for students.

Grant funding from the Wyoming Arts Council will make the following Arts Spark programs possible:

#### Cowboy Code of Ethics Artwork

Each camper will explore art techniques through curriculum created by local artist Christy Anspach. This customized curriculum will be aligned with the camp's theme, "Cowboy Code of Ethics," focusing on core values such as integrity, respect, and perseverance. Campers will participate in STEAM activities inspired by Wyoming landscapes, wildlife, and cowboy culture, reinforcing the principles of the Code of the West through visual storytelling.

#### Tea Party Painting

In mid-July, campers will participate in a paint-along tea party. This activity encourages creativity, listening skills, and imagination. The tea party will be facilitated by Mae Orm, an experienced visual artist known for her interactive teaching style.

#### Podcasting

A previous WAC grant funded PAC's podcasting equipment, which campers will use for electronic journaling to develop storytelling and communication skills. Podcasting will also be introduced in the Teen Room, with adult pickleball players—many retired teachers—volunteering as mentors.

#### Cardio Drumming

Led by certified instructor Brittany Williams, cardio drumming combines rhythm, movement, and music. Using exercise balls and drumsticks, campers will engage in high-energy drumming routines, improving coordination, focus, and cardiovascular health while expressing themselves through rhythmic movement.

#### Stained Glass Project

Hayley Ruland of Stained Glass Sundays will lead a workshop where campers create a 3-foot stained glass "Cowboy Code of Conduct" installation for PAC's lobby. Younger campers will engage in simpler stained glass projects, while older students contribute to the final design. Each camper will take home a personal piece.

### Folk for Kids Program

PAC partners with the Pinedale Fine Arts Council (PFAC) to participate in Folk for Kids, an initiative that introduces youth to folk music through workshops with touring artists, masterclasses, and outdoor concerts. These off-site experiences will expose campers to traditional and contemporary folk music, fostering an appreciation for musical arts.

### Mermaid Camp

Back by popular demand, Mermaid Camp will be led by Melissa Ryckman, providing a unique blend of storytelling, performance, and aquatic arts. Campers will don mermaid tails, learn synchronized swimming techniques, and explore ocean-inspired crafts. This imaginative camp promotes confidence, movement skills, and water safety in a playful and engaging format.

### Impact & Implementation

The Arts Spark Program will serve over one hundred elementary-aged children, providing high-quality arts programming throughout summer and Fridays. Funding from WAC will directly support artist fees, supplies, facility costs, and scholarships for equitable access. By integrating visual, performing, and movement-based activities, the Arts Spark Program will foster creativity, community engagement, and a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Arts Spark Program provides structured arts learning for elementary-aged children. Integrated into the Little Wrangler Day Camp (LWDC) and the new Friday Program, it fosters creativity, skill development, and cultural appreciation. Activities align with Wyoming's Visual & Performing Arts Standards, ensuring high-quality instruction.

### Curriculum & Arts Learning Components

#### Cowboy Code of Ethics Artwork (Visual Arts, STEAM)

Led by Christy Anspach, campers will explore color theory, composition, and mixed media while creating art reflecting Cowboy Code values such as integrity and respect.

Learning Outcomes: Develop foundational art techniques and connect artistic expression to personal and cultural values.

#### Tea Party Painting (Visual Arts, Interpretation)

Led by Mae Orm, this guided paint-along encourages creative decision-making and fine motor skill development.

Learning Outcomes: Strengthen artistic interpretation, listening, and confidence in self-expression.

#### Podcasting (Digital Arts, Storytelling)

Using podcasting equipment funded by a previous grant, campers will develop narrative and media production skills.

Learning Outcomes: Improve storytelling, vocal expression, and communication abilities.

#### Cardio Drumming (Movement, Performing Arts)

Led by Brittany Williams, this program integrates rhythm, music, and fitness, engaging campers in high-energy drumming routines.

Learning Outcomes: Enhance coordination, focus, and understanding of musical rhythm.

#### Stained Glass Project (Visual Arts, Applied Art)

Artist Hayley Ruland will guide campers in creating a permanent stained glass installation for PAC's lobby.

Learning Outcomes: Learn glass art techniques, composition, and teamwork in public art projects.

#### Folk for Kids Program (Music, Cultural Arts)

In partnership with the Pinedale Fine Arts Council, campers will engage in folk music workshops and live performances.

Learning Outcomes: Gain appreciation for folk music and its storytelling traditions.

### Mermaid Camp (Performance, Movement)

Led by Melissa Ryckman, this program blends synchronized swimming, storytelling, and performance arts.

Learning Outcomes: Improve movement coordination, role-playing, and water safety skills.

### Impact & Community Connection

PAC's Arts Spark Program ensures that youth in Sublette County access high-quality arts education. In a rural community with limited arts exposure, this program provides professional instruction and structured learning that fosters artistic confidence and cultural appreciation.

### Educators & Program Strength

PAC collaborates with skilled local artists who bring expertise and hands-on teaching to each discipline. Their guidance helps campers explore various art forms while strengthening technical skills.

Program impact will be assessed through Pre- and Post-surveys measuring skill development, student artwork and performances documenting progress and instructor feedback to refine instruction

Arts Spark is more than making art—it's about learning, growth, and fostering lifelong creativity.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The Arts Spark Program at PAC is designed to foster creativity, skill development, and cultural appreciation in elementary-aged children through structured arts education. The program aligns with Wyoming Fine & Performing Arts Content & Performance Standards, ensuring that activities provide meaningful arts learning experiences.

### Identified Arts Learning Goals

#### Develop Technical Art Skills

Aligned Standard: VA2.2.A (Use various materials, tools, and techniques to create art)

Goal: Campers will explore painting, stained glass, mixed media, and digital storytelling to build foundational art-making skills.

Measurement: Pre- and post-project evaluations of camper artwork.

#### Enhance Artistic Interpretation & Communication

Aligned Standard: VA4.2.A (Communicate ideas through art)

Goal: Campers will express personal and cultural themes through the Cowboy Code of Ethics artwork, podcasting, and tea party painting.

Measurement: Verbal reflections and recorded podcast segments.

#### Foster Movement & Musical Expression

Aligned Standard: MU2.2.A (Explore rhythm, beat, and movement in music)

Goal: Through cardio drumming, folk music workshops, and Mermaid Camp, campers will develop an understanding of musical rhythm and movement.

Measurement: Instructor observation and camper participation in performances.

#### Encourage Collaboration & Public Art Engagement

Aligned Standard: VA5.2.A (Participate in collaborative art projects)

Goal: Campers will contribute to a permanent stained glass installation reflecting the Cowboy Code of Ethics.

Measurement: Completion of a 3-foot stained glass piece displayed at PAC.

Improve Listening & Direction-Following Skills

Aligned Standard: TH1.2.A (Follow simple instructions to participate in the arts)

Goal: Campers will practice following artistic direction during guided painting, storytelling, and movement-based activities.

Measurement: Instructor feedback and participant engagement levels.

PAC identified these goals by consulting with Cristy Anspach, Pinedale Elementary art teacher, along with feedback from local educators and parents requesting structured arts learning opportunities.

PAC's 2020 community needs assessment survey highlighted the need for expanded youth arts education and how much the community values the program.

Furthermore, observations from past Arts Spark programming show increased camper engagement when lessons combined hands-on learning with artistic themes.

By aligning with state standards and utilizing skilled local artists, PAC ensures that campers develop artistic skills, explore cultural themes, and engage in meaningful creative expression. Having consulted with an educator to develop the Arts Spark program, these goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART), ensuring a structured approach to arts learning and assessment.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Artists were selected by working closely with the Pinedale Fine Arts Council to identify local talent. PAC has also found instructors from resources shared from contacts around the state who do similar programs and by staff involvement at the American Camp Association conference (ACA). Many artists have taught at LWDC in years past and were well received by the campers and parents alike.

Cristy Anspach (Code of the West art projects): Cristy Anspach is a versatile artist and dedicated educator based in Pinedale, Wyoming, with expertise in painting, ceramics, fiber, and sculpture. She has been teaching art at Pinedale Elementary School since 1999, inspiring young artists with her passion and knowledge. A graduate of Colorado State University with degrees in painting and art education, Her art has been featured in exhibitions like Unintended Consequences (2020), honoring local wildlife. Cristy also creates functional stoneware inspired by Wyoming's natural beauty.

Mae Orm (Painting TeaParty): Mae Orm is a visual artist and entrepreneur based in Pinedale, Wyoming, specializing in clay, oils, and watercolor. She founded Pinedale Art & Crafts in 2016, offering art classes and showcasing local work. Inspired by the Wind River Range, she captures its movement and colors through plein-air painting. Mae has contributed to public art projects, such as powerbox wraps in both Pinedale and Jackson and "Sink or Swim, 2023" at the Art Association of Jackson Hole. Her colorful entry "Rainbow Ninja" was selected as a finalist for the Jackson Hole Still Works' annual vodka label contest.

Pickleball Players Group: While not artists, this dedicated group plays at PAC five to six times a week. Many are retired teachers and through conversations with PAC staff, a meaningful idea emerged: leveraging their experience and passion to support local youth. This led to the creation of a teen room, where they provide supervision, guidance, and conversation. Podcasting equipment from last year's WAC grant will be installed in the space.

Brittany Williams (cardio drumming): A certified fitness instructor for over 12 years, Brittany Williams leads Strength and Mobility, Strong45, and Zumba classes at PAC, bringing high-energy, music-driven workouts to the community.

Hayley Ruland ( Stained Glass Sundays): Hayley Ruland is a stained glass artist and engineer based in Pinedale, Wyoming, with over 20 years of experience. She holds degrees in civil and environmental engineering but has dedicated much of her career to exploring innovative glass art techniques. As the founder of Stained Glass Sundays, she merges traditional stained glass methods with modern technologies like 3D printing and CNC machining. Hayley is passionate about arts education, leading workshops at local organizations. Her work includes interactive projects like Paint By Glass, a DIY kit making stained glass accessible to all ages.

Melissa Ryckman (Mermaid Camp): Melissa Ryckman co-owns CamRanger, a Pinedale-based company specializing in wireless camera control accessories. Alongside her husband, Melissa has been instrumental in developing products that allow photographers to control their cameras remotely. In her spare time, she developed Mermaid Camp, where participants wear mermaid tails while learning swimming techniques, synchronized movements, and water safety while embracing the magic of underwater storytelling.

## **Budget Narrative**

The Arts Spark budget covers staff wages, artist fees, project supplies, and facility costs. Friends of PAC funds this with grants, private donors, and foundations. Fundraising events such as the Duck Derby where hundreds of rubber ducks race down Pine Creek further ensure sustainable funding.



As an organization dedicated to securing supplemental funding for the Pinedale Aquatic Center (PAC), Friends of PAC strategically channels financial resources to maximize impact. In 2023, 81% of revenue supported PAC programming, with 19% for operations and sustainability. This strong financial stewardship demonstrates a commitment to both fiscal responsibility and program growth.

Key funders include Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, Wyoming Community Foundation, Wyoming Arts Council, Sublette County Recreation Board, and TANF. In-kind support includes volunteer time, meals and materials. This diverse funding ensures Arts Spark's long-term success and high-quality arts experiences.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

GLENROCK MAIN STREET

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: GLENROCK MAIN STREET - VETERANS PARK

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission:

To promote revitalization by celebrating, supporting, and sustaining Glenrock's downtown area to enhance the quality of life through beautification, historic preservation, promotions, and economic growth. Sta

Strategic Goals:

To provide a vibrant downtown as an exciting place to explore, shop, and invest.

To improve the physical appearance and preserve the historic character of the Glenrock Main Street District.

To stimulate growth for new businesses and revitalize existing businesses.

Organize volunteers and stakeholders to build leadership and develop a public-private partnership to assist in the revitalization process.

### Community

The population of Glenrock is 2,407 residents in the town limits and the population of Converse County is 13,370 (2021 data). The Median age of Glenrock is 43 and the population consist of 52% male and 48% female. 82% of the population is white (non-hispanic). Of the employed workforce - 62% is white collar, with educators leading the category, while 38% is blue collar - the majority is in the extraction and construction industry. The average commute for both Glenrock and Converse County is 25 minutes. In the summer of 2022, a new Town Square was completed in downtown Glenrock. This Town Square is central gathering place for Glenrock residents as well as a destination for many travelers to the area or travelers passing through. The Square has a splash pad, ice skating rink, playgrounds, fire pits, and an amphitheater. Glenrock Main Street in conjunction with the Town, started "Fridays at the Square" to provide live music at the Square every Friday during the summer. This event brought visitors to Glenrock from all over the state and beyond. Glenrock Main Street is excited to build off the momentum

of the Square to help revitalize our downtown and to provide beautification projects to assist in business attraction and retention.

Glenrock is the home for many veterans who served our country and is a very patriotic community. The Veterans Park will be a central gathering place to honor and remember our heroes.

### **Evaluation**

The Veterans Park is proposed for downtown Glenrock on an existing vacant lot. This location is along the main thoroughfare through Glenrock - State Road 20/26. Our goal with this project is to create not only a gathering location for our community but to create a destination for visitors from all over the state and country. The Glenrock Veterans Park will serve as a place of reflection, respect, and gratitude for all residents of Converse County, and visitors. This project holds deep significance for our communities, and believe it is a meaningful way to show our appreciation for the freedoms and values our veterans have safeguarded. We will collect the names of all veterans that served in our community and recognize each name engraved in granite in the Park. The Park will be the central location for Memorial Day and Veterans Day event for the community. We will also have QR code with conflict stories and information on the branches of service and the different conflicts of war.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

n/a

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Glenrock Veteran" Park will be located at 108 south 3rd street on the northeast corner of Birch and 3rd street. The Park entrance monument includes an entrance sign with bronze medallions mounted to the base with of each branch of service and stainless battlefield cross. (See picture).

The main bronze in the park will be a soldier with two small children in the center on the park. The center pedestal will have a firepit-like element with a ring on fire around the base.

There will be over 70 individual pieces of granite in the Park - There will be individual Veterans Pillars with the names of all Glenrock veterans past and present. There will be benches, eagle statues, and War Monument.

The Park will include flags representing our County, State and each branch of service.

The granite will be quarried domestically. A locally quarried monument is rare and we're proud that Glenrock's memorial park will be entirely constructed using domestic material and labor.

This project is being designed by Bott Monument, located in Riverton Wyoming and Bott will be using (2) bronze artists for this project — Raymond Gibby and Bill Sturgis. Both are well known in the art world and are the best in their respective fields. Bill Sturgis will be doing the soldier and children, and Raymond Gibby will handle the eagles.

To make this vision a reality, we will be seeking the support of generous individuals, businesses, and organizations who share our commitment to honoring our heroes. There will be multiple opportunities to acknowledge our donors and supports with bricks, pillars, and benches.

The requesting funding will be used for the artist to build the various granite monuments.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

The total Veterans Park Project estimated cost will be \$2,000,000. Glenrock Main Street has received \$545,000 specifically for this project, to date and will be requesting funding for FY 2026 from the Town of Glenrock , Converse County, several private foundations, Wyoming Community Foundation, AARP, Rocky Mountain Power, Blank Hills Energy and will be soliciting donations from businesses and private individuals. We will be hold several fund raising events as well with auction items donated from the community. All staff working on making this project possible are volunteers with he exception of one part time director.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

COMMUNITY PRIDE FOUNDATION

WWW.GOSHEN.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Materials and artist fees for the Torrington Main Street mural project

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Community Pride Foundation and Torrington Main Street are committed to cultivating a supported, thriving business community and fostering dynamic relationships, encouraging collaboration and mutual growth. We strive to position our downtown as a vibrant gathering place where community members can celebrate their heritage while striving for innovative advances. One of our strategic goals is to implement a mural project that falls in alignment with a public art guidebook recently compiled for our community that encourages the county-wide cultivation of diverse forms of art that embody the artistic and cultural spirit of our particular way of life.

### Community

The Community Pride Foundation, in partnership with Torrington Main Street serves the downtown area of Torrington (population 6,675), operating under a board of community cultivators working to encourage community input to guide our initiatives. Our Main Street Advisory board is made up of citizens representing various demographics.

Torrington Main Street firmly believes in fostering an inclusive community where every member, irrespective of their background or circumstances, can experience and contribute to the vibrant tapestry of our cultural and artistic endeavors. This commitment is at the heart of our mission to ensure Torrington Main Street remains a lively, inviting destination for all by creating vibrant spaces for gathering where locals and visitors alike can connect, relax and engage. To ensure our mural project and other artistic initiatives are truly inclusive, we actively engage with non-dominant communities through various means. This includes partnerships with local organizations serving people with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and low-income families to identify participants and collaborators. Our outreach efforts are designed to invite these communities to share their stories and artistic expressions, ensuring their voices and experiences are integral to the narrative of our public art.

We take accommodations seriously to ensure everyone can fully participate in and enjoy our projects. Upon request or identified need, we readily provide accommodations such as accessible venue locations and frequently hold events that are of no cost. Our planning process includes an accessibility review to proactively identify and

address potential barriers, ensuring our events and projects are welcoming and accessible to all members of our community.

## **Evaluation**

To assess the impact of our mural project on the community, we will employ a multifaceted evaluation approach that captures both the tangible and intangible outcomes. Our goal is to understand not only the project's direct effects on economic vitality and cultural enrichment but also its influence on community engagement, pride, and inclusivity. We plan to employ pre and post project surveys and questionnaires along with social media and online engagement for immediate feedback and engagement metrics.

We will collaborate with local businesses to measure any changes in foot traffic in the vicinity of murals. Correlating these data with local retail and hospitality revenue trends helps us assess the mural's effect on economic activity.

Through interviews and focus groups conducted several months post-completion, we will collect qualitative insights from community members, artists involved, and local leaders. These discussions aim to uncover deeper narratives about the mural's role in enhancing community pride, cultural appreciation, and social cohesion.

Repeat surveys will be conducted annually allowing us to track changes in public perception and the mural's sustained impact on the community. This longitudinal approach helps identify lasting benefits or areas for future improvement.

We will also specifically evaluate how well the project has engaged non-dominant communities by reviewing participation rates representation in decision-making processes and feedback from these groups. Success in this area is measured by the mural's ability to reflect diverse community identities and stories, fostering a sense of belonging among all community members.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Operating costs for the mural project will include essential supplies such as high-quality exterior paint, primer, sealant, brushes, rollers, and other application tools. Additionally, costs will cover protective coatings to ensure longevity, as well as any necessary materials for surface preparation.

The estimated supply costs for the project range from \$500 to \$5,000, depending on mural size, surface condition, and required specialty coatings. If awarded, the requested operating funds will be allocated to purchasing these essential materials to ensure a durable and visually impactful mural for the community.

## **Project Support Narrative**

Between July 1 and June 30, our organization will complete a large-scale mural project designed to enhance the visual identity of our downtown and celebrate the cultural and historical significance of our community. This project aligns with our mission to support local businesses, foster community pride, and create engaging public spaces.

Key phases of the project include:

Community Engagement – Gathering input from local residents, business owners, and stakeholders to ensure the mural reflects community values.

Artist Selection & Design Development – Working with a professional mural artist to create a compelling and meaningful design.

Wall Preparation & Installation – Cleaning, priming, and sealing the mural surface, followed by the painting and protective finishing process.

Unveiling & Public Programming – Hosting an unveiling event and activities to promote public art appreciation.

### **Artist Involvement & Qualifications**

We are currently in the process of identifying and securing an experienced muralist to lead this project. The selected artist will have a strong portfolio of public art projects, experience with large-scale works, and a demonstrated ability to engage communities in the creative process.

### **Allocation of Requested Project Support Funds**

Grant funds will be allocated as follows:

Artist Fees & Labor – Compensation for the lead artist and any assisting artists. Estimated cost: \$20,000.

Supplies & Materials – Wall preparation such as cleaning, repairs, and priming to ensure longevity, high-quality exterior paints, primers, sealants, brushes, rollers, UV and weather-resistant sealant and other necessary tools. Estimated cost: \$5,000.

Equipment Rentals – Scaffolding, lifts, or ladders required for safe mural installation. Estimated in-kind donation: \$2,000.

Community Engagement & Marketing – Materials for public input sessions, outreach, and event promotion. Estimated in-kind donation: \$500.

This project will serve as a lasting investment in our community, fostering economic and cultural benefits while strengthening the connection between residents and their shared public spaces.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Torrington Main Street is supported by Go Goshen, which funds program administration, including the Main Street Coordinator, and receives guidance from Wyoming Main Street.

Our advisory board, composed of dedicated volunteers, enhances downtown through fundraising and initiatives like the Veterans Banner Project, Summer Concert Series, and beautification efforts.

We collaborate with a strong network of partners, including the Community Pride Foundation, our fiscal partner for grant opportunities, as well as the towns within Goshen County, Goshen County government, Goshen County School District, and the Goshen County Library.

These partnerships help strengthen our economy, celebrate our heritage, and create a more vibrant community.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

GOSHEN COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION

[HTTPS://GOSHENCOUNTYLIBRARY.ORG/](https://goshencountylibrary.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Art in the outdoors

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Goshen County Library is an intergenerational community hub offering many experiences, services, and materials that seek to enrich and positively impact all community members.

Our values:

Customer Focused: Our users are not only our customers; they are the reason the library exists. We provide quality service and treat all users fairly, equally, and respectfully. Services are provided in a non-judgmental manner that is sensitive to and supportive of human differences.

Staff Excellence: Our employees and volunteers are valued as individuals and for their essential contributions to the organization. An open exchange of ideas is encouraged throughout the system. We nurture our talents and each other.

Organizational Growth and Innovation: We are a learning organization that is responsive to community needs. We constantly reassess our services and methods and try to see ourselves through the public's eyes. We maintain integrity and high standards in our work and provide access to all individuals.

Our vision:

We strive to provide:

Library Services - A welcoming and lively center with valued and used services by people of all ages, backgrounds, belief systems, and experiences.

Quality - A well-trained and highly capable staff that works to provide quality service to all users.

Appropriate facilities that are inviting and well-maintained.

Relevance - Timely, accurate, and credible information, technology, collections, and services relevant to community needs are accessible and user-friendly.

Community - Intellectual freedom and the confidentiality of each individual's use of the library.

A close working relationship with other libraries, community agencies, and organizations that foster cooperation.

Good Stewardship - An environment that fosters the love of literature from early childhood throughout adulthood. The most efficient and effective use of the taxpayer's resources.

## **Community**

The Goshen County Library serves all of Goshen County, including the towns of Torrington (population 6,675), Lingle (population 497), Fort Laramie (population 232), Yoder (population 169), and La Grange (population 303).

Services: GCL has public computers for use in the library and laptops and hot spots for patrons to use at home. There are also a large number of patrons who check out digital books.

Materials: We're very conscious of ensuring that we have authors from underrepresented demographics, such as women of color, books in translation, and LGBTQ+ authors and topics.

Facilities: GCL facilities are ADA-accessible. We recently added a private room and access to technology for patrons to use for telehealth appointments.

Staff: GCL staff and board consistently are trained in serving all patrons. In fact, one of our stated values is "We are a learning organization that is not afraid to change and take appropriate risks in pursuit of meeting community needs. We constantly reassess our services and methods and try to see ourselves through the public's eyes."

Evaluation: We are not only a data-driven organization but also a patron-driven organization. We strive to meet the needs of our community by understanding patron experiences and gathering data. Our data would suggest that we don't need to provide Spanish-speaking materials but our day-to-day experiences inform our decision to purchase Spanish materials.

## **Evaluation**

Our vision is to create a welcoming place where all members of the community have access to information. To do this, we evaluate and measure the impact of our services through:

1. Data - every interaction with a person or material is measured and tracked. This helps us to see the big picture.
2. Surveys - each program ends with an exit survey and we conduct community surveys as a part of our strategic planning. Along with survey questions, we include open-ended questions to allow patrons to use their own voices to communicate their experiences.
3. Stories - our patron's stories about why they use the library and our community member's stories about why they don't use the library help us to fine-tune our programming to meet the needs of our community. We gather these stories through our surveys and through networking.

For this project we will be able to track usage for group events and programming.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

We want to hire two local artists to enhance the outdoor space we are creating.

1. We have a local painter who has provided the following bid:

Labor costs (\$10 a square foot)

The activity building has two areas to be painted.  $10 \times 10 = 100\text{sft}$  (\$1000) and  $10 \times 20 = 200\text{sft}$  (\$2000)

The logo on the front is a  $7 \times 7 = 49\text{sft}$  (\$490)

Dino footprints: \$10 a print, and approx 20 prints. (\$200)

Total: \$ 3,690

I will remeasure actual painted surface area at the end for a more accurate total, but this is the current estimate.

### Materials

Spray paint: \$10 a can, we will need approx 10 cans.

Asphalt paint: one \$70 can

Exterior paint: \$30 a can, 3 cans. (this is mostly just in case I end up needing a specific color I don't have.)

Painter's tape: \$15

Paint Brushes: \$15

For the dino footprints, to make them look as good as possible, I will use stamps or stencils.

Dino stamp materials cost

Foam: \$0 i already have some.

Stamp backing: \$40

Handles: \$70

Glue: \$20

Whether we use stamps or stencils, I will need two, one for each foot.

Total: \$420

Labor and material costs combined - \$4,110

2. We have a local metal worker who will create a large 8'x8' tree that will be mounted against the building and contain the names of our major donors to this outdoor space.

For the tree:

The total would be \$6000 that would include some money for installation, material cost, labor, time, draft, powder coating, travel time, welding, and consumables.

I have images of the outdoor space and the projects if you would like to see them.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The financial support of the library comes from three sources: Goshen County, the Library Foundation, and grant income. The funds from Goshen County cover library administration and building expenses. All other programs, materials, and services come from other sources. In 2008, the State of Wyoming created an endowment challenge for Wyoming public libraries. Donations to Goshen County Library Foundation were matched 3:1 from the state. The endowment corpus created the seed money for the library's foundation to fundraise and invest successfully. The library has also successfully obtains grants for particular projects and materials.

Primary groups that support the library: Rotary, the Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Community Foundation, the Wyoming Humanities Council, the Ellbogen Foundation, and local businesses. Through these partnerships, Goshen County Library can fill budget gaps, sustain the library, and provide funds for special projects.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

GRAND ENCAMPMENT COWBOY GATHERING OUTFIT

GRANDENCAMPMENTGATHERING.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025 Grand Encampment Cowboy Gathering Musical/Poetry Event

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission is to preserve and share the unique culture of the rancher and cowboy in the American West. Performers present themselves as positive ambassadors of the western way of life. We seek out performers who can connect with our audience with their knowledge of ranching/cowboy way of life. We also seek performers in all age groups.

The primary goals of the Grand Encampment Cowboy Gathering Outfit:

- \* Promote cowboy/ranch traditions
- \* Provide a safe/welcoming environment
- \* Keep most events free of charge so everyone can experience the performing arts
- \* Book a wide variety of affordable, high-quality musicians/poets (between 10-12 performers)
- \* Offer an educational event
- \* Provide a place for new entertainers to have a moment on the stage to showcase their talent in front of an audience, through our open mic event
- \* Give audience a better understanding of Cowboys/Ranching/Farming and their importance to the economy and our way of life, which puts a face to ranching and farming
- \* To continue this event for many years to come (some Cowboy Gatherings have closed down in other states due to financial issues)
- \* Seek out possible financial donors and grants

### Community

The Upper North Platte River Valley of Carbon County consists of the towns of Encampment/Riverside/Saratoga, approximately 65 miles west of Laramie. The population is 90% White/9% Hispanic/1% Other ethnicity. The population of this area is less than 3,500 people.

This event may be the only time some residents get to experience the performing arts with award winning performers. Our open mic/campfire sessions welcome performers of all ages/experience levels. Thus, giving folks, who might be able to afford traveling to perform at other events, a chance to have time in front of a larger audience.

Visitors represent a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Carbon County has a higher % of families/people below poverty level income, students with free/reduced lunch, those receiving food stamps-SNAP (Carbon County vs WY). Much of our event is free, encouraging family/senior citizen population to attend without any economic impact.

Easy access is essential to this event, as many attendees are senior citizens.

We recognize and pay honor to our Veterans before the singing of the National Anthem.

Website/Facebook/local publications/radio stations share information about our event and accommodations.

We purchase advertising & distribute posters throughout our community (including senior centers/nursing homes/libraries/American Legion). This variety of promotion helps to ensure we reach a wider range of people within our community. Website has phone#/email/ mailing address for any person with special needs to contact us. Accommodations are handled as we receive knowledge of needs (either in person or through contact areas. Service animals welcome at all venues.

All venues have parking spots/restrooms that are ADA compliant.

Event helps audience stay active/engaged in Arts programs!

## **Evaluation**

Event is documents in photographs/statistics gathered from participants survey data. Head counts are conducted at all events. Data helps determine the popularity of each event. Survey cards are offered to each attendee, which includes spectator name/address, how they heard about event, suggestions for improvement, rating & comments of performers, asking if they would like to be added to our Membership drive mailing list. Committee members talk w/spectators asking how they like our event/performers. We make ourselves available to participants to answer questions or concerns.

Committee members talk w/performers asking how to improve the event. Performers enjoy the laid-back/relaxed atmosphere & how impressive our spectators are. Many say this Cowboy Gathering is the best organized event they attend.

Comments/suggestions from performers/spectators are shared at meetings with committee members to identify areas for improvement. Suggestions determine performers, improving website, upcoming workshops, additional places to post flyers, & addressing concerns expressed on survey cards. Most comments tell us to "just keep doing what we are doing." We receive a lot of positive feedback from the cards.

Attendee numbers from Encampment/surrounding area: 150, in state: 100, out of state: 100.

This event allows everyone to share in the Performing Arts, especially w/the free events. The Grand Encampment Cowboy Gathering brings to life what can't be seen from the road. The Gathering gives local resident/visitors alike a glimpse into the cowboy/ranching way of life. We help local businesses (restaurants, motels, gas stations, etc) and the Grand Encampment Museum thrive through tourism. Committee members talk to local businesses after the event to discuss improvements/suggestions.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Event costs:

\* 45% for Entertainers (partial funding usually comes from Carbon County School Dist. #2 Rec Board Grant). Many of our entertainers travel long distances to attend this event.

\* 10% for Printed materials: membership drive letter/event posters/brochures

\* 4% for Event insurance

\* 41% for Misc. operating costs: postage/event supplies/website maintenance/sound system operators, etc.

Funds received will be allocated to the Gatherings share of costs for entertainer expense/printed event materials/event insurance/sound system operators/website maintenance. Funding helps to cover this year's (2025) expenses, without having to drain reserve for the following year.

All events are held at the Grand View Park, except for the Saturday evening "Roundup" which is held in the Encampment K-12 School gym. Large tents, a mobile stage, and tables for ticket sales, etc. are set up at the park for attendee and performer comfort/convenience. Scheduled events/educational demonstrations are discussed in detail at committee meetings prior to our event. Headliner and "second tier" performers are selected by the Entertainment Sub-committee and are presented/discussed at a committee meeting. Sub-committee members include Steve Moulton and Jason Swedlund, both of which are recognized musicians and well acquainted with other entertainers. Steve is one of the founding members of the Grand Encampment Cowboy Gathering; he has served on the committee for 22 years. Jason has served on the committee for over 10 years.

All events held at the Grand View Park are free for attendees; the Saturday evening performance is a ticketed event (\$20 per person).

Scheduled events:

Friday evening July 18:

6:30pm - Open Mic Event - gives audience members/new performers a chance to showcase their musical/poetic talents

9:30pm - Campfire Jam Session - all performers, along with audience members, share songs, stories, poetry, and/or play musical instruments

Saturday, July 19:

9:00am - Educational Demonstration - Dutch Oven Cooking - presenter will share the history of Dutch oven cooking, information, recipes, and instructions with attendees, as well as cooked samples

12:00pm - Western Entertainment Show - featuring 11 acts performing cowboy/western songs & poetry including headliner performers (Jon Chandler, Caitlynn Taussig, Jeff Carson) and other "second tier" entertainers (Washtub Jerry, Doug Figgs, Many Strings, Terry Nash, Bill Clark, Kacey and Jenna, George Wallace, Darrell Holden)

7:00pm - Western Entertainment Roundup - featuring headline performers: Jon Chandler (award winning singer songwriter) with Ernie Martinez (award winning instrumentalist & songwriter); Caitlynn Taussig (singer/songwriter); and Jeff Carson (poet).

Sunday, July 20:

9:30am - Cowboy Church, for those who care to share in a worship service.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

25% of budget is from memberships/ticket sales to the Saturday night show. All other funding comes from grants/community support. We try to maintain one year's operation costs as reserve for cash-flow, particularly for expenses paid before receiving any funds from the three primary grant opportunities we apply for annually.

Funding received annually from Towns of Riverside & Encampment. We apply for grant funding for partial support of lodging/performer stipends from Carbon County School Dist. #2 Rec Board and Carbon County Visitors Council for advertising. Mailed membership drive donations provide funding for overall operations.

Budget includes stipends/lodging for performers. Larger stipends/travel support are paid to headline performers. We recognize the need to increase performer stipends to cover travel costs.

In-kind donations: performer lodging/door prizes/stage decor/volunteers for setup/park maintenance/giclee print for raffle/school setup and cleanup.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

GRAND TETON MUSIC FESTIVAL, INC.

WWW.GTMF.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Supporting Grand Teton Music Festival's Operations and Arts Learning Programs

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Grand Teton Music Festival's mission is to engage, entertain, educate, and inspire our resident and seasonal communities through exhilarating musical experiences. The organization features orchestral, chamber, and solo performances of primarily classical music by world-class artists, and fosters a culture that draws outstanding musicians to Jackson Hole in support of this mission. GTMF fulfills its mission through more than 150 concerts, education activities, and community events per year. Approximately two-thirds of GTMF's events are focused on education and community engagement; additionally, more than 85% of those community engagement events are free and open to the public.

Artistic and Education Goals include:

- Presenting exceptional musical experiences to residents and visitors of Teton County
- Expanding access to music through new and enhanced programs and community partnerships
- Attracting top-tier musicians, artists, and conductors to participate in concerts and community programs
- Leveraging the power of music to enhance the total wellness of Teton County residents

Operational Goals include:

- Diversifying patron bases to grow audiences and expand philanthropic support
- Achieving a balanced budget or better through financial planning and earned and contributed revenue
- Recruiting and retaining a highly skilled staff and engaged, diverse Board of Directors

### Community

In 2024, the Grand Teton Music Festival served over 22,000 individuals, with 42% of these ticket-buyers having Wyoming addresses. Our concert season subscribers are predominantly older adults (65+), comprising more than

85% of our base, and we are proud to serve this often-underrepresented group. Anecdotally, many maintain ties to Wyoming because of the community they've built around the Festival. In contrast, single-ticket buyers trend younger, especially for our classical-crossover Gateway Series.

We are mindful of the economic disparities in Teton County and have implemented several programs to engage everyone in our community: 1) \$5 tickets for youth under 17; 2) \$25 day-of concert tickets; and 3) complimentary tickets distributed through partners like Hole Food Rescue and Coombs Outdoors, which serve food-insecure and ESL families, respectively. Additionally, most of our Education and Community Engagement (ECE) programs are free and open to the public; 77% of audience members are consistently Wyoming residents. These events are presented in collaboration with partners that represent diverse cross-sections of our community, including rural residents (e.g., Teton County Library in Alta) and individuals with disabilities (e.g., Sage Living). From the music education perspective, our camper-led opera project at Camp Jackson is one example of a co-created experience shaped by the youth we serve.

Walk Festival Hall, our primary venue, offers adaptable seating, street-level valet parking, and a hearing aid loop. Patrons may request accommodations during ticket purchases or on-site; a designated staff member manages accessible seating at every event. For off-site events, we partner with venues that meet or exceed ADA standards to ensure everyone can participate fully.

## **Evaluation**

The Festival tracks and analyzes ticket sales, including patron addresses, and attendance data at free programming to quantify the impact of each performance or program. This data helps us determine interest in particular composers, performers, and community engagement programs. For example, attendance data gathered at our "Musical Adventures" workshops—weekday morning musical activities for children 0–5—led us to significantly expand this program in 2023. The positive impact of this decision was reinforced through a 76% growth in attendance between 2023 and 2024.

The Festival also evaluates the impact of its programs through qualitative surveys distributed to audience members, musicians, and community partners. These surveys are distributed via email to ticket buyers, Festival musicians, and community contacts. Feedback received through these surveys allows us to assess if we are meeting our artistic, educational, and operational goals. We use this feedback, along with quantitative attendance data, to inform programming decisions for the following season, which has led to significant audience growth (for example, 2,000 more individuals attended concerts in 2024 versus 2023). Historically, these surveys have led to significant changes in the structure of the season, including adding an eighth week to the Festival in order to present a partially-staged opera. Finally, our staff spends a significant amount of time conversing with patrons, donors, and community members during the summer season, collecting anecdotal feedback through deepened relationships. In 2025, for example, we are adding a component to "Musical Adventures" for older children, ages 6–12, specifically because of ongoing conversations between parents and our ECE staff.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The majority of GTMF's operating costs relate to artistic and programming expenses, with compensation for our 250+ summer musicians as the most significant expense. The artistic and programming expenses are projected at \$3,157,205: artistic personnel costs represent 40% of this expense (\$1,272,300), musician housing represents 24% (\$763,150), and musician travel honorariums represent an additional 11% of this total (\$335,400). The remaining costs associated with artistic and programming expenses are off-season programming (\$72,460), equipment and production rentals (\$276,275), venue maintenance (\$225,220), musician expenses for special events (\$92,000), and community outreach expenses (\$120,400). GTMF also budgets \$375,770 for marketing expenses, \$228,500 for development expenses, \$1,557,505 for administrative staff, and \$316,505 for office expenses, including rent, utilities, IT support, and supplies. Our total operating costs for 2025 are forecasted at \$5,635,485.

Support from the Wyoming Arts Council will be directed to musician honorariums specifically for our "On the Road" free community concert series and for our family concerts. The musician expenses for these programs are projected to be \$22,000 for the summer. Although this is just a fraction (2%) of the total costs associated with musician honorariums, these free concerts have a huge impact on our community—in 2024 alone, these events reached more than 1,800 children, families, and community members. Even more significantly, the "On the Road" series brings classical music to individuals in their spaces through partnerships with other local organizations—such as Teton Raptor Center, Teton Science School's Murie Ranch, and Teton Literacy Center—enhancing the accessibility of classical music in Teton County.

While GTMF's overall operating budget is substantial, support from the Wyoming Arts Council plays a uniquely strategic role in ensuring the accessibility of our programming. Our free community concerts are on a smaller scale and not ticketed, and are therefore less likely to attract donor-directed gifts. As a result, these community programs rely heavily on grant funding. If granted fully, Wyoming Arts Council support will cover almost half of the costs associated with this program. The remaining \$12,000 will be covered by a combination of secured and pending gifts designated for community engagement, including a confirmed \$6,000 grant from a private foundation. WAC's investment would enable us to fulfill our mission to serve the broader Teton County community, particularly those who may not otherwise attend traditional concert experiences.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Arts learning events make up more than half of our annual programming and drew more than 5,000 participants and audience members last season.

#### **Musical Adventures (June–August 2025)**

Stoner Family Education Curator Meaghan Heinrich leads children ages 0–5 and their caregivers in short, interactive sessions of group song, movement, and dance at the Greenspace on the Block (Jackson) and Teton Village Commons. These weekly morning sessions coincide with the Festival's summer season and highlight music that will be performed later in the week. In 2024, the program averaged 60 attendees per session.

#### NEW! GTMF Youth Ukulele Jam (June–August 2025)

Expanding on Musical Adventures, this new program offers musical engagement for children ages 6–12. Led by Meaghan Heinrich, the 8-week series follows the Jackson Musical Adventures sessions and introduces participants to ukulele basics. The program was developed in direct response to parent feedback.

#### Summer Camp Visits (July–August 2025)

Heinrich will visit five local camps to lead age-appropriate musical activities. These range from introductory “practice” kindergarten classes through Teton Literacy Center to a week-long opera workshop and production of *Hansel and Gretel* at Camp Jackson. She will also lead an 8-week ukulele club for the third year at Coombs Outdoors, a camp for economically disadvantaged and culturally non-dominant youth.

#### Pre-Concert Talks & Meaghan on Deck (July–August 2025)

These programs provide educational context for Festival Orchestra concerts. Pre-concert talks, led by Heinrich, a Festival musician, or a guest lecturer, occur before each orchestra concert. Meaghan on Deck, held after open rehearsals, offers family-friendly commentary for younger and first-time audiences. Each program averages 50 attendees.

#### Family Concert (July 16, 2025)

Our 2025 Family Concert features Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf*, performed by Festival Orchestra members and narrated by Meaghan Heinrich. Her adapted script will localize the story with animals native to Grand Teton National Park. In 2024, a similar event drew over 400 attendees to Walk Festival Hall.

#### Donald Runnicles Musical Arts Scholarship Competition (July 26–27, 2025)

This competition supports graduating high school seniors from Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana who intend to pursue music studies. Six finalists will compete at Walk Festival Hall for three scholarships totaling \$50,000.

#### NEW! Musician Residencies (October 2025 & April 2026)

Eight GTMF musicians will lead two week-long residencies at Jackson Hole High School—four in October and four in April. Each residency includes masterclasses, rehearsals, and private lessons. The first week of each focuses on strings, with two guest string clinicians; the second on band, featuring a wind player and a percussionist.

### GTMF Presents (December 2025 & February 2026)

This classical crossover series features classically trained artists working across genres, and each concert includes educational outreach. In December, singer Tony DeSare will perform a special holiday program for 400+ Teton County students.

### String Fest (March 2026)

Led by GTMF violinist Barbara Scowcroft, this one-day workshop gathers eighth-grade string students from Jackson, Star Valley, and Teton Valley, ID. The event ends with a public performance at Walk Festival Hall. In 2024, there were 59 participants. A second String Fest occurred for high school students in 2024 and drew 61 participants.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

The guiding impulse of all of our arts learning programs is to ignite and nurture a passion for music in everyone these programs impact, no matter where they are in their musical journey. Consequently, we have diversified our programs to emphasize all four of Wyoming's music-specific Fine and Performing Arts Standards (2013 version) in varying degrees. In consultation with our Education Curator Meaghan Heinrich, each program is designed to meet multiple arts learning goals across the four standards while also addressing a specific musical need in our community. Three examples of program-specific arts learning goals are detailed below—prototypes for how we consider arts learning goals when developing all of our programs.

### Musical Adventures:

These programs—in direct response to parent demand for early-childhood music education in Jackson—are closely aligned with the Wyoming Arts Learning Goals for K–4th grade students.

At the end of each session, participating children should: begin to develop basic musicianship (FPA4.1.M.1); begin to perform independently and with others, developing rhythm, dynamics, and a steady beat (FPA4.1.M.2); create music using a variety of traditional and non-traditional sound sources (FPA4.1.M.4); use appropriate terminology to identify instruments (FPA4.2.M.1); respond to aural examples through movement (FPA4.2.M.2); and demonstrate appropriate behavior in a musical setting (FPA4.4.M.1).

### GTMF's Camp Jackson Partnership:

GTMF seeks out partnerships with local summer camps to help bridge the gap in music education between school years for local students. As the goal of this partnership with Camp Jackson is to put on a full production of a specific piece (Humperdinck's "Hansel and Gretel"), these goals, aligned with the 5th–8th grade standards, are tailored specifically to this piece.

At the end of the week-long production period, campers should: demonstrate musicianship through rehearsal and revision (FPA8.1.M.1); perform independently and with others demonstrating pitch accuracy, correct rhythm, and a steady beat (FPA 8.1.M.2); apply appropriate musical terminology when discussing "Hansel and Gretel"

(FPA8.2.M.1); respond to aural examples by describing musical elements within the piece (FPA8.2.M.2); evaluate the effectiveness of their own and others' performances (FPA8.2.M.3); describe the distinguishing stylistic features of the piece (FPA8.3.M.1); and demonstrate appropriate behavior in various musical settings (FPA8.4.M.1). Using these Arts Learning Goals as a guide, Meaghan Heinrich will develop a curriculum for the week that blends performance, aesthetics, and history to accomplish these goals.

#### Pre-Concert Talks:

GTMF's pre-concert talks are tailored to GTMF's primary audience—adults. Therefore, we use Arts Learning Goals for students in 9th–11th grade to design these experiences, guided by our core principle of nurturing a lifelong passion for music.

After each lecture, an attendee should have an enhanced ability to: respond to the concert program by evaluating musical elements and expressive devices (FPA11.2.M.2); evaluate the compositions and performance by comparing them to exemplary models (FPA11.2.M.3); form and defend preferences for musicians, works, and genres (FPA11.2.M.4); classify by some means unfamiliar music they encounter in the program (FPA11.3.M.1); and analyze characteristics that make a specific piece historically or culturally significant (FPA11.3.M.2).

We use several methods to evaluate program outcomes:

1. Distributing post-event surveys with open-ended questions to capture what participants learned. In 2025, we plan to send an end-of-season survey with arts learning-specific questions.
2. Observing and reviewing student performances—Meaghan Heinrich, GTMF musicians, and staff assess strengths and areas for improvement.
3. Gathering anecdotal feedback—staff speak with parents and participants to ask specific questions related to learning goals.

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The musicians, instructors, and educators involved in the Festival's education and community engagement programs are professionals in their respective fields.

Meaghan Heinrich, GTMF's Stoner Family Education Curator, leads Musical Adventures, GTMF's Ukulele Clubs, and GTMF Camp Partnerships; she also hosts Meaghan on Deck, the majority of GTMF's Pre-Concert Lectures, Family Concerts, and the On the Road concert series. She is a music educator with Milwaukee Public Schools and is on the faculty of the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music where she teaches oboe, early childhood music, and chamber music. The programs Meaghan designs and presents for GTMF are informed by curricula and standards from her work as a public school educator in Milwaukee.

Scholarship Competition judges are selected from the Festival Orchestra, which is comprised of professional orchestral musicians and/or university music professors. These musicians sit alongside our Music Director, Sir Donald Runnicles. Last year's adjudicators were Stephanie Key, Interim Second Clarinet of the Dallas Symphony, and Chiara Kingsley-Diequez, principal viola of the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra.

Sir Donald Runnicles is Music Director of the Grand Teton Music Festival and Director of the Dresden Philharmonic. His previous posts include General Music Director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Principal Guest Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the San Francisco Opera, Principal Conductor of the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and General Music Director of the Theater Freiburg and Orchestra. He was appointed OBE in 2004, was made a Knight Bachelor in 2020, and holds honorary degrees from the University of Edinburgh, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

GTMF Musician Residency artists will be Festival Orchestra musicians who are interested in music education and community engagement. Each one of our Festival Orchestra musicians is a working, professional musician, playing in a major orchestra or working in an academic institution.

GTMF Presents performers are selected based on their artistic excellence, proven ability to engage with audiences, and interest in participating in education and community engagement programs while in residence. The 2024–25 season featured jazz trumpeter Byron Stripling and Friends, string quartet the Verona Quartet, and classical-bluegrass string trio the Mike Block Trio.

Barbara Scowcroft, GTMF and Utah Symphony violinist, leads the 8th Grade String Fest each year. In addition to her orchestral positions, she serves as Adjunct Associate Professor of Violin at the University of Utah and is Music Director and Conductor of the Utah Youth Symphony.

Violinist Lorien Benet Hart led the High School String Fest this past March, and will be invited back for 2026. Hart is a violinist with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and has been playing with GTMF since 1995.

### **Budget Narrative**

GTMF relies on four primary funding sources: 1) individual and corporate contributions (62%); 2) grants from public and private sources (3%); 3) ticket revenue (16%); 4) in-kind housing donations. Individual contributions arise from the continued artistic excellence of our musicians and Music Director, as well as GTMF's position as an arts leader in the community. Grants in particular help fund our community programs—making up 47% of funding for our free community and arts learning events—and ensuring that they remain accessible to all. In addition to providing income, ticket sales help us gauge community interest in our programs and concerts, allowing us to better align our programs with community interests. Finally, longstanding partnerships with in-kind housing donors enable us to bring our excellent musicians to Wyoming each summer. Our expenses are consistent with our mission: engaging, entertaining, educating, and inspiring our resident and seasonal communities.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

HORSE WARRIORS

[HTTPS://WWW.HORSEWARRIORS.COM/](https://www.horsewarriors.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Empowering Our Program Participants Through Creativity, Compassion, and Community

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Horse Warriors™ mission is to create a safer and more sane world through empowering young people, individuals, and families to live and act with kindness, compassion, and wisdom in all facets of life.

As a top Equine-Assisted Services provider in the USA, we are committed to the following strategic goals, designed to help our participants develop strong leadership skills while fostering personal growth:

- 1) Build healthy relationships in response to the current US climate of social and political divisions, stress with the economy, social media bullying, and mental health challenges. Through enhancing collaborative art activities, group sharing, and family-inclusive journal exercises, we strive to help participants connect and share.
- 2) Build compassion, kindness and respect via equine facilitated leadership and empowerment programs, with our herd of 24 horses serving as remarkable coaches to guide participants in developing these essential qualities.
- 3) Develop intensified arts inclusion activities in all our programs to nurture creativity and stimulate and provide emotional solace.
- 4) Serve people of all ages and abilities through effective programming along with financial assistance that is available in this portion of the state.
- 5) Expand our FREE cancer programs that serve and support individuals, families, and caretakers on this journey.

For 2025-2026 Horse Warriors™ programs, we are piloting more concentrated arts inclusion activities to succeed in promoting lifelong learning, personal growth and well-being for our participants.

### Community



Since 1998, Horse Warriors™ has been the only program of its kind in this region of Wyoming, offering a unique blend of horsemanship, empowerment, leadership, family inclusion, arts instruction, outdoor education, and peer mentoring.

Each year, we serve over 200 participants, ranging in age from 6 to 80, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds, regardless of income, education, profession, or ethnicity. To ensure accessibility, we provide scholarships to 50% of our participants and offer FREE programs for individuals on a cancer journey, as well as their caregivers and families.

We collaborate with local schools and counselors to enroll students of diverse abilities and backgrounds. Our programs have welcomed Black, White, and Latino students, as well as participants who are amputees, blind, or deaf, ensuring an inclusive and supportive environment for all.

The following documents the communities we serve:

- LINCOLN & SUBLETTE COUNTIES. Two of the fastest growing counties in the state of Wyoming. Low income and education levels exist. Little or no exposure to the arts and culture. Widespread domestic violence, incest and illegal drug use. As bedroom communities of Jackson Hole, growth is taking place because of the many residents who are part of the Jackson workforce, seeking affordable housing, while commuting to Jackson.
- TETON COUNTY. Affluent population with a low and middle-class population. Higher income and education level is present. 33% Latino population exists with limited access to the arts.

## **Evaluation**

Participant recruitment and retention are key to Horse Warriors™ evaluation process. Success is monitored via:

- Testimonials from participants help guide our activities, helping us determine which offer the greatest benefit.
- Daily discussion time in all our programs offers one of the greatest benefits to building the camaraderie and support participants need to pursue some of the challenging activities involved in working with our horses.

For project success metrics, our Horse Warriors™ administration and staff rely on collaborative programming timelines developed with input from both staff and administration. We prioritize budget-conscious operations, ensuring that expenses remain within our means while maintaining high participant satisfaction and meeting expectations. By working together, our stakeholders create programs that consistently deliver value. Our Return on Investment (ROI) is reflected in the personal growth, empowerment, and leadership skills participants gain throughout their journey.

To continually improve, evaluation forms are completed by students, parents, instructors, and volunteers after each session. These insights are reviewed by staff, therapists, and board members to refine and enhance future programs. Our overarching goals include empowering youth and community members, fostering leadership skills, promoting kindness and respect for both humans and animals, encouraging creativity and artistic expression, and ensuring happy horses with improved horsemanship.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

From July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, Horse Warriors™ will focus on meeting community needs while expanding participation with a focus on enhanced arts inclusion in all programs. In response to ongoing social and political divisions, economic challenges, the rise of social media bullying, and cancer survivorship, our programs are designed to empower participants by fostering creativity, compassion, and a sense of community. All programs involve working with horses - whether choosing to ride, walk or simply observe ones' horse - an experience that transforms leading and working together. We envision promoting lifelong learning, personal growth, and overall well-being for all participants - for all ages and abilities - ensuring they gain valuable skills and confidence to navigate these challenging times.

#### **2025-2026 PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

- HORSE WARRIORS™ LEVEL 2 HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM: June 30-July 11, 2025; M-F; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Relationship building, horsemanship, social skill development, art, creative writing, public speaking, academic assistance; parent involvement required; parent/child activities facilitated by licensed therapist; 30 hours of community service per year required.

#### **- PONY CAMP PROGRAMS:**

July 14-16, 2025; Ages 8-9; M-F; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

July 21-23, 2025; Ages 10-11; M-F; 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Horseback riding, games, round pen play, & art; hours of fun and laughter every day; learn a LOT about horses and being a good leader and team player.

#### **- READ, RIDE AND DRAW CAMP:**

July 28-August 1, 2025; Ages 8-9; M-F; 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

August 4-8, 2025; Ages 10-11; M-F; 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Includes riding, group reading of an age-appropriate book, discussions, journaling, vocabulary exploration, horse games and art activities.

- WOMEN & HORSES™: 3-days long/session; 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

August 26-28, 2025

September 9-11, 2025

September 23-25, 2025

Ages 19 and up; open to riders of all levels; relationship building; horsemanship - riding, obstacle training, trail riding; creative self-expression.

- SATURDAY SUPERHEROES: (FREE Program restoring hope, joy, strength & confidence to people healing from Breast Cancer )

Held 10 Saturdays (July 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025; August 2, 16, 30, 2025; September 13, 20, 27, 2025)

- THE ART OF HEALING - TURNING CANCER INTO CREATIVITY (New FREE Program for cancer patients & their caregivers)

February 8, 15, 22, 2026 Session

March 8, 15, 28, 2026 Session

Focus on creating imagery to explore & share stories of living beyond cancer.

HORSE WARRIORS™ OPERATIONS EXPENSES: Grant funding will contribute to support operations costs for the above programs which total \$ 226,000. Expenses include accounting, advertising & promotion, quality art supplies, contract labor, equipment, facilities rental, horse expenses, insurance, salaries & hourly pay, and program "takeaways" including Horse Warriors™ branded ball caps, t-shirts, and hooded tops.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The ARTS are an integral part of all Horse Warriors™ programs, playing a key role in achieving our mission. Our ART INCLUSION program thrives by offering a diverse range of artistic experiences, fostering creative expression, skill

development, and a deeper appreciation for the arts. Through these explorations, participants gain confidence, self-awareness, and a lifelong connection to creativity.

#### THE ROLE OF ART IN HORSE WARRIORS™ - EMPOWERING THROUGH CREATIVITY

Why does art instruction play a vital role in a program focused on horse stewardship? For over 27 years, the inclusion of art experiences in Horse Warriors™ has highlighted the power of free expression and creativity in personal growth. Scientific research shows that art heals, influencing both physiology and attitude, while also transforming self-perception and worldview.

At Horse Warriors™, participants engage in visual and written artistic expression inspired by nature, horse-human interactions, and classical art training. Under the guidance of professional artists, they develop competence and confidence in their creative skills. Art is seamlessly woven into all our programming, providing students with a meaningful "voice" to express emotions and perspectives that may be difficult to verbalize.

By incorporating drawing and writing, students learn to observe, interpret, and connect with a broader understanding of their experiences. With art programs becoming less prominent in school curricula, many of our students—primarily from low-income families—receive little or no exposure to the arts. Through artistic exploration, we witness students discovering a more authentic, compassionate version of themselves, using creativity as a tool for self-expression and personal growth.

Two 2025-2026 examples of Horse Warriors™ ART INCLUSION programs:

##### - READ, RIDE AND DRAW

Motivated to improve the enjoyment of reading accompanied by an exposure to art, Horse Warriors™ brings this program to our communities. Reading skills for American students have dropped to record lows in the last couple of years (2024 NAEP Reading Assessment). Closing this gap is an urgent priority. We offer this week-long camp (2 sessions - ages 8-9; 10-11) to encourage reading comprehension, increase vocabulary, and use journal writing and art sketching to experience how words and images can work together. Over a week's time a book is read; drawing and photo taking occurs while interacting with horses; and individual journals are created for daily writing and artwork integrating the book's story theme.

##### - THE ART OF HEALING - TURNING CANCER INTO CREATIVITY (New FREE Program for cancer patients & their caregivers)

This FREE art program is for anyone who is on their cancer journey, and is taught by Priscilla Marden, a breast cancer survivor, and professional colored pencil artist and illustrator.

These are just two examples of Horse Warriors™ ART INCLUSION activities. All our programs contain art engagement which benefits all ages. For our youth, it aids in the cultivation of fine motor skills, enhances visual learning, fosters creativity and provides healthy social interaction. For adults, it provides a constructive outlet for stress relief and emotional expression leading to improved mental health and over-all well-being.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **SUPPORTING LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERMENT, AND ACCEPTANCE THROUGH THE ARTS**

The overarching goal of Horse Warriors™ in integrating arts education into our programs is to foster leadership, empowerment, and acceptance. We seek funding to sustain and expand our 27-year legacy of success through equine-facilitated learning, a proven approach that incorporates art-based experiences to develop essential life skills.

By blending horsemanship and creative expression, our programs promote:

- Relationship building
- Social skill development
- Empowerment and leadership
- Kindness and inclusivity

We are committed to helping youth, families, women, equine professionals, and cancer warriors reach their fullest potential through this transformative work.

#### **ARTS LEARNING GOALS: CREATIVITY, EXPRESSION, AND GROWTH**

Our Arts Learning objectives focus on:

- Exposure to the arts through year-round enrichment.
- Finding one's voice through creative expression and experimentation.
- Building relationships through collaboration, listening, and sharing in artistic projects.
- Enhancing creativity through visual arts, creative writing, and public speaking.

These goals are woven into each participant's journey, empowering them as they engage with their communities and future endeavors. Our diverse artistic media introduce students to new creative pathways, while professional artists provide mentorship and inspiration—potentially igniting an interest in art as a career.

Our arts curriculum includes:

- Traditional & Mixed Media – Graphite, pastel, pen & ink, watercolor, acrylics, collage, colored pencil, charcoal

- Photography & Graphic Design
- Drawing from Nature & Sculpture
- Creative Writing & Poetry
- Video Production
- Reading books while learning new vocabulary and the art of expression

## HEALING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CONNECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

Now is the time to help our communities recover from the challenges of political and social division, economic uncertainty, the negative influence of social media, and a decline in overall mental health. At Horse Warriors™, our arts component is an integral part of every program, supporting participants through the process of change and healing.

With mental health professionals guiding interactions and a highly trained staff emphasizing the power of community and relationships, we consistently witness the real-world application of Horse Warriors™ teachings in employment, education, social settings, and interpersonal connections.

Through equine-facilitated learning and the power of herd dynamics, we empower:

- Families, adolescents, and women in transition to build trust and communicate authentically.
- Survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault to heal and regain personal strength.
- Parents and children to mend broken communication.
- Those on their cancer journey to find joy, hope and support.

Since 1998, our mission has remained steadfast:

"To make the world a better place, one relationship at a time."

As one participant shared:

"Horse Warriors™ gave me a community where we are family."

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Horse Warriors™ has fostered strong collaborations and relationships to deliver exceptional arts education within its programs. Our initiative, 'Empowering Our Program Participants Through Creativity, Compassion, and Community,' is supported by partnerships with professional guest artists, mental health experts, equine specialists, and dedicated volunteers—including retired educators, public resource managers, community support staff, therapists, and designers. These skilled professionals enhance our art and writing programs while also contributing to our free academic tutoring services.

Professional Guest Artists lead thought-provoking exercises in both writing and visual arts, guiding participants toward deeper engagement, meaningful expression, and creative inspiration:

- Lyn Dalebout, poet, writer, author of “Out of the Flames” collection of poetry: “Being Nature’s Voice”

- Alex Schechter, sculptor, illustrator, art professor at Clemson: “Drawing Outside the Box”

- Judy Gonet, watercolorist, mixed media, WWCC instructor: “Watercolor Your Way”

- Taryn Boals, mixed media artist: “Stacking the World: Overlapping Images and Transparencies”

- Kay Stratman, watercolorist, Sumi-e Ink artist: “Fabric-ation” printing and painting on fabric

- Priscilla Marden, illustrator, watercolorist, calligrapher: “Booking It: Small Books and Folded Missives”

We make a concentrated investment in developing and educating our staff to be exceptional teachers, mental health advocates, and role models in fostering and maintaining healthy relationships.

Expression and documentation through journaling play a significant role in all our programs as a form of art. Each student receives a journal kit and art supplies at the beginning of the year. These journals accompany participants on the trail in saddlebags, are used in the arena, and serve as a tool for discussion groups. They become a year-round record of personal reflections, observations, inspiration, and accomplishments.

## **Budget Narrative**

### HORSE WARRIORS™ INCOME AND FUNDING SOURCES-% OF TOTAL BUDGET:

- Program Participation Fees = 18%
- Grant Funding = 66%
- Direct Public Support = 2%
- Sponsorships = 3%
- Free Will Donations = 15%
- In-Kind Donations (Volunteers; Cancer programs; Ranch Lease; Winter Snow Removal) = 10%

Horse Warriors™ is fortunate to be supported by these KEY PARTNERSHIPS:

- Soroptimist of Jackson Hole - scholarship funding
- Our Horse Sponsors - sponsorships help pay for the necessities each of sponsored horse to stay healthy and continue to bring a light into the many lives they touch all throughout the year.
- Local businesses - offering of discounted supplies
- For our FREE CANCER PROGRAMS:

St. John's Health Oncology

Wyoming Breast Cancer Initiative

Grand Adventure

Wyoming Cancer Resource Services/Sweetwater Memorial Hospital

Horse Warriors™ budget is planned yearly, reviewed monthly by our Board of Directors developing reasonable financials & goals.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

JACKSON HOLE BOOK FESTIVAL

JACKSONHOLEBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Jackson Hole Book Festival: Conversation for the Community

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The JHBF celebrates books, authors, and readers, to inspire conversation, deepen understanding, and enrich the connections within the community.

Building on and growing the success of last year, JHBR's strategic goals are:

1. To bring a range of authors/writers/ to the community for a full day of conversation with people who live in the Teton Valley and well beyond - across Wyoming - through livestreaming - making the day's events available for all.
2. To add a whole new dimension to the cultural fabric of the community with a sustainable, annual, free for all literary extravaganza, featuring writers from across genres and themes including fiction, non-fiction, illustration, memoir, biography, history, writing, journalism, culture, to name a few. Currently the community boasts an Arts Festival, Music Festival, theater and dance, but it is missing an annual event specifically for the purpose of bringing authors and readers together for conversation and discourse.
3. To collaborate and partner with other cultural and educational organizations across the Valley and the state to ensure a growing and sustainable literary event that allows for conversation and knowledge sharing for people (readers) of all ages and interests. This includes WY Humanities, National Museum of Wildlife (for the second year the Museum - at their request - will present the Bull Bransom illustrator award at the Festival), the schools, JH Writers (helping to support a middle school author's engagement with students), and other literary groups across the state.
4. To build and grow a sustainable Festival that will take place over an entire weekend in the future - and feature more authors from across the state and beyond with more themes and topics covered.

5. To grow marketing and reach so the Festival becomes an expected event for all across the state (book clubs, community centers, hospitals, etc.) who want to spend the day 'at' the Festival without having to be there in person!

## **Community**

Last year I spent many days travelling across the Teton Valley and beyond, talking to people, businesses and organizations to build support for the inaugural Festival and to request permission to hang 2024 Book Festival posters in lobbies, storefronts, coffee shops, libraries, and schools. I was moved by people who responded so positively when they heard the Festival was free! This is an expensive area and expensive to participate in ticketed cultural activities. These high costs preclude our working, middle class from engaging. The Book Festival swung open a door to everyone - to participate in conversations with renowned authors, moderators, and other book lovers. As a result, it achieved its goal in that it brought very different people together - who might never have a chance to 'sit at the same table' and talk - to engage in civilized discourse about complicated and sometimes provocative issues. With this year's livestreaming capabilities, the Book Festival is a global public good for everyone across the state - allowing all the privilege of spending a full day in Festival rooms or online, with authors, writers and thinkers. It adds a new, substantive dimension to the rich cultural experiences in the Valley and across WY and beyond.

One of the primary reasons we chose Snow King was to ensure that everyone has access (e.g., disabled people) to the event. Now with livestreaming, many of the featured authors will be in living rooms, libraries and community centers as well!

This year, with an additional focus on the indigenous experience (authors including Martha Sandweiss and Chris La Tray), we believe the Festival will speak even more broadly to our indigenous neighbors and friends. We are reaching out to the Reservation to explore collaborative initiatives.

## **Evaluation**

Last year we successfully surveyed (through the QuestionPro Platform) all Book Festival attendees, and the teachers and administrators who were involved in the BF engagement in the schools. The response rate was extremely high and the responses were extremely positive. We will use the same platform in 2025 to measure views and perceptions of the event (qualitative and quantitative) to improve the event for future years and track findings from 2024. To be specific (and we are very happy to share survey results with the WY Arts Council):

1. Post BF event: A quantitative survey with open ended questions that explore attitudes toward the Festival, including:

- a. Festival venue
- b. Festival discussions

- c. Accessibility
- d. Topics of discussion
- e. Moderators
- f. Audience engagement
- g. "Net Promoter Score" (would participants recommend the BF to others - last year the rating was above 80%)
- h. How to improve the Festival (last year improvements included how to use hotel space, signage, availability of lunch, program, to name a few)

2. Similar topics with schools (waiting to determine what the Festival will do beyond its collaboration with the Wildlife Museum's illustrator's events in TCSD schools and JH Writers' author event in schools).

3. Outreach to authors and their agents/publishers to assess qualitative the author/writer experience

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

17 authors have already agreed to participate in the JH Book Festival. All of the authors are published writers - and all have received awards and or national acclaim. Their books range from biography to history, politics to culture, mental health, policy, to name a few. Authors include: Former MT Poet Laureate Chris La Tray, fiction writers Adele Waldman and Bret Johnston, cultural political thinker writer Jamie Metzl, Reagan biographer Max Boot, Retired Princeton Professor Martha Snadweiss, Local councilman and environmental essay editor Luther Probst, outdoors writer Porter Fox, Professor Randall Wilson who writes about Yellowstone, Science Magazine writer Charles Piller who writes about Alzheimers reserach, local psychiatrist Drew Ramsey who writes about mental health, to name just a few. The website now has approximately 14 of the authors listed (more to be included). We will feature 25 + authors including the WY author chosen by WY Humanities for the Library Congress Center for the Book (featured at this year's National Book Festival in Washington DC) and the illustrator awarded by the National Museum of Wildlife Art. We will also feature moderators who have expertise in the books' topics. We'll feature University of WY Professors Jean Garrison and Peter Parolin, Washington Post columnist Ruth Marcus, Professor Sherry Smith, local financier and author Victor Haghani, WY Humanities Lucas Fraelick and Emy diGrappa as moderators. More will be named as we consider the day's programming.

WY Arts Council Funds will go directly to support the authors' attendance at the event. The Book Festival pays for economy flights to JAC and two nights of hotel locally and, of course, transport within Jackson. This equals approximately \$2000 per author. We do not pay for local authors.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Last year the Festival was privileged to raise a significant and meaningful amount from generous state and local grantors in its first year. We believe that we demonstrated capacity and valuable use of these funds in the first ever JH Book Festival. In addition we raised a significant amount from generous donors. We engaged with KHOL - the local radio station in Jackson - for an in-kind donation of advertising and promotion.

We finished the 2024 BF year in the black - as certain expenses we expected did not materialize or were less than expected.

This year we have increased fundraising firepower with several new Board members who are fully focused on fundraising. We hope this will translate into a significant increase in donations as the Festival has gained prominence since year one with extensive support throughout the community and beyond.

Our collaborations with JH Writers, the Museum of Wildlife Art, and WY Humanities will help to cover author expenses as well.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

JACKSON HOLE COMMUNITY RADIO, INCORPORATED

891KHOL.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Operating support for KHOL's arts & culture coverage and music programming.

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission:

To serve the Jackson Hole community of residents and visitors through independent local and regional news and by creating a forum for the free exchange of ideas and music discovery that informs, entertains and promotes a deeper understanding of the world around us.

Community impact goals as outlined in KHOL's strategic plan:

Expand KHOL's brand reach by increasing volunteer opportunities, implementing live and remote broadcasts at events, presenting or sponsoring local musical events, and maintaining a presence at popular events.

Enhance KHOL's music experience by diversifying the volunteer DJ pool, developing a training system for DJs to improve skills, upgrading DJ equipment, and engaging DJs with new music selection on airwaves.

### Community

In a town where arts and culture programming is often prohibitively expensive for working Jackson residents, KHOL seeks to equalize access to information, arts and culture by transmitting free to listeners via multiple platforms, from phones to cars to home clock radios and web streaming.

KHOL reaches 40,000 daily listeners in the greater Jackson Hole area over the airwaves, and up to 70,000 in the summer months. Our listeners are as diverse as the population in our region, with approximately 30% identifying as Latino. 40% of Jackson's workforce commutes each day, largely by personal vehicle. Our programming can be heard statewide through a partnership with Wyoming Public Radio.

We have a 10-member Community Advisory Board, representing a cross-section of our community. This group meets bi-annually to provide feedback to staff and KHOL's board of directors on programming. Our work is essential to advancing, representing and documenting cultural happenings within the Jackson community. We are a guide for the public imagination and an essential resource for local artists, musicians, and other cultural figures. Our regional and national partnerships ensure that our local art, music and culture is visible on a larger scale.

KHOL offers local nonprofits the opportunity to broadcast public service announcements (PSAs). These serve as an avenue for announcing free events or mission initiatives on the air. Examples of PSAs include Wilson School House's free activity announcements, a call for applicants for Teton Climbers Coalition's Grand Scholarship, and free poetry classes from Jackson Hole Writers. These spots generate community engagement, which is essential to increasing and stimulating public and private investment in cultural institutions and infrastructure.

## **Evaluation**

KHOL's programming broadcasts on 89.1 FM, and is further disseminated on our website, social media channels, podcasts and on the new KHOL public media app. Online engagement has continued to grow in the past few years, largely due to an increase in reporting and original content. 891khol.org averaged 15.5k page views per month in 2023, 19k page views per month in 2024, and 24k page views per month this year to date. This multi-fold increase demonstrates the public's appetite for local journalism, arts and cultural coverage, and music streaming. The impact of KHOL programming is also measured by the number of members supporting the station. Sustaining membership grew 40% from 2023 to 2024.

KHOL's work evokes significant positive feedback. Artists are excited to be in the on-air studio for interviews and live performances. KHOL volunteers are committed to their weekly shows and the studio is always full (we love to see our volunteers bringing friends to their shows; it is even more rewarding to see the names of those friends thereafter queued up for DJ training). Growing a sense of community is essential to the success of a collaborative studio space for artists and musicians.

KHOL has gathered feedback from listeners via a membership survey to gather recommendations for improvement, accommodations, and additional needs. This feedback is reviewed by the whole team and is used to address programming needs. Qualitative data from the membership survey has provided valuable insight into where KHOL can grow: one member replied, "under the heading of programming . . . there might be more room for arts and culture interviews and programming in my opinion." We love to hear why people tune into 89.1 FM, and we're committed to acting on this data by improving programming.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

KHOL is seeking \$10,000 in operating support to continue its local coverage of arts and culture. KHOL has expanded its music department with the addition of Special Host Evan Ballew, joining Music Director Jack Catlin. The pair explore the personalities, works and inspirations of the artists, musicians, dancers and other cultural figures who are making an impact in Jackson and Wyoming. Catlin broadcasts interviews live on-air during KHOL's flagship morning show, The Heavy Warm Up. Ballew broadcasts interviews on KHOL's new regional music show,

Intermountain Best. Each interview is recorded for online publication and inclusion into KHOL's flagship podcast "Jackson Unpacked." They are also disseminated across KHOL's social media channels and weekly newsletter. Intermountain Best will soon be released on PRX so that other public radio stations can also broadcast this programming.

Highlights this year include interviews with One Ton Pig, Ben Musser, Hilary Camino and Leif Routman:

<https://891khol.org/come-see-the-one-ton-pig-batdorf-and-smith-pull-back-the-curtain-on-nearly-two-decades-of-new-grass-in-the-tetons/>

<https://891khol.org/homemade-rock-techno-mussers-new-sound-fresher-than-a-cool-mountain-breeze/>

<https://891khol.org/therapist-camino-ditches-automation-to-find-honesty-and-healing/>

The music department's coverage provides exposure for these musicians, artists, and other cultural figures, helping them succeed in their journeys. It also provides inspiration and valuable programming for our community of listeners, allowing Jackson residents to stay up to date on important cultural happenings. With this funding, the music department will continue to provide coverage for local and regional musicians, artists, and other cultural figures by producing 2-4 interviews per month.

Funding from this grant will apply to Catlin's salary, Ballew's stipend and costs associated with operating the on-air studio. KHOL's on-air studio's operating costs exceed \$47,000 between July 1 – June 30. These costs include rent at Center for the Arts (\$28,000), tower lease on top of Snow King (\$6,000), licensing fees for audio software and online services (\$8,000), and engineering and IT support (\$5,000). Catlin draws 5 hours per week between July 1 – June 30 or \$7750 annually to produce his coverage of arts and culture (12.5% of his salary). Ballew draws \$150 per show in addition to \$150 per interview produced, or \$9600 annually. Total annual operating cost for the station is roughly \$650,000.

On-air and web-published arts and cultural interviews and live music sessions will include an acknowledgment of support from the Wyoming Arts Council, at the end of the broadcast and in the postscript of the article.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

KHOL is seeking \$1000 in funding to cover staff time for training station volunteers. Volunteer engagement increased significantly in 2024, demonstrating the interest that community members have in hosting a weekly radio show. This outlet is deeply enriching for the DJs themselves, allowing them to develop and explore new skills. It also furthers the mission of KHOL, enriching the airwaves with community voices and creating a better listening experience for the public. KHOL is fulfilling a need in the community by providing training for broadcast skills, on-air presence and public speaking.

Inevitably, there is volunteer turnover year to year. Jackson is a somewhat transient community, especially for young adults. In order to keep KHOL's airwaves full of community voices, ongoing training is essential.

Qualitative data from the membership survey has provided valuable insight into where KHOL can grow: one member replied constructively that they desired, "variety of music . . . MORE variety!" We're committed to acting on this data by improving programming and we believe that training more DJs will bring a greater variety and diversity of music to the airwaves.

The requested arts learning support is a 50% match of the total value of annual DJ training cost. We train 16 new DJs per year; annually, this comprises 64 hours or \$2,000 (approx. 3% of Music Director Jack Catlin's salary). This training time maintains our collaborative and creative studio space and ensures volunteer engagement.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Goals: To expand volunteer opportunities for learning broadcast basics, on-air presence and public speaking. Expanding volunteer opportunities builds towards our strategic goals of enhancing KHOL's music experience, and diversifying the pool of volunteer DJs and the music they play. These goals are identified by staff ideation, through feedback from the Community Advisory Board and membership survey, and with direct feedback from current volunteers. These goals advance KHOL's mission to inform, entertain and promote a deeper understanding of the world around us.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Artists involved: This training will be led by our music director Jack Catlin, a veteran radio host with thousands of hours of on-air experience.

### **Budget Narrative**

Funding for KHOL comes from grants, individual donations and underwriting. Relatively new support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting has expanded station resources by 50% and stabilized station finances. A significant portion of funding is restricted to KHOL's newsroom. Additionally, in-kind support comes from local institutions including Snow King Mountain, Jackson Hole Mountain Resort, OxPresents (Mangy Moose), The Virginian Lodge, Snake River Brewing, and OpenSnow (meteorologist).

WAC grant funding will add value to our music programming and serve as a stepping stone to establishing additional partnerships with local organizations involved in Jackson's music scene.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

JACKSON HOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

JACKSONHOLEHISTORY.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Early 20th Century Women Artists of the American West: An Exhibit at the Jackson Hole History Museum

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

History Jackson Hole (HJH), and its Jackson Hole History Museum, tells the stories of Jackson Hole that connect people to the history of this valley and region. We steward and share artifacts and ideas that foster curiosity and continual learning, forge connections, and inform our 21st century dialogue. We envision a community brought together, enriched, and strengthened by compelling connections to the history and legacy of Jackson Hole.

Our goals:

- Provide a central and inviting place for community dialogue, educational activities, and events about and inspired by history, arts, and culture.
- Give voice to diverse perspectives and provide a space where multiple, layered stories can be told through evocative, changing exhibits and programming.
- Support continued research and scholarship and build upon our history by actively collecting and supporting history that is in the making today.
- Expand reach by bringing our collection, stories, and knowledge outside the Museum.
- Continue to steward a financially secure organization with an eye towards revenue diversification.
- Foster fun, play, whimsy. Not all learning has to be serious!

Our impact:

- Offering lifelong learning opportunities. Our work contributes to the intellectual development and cultural enrichment of community members.

-Fostering community. We bring people together through events, exhibitions, and educational programming. These shared experiences help build social bonds contributing to mental well-being and a sense of unity within Jackson Hole.

-Encourage civic engagement. By learning about the past, we build a sense of responsibility and commitment to the legacy of Jackson Hole.

-Promote intergenerational connections.

-Support local tourism and economic development. Heritage tourism brings visitors who support the Jackson Hole community in meaningful and respectful ways.

## **Community**

History Jackson Hole serves the dynamic and diverse community of Teton County – a region with a rich cultural heritage and a complex socioeconomic landscape. Our community includes long-time residents, newcomers, regional tribes, seasonal workers, and a constant influx of visitors drawn to the area’s natural beauty, Western heritage, and vibrant arts & culture scene.

HJH is committed to making history, culture, and the arts accessible and relevant to all segments of our community. We identify community needs through deep, ongoing collaboration with partners such as including Teton County School District, Senior Center of JH, Teton Literacy Center, Grand Teton National Park, One22 – Community Resource Center, JH Public Arts, Teton County Library, the Shoshone-Bannock Language & Cultural Preservation Department, and the Eastern Shoshone Tribal Historic Preservation Office. Regular dialogue, community feedback, and responsive programming ensure our work remains inclusive, equitable, and relevant.

HJH reaches all ages—from young children to elders—through free and low-cost programs like summer camps, field trips, community panels, and artisan workshops. We remove barriers to access through initiatives like our equitable camp lottery and partnerships with schools and service organizations. Our co-curated exhibits, including the JH Latino History Project and the Cowboy Trades Association Travelling Exhibit, demonstrate our commitment to cultural inclusivity and co-creation.

With a new, purpose-built accessible museum campus, HJH provides space for learning, connection, and creative expression—strengthening cultural understanding and community well-being across Teton County.

## **Evaluation**

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regional tribes, seasonal workers, and a constant influx of visitors drawn to the area’s natural beauty, Western heritage, and vibrant arts & culture scene.

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### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

History Jackson Hole opened a new Museum Campus in June 2024, which includes a gallery dedicated to special rotating exhibitions co-curated with partners. Following our inaugural exhibition in this gallery featured contemporary indigenous artists of the Wind River Reservation, we have committed to sharing diverse and often underrepresented perspectives in this space. In Wyoming, as in many rural areas, and particularly in the past, women artists are often underrepresented in Western art, hindering diverse perspectives and perpetuating gender disparities and Western stereotypes. Last year, we realized that only 8 of the 84 paintings in our Museum’s collection are credited to women artists. To combat this discrepancy, HJH partnered with the non-profit AWARE: Archives of Women Artists, Research, & Exhibitions, to research, curate, and exhibit historical women artists of the West at the Jackson Hole History Museum. AWARE is directed by Camille Morineau, an accomplished curator and art historian and they have an international team that works to make women artists of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries visible by producing and sharing free content. Their research, curation, and writing allow for a deeper understanding of these artists’ careers and works by contextualizing them within larger artistic movements, societal changes and feminist thinking.

During the initial research phase in 2024, over 15 artists were explored from Wyoming, Montana, Utah and Colorado. Based on the new Museum’s changing exhibit gallery square footage and wealth of interpretive

material, including journals and photographs, we decided to plan the exhibit in two parts. Western Women Artists: Trailblazers at the Turn of the 20th Century Part I opened on January 29, 2025 featuring five women artists from Wyoming and Colorado – Lora Webb Nichols, Evelyn Cameron, Fra Dana, Josephine Hale, and Elizabeth Lochrie. Artwork was borrowed from University of Wyoming’s American Heritage Center, University of Montana Museum of Art and Culture, and the Montana Historical Society. Over 150 community members attended the exhibit opening reception and we continue to receive positive feedback from all museum visitors, including school groups and special tours.

We have begun planning Part II for Winter 2026 and seek funding to support artwork acquisition, exhibit design, production, and installation. Potential artists include Helen Henderson Chain, Henrietta Bromwell, Anne Van Briggie Ritter, Elizabeth Spalding, Mabel Pearl Frazer, and Louise Richards Farnsworth. Potential lending institutions include History Colorado, Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art, Denver Public Library, Springville Museum of Art, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, and Utah Museum of Fine Art. Interpretive material will explore the intersectionality of art, history, gender, environment, and community. The exhibit will provide a broader regional perspective and context of Jackson Hole and Wyoming within the American West, and the exhibit will serve as a platform for experiential learning and community connection.

We are eager to continue this partnership and service to our community; by featuring women artists working historically in our region, this public exhibition not only spotlights Women’s contributions to documenting and defining the West but also challenges entrenched gender norms and dominant historical narratives, inspiring future generations of artists and leaders.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

History Jackson Hole is a 501c3 nonprofit organization supported by Teton County, Town of Jackson, donors, members, business sponsors, local, regional, and federal grants, in-kind donations, and our visitors. We are committed to affordable and low-cost programming, and while many of our programs are free, we do charge a nominal fee, \$12 adult / \$10 student & senior, for museum admission. These sources support seven staff members, collection/research/education/exhibit costs, facility operations (museum galleries, historic log cabins, classroom, research center), and administrative/fundraising support. Wyoming Arts grant funds will be used for this special exhibit, specifically to borrow and ship selected artwork, exhibit design and printing of interpretive materials and labels, exhibit installation, and associated programming.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

JACKSON HOLE PUBLIC ART

[HTTPS://JHPUBLICART.ORG/](https://jhpUBLICART.ORG/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Jackson Hole Public Art: Connecting Community through Public Art and Celebration

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Jackson Hole Public Art (JHPA) forges partnerships for the integration of art into any environment to inspire lasting cultural, educational, and economic benefits.

We produce community-minded, artist-driven projects presented in our community's popular gathering spaces that are free, family-friendly, and accessible to everyone. Since our founding in 2010, we have raised and overseen investments of \$2.3+ million in permanent and temporary public art installations and events. Public art adds character and meaning to parks, pathways, and public buildings. We generate opportunities for artists to tell the stories of our community and build awareness of local issues, and we promote sustainable techniques and art that inspire conservation. We animate civic spaces with art that encourages social interactions and design programs that provide opportunities for local youth, and local and regional artists. We facilitate partnerships between private and public developers. Public art in Jackson addresses local health, safety, and quality of life, adding a sense of well-being and belonging to all who experience it.

### 2025/26 Goals

Commission art that promotes a sense of belonging and well-being and makes public space inclusive.

Produce artist-driven commissions specifically designed for youth and emerging & professional artists.

Produce community engagement activities that build a sense of community while activating public art with memorable experiences and relevant education.

### Community

Jackson Hole is a town of 23,000+ that welcomes over 4 million visitors annually who come to access national parks, wildlife, and ski mountains. Visitation creates a community of service workers and artists who live at earning levels far below the median home price of \$2.7 million. The widening economic disparity and changing demographics of our community are isolating factors that perpetuate feelings of not belonging; the years of rapid

change can make this diverse community feel particularly excluded. Our community needs free and accessible opportunities that build social connections and bridge gaps between culturally and economically diverse populations to create a more cohesive and resilient community.

We believe public art is an antidote to isolation, creating shared experiences that are accessible moments of discovery. Art can share stories, and public art provides the opportunity for the individual to share perspectives and for a community to develop and share their identity. JHPA invests in artists from emerging to internationally acclaimed. JH Public Art seeks these cultural exchanges, inviting community members by commissioning a broad range of artists with different backgrounds, perspectives, ages, and styles of work. Cultural murals, for example, offer fresh narratives in open spaces through a visual language. Temporary installations attract all residents and are free for all to engage in, and are located in accessible public spaces, creating feelings of delight, curiosity, and inclusion. Permanent artworks meet ADA standards, with interpretive materials in several languages. We geo-tag, use larger print, and provide online media and videos to reach a broad audience; our website is also in Spanish.

## **Evaluation**

JH Public Art (JHPA) uses a thorough evaluation strategy to measure program impact and community engagement.

### **Annual Board & Program Review**

Each year, the JHPA Board assesses major projects using a rubric evaluating expenses, staff time, audience reach, and alignment with strategic goals. Programs are refined, expanded, or discontinued based on findings. The staff also conducts pre- and post-program evaluations to identify successes, challenges, and areas for improvement.

### **Public Art Task Force & Town-Funded Projects**

Under the 1.5% for Public Art Ordinance, the Public Art Task Force collaborates with senior town staff to identify capital projects best suited for public art integration.

### **Audience Engagement & Data Collection**

We track participation and impact through:

Event Attendance: Headcounts at public art openings, workshops, and celebrations.

Digital Analytics: Social media insights, app downloads, and QR code interactions.

Surveys: Feedback from attendees, artists, and educators on program quality and accessibility.

Live Feedback & Documentation: Staff gathers informal feedback at events, while photo and video documentation broadens audience reach.

## Stakeholder & Partner Evaluations

Local selection panels, the Public Art Task Force, and technical reviews ensure high-quality artist selection and project feasibility. Post-event partner debriefs further refine our approach.

Through these evaluation methods, JHPA strengthens community engagement and continuously enhances the impact of public art in Jackson Hole.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

JH Public Art (JHPA) operates efficiently within a \$597,000 annual budget, maximizing impact through a lean team and strategic subcontracting. Our 2025 operating costs include:

Staffing: One full-time Executive Director and a ¾-time Project Manager

Subcontracted Services: \$92,000 for social media, graphic design, grant writing, curation, and installation

Artists, Art Projects & Installation: \$185,000

Rent, Insurance, Supplies & IT: \$19,000

JHPA coordinates, creates, and manages public art projects that enhance public spaces, foster community engagement, support local artists, and contribute to the vibrancy of Jackson Hole's cultural landscape. We request funding to help cover operational expenses related to two key initiatives:

**Illuminating Joy: Garden of Lanterns Project** (18% staff time | Requesting \$5,400) A five-month program featuring individual and collaborative lantern-making, K-12 instructor training, and a culminating illuminated installation that brings the community together with a Glowing Garden Celebration.

**Goal:** Integrate temporary and joyous art into public spaces, strengthen community connections, engage and inspire local artists, and provide instructor training.

**WildWalls** (12% staff time | Requesting \$4,600) This project transforms downtown alleyways into an outdoor gallery of murals by local artists, incorporating interactive elements, engaging the viewer in a dynamic, urban setting.

**Goal:** Activate public spaces with temporary, interactive murals, support local artists, and boost economic activity by increasing foot traffic.

Other JHPA projects include:

**GlowNights (14% staff time)** Light-based winter installation at JH Mountain Resort, presented in partnership with Teton Village Assoc. and the Center for the Arts, showcasing works by experienced artists.

**Goal:** Integrate large-scale, temporary art installations into public spaces, foster community connection, and support local businesses through increased winter tourism.

**The ArtSpot (7% staff time)** A rotating exhibition space, viewed by over 30,000 daily commuters, featuring an upcoming installation designed by JHHS's Cultural Literacy classes.

**Goal:** Provide a high-visibility platform for local artists, integrate temporary art into everyday public spaces, foster creative opportunities for the community.

**Pathway Murals (1% staff time)** A collaborative project where JHHS students design and install a mural along the Hwy 22 pathway.

**Goal:** Enhance public spaces with educational and engaging art while providing mentorship and hands-on experience for local artists.

**Connection to Nature, an invitational (6% staff time)**

**Goal:** Celebrate contributions to environmental conservation and artistic expression, integrating meaningful public art into community spaces.

**Public Art Management & Advocacy (20% staff time)** Oversight of installations such as Patrick Marold's sculpture at the Stilson Transit Center and public art enhancements in Affordable Housing dev.

**Goal:** Ensure the seamless integration of public art into major community projects, maintain existing installations, and advocate for continued investment in public art.

**Critical Operational Projects (14% staff time)** Includes administration of the Teton County Arts for All Grant Program, coordination of the Jackson Public Arts Task Force, and facilitation of the Town of Jackson % for Art Program.

**Goal:** Support arts funding & infrastructure by managing key local arts programs that benefit artists and the community.

## **Project Support Narrative**

n/a

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Garden of Lanterns is a dynamic, five-month arts learning initiative engaging TCSD #1 students in public art, community engagement, and artistic practice. Developed with local leaders and educators, it fosters empathy, breaks barriers, and enriches lives through a meaningful creative process. The project culminates in a public art installation at The Center for the Arts, symbolizing care, growth, and community.



Beyond student participation, the project involves the broader community by commissioning local artists, offering free lantern-making workshops to art instructors and artists, and collaborating with writers, poets, and musicians through nonprofit partnerships.

While the project includes hands-on artistic production, its core focus is arts learning. Students engage deeply with the artistic process, emphasizing conceptual development, technical skills, and public art considerations. They learn to envision, design, and implement large-scale public art within civic and environmental contexts.

Community connection is central, offering students opportunities to collaborate with professional artists and nonprofits. They gain insight into how public art shapes communal spaces, exploring its perception from different angles - visually or as an interactive experience—while considering material durability and environmental impact.

Our educators bring expertise in visual arts, public art planning, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Artists serve as instructors and mentors, guiding students through conceptual and logistical challenges. By sharing their experiences, they illuminate pathways to careers in the arts, from technical skills to navigating the public art review process.

Aligned with Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards, our learning objectives foster creativity, critical thinking, and civic engagement:

Students explore public art fundamentals, its purpose, and community impact, learning how artists conceptualize ideas, select materials, and consider audience interaction.

Students conceptualize, design, and construct lanterns, contributing to a larger public art piece. They gain an understanding of the civic review process, installation logistics, and site restoration, preparing them for future engagement with public art.

By the program's end, students not only create public art but also develop a deeper appreciation for its role in community spaces. Through experiential learning, collaboration, and hands-on application, The Garden of Lanterns ensures that students gain artistic skills and a broader understanding of public art's societal impact.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

This year, over 200 students from Teton County School District #1 (TCSD #1) will participate in the Garden of Lanterns project, a multifaceted, community-centered arts initiative. Through the design, creation, installation, and interaction with a glowing lantern installation, students will engage deeply with visual arts concepts, collaborative design, and public art practices.

The guiding artistic vision of the project is the Garden as a symbol of community, requiring tending, nurturing, and collaboration. The lanterns represent the people and relationships that bring light and warmth to our shared space. Students will engage in a thoughtful exploration of symbolism, materials, and design, considering how individual artistic elements contribute to a larger, interactive public installation.

The Garden of Lanterns project fully integrates Wyoming Visual Arts Standards across all four artistic domains—Create, Present, Respond, and Connect—ensuring a comprehensive, standards-based learning experience for students in grades K-12.

### Create (C1, C2, C3) and Present (P1, P2, P3)

Grades K-2: Introduce and explore how visual elements create mood and convey emotions. Relate these ideas to the illuminated Garden of Lanterns and its symbolism. Work collaboratively to develop an environment, arranging pre-constructed lanterns into meaningful compositions. Apply appropriate techniques to adhere translucent materials to lanterns. Collaboratively arrange lanterns to engage viewers in a glowing space.

Grades 3-8: Discuss and analyze the symbolism of a garden as a metaphor for community, care, and growth in public art. Identify how artistic choices influence meaning in a public art piece. Learn techniques for constructing lanterns, selecting materials that align with the artistic intent. Construct and refine their lanterns, experimenting with placement and interaction to shape the installation's mood and public engagement.

Grades 9-12: Explore installation art, material symbolism, and mood. Students will reflect on how light and interactive public art create meaning, drawing from contemporary and historical examples. Investigate cultural and historical lantern traditions, integrating installation techniques to create a meaningful collective piece. Design, construct, and finalize their lanterns for presentation in the community installation.

### Respond (R1, R2, R3) and Connect (CO1, CO2)

Grades K-2: Express what the lanterns mean to them personally and to others. Identify what they like about their own and others' lanterns. Relate the lanterns to personal experiences of light and warmth. Learn about lantern festivals from around the world.

Grades 3-8: Analyze how public art installations - especially light-based - create emotional and cultural impact. Explore and articulate how symbolism and materials convey meaning. Discuss effective design choices in the installation. Compare how different cultures use light in public celebrations and rituals.

Grades 9-12: Critically evaluate material choices, light effects, and spatial composition in public art. Engage in deeper analysis of installation art, considering artistic intent and audience perception. Apply critical evaluation criteria to assess craftsmanship, symbolism, and interactivity. Study historical and contemporary light-based installation art, examining its symbolic, political, and social significance.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

This project brings together a team of highly skilled artists, educators, and arts leaders, each with extensive experience in their fields. These individuals were selected based on their expertise, prior collaboration with JHPA, and their ability to provide high-quality arts education while ensuring alignment with Wyoming educational standards.

Robin Cameron, Project Director, JHPA, brings artistic and educational expertise to this project. She holds a BA in Fine Arts from Amherst College and an MA in Science Education from Montana State University. Currently serving as the Project Director for JHPA, Robin was formerly the Dean of Students at JH Community School and has experience teaching both photography and biology. As the educational lead on the Garden of Lanterns project, she oversees development, administration, and educational programming, ensuring alignment with Wyoming educational standards. Additionally, she will directly contribute as an instructor for select workshops.

Bronwyn Minton, Lead Art Instructor & Curator, has been recognized for her contributions to the arts with accolades such as the Wyoming Governor's Arts Award and two Wyoming Arts Council Visual Arts Fellowships. She holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. Bronwyn serves as a contracted curator for JHPA and plays a crucial role in the Garden of Lanterns project, both assisting with program development and serving as a lead instructor.

Ruth Moran, Executive Director, pARTners, Executive Director of pARTners, leads the collaboration between JHPA and the Teton County School District (TCSD). She ensures that the Garden of Lanterns project is fully integrated into the school curriculum, meets Wyoming educational standards, and provides meaningful arts experiences for students at multiple grade levels.

The Garden of Lanterns project will be embedded in TCSD art classes across elementary, middle, and high school levels. The following dedicated TCSD art educators will directly engage students, integrating lantern-making into their curricula:

Lauren Brzozowski, Art Teacher, Kelly & Jackson Elementary Schools With over 15 years of experience as an art educator, Lauren holds a MA in Curriculum and Instruction, Studio Art, and Forestry. She is a recipient of the 2021 Quality Educator Grant.

Shannon Hart, Art Teacher, Jackson Hole Middle School A practicing artist and TCSD art instructor, Shannon brings extensive experience teaching middle school students.

Shannon Borrego, Art Teacher, Jackson Hole High School As the outgoing president of the Wyoming Secondary Art Educators Association, Shannon is an advocate for arts education at the secondary level.

Each artist, educator, and partner was chosen based on their expertise, leadership in arts education, and commitment to community engagement. All have previously collaborated with JHPA, demonstrating a shared vision for integrating the arts into education. This team will provide instruction, mentorship, and hands-on learning experiences, ensuring that students of all grade levels develop artistic skills, cultural awareness, and creative expression through this project.

## **Budget Narrative**

More than 78% of the JHPA budget comes from private, national, state, and local government grants, business sponsorships, and private donations. Consulting fees are generated from working with government and private capital projects to install permanent and temporary public artworks, which account for 5% of our income. Sponsorship income is 6%, and Project Management Funds comprise 9%. As our programs are free to the public, our fundraising event income represents .1% of our funding sources.

The budget reflects a commitment to pay local and professional artists, engage students, and market to broad audiences. We commit over 60% of our budget to artists and artworks, including installation. JH Public Art is 100% devoted to delivering art and interactive programs. We receive ample in-kind services from local engineers, building contractors, architects, lodging, and food and beverage businesses.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

JACKSON HOLE WRITERS

JHWRITERS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Growing Our Local and State-wide Literary Community

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission: We are a community of writers. We build connections and create educational experiences for established and aspiring writers across genres.

Vision: Jackson Hole Writers envisions a world where all writers are empowered to achieve personal success through opportunity and support.

Narrative: Jackson Hole Writers continues an exciting phase of growth and organizational development. In 2023, the Board of Directors engaged in a substantial process of strategic planning and mission revision to move the organization forward before hiring a new Executive Director, Matt Daly. Now in his second year, Daly has overseen the effort to activate our mission and implement our goals with year-round programming for writers of all ages and levels of experience.

Strategic Goals (after 2023 restructuring):

GOAL 1: ENSURE A STABLE AND SECURE FINANCIAL FUTURE FOR JHW

Secure operating funds for the next year.

Create a reserve fund to ensure two years of uninterrupted operations.

Make conference a profitable source of revenue.

Grow awareness through improved marketing and outreach.

Establish effective fundraising.

GOAL 2: BUILD A CREATIVE AND ENGAGED STAFF TO EXECUTE JHW'S MISSION

Create a realistic staffing plan with clear responsibilities and fair compensation.

Invest in leadership who can holistically manage, programs, admin, and fundraising.

Grow a pool of effective volunteers and plan for volunteer appreciation.

Develop opportunities for staff training, mentorship, and continuing education.

Establish a system of yearly review.

Foster a strong relationship between the board and staff with clear roles.

### GOAL 3: EXPAND JHW'S PROGRAMS TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE IN TERMS OF PEOPLE, GENRES, AND ACCESS

Modernize the conference, making it more inclusive and financially viable.

Increase the number of community-based programs we offer for young writers and adults.

Reach more writers; build a larger, more inclusive and connected community.

### **Community**

We serve a local, regional and national community of writers and have a strong commitment toward reaching writers of all ages and levels of experience. Our four program areas -- celebrations, craft classes, critique groups and conferences, -- provide a range of access points for a broad audience of writers. Because we are a community of writers, we are in regular conversation with all members of our community to listen to the needs of our audience. We are also growing relationships with other literary organizations and arts granting organizations in Wyoming as key components of achieving our mission. One project we are spearheading, the Wyoming Literary Map, will be an online space where all aspects of Wyoming's literary community can connect.

We are eager to diversify our audience as stated in our strategic goals. By working with a wide range of teaching authors through our network of local, state and national contacts, we invite a similarly wide range of writers to our programs by helping them feel represented by the faculty leading those programs.

For younger and older writers, we also encourage inclusivity by making programs free to families whenever possible or by suggested donation or at low cost. Our new strategic programming initiatives allow us to generate income from some programs with registration fees that, when those programs raise funds beyond their expenses, help support access to skillful writing instruction for lower costs in other program areas.

Most of our programs take place at the Center for the Arts, so we benefit for the accommodations present at the Center. Otherwise, we address accommodations on a case-by-case basis.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation of our programs primarily takes the form of digital/written surveys and follow-up conversations. Both will continue as key parts of our evaluation process, but we can do better to gather information about participant demographics and community engagement as well as follow-up contacts regarding longer-term impacts of our work on the lives of writers. Our annual conference gives us an excellent opportunity to collect data on both in-state and out-of-state participants. Our conference has collected responses to surveys for many years, so we have the opportunity to compare current data with past evaluations.

We find qualitative data to be especially valuable in refining our programs. We engage in regular communication with our teaching authors before, during and after programs to ensure skillful teaching that achieves our goals. We also maintain communication with attendees immediately following programs and over time to understand how the programs we offer are integrated into the writing practices of attendees.

We have recently joined the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole's Systems of Education collective which gives us access to many local organizations that offer educational programs. Participation in the collective allows us to learn about and benefit from the program experience and evaluation of our peers. Similarly, we have also engaged with a group of Wyoming literary arts organizations to build relationships and share information. The Wyoming Literary Map project grew out of conversations with this group and in the summer of 2025 will be live online as a resource for authors and organizations around the state to connect and increase opportunities for sharing feedback about statewide program offerings and evaluations.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Thanks to our status as a resident at the Center for the Arts in Jackson, many of our operating costs remain low. Approximately 10% of our FY2025 approved budget is for non-salary and non-program operating costs. Budgeted salary for our one staff member is approximately 45% of our total budget with a considerable portion of staff time going to program development, coordination and administration. This leaves 45% of our budget dedicated to program expenses.

Currently, our sole staff member is still moving toward full-time compensation, and our current fiscal year began with a transformative gift from a single new donor that provides monthly support toward operating costs and part-time salary for our Executive Director. Fiscal year 2024 saw dramatic growth in our programs and in public awareness and goodwill for our work. We are engaged in a strategic fundraising effort that is much more robust than previous years to capitalize on the positive growth in 2024.

Requested operating funds will be allocated toward staff salary support to administer and promote youth and adult programming this year. Requested funds will allow us to continue to refine and grow programs similar to those that led to our success in 2024 and will allow our Executive Director to follow up on the launch of the Wyoming Literary Map with a concerted effort to connect with the literary community around the state.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Our program efforts, broadly fall into four categories and are summarized below.

### 1. Craft Classes

Genre- and topic-specific workshops offered for local and regional audiences. Published writers lead each workshop focused on an area of their expertise. Concrete skill-building for writers in specific genres. In 2025, we will coordinate a mix of workshops for young writers (The Write Squad in schools and Almost Authors in summer), adult writers (offered every month both in-person and online) and older writers (with a facilitator trained in creative aging projects for older adults). Most craft classes are 1.5-3 hour sessions. Total number of 300-350 class participants estimated in 2025.

Youth -- 1. Almost Authors -- In the grant period, four half-day workshops and a fall conference for young writers will be lead by both nationally-recognized and local authors. Grant funds will be used to support honoraria for teaching authors. 2. The Write Squad -- Connected to our coordination of the Teton County portion Young Authors competition, we offer afterschool writing sessions in partnership with the Teton County School District's After the Bell program. Teams of local authors and writers work closely with students to generate new writing both for the contest and for their own interest. Grant funds will be used to support the staffing and administering The Write Squad.

Adult -- Craft Classes (monthly offerings) -- In the grant period, our goal is to host monthly craft classes led by local published authors in a variety of subjects and across genres. Classes are often offered in an in-person/online format to increase participation. Grant funds will be used to support administering this program. Modest registration fees and/or suggested donations cover honoraria for authors.

Older adult -- Creative Aging -- these programs are in development and not included in this grant application.

### 2. Critique Groups

Critique groups are active, community-driven monthly experiences in which writers come together to share work and to receive feedback on their writing to support revision. In-person and virtual critique groups are open to writers of all ability levels and can be attended at will, encouraging statewide participation. Meetings are moderated by volunteer participants. Approximately 200-400 participant engagements (individuals attending a single session) estimated. Project support will not be used for these programs.

### 3. Celebrations

The central celebration program in 2025 will be the launch of the Wyoming Literary Map. This program is currently under development thanks to support for the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund and Wyoming Humanities. The map uses ArcGIS to produce an online resource where authors, organizations, bookstores, libraries and archives, events, and literary landmarks, with accompanying information, can be displayed in an interactive and searchable map. A simple intake form allows for state-wide participation. The map's public launch is planned for June and funding will be used to support staff efforts to connect with individuals and organizations in the state.



#### 4. Conferences: The Jackson Hole Writers Conference, October 23-25, 2025

The Jackson Hole Writers Conference has thirty-five-year history as a professional conference for writers seeking publication. Programming now includes a public keynote and other opportunities for public involvement in this professional conference. Funding is not requested for this program.

#### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Arts Learning funding is requested for the implementation of our craft classes for young writers and adults during the grant period.

Almost Authors is a summer/fall series of writing classes for children that will host half-day workshops. As stated previously, these programs give young writers from our areas the opportunity to work directly with authors they read to build writing skills. The workshops are coordinated in partnership with St. John's Episcopal Church which provides classroom and outdoor space for the classes. All participants received journals for use during the program, other materials, and lunch. In the youth writing conference, planned in partnership with the Jackson Hole Book Festival, child participants take a closer look at what it takes for writers to publish their work. This session has craft lessons while also focusing on the critique and revision process that pushes student writing toward the quality necessary for publication. Students will work with a nationally-recognized writer and with a local published writer during this program. Almost Authors has attracted young writers from Teton, Sublette, Lincoln and Fremont counties. These programs expand the creative writing classes available to young people in the region, and their focus on skill-building first makes them unique. Local children's literature authors Nanci Turner Steveson coordinates the program and provides educational support at all sessions. 2025 authors include two awarding winners: Nanci Turner Steveson and Janet Fox as well as two-time Modern Love essayist Rachel Stevens (Teton County resident).

Direct creative writing instruction for youth continues during the school year with our Write Squad session in the Teton County School District's After the Bell program. Teams of local writers meet with students weekly over the course of nine planned seven-week series, three series each in fall, winter and spring After the Bell sessions. These programs encourage students to create and refine work that may then be submitted to the county contest of the Young Authors Competition administered by the Wyoming State Literacy Association. Write Squad members are all residents of Teton County and include MFA candidates, journalists, and published authors in various genres.

For adults, our goal within the grant period is to offer craft classes monthly. Craft classes are hands-on opportunities to learn skills from community member who writer for publication. All in-person and hybrid sessions take place at the Center for the Arts and are offered for a minimal fee or suggested donation. Our goal is to have donations and registration fees cover teaching author honoraria whenever possible. We see these sessions as great opportunities for local published authors to try out new workshop ideas. So, the learning process in these classes supports skill-building for both participants and teaching writers. Teaching authors are a mix of local and non-local writers with books in the world. Online and hybrid classes allow us to include our network of conference faculty to reengage with our writing community.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

Almost Authors and The Write Squad:

Learning goals for our youth programming focus on building skill from the ground up and in all aspects of the writing process including: generating ideas for writing, crafting sentences that show action, descriptive writing, dialogue, scene structure, building a story arc, etc. Our goals also include skill-building in receiving and incorporating critical feedback and preparing writing for publication. In all cases, learning goals for youth programs grow out of the real professional needs of adult writers. Since we work directly with writers, we invite each of our teaching writers to focus their craft classes to the skills they feel most skilled to teach. This results in sessions in which writers and students are engaged in topics and exercises that are directly applied to all of their writing. Our goals all drive toward our mission of creating a community of writers working in a shared effort to improve their writing.

Adult Craft Classes:

Similarly, our adult classes have goals associated with the interests and skills of the teaching writers. In addition to developing individual craft class goals with teaching writers, our classes also include opportunities for participants to bring in their own questions about the material and to develop community among peers. Our learning goals for adults also focus on core aspects of the writing process from idea generation through publication. We balance craft-focused classes with publishing-skill classes with the goal of giving attendees learning experiences that benefit the full arc of a writing project.

Overall, our classes have formats which allow participants to learn, practice, and receive feedback on their practice. This process has proven to create both in-class engagement and replicable skill when participating writers engage with writing outside of the classroom. The scope of our learning goals was developed through conversation with past attendees and with teaching authors. By asking our audience what skills they most need to develop, we are able to make our offerings current and applicable in the fast-changing world of publishing. Our goals change year to year to address changes in publishing and to meet the stated needs and interests of our audience.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Institutional partners: Teton County School District, St. John's Episcopal Church, Center for the Arts and the Jackson Hole Book Festival.

Artist partners for Almost Authors:

Nanci Turner Steveson, Young Authors coordinator -- Nanci Turner Steveson grew up in Connecticut, England, and Texas, always with a book in one hand, the reins of a pony in the other. She wrote her first "novel" at the age of nine about a wild horse named Liberty. Nanci works with the Off Square Theatre Company as a stage manager and youth-performer shepherd. She is a reading fairy to book-hungry children and a riding instructor. The mother of two grown sons, Nanci lives in a meadow at the foot of the Grand Tetons in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with her

Arabian horse and a 100-pound rescue dog named Story. She is the founder of the Literacy for Hope project, dedicated to getting books into the hands of the homeless.

Janet Fox is a former children's teacher and an author of picture, middle grade, and young adult books. She is the author of the award-winning middle-grade non-fiction book *Get Organized Without Losing It*, *The Faithful Forgiven*, and *The Charmed Children of Rookskill Castle*, as well as its companion book *The Artifact Hunters*. Janet lives with her husband and son in Montana.

Rachel Stevens is a writer, creative director, and radio enthusiast in Jackson, Wyoming, where she lives with her nurse husband and spirited five-year-old daughter. Rachel has published two Modern Love stories in *The New York Times* and a short documentary on PBS POV. She shares a personal essay weekly on Substack at *The Messayist*, and she has recently finished a memoir about growing up religious in Texas before coming of age (later in life) in a mountain town.

Other teaching authors for both *Almost Authors* and *The Write Squad* are to be determined. In 2024, three local and three national authors participated in *Almost Authors* and nine local authors participated in *The Write Squad*. Choosing *Writer Squad* writers focuses on writers who are residents of Teton County to help students see how the writing life is possible in their home town. In 2024, *Write Squad* writers included novelists, journalists, poets and with published work.

Adult craft class teaching authors are mostly to be determined. In 2024, these programs were primarily led by writers who are residents of Teton and Lincoln counties, several of whom have received national recognition for their work. Planned classes include authors Bridget Crocker, whose memoir, *The River's Daughter*, was released in the spring of 2025, and Andrew Buckley, an author and podcaster who publishes traditionally and self-publishes and teaches regularly in Canada and the U.S.

## **Budget Narrative**

Jackson Hole Writers receives funding from granting organizations, partnering organizations, business sponsors, in-kind contributions, individual supporters and program participants. In this second year of strategic growth and development with new staff leadership, we see how important it is to develop our funding sources in all of these areas. A strong mix of funding sources allows us to offer a variety of programs at a range of prices to engage with a wide range of writers. FY 2024 (Oct. 1 - Sept. 30) proved to be a year of positive program growth which has led to a stronger position from which to raise funds from individual donations. Donations in FY 2025 are on track to exceed approved budget targets which supports our strategic goal to build an operating reserve to ensure long-term financial viability.

Efforts to increase our statewide partnerships, led by the Wyoming Literary Map, open the door for more in-state partnerships and collaborations.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

JACKSON WILD

WWW.JACKSONWILD.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Jackson Wild Operating Support 2025-2026

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission: Jackson Wild is a catalyst for the conservation and wildlife filmmaking industry, working globally to maximize the impact of storytelling that highlights our urgent and collective responsibility to protect and restore our planet. Through a biennial Summit, Awards, and year-round events and engagement, Jackson Wild facilitates collaboration, celebration, and inspiration, bringing together thought leaders, broadcasters, distributors and content creators who seek innovative ways to bring our crucial stories to the world.

Goals: At Jackson Wild, we believe that media is a powerful tool in deepening one's connection to the natural world, inspiring action to protect and restore it. As a globally recognized leader in nature and environmental media, Jackson Wild plays a critical role in supporting storytellers and industry professionals who use the power of film and media to drive awareness and impact. Through our events, programs and initiatives, we bring Jackson Hole culture and values to audiences around the world. Our strategic goals include 1) Strengthening partnerships with conservation organizations, filmmakers, and educators to amplify the impact of environmental storytelling 2) Expanding community engagement through public screenings and events that connect audiences with conservation-focused storytelling 3) Supporting and mentoring emerging filmmakers, particularly those from underrepresented communities, through education and training initiatives like the Jackson Wild Media Lab.

### Community

Jackson Wild serves a broad community, including filmmakers, industry executives, conservationists, and the general public in Wyoming and beyond. Locally, we identify community needs through partnerships with schools, environmental organizations, and key stakeholders. In the last year, our sold-out community screenings of '399: Queen of the Tetons' and 'Mollie's Pack' demonstrate strong public interest in conservation storytelling.

We prioritize accessibility by offering free and low-cost events. Ticketed events are modestly priced, and we work with classrooms and organizations to offer free passes for underserved communities. Because Jackson Wild curates award-winning films from around the world, we are able to offer a wide variety of programs, including

films featuring non-English languages, cultures from around the world, and individuals from underrepresented communities, allowing our programming to appeal to a diversity of audiences.

Jackson Wild's public events are hosted at the Center for the Arts, an ADA compliant facility located downtown and easily accessed by the START bus, bicycle, or on foot. CFA access features include: ramp/automatic door access at entrances, elevator access to all floors, ADA access in restrooms and (36) removable ADA seating locations and assisted listening system in Theater.

## **Evaluation**

We incorporate multiple strategies to assess the impact of our programs. Formal observation during events allows us to gauge audience engagement in real time, while post-event surveys provide valuable quantitative and qualitative feedback from attendees, participants, and partners. We also conduct structured debrief sessions with staff, volunteers, and key collaborators to identify areas for improvement and innovation. Additionally, we track social media engagement metrics—such as shares and comments—to evaluate community reach and resonance. These insights inform our future programming, ensuring that we continue to meet the needs of our audience and effectively fulfill our mission.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Jackson Wild is seeking \$10,000 in operating support to help sustain and expand the reach and impact of our programs, including community engagement initiatives. These funds will be used to offset operational costs, which from July 1 - June 30 will include payroll (\$37,729 per month), health insurance (\$3,923 per month), rent & utilities (\$898 per month), accounting services (\$2,000 per month), and software subscriptions (\$700 per month), totaling \$45,250 in monthly operational expenses, or \$543,000 annually. Basic operating/administration expenses comprise about 41% of our annual budget. This funding will help us continue providing meaningful experiences for our local audience while maintaining operational sustainability. With in-person events serving as the backbone of our programming, Jackson Wild's fundraising model is reliant on event sponsorships, award submissions, and ticket revenue, which results in fluctuating revenue streams between events. This is why operational support funds are so crucial for our long-term financial sustainability.

This year, our industry-focused programming will take place at Jackson Lake Lodge, drawing a global audience of media professionals, scientists, and conservationists to Grand Teton National Park. It is an extraordinary convening where collaboration and innovation thrive, ideas are launched, and strategic partnerships are forged. Alongside our Summit, we will host the Jackson Wild Media Lab, an intensive hands-on visual arts workshop that connects early-career filmmakers with industry mentors, providing hands-on training and fostering career development.

In addition to industry programming, Jackson Wild is committed to enriching the local community through inspiring and thought-provoking film screenings and networking events. We will leverage the presence of renowned filmmakers and thought leaders attending the Summit to host high-profile screenings at the Center for the Arts in downtown Jackson on September 26-27. These curated screenings will showcase films from our prestigious Jackson Wild Media Awards, known as nature film's equivalent to the Oscars®. These events, featuring

post-screening discussions with filmmakers and featured subjects, will provide a unique opportunity for the Jackson community to engage directly with impactful storytelling on conservation and environmental themes. In addition to the Summit-adjacent screenings, we are planning on hosting quarterly community screenings throughout the year. While we cannot provide specific films at this time, the films will come from artists within our community — filmmakers who are working with some of the most recognized and lauded distributors such as BBC's Natural History Unit, National Geographic, IMAX, Netflix and PBS.

By securing operational support through grants like this one, we will ensure that these vital programs continue to thrive. Financial stability allows us to further our mission of fostering conservation storytelling and providing meaningful experiences for our local audience.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Jackson Wild is seeking \$5,000 in Arts Learning support to fund one Wyoming-based participant in the Jackson Wild Media Lab, which will take place this September 23 - October 3, 2025, in conjunction with the Jackson Wild Summit at the Jackson Lake Lodge. The Media Lab is an immersive, cross-disciplinary science filmmaking workshop that brings scientists and media creators together to learn from leaders in the profession. Over one intensive week, fellows gain hands-on filmmaking experience, develop storytelling skills, and receive training in professional-grade tools and equipment.

This program prioritizes learning technical and creative skills in visual storytelling, combined with an opportunity to practice skills learned. Participants will not only produce films but also learn the fundamental principles of effective science communication, the role of narrative structure in filmmaking, and audience engagement techniques. Through structured mentorship, participants will refine their abilities to translate conservation issues into compelling media, ensuring that their learning extends beyond project completion.

As part of the Media Lab, participants develop, produce, edit, and present a short film highlighting a conservation issue local to the greater Yellowstone ecosystem. The Media Lab provides a platform for valuable networking and collaborations to help Fellows get to the next level in their careers, helping amplify emerging talent and underrepresented voices. By reserving a spot for a Wyoming applicant, we can ensure that local talent gains access to world-class mentorship and career-building opportunities.

Beyond technical training, the Media Lab fosters valuable networking and collaboration opportunities, helping fellows advance their careers in conservation storytelling. As a past participant shared, "The Jackson Wild Media Lab was one of the most important learning experiences of my career, not just for the hands-on activities it provided, but also for the community it helped me build." This grant will support the next generation of

conservation storytellers from Wyoming, ensuring that their voices and perspectives are represented in global conversations about nature and media.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The primary goal of this initiative is to provide an immersive arts learning experience that equips filmmakers with the technical and creative skills necessary for effective conservation storytelling. Participants will gain proficiency in cinematography, editing, and narrative development while learning how to communicate complex scientific topics through compelling visual storytelling. As a leader in the environmental media space, we have observed that there is a lack of regional storytellers focusing on these types of stories. By supporting and bringing in local talent, we aim to expand regional storytelling capacity, ensuring that conservation narratives relevant to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and beyond are effectively communicated by those with direct ties to the area.

The Media Lab curriculum has been designed to achieve the following arts learning goals:

- Creative Process: Fellows will develop original short films, from concept to final edit, fostering innovation and problem-solving skills.
- Collaboration & Communication: Working in teams, Fellows will engage in cross-disciplinary collaboration with scientists, refining their ability to translate research into an engaging visual medium.
- Technical Mastery: Fellows will receive hands-on training with industry-standard Sony equipment, ensuring they develop the technical competencies needed to pursue careers in conservation filmmaking.
- Audience Engagement: By focusing on effective storytelling techniques, Fellows will learn how to create content that resonates with diverse audiences and inspires action.

By the end of the program, participants will have produced, shot and edited a short conservation film, demonstrating their ability to apply these skills in a real-world context. They will also gain confidence in presenting their work to an audience, an important step in their professional development. By equipping participants with technical skills, communication strategies, and industry connections, we provide a critical stepping stone for emerging filmmakers to build successful careers in science and environmental storytelling. Our goal is not only to train individuals but also to foster a lasting impact by developing a strong, skilled, and diverse pipeline of conservation storytellers from Wyoming who will continue to shape the future of environmental media.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Jackson Wild Media Lab is facilitated by leading filmmakers, scientists, and industry experts. Past mentors have included Emmy-winning directors, National Geographic explorers, and conservation leaders. Among the distinguished professionals involved is Day's Edge Productions, an Emmy-nominated filmmaking team specializing in science and conservation storytelling, who have been leading this workshop since 2019. These mentors provide

critical guidance and professional insight, ensuring that participants gain practical filmmaking skills and industry connections that will help build their career trajectory. The mentors were selected because of their in-depth knowledge of the wildlife film industry, the awards they've received in recognition of their high quality films, their past teaching experience and their ability to clearly communicate and distill complex topics. Key partners include Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Tangled Bank Studios both through editorial and financial support and Sony Electronics for providing in-kind equipment and technical craft education.

### **Budget Narrative**

Jackson Wild is supported by a combination of grants, sponsorships, in-kind donations, and ticket sales. Key partners include conservation organizations, media networks, and educational institutions, such as Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Tangled Bank Studios, Sony, National Geographic, Netflix, Conservation International and PBS.

A significant portion of our budget is dedicated to payroll, ensuring that our small but highly skilled team can continue developing and executing impactful programming. Rent and utilities costs, including software and subscriptions, allow us to maintain essential operational functions such as event planning, marketing, and outreach. Our operational expenses align directly with the services we provide, ensuring the sustainability of our community programming and educational initiatives.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

JENTEL FOUNDATION

[WWW.JENTELARTS.ORG](http://WWW.JENTELARTS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Jentel's Next Step: Supporting Wyoming Artists Beyond Residency

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Jentel Artist Residency's mission is to inspire innovation, collaboration, and artistic growth by providing an environment that fosters creative exploration and exchange. Since 2001, Jentel has supplied visual artists, writers, and composers with time, space, and resources to pursue their creative work.

#### Strategic Goals:

- Provide career-changing networking opportunities for our artists in residence as they live and work together over a 3-week residency.
- Give the gift of the Mountain West to artists from across the county so that they might expand their creative purview and be inspired by this unique landscape.
- Give artists, writers and composers time away from daily distractions and to encourage them to dig deeper into their creative process, become enlightened in new ways, and find renewed dedication to their work.

Each year, Jentel hosts 11 three-week residency cohorts, each accommodating six creatives, for a total of 66 residents annually. Currently, Jentel has over 1500 alumni.

### Community

Jentel serves a diverse community of artists from across the U.S., with a strong commitment to supporting rural WY creatives. Our primary community includes visual artists, writers, & composers, many of whom come from geographically isolated or economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

To identify the needs of our community, Jentel engages directly with artists through application processes, alumni feedback, & partnerships with organizations like the Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Arts Alliance, & UW. This refines our programs & ensures they are accessible & meaningful for the artists we serve. By listening to our

residents & assessing the challenges they face, we continually evolve our approach to provide more equitable opportunities.

Jentel is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment, & we recognize that artists working in folk & traditional arts, as well as those with multifaceted identities, may face additional barriers to accessing residency programs. Our goal is to make Jentel a welcoming & enriching space for all creative practitioners.

We work on a case-by-case basis to ensure participant needs are accommodated. While our rural setting presents some challenges to full ADA accessibility, we are dedicated to making adjustments whenever possible to support artists with disabilities, older adults, & those with specific mobility or health needs. We provide individualized solutions like workspace modifications, transportation assistance, & flexible scheduling to ensure all artists can fully participate in the residency experience. Last year we hosted our 1st service animal in our residence & look forward to more in the future. Our goal is to create an inclusive, enriching experience for all artists, regardless of background or ability.

## **Evaluation**

MEASURING SUCCESS of our project, 'Jentel's Next Step: Supporting Wyoming Artists Beyond Residency '

Quantitative Analysis/ Mentorship Engagement: Number of Wyoming artists matched with mentors and the frequency of mentor-mentee interactions.

Qualitative Feedback: Surveys and interviews with participating artists and mentors to assess the program's impact and areas for improvement.

Long-Term Economic Contribution: The program's success will also be measured by its overall impact on Wyoming's creative economy, including artist career advancements, increased funding and exhibition opportunities for participants, and contributions to local arts initiatives.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

OUR CHALLENGE

Rural WY artists face unique barriers to artistic growth & engagement with the broader arts community. Wyoming's population is widely dispersed, leaving artists isolated from professional networks & collaborative opportunities. Additionally, many WY creatives come from historically underserved communities, such as the Wind

River Reservation, the Crow Agency, & regions affected by energy sector fluctuations. Without access to professional development & national exposure, these artists struggle to build sustainable careers.

In FY2025, Jentel received a Community Support Grant of \$7,500 in operations support to reach more WY artists. This initiative was incredibly successful, resulting in at least one Wyoming artist in each of our cohorts over the past year. This proposal seeks to build on that momentum by providing structured & thoughtful post-residency support for Wyoming artists to continue their professional development & build connections through mentorship.

Finding & connecting with the right mentors can be challenging as Wyoming's rural regions have fewer experienced artists or arts professionals available for mentorship. Opportunities for in-person networking, workshops, & industry events are scarce, making it harder to form organic mentor relationships. Digital connections can help, but without prior introductions or established networks, reaching the right mentor remains a significant hurdle.

## OUR PLAN

To address the challenge of providing continued professional support for rural WY artists, Jentel will launch a structured post-residency mentorship program.

**Who:** Upon exiting a Jentel Residency, alumni who are residents of WY and interested in participating will be enrolled in the mentorship program. Jentel & its sister organization Neltje Center have a network of exceptional mentors ready to support emerging Wyoming artists.

**Focus:** By connecting artists with seasoned professionals, we aim to foster long-term growth, motivation, & professional sustainability. This initiative will provide guidance on securing funding, increasing visibility, & navigating the complexities of a creative career.

**How:** Jentel will facilitate connections between these experienced creatives & emerging Wyoming artists. Participants will be given a number of hours to connect with their mentor, & mentors will receive an honorarium for their time & expertise.

## FUND ALLOCATION

Funds for this project will be allocated to support mentorship honoraria, program coordination, & essential digital tools. The largest portion, \$9,900, will compensate mentors for their time & expertise, ensuring that 11 alumni each receive six hours of mentorship at a rate of \$150/hour. An additional \$5,000 will cover program coordination,

overhead, & administration to facilitate mentor-mentee connections & oversee program logistics & make adjustments as needed. Lastly, \$500 will be used for digital tools & analytics to track engagement and outcomes. The total project cost of \$15,400 will be met through a 1:1 match, with half requested from the WAC & the remaining half funded through private donations held on Jentel's behalf by the University of Wyoming Foundation.

## IMPACT

This program directly addresses the barriers faced by rural artists, including lack of access to resources & visibility in the art world. By fostering connections & providing professional development opportunities, this project aligns with the WAC's goal to strengthen the creative ecosystem.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

Jentel's funding comes from a combination of institutional support and private donations. We receive funding from the University of Wyoming College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office, as well as generous private donations from Neltje's family and supporters across the state. These contributions allow us to maintain high-quality residency experiences for artists by covering operational costs, residency stipends, and program and facility enhancements. Our budget aligns with our mission by prioritizing professional development, artist support, and community engagement, ensuring Wyoming artists have access to meaningful opportunities for creative growth.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LANDER ART CENTER

LANDERARTCENTER.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Creative Horizons 2026: Empowering Fremont County through Community Arts

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Lander Art Center's mission is to foster a strong arts community in Fremont County by providing arts learning opportunities and exhibition experiences for all. Through accessible classes, exhibitions, and events, we ensure that people of all backgrounds have meaningful opportunities to engage with the arts. Creative Horizons 2026 expands on this mission, increasing participation, strengthening partnerships, and making the arts more inclusive and sustainable.

A key priority is broadening access to arts education. By increasing enrollment by 20 percent and expanding financial aid, we ensure that cost is never a barrier. Scholarships and sliding-scale fees allow students of all ages to participate in after-school programs, weekend workshops, and open studio sessions. Strengthening partnerships with Fremont County School District 1, Art Link Wyoming, Lander Performing Arts, and local businesses allows us to co-host programs that celebrate regional heritage and promote cross-cultural dialogue.

Non-dominant outreach remains central. A thoughtful accommodations policy ensures transparency, while dedicated funding supports large-print materials and other accessibility resources. Removing barriers ensures that older adults, individuals with disabilities, and English-language learners feel welcomed and supported. To sustain this work, we are diversifying revenue streams—grants, memberships, sponsorships, and fundraising—so that no single funding source exceeds 35 percent of our budget.

From first-time hobbyists to experienced artists, the Lander Art Center fosters an environment where creativity thrives. Through Creative Horizons 2026, we ensure that the arts remain a dynamic and lasting presence in Fremont County, enriching the lives of all who participate.

### Community

Located near the Wind River Range, Lander blends a small-town feel with diverse populations. Roughly 30% of local students qualify for free or reduced lunch, underscoring the need for low- or no-cost extracurriculars. Tribal citizens, retired seniors, Hispanic families, and rural residents each bring distinct voices—and face unique barriers

to arts participation. Transportation, financial resources, and limited class availability all play roles in preventing engagement.

To respond, we partner with teachers and nonprofits to determine scheduling gaps, scholarship needs, or specialized adaptations. For example, a teacher may report strong interest in weekend painting intensives, so we can organize those at times suiting working families. Meanwhile, older adults often request mid-morning classes, prompting a daytime mosaic series taught at accessible sites. Partnering with tribal educators helps us fold Native art traditions into our curriculum, celebrating cultural legacies and promoting cross-community dialogue.

In line with Creative Horizons 2026, we proactively provide inclusive solutions—ranging from wheelchair-accessible space design to bilingual outreach. Our accommodations policy is posted in flyers, social media announcements, and sign-up forms to ensure everyone knows that requests for large-print instructions, and extra tactile demonstrations are welcome. By making sure these needs are funded within our budget, we confirm that Fremont County’s diverse population sees the Lander Art Center as a safe, affirming place to create, learn, and connect.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation at the Lander Art Center is an ongoing process that ensures our programs are effective, inclusive, and responsive. We use both quantitative and qualitative data to assess impact, improve accessibility, and guide decision-making.

We track enrollment trends, demographics, and scholarship usage to measure participation, with a goal of increasing engagement by 20 percent annually, particularly among rural learners and those needing financial aid. Post-class surveys measure satisfaction, skill development, and accessibility concerns, with a target of 85 percent rating their experience as “very good” or “excellent.” This is largely done through our class management software but also through manual solicitation.

Qualitative feedback provides deeper insight into our impact. We gather testimonials from participants, instructors, and partners like Art Link Wyoming to understand how programs influence artistic growth and confidence. Observations from staff and volunteers are recorded in internal reports, ensuring informal feedback is preserved. Success stories from participants who exhibit their work, pursue further education, or use their skills professionally are documented to measure long-term impact.

Feedback directly shapes future programming. If surveys indicate rising interest in photography, we introduce new workshops or exhibitions. If cost is a barrier, we prioritize scholarships or no/low-cost application fees. If rural participants face access challenges, we shift resources toward off-site classes. By making evaluation a continuous conversation, we ensure the Lander Art Center remains adaptable, equitable, and aligned with the creative needs of Fremont County.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Operating support provides the foundation necessary to sustain Creative Horizons 2026, ensuring that the Lander Art Center remains a hub for artistic engagement in Fremont County. With an annual budget of \$137,658, core expenses include rent, utilities, liability insurance, and two part-time staff positions, each critical to delivering consistent, high-quality programming.

This year, our most significant growth comes from the merger with Art Link Wyoming, a milestone that will double our kids' programming and expand our integration into local schools. This effort has taken years of planning and collaboration, and we are beyond excited to see it come to fruition. Through this expansion, we will serve more isolated communities, including homeschool families, while increasing our in-classroom impact. By working more closely with educators, we can offer adjunct arts programming that strengthens engagement both in schools and in our own studio space.

The Lander Art Center's Main Street location is the heart of our programming, serving as a teaching space, exhibition venue, and administrative hub. Reliable rent and utilities allow us to host youth camps, weekend workshops, and open studio sessions, ensuring consistent access and removing seasonal barriers. Operating costs also include liability insurance and administrative overhead, protecting participants while keeping daily operations streamlined. With the merger, our two part-time staff positions— a Gallery Representative and an Education Coordinator— are more critical than ever. The Gallery Representative oversees exhibitions and community events, while the Education Coordinator manages class enrollment, teacher coordination, scholarship distribution, and expanded school partnerships.

We request up to \$10,000 in combined operating and project support, adhering to the 50 percent maximum rule. This funding will offset monthly rent, utilities, and staff wages, allowing us to sustain our expanded programming while keeping class fees low, broadening scholarship availability, and ensuring seamless scheduling for school and nonprofit partners.

As our programs grow, we are also prioritizing accessibility. A portion of the funding will support physical accessibility improvements, bilingual classroom potentials, and interpretive services to ensure older adults, multilingual families, and individuals with disabilities can fully engage in our programs. These investments align with our commitment to breaking down barriers to arts participation.

As we take on this historic merger, operating support is critical to ensuring that our growth is sustainable, strategic, and community-driven. Creative Horizons 2026 is not just an expansion in numbers— it is a transformation in how the Lander Art Center serves the county. By embedding arts education more deeply into schools, offering more diverse learning opportunities, and strengthening organizational stability, we are setting the foundation for a stronger, more inclusive arts future in Fremont County. With Wyoming Arts Council funding, we

can navigate this transition smoothly and ensure that the arts remain a vital, accessible, and enriching part of our community for years to come.

### **Project Support Narrative**

LAC has a few different major project pillars that connect us to the community.

The cornerstone of our community arts programming is our robust Clay Studio, a facility equipped with a kiln, seven individual pottery wheels, a slab roller, pug mill, extruder, and an extensive array of tools, glazes, and underglazes. This studio supports diverse activities, including structured classes, open clay studio hours, shelf rental options, and drop-in sessions, significantly contributing to our community's engagement with the visual arts. In 2025-2026, we aim to serve over 400 unique interactions through this facility alone, spanning dedicated hobbyists to professional artists.

LAC's gallery will host 6-8 annual exhibitions, showcasing local and regional artists at varying skill levels, from emerging students to accomplished professionals. These exhibitions are free to the public and regularly attract over 3,000 visitors, providing culturally enriching visual arts experiences.

Our gallery programming will include six to eight exhibitions throughout the year, showcasing local and regional artists across varying skill levels—students, amateurs, and professionals. These exhibitions offer artists valuable exposure and the community free access to dynamic, culturally enriching experiences. We also host two major external public events Art in the Afternoon and Summerfest where we provide art markets for our local artisans to sell their work. Our planned events and exhibitions for this period ensure broad representation and engagement, reaching an estimated audience of over 3,000 visitors annually.

Complementing our visual arts initiatives, LAC hosts regular community-centered projects such as the biweekly Literary Rug group, encouraging literary arts and dialogue among residents; the Saturday morning Open Musical Jam, fostering musical exploration and informal performance opportunities; and our newly initiated Storyteller musical evening series. This latter initiative will spotlight local and regional musicians in an intimate setting, blending storytelling with music to deepen audience connection and appreciation.

Further enriching our arts ecosystem, the merger of Art Link Wyoming into LAC programming introduces additional impactful initiatives: participation in the Lander Art District Street Fair, open acting workshops in our flexible gallery space, the annual Bookmarked youth writing contest, Summerfest Talent Show, and a 4th-grade silkscreen project. These activities significantly expand our outreach and engagement, bringing arts directly into local schools and public spaces.

Our programming prominently features highly qualified local artists and facilitators, such as Lander Burton, who combines exhibition and educational outreach; Marnie Fusco our newest board member who champions the Art



Linked projects, Annelise Wright, who heralds the Literary Rug, Shannon Wachowski and Heather Huberty who manage our Clay Studio and more!

Funds requested will proportionately be split to directly support:

Art materials and classroom supplies (\$6,000)

Artist and educator stipends (\$10,000)

Exhibition expenses, promotions, and events (\$3,500)

Marketing, program administration, and outreach (\$3,000)

Logistics and costs for community events (\$2,500)

With Wyoming Arts Council's support, LAC will sustain and strengthen its role as a central arts and culture resource, fostering community engagement, inclusivity, and artistic vitality across Fremont County.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Lander Art Center's Arts Learning programs for FY26 are designed to provide transformative, inclusive arts education that fosters creativity, skill-building, and cultural understanding across Fremont County. From July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, we will offer a diverse range of workshops, classes, and events tailored to engage learners of all ages and backgrounds. These programs aim to expand access for underserved populations, preserve cultural traditions, and build intergenerational connections through the arts.

Our goals include increasing participation among economically disadvantaged individuals and older adults, integrating cultural heritage into our programming, and providing high-quality educational experiences led by expert instructors. These goals were identified through direct feedback from community surveys, school partners, and participants. Key programs include Native American folk art workshops taught by local Native artists specializing in beading, carving, and textile work; therapeutic ceramics workshops for older adults; and after-school classes for K-12 students focusing on foundational art skills. Each program is carefully designed to meet specific community needs while fostering cross-cultural dialogue.

Shannon Wachowski serves as our lead Clay Studio instructor and will expand ceramics offerings with a focus on creative exploration for all skill levels. Pamela Sipe, a Wyoming PTSB-certified Art Educator with extensive experience in K-12 education, will lead children's programming aligned with state standards. Heather Huberty will oversee therapeutic ceramics workshops and lead our creative aging projects, using her expertise in engaging older adults through the arts. Additionally, we will collaborate with Native artists to design and teach folk art workshops that celebrate cultural heritage while providing authentic learning experiences.

Evaluation is central to ensuring the success of these programs. We will use pre- and post-program surveys to measure skill acquisition and participant satisfaction. Enrollment trends will be tracked alongside qualitative feedback from participants and instructors. Testimonials will document how programs influence artistic growth and confidence. For example, we aim for an 85% satisfaction rate among participants and a 20% increase in enrollment from underserved populations. These metrics will guide future programming decisions to ensure continuous improvement.

Accessibility remains a top priority. Scholarships and sliding-scale fees will ensure cost is never a barrier to participation. ADA-compliant facilities, large-print materials, tactile demonstrations, and other accommodations will make programs accessible to individuals with disabilities or unique needs. By addressing these barriers proactively, we aim to create an inclusive environment where all community members feel welcome.

Through targeted outreach efforts—including partnerships with Fremont County schools and local nonprofits—we will ensure that these programs reach the widest possible audience. The introduction of Native American folk art workshops represents a significant step forward in celebrating local cultural heritage while fostering mutual understanding among participants from diverse backgrounds.

With support from WAC's Arts Learning Grant, the Lander Art Center can expand opportunities for meaningful engagement while ensuring that cost or accessibility barriers never prevent participation.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Arts learning is at the heart of the Lander Art Center's mission to foster a strong arts community in Fremont County by providing arts learning opportunities and exhibition experiences for all. Our goals for arts learning in the 2025–2026 cycle have been carefully developed through community conversations, class surveys, partner collaborations, teacher input, and the deepened insight gained through our merger with Art Link Wyoming. These goals reflect both what we know from experience and what we've heard directly from those we serve.

Our first goal is to increase both the quality and quantity of youth-focused visual arts education in Fremont County. With the integration of Art Link Wyoming into our programming, we are positioned to double the number of students served annually, reaching new and underserved populations, especially homeschool students, rural families, and K–8 students in schools with limited access to formal art instruction. Our aim is to provide more consistent, developmentally appropriate arts education that helps students build creative skills over time. This includes not only hands-on classes in mediums like painting, ceramics, printmaking, and mixed media, but also opportunities to explore artistic thinking, observation, and self-expression in ways that support academic learning, emotional development, and confidence.

Our second goal is to design arts learning experiences that reflect and respect the diversity of our community. We will continue to build partnerships with Native educators, tribal artists, bilingual families, and educators who serve students with disabilities to ensure that our curriculum is inclusive, culturally relevant, and adaptive. As we develop and refine our teaching artist roster and curricula, we intentionally select artists who represent a wide range of identities, artistic disciplines, and teaching styles. Our goal is not only to increase participation among underserved groups but to offer classes and experiences that speak to their lived experiences, cultural heritage, and creative potential.

Third, we aim to cultivate deeper engagement and progression in our programs—not just one-time attendance, but repeat participation that reflects a student’s growing interest and confidence. This includes structuring our classes so that learners can move from beginner to intermediate levels, introducing critique sessions for older youth, creating opportunities for peer mentorship, and showcasing student work in exhibitions that help young artists see themselves as part of a wider creative community. We believe that public recognition of a student’s work can be a powerful motivator and a meaningful part of their growth, which is why we plan to expand our student gallery shows and community events tied to arts learning.

Finally, accessibility remains a foundational part of our arts learning goals. Every class we offer is reviewed with an eye toward physical, linguistic, financial, and sensory inclusion. We reserve scholarship seats in all youth programs, provide bilingual support when possible, and adapt materials or processes for students with disabilities or learning differences. We recognize that learning environments must be adaptable to be truly welcoming, and that effective arts education depends not just on what is taught, but on how every student is made to feel valued.

These goals were identified through years of direct interaction with families, schools, teachers, and students—through post-class surveys, teacher planning sessions, partner feedback, and community forums. They also reflect what we’ve observed in our own classrooms: that creativity blooms where there is access, encouragement, representation, and a sense of belonging. As we step into a new chapter through Creative Horizons 2026, these arts learning goals will guide how we teach, listen, and grow.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Lander Art Center works with a strong and diverse team of teaching artists, certified educators, and community partners to deliver accessible, inclusive, and high-quality arts learning across Fremont County. Our instructors are chosen based on their teaching experience, artistic excellence, cultural competency, and alignment with our mission to provide arts learning opportunities for all.

Paula McCormick (BFA) teaches encaustic wax painting and brings a depth of studio practice grounded in color theory and texture. Jenny Reeves Johnson is a certified educator who has taught art from kindergarten through college since 1977 and brings unmatched experience in foundational and intergenerational learning. Carolina Jaramillo Schadebott is a K–12 educator and ceramicist whose classes in hand-building and wheel-throwing are consistently well-attended by both youth and adults.

Devan Fross (MA, Special Education, Wyoming PTSB certified) is a multimedia artist and printmaker who designs adaptive classes that welcome learners of all abilities. Pamela Sipe, a Wyoming PTSB-certified art educator, contributes extensive classroom experience and knowledge of statewide education standards. Korinne Ryan holds a BFA in Fine Art with an emphasis in sculpture and printmaking and a BA in Art Education K–12; she integrates concept development and technical rigor in youth and teen classes.

Lander Burton (MFA, Bard College; BFA, The Cooper Union) is a painter and mixed media artist whose workshops explore abstraction, memory, and personal expression through process-based learning. Emily Gecosky (BA) leads courses in calligraphy and watercolor, known for her calming and focused teaching approach. Traci Sessions, a mosaic artist, offers tile-based workshops that emphasize color, design, and collaborative community-building. Jocelyn Danna specializes in glasswork and silversmithing, guiding students in the safe and creative use of small tools and materials.

Shannon Wachowski (MA) brings a unique STEAM focus to the team. With a background in chemical engineering and science education, she offers programming that blends scientific thinking with visual expression—perfect for students engaged in cross-disciplinary learning.

All instructors are recruited through local networks, direct outreach, and community recommendations. Each submits a proposal and teaching samples for review by our Education Coordinator and board members. Priority is given to artists who are rooted in our region, reflect the diversity of our community, and demonstrate the ability to adapt instruction across different age groups and learning needs.

We also work closely with partner organizations to support our arts learning goals. Art Link Wyoming, now integrated into our programming, has helped expand our reach into schools, homeschool communities, and rural areas. The Lander Inclusion Movement helps advise on accessibility practices and inclusive curriculum design. Fremont County School District 1 educators provide input on program alignment with Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards and collaborate with us to bring art into the classroom.

Together, this team ensures that the Lander Art Center’s Creative Horizons 2026 initiative is supported by a network of trusted, skilled, and passionate educators who guide learners of all ages through meaningful, creative exploration.

## **Budget Narrative**

The Lander Art Center's budget reflects our commitment to fostering arts in Fremont County through diverse funding and strategic allocation. We blend earned income (classes, art sales, Open Clay Studio), grants,

memberships, and fundraising events to ensure financial resilience. In-kind donations from local businesses and volunteers significantly extend our reach.

Our budget aligns closely with expanded programming, particularly the merger with Art Link Wyoming. Key investments include a new part-time Education Coordinator, increased class offerings, and enhanced accessibility measures. We're maintaining fiscal discipline while growing youth programs and deepening school partnerships.

To ensure long-term sustainability, we're diversifying revenue streams and strengthening community partnerships. This approach allows us to keep classes affordable while expanding scholarship opportunities, ensuring arts remain accessible to all in Fremont County.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LANDER PERFORMING ARTS

LANDERPERFORMINGARTS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Lander Performing Arts 25-26 proposal

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Founded in 1947, Lander Performing Arts (LPA) brings diverse, professional performing arts experiences to Fremont County, ensuring the arts remain affordable, accessible, and immersive for all. Through live performances and outreach programs, we showcase a wide range of artistic expression—including dance, theater, and multiple music genres—to foster cultural appreciation and inspire creativity in our rural, geographically isolated community. LPA believes in the power of the arts to unite people and is committed to building a thriving arts scene for generations to come.

As part of our broader mission, this year we are integrating Art Link Wyoming's legacy performing arts programming into our season. Art Link Wyoming was a small Lander-based nonprofit focused on arts & music outreach for youth; given our shared goals and overlapping missions, LPA is excited to ensure the continuation of these youth programs under our leadership. (Additional details are provided in the project narrative section).

Strategic goals:

**\*Invest in Youth Arts Education & Future Audiences\***

LPA recognizes the need to adapt to shifting demographics and actively engage younger generations to cultivate future artists and arts supporters.

We will:

Successfully integrate Art Link Wyoming's school-based programs to ensure continued youth exposure to live, professional performances.

Add at least two new artist workshops or masterclasses to inspire and engage students in our 25-26 season.

**\*Expand Arts Access & Community Engagement\***

LPA is committed to inclusivity and broadening community participation in the arts.

We will:

Provide free tickets and outreach programs to underserved communities through our Expanding Arts Access program.

Build at least one new program partnership in our 25-26 season.

Strengthen relationships with our current local partners.

Recruit additional LPA volunteers to grow our reach and spread awareness

## **Community**

Lander, WY, is a small, rural town (population ~7,600) nestled in the foothills of the Wind River Range, best known for its strong outdoor recreation culture. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Lander's population is mostly white (81.8%) and American Indian (9.0%), with about 10% of residents living below the poverty line.

Lander's age demographics highlight the need for senior accessibility and especially youth engagement —18% of residents are 65+, while 26.6% are under 18, a rate higher than the national average. The local public school district serves over 1,600 students, yet despite having seven certified visual arts teachers, only four certified teachers cover the entire K-12 music curriculum. This gap makes youth exposure to live performances and arts education more critical than ever. LPA has stepped up by committing to carry forward Art Link WY's legacy youth programs (provided for free & detailed below), keeping student tickets at a very low price of \$5, and expanding our free ticket initiative to include those served by the Department of Family Services.

Lander is also home to Wyoming Life Resource Center (WLRC), Community Entry Services (CES), and the Lander Inclusion Movement (LIC), all of which provide vital support for individuals with disabilities. As part of our commitment to equity and inclusion, LPA actively secures grant funding to provide free tickets to these underserved groups and offers specialized outreach programs whenever possible. Our primary venue, the Lander Valley High School auditorium, is fully ADA-accessible, and we accommodate additional accessibility requests as needed. Through these efforts, LPA is dedicated to ensuring that the performing arts remain welcoming and enriching for everyone in our community.

## **Evaluation**

Quantitative evaluation:

We closely track ticket sales and audience turnout to gauge interest and participation in our season performances. A significant shift from past years is that the majority of our ticket sales now happen online. LPA's website ticketing system is integrated into the CRM Little Green Light, allowing us to monitor attendee retention, identify new donors, and analyze purchasing trends to better understand our audience. Cash & check sales are integrated manually to ensure the data is comprehensive.

To measure the success of our Expanding Arts Access (EAA) free ticket initiative, we label EAA tickets and collect stubs at each performance. This helps us identify which community groups are utilizing the tickets most and whether students or adults are the primary participants. These insights inform our outreach efforts and help ensure our free ticket program is serving its intended audiences effectively.

#### Qualitation evaluation:

We actively gather feedback from attendees after performances and outreach programs through informal discussions, ensuring that community input directly informs our decisions. This feedback is reviewed and discussed at LPA board meetings, where observations are documented in meeting minutes. Community input plays a crucial role in shaping our programming - one key example is the decision to eliminate Sunday performances for the 2025-26 season after receiving feedback that Sunday shows conflicted with religious commitments for many residents. Another example - after a sold-out performance and an overwhelming positive response from attendees, LPA will continue to schedule a holiday show on the same evening as the city's "Light Up Lander" December event.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Lander Performing Arts' budget covers a range of essential costs to ensure the success of our programs and performances.

\$16,500 – Staff: Our part-time Development Director is the backbone of our operations, handling grant writing and reporting, website updates, ticket sales tracking, donor and CRM management, and all marketing efforts, including advertising and social media outreach.

\$4,000 – Marketing: Effective promotion is key to audience engagement. This budget covers digital and print advertising, postage for mass mailers & C4C cards, flyers, posters, and the printing of paper tickets and show programs.

\$1,100 – Website Sales & CRM: We maintain our own domain and use Squarespace for ticket sales via Stripe, along with the Little Green Light CRM to manage donor and audience data.

\$3,200 – Taxes & Insurance: With annual expenditures exceeding \$50,000, we hire an accountant for tax filings and maintain two liability insurance policies, both of which increased in cost this year.

\$1,000 – Performance Space Maintenance: While we are fortunate to use the LVHS auditorium for free, occasional stage modifications and regular professional piano tuning are necessary expenses (and often contract requirements for traveling artists).

\$1,200 – Administrative Costs: This includes our PO Box, QuickBooks subscription, and general office supplies.

\$500 - Board & staff training



\*The following budget items are not traditionally classified as "operating costs", however these are included to help WAC understand our overall yearly expenses. Well over half of our total annual budget is allocated to our season shows plus additional arts programming\*

\$40,000 – Artist Fees, Lodging & Hospitality: Fees vary depending on the artist's reputation, travel distance, group size, and whether we request time for outreach in addition to their main performance. Contracts also require lodging, meals, and other accommodations to support visiting performers. As these costs continue to rise, expanding and diversifying revenue streams is crucial to sustaining LPA's ability to bring high-quality performances to our community.

\$8,000 - Art Link legacy performing arts programs: These are costs that are new to LPA beginning in the spring of 2025; details are included in the following "project narrative" section.

We are respectfully requesting \$10,000 from the Wyoming Arts Council to advance Lander Performing Arts' mission; \$5,000 for operating support and \$5,000 for project support. Operating support funds will help cover the salary of our sole staff member and contribute to our crucial marketing expenses. The project support funds will be allocated as detailed in the next section.

### **Project Support Narrative**

We are requesting funding to support two key initiatives that expand performing arts access and sustain valuable youth programming in our community.

#### **\*\*Expanding Arts Access (EAA)**

Launched last year through dedicated grant funding, our EAA program provides free tickets to underserved community members. This season, we have focused on seniors (through the Senior Center) and individuals with disabilities (through CES, WLRC, and LIC). At our most recent show, Tomáseen Foley's A Celtic Christmas, nearly 67% of allocated free tickets were utilized, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees.

For the 2025-26 season, we plan to extend this initiative to include families served by the Department of Family Services, ensuring more residents can experience live performances without financial barriers. One highlight of the upcoming season will be ARTrageous on September 12, 2025—a high-energy show that blends live music, dance, storytelling, puppetry, and speed-painted visual art. This internationally acclaimed group has performed over 3,000 shows worldwide and is a perfect introduction to live performance for young children and families. As part of their visit, ARTrageous will also provide an interactive in-school assembly at Baldwin Creek Elementary, expanding arts access even further.

To support this effort, we are requesting \$2,500 from WAC to purchase 100 show tickets (\$25 x 100) for our 2025-26 show season, covering 50% of our EAA ticket goal.

#### **\*\*Integration of Art Link Wyoming's (ALW) Legacy Programs**

Through collaboration with ALW and other Lander-based nonprofits, it was determined that transitioning ALW's performing arts programs into LPA would reduce redundancy, maximize resources, and improve long-term sustainability. While the programs were highly valued, maintaining the small nonprofit and retaining board members had become increasingly difficult. To ensure continuity, former ALW director Marnie Fusco, who built strong relationships with local schools, joined LPA last fall.

One of the youth programs now under LPA's umbrella is the Missoula Children's Theatre (MCT) residency, a long-standing community favorite. MCT, the nation's largest touring children's theater, provides two tour directors, costumes, and sets for a week-long musical theater workshop. After open auditions, over sixty K-8 students are cast in the production. LPA remains committed to keeping this program FREE and accessible to all. Over the past two years, participation in the Lander auditions grew by more than 30%, reflecting a renewed enthusiasm for theatre opportunities (none exist in our school district until high school). Additionally, MCT provides daytime in-school workshops, reaching even more students. This year's show, Red Riding Hood, will take place at the LVHS auditorium on September 20, 2025.

LPA is also continuing additional Art Link legacy programs; a couple highlights include:

WYOjazz – In-school jazz performances led by trumpet master and former CWC Professor of Music Kelly Dehnert.

Scout River – A Native drum group featuring performers from the Wind River Reservation and surrounding areas, providing students with an authentic cultural experience.

To help sustain these legacy programs, we are requesting \$2,500 from WAC, which will cover approximately 30% of the total absorbed program costs. The transition of ALW into LPA has resulted in minimal additional operational expenses, allowing us to maximize funding directly for programming.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

Season ticket sales make up a significant portion of LPA's income, though they have yet to return to pre-COVID levels. We actively pursue state and local grants, particularly to support our Expanding Arts Access initiatives, while individual donations and small business sponsorships round out our primary funding sources. LPA also maintains an investment account to help cover fundraising shortfalls, though we strive to limit withdrawals to ensure long-term financial stability.

The Lander school district provides the LVHS auditorium and a stage technician at no cost to us, a major in-kind contribution. Additionally, board members and community volunteers contribute valuable time and skills to support our operations.

A key partnership is with the Lander Community Foundation and their Challenge for Charities fundraiser; this annual event not only helps broaden our donor base but provides an additional 30-60% in matching funds, maximizing our local fundraising efforts.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LANDER PRESENTS INC DBA LANDER PRESENTS

[HTTPS://WWW.LANDERPRESENTS.COM/](https://www.landerpresents.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Lander Presents 2025/2026 Free Summer Concert Series

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Lander Presents is an initiative to bring live music, film, and events to audiences in the foothills of the Win River Range. Past events have drawn nationally recognized music guests to Lander to create a family friendly atmosphere for the entire community to enjoy.

The increasing popularity of community events presents a valuable opportunity to expand programming that engages Lander residents and attracts visitors from across the region. For years, the LP Board has dedicated significant effort to the Free Concert Series, ensuring accessibility for individuals of all socioeconomic backgrounds while bringing diverse musical acts to Lander. This initiative fosters an inclusive, welcoming environment where community members can gather, connect, and celebrate the arts. With a strong commitment to strengthening community bonds, the Board remains focused on creating shared gathering spaces that enhance social cohesion among Lander residents, Fremont County, and regional visitors.

### Community

The Live Concert Series provides a vibrant and inclusive cultural experience for residents and visitors alike. The centrally located stage, originally built by dedicated volunteers, serves as a focal point for live performances, filling the park with music and fostering a sense of connection among attendees. Families enjoying park amenities, such as sports fields and playgrounds, are naturally drawn to the lively atmosphere, further strengthening community engagement.

All concerts are free and open to the public, ensuring accessibility for individuals of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Additionally, each event provides opportunities for food vendors, youth program fundraising booths, and beverage tents, further benefiting the community. Marketing and outreach efforts prioritize inclusivity, ensuring that all residents feel welcome and encouraged to attend. The series is carefully curated to feature diverse musical acts that appeal to a broad audience, and accommodations are available upon request to ensure accessibility for all attendees.

Beyond organizing the Free Concert Series, LP Board members actively collaborate with the City of Lander and other partners to enhance the City Park band shelter. Current efforts focus on updating electrical services and improving stage accessibility through the installation of ramps, ensuring an inclusive experience for musicians and audience members alike. The LP board and the City of Lander staff are available to accommodate access for all attendees to provide a welcome and comfortable experience.

Through these initiatives, Lander Presents remains committed to fostering cultural enrichment, economic growth, and community engagement, ensuring that Lander continues to be a welcoming hub for live music and shared experiences.

### **Evaluation**

The Lander Presents Concert Series is designed to be an inclusive gathering point for all of Fremont County, as well as visitors from across Wyoming and beyond. By securing artists who might not typically include Lander in their tour schedules, Lander Presents complements other community efforts to expand cultural programming. These concerts have grown into popular events, benefiting not only attendees but also local sponsors, vendors, and businesses.

In the upcoming season, Lander Presents anticipates welcoming over 4,000 attendees throughout the summer concert series, with estimated direct economic spending of approximately \$200 per attendee per show within the Lander community. Event impact is measured through attendance tracking and economic assessments, ensuring ongoing growth and community benefit.

In addition to the four concerts in the public series, Lander Presents hosts an annual donor appreciation event, providing an exclusive performance for supporters. This event serves as a way to thank contributors, foster community engagement, and encourage ongoing support, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the concert series.

The community impact of Lander Presents extends beyond live performances. Fundraising through sponsorships and merchandise sales has continued to increase, reinforcing the series as a reliable and valued cultural event. Sponsorship opportunities remain available throughout the year, attracting support from local residents, businesses, and visitors who recognize the importance of sustaining free, high-quality entertainment.

Lander Presents remains committed to strengthening the cultural, economic, and social fabric of Fremont County, ensuring that live music and community gatherings continue to thrive for years to come.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

During the July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 funding period, operating costs will primarily cover compensation for musicians and bands traveling from out of state to perform in the Lander Presents Live Concert Series. To attract high-profile, nationally recognized artists, Lander Presents engages in year-round fundraising efforts to secure the necessary financial resources. While budgets may fluctuate annually, the average cost for hosting four concerts each year is approximately \$80,000.

Lander Presents is operated by a dedicated team of seven volunteers, keeping overhead expenses to a minimum. All requested funds will be directly allocated to concert-related expenses, including artist fees, sound production, and accommodations for traveling musicians. The funding requested in this proposal will specifically support artist compensation for the 2025 Summer Concert Series, ensuring the continued success and accessibility of these free community events.

#### 2025 Summer Concert Series Schedule:

June 19, 2025

July 17, 2025

July 31, 2025

August 14, 2025 (Sponsorship Appreciation Show)

August 15, 2025

Along with funding from the Wyoming Arts Council, Lander Presents generates additional financial support through sponsorships from local businesses, contributions from community members, and fundraising initiatives such as raffles sponsored by Maven Optics. These combined efforts help sustain and grow the concert series, ensuring that Lander residents and visitors continue to enjoy free, high-quality live music each summer.

Finally, Lander Presents continues to expand partnerships with local outdoor recreation and tourism organizations, including mountain biking and climbing clubs, as well as regional tourism groups. These collaborations not only strengthen community engagement but also promote Lander as a destination for both live music and outdoor recreation. By integrating the concert series with the broader cultural and recreational offerings in the region, Lander Presents plays a crucial role in enhancing tourism, supporting local businesses, and fostering a strong sense of community which encourages more funding contributions from the community and businesses.

## **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Concert Series relies on fundraising efforts by board members, along with significant in-kind contributions from volunteers and local businesses. Fundraising efforts include soliciting donations from local community members and businesses, securing sponsorships, and applying for local and state grants.

Significant in-kind contributions are provided through the time and effort of board members and volunteers who make the concert series possible. Board members meet regularly throughout the year to plan the concert series, including securing artists, coordinating logistics, fundraising, and marketing. Event volunteers contribute by setting up and dismantling staging areas for each show and remain on-site late to tear down equipment and restore the venue. Maven Optics donates in-kind marketing and design services, including logo creation, branding, and merchandise design for each concert season.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LARAMIE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

[WWW.LARAMIEARTISTSPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.LARAMIEARTISTSPROJECT.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: LCF)/LAP Touchstone Laramie (TL) 2025 Biennial Art Exhibiton

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Laramie Community Fdtn (LCF) presents LAP is a consortium of visual artists and musicians from Albany County, WY that comes together every two years to form a unique and personal cultural event for Laramie and the region. LAP mission goals include: holding standards for the exhibition that encourage professional development for visual artists (development of personal marketing strategies, maintaining professional exhibit standards, and portfolio development); encouraging public recognition and appreciation of community artists and the value of their work thru art sales and performance attendance; and to promote Laramie as a regional cultural center. The inclusion of musical performance by area musicians in 2023 proved to be very successful. LAP is bringing this feature back in the TL 2025 exhibition to form a celebration of the arts in Albany CO. The venue for TL 2025 has drastically lowered the costs of artists to participate in contrast with prior years' exhibitions, while still providing a free, genial, and professional environment for its visitors. One of the primary purposes of LAP is to create an atmosphere for the sharing of the arts, across the economic and educational spectrums of Albany Co. and to foster public communication with artists, supporting and strengthening the arts in our community.

### Community

As of 2023, Laramie is a South Eastern WY community of 32,152 and is predominantly White (78.6%), Hispanic(11.7%), Asian (4.1%) and Black(1.3%). Of its residents 25 years and older, 96.7% are of high school or higher education, 55.8 %have college or professional degrees. 0.9% are persons over 65. Of those under 65 years of age, 8.3% live with some disability, while 9.3% live without health care insurance. The median income per household is \$52,414 and 22.1 % live in poverty. TS 2025 is an event that is free to the public. The venue is the WY Territorial Prison, a State Historical Site (WYTPSHS). It suspends the normal admission charges (\$9.00) and extends its hours to include after normal close of business and Sunday. LAP will consult with the Eppson Center and the Cooper Center for the arts to best identify transportation opportunities for their respective clients, including seniors and those with physical and cognitive disabilities. The WYTPSHS is an ADA compliant and compatible facility with groomed walkways and paths, ramps (where needed), and an elevator. These features make it possible and convenient for those visitors with physical disabilities to navigate throughout the venue. These features also aid the artists, some of whom are older or may have a disability, transport their artwork, sound equipment, and instruments to and from the TL2025 Exhibition areas of the WYTPSHS, the Gallery and the Horse Barn Theater.

### Evaluation



LCF/LAP reviews all quantitative and qualitative evaluative strategies in planning for the next biennium's exhibitions and events that evidence whether we are successfully addressing our stated goals for the exhibition and our overall mission.

Quantitative strategies:

LCF/LAP Tracks attendance numbers , we track individual and group's sales, we compare address invitee lists with overall attendance, and we track participation by those institutionalized visitors in attendance, (Seniors, and those with disabilities (ex:Cooper Center for the Arts)).

Qualitative strategies:

Artists' feedback through surveys; post event assessment consultations with TS2025 participating artists; interviews with WYTPSHS staff; comments from patrons, collectors, and clients, solicitation of comments from attending public, monitoring the artists' and visitors needs' throughout the event to see how we might make improvements; and we reserve photographic documentation of the event itself.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

WYTPSHS rental: \$1500.00. This includes rental for 20 artists' spaces in the Gallery area and the Horse Barn Theatre (HBT) for the weekend; additionally,

musicians will perform on the stage of the HBT throughout the weekend

Advertising: \$1200.00. This includes multiple digital platforms, radio, print media

Webmaster: \$3000.00. Webmaster continually updates event postings across multiple digital media platforms; provides artist profiles, artistic statements,

CVs for 20 artists, and facilitates artists' postings of instructional videos, personal biographies, etc., by digital media; maintains

a consistent web presence enhancing "brand" characteristics of LAP group.

Cashiers for event: \$1200.00 We employ 3 cashiers in shifts to cover the 3 day event

Insurance for event: \$210.00. We insure the event against liability in accordance with state guidelines for venue.

Website host co.: \$550.00

Printing \$1230.00 Invitations printing , "Save the Date", and posters printing,

Postage. \$500.00

Catering reception

refreshments

throughout: \$5000.00 Paid with private funds and donations

Musicians and

director: \$5000.00. All performing musicians will be paid

PST "Square"

updated

equipment: \$500.00 Our personal Sales Terminal for use in exhibition needs to be replaced.

Misc. office

supplies, \$80.00

packets, \$50.00

Photographer. \$400.00

POBox \$166.00

Acct. Fee \$250.00

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\$20886.00

With this application, LCF/LAP is requesting \$5000.00 to offset the costs to pay for Webmaster contracting, (for website maintenance and maintaining digital advertising platforms, and for the collection and editing of artist-contributed profiles across multiple media platforms);(\$3000); and quality cashiers (\$1200)who have experience in sales and that can guide visitors through LAP artist sales procedures; we would like to apply for assistance with our printing costs (\$640); and for assistance in upgrading our sales terminal, its old and needs to be replaced (\$160).

### **Project Support Narrative**

TL25 is the project of LCF/LAP. In a biennial year, planning for the event begins 10 months prior to the event. All members are required to participate in the planning of TL25 and all are obligated to work on committee assignments, as outlined by leadership. All artist contributed hours after July 1, 2025 are recorded as "in-kind" donations. A steering committee mentors other members, considers issues pertinent to the formation of TL25, and problem solves issues as they occur. All participants are professional artists, ranging in experience from locally known to those with award winning national exhibition records. The current steering committee expertise includes a past museum administrator, past state cultural resources administrator, curators, educators, and award winning artists in a range of media.

Our webmaster, Allison Pluda-John, is an accomplished photographer and web designer. She uses a multifaceted approach when marketing LAP artists by combining multiple platforms and visual media styles to invent creative and flexible solutions. The position of webmaster is critical to our TL efforts. She keeps up with current digital ad trends and is proficient with the latest social media marketing strategies.

TL25 will provide a quality cultural arts experience that is free to the public, encouraging all to engage directly with artists to discuss individual art works and artistic development. In so doing, LAP fosters growth of and support for the arts community in Laramie and Albany Co. Aspiring artists from SE WY are known to attend the exhibit to connect with the exhibiting artists and to share their mutual experiences in creating and making art. LAP presents an exhibition of diverse artwork styles, subjects, and mediums in a one-stop setting. TL25 is presented in the WYTPSHS ground level Gallery and the 2nd floor historic Horse Barn Theater. (HBT) The HBT has proven to be a versatile venue as it contains a small performance stage which allows LAP to present area musicians during the reception and throughout the weekend's exhibition. We first presented the addition of music of Albany Co. musicians and songwriters with our 2020 online only Digital Exhibition. In the 2023 exhibition, we were able to present musicians in live performance on the HBT stage. This was met with very positive reviews from the public. We are planning to present this feature again in 2025.

Importantly, TL25 will be more than just a weekend exhibition and performance venue. Social media provides opportunities leading up to the event for artists to familiarize the viewing public with their art and community

interests through the posting of digital profiles; video demonstrations of artist methodologies; and other work that might not be in TL25, but is available through the artists' own websites. This challenges artists to think critically about how they present themselves and their art forms to the public. We strive to further develop professional artists as well as showcase their work in a comfortable and genial setting.

Artists entry fees help defray some costs of the exhibition. We also seek donations in the community from private individuals and local businesses. We have found that a number of our local businesses gladly support TL every cycle and look forward to attending the gala reception that is complementary with their contribution to our effort. In turn, their support for TL25 is promoted on posters, brochures, and in advertising.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

LCF/LAP maintains a small cash reserve to defray expenses of startup in biennial years. We seek public donations in order to offset any expenses that are not otherwise covered by artist fees, bank account, and grant funds.

LCF/LAP is also applying to the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund for assistance to help us offset the cost of musicians and to help with advertising and printing costs. While we hope to use WAC grant funds to cover the cost of our webmaster and cashiers in this TS2025, we can also anticipate that all costs for this cycle will meet with inflation.

Our artist In-kind donations are based on self declared hours of preparation recorded by each member after FY 25-26 begins, July 1, 2025. These hours are usually in excess of one thousand hours, collectively. Modest hourly labor rates are applied to Steering Committee, Members, and Volunteers.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LARAMIE PLAINS CIVIC CENTER, INC.

[WWW.GRYPHONTHEATRE.ORG](http://WWW.GRYPHONTHEATRE.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Gem City Nights

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Laramie Plains Civic Center (LPCC) is to serve as a community fostering connections, nurturing creativity, and ensuring an enriched future with a vision to cultivate a vibrant and inclusive space for people to gather, connect, and grow.

We strive to preserve the historical integrity of our community and building for future generations while offering safe, comfortable spaces for education, the arts, recreation, business, and nonprofit organizations. Additionally, we are committed to fostering a stronger and more diverse arts community.

LPCC values diversity and seeks to provide space for a wide range of experiences while adhering to community standards and promoting cultural and social engagement. Our events serve as gathering places that enrich the quality of life for both residents and visitors to Laramie and Albany County.

Gem City Nights is an extension of LPCC's mission to enhance the local music and arts scene by providing greater access to artistic experiences. The event helps cultivate a vibrant creative community, making Laramie and Albany County a more attractive destination for artists and performers.

### Community

The LPCC is located in the heart of Laramie, Wyoming—at the crossroads of I-80 and HWY 287, just under 70 miles from the Front Range Urban Corridor—the Laramie Plains Civic Center is a historic institution dedicated to serving the arts and the broader community. Home to the Gryphon Theatre, LPCC engages diverse audiences with live music and artistic experiences across various genres and media.

LPCC is committed to accessibility, offering locally promoted films, theater, dance, and other events at low or no cost to the public. By collaborating with regional and national promoters, we bring nationally touring musicians and artists to Laramie—acts that might otherwise bypass Wyoming—thus expanding cultural opportunities for our community.

Beyond hosting events, LPCC actively partners with local and regional organizations, offering our theater facility, technology, and experienced staff to help bring their events to life. We support these organizations through an open partnership model, which includes a 25% discount for Wyoming-based nonprofits.

LPCC is dedicated to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and family-friendly environment. We prioritize accessibility for people with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and low-income residents. Our facilities comply with ADA accessibility standards, and we continuously evaluate and implement upgrades to ensure inclusivity while preserving the historic character of our building.

## **Evaluation**

To assess the success of Gem City Nights, LPCC will survey audiences, sponsors, and partners to gauge the event's impact on the community. Our goal is to increase local participation in the performing and visual arts, cultivate unique artistic experiences, and enhance cultural engagement.

For the fourth season of Gem City Nights, we aim to:

- Increase event attendance and community engagement.
- Expand sponsorships and business participation.
- Enhance the overall experience through audience feedback and data analysis.

At the conclusion of the season, we will conduct a growth analysis and collect patron feedback to identify opportunities for improvement. We anticipate continued growth in both participation and awareness, aligning with LPCC's broader expansion within the Laramie community.

Data Collection Methods:

- Online surveys for attendees, artists, and sponsors.
- Post-event discussions with local businesses, participants, and partners.
- Collaboration with Laramie Main Street, which will share attendance and vendor sales data from the Downtown Farmers Market, providing a broader understanding of the event's economic impact.

These insights will help LPCC refine future Gem City Nights programming and further support performing and visual arts in the region.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

LPCC is seeking funding for the fifth annual Gem City Nights, a free outdoor live music and visual arts series held in Downtown Laramie.

#### Event Overview:

- Dates: August 8th & August 22nd
- Time: 5:00–9:00 PM
- Location: Grass area south of the Laramie Farmers Market at North Train Depot Park
- Programming: Each night will feature three musical acts from Wyoming and the surrounding region, along with a local live visual artist.
- Vendors: Regional food, beverage, and arts vendors will be hosted alongside the Laramie Main Street Downtown Farmers Market.

#### Budget Breakdown:

- Production costs: \$4,000 per show
- Artist compensation: \$5,000 per show

- LPCC staff support: \$500 per show
- Advertising & promotion: \$1,500 per show
- Total Budget: \$22,000 (including in-kind donations)

Funds from WAC (Wyoming Arts Council) will help support the overall budget, allowing us to expand cultural and musical diversity so that the series appeals to a broad audience. We prioritize hiring Wyoming-based vendors and keeping as much of the event's financial impact within the state. Additional funding comes from local sponsors and volunteers, ensuring the event remains free and accessible to all.

#### Project Oversight:

- Adam Bender – Gryphon Theatre Director (live event production, booking, festival management)
- Jessica Brauer – LPCC Executive Director (event organization, community partnerships)
- Aubree Wallace – LPCC Assistant Director (arts initiatives, visual artists, vendors)

Through Gem City Nights, LPCC aims to:

- Create new opportunities for Wyoming artists to connect with the community.
- Increase awareness of local music and arts, expanding opportunities for Wyoming-based artists beyond state lines.
- Strengthen community involvement, cultural engagement, and economic benefits for Laramie and Albany County.
- Position Laramie as a more attractive destination for national touring artists, enriching local entertainment options.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**



Gem City Nights is made possible through the generous support of local businesses, sponsors, and community partnerships.

Confirmed Supporters:

Pence and Mac Attorneys at Law

Hammontree Real Estate

Bonds Brewing

VDR Foreign Auto Repair

Sweet Melissa's Café

Wyoming Public Radio

BendeRuble Sound LLC

Screaming Goat Productions

Additionally, the event benefits from the support of:

Laramie Plains Civic Center staff & board

Laramie Main Street

City of Laramie

LPCC has a history of securing community support grants from organizations such as:

WAC

WCTF

LPAC

City of Laramie

Black Hills Energy

Rocky Mountain Power

As a self-sustaining organization, LPCC generates revenue through:

Room rentals

Private events hosted at the Gryphon Theatre and other LPCC rental spaces.

Donations and community fundraising efforts.

Our budget aligns with LPCC's mission to provide accessible, community-driven arts programming that enhances the cultural landscape of Laramie and beyond.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LARAMIE PUBLIC ART COALITION

[HTTPS://LARAMIEPUBLICART.ORG](https://laramiepublicart.org)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Capacity Building and Growth for Public Art in Laramie

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of Laramie Public Art Coalition (LPAC) is to cultivate joy, belonging, and curiosity through public art in Albany County. We provide structure and inclusive processes to create successful public art projects reflecting Albany County's identities and values, and contribute to community vitality.

Through a strategic plan process (draft completed February 2025), we have established four strategic goals for the next three years. They are: 1. Organizational growth and capacity - expand LPAC's internal capacity by strengthening the human, financial, and structural resources to achieve its mission; 2. Artistic Development and Resource Expansion - cultivate a sense of belonging and connection among the artist community by providing programs, resources, and opportunities to foster creativity, sustainability, and artistic growth; 3. Community Engagement & Public Art Accessibility - Deepen community involvement in public art by implementing inclusive processes that invite public participation, and ensure that diverse voices, especially those from marginalized communities, are represented in public spaces; 4. Strategic Partnerships & Advocacy- Embrace LPAC's role as a leader in the local and regional arts ecosystem by advocating for public art funding, collaborating with diverse organizations, and serving as the primary hub for public art initiatives in Laramie.

Central to our mission is the recognition and celebration of artists and their contributions. We deeply value talent, passion, and dedication of artists, and we are committed to providing financial support and professional development opportunities. Artists are always paid fairly for their ideas. We lead the way in artist compensation in our community. On a national level, for a city of our size, Laramie is becoming a leader in artist growth and economic viability. At LPAC, we are dedicated to fostering a vibrant community where people of all ages have the opportunity to participate, create, and thrive.

### Community

Laramie, Wyoming has a population of over 32,000 residents, some of whom have called the area home for generations, and some stay for a shorter time (we are home to the University of Wyoming and Wyoming Technical Institute). The median household income is just over \$52,000, which is approximately \$28,000 less than the national average. According to the City of Laramie, we have some of the highest rent costs and lowest incomes in

the state. We have a high percentage of food insecurity, and many organizations provide sliding scale fees and/or basic needs support, including LPAC. Albany county reports 12% of its residents are Hispanic or Latino. We believe any person who is part of this place deserves a voice in their public space, access, and more so, the connection that comes with the transformational power of community engaged public art. Our listening and engagement processes allow us to co-create with many.

Our work, we constantly make improvements to how we can include more voices. Our recent Request for Qualifications (RFQs) have been translated into multiple languages, and we share those calls with partner organizations across the state, region, and nationally. Written literature is printed bilingually and hung or displayed at ADA appropriate heights. We offer workshops with a small registration fee but are provided at no- or low-cost if requested. We redirect these fees to host additional free workshops with various community partners. We pay the local artist who leads the program fairly for their time. Given our small size, we can also respond to most accommodation requests with relative ease, including sensory friendly kits, variable height tables, microphones for speaking/amplifying, printed materials upon request, captions for online webinars, and more.

## **Evaluation**

LPAC utilizes both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods. Quantitative measures include number of attendees for workshops, public openings or events, and community forums; the number of artists paid annually; economic impact via dollars contributed to the local economy (primarily fair wages for artists); as well as artist and participant demographics. We recently implemented software for a fundraising platform that indicates information about individual giving, aiding in long-range funding plans.

Some of our qualitative measures include digital surveys, observation by trained staff and/or teaching artists, and anecdotal information collected through dialogue with and by staff, board, volunteers, and community. After workshops and public programs, LPAC collects written feedback via digital surveys emailed to participants. We ask questions like - What new skill or idea did you learn? Did you discover a new community resource or venue? How do you feel more connected to the arts and community in Laramie? What did you love? What could we do differently? This information is used to tailor future workshop offerings and public engagement processes.

Last year, after feedback from many passionate constituents, we implemented a selection committee open application process to expand who is involved with public art selection; previously, selection committee members have been hand selected internally. This new approach has increased and diversified our community connections. We also held a community forum where artist-finalists for the Rotating Sculpture program gave formal presentations prior to final selection. Audience members provided input to the process. We are eager to make adjustments to how we work, especially when it better serves our community.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

In January 2025, LPAC moved into a new office located in the historic Laramie Plains Civic Center. Previously, we partnered and shared office space with local organizations, used co-working spaces, or worked from in-kind

community spaces (and occasionally from personal homes). This new space will allow us to host more workshops and expand our offerings. It also comes with additional cost for rent and utilities that were previously in-kind contributions through shared or donated space. The Civic Center has generously offered this space at a non-profit discounted rate. Furnishing the space is an on-going process. We were able to purchase minimal fixtures (such as adjustable height tables) and use recycled or donated materials. We plan to continue to build out the space to provide more comfort and function during the coming fiscal year. This will likely include various forms of technology, including printer, projector, and other A/V needs. Remainder costs include marketing and development, such as printing costs, website design and hosting, and marketing.

Majority of operating costs are dedicated to administrative staff. Over the years LPAC has grown from a volunteer coalition, to one .5FTE (full time equivalent) position, to what it is today. Now, we are an organization of one FTE (executive director), one (0.5) FTE (a community engagement manager), and 2 temporary (0.25) FTE positions (part of the artist team for High Iron), as well as contract teaching artists, and a volunteer board of 9 current members. Last year, we increased the compensation packages for the 1.5 permanent employees to include a retirement offering with 3% matching funds from the organization, as well as a small increase in general salary for both employees. It should be mentioned we are in the process of hiring a new executive director via a national search. Currently the board chair and members are stepping up for basic operations and programs while we look for an interim director and prepare for the search. Doing a comprehensive search takes time and funding, as well as community and stakeholder support. While our small organization isn't able to offer a comprehensive health care package, we do plan to offer the new executive director a health care stipend and technology stipend as an alternative to a full benefits package. The salary range is generous compared to state-wide non-profits, and competitive for regional arts organizations with similar positions. Still, we see a challenge with finding affordable housing for the new director and working to strategize and entice the hiring process. We also provide professional development for staff.

Additional overhead costs include working with a CPA firm, who support filing the obligatory Secretary of State forms and tax information. A new board member has increased skill and knowledge of Quickbooks (QB). We plan to pay for an upgraded QB plan to better integrate daily operational tasks and financial management. We use bill.com to track and manage expenses in order to provide accurate and detailed information for grant reports. We are also looking at investing in a system to better manage our registration, donors, and constituents all in one place. This is currently in the research phase, but may incur an additional cost for the next fiscal year (and years to come). Our board holds an annual retreat, often hiring a consultant or facilitator for guidance. We also pay for the required board and liability insurance.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Wyoming Arts Council funding will support the following projects and programs: Third Street Gateway Project, High Iron Monument Project, the spring and fall workshop programs, and the Optimist Park Art Shed (see Arts Learning for more information on the last two).

Beginning 2025, the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WyDOT) will overhaul traffic and pedestrian features on Third Street/Hwy287, Laramie's main (and unsightly) gateway. Laramie Main Street and the City of Laramie

partnered on a community-driven vision for this corridor. The 2016 City plan, “3,2,1...Third Street,” cited the need for public art. Gateways are also highlighted in the 2014 Laramie Public Art Plan: “The gateways to Laramie are cited most often as places in need of transformation. They are the first and last impression of Laramie for residents and visitors. The need to transform the gateways is not a new desire; it was identified in the City of Laramie’s 2007 Comprehensive Plan...and is included in the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Public art alone cannot address the issue, but (we) can spearhead the effort, or work in tandem with other entities.”

This multi-year project has moved into action as of late FY25, but will continue into FY26 for the public art portions, with anticipated completion in early FY27. The selection committee includes an LPAC board member; Derek Teini, assistant project manager and City of Laramie Planning Office; Kory Cramer, a WyDOT engineer and project manager; Jennifer Power, a local artist representing Laramie Main Street; Kai Edwards artist from the Youth Justice Initiative; a community member from the LPAC selection pool, and 3rd street business owners. One artist or artist team will be selected to work with the Laramie multi-agency team. Once contracted, anticipated dates are: Conceptual design artist visit - Early July 2025; Final design due - End of August 2025; Fabrication throughout 2025/2026; Installation - Late summer/early fall 2026. Additional engagement will include small scale art-making workshops related to the selected artist and project, which will be provided by local teaching artists and LPAC's Community Engagement manager.

The second large project is also multi-year. High Iron is a traveling public art and oral history project that unearths hidden stories of immigrant rail labor, through personal stories gathered from descendants of rail labor in our community, as well as artwork focused on the history of the transcontinental railroad in Laramie. It was completed and opened in fall 2024 through the Monument Lab's Re:Generation. This modified rail car is currently sited at City of Laramie's former Public Works facility. While it has been dormant during cold months, continued engagement and story collection is planned for early FY26 in Laramie. The project will move then begin its tour around the state, starting in Cheyenne, and a partnership with the Cheyenne Depot Museum. The High Iron team includes artists Aubrey Edwards and Conor Mullen and LPAC ED Laura McDermit who is continuing on the project after her transition. In Laramie, six additional artists contributed to the boxcar: Michael Chavez, Anjel Garcia, Eirini Linardaki, Amanda Pittman, Karen Vaughan, and John Wilhelm. Each artwork explores a personal connection to labor or is informed by the communities and land impacted by the rail.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Two on-going programs are part of LPAC's community-focused arts learning: Spring and Fall Workshop Series, and the Optimist Park Art Shed.

For the last two years, Laramie Public Art Coalition (LPAC) has been a valued resource for fostering creativity and community connection through our artist-led workshop series. The Artist-led Workshop Series happens annual in spring and fall, with 3 - 4 monthly workshops hosted at the LPAC office/studio space (October - December and then again March - May, for approximately 25 total workshops). Our Community Engagement Manager works diligently to partner, plan, and support local artists-- some are veteran teaching artists and some have never taught a public workshop. LPAC supports artists with workshop themes, objectives, and scope/sequence. Most workshops are single day, but based on participant and artist feedback, we are expanding to offer multi-session

sequential workshops. Past examples include a multi-session broad side poster printing workshop with Jim Jereb, a single day oil painting workshop with Linda Lillegraven, and paper sculpture with UW Art Faculty Ashley Hope Carlisle. Each workshop is designed for learners of all ages, but most often adults outside of the school settings, to increase or be exposed to new media, increase skills, build community connections, and increase their sense of belonging.

The Optimist Park Art Shed was established in 2024 with support from the Albany County Recreation Board, Skate Laramie (a local wheel-sport non-profit), and LPAC. We manage a free drop-in art making activity on a bi-weekly basis in the summer months. These activities are led by local artists and have been topics and media such as copper etching, cyanotype printing, and embroidery. We often see youth and their families engaging for hours at a time on a warm summer day. Optimist Park is located on the west side of Laramie, which is a historic neighborhood comprised of mixed heritage and predominantly a low-socio economic population. It is important to offer these workshops for free, but the learning has immense value.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

While many of our workshops could be called standards-based we also believe the learning goals are more broad and encompassing. The goals of the workshops include:

- teaching/learning specific skills and techniques
- developing aesthetic awareness
- provide new ways of understanding the world around us, including community, civic and social engagement
- provide avenues for self expression and increased well-being

Additionally, each workshop has specific goals outlined through co-creation with our Community Engagement Manager and each teaching artist.

These workshops also often meet three or four National Core Art Standards (and Wyoming State Fine and Performing Arts Standards), providing out of school instruction during for young people and their families, as well as adult learners during the spring and fall. Those standards include create, present, reflect or respond, and connect. This include generating original artwork through creation, hosting mini-critiques at the end of each workshop, and discussions related to social, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The primary lead for arts learning is our Community Engagement Manager, Olivia Ewing. Ewing is a Laramie-based artist who works in mixed media and was the recent winner of the "Spirit of Wyoming" competition and will be featured on the Jackson Hole Still Works Vodka label in the next year. She completed a mural, her first public artwork, in the Medicine Bow National Forest during summer 2023. She has been the Community Engagement

Manager for LPAC since November 2023. She plans the artist-led workshops and will continue this work for the Art Shed in Optimist Park.

We often partner with trained teaching artists from the University of Wyoming Art Museum, Albany County School District Art Teachers, and arts from the community. Our board co-chair, Katie Christensen, is the former Arts Education Specialist for the Wyoming Arts Council, Curator of Education at the University of Wyoming Art Museum, and former Art Educator of the Year. She is supporting the workshop series as a consultant and volunteer support.

Workshop artists are being contacted and selected in the coming months for the fall and spring series. Often if a local artist is not the recipient of a public art project (large or small) we invite them to pitch a workshop. This has been a great way of vetting artist, and continuing to build strong community connections and capacity.

### **Budget Narrative**

LPAC receives funding from many sources including local, state, federal agencies, such as the NEA, Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund (WCTF), and Albany County Partnership Grants, as well as individual giving, and corporate sponsorships like Union Pacific. We have a partnership agreement/MOU with the City of Laramie and receive an hourly fee for service for administrative support for select initiatives. A three-year grant from WCTF has supported the part-time Community Engagement Manager, matched by funding from the City and the County Community Partner Funds. In-kind contributions include volunteer hours by board and community members, discounted rent, and donated materials. Our restricted funds support the creation of art in public space and paying artists fairly for their work. As stated above, we will pay artists over \$130,000 in FY25, a three fold increase from previous years, supporting workshops, making sculptures, painting murals, and large- and small-scale public art projects.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LOBBAN STREET MUSIC

[WWW.LOBBANSTREETMUSIC.ORG](http://WWW.LOBBANSTREETMUSIC.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: FY 2026 Saturdays in the Square/ Lobban Street Music Matching Grant

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

Lobban Street Music, established in 2019, is dedicated to bringing free live music experiences to Buffalo, Wyoming, with the goal of enhancing the quality of life for Johnson County residents, supporting local and touring musicians, and contributing to the vibrancy of the local economy. Our flagship program, Saturdays in the Square, was launched in 2018 as a free summer concert series and is held in Crazy Woman Square in downtown Buffalo. This community-driven initiative has become an anticipated event and a welcoming space where residents and visitors alike can enjoy live music and culture in a family-friendly, accessible setting.

Through this grant, Lobban Street Music aims to expand and sustain Saturdays in the Square, ensuring it remains a free, high-quality event that enriches the community and fosters economic growth. Our strategic goals include:

- Ensuring accessibility by keeping all concerts free to eliminate financial barriers for attendees.
- Expanding and diversifying the genres and artists featured, bringing new and exciting acts to Buffalo each year.
- Encouraging community connection for people of all ages by providing events that attract multi-generational attendees.
- Boosting the local economy by attracting visitors who support Buffalo's businesses, restaurants, and hotels.
- Supporting musicians by providing paid performance opportunities and fostering connections with state-wide and nationally touring artists.

With funding, we will continue to celebrate the power of live music, strengthen Buffalo's cultural offerings, and create a lasting impact on the community.

### **Community**



Lobban Street Music serves Johnson County, Wyoming, a rural community of 8,906 residents. Buffalo, the county seat, and Kaycee are the only incorporated towns. With 28.3% of residents aged 65 or older, 730 veterans, and 10.9% living in poverty, access to live music and cultural experiences is limited. The economy relies on ranching, tourism, and small businesses, but rural isolation creates barriers to arts participation.

Founded in 2019, Lobban Street Music provides free, high-quality live music to address this need. Our flagship program, Saturdays in the Square, launched in 2018, is a free summer concert series in Crazy Woman Square, downtown Buffalo. It ensures that all residents, regardless of income or ability, can enjoy live music. Centrally located, the venue is within walking distance for many and accessible via the Buffalo Area Transit System (BATS), removing barriers to attendance.

We remain committed to inclusivity, ensuring that people with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and low-income residents can fully participate. All events remain free, eliminating financial barriers, and partnerships with local vendors provide affordable food options. We use flyers, social media, radio, partnerships with senior centers, veterans' groups, small businesses, and schools to engage the community.

Our programming highlights underrepresented musicians, alongside well known acts further enriching the cultural experience. Crazy Woman Square is wheelchair accessible, with ADA-compliant restrooms and designated seating. Accommodation requests can be made via our website, social media, or phone.

With grant support, we will expand Saturdays in the Square, strengthening Buffalo's cultural vibrancy through free, inclusive live music that fosters community connections.

## **Evaluation**

We use a multifaceted approach to evaluate and measure the impact of our events on the community. Attendance remains the primary indicator of success, and we have seen steady exponential growth since inception in 2018. In the first years on the series attendance varied from 50-150 attendees, the last two seasons we have seen consistent crowds over 300 attendees and several concerts over 500, with the largest attended show occurring last August with over 700 attendees. we continue to have patrons visit from surrounding communities of Sheridan, Casper, Gillette, Billings, Black Hills, SD, and from far reaches of Wyoming. We track trends over time considering external factors such as weather, competing events, and the musician lineups of our shows.

We have also used a number of different surveys in the past, which provides valuable insights including surveys via Survey Monkey, surveys passed around the events, and speaking with attendees personally. Local downtown businesses also continue report an uptick in sales from during Saturdays in the Square events.

We also measure success through sponsor retention and engagement. Since our inception, we have partnered with over 35 local businesses, with 20 providing multi-year support and 15 contributing for more than three years. Sponsor feedback helps shape our growth, ensuring we align with community needs. Additionally, we analyze social media engagement, audience demographics, and feedback to refine programming and enhance our impact. By continuously adapting based on data and community input, we strive to maximize the reach and benefits of our events.

We are exploring more options in this panning year, in order to gain a more accurate account of the impact of the events.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

We are requesting matching funding for two events this summer, July 21, 2025 and August 23, 2025, and our first concert of the 2026 series which will occur June 13 or 20, 2026. Concerts are held from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Crazy Woman Square stage in downtown Buffalo, WY. The following bands have been booked for the 2025 summer series.

The July show features Lily Henley from Nashville, TN and Jalan Crossland from Ten Sleep, WY.

Lily Henley, s an award-winning folk singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist who set out to make an album of Sephardic Jewish ballads set to new melodies, she was looking for her own way to interpret a critically endangered tradition. Henley highlights the Ladino language, a threatened tongue that fuses old Spanish with Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, and Persian elements spoken by less than 100,000 people in the world today. Henley is a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright award and was an Artist-in-Residence at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Caramoor American Roots Festival, and the New York Sephardic Music Festival.

Jalan Crossland is a renowned singer-songwriter and virtuoso guitarist from Ten Sleep, Wyoming, known for his masterful fingerpicking, clawhammer banjo playing, and vivid storytelling through music. A recipient of the Wyoming Governor's Arts Award, he is widely recognized as one of the region's most talented and authentic musical voices.

The July show features Wes Urbaniak from Billings, MT, Prairie Wildfire from Buffalo, WY, and North Fork Crossing from Bozeman, MT.

Wes Urbaniak is a singer-songwriter and innovative luthier from Billings, Montana, known for his unique blend of folk, indie, and experimental acoustic music. His intricate guitar work, poetic lyrics, and distinctive percussive playing style set him apart as a dynamic performer. With a deep connection to storytelling and a passion for creative expression, he has cultivated a loyal following across the Northwest, captivating audiences with his raw, heartfelt performances and boundary-pushing artistry.

Prairie Wildfire is a dynamic bluegrass and Americana trio from Buffalo, Wyoming, known for their tight harmonies, skilled instrumentation, and heartfelt songwriting. Though they have disbanded to pursue individual paths, Prairie Wildfire is reuniting in their hometown perform together once again.

Founded in 2021, North Fork Crossing has quickly made its presence known all around Montana, most notably in the beautiful Gallatin Valley where they live. The quintet, Cade Slayden (guitar), Ryan Kelly (mandolin), Rabi Phelan (upright bass), Silas Rea (fiddle), and Matt Hickey (banjo) are drawn to having Bluegrass reach a younger generation, priding themselves on their unique sound as the evolution of string band music.

Lobban Street Music's project costs for these three events are \$24,000, which includes all artist fees, sound engineering, and lighting. The Buffalo Chamber of Commerce provides the venue free of charge. Local sponsors have already pledged \$11,000. According to our projections, we anticipate receiving approximately \$15,000 in support in addition to the WCA grant, if received.

The requested \$10,000 in project funds from WCA will be used to match our current sponsor pledges to double their impact. Any additional funds raised above the amount we need for these three events will go toward marketing as well as project costs for subsequent seasons.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Lobban Street Music is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization run entirely by volunteers. We are supported through a combination of grants, sponsorships, individual donations, and fundraising events. With your support, we have been able to keep Saturdays in the Square events free for our community.

We have received a Tourism Promotion Grant from the Johnson County Tourism Association (JCTA) for the past five years. These funds are used to expand marketing efforts to grow the series, and bring in visitors to Buffalo. This partnership illustrates the positive impact of our events on the local tourism economy.

In addition to the generous support from the Wyoming Arts Council, over 40 businesses have sponsored us since our inception. They represent many different industries, including banking, real estate, health care, construction, and more. This broad support indicates widespread recognition of our event's positive economic and social impact within the community.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

LOUISA SWAIN FOUNDATION

[HTTPS://WYOMINGWOMENSHISTORYHOUSE.ORG](https://wyomingwomenshistoryhouse.org)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Women in Wyoming Exhibit at the Wyoming Women's History House

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Louisa Swain Foundation (LSF) is dedicated to preserving and celebrating the history of the world's first democratically cast electoral ballot by a woman, Louisa Swain, on September 6, 1870, in the state of Wyoming. LSF is dedicated to fostering education in the areas of democracy, human rights and suffrage and seeks recognize those who, through their actions or accomplishments, display the qualities of community, courage and strength of character. LSF operates the Wyoming Women's History House in historic downtown Laramie, Wyoming.

The LSF was established in 2001. In the early 2000's, the current downtown property was donated to the LSF. Until recently, the history house was operated on a small budget and open during the summer months. In 2022, the LSF expanded operations and partnerships. The facility is open to the public six days a week for the months of March – December. Programming was enhanced to bring in tourists exploring the downtown and local residents into the space and partnerships were rebuilt with community collaborators.

At a national level, the LSF is working with the Smithsonian on the development of the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum through collaboration with the Wyoming chapter of Making History Network. The chapter is made of leaders from across the state and will ensure Wyoming has a presence in the new Smithsonian Museum.

### Strategic Goals:

1. Recognize Wyoming women from the notable firsts to achievements of present-day
2. Engage our local and statewide community in conversations about Wyoming women
3. Encourage leadership development, civic engagement and service to community
4. Support new research connected to civic participation and issues related to women

#### Programs:

- Classroom Visits and School Group Tours
- Monthly Sip and Savor History nights
- Historical Recognition Events
- Engaging Youth in Scholarship
- Collaboration with Local Women's Groups
- Louisa Swain Foundation Enrichment Scholarship

### **Community**

Located in the southwest corner of the state, Laramie, Wyoming is the county seat for Albany County. Native American peoples inhabited and visited the lands encompassed within Wyoming for centuries prior to the founding of the Laramie, including the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Crow, Lakota, Shoshone and Ute, on whose land we stand today.

According to the 2024 Census data, Laramie has a population of 31,407. The population was reported to be 84% white, 12% Hispanic, 4% Asian, 1% Native American or Alaska Native and 1% Black (note 7% identified in two or more racial categories). Laramie's population is 11% over 65 years old, 14% under 18 years old and 75% between the ages of 19 – 64. Available data notes 4.7% of populations reported as veterans living in Laramie.

With 22% of households living at or below the poverty line, Albany County has the highest rate of poverty in Wyoming. Laramie has a robust network of social services and support programs that work together to meet the needs of the community. Over 9% of people in Laramie live without health insurance and 8% of persons under 65 report having a disability of some kind. Laramie has an active senior center, the Epson Center. Ark Regional Services and other local organizations provide strong support for individuals with developmental disabilities. Laramie also has an established public transit system that runs from the downtown area to the east end of town.

Laramie is home to two public higher education institutions – the University of Wyoming, and the Albany County Campus of Laramie County Community College. The Albany County School District #1 operates the schools in Laramie, Harmony, Rock River and Centennial. The local tourism board, Visit Laramie, notes Albany had 1 million visitors in 2023.

### **Evaluation**

The Louisa Swain Foundation (LSF) conducts evaluation in a number of ways: guest count, event attendance, comment cards, docent interactions, event feedback forms, social media and website metrics as well as social

media and website comments. The staff and docents engage regularly with partners to determine needs and how best to adapt our collaborations.

Many of the above measurements help us understand how our presence and engagement with the community has been impactful. In the last three years our visitor numbers have soared (up from roughly 500 per summer) and our number partnership events has increased. We have gotten positive feedback from our engagement with schools, the local senior center and various community organizations focused on supporting those in need. Our most ardent supporters have been the Laramie Main Street Alliance and the downtown businesses who have noticed the increased traffic since our decision to revitalize the space, recruit and retain interactive docents, hold regular special events, and remain open ten months a year. Feedback has helped inform program, such as the creation of our Sip and Savor History Night monthly events or our recent work with local students age 13- 18 to engage you in research and scholarship connected to Wyoming.

For the proposed exhibit project, the following evaluation metrics will be used: visitor count, event counts, comment cards, level of participation in engagement components of the exhibit (like postcards or comments added to the board), social media engagement, number of school visits, engagement counts from artist in residence and feedback from the artists, faculty and teacher we work with throughout the process.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

This exhibition would allow LSF to have a wider audience in the community and signal our commitment to the achievements of the present-day Wyoming women. With 1,800 sq feet, the Wyoming Women's History House cannot accommodate the exhibit. We have identified a vacant business location which could be the ideal space and is currently available, directly across the street with 3,000 sq feet of open space. The property owners want to support the project. The current rental cost is \$2600 per month and is available for a 6-month lease.

The Women in Wyoming Project is programming appropriate for all ages and will be open to the public. The mission of Women in Wyoming is to tell the inspiring stories of contemporary Wyoming women through art and media, celebrating their achievements, power, and learned wisdom. A celebration of Wyoming's inspiring and impactful women, the exhibit is an immersive experience that showcases the modern-day strength and spirit of Wyoming women and girls. The exhibit features 27 large-scale portraits, an audio soundscape incorporating natural sounds captured on location to snippets of the podcast interview episodes, as well as interactive storytelling components which prompt the audience to tell stories about inspiring women in their own lives. (<https://womeninwyoming.com>)

The project came to the UW Art Museum in September 2020 during the height of the COVID pandemic restrictions and deserves a fresh start in our community with a chance to be showcased to all visitors to the region.

Artist Lindsey Linton Buk is multimedia artist who works with photography and various technologies to create “art with an impact.” Her resume has been included with the grant application to give a full sense of her work and history.

Typical outreach efforts include: list serve emails, advertisement, website, social media, and newsletters. Primarily programming is promoted through direct outreach to collaboration partners to encourage a collaboration. For the proposed project, we will work directly with the following organizations with local schools, homeschooled families, fine arts faculty of both higher education institutions, student organizations, senior center, local tourism office, Downtown Farmer’s Market, local arts organizations, Laramie Main Street Alliance and downtown businesses

One of the most appealing aspects of the exhibit in our project proposal is the way in represents women from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. In our recent years, LSF has focused on connecting with communities that have not traditionally visited our facility. These new efforts have allowed us to access audiences that do not know the history of these Wyoming events and the women connected to them.

Both the Wyoming Women’s History House and the identified location for the exhibit has accessible main entrance, one floor with no ramps or stairs and accessible bathrooms. The exhibits – in the house and for this project - are intentionally designed to have large print and are installed the ADA recommended height for signage. Docents engage with all visitors and can respond to any additional accommodation requests.

Project timeline:

July 1 – begin development of curriculum, outreach to local schools, etc.

July 15 –work prep rental space

July 13 – exhibit closes at Brinton Museum

August 1 – Exhibit installation

August 15 – December 15 – Exhibit open to the public six days

December 15 – tear down of exhibit

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Each location hosting this experience has developed a way to invite visitors to make deeper connections with the exhibit. One location invited participants to post-it notes about women who have been mentors to them. Another location invites participants to write a postcard to an important woman in their life and mails them for the visitor.



The Wyoming Women's History House is excited to create interactive elements as way to help visitors process their experience with the exhibit and tie the present-day women in the exhibit to the many visionary women of Wyoming's past.

As exhibit artist, Lindsay Linton Buk says, "As our world grows more fragmented, the exhibit serves as a powerful space for connection—bringing people together through shared experiences and storytelling. The exhibit is more than just a display of photographs; it is an evolving, living tribute to the women who have shaped Wyoming and beyond. With every new venue, it continues to grow—not just in physical space, but in the stories it carries and the connections it fosters."

LSF will work with the history educator currently running the youth scholarship work for the Smithsonian to identify an arts instructor. For a stipend, the two educators will build curriculum with distinct lesson plans for various age groups to engage with the exhibit that aligns with Wyoming State Standards for social studies and art. The goal is to develop pieces for teachers to utilize with students. The curriculum related to the art standards could be used in other Wyoming locations that host the event in the future.

The exhibit artist has agreed to spending time in the community as an "artist in residence" to connect with local schools and higher education students and faculty. The goal of the artist in residence time is to provide youth and college students the opportunity to learn directly with the artist. Beyond these unique opportunities for students, there will also be a public artist talk event for the community to engage as well as an opening reception. LSF would also hope to host a panel discussion with many of the women featured in the exhibit.

Finally, the project provides the opportunity to engage with local artists and arts organizations. LSF envisions connecting with artists (for example: photographer, painters, writers) to host art workshops in the exhibit space and has budgeted a stipend for the artists. LSF would ensure all events were offered to a variety of community constituents with a focus on underserved populations.

Accommodation requests into this project specific budget through the consideration of an accessible space, building materials and placement for temporary additions to the space, signage and print materials. The curriculum and lesson plans created will also work to ensure we are considering activities, manipulative and supplies that are accessible.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

After reviewing the state standards for art and social studies and in consultation with the exhibit artist, the following key learning outcomes were identified. These outcomes will be adjusted to fit appropriate for age and audience as the lesson plans and workshop are built and tied to the larger curriculum map.

Visitors will engage with the art on display and make connections to the women in their own lives.

Visitors will reflect on how the images shared in the exhibit are a form of storytelling.

Visitors will compare and contrast the present-day women of the exhibit to the visionary women of Wyoming's past.

Visitors will appraise the images to identify elements of composition, color and other ways the artist made intention choices with the piece.

Visitors will generate their own ideas about what makes Wyoming women unique.

Visitors will analyze the exhibit and each piece to determine what message the artist is conveying.

Given the variety of experiences noted above, LSF envisions interactive elements that remain on display for visitors of all ages to engage with as well as lesson plans developed that are tied to state art and history standards that provide lessons for before, during and after the experience with the exhibit.

These opportunities would tie to art standards related to:

- 1) organizing and developing artistic work and ideas
- 2) refining and conceptualizing the art making process
- 3) analyzing and interpreting artistic work
- 4) interpreting the intent and meaning of artistic work
- 5) relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding
- 6) synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

The exhibit would relate to social studies curricular concepts tied to the following ideas:

- 1) Learning how to apply civic ideals as part of citizen action is essential to the exercise of democratic freedoms and the pursuit of the common good.
- 2) Personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual's own culture throughout her or his development.
- 3) The study of people, places, and environments enables us to understand the relationship between human populations and the physical world.
- 4) Knowledge and understanding of the past enable us to analyze the causes and consequences of events and developments, and to place these in the context of the institutions, values and beliefs of the periods in which they took place.

5) Studying the past makes it possible for us to understand the human story across time.

6) Human beings create, learn, share, and adapt to culture, but cultures are dynamic and change over time.

LSF would have assessment of learning built into the lesson plans developed. Further, after engagement with programs, K-12 students would fill out an exit ticket style survey. Event surveys for older student engagement can also help us determine if the learning outcomes of each engagement have been met.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Lindsay Linton Buk is the exhibiting artist. The highlights of her resume include:

#### Education:

NORTHWEST COLLEGE, AAS PHOTOGRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS, 2010

4.0 GPA, Dean's list, WINNER, "Best Portrait" and "Best in Show" at the annual student showcases. Produced "Been Here for Generations," a documentary project featuring generational farming families in Powell, Wyoming through environmental portraiture and written narrative.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE, BA HISTORY, MINOR GEOGRAPHY, 2007

Thesis: "Intertribalism and the Alcatraz Take-over: Catalyst for a decade of American Indian Activism." D1 Alpine Ski Team; Riddim World Dance Troup Co-Director and Choreographer.

#### Experience:

WOMEN IN WYOMING, June 2016 to present

DIRECTOR, PHOTOGRAPHER, PODCAST HOST, KEYNOTE SPEAKER & FACILITATOR

Director, photographer, and podcast host of Women in Wyoming, a documentary art and media project using photography, podcast interviews, and a traveling exhibition to celebrate inspiring and influential women and girls in Wyoming.

CO-FOUNDER, THE BRIO COLLECTIVE

Leadership Wyoming, 2022 to present

An 8-week transformational program (in-person and remote) for Wyoming

women leaders alongside Mandy Fabel, ED of Leadership Wyoming and Brio co-founder.

#### PHOTOGRAPHER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Commercial, editorial, and portrait photographer based in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, producing high-end photo shoots for clients in Jackson and around the country.

#### PHOTOGRAPHY INSTRUCTOR CANON,

“Photography in the Parks,” May 2012 to September 2012

Photography instructor for “Photography in the Parks,” a summer workshop series sponsored by Canon providing free photography and video lessons to the general public in Grand Canyon, Zion, Yellowstone/Grand Teton, Rocky Mountain, and Acadia National Parks. Instructor to beginning through advanced photographers.

#### STUDIO MANAGER & ASSOCIATE PHOTOGRAPHER

PETER HURLEY STUDIO, January 2011 to May 2012

Studio manager to internationally acclaimed headshot/portrait photographer, educator, and entrepreneur, Peter Hurley. Responsible for managing all aspects of Peter’s studio, from client relations to acting as Peter’s associate photographer in New York City.

LSF works with various local history educators who can support the curriculum though no one specific has been approached yet with this request. There are several active arts educators who could support this curriculum development, but again no one specific has been approached.

Laramie has several photography, printmakers, painters, writers and musicians who could be approached to host a workshop connected to the exhibit. LSF would be excited to work with local arts organizations to share information about the opportunity to get interest from a larger range of local artists.

### **Budget Narrative**

The primary source of revenue for the organization is sponsorships, donors and visitor donations. Regular grants from the Guthrie Foundation and Wyoming Women's Council in the past three years. The project budget total goes beyond the grant request and matching funds. The LSF board has identified donors interested in supporting an expansion of our programming who would provide the matching dollars. The project costs include the exhibit fee,

rent for a space to house the exhibit nearby, utilities, shipping and installation costs, marketing and event costs for opening reception, artist talk and artist workshops and artist-in residence events.

The Art Learning Support request includes stipends for curriculum creation with local educators, stipends to work with local artists, money to facilitate bringing students to the exhibit from surrounding schools, costs for the supplies connected to the curriculum and artist workshops and the artist fees for an artist-in-residence experience.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

MAKER SPACE 307

MAKERSPACE307.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: How We Make Things

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

#### MISSION/GOALS

Maker Space 307 supports creative ideas, inventions, and startups by teaching people how to use the tools and technology necessary for them to make their way.

- 1 - Grow a resilient maker community providing equipment, teaching, and learning opportunities
- 2 - Increase Staff to support the growth of members and programs
- 3 - Increase Volunteer Opportunities - Volunteers as support for programs and members
- 4 - Increase reach to other organizations and Makers - widening the circle of support for learners and makers
- 5 - Generate overlapping programs that bring different organizations, groups, and makers together— synergistic
- 6 - Find new ways to engage our community (i.e., Maker Show and Tell, overlapping workshops, local workshops teachers, how we make things, as well as how the tools to make things are made)

### Community

The largest community of American Indians in Wyoming lives in Fremont County on the Wind River Reservation (WRR) and Riverton. Out of school enrichment programs benefit all youth; therefore, we collaborate with the 477 programs of the WRR to provide awareness and transportation for Tribal youth to participate in Maker Space Youth Enrichment Programs. We are the only arts organization that provides after-school programs for youth on the reservation. We work with the Riverton Summer Academy, providing free enrichment programs for grades 3 - 6 youth in Fremont County.

Through the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), 2 High School youths work and learn at MS307 yearly with a job coach. We provide 2 internships annually through Central Wyoming College and 2 Lifelong Learning 8-week workshops yearly for people over 50. We are a host site for youth with learning disabilities to access enrichment programs; we are part of a USDA program to provide opportunities and support for entrepreneurs

with free memberships, technical support, and equipment to make prototypes and marketing collateral. 80 free memberships were made available to those in need in the community last year.

We are understaffed; therefore, we partner with many organizations in our area that fulfill identified community needs for services. These collaborations help us generate a sense of belonging for a broader group of individuals, and working within their support systems means the participants' accommodations are met by their primary organization. The largest group we serve are member walk-ins on an individual basis.

## **Evaluation**

We have a paper sign-in system for our walk-ins to sign their name, time, and date, and check a box about why they are here. Here for: self, work, class, advise, equipment use, social event, with guests.

We have a physical suggestion box and an online suggestion box.

We have QR codes on the walls that pull up a short review of services or classes (were you: in a class, seeking support, working independently, visiting, other; expectations were met Y/N; what was good, what was not so good)

Most importantly, we talk to our community in person and through our Board to see how we can provide what they want and need and who in the community would like to share their creative knowledge and skills.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Expenses - July 1 - June 30, 2025-26

### Grant funds

Payroll	\$8,000
Utilities	\$2,000
SUBTOTAL	\$10,000

### Operating Expenses

Rent	\$21,000
Utilities	\$9,600
Payroll	\$75,400
Contracts (visiting artists)	\$8,000
Supplies	\$18,000
Maintenance and repair	
of equipment	\$8,000
SUBTOTAL	\$140,000

TOTAL

\$150,000

### **Project Support Narrative**

Because we have equipment for the community to use, our largest program is helping walk-ins. We now live in a world where people want bits of information when needed - not before, and no more than what is needed. Where YouTube and Google can provide all the bits of information you want, the physical space and equipment are not found there. We have space and equipment and people to help.

Solving the problems of making involves the right equipment, key advice, explaining the color wheel and how to use analogous or complementary color choices, or using Arduino, step motors, or variables of heat and speed to laser cut or weld.

Many traditional skills were lost in the second half of the 20th century. We are here to keep them alive. Our community comprises those who want to make things and those who want to know how artists, artisans, and makers create. It is of greater interest for some to make things, and others only want to know how arts, crafts, or tools for making are made. We have been leaving out the latter or those who want to participate passively in lifelong learning.

We are scheduling a series of demonstrations about the tools used to make the tools artists and artisans use, like the sewing machines, the glues, and the shaping tools for metalsmithing and leatherwork- everything from how to make puppets to a stone cabochon. Some demonstrations will be stand-alone, and workshops will follow some. This demonstration of pre-21st-century know-how will also include the art of restoration techniques like cleaning a painting, learning to darn, or restoration of a letterpress.

- September—Kafaru—Tour and demonstrations of customisable backpacks and outdoor gear made in Riverton. Specifically working with their lead designer, who designs products and the fabrication steps to make each item. He has a great understanding of all the equipment available to make his designs.

- October—Barrie Bryant will demonstrate how to make hide glue, gesso with marble dust and hide glue, and egg tempera, like Michelangelo used for the Sistine Chapel ceiling. The demonstration will be followed by a gold gilding workshop.

- November - David Maulik will present the story of the Singer Sewing Machine, the hundreds of thousands made and later programs to repair the treadle machines and send them to third-world countries for people without electricity and how to motorize these machines with servo motors and find and buy them inexpensively.

January—The Riverton Mineral and Gem Society will demonstrate how a stone cabochon is made and share their summer field trips to find stones. This will be followed by an eight-week Stone Cabochon Workshop.

- February — David Maulik demonstrates the art of making furr-felt hats, the history, the tools, and the equipment used to make them. Followed by an 8-week hat-making workshop.



- March— Lorre Hoffman will demonstrate the stained glass art process using copper foil, lead camming, and newer zinc camming. followed by a stained glass workshop.

- June—Professor Jim Jereb will demonstrate the letter press, its historical and contemporary use by artists, and what to look for when buying used. The demonstration will be followed by a letterpress workshop.

Project Funds will be used for artist honoraria - Jereb and Bryant- and some materials for workshops- Bryant, Maulik, Hoffman, and Jereb.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Maker Space 307 staff and board have worked to develop a learning program that includes a lot of local artisans with the idea that local instructors will be around when questions, troubleshooting, or expansion of ideas and materials arise later. Maker Space's one golden rule is open-ended exploration, and having local artists makes it possible to ask questions even after a workshop. Therefore, the bulk of our workshops are from local artisans.

Maker Spaces also engage communities in a wider spectrum of ideas or techniques for making or designing anything. So, we are committed to bringing in artists and makers from outside our community.

Working with the 477 programs on the Wind River Reservation, we will be offering after-school arts programs twice monthly, Sept., Oct., Nov. 2025, and Jan., Feb., Mar. 2026. This collaboration allows reservation-based schools that contract with Tribal 477 programs to attend Maker Space programs. 477 will recruit youth ages 11 - 14 and provide transportation for the arts enrichment programs at Maker Space.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Arts Learning Goals

- 1 - Grow a resilient maker community providing equipment, teaching, and learning opportunities
- 2 - Staff to support the growth of members and programs
- 3 - Design Volunteer Opportunities - Volunteers as support for programs and members
- 4 - Collaboration with other organizations and Makers, widening the circle of support for learners and makers
- 5 - Generate overlapping programs that bring different organizations, groups, and makers together— synergistic
- 6 - Develop diverse presentations and workshops for our community (i.e., demonstrations, overlapping workshops, local workshop teachers)

We are creating more ways to learn with this season's focus on demonstrations for the public, increasing reach through partnerships with the Wind River Reservation 477 programs for ages 11-14, Riverton Recreation's free Summer Academy for kids ages 8-14, DVR programs for High School students, and CWC internships. Walk-ins are welcome at any time.

We visit with our members, and our board are ears and eyes in our community, including the Wind River Reservation (WRR), Riverton, Lander, Hudson, Shoshoni, and Pavillion, which have a broad spectrum of diverse ideas about art and making. We have board members in most communities to help us form parts of our programs to suit the needs of each community. Sometimes, the needs of people may not be so divergent in what they want to learn, but the timing of when programs are offered and transportation needs to be considered. Working with programs like DVR, Job coaching, and internships helps us gain perspective on accommodations we can provide for various participants.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

- Barrie Bryant is a contributing writer for the American Guilders Association and a 30-year frame maker gold gilder. He has also offered 6 Creative Aging programs in documentary photography. His first Bighorn Basin Documentary workshop was exhibited at the Wyoming Capital for 9 months, and the State archives purchased his students' work. Barrie will offer a demonstration and a workshop.

Jim Jereb is the Head of Printmaking at Truman State University, where he teaches printmaking and history. His workshops always fill up, and the results are fantastic. Jim will offer a demonstration and workshop.

- David Maulik has a fine mind and curiosity, combined with his knowledge of many things, which enables him to know how to do everything we have to offer at Maker Space, and then some. His recent dive into the reliable Singer sewing machines that have been around since 1851. He has been buying and restoring some and "fixing some with servo motors so they will work for another 175 years. He sees this work and information as a way for people to get reliable quality machines for a very low cost. These old machines' workings are very simple, so learning to fix and maintain them is within reach of most people and is a good way to learn about small motors. David will also be available to assist people who have machines to update or restore.

- Lorre Hoffman has an MFA in Sculpture and has been making stained glass since the 1970s. She has recently worked on stained glass windows for the Hudson Catholic Church and wants to share the history and simple tools for this amazing art. She will also present information about the stained glass windows of St. Stephen's Church, built in 1928. The windows were made in 1990 as a community project and are based on Arapaho Symbols.

Third—and fourth-generation rock collectors of the Riverton Mineral and Gem Society will present lapidary demonstrations. These collectors not only know where to find great stones in Wyoming (and they have a robust schedule of rock field trips each summer) but are also lapidarists who will teach cabbing, faceting, and stone carving. Further, to reinforce the idea of sticking around for more questions and troubleshooting, they will have a lapidarist available two afternoons a week to help people learn about rock collecting and lapidary work.

### **Budget Narrative**

Household and Individual Memberships are 15% of income

Institutional or Business Support provides 25% of income

Fundraising provides 10% of income

Workshop and class fees provide 5%

Grants fund 45% of our operation

- Key to our existence is a USDA grant, which pays for one FTE and entrepreneur memberships and has helped build up our equipment base

- Santa Fe Tobacco provides free memberships for American Indians linked to programs and access we provide.

The Tribal 477 partnerships are in-kind contributions that recruit youth and provide transportation to specific Maker Space programs for them. Another grant funds memberships for these youths and their families. 477 is also coordinating Elders to teach traditional arts and buying the materials for these workshops.

- We have lost quite a bit of our Federal funds since January, and local businesses have pitched in to pay our rent for the next four years if necessary.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

[WWW.SHAKESPEAREINTHEPARKS.ORG](http://WWW.SHAKESPEAREINTHEPARKS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Montana Shakespeare in the Parks Programs in Wyoming

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks is to engage and enrich both rural and underserved communities with professional productions of Shakespeare and other classics and, through educational outreach, to inspire creative expression and appreciation of the arts in young audiences.

Montana Shakespeare in the Parks has three primary goals:

1. To serve communities by reducing isolation and improving access to shared cultural, artistic, and educational experiences. By bringing together citizens from different backgrounds, socio-economic classes, and many generations, we are committed to building a stronger society and culture. Survey data and comments indicate that MSIP has become a cherished tradition for many families, and audiences are grateful to share the experience across generations.
2. To expose as many students as possible to a live theatrical production of a Shakespeare play. Surveys confirm that student attitudes about Shakespeare and understanding of literature improve as a result of seeing a live performance and participating in workshops. In 2024, 60% of middle and high school students indicated an improved attitude about Shakespeare. Our goal is to increase that number in 2025. We will also maintain or improve the 86% of respondents reporting that the play was easier to understand as a performance than it was when read as text only.
3. To reach as many rural and underserved communities as possible. MSIP defines rural and underserved in several ways: by economic measures, by population, and by distance from a metro area with arts and cultural institutions. For example, in 2024, 73% of the schools reached were eligible for Title I (32% receiving school-wide assistance; 34% targeted assistance; 7% eligible but not participating). Our goal for 2025 will be to maintain the number or percentage of schools receiving Title I assistance and to continue performing in rural communities without charging directly for admissions.

## **Community**

Central to our mission is to bring free professional theater directly to rural communities and schools, especially those who may not have access to live theater without significant travel or expense. We prioritize the most underserved areas. Our educational tours especially reach communities where arts access is varied and inequitable: 60% of schools reached are in communities with populations of 5,000 or fewer; most are over 100 miles away from a community that offers any sort of professional theatre experience; 73% of the schools are eligible for Title I assistance.

For our summer Parks tour, MSIP has deep, longstanding relationships with volunteers in each community who serve as Tour Coordinators. With their local knowledge, coordinators act as our on-the-ground contact to plan an event that best meets the needs of their individual community. They arrange for outdoor and backup (indoor) locations that are accessible, connect MSIP to local sponsors, and assist with spreading the word to different communities within their town.

Large print programs are available by request, and our website includes alt tags, color-blind-friendly color contrast, and layout features to better accommodate software used by patrons with sight impairments. To ensure those with hearing impairments receive a rich experience, MSIP provides free receivers and headphones that sync with our sound system, including a Wi-Fi technology that allows patrons to connect an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) to their own phone or iPad for improved volume control. Based on audience feedback, MSIP is planning to invest in improved microphones, additional mic stands, a digital mixer for audio distribution, and new speakers to ensure better sound quality, connectivity, and reliability.

## **Evaluation**

We measure the success of our programs both quantitatively and qualitatively. During our Parks Tour, our goal is to increase audience reach in each area, aiming to encourage attendance from new populations and engage the surrounding towns. We track audience counts at each tour stop year-over-year. We also solicit feedback from our Tour Coordinators and from audience members directly. Programs include a survey with questions about the production's quality, the effectiveness of different marketing efforts, and suggestions for future improvements. At the end of the season, we compile hundreds of responses to hone our future efforts and identify areas for improvement. For example, in 2024 we invested in a Wi-Fi technology that allowed patrons using ALD to connect their own phone or laptop to the sound system for better volume control. Their feedback is now motivating us to upgrade the microphones and mixing equipment for better sound clarity.

MSIP's educational outreach programs are measured through teacher and student comment forms, daily reports from the tour manager, follow-up phone calls to school administrators, educators, and organizers, and a program postmortem with the touring company. After each school visit, an MSIP staff member personally phones the school to inquire about how the program was received and whether the school would like to reserve a date for the following year. The school is then sent two surveys: a student survey to measure perceived understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare, lessons learned from workshops or the Q&A, and overall enjoyment of the residency;

and a teacher survey addressing the effectiveness of workshops, the value of the Teacher Toolkit, suggestions for improvement, and what it means to have MSIP visit the school.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Now in its 53rd season, MSIP's nationally recognized Parks Tour will feature live performances of Shakespeare's AS YOU LIKE IT and HENRY V. More than 400 actors auditioned in December for a few coveted slots with MSIP, and a top-notch design team from around the country will arrive in Bozeman in May to rehearse and build the sets, costumes, and props.

The summer Parks tour will kick off at the end of June and run through early September. The 11-member company will perform for free in parks and public spaces 78 times in 65 communities across the mountain west. Grant funds will be used to support travel, lodging, and artist costs associated with tour stops in Sheridan, Afton, Worland, Powell, and Cody. The self-contained and highly-mobile company will erect an Elizabethan-style stage and perform for a community each day. Tour Coordinators in each community provide support in securing performance locations and promoting the performance.

MSIP has a significant impact on the economy and quality of life in the communities we visit. In smaller towns like Afton, the summer tour may be the only live professional performing arts program to which residents readily have access. In larger towns such as Cody, MSIP's summer performances offer residents the opportunity to gather as a community and enjoy, at no cost, the magic of theatre in a setting that's welcoming and accessible to people of all ages and from all walks of life.

Selection of artists involved in the 2025 Parks Tour:

Kevin Asselin (Director, HENRY V) serves as MSIP's Executive Artistic Director and holds an MFA in Acting from the University of Illinois and a Bachelor of Science in Music-Theatre from Plymouth State University. Prior to assuming his current position, Kevin worked with MSIP for 13 seasons as an actor, fight director, teacher, and director. He directed over 17 productions for MSIP. A member of Actor's Equity, he has numerous Chicago and regional acting credits. A two-time Joseph Jefferson nominated fight director, he has been a Resident Fight Director with The American Players Theatre, The Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, among others. Additionally, Kevin was an Associate Professor of Movement and Acting at Oklahoma City University.

Eva Breneman (Director, AS YOU LIKE IT) is a Director and Voice/Text Coach in Chicago. Directing: Uncle Vanya (Winter Words/American Players Theatre); Drinking and Unemployment: After Studs Terkel (workshop readings);

Hope (Timeline Theatre); Nine Parts of Desire (New York and Edinburgh Fringe). Chicago voice/text: Toni Stone, Layalina (Goodman); Fen (Court); Songs for Nobodies (Northlight); The Chinese Lady (Timeline); Murder on the Orient Express (Drury Lane); Big Fish (Marriott Lincolnshire); Private Lives (Raven). Broadway: Airline Highway (Samuel Friedman Theatre). Off-Broadway: Boswell (59E59). Regional: Nine seasons at American Players Theatre; Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It; Things I Know to be True (Milwaukee Rep); The Chinese Lady (Denver Center); Love's Labour's Lost (Actor's Theatre of Louisville). Eva is an associate artist at TimeLine Theatre Company.

Gretchen E. Minton (Dramaturg) is a professor of English at Montana State University, dramaturg for MSIP, and author of "Shakespeare in Montana: Big Sky Country's Love Affair with the World's Most Famous Author." Gretchen has given lectures at the Globe Theatre in London, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and the Utah Shakespeare Festival.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

MSIP partners with Wyoming schools through two educational programs each year: Shakespeare in the Schools (SIS) and MT Shakes! Each full-day, in-school residency begins with a professional production that brings a Shakespeare play to life. Following the performance, the company leads attendees in a talkback to break down the wall between actors and students. After the talkback, our energetic and well-trained team of actor-educators break into groups to lead workshops designed to deepen students' understanding of the play through games and exercises. Through these time-tested residency programs, MSIP addresses the disparity between Arts Education Standards and the resources applied to delivering Arts curriculum, and provides an introduction to Shakespeare that is accessible, relevant, and most importantly, fun.

This fall, for the first time in the 33 years of the SIS program, we are excited to adapt one of Shakespeare's "history" plays for students. RICHARD III was selected for its potential to engage middle and high school students in thoughtful exploration of recognizable themes like the influence of personal insecurities on one's decisions and actions; the challenges in overcoming negative self-perception; and the perils of unchecked ambition. RICHARD III's compelling dramatic structure and brilliant use of heightened language in highly dramatic scenes will be an excellent introduction for students grades 5-12 to the compelling nature of Shakespeare's works. And, of course, the highly physical nature of the conflicts between strong-willed characters (sword fights!) is always engaging to students, especially when presented as originally meant to be appreciated, in live performance.

The Shakespeare in the Schools residency offers a combination of activities that encourage students to delve into the concepts of story, character, design, movement, voice, language, poetry, writing, analysis, interpretation, presentation, and collaboration. A robust Teacher Toolkit extends the learning into the classroom beyond the residency. Booking for the fall 2025 SIS program featuring RICHARD III has already begun and, as of now, will include middle and high schools in Tongue River, Buffalo, Cody, Meeteetse, Powell, and Sheridan.

The goal of Montana Shakes! is to bring live Shakespeare to young students at a time when they are most receptive to learning. In the spring of 2026, Montana Shakes! will reach approximately 5-7 Wyoming schools with a

lively 40-minute original play featuring Shakespearean scenes crafted for younger audiences. Following the play, we further engage students in Q&A sessions and theatrical workshops where students learn about language and theatrical production and have the opportunity to try stage combat and hands-on theater games. Wyoming residencies have traditionally included elementary schools in Cody, Meeteetse, Powell, and Sheridan, with several other towns in rotation.

In developing the curriculum, we seek to offer productions our young audiences relate to by addressing themes encountered in daily life, such as identity, bullying, and family dynamics. Themes are further explored through workshops and Q&A sessions, where links are forged to related topics such as communication and creative thinking. When hiring actors, MSIP seeks qualified actor-educators who display artistic talent with the ability to engage students in an educational setting while inspiring appreciation for the arts.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Through our two educational programs, we lift the timeless stories of Shakespeare from the page and share the excitement of live theatre with students across Montana and Wyoming. Our primary goal is to reduce apprehension and instill an appreciation for literature, theatre arts, and the works of Shakespeare, because research has shown impressive benefits of arts education on entire school culture, especially student motivation, attitudes, and attendance. However, with few dedicated theatre courses in the curriculum, educators are left to begin with Shakespeare's written text, which can seem intimidating to students. When presented live, Shakespeare's stories have the power to serve as a catalyst, sparking a broader curiosity and appreciation of theater, language, history, and culture.

For middle and high school students, MSIP programming supports a range of positive outcomes including greater success in meeting state standards for Fine and Performing Arts, and English Language and Literature. The daylong residency offers students the opportunity to experience live theatre and participate in active workshops where they can practice their creative, interpretive, responsive, and associative knowledge. Q&A and workshops encourage students to explore context and connections between themes in Shakespeare and their own experiences or current events. These sessions encourage analysis and evaluation of artistic work, as students explore the relationship between written literature and fully staged production. Our company is prepared to cover all aspects of the production process, from plot points and character relationships to design choices and heightened language. Workshop exercises offer engaging ways to conceptualize, organize, refine and communicate artistic ideas, with the opportunity to present creative work to the MSIP company, their teachers, or their peers.

These goals of contributing to students' understanding and appreciation of arts and literature have been developed through 33 years of collaboration between MSIP's Director of Education, artistic staff, and the region's educators, who have helped shape the residency structure, the Teacher Toolkit, and workshop content. In addition to suggestions offered in surveys, MSIP has developed a culture of continuous adaptation and improvement. At the end of each residency, the touring company discusses the day's activities, and the Tour Manager compiles a report covering technical considerations, observations about student participation, and stories of impact.



For instance, a few weeks into the fall 2024 SIS tour, the Tour Manager captured some observations about the workshop “What revels are in hand? – Stories Beyond the Play,” in which students analyzed and debated characters and relationships in the play and then created and performed their own stories inspired by A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM. These observations led the teaching artists to adjust the workshop content, and she noted how students responded to the change:

“We’re noticing with the Stories workshops that the kids always just wanted to kill all the characters. They think they’re so original – it’s quite funny. We talked about trying to make it a rule that the kids aren’t allowed to use death or violence in their story.”

Several days later, her observation of the Stories workshop was quite different:

“In the stories workshop, we’ve started to ask the students to avoid death and violence in their stories. We have noticed this framework really allows the kids to reach for higher hanging fruit. Today we had a student come up with such an amazing story that was Titania trading her beauty and youth to heal Oberon of his jealousy, and when he realized Titania was no longer beautiful, he banished her to the Moon! And that’s why the moon sometimes disappears from the sky, it’s when Oberon is about – she doesn’t want to see him. SO CREATIVE!”

Our goal is for all students to “reach for higher hanging fruit.”

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Shakespeare in the Schools (SIS) and Montana Shakes! are developed and delivered by highly-qualified professional artists and educators each year. Eight actor-educators are selected for SIS and four are selected for Shakes! from nation-wide auditions. At least two of the artist-educators are returning cast members to ensure the continuity of the program and familiarity with our partnering schools. Our Directors and Education Director are leaders in the theatrical landscape.

Matt Foss, Montana Shakes! playwright and Director: Matt received his M.F.A. in acting from Chicago’s Roosevelt University and Ph.D. in theatre studies and directing from Wayne State University in Detroit. He toured as an actor with Montana Shakespeare in the Parks from 2003-2006 and wrote and directed three original adaptations for MSIP’s Shakes! programs. In 2016, his touring production of "The Glass Menagerie" performed at Russia’s Moscow Art Theatre. He adapted and directed Upton Sinclair’s "The Jungle" for Oracle Productions in Chicago in 2014. The production received Chicago Jeff Award Nominations for Outstanding Production, Director, Ensemble, and won for Best New Adaptation. Among many other honors, Foss was the recipient of the ATHE/KCACTF Prize for Innovative Teaching in 2013 and the 2020 University of Toledo Edith Rathburn Outreach and Engagement Excellence Award.

Katherine Norman, MSIP Education Director: Katherine is a teaching artist, actor, and scholar currently based at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has developed educational materials for several of MSIP's tours. In addition to Montana Shakespeare, Katherine has gotten to share work as a teacher, researcher, and consultant with theatre companies and arts education organizations all over the world. She holds a PhD in Educational Psychology and splits her research work between the Educational Neuroscience Lab and the Community Arts Collaboratory, where she studies how and what we learn through participating in the arts. She holds an MS in Educational Psychology and an MA in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies with a focus in Theatre for Youth from the UW-Madison, and a BFA in Acting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Sam Cheeseman, Tour Manager and Actor-Educator: Sam is an actor-educator based in Chicago, Illinois. A graduate of the University of Northern Colorado, Sam has spent seven tours with MSIP. Sam was one of the founding members of the "Virtual Shakes!" program designed in response to the pandemic. Outside of MSIP, Sam has taught for Nebraska Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare All-Stars, and Drama in the Driveway among others. Chicago theater credits include Midsommer Flight, Invictus Theatre, Chicago Theatre Works, and more. He will join MSIP again as a tour manager and actor-educator for the 2025-2026 education tours.

### **Budget Narrative**

MSIP is an outreach program of Montana State University and is supported through a diverse portfolio of income streams solicited through MSU, MSU Alumni Foundation, and our supporting 501 (c)(3) entity Friends of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. Montana State University provides in-kind support in the form of office and theater space, our Executive Artistic Director's salary, the partial salary of two other staff members, and short-term on-campus housing for contracted artists.

We operate under a balanced budget each year. Each tour location contributes a modest performance fee that covers a small percentage of the expense of each tour stop. The remaining funds are raised through corporate sponsorships, individual donations, grants, and a benefit event. Management of these activities is shared by administrative staff.

Budget figures below reflect only the estimated costs of those performances and educational programs that occur in Wyoming.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

MUSEUM OF THE OCCIDENTAL HOTEL

[WWW.OCCIDENTALWYOMING.COM](http://WWW.OCCIDENTALWYOMING.COM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Women's History Gallery of 20th Century Fashion

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission Statement: The gallery strives to be a destination point for education, entertainment, inspiration and civic engagement for all ages, genders and ethnicities through dynamic exhibitions, tours, publications, special events and programming; and to further the museum's mission to educate the public on the history of the West and preserve historical artifacts for future generations.

The Strategic Goals: Year One: 2025/2026: To make \$15,000 revenue from tours (offered daily by appointment, \$5 per person, 3,000 expected); re-stage exhibits seasonally; hold 4 galas (200-300 expected); offer 4 activity programs.

The Community Contribution: Is two-fold: to the individual and community as a whole. Individually, the gallery enriches the lives of all who take a tour, come to a gala or attend a program, then impacts Buffalo and surrounding communities as a whole by the economic boost from travelers by way of money spent on fuel, food and lodging. The gallery is the only one in the West dedicated solely to women's fashion of the 20th century.

The historical artifacts on display are on loan by professional costumer and fashion historian Leslie Stratmoen of Riverton, who as the gallery curator creates and presents exhibits and programs. The first exhibit, "Flappers to Fringe," covers the 1920s-70s, and shows how people, places and events influenced what women wore and how they lived. The exhibit features six live-size dioramas staged with a mannequin and steamer trunk as if she's a fashionable young lady of the day arriving at the hotel, unpacking and dressing for an event. Exhibit booklets tell the story and a scavenger hunt and coloring book illustrations are teaching tools for the children. Programs offered by the curator cover a variety of topics and activities, to include: making a Coco Chanel-style necklace while learning about designers or molding an automobile or bust of King Tut while learning how the car and a king influenced the styles of the Roaring Twenties.

### Community

The demographics of the local community, according to the most recent census, are: 96% white (3% Hispanic); the remaining being non-Hispanic, Asian and American Indian & Alaska Native. None reported speaking a non-English language at home. Illustrations are included on signage and written materials to accommodate the non-English travelers coming from around the world. The hotel's website averages 48,000 visits annually, with the number expected to rise. The Occidental was just named one of the top historic hotels in America by "True West," a magazine that reaches nearly a million readers worldwide.

Mannequins are flesh-toned Caucasian to reflect the color of the typical traveler of the time period being represented in the exhibit. Ethnicities are represented in reference to fashion styles, like Spanish embroidered blouses and Asian kimonos. Admission price is set at \$5 to be affordable for most people.

The hotel is ADA compliant with bathrooms on the main floor near the gallery. Exhibits are staged along the gallery perimeter with wide aisles for walkers and wheelchairs. Seating is available. Future plans include an audio tour and tactile board. Other specific accommodations can be addressed as needed by making them known when scheduling a tour.

Exhibits and programs are designed to be engaging by presenting fun fashion facts and showing how people, places and events influenced fashion.

Outreach efforts have been made. Tailored programming was offered to local 4-H groups and will be offered to local schools and the University of Wyoming Humanities Department. Outreach continues to businesses and organizations, to include local service clubs and senior citizen centers, and other statewide organizations, to book the gallery for special events, retreats or conventions.

## **Evaluation**

Qualitative: Evaluation of the venture in regard to testimonials, observations and success stories has yet to be acquired. The new gallery opens June 21, 2025. Feedback will be encouraged and assessed through in-person conversations, guest book entries, surveys and social media posts and will guide the curator in making adjustments to the exhibits and focus of programs. Both the museum, through the hotel, and the exhibit have websites and social media accounts. Websites are: [www.occidentalwyoming.com](http://www.occidentalwyoming.com) and [www.flapperstofringevintage.com](http://www.flapperstofringevintage.com). Facebook & Instagram accounts are Historic Occidental Hotel and Flappers to Fringe Vintage.

Quantitative: Attendance, demographics and financial metrics will be tracked monthly through ticket sales and guest book entries. Assessment meetings will be held bi-monthly and include an end-of-the-year (December) evaluation meeting with the collection owner/curator to assess the goals of the partners/gallery. Currently, both partners are providing in-kind support of the project: Occidental Wyoming, LLC is providing gallery, storage room, lodging and tour guide; and the collections owner/curator is waiving the exhibit rental and travel fees.

Funding for the move of the collection from Riverton, Wyoming, was provided by the Wyoming Humanities organization and marketing for brochures to be distributed in the state's visitor's centers is being paid by the Johnson County Tourism Association.

Another assessment meeting is planned for April 2026, at which time: the contract for the loan of the collection will be assessed and renewed; plans and adjustments will be made for 2026-2027 exhibits and programs; and adjustments/additions will be made to the budget.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The gallery's essential function is three-fold: Educate: The public on how people, places and events influenced, and sometimes dictated, what women wore in the 20th century and how they behaved. Entertain: The public in an engaging and inspiring way. Preserve: The historic artifacts for future generations.

The partners opened the gallery with the agreement that the Occidental Wyoming, LLC would waive the gallery and storage room rental fees and the collection's owner would waive the rental fee for the exhibit with the gallery paying for itself within the year. That is a value of \$12,000. An estimated 3,000 people are expected to take the

tour this year. The figure is based on an estimated 200-300 locals expected to attend the galas and programs, combined with a percentage of the number of travelers already booked at the hotel. If the expected estimate holds true, the gallery could make a profit from admissions of \$15,000 in the first year. However, the hotel operators would like to recoup some of their losses and pay the hotel tour guide a bonus for including the gallery and support the curator with a stipend to reserve her time for installations and programs. She is offering to re-stage the exhibits four times over the year and present four activities programs which the museum will not be able to take advantage of without grant funding to pay for labor, travel and lodging fees and supplies for programs.

As per the partnership, the owner of the hotel, who is also the museum's board director/treasurer is the fiscal agent for the gallery, as set forth by the agreement, and the owner of the collection is the manager of the collection, designer/creator of exhibits, supervisor of installations, designer/marketer, performer/host of opening galas and planner/presenter of activities and programs.

The requested funding would be used specifically to support the following operational needs: Salaries: \$5,000 (\$4,000 Curator Stipend, \$1,000 tour guide); Rent: \$4,000 (Gallery); Facility Maintenance: \$500 (\$210 Security cameras; \$250 Locksmith); Supplies: \$500 (Activity Programs).

The plan, depending on grant funding, is to re-stage the exhibits seasonally, which includes opening galas. The gallery opens with the mannequins dressed for the spring/summer. Then will be switched out in November for the holidays followed by a spring exhibit, possibly of wedding dresses through the 20th century, then another change-out for the summer. The displays for all exhibits present the fashions of the day in a variety of ways: dressed for the season or by an event, like maybe swimsuits for a beach party or gown for a ball or gala; or even the "little black dress" through the years to show how the styles changed and explain why hemlines went up, then down, then up, again. Displays give visitors a snapshot view of what life was like for women of the 20th century, a time when rules were expected to be followed, fashion cues came from friends, neighbors and films, and patterns and fabrics were ordered from catalogues and magazines. Activities programs, if presented, would coincide with the installations. All the programs and galas will be held in the gallery amidst the displays. Galas will include special musical guests and refreshments. Admission to the grand opening gala is free, with donations accepted. Subsequent galas will have a nominal admission fee, as yet to be set. There will also be a charge for programs, with that fee, too, yet to be set.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Project support would be beneficial in achieving the educational goals of the gallery, which include: exhibit guide books, available in the gallery for all exhibits, and activity-based programs and galas for exhibit openings, all of which will be held in the gallery.

Exhibit Guide Books: Introduce the exhibits and give an overall view of each decade, provide narrative for each display and present detailed information about historical items. Also, the afore mentioned scavenger hunt sheet and fashion illustrations are available for the children to have fun finding items within the exhibits or designing a color scheme for a fashionable young lady or gent of the period.

Activity-based Programs: Introduce visitors to the gallery in a more personal way by meeting the curator and having her guide them in creating a work of art to take home while listening to her talk about fashion history. Four are offered in this first year, dependent on funding for supplies, to include, in addition to the aforementioned: decorating a Fascinator cap while learning about the rise and demise of hats and designing a dress on a mini-mannequin while learning about Dior's "New Look," which was one designer's reaction to World War II rationing.

Galas: Introduce the general public to each new exhibit. The Grand Opening Gala is set for June 21, 2025, featuring music provided by the curator singing songs made famous by the divas of the decades, followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony, tour and refreshments. The public is welcome. No admission charged. Another gala will be held in December for the unveiling of the Holiday Display and two in the spring-summer, with dates as yet to be set. Each one will feature music, tour and refreshments. Again, open to the general public.

The guide books, programs and galas will all be created and presented by the owner of the collection, Leslie Stratmoen, who is coming on board as the curator for the gallery. She brings a wealth of experience to the position. She's a professional costumer and humanities scholar who holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Iowa, was an adjunct costumer for Central Wyoming College in Riverton, worked as a marketing instructor at Iowa Central Community College and is an award-winning journalist, broadcaster, talk show host and graphic designer. She also has vast knowledge of the collection for which she's been curating and managing for nearly 20 years; has researched and costumed more than 25 productions, covering Elizabethan to 20th Century styles; created the exhibit "Windows of Time Through a Woman's Eyes;" and is the website and content creator for the collection's website, [flapperstofringevintage.com](http://flapperstofringevintage.com).

Other collaborators: Creative Consultant Oakley Boycott, the model for the online exhibit. She is: a professional actress/model based out of New York/Lander; a member of Actors Equity Association & Screen Actors Guild; a performer with the Metropolitan Opera; and the producer of the Wyoming Cowboy Hall of Fame documentary on the last of the true Wyoming Cowboys. Exhibition Installation Consultant: Stephen G. Ecklund, Boulder, Colo., BA & MA from the University of Northern Iowa. Career Highlights: Walker Art Center, Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota Children's Museum, Weismann Art Museum. Grant Application and Contract Guidance: Former Wyoming Senator Mark O. Harris, President & CEO of the Harry Jackson Museum in Wyoming and was responsible for review and approval of all grants.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Creation of the gallery was made possible by a partnership between the Occidental Wyoming, LLC and Leslie Kay Productions, each providing in-kind services: the hotel (gallery, storage room, lodging, tour guide); LKP (collection & curator services). A Wyoming Humanities grant funded the collection move. A Johnson County Tourism Association grant's paying for marketing. An Arts Council grant: guarantees success by not depleting the museum's fund; helps recoup a portion of the hotel's rental/lodging fees; secures a part-time curator & tour guide. Door locks and security cameras are needed to protect the artifacts. Activities/programs will not be offered without funding for the curator's travel fees and supplies. The overall justification for the council to grant funding for the gallery comes by way of aligning missions: to sustain and cultivate the community through the arts and help to ensure the gallery becomes a driving force in Wyoming's social, economic, education and everyday life.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

MUSIC LAND

WWW.JHYOMUSICLAND.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Empowering Futures: Filling the Gap, Building Capacity, and Increasing Enrollment for Success

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

MISSION STATEMENT: Delivering excellence in classical music education through exceptional music instruction, starting from early childhood education (0-5) with Mommy & Me classes, progressing to private instruction, and culminating in orchestral performance for well-rounded musical journey.

### STRATEGIC GOALS:

- 1) As a vibrant nonprofit, we are dedicated to nurturing the next generation of musicians and music lovers with increased classical music education in our community.
- 2) Embracing that music is a universal language, we work to transcend barriers, build connections, inspire creativity and foster community through our programming.
- 3) Reflecting on our mission statement, we recognize the critical importance of increasing enrollment, building our capacity and filling the gaps in music education within our community.
- 4) Our overarching strategic goal culminates in providing a musical foundation for our youth and their families.

### Community

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything." - Plato

MusicLand's classical music education program offers enriching and meaningful experiences to a diverse community, including children and youth (ages 0-18), their parents and caregivers, educators, collaborators, partners, volunteers, and audiences from various backgrounds.

- Includes a wide range of economics: High to low income where 25% of our participants require financial aid (scholarships from One 22, Boundless, and MusicLand's financial aid fund).
- Ethnicities include: White with 33% Latino (TCSD enrollment figures) and other growing ethnic groups. MusicLand's marketing materials are produced in both Spanish and English.
- Economics: Primarily a resort community consisting of lodging, restaurants and retail businesses that are supported by the lower/middle-class population. Teton County, WY has high living costs and very expensive homes due to the influx of extreme wealth.
- Education: Upper class has high level of education; middle and lower class levels has lower class levels.
- Geography: Our programs serve participants and families from Teton & Lincoln Counties, WY & Teton County, ID.

At MusicLand, we are committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse, and equitable environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging. Our programs welcome students of all gender identities, including male, female, transgender, and nonbinary individuals, celebrating both diversity and talent. We proudly support students with ADHD and Autism, ensuring they have a meaningful experience. Open to participants from infancy through age 18, along with their families and guardians, our programs take place in ADA-compliant facilities to ensure accessibility for all.

## **Evaluation**

The success of MusicLand's new and expanded music education programming will be determined primarily by increased enrollment which will support program expansion expenses. Our evaluation criteria is based on meeting the parameters, needs, components, and successful outcomes for our participants that includes:

- Ongoing instructor observation with student and parent feedback;
- Written surveys and verbal feedback from participants, families/caregivers, and audience members that are analyzed by our staff and board.

Our primary goal in evaluations is to ensure there exists high satisfaction with our participants' experiences. Observations take place regarding the benefits from our programming, in addition to accomplishing learning the art of music, improved social skills, teamwork, emotional regulation and cognitive function. These offer a valuable experience, as well as just having fun! We look for these specific benefits in ALL evaluations:

- Development of music appreciation and participation for our youth (ages 0-18) as well as their families and caregivers.
- Creativity being inspired and nurtured.
- Excitement is generated.
- Horizons are expanded.



- Skills and competencies are developed.
- A "place" is provided to work out emotions and sharing of expressions and feelings.
- The participant is engaged in identity work, learning to appreciate their "self".

Honoring our goal to provide positive and meaningful classical music education experiences to our diverse population, MusicLand intends to consistently evaluate and make sure its expanded programming continues to serve all with varying demographics:

- High income to low income (25% of our current participants require financial aid).
- All ethnicities - including the existing and growing 33% Latino population .

### **Operating Support Narrative**

"If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music." - Albert Einstein

MusicLand has strategically built its classical music programs that serve community participants (ages newborn to 18) from child care organizations, pre-schools, both public and private schools, and home-schooled students.

During 2025-2026 we are adding NEW and EXPANDED programs that will impact and increase our overall program enrollment numbers. Grant funds will be used to certify and hire new instructors; allow for expanded collaboration with other arts organizations, professional musicians and instructors; pay for venue space for sessions, recitals, and concerts; assist with scholarships and funding for those in need; support the purchase of the necessary musical equipment and supplies for this program expansion; while allowing funds to invest in increased participation in our existing programs.

JACKSON HOLE YOUTH ORCHESTRA (JHYO) - MusicLand's flagship program.

- Takes place in the fall, winter & spring with 29 weeks of Monday rehearsals @ The Center. Current enrollment is 15 musicians grades 7-12. June 2026 Annual final performance at The Center.

- (NEW) Summer Composition Workshop with GTMF's Barb Scowcroft and Steven Laven along with the MusicLand faculty. 8 weeks of summer orchestra experiences including attendance @ GTMF rehearsals & performances. Culminates in final JHYO performance at Walk Hall on August 12, 2025. Program is designed to recruit increased participants for the 29 week school year JHYO program.

#### SUZUKI STRINGS PROGRAM (Violin & Cello).

- Private violin lessons with Michelle Quinn for 29 weeks. Culminates in semester recitals for students at the end of May.
- 30-45 minute Cello private and group lessons with Vince Gutwein for 29 weeks. Culminates in recitals to demonstrate skills learned.
- 4-day annual spring workshop with master Suzuki teachers culminating with spring recital.
- (NEW) Pre-Twinkle Violin Summer Camp with Michelle Quinn. Curriculum includes a week of beginning violin technique, music theory, and music appreciation. Program is designed to recruit students for Suzuki fall Violin private and group program.

#### SUZUKI PIANO PROGRAM.

- (NEW) Responding to years of demand by our community for piano learning for ages 4+, MusicLand is beginning 7 / 17 Suzuki private piano lessons by certified instructor. Private lessons to take place in The Center offices. Recital planned to demonstrate learning skills in fall and spring.

#### MUSIC TOGETHER® PROGRAM (Ages 0-5/Caregivers).

- (EXPANDED SESSIONS) MusicLand is partnering/collaborating with Teton Music School in order to offer increased classes to accommodate community demand by parents and caregivers. Scheduled sessions to take place to experience music, where children can sing, wiggle and play. Sessions take place at The Center.
- (NEW) MusicLand is working with the Children's Learning Center to hold an additional Music Together® session.

#### RHYTHM KIDS® PROGRAM (Ages 4-6).

- (EXPANDED SESSIONS) This popular program that began with only one session, will now increase sessions to take place after-school and afternoon sessions, during the summer to be held at The Center.

The addition of NEW and EXPANDED classical music education programs contributes to MusicLand's capacity building goals. Since 2019, our programming provides positive, meaningful experiences to Teton County's diverse population.

#### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

"Art is how we decorate space; Music is how we decorate time." - Jean Michel Basquiat

The Importance of Music and the Arts in MusicLand's classical music education programming: Music and the arts play a vital role in fostering creativity, enhancing cognitive skills, encouraging emotional expression, and strengthening social and cultural understanding. Their impact extends beyond individuals, enriching entire communities.

MusicLand's scheduled programs for 2025-2026 offer benefits for Individuals:

- Cognitive Growth: Engaging in music and the arts sharpens problem-solving, pattern recognition, and critical thinking skills.
- Emotional Well-being: Artistic expression through music provides an outlet for emotions, boosts self-esteem, and improves communication skills.
- Academic Enhancement: Research suggests that involvement in music supports improvements in math, reading, verbal skills, and critical thinking.
- Social Development: Participating in music as an art form fosters collaboration, patience, empathy, and healthy social interactions.
- Memory and Focus: Music, in particular, has been shown to enhance memory and cognitive function.
- Self-Expression: Music offers powerful ways to share thoughts, emotions, and stories.
- Stress Relief: Engaging in creative activities helps reduce anxiety and promote relaxation.
- Motor Skills: Movement-based musical activities aid in physical coordination and fine motor development.
- Cultural Awareness: Exposure to musical arts helps deepen appreciation for history, diverse cultures, and different perspectives.

MusicLand 's scheduled programs for 2025-2026 offer benefits to the community:

- Driving Social Change: Music as an art form serves as a catalyst for challenging norms, inspiring activism, and fostering dialogue.
- Community Building: Concerts, recitals and performances bring people together, strengthening community bonds.
- Cultural Preservation: Classical music education helps safeguard traditions and keep cultural heritage alive.

- Inclusivity and Accessibility: Our programming provides a platform for diverse musicianship, ensuring opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities.
- By supporting music and the arts, we invest in personal growth, cultural enrichment, and the collective well-being of our communities.

With NEW/EXPANDED programming for 2025-2026 (described in the Operating Support Section of this application), MusicLand offers stellar and fun music education beginning with newborns and including youth up through the age of 18. Our variety of programming promotes the arts through offering classical music education, appreciation, and participation for our community's youth - inspiring creativity and expanding our youth's horizons. Each year we have successfully reached over 130 community youth and impacted over 122 local families. Through increased partnerships/collaborations with other arts organizations along with strategically adding new programs and certified instructors, MusicLand is now positioned to double its enrollment as well as increase its impact numbers. For over the past six years, we have been turning away the participation of 10-15 families per year due to lack of instructors and inadequate program space. Going forward and with the support of grant funds, we can meet the demand from our community for additional programs and expand classical music education, building our capacity to serve our community.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

"Feed the soul art and music, it will live forever." - Julie Andrews

Music education is a powerful tool for positive youth development. At MusicLand, our mission is to expand opportunities for young people (ages 0-18) to experience and benefit from the many advantages of classical music education. 2025-2026 MusicLand's NEW/EXPANDED programming is being offered with our goal to build our capacity.

Our goals are shaped by the valuable feedback of our students, their families, our skilled and passionate instructors, and our dedicated board of directors while meeting community demand for expanded classical music education. We are committed to making music education an enjoyable, engaging, and memorable experience, fostering a lifelong love for the art of music with these NEW and EXPANDED programs.

The following NEW/EXPANDED PROGRAMS are designed to meet the specific goal of recruiting and attracting increased MusicLand program enrollment in classical music education..

The JACKSON HOLE YOUTH ORCHESTRA (JHYO) SUMMER COMPOSITION WORKSHOP is a NEW MusicLand program scheduled during the summer when our community's youth are available to participate. The purpose is to recruit increased participants to our JHYO 29-week school year program (fall and spring months) - MusicLand's flagship

artistic program with conductor, Vince Gutwein. The workshop represents a collaboration with the Grand Teton Music Festival (GTMF) where two renowned GTMF musicians, Barbara Scowcroft (<https://music.utah.edu/faculty/barbara-scowcroft.php>) and Steven Laven (<https://stevelaven.com/profile.html>), will share their music expertise and experiences in the art of creating music through composition. The 8-week workshop includes attending GTMF rehearsals and performances at Walk Festival Hall in Teton Village, WY. A final JHYO performance will take place at Walk Hall on August 12, 2025 to culminate the workshop and provide the opportunity for the youth orchestra to demonstrate skills and expertise they learned.

SUZUKI STRINGS - PRE-TWINKLE VIOLIN SUMMER CAMP is a NEW MusicLand program with Michelle Quinn, ED and instructor. Students in grades K-5 join our certified Suzuki violin teacher, Mrs. Quinn for a week of fun experiencing the art of string music. Music theory, beginning violin technique and music appreciation is the focus. The purpose for the camp is to prepare students for our Suzuki Violin Fall program or just have fun!

SUZUKI PIANO is a NEW program responding to years of community demand for piano learning. Youth ages 4 and up receive weekly private lessons by a Suzuki certified instructor in MusicLands Center of the Arts offices. Recitals, held in the fall and spring, will celebrate the learning experiences of students participating in the art of piano playing.

MUSIC TOGETHER® PROGRAM for 2025-2026 has EXPANDED SESSIONS to meet the demand from families/caregivers in our community.

- MusicLand is partnering with Teton Music School at The Center to offer increased classes. Ages 0-5, accompanied by their caregivers, experience music where children can sing, wiggle and play while enhancing a toddler's language, cognitive abilities, emotional social and physical responses, learning habits, and music appreciation.

- MusicLand is collaborating with the local Children's Learning Center to hold ADDITIONAL Music Together® sessions.

RHYTHM KIDS® PROGRAM for 2025-2026 has EXPANDED SESSIONS - a popular program for our youth, ages 4-6, that began last year with only one session, is being offered in the afternoons after-school as well as during the summer months at The Center.

The addition of NEW & EXPANDED classical music education programs contributes to MusicLand's art learning goals while providing meaningful experiences to our diverse local population.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

"Music is the universal language of mankind." - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

## ORGANIZERS & PRINCIPALS:

MICHELLE QUINN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – Michelle Quinn founded MusicLand in 2019 with a vision to bring classical music education to the youth of her community. A longtime resident of Teton County, WY, for over 27 years, she has played the violin for more than 45 years and has been teaching for 18 years. Throughout her career, Michelle has performed with and been a member of several renowned symphony orchestras. As the founder of Snake River Strings, she collaborates with other professional musicians to perform locally. She is also one of the few Certified Suzuki teachers in Wyoming and holds certification as a MUSIC TOGETHER® instructor.

VINCE GUTWEIN, CONDUCTOR AND CERTIFIED SUZUKI INSTRUCTOR – Vince Gutwein brings exceptional teaching and performance expertise to MusicLand, playing a key role in the organization's success. As the conductor of the Jackson Hole Youth Orchestra, MusicLand's original flagship program, he has been instrumental in shaping and expanding its offerings. With over 23 years of dedication to Teton County School District No. 1's music program, Vince has had a profound impact on music education in the community. He holds both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Music Education from the University of Wyoming and serves as the lead instructor for MusicLand's Suzuki Cello program.

BRIAN CARR, MUSICLAND'S BOARD PRESIDENT & MARKETING DIRECTOR – Brian serves as a Battalion Chief for Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, bringing a wealth of leadership and experience to MusicLand. He plays a key role in ensuring that our brand, vision, and goals are effectively and stylistically communicated. With a strong academic background in classical languages, literatures, and linguistics, along with a deep appreciation for the arts, Brian is a valuable asset to our organization, helping to bridge the gap between music education and community engagement.

ISSAC BEVIS, MUSICLAND'S IT DIRECTOR - Isaac is an invaluable member of the MusicLand team. With an extensive background in music, as well as all things technological, he shares his graphic arts expertise to keep our marketing professional.

## INSTRUCTORS:

MusicLand selects only qualified, certified instructors for its music education programs. They share their expertise in honoring music as an art and fill the important role of adding strength to this program.

## VOLUNTEERS:

The success of our programs is due to our volunteers who make themselves available, as needed, in our various activities, fundraiser events and music education programs.

#### COLLABORATORS:

MusicLand believes the the common denominator for our sustainability is to form partnerships and collaborations. Workshops take place with the Grand Teton Music Festival. End of the season performances take place with the Jackson Hole Community Band. Collaborating with Teton Music School, a supporting arts organization, for the Music Together® programs makes a greater collective difference in serving our community.

#### **Budget Narrative**

Valuable feedback and unwavering dedication to MusicLand's growth and expansion have strengthened our capacity-building efforts. Our primary goal is to govern and enhance our expanding programs, ensuring that we reach a diverse community with accessible, enjoyable, and reputable classical music education.

Our expanded programming brings additional expenses, including venue rentals for classes and performances, impactful marketing and advertising to boost enrollment, hiring and certifying new instructors, increasing compensation for current staff, and expanding scholarships and financial aid for lower-income participants. These costs will be offset through program enrollment fees, grant funding, and generous community donations.

MusicLand's total grant request for this application represents just 5% of our overall operating budget for 2025-2026. This funding is essential in supporting and sustaining classical music education for our youth.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WILDLIFE ART OF THE UNITED STATES

[WWW.WILDLIFEART.ORG](http://WWW.WILDLIFEART.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Two of a Kind

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The mission of the National Museum of Wildlife Art is to impart knowledge and generate wonder through art and education. Our vision is to inspire connections with wildlife and nature. Aligned with these guiding principles, our current strategic goals aim to:

1. Sustain & Grow Financial Capacity: Strengthen financial resources to ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of museum initiatives.
2. Enhance Exposure & Quality of the Permanent Collection: Increase the visibility and accessibility of our permanent collection through strategic curation, conservation efforts, and innovative exhibition design, fostering deeper engagement and appreciation among visitors.
3. Expand Outreach and Increase Attendance: Broaden community outreach efforts and implement targeted marketing strategies to attract diverse audiences, fostering greater participation and attendance while promoting awareness of the museum's offerings.
4. Build Sustainable Museum Operation: Implement environmentally conscious practices and operational efficiencies to minimize ecological footprint and maximize resource utilization, ensuring responsible stewardship of museum resources for future generations.
5. HR, Culture & Governance: Foster a supportive and inclusive organizational culture, invest in staff development and training, and uphold strong governance principles to promote effective leadership, transparency, and accountability throughout the museum.



For this exhibit, our focus is on increasing engagement with the permanent collection by presenting 25 paired artworks that depict similar animal subjects across different media, styles, and time periods. By exploring visual and thematic connections between works, the exhibition will encourage close looking and deeper reflection on artistic process and interpretation. This accessible, multi-generational experience is designed to engage new and returning visitors, spark curiosity, and highlight the richness of our collection in innovative ways.

## **Community**

The National Museum of Wildlife Art (NMWA) has served a diverse demographic for 38 years, welcoming tourists, local residents, and underserved populations. As a major regional tourist destination and vital cultural resource, the Museum serves communities across four counties within a 100-mile radius of Jackson, Wyoming.

Located in Teton County—where over two million tourists visit annually and income disparity is among the highest in the U.S.—NMWA is committed to ensuring equitable access to the arts. Our community includes rural populations, a growing Hispanic demographic, local schools, and Indigenous communities. We offer free admission on the first Sunday of every month to Jackson Hole locals—26 free Sundays during the Two of a Kind exhibit. Enrolled tribal members receive free admission through our Indigenous Access Program. Discounted admission is also available via \$2-off brochures distributed at the Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce and throughout the area.

We foster engagement with all visitors through inclusive programming, accessible interpretation, and ongoing outreach. Community input informs our work, including feedback from the sight-impaired community that shaped our 3D-touch exhibit. Bilingual staff and translated materials support Spanish-speaking visitors, and partnerships with Indigenous communities help amplify Native voices through land acknowledgments and co-created programming that reflects lived experiences.

While we do not provide lodging accommodations, we direct visitors to the Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce, which offers a range of accessible, budget-conscious options. Our staff are also prepared to respond to access and accommodation requests, helping ensure all individuals can fully participate in the Museum experience.

## **Evaluation**

We employ a diverse range of evaluation methods to comprehensively measure the impact of our programs and services within the community. Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data, we gather insights to inform decision-making at all levels, ensuring our initiatives remain responsive to community needs and preferences.

Our evaluation approach encompasses various assessment techniques, including observational, conversational, and self-selected methods such as paper and digital surveys. Visitor testimonials serve as a powerful tool for gauging program effectiveness, capturing firsthand experiences and perspectives. We actively engage with

students, teachers, and caretakers through spontaneous conversations to assess program success and gather feedback.

We conduct online and in-person surveys and meetings with educators to gather valuable insights into the impact of our youth and adult art education programs. Visitor surveys play a crucial role in evaluating exhibit efficacy, guiding our staff in making informed decisions for future programming. Our staff and volunteers record visitor engagement with in-gallery labels and various learning platforms, enabling us to understand audience preferences and behaviors. We also utilize iPad-based assessments in some exhibits, allowing visitors to provide immediate feedback on their experience.

Attendance data collected at the Welcome Desk for all programs, exhibits, and events serves as a valuable metric for assessing popularity and engagement levels. Additionally, we track social media metrics across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to gauge online community engagement and reach.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The National Museum of Wildlife Art owns its land and building, with estimated annual operating costs covering utilities (\$95,560), janitorial services (\$19,260), insurance for art and liability (\$80,343), phone/internet (\$12,252), security services (\$93,034), building maintenance (\$66,951), operating supplies (\$51,503), advertising (\$100,622), and Curatorial staff salaries (\$300,000).

For the upcoming exhibit *Two of a Kind*, running from November 1, 2025, to April 26, 2026, overhead costs are \$19,746.80. This figure is based on a square footage cost calculation for the Bison and Changing Visions galleries, where the exhibit will be held. The show will be on view for 176 days and will occupy approximately 5% of the Museum's total 51,000 square feet. These galleries provide a distinctive setting to present paired artworks in a spacious, contemplative environment that supports the exhibit's goal: encouraging visitors to look more closely at animal-themed works and engage deeply with questions of style, medium, artistic intent, and interpretation.

*Two of a Kind* will feature 25 pairings of works drawn from a range of media—including paintings, sculptures, prints, ceramics, and photographs. Each pair will explore visual and conceptual similarities between depictions of animals, often of the same species, while inviting inquiry into the differences between them. From size and materials to message and audience, the works will serve as entry points into conversations about artistic process, influence, and meaning. The variety of pairings is designed to appeal to multigenerational audiences and spark connections across interests—from conservation and storytelling to formal technique and cultural context.

The exhibition will involve the Museum's Curatorial Department, including two curators, a preparator, and a registrar. The team began dedicated work on the exhibit in September 2024, focusing approximately 25% of their time on developing and planning the show. While the majority of works are from NMWA's permanent collection,

the team is also working to borrow select pieces from institutions such as Art Bridges to expand the diversity of artists and perspectives featured.

Dr. Tammi Hanawalt, NMWA's Curator of Art, is curating the exhibition. Her expertise lies in Native American art history and Art of the American West. From 2017 to 2020, she was an adjunct professor at the Institute of American Indian Arts, and since joining NMWA in 2021, she has curated 12 exhibitions.

Operating support funds will be allocated to cover the overhead costs associated with hosting this exhibit, ensuring its successful presentation and accessibility to our broad and diverse audience.

### **Project Support Narrative**

From November 1, 2025 through April 26, 2026, the National Museum of Wildlife Art (NMWA) will present *Two of a Kind*, a new exhibition in the Changing Visions and Bison Galleries that explores the power of pairing. Featuring 25 pairs of artworks in a wide variety of media—including paintings, sculptures, photographs, prints, and ceramics—this project will invite audiences to examine how artists depict similar subjects, particularly animals, using different materials, styles, and messages. Through intentional juxtapositions, this exhibition will foster closer looking and deeper engagement with the collection, prompting visitors to ask: how does medium shape meaning? What do surface similarities conceal? How do artists across time respond to one another or to shared themes?

Each pair will offer a unique point of contrast or comparison. While some groupings may emphasize differences in scale or material—appealing to younger and more tactile learners—others will highlight thematic or stylistic variation, engaging conservationists and art enthusiasts interested in advocacy, storytelling, and artistic influence. By anchoring each pairing in animal imagery, visitors will find a familiar entry point that supports our mission of connecting people, art, and wildlife.

Approximately 46 of the artworks featured will come from NMWA's permanent collection, with 3–5 loans from outside institutions such as Art Bridges. For example, we will pair Horace Pippin's *Holy Mountain I* (1944), a vision of racial harmony, with Edward Hicks's *Peaceable Kingdom* (1822–25), a 19th-century allegory of Quaker ideals. Together, these works illustrate how artists from different eras and cultural backgrounds have used animal imagery to express social and spiritual themes.

In addition to historic works, the exhibition will highlight several contemporary women artists represented in our collection. Penelope Gottlieb reinterprets the work of John James Audubon by painting over his prints to comment on colonization and the impact of invasive species—offering both a visual and conceptual counterpoint to the originals. Painter Kathryn Mapes Turner, sculptor Sandy Scott, and artist September Vhay will also be featured. All three are closely tied to the Jackson art community and have participated in NMWA's *Western Visions* exhibition.

Each brings a unique perspective on wildlife and the role of women in the arts, and we plan to explore opportunities for a public panel or conversation featuring these artists during the exhibition run.

Throughout development, our curatorial team—led by Dr. Tammi Hanawalt—will collaborate with artists, scholars, and lending institutions to ensure diverse representation and dynamic interpretation. Dr. Hanawalt, an expert in Native American art and the American West, has curated more than a dozen exhibitions at NMWA since 2021 and brings a thoughtful and inclusive approach to exhibition design and public engagement.

Requested project support funds will be used for artist and lender fees, shipping for borrowed works, graphic design and Spanish translations, printing, framing and pedestals, delivery costs, interpretive materials, curatorial research, and community programs aligned with the exhibition. These funds will help us create a vibrant, accessible experience that inspires visitors to look again and look deeper.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Support comes from various funding sources, including admissions, Museum Shop, memberships, individuals & family foundations, facility rental, and endowment earnings. Key partners include NMWA trustees, National Christian Foundation, Brinson Foundation, Hearst Foundations, Mays Family Foundation, Lea Charitable Trust, and Robert S. & Grayce B. Kerr Foundation. Grant support comes from the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, the Cultural Council of Jackson Hole, WCTF, and WAC, among others.

Bank of Jackson Hole, First Western Trust, EcoTours, Spackmans and Associates, and other local businesses are loyal supporters. Thousands of annual volunteer hours comprise the bulk of our in-kind donations. We receive catering, design, and publications discounts. Museum senior staff and board committees thoroughly investigate the hard costs associated with exhibits, programs, and events. To set fundraising budget goals, overhead expenses allocated to exhibits/programs are also determined.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING- NELTJE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS

[HTTPS://WWW.UWYO.EDU/AS/NELTJE-CENTER/INDEX.HTML](https://www.uwyo.edu/as/neltje-center/index.html)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Amplifying Our Voice: A Strategic Communications Initiative for the Neltje Center

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission is to serve as a sanctuary where imagination flourishes, creativity thrives, and artistic excellence is nurtured. Through interdisciplinary residencies, visiting artist workshops, and statewide partnerships, we empower students, faculty, and creatives from across the state in all disciplines to explore and expand their artistic practice.

#### Strategic Goals:

- To serve as a satellite campus for the arts, culture and humanities programming of the University of Wyoming to encourage more exploratory and expansive practices of faculty and students through a program of mini-residencies outside a traditional academic setting.

-To be a place of artistic development that prioritizes process over finished product by bringing world-class creative groups (dance companies, theater groups, visual artist collectives, music ensembles, etc) who have community engagement as a key part of their practice, to give the Sheridan community and beyond a behind-the-scenes look into the creative process.

-To embody the vision of Neltje (1934-2021), an artist, philanthropist, educator, and entrepreneur whose contributions to the state of Wyoming are considerable, and to communicate her impact and promote her legacy for future generations.

-To become a leader in the arts statewide and a hub for artistic exchange and innovation. Through our work with artists and our partnerships with arts organizations across the state, to be a catalyst in strengthening Wyoming's creative economy.

### Community

Communities we serve:

Rural Artists– Providing resources, networking, & professional development for creatives statewide

University of Wyoming– Offering off-campus learning, residencies, & interdisciplinary workshops. We foster engagement & connection beyond traditional academic settings.

Sheridan County– Engaging the local community through arts programming & cultural events to provide opportunities for lifelong learning in the arts.

We identify needs through direct engagement, participant feedback, & collaboration with arts & economic development organizations.

We foster inclusion through:

Dedicated Programming– Supporting rural creatives with accessible workshops & residencies.

Partnerships– Collaborating with organizations to reach underserved groups.

Cultural Representation– Incorporating diverse perspectives, including Indigenous & folk arts.

Community Initiatives– Developing mentorship programs, public art projects, & tailored workshops.

We ensure accessibility through:

Virtual Access– We offer remote participation options whenever possible, & our online materials follow the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA standards & adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Financial Support– Low-cost or no-cost programming. For example, our upcoming 4-day 'Listening with Water' program is free & we provide accommodations & meals.

Personalized Accommodations– Diet & allergy concerns are always addressed in our pre-event intake forms. Our promo materials include a contact for accessibility questions, & through our connections with UW we can provide sign language interpretation, sensory-friendly break spaces, & accommodations to the physical environment.

Our commitment ensures all individuals can fully engage with & benefit from our programs.

## **Evaluation**

'Amplifying Our Voice: A Strategic Communications Initiative for the Neltje Center'

QUANTITATIVE METRICS:

Brand Recognition & Awareness – Growth in media mentions, website traffic, and social media engagement (measured in followers, reach, and impressions).

Audience Growth & Engagement – Increase in mailing list subscribers and program participants.

Funding & Partnership Opportunities – Number of new donors, sponsorships, or grant applications submitted.

Program Participation & Attendance – Number of residency applications, workshop attendees, and event participants.

Efficiency in Outreach – Time saved or reduced workload for staff in communication efforts (measured in hours or tasks).

#### QUALITATIVE METRICS:

Community & Stakeholder Feedback – Testimonials, survey responses, and qualitative feedback from participants.

Impact on Artists & Participants – Stories and case studies showcasing how engagement with the Neltje Center has influenced creative growth.

Perceived Effectiveness of Communication Strategy – Feedback from partners and participants on clarity, reach, and effectiveness of messaging.

Reputation & Visibility in the Arts Community – Perception of Neltje Center's influence and presence in Wyoming and beyond, based on expert opinions and peer recognition.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

#### OUR CHALLENGE

As a growing organization, we recognize the need to develop a clear strategy for communications and marketing. While we have been deeply focused on establishing programming and building strong relationships within the arts

community, we have not yet developed a comprehensive plan to effectively communicate our mission to our diverse audiences. This is particularly critical for us now in our organization's early stage of development. While we do impactful work in the arts, the Neltje Center and its mission is still unknown to many across the state.

Our key audiences include:

UW Campus – Students, faculty, and alumni who engage with our academic and creative programs.

Sheridan County Community – Local artists, educators, and community members who benefit from our programming and outreach.

Statewide Creative Economy – Wyoming-based artists, performers, and creative professionals who look to the Neltje Center for professional development and artistic opportunities.

National Presence – We aspire to expand our reach beyond Wyoming to attract national recognition and participation in our programs.

## OUR PLAN

To address this critical need, we seek funding to engage BARK Firm, a well-respected marketing and communications firm based in Casper, Wyoming. Their expertise will help us establish a clear brand identity, refine our messaging, and create essential communication materials. This investment will enable us to:

- Develop a strategic communications plan tailored to our key audiences.
- Create branding & marketing materials that effectively convey our mission and impact.
- Improve our outreach efforts to attract broader participation & support.
- Strengthen our presence in the state & expand to a national audience.

## ALLOCATION OF FUNDS by the BARK Firm

Flat monthly fee of \$3,000 over a six-month timeline, totaling \$18,000.

Plus \$2,000 to be used for social media advertising costs.

The project will unfold in two phases:

Phase 1: BRAND DEVELOPMENT (30-60 days to complete)

BARK will create:



Brand Identity (Logo) & Branding Guidelines

Business Pack, including:

Business Cards

Letterhead

Email Signature

PowerPoint Template (cover slide & 1-2 internal slide designs)

Phase 2: MESSAGING & EXECUTION (after phase 1 completed, an additional 120 days to complete)

Develop targeted messaging for different audiences.

Create a strategic execution plan, including guidance on tracking and measuring success.

Provide a social media startup pack with 6-10 sample posts, including designed assets, messaging, & captions.

Advise on the best use of the remaining \$2,000 in the budget for social media placement.

Provide copy, guidance, & assets for website.

## SUSTAINABILITY & IMPACT

Once this strategic communications plan is developed, the Neltje Center will have a strong foundation for future outreach & engagement. The materials and strategy created through this project will be utilized for years to come, allowing us to efficiently communicate with our audiences, expand our impact, & secure additional funding and partnerships.

By investing in this initiative, WAC will be supporting not only the Neltje Center but also the broader Wyoming arts ecosystem. A stronger, well-connected Neltje Center means more opportunities for artists, more collaborations across the state, & a thriving creative economy. Additionally, clear & concise messaging is essential to our efforts to secure funding for the Neltje Center for years to come.

## **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

## **Budget Narrative**

The Neltje Center is funded through a combination of institutional support, state funding, foundation & private donations.

Our core financial support comes from the UW Board of Trustees and UW's College of Arts & Sciences, which sustains our operations & programming as part of the university's broader commitment to fostering creativity & interdisciplinary collaboration.

Through FY2026, we also receive funding through the WY State Legislature's biennium budget, reinforcing the state's recognition of the Neltje Center's role in advancing the creative economy & providing opportunities. Private donations from Neltje's family members & dedicated supporters from across WY further contribute to our ability to offer meaningful programs, artist residencies, & community engagement initiatives.

While we do not currently receive in-kind donations, our partnerships with arts organizations, community leaders, & UW help amplify our impact by fostering collaborative programming & resource-sharing.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

NICOLAYSEN ART MUSEUM

[HTTPS://THENIC.ORG](https://thenic.org)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Nicolaysen Art Museum 2025-26 Community Support Grant

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Nicolaysen Art Museum (The NIC)'s mission is to collect, preserve, and exhibit the work of contemporary artists and present it to the community as a vital source of inspiration and education. Our Vision is to be the cultural anchor of our community.

The NIC's most recent strategic plan established five goals: build endowment; increase the number of members and quality of benefits; ensure community programs are mission-driven, highly engaging, and profitable; develop education programs, facilities, and resources; and create organizational excellence and sustainable practices. Per our 2025-2030 strategic plan, our first goal is to retain personnel, open new revenue streams, sustain community relationships, and reach new audiences. Our second goal is to increase our relevance by coordinating with local tourism and business organizations, increasing the amount of support to ensure museums are accessible to everyone regardless of financial ability, and increasing cooperation with local cultural organizations. Third, we are actively working on our brand kit for The NIC and hosting a community advisory board to improve our visitor experience. Our fourth goal is to increase board participation, and our fifth is to continue our professional development opportunities for staff to attend regional museum, leadership, non-profit, and education conferences. Our sixth and final goal is centered around our physical facility, both indoors and outdoors, through improving rentable spaces, vault renovation, and HVAC replacement to ensure the preservation and longevity of our permanent collection.

### Community

The NIC hosts visitors from all over our state and country and primarily serves Natrona County through our programming. As of 2024, the US Census Bureau reports Natrona County's population as 80,410. In 2024, the NIC had over 39,000 visitors. The NIC is the only museum in Wyoming dedicated to contemporary art and acts as our community cultural anchor by providing exhibitions, education programs, live art performances, and space for community groups to gather. We partner with community organizations on arts education programs for veterans, seniors, dementia care patients, grieving children, and adults with developmental disabilities, and provide art education classes for adults and children from preschool to 12th grade. We are the annual host site for the Natrona County School District's Fifth Grade Art Show, Wyoming Reads, and host over 700 students during the

state High School Art Symposium. We allow unlimited access to exhibitions and our permanent collection to college and high school art students. The NIC offers free memberships to certified Wyoming school teachers. In 2025-26, we will begin a Museums for All program. To allow those in our community who are considered low-income better access, the NIC aims to offer free memberships and education scholarships to households receiving SNAP/WIC benefits. Our goal is to increase our membership and classroom participation by 15% to reflect the demographic needs of our community. Our facility is ADA/Section 504 compliant, and staff are trained to address and fulfill all requests for accommodation to the best of our ability. Our accommodations process is advertised on our website and at our museum front desk. To accommodate those unable to visit the museum in person, our exhibitions are available virtually on our website.

## **Evaluation**

The NIC regularly seeks to understand how we can better serve our community. We look for underserved populations and how we can best make the arts accessible for all. The NIC uses both objective/quantitative and subjective/qualitative feedback to evaluate and measure the impact of our arts programs and services, and adjusts them according to that feedback. In addition, the NIC sets attendance, engagement, partnerships, and financial goals in advance for all community programming. Our art education lesson plans are based on National Core Art Standards with additional input from Wyoming State Standards. At the end of a multi-class session, the NIC educational staff surveys youth art program participants and their parents on improvements to key skill areas such as fine motor ability, communication, and creative expression to ensure that student needs are being met. Staff also surveys adult program participants after each program session to inquire about our success: what they learned, what could be improved, and what they want to learn in the future. After the program session, NIC staff have a debrief where we review whether we met, exceeded, or failed to meet our targets. Combined with an approach of keeping community needs as our focus, this allows for a system of continuous improvement that ensures that we always deliver the best programs possible. Using these methods, we know that our sustained ability to provide art education allows our students to see value in art, and thus see value in themselves when they create it, creating a feeling of self-worth, hope for the future, and the ability to impact the world in a positive, creative, and meaningful way.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The NIC requests CSG funding for operational support from July 2025 to June 2026, specifically for utility costs for our 25,000-square-foot museum and facilities. The NIC's annual expense budget, including in-kind, is \$1,166,549. Our combined utility bills average approximately \$3,670 a month. This includes water, waste collection, and electricity. Electricity is our largest utility bill, averaging \$3,215. For the timeframe of July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, the NIC has budgeted \$44K for utility expenses. Our other substantial operating expenses include \$358K in annual personal expenses for three full-time and nine part-time employees, including wages/salary, taxes, insurance, and benefits. The Nicolaysen Art Museum receives rent in-kind from the City of Casper for \$360K annually. The NIC's business liability insurance and building maintenance average \$72K annually. The NIC receives \$100K annually from the City of Casper 1 Cent funding for building maintenance and facility improvements. Other operation costs are covered by unrestricted revenue dollars from income generated from events, tuition/class/workshop fees, facility use/rentals, investment revenue, and membership dues, as well as funding from endowment distributions, foundations, grants, private donations, and legacy bequests. All CSG funding allocated by the Wyoming Arts Council to the NIC will be specifically used to pay electricity costs, allowing the NIC to allocate more unrestricted dollars toward personnel and other operating expenses.

## **Project Support Narrative**

NA

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The NIC offers a wide variety of arts learning programs for all ages. Our educators stay up-to-date with current national, state, and district standards for art education, ensuring all students receive the knowledge needed to continue their exploration into the arts. In FY23- 24, the NIC had 762 class participants. In 2025-26, our class line-up will include our staple programs. The NIC's goal is to increase class attendance by 15% during the upcoming fiscal year. Our youngest audiences are served through Preschool Picassos and our Saturday program, Art Play. Both Preschool Picassos and Art Play provide a safe and creative learning environment for preschoolers and their parents to explore creating artwork together. School-aged children (K-8) are reached through our Homeschool Art program, which enriches the lives of homeschooled children with a wide array of supplies, mediums, and standardized art projects designed with socialization and effective communication skills in mind. We also host an Art Club program for 1st-5th graders on Saturdays that serves as a window into the world of art, as well as Art Studio, which serves our teen audiences by providing the opportunity to express themselves through art. Corner Studio is a new class created for women to help them connect with other mothers and create artwork while child care is provided. The NIC is proud to partner with local institutions to host inclusive art accessibility art programs for all audiences. Here & Now is a program designed with Wyoming Dementia Care for patients with dementia and their caregivers. This program provides projects designed to help patients with dementia feel autonomous again. Outside the Lines is a free art program for veterans that was developed in partnership with the Veterans Center. With the assistance of the counselor they provide, we offer a space to connect with other veterans while focusing on creating something new, rather than on the past that brings them together. Creative Minds was developed for people with physical or intellectual impairments and is a partnership with NOWCAP and the ARC. Through step-by-step projects that accommodate all abilities, everyone is able to find value in the artwork they create. Finally, Creative Aging is a partnership with several regional senior living facilities that brings the art directly to our participants. This allows for those with lower mobility or the inability to drive to access our art programs.

June through August 2025, the NIC will offer nine summer camps for children between the ages of 6-15 years old. Our summer camps encourage creativity, exploration, and discovery. Three camps will be held in partnership with The Science Zone, including The Art Lab: Music and Masterpieces, Shark Week, and 3D Builders. Children will spend the first half of the day at the NIC and the second half of the day at The Science Zone. The 2025 NIC-exclusive summer camps include Creativity in Motion, Street Art, Myths and Legends of the World, Click It! Photography Camp, Taylor Swift Camp, and The Art of Glass.

Throughout the year, we partner with local schools with dual-language immersion programs to host cultural events, including Día de los Muertos and Chinese Lunar New Year, which highlight and celebrate cultures in our community. We also host an annual Holiday Open House in December, focusing on the art and history of the winter season. Our cultural events are centered around education and are free to the public.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our goals for our arts learning programs come from the Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Content and Performance Standards and the National Core Art Standards for our preschool through twelfth-grade students. These specific goals include improving fine motor skills and technical ability; patience and time management; creativity and self-expression; emotional resilience; effective communication; sense of accomplishment; sense of self-worth; attention to detail; communication of process; and sense of enjoyment. We strive for generalized goals for all of our classes, such as providing a safe and supportive place for local children to explore their abilities, autonomy, and sense of self creatively through the arts. According to author and art educator, Downi Griner, in her 2012 dissertation, too many students set getting a good grade as their only goal. She states, "To some a grade becomes the end goal rather than creation, experience, learning or communication." Through the pure creation of artwork, positive childhood experiences, and effective communication, we foster autonomy, relatability, and competence in our students, something all art educators strive for as goals that, when combined, lead to intrinsic motivation to create art outside the museum on their own time, rather than something that is only done in exchange for a grade. Using after-class surveys instead of grades, our students and their parents let us know how we did to help them toward these goals, allowing us to focus on areas of improvement.

Adult program learning goals are tied to the National Core Standards of Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting. These goals are achieved by working with a variety of mediums, engaging with and responding to art through critiques, self-expression, and exploration. The same goals and surveys listed above are also adapted to apply to our adult students following classes and workshops.

Each arts learning program has its own specific goals, as well. We design each curriculum to be tailored to the needs of the specific group served in each class. For example, our Here and Now lessons are designed to have sensory components in hopes of stimulating memories, and our classes for seniors are designed to stimulate hand-eye coordination in order to retain dexterity. When we partner with the Casper Veterans Center to offer a free art class for veterans and active service members, the counselors describe one of the most difficult aspects of returning to civilian life as being that the military teaches members to think in terms of black and white with a strict code of conduct. Our goal here is to show them that art permits them to make mistakes, start over, and see the world through a creative lens. We work hard to create a safe and supportive environment for their expression. Our accessibility programs are reviewed either by the participants or their caregivers at the end of each session, approximately every three to six months, to see if they are satisfied with the learning goals they get to set for themselves. We have social hours built into our Here and Now, Outside the Lines, Creative Aging, and Creative Minds programs so we can get subjective feedback about what clients like or dislike about each session, its structures, and goals, and adjust them accordingly, as needed.

Our ultimate goal is to promote the intrinsic value and importance of art and the creation of new artists through the inspiration, education, and creation of art. Our art community is sustained through our arts learning programs, as even our current staff was inspired as children to become who they are by their own predecessors here at the NIC. Local artists on exhibit in our galleries were likewise inspired. This goal is, therefore, self-evident to us and drives everything we do in our passion for the arts.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Our Associate Curator of Education, Kim Breed, has an AA in Fine Art and has over ten years of art teaching experience. The NIC also has two part-time art educators. Kelsy Lempka holds a BA in Art Education from the University of Wyoming and has extensive experience in early childhood education, including six years at the NIC. Amy Christie holds a BA in Art Education and SPED and has four years of experience in museum-based art education. Both Kim and Kelsy have been awarded the Wyoming Art Education Association's Museum Art Educator of the Year in 2023 and 2025, respectively. With their combined experience, the NIC provides art classes for preschool, homeschool, and teen audiences weekly. For our art class for veterans, Outside the Lines, we partner with many local artists and studios to provide diverse art-making opportunities. In 2024, we worked with local artists Mike Hills, a jeweler, and Alicia Thaden, a pastel artist. Chris Ruggeseger, another local artist, has also helped teach our street art and graffiti programs for veterans and teen summer camps for the last 8 years. Counselors from the Veterans Center attend every session of Outside the Lines as both participants and professionals who can intervene if a student is in distress.

Artists with solo exhibitions in the NIC galleries lead seminars and workshops based on their art-making style or medium whenever possible. The creativity stations in our Discovery Center focus on these mediums used by our current gallery artists, as well. In 2025-26, our gallery exhibitions will feature solo exhibitions by artists Ezra Tucker and David Klaren, the WAC Fellowship Biennial, and an indigenous art showcase put together by Ashley Pourier, the curator at the Heritage Center in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. We will also feature numerous local artists in juried group exhibitions during January-March of 2026.

Of particular note, the NIC is also looking forward to our upcoming exhibition featuring local artist Zak Pullen, who is excited to be showing during our Spring 2026 education quarter. He will showcase his latest works, from children's book illustrations to advertising and community commissions. He also has plans to actively work in our gallery and speak to students who visit in droves during the High School Art Symposium. As the cultural anchor of our community, a concept Pullen holds in high esteem, we are proud to be his first choice to host this momentous exhibit. Through our collaborations with him, we are hosting professional development workshops for artists, bringing back exhibit catalogs, improving our marketing strategies by better utilizing our building's natural advertising spaces, and rethinking our fundraising process with our annual dinner and art auction to best serve local artists. This highlights the power of a relationship with one artist out of the countless artists we serve in our community, each expanding our creative horizons.

## **Budget Narrative**

The NIC's budget provides for a 25,000-square-foot art museum, 12 staff members, 20 contemporary art exhibitions, 15 educational programs, and numerous services and community cultural programs hosted at the museum per year. The NIC generates 60% of its revenue from contributed income, including sponsorships, grants, foundations, and individual donations. Approximately 40% of our income is generated from events, tuition/class/workshop fees, facility use/rentals, investment revenue, and membership dues. Examples of key partnerships include Blue Envelope and Walmart, which provide matching funds for community project support and art learning, and the City of Casper, which provides an in-kind gift of monthly rent for the building. Together,

the City of Casper and the NIC are caretakers of the facility and grounds. Our budget figures include personnel in our cash expenses for both Operating Support and Arts Learning total cash expenses.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

NORTHWEST COLLEGE

WWW.NWC.EDU

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Northwest Jazz Festival

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

As a distinguished part of Northwest College, the NWC Music Department is dedicated to individual achievement, global citizenship, and community vitality through exceptional and dynamic learning environments. We strive to provide a comprehensive music education to our own college students, in addition to local elementary and secondary students, and the community at large through the efforts of our vibrant faculty and staff. We are also fully-accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, maintaining high standards set by their organization. From orchestra to jazz ensembles to vocal groups and bands, we aim to provide the same quality performance and learning opportunities that are typically found only at schools many times our size.

In line with the mission of our music department, our goals include:

- Be responsive to the continuing education and cultural needs of the community.
- Be responsive to the needs of students and the community in future planning.

### **Community**

Roughly 49,000 people within 16 communities make up the service area in the three rural counties of Northwest's Big Horn Basin. Services include credit, adult education, workforce training, and continuing education classes through Powell's main campus, two centers in Cody and Worland, and extended campus communities. Both on-site and online instruction is available. Principal nearby towns include Powell, Cody, Worland, Lovell, Greybull, and Basin. Furthermore, we see participation from the greater Wyoming area and southeast Montana.

While the arts can sometimes be seen as under-appreciated in the region, NWC is one of just a few local arts organization in the area that is dedicated to continually providing quality events and experiences. There is an ongoing need to build the artistic community through performance and educational experiences that goes beyond just students and those who can afford to be a part of these types of opportunities. In an attempt to grow our audiences, we are motivated to provide engaging cultural experiences that will broaden learners in music education.

Our events specifically invite people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds to take part whether or not they have any familiarity with the arts. The Jazz Festival also offers discounted tickets to Hardin, Montana schools that include a significant population of Native American students, and we communicate with those teachers to promote awareness.

Every year, we continue to mold our events so they may reach the largest number of people. This past year in particular, we moved forward with scheduling changes within our calendar and during the Jazz Festival day which allowed the maximum amount of schools and students to experience our world-class adjudicators in concert.

### **Evaluation**

All events include a post event survey distributed to participants and staff. This information is gathered and reviewed in a post event meeting. Over the years, numerous tweaks to scheduling and programming have come about as a direct result of these surveys. Any comments related to the caliber of performers and adjudicators trigger a thorough examination.

In the past, we have also reviewed adjudicator scores and recorded comments for verification of any difficulties brought to our attention. We will always follow up with direct communication to any participant who may have concerns. While this is extremely rare as years of producing these events have them running quite smoothly, I can assure you that we endeavor to uphold Northwest College's mission and goals. The

success of complex events like these are built upon relationships. The various schools that participate have come to value the attention they receive and the quality of the instruction their students experience.

We simply could not have produced these events for as long as we have without maintaining a high level of educational and artistic integrity.

While many aspects of these events have been in place for decades in some cases, we are still responsive to change. An example of this responsiveness includes our move, in 2018, to a noncompetitive festival that emphasizes jazz education through longer one-on-one adjudication workshops and replacing a scored rating sheet with adjudicator comments. Also, as mentioned above, we have actively looked at our festival schedules so more schools, especially those traveling from further away, can attend performances from our adjudicators, and we have added workshops throughout the day to offer even more opportunities to learn.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

#### JAZZ FEST OPERATING COSTS

Total Jazz Fest costs are \$17,930 of which \$10,430 are operating costs. The largest expense of our festival pertains to the hiring of elite performers and qualified adjudicators. This includes artist fees, plane tickets/travel, lodging for two nights, and meals. The total artist expense this year will be \$12,500. Additional expenses include advertising through printed posters, social media, and newspaper spots (\$1450) as well as venue rental for the concert (\$330), administrative support (\$1,600), instrument/equipment rental (\$600) and awards for outstanding student performers/ensembles (\$400).

### **Project Support Narrative**

#### JAZZ FEST DETAILS

The 42nd annual Northwest Jazz Festival (March 3rd) represents our largest and most enduring public offering in the NWC Music Department. The jazz festival is a non-competitive, adjudicated festival that draws Middle School, High School, and College-level vocal/instrumental ensembles from WY and surrounding states. Groups participating in the festival are adjudicated on their performances and immediately receive a one-on-one clinic by one of our guest adjudicators. The clinicians are often also headliners and/or nationally recognized performers and jazz educators. We will also be hiring a few additional instrumental and vocal adjudicators from around the country. These individuals are typically hired early in the Fall, and we find qualified

adjudicators that often hold college professor positions. Educational opportunities have included "Meet the Artist" clinics for students, educators and the public to learn more about the jazz idiom and the musicians. We have also hosted sessions focusing on jazz improvisation. Included in our one-day festival will be an inspiring public concert from our guest adjudicators and headlining performers.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Northwest Jazz Festival is a non-competitive educational opportunity for vocal and instrumental jazz students at all levels of proficiency. High-quality assessment and instruction is provided by respected jazz educators in a positive and constructive learning environment. By participating, students and teachers are able to be a part of an experience that promotes the only true American art form of jazz music. Performance practice, musical concepts, and jazz history are all prominently explored during each workshop, and inspiration is garnered through Q&A sessions and live performances. Building interest and passion for jazz music cannot be overstated and is a central goal in the overall learning process of our festival.

There are three forms of feedback utilized in the adjudication process for our festival: written comments, recorded comments in real time, and comments in a clinic setting. Attendees also have the opportunity to observe others and develop their critical thinking skills as they gain a further appreciation for the art form. The students and directors are then able to return to their schools to work on the areas of improvement outlined for their particular ensemble and individual goals.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The Northwest Jazz Festival Arts Learning Goals are as follows:

1. Provide a student-centered education environment that fosters positivity, inspiration, and the thirst for knowledge
2. Offer a multitude of settings for student learning including: masterclasses, adjudication clinics, and live performances
3. Hire quality jazz educators that are capable of delivering a top-level education to the students

These goals have been at the core of the Northwest Jazz Festival for many years.

Goals are identified through the experiences of our faculty, all with extensive backgrounds in jazz music and education. We look toward other Jazz Festival experiences, All-State events, workshops/conventions, and foundational educational values laid out through members of the Jazz Education Network to help guide our goals.

Our planning team is consistently reminded of these foundational missions as we continue to provide a quality educational experience in the jazz idiom.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

We have hosted some of the greatest names in the history of jazz here at the Northwest Jazz Festival

including: Maynard Ferguson, Arturo Sandoval, Randy Brecker, the New York Voices, Saje, Accent, Lewis

Nash, and many more. Our 2025 Jazz Festival welcomed LA-based artist Moonchild, a soul-trio with a background in jazz music.

For additional adjudicators, we brought in Dr. Rob Tapper, a professor of trombone and director of Jazz Studies at the University of Montana; Dr. Jenna McLean, assistant professor of Commercial Music/Applied Voice at Idaho State University who holds a Doctor of Arts Degree in Jazz Voice from the University of Northern Colorado; and Rachel Schoessler who has been on our staff at our past three Vocal Jazz Academy events leading ensembles and holding workshops in songwriting and jazz voice. Moreover, we utilized NWC Faculty Dr. Zach Paris (drums), Dr. Andrey Gonçalves (bass), and Jeff Troxel (guitar) for clinics in improvisation and jazz combo performance. Dr. Robert Rumbolz heads our Music Technology program and is essential, along with our students, in set-up and running sound for both the instrumental and vocal sides of our festival. Eric Hagmann is our Vocal Instructor and coordinates the event by communicating with artists, directors, and staff.

The quality of adjudication is extremely high with many of the educators holding teaching positions at prolific colleges and universities around the country. We continue to seek out prominent performers in the national jazz community who would otherwise be inaccessible to our Wyoming students and community members. Traditionally, we have sought two to three adjudicators from each area (instrumental/vocal) who work with our incoming ensembles throughout the course of the day. These artists are discussed and handpicked through NWC music department meetings, and we specifically look for artists who are well-regarded in the current jazz scene. Furthermore, our NWC faculty and students work closely with these artists to ensure our festival runs smoothly.

### **Budget Narrative**

Music events at NWC rely on a number of key partnerships: Northwest College, the Northwest College Foundation, the Wyoming High School Activities Association, Hill Music of Casper, the Park County Travel Council, and the Wyoming Jazz Educators. These organizations provide equipment, facilities, volunteer workers, transportation vehicles, advertising, administrative assistance, and financial support for our festival.

In-Kind contributions cover those individuals who help coordinate our events. The festival has traditionally done well with school group registrations and ticket sales to the evening concert, but it takes much more than these income streams to hire and support our world-class performers and adjudicators in delivering high quality jazz education in Wyoming. Our Jazz Fest budget aligns with our ability to coordinate all these organizations together to create a memorable and inspiring day for our regional students and teachers at our events.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

NOWOODSTOCK

[HTTP://WWW.NOWOODSTOCK.COM](http://www.nowoodstock.com)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Nowoodstock XXIV

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of Nowoodstock music festival is to provide a venue for local and regional musicians to share their music and talents with the community, and for the under-served community of the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming and the town of Ten Sleep to have the opportunity to attend a festival featuring local, regional, and national touring musical talent.

In support of our mission, over the course of the last 23 years, Nowoodstock has presented over 260 musical acts in a wide variety of musical styles and genres, at least 80% of which have been from Wyoming. This record of achievement speaks to the initial goals and vision of the event's founders. This tradition continues.

The goals of the festival are evident in the event's inception. Pat O'Brien and Janna Hampton lamented the (1) dire lack of quality and variety of live music available in the Big Horn Basin in early 2001. They decided to start a music festival to occupy this void in the picturesque setting of Ten Sleep that summer. Nowoodstock quickly caught the attention of businesses and individuals eager to become associated with the event as sponsors. Nowoodstock is now (2) the premier three-day outdoor musical summer event in Washakie County and the Big Horn Basin. Some children that went to the first few festivals can now be seen with their own children at the festival. These families represent (3) the under-served population Nowoodstock identified in the beginning. Nowoodstock presents (4) an eclectic mix of music that is not typically available in the remote areas of Wyoming.

As of 2024, Nowoodstock has incorporated in the State of Wyoming and filed as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with the IRS. This new organization will continue the mission and goals of Nowoodstock's founders. It will also expand the reach of Nowoodstock throughout the state for sponsors and funding sources.

### Community

The population of Washakie, Hot Springs and Big Horn Counties have a combined population under 25,000 as of 2021. This is a very remote part of a remote state and suffers from a limited availability of cultural opportunities. The average individual income within these three counties is less than \$30,000 per year.

The Town of Ten Sleep provides Vista Park as the venue for Nowoodstock. The park is relatively flat, providing easy access by walker, cane or wheelchair. Invitations are extended to Big Horn Enterprises which provides residential, vocational, behavioral and life skills training to the developmentally disabled in Worland, Powell, and Thermopolis. Invitations are also extended to Worland Healthcare and Canyon Hills Manor in Thermopolis which are nursing homes. These invitations include access and use of handicap parking, handicap restroom facilities, free admission and bottled water for their staff and clients for Sunday's program.

Several low-income individuals take advantage of free admission for the weekend by volunteering their time to help with set up and tear down, the merchandise table, or managing trash. Nowoodstock offers free passes to current and former military personnel. Approximately 21 passes were provided to military and veteran personnel in 2024. Citizens 65 and older are admitted at half price for the Sunday performances. Dozens of seniors take advantage of these discounts each year. Children under 12 are admitted free.

According to the results of the 134 respondents to the 2024 Nowoodstock questionnaire: 77% of respondents were from 17 different towns in Wyoming, and 23% from 25 towns in 10 other states. Nowoodstock not only serves Ten Sleep, Washakie County and the Big Horn Basin, but the entire state of Wyoming.

## **Evaluation**

Attendees are urged and incentivized--by offering T-shirts, CDs, and passes to the following year's Nowoodstock festival--to provide personal data (name, address, phone, and e-mail) on a half sheet (8.5" x 5.5") of paper. Among the questions asked are: What is your impression of Nowoodstock? and What would you do to make this festival better? Also, volunteered demographic information has helped define the communities served by Nowoodstock. Response numbers have been as low as 83 in 2011 and as high as 169 in 2023. For the past fifteen years the makeup of the respondents is eerily similar. Every year during this period approximately 40% of responses came from people in the Big Horn Basin, 35% - 40% came from Wyoming outside the Basin, and 20% - 25% from out of state.

After each festival, the staff, volunteers, and Town Council hold formal and informal debriefs. Suggestions that have led to changes include creating a WiFi hot spot in the park, live streaming, and musical instruction on home spun instruments for the children with Miss V. The most common response on the evaluation forms each year is, "Don't change a thing."

In addition to the evaluation sheet, the event staff conducts numerous conversations with festival goers, vendors, and artists as to their views on the festival and what makes it good and what can make it better. After the event, the staff discusses all of these suggestions & comments to decide if any are deemed viable.

## **Operating Support Narrative**



Nowoodstock is requesting Operating Support for the stage, sound, lights, sanitation, and miscellaneous supplies. Nowoodstock is lucky to have limited year-round operating costs consisting primarily of phone service and internet access. The festival owns little other than a few pop-up tents, tool kit, computer, tablets and extension cords. This allowed the festival to weather the pandemic so far with minimal effect.

The festival requires substantial costs in production of the event. Nowoodstock, with its longevity has become a well-oiled machine. After twenty-three years of operation, familiarity of the site allows production crews to operate without event staff oversight. Operating support for Nowoodstock includes a 32' x 24' stage, full sound that will cover the entire park including a satellite speaker to project sound in the vendor area, and stage lighting. Also included is a separate sound engineer to mix the music for the live stream. The stage, sound, lights, and four technicians are provided by Dynamic Sound and Lighting from Casper. The live stream is provided by Range, Worland's local telephone provider at no cost. From 2003 until 2019, Nowoodstock employed River Sound and Bob Hussa for its production. During this period, River Sound provided excellent sound quality and helped the festival achieve its ultimate success. It was determined early that good quality sound is our product. After the retirement of Mr. Hussa in 2020, Nowoodstock has employed Dynamic Sound and Lighting with Mr. Jeff Schafer and Mr. Steve Misora to continue the excellence in our production. The stage has been in the same location since 2004, allowing the production company staff to spot and erect the stage without event staff supervision. Sound production, stage and lighting, represents fully 75% of the festival's operating expenses.

The next largest operating expense is sanitation. With 2,000 people attending the festival over the course of three days, 22 sanitary port-a-johns and 8 hand-washing stations are essential to the overall satisfaction and convenience of festival attendees. These facilities are refreshed daily during the festival. Facilities have been provided by Laird Sanitation of Greybull, Wyoming for the past twelve years. Due to the length of time that Laird Sanitation has provided these facilities, their workers know exactly where the port-a-johns and wash stations need to be located every year, saving event staff time and effort. These facilities are placed in two different convenient locations in the park. Wheelchair accessible facilities are located in the Ten Sleep Pioneer Museum which is located within the festival area of the park. Sanitation represents 20% of the festival's operating expenses.

The remaining 5% of operating expenses includes advertising in local newspapers; printing costs of programs, fliers, and posters; and miscellaneous supplies. Additional advertising is provided by the Washakie County Visitor's Council, [bighornmountaincountry.com](http://bighornmountaincountry.com).

Equal to the above expenses are the costs of hiring artists of sufficient talent to fill the 24 hours of music that constitute the program.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Nowoodstock is requesting Project Support from the Wyoming Arts Council for artist fees and accommodations which account for approximately 95% of project expenses.

To achieve our mission's goal each year Nowoodstock brings some of the best Wyoming talent to the festival.

Jeff Troxel has spent many years teaching and entertaining with his music in Wyoming. He taught jazz guitar at Northwest Wyoming Community College and Central Wyoming Community College. He's a well-known singer-songwriter. He's written a book on the guitar style of Chuck Pyle from Colorado.

Jalan Crossland received the Wyoming Governor's Arts Award in 2013 and is a national champion guitar player. Jalan is a Ten Sleep native and has been a staple and the main draw of the event for the previous 23 years. Every year, more people are present at his Saturday evening performance than any other time during the festival. Once again, Jalan will perform two shows this year.

Marlee Holdeman won the 2024 Wyoming Singer-Songwriter championship in Ten Sleep last September. It is Nowoodstock's policy that the winner of the competition receives two shows at Nowoodstock music festival. Marlee is the fifth consecutive champion to receive this consideration.

Reckless Rooster: Hailing from the rural mountain town of Pinedale, Wyoming, award-winning Americana/Folk multi-instrumentalist, Reckless Rooster is the culmination of a decade's worth of hard touring combined with a do-or-die-trying attitude the likes of which one could expect from a former working ranch cowboy turned traveling troubadour.

Rob Weimann is bringing his band, Big Bob in the Sky, from Lander to Nowoodstock XXIV. Rob is an alum in that he played two shows as the Singer-Songwriter winner several years ago. This year, Rob appears a part of a 4-piece band.

LLMN is a local favorite. The Jordan twins from Hyattville and the Blutt brothers from Ten Sleep make up this fun band. The Jordan twins have yet to reach high school and will appear at Nowoodstock for the 4th year in a row. The Blutt brothers are freshmen, one at Ten Sleep High School and the other at Northwest Community College in Powell. Nowoodstock is dedicated to bringing young talent to a wider audience.

Jamie Hansen is from Laramie and brings a full band to Nowoodstock XXIV. Over the past four years, she has released 12 singles and a live EP, earning recognition as a Nashville Songwriters Association "One to Watch" and praise from Buzz Music for her "unique vocal prowess." Jamie's most recent album has just been released: 1 2 Many.

Little Hurricane is a powerhouse Dirty Blues trio out of California. Having headlined shows in Skandinavia, New Zealand and Australia, this band brings professionalism and excitement to the stage.

Lena Rich was born in Maine and recently relocated to Livingston, MT. A graduate of Oberlin College & Conservatory, Lena designed her own major, pulling from elements of music composition, poetry, and performance. Lena is playing as part of a 4-piece band.

Elana Hayden is originally from New York and recently relocated to Billings, MT. As an in-demand New York session singer, songwriter, jingle/voiceover artist, and performer, Elana Hayden has written, recorded, produced and licensed numerous songs, jingles and voiceovers for TV, film, radio and video including spots for Showtime, HBO, the NBA, WNBA, Maury Povich, The Montel Show, and several other shows as well.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Nowoodstock is funded from various sources including sponsorships, ticket sales, in-kind donations, vendor fees, and Wyoming Arts Council grants. This formula has allowed us to operate for over two decades. Sponsors generate approximately 36% of the festival revenue and cover the majority of upfront costs. In-kind donations account for about 11% of the budget. Vendor fees generate about 7% and grants about 9%. The remaining 37% is generated by ticket sales.

The Town of Ten Sleep provides Vista Park as the festival venue. Range Communications provides a WiFi hot spot and live streaming of the festival as well as radio and social media advertising. Big Horn Rural Electric provides the electrical service. The Worland/Ten Sleep Visitors Council provides statewide advertising through Visions West Marketing. SerlKay Printing provides 600 festival posters and the Northern Wyoming News matches all print ads for the festival. A dozen other entities provide small in-kind donations.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

OFF SQUARE THEATRE COMPANY

WWW.OFFSQUARE.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Off Square Theatre Company's Professional Season and Arts Education

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Off Square Theatre Company (OST)'s mission is to create high-quality live theatre experiences that bridge divides. Our vision is theatre as a catalyst for connection through entertainment paired with cultural and philosophical content that sparks dialogue.

OST's programming centers on three pillars: 1. producing live, professional theatre that prioritizes artistic excellence; 2. providing high-quality theatre arts education programs; and 3. bridging divides by bringing people together - first into one room, then into an emotionally rich shared experience, and finally into a more resilient community.

OST is in the third year of a five-year strategic plan. As outlined by our plan, see below for overarching goals as well as sub-goals for 2025-2026.

1) increased production and design capacity via number of productions and engagement of new artists

2025-2026: Work with one new director and one new designer to expand professional production capacity and expertise

2) a 50% increase in the demographic representation of backgrounds and perspectives from audience and program participants.

2025-2026: Make programmatic selections to attract multi-generational audiences. Begin researching and planning for an organizational equity assessment.

3) an increase in the leadership capacity of youth

2025-2026: Codify teaching standards/core curriculum, share curriculum with external partners

#### 4) strengthen and expand the continuity of education programs

2025-2026: Expand capacity and reach of education programs through partnerships with existing organizations (local schools both public and private, education-oriented nonprofits). Expand recruitment of teaching staff through targeted advertisements and direct solicitation.

### **Community**

OST aims to reach many residents of Teton County in one or more of our programs each year. Teton County is full of demographic opposites—drastic income inequality and racial disparities define us. For example, despite the high per capita income in our county, 20% of public school students rely on free or reduced-cost lunches. OST is in the third year of a five-year strategic plan that aims to increase the number of underrepresented voices served by and contracted for our programs.

In professional productions, where we hire actors, designers, and directors on a contract basis, OST collaborates with artists from nondominant communities. We contract Wyoming artists alongside professionals from more populated areas. This model allows local artists to experience a diverse workplace and allows our audiences to witness diverse performances. This includes racial diversity alongside diversity of career experience, religion, and worldview.

In the education sphere, Teton County is 15% Latinx. A well-run scholarship process and Spanish-language materials are key components in OST's engagement with this community. We have also piloted the use of a lottery system in select programs to improve access and broaden participation.

OST also recognizes the importance of using partnerships to reach Latinx and lower-income families with educational programming. In 2024, we partnered with TCSD#1 to lead bilingual afterschool theatre arts programming, producing a play in Spanish. We look forward to expanding these efforts.

Accommodations: Facilities are accessible to mobility-impaired patrons. ASL interpretation is provided for productions. The process for requesting accommodations via communication with an ADA trained employee is advertised on ticketing/program registration webpages.

### **Evaluation**

OST measures impact through participation by and feedback from students, performers, professionals, audience members, and volunteers.

As an example of the quantifiable data we collect, we have the following data from our 2025 youth musical:

- number of audience members
- number of school students from local schools as well as home schooled students at school matinees
- number of student participants
- number of artists employed

Beyond quantifiable data, OST conducts a survey and interview process alongside each program. This involves:

- Digital surveys distributed to each program participant, audience member, and/or employed artist
- A staff-wide debrief after every program during which the data from these surveys is analyzed and discussed, and during which plans are made to take the data into account during the program's next iteration.
- For our education programs, we are utilizing an evaluation program that tracks a small group of students who regularly engage in our programs over several years. This evaluation program, led by our Education Director, is tracking OST's impact over years of cumulative theatre arts learning through data collection, interviews, and parent feedback.

Program evaluations are reviewed by OST staff following each program and shared with external program partners as appropriate. The Board of Directors review evaluations cumulatively as part of the strategic planning quarterly review process.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

OST seeks Project Support to produce its professional season of live theatre reaching approximately 4,200 audience members and 300 students and employing over 50 local and guest artists across all disciplines. All programming will serve local artists and educators, nationally recognized guest artists, and local youth. All programming will occur within Jackson's Center for the Arts (procured). Funds from the Wyoming Arts Council will support salaries of Wyoming-based artists; funds for other project expenses are generated through philanthropy, tuition for selected programs, ticket sales, corporate sponsors, and additional grants.

THIN AIR SHAKESPEARE: TWELFTH NIGHT (July 2025)

The thirteenth year of this free, family-friendly outdoor production will invite audiences to enjoy Shakespeare on the lawn at the Center for the Arts.

## THE EFFECT (October 2025)

OST will produce the regional premiere of THE EFFECT by Lucy Prebble (HBO's Succession). Two young volunteers, Tristan and Connie, agree to take part in a clinical drug trial. Succumbing to the gravitational pull of attraction and love, however, Tristan and Connie manage to throw the trial off-course, much to the frustration of the clinicians involved. This funny, moving and perhaps surprisingly human play explores questions of sanity, neurology and the limits of medicine, alongside ideas of fate, loyalty and the inevitability of physical attraction.

## LAFF STAFF (Fall 2025-Spring 2026)

Four weekends of improv shows by local improv troop. Dates are selected in August each year and generally are in the months of November, February, March, April.

## OUTREACH

Throughout the season, OST will conduct engagement activities within the community. This includes creating discussion guides for each production, hosting talkbacks, "book club" style discussions of plays, and micro-tours to venues like The Senior Center and assisted living facility. OST is focusing on partnerships with non-arts organizations to amplify impact throughout the community.

This season is in addition to our youth productions (Youth Musical and Off Square Players) described in the Arts Learning section.

## ARTISTS

OST engages directors, performers, and technical artists who reflect and enhance the quality of theatre we produce, including maintaining contracts with professional unions. OST's Producing Artistic Director, Natalia Duncan Macker, is herself a Wyoming Arts Council Performing Arts Fellow. Examples of contracted artists include:

- Edgar Landa (Thin Air Shakespeare): faculty member at the USC School of Dramatic Arts. Artist with Shakespeare & Company. Awards include: The L.A. Stage Alliance Ovation Award for Fight Choreography, L.A. Stage Alliance Ovation Award for Best Director of a Musical.

- Michelle Tattenbaum (The Effect): Michelle is an East Coast based director who works in theater, audio and film. She tells stories of marginalized people, stories that transform audiences and the way they see the world. She has directed many theatrical world premieres and New York premieres, and her productions have been nominated for Drama Desk, Lortel, Barrymore, and San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Awards, as well as the Reumert Award (the Danish Tonys).

- Doug Vogel (resident designer): has been a theatrical electrician and lighting designer in New York, San Francisco and Jackson for over 50 years. He studied under Gilbert Helmsley at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He has lit almost 30 shows for Off Square Theatre.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

## Camps & Workshops – year-round

OST will offer seven weeks of camps and various workshops throughout the year, including programmatic staples such as:

- The Wyoming Shakespeare Conservatory: Students spend a week immersed in the Bard studying textual interpretation and creating a performance
- Musical Theatre Intensive: Students learn scenes, songs, and dances from iconic musicals, culminating in a final showcase.
- Storytime Playshop: Students aged 4-7 take a story from page to stage – families can enroll in one-time workshops throughout the school year or in a week-long summer camp.
- Workshops and Masterclasses: As visiting artists are employed in OST's professional season, they are engaged to teach workshops and masterclasses in their areas of expertise throughout the year. OST staff will also lead periodic workshops to complement our programs, including audition and directing workshops.

## Off Square Players Production - December 2025

Students in grades 8+ take responsibility for the complete production of a play. OST will guide the show's production team through casting, the rehearsal process, and creation of all the show's design and technical elements, leading up to a final weekend of public performances. This program allows older, dedicated theatre students to collaborate and take responsibility on a deep level as they create and execute their own artistic vision. In 2024, we included students for the first time in play selection, licensing, and company formation, deepening their educational experience.

## Youth Musical - February 2026

OST's flagship educational program - our Youth Musical provides an opportunity for youth to put what they learn into practice on stage with a professional production team. Students audition, rehearse, and perform for their peers and the public. The process begins with auditions and casting in October, followed by vocal coaching in November and December for key roles, with full rehearsals for the cast launching in January. Young artists are challenged to excel as they learn new skills and develop their imagination in a supportive environment.

## Missoula Children's Theater (MCT) – April 2026

OST partners to produce MCT's week-long program where K-12 students audition for, rehearse, and perform a musical. This program is offered completely free of charge to all participants and audience members. It serves as an 'entry-level' program for students who want to try out theatre before they commit to the months-long Youth Musical process.



## Intern Program – Year-round

With our Youth Musical Crew program and an internship program alongside all our professional productions, OST provides students the opportunity to work ‘behind the scenes’ for a professional theatre company. Students receive training and experience in areas such as set design and building, costume design, lighting design and operation, and sound design. This program creates a space for students interested in the technical and design components of theater and gives them experience with valuable vocational skills.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

OST’s education programming’s overarching goal is to increase the empathy and creative leadership capacity of the youth in our programs. To this end, we identified eight ‘Leadership Competencies’ that are evolved and practiced through theatre arts education. Our competencies are as follows:

- Empathy (practiced through interacting with different plays, characters, and stories, and oftentimes through having to ‘see through someone else’s eyes in performance)
- Collaboration (practiced with fellow cast and crew members)
- Confidence (practiced when performing in front of an audience, auditioning, and performing in front of friends in rehearsal)
- Conflict Negotiation (negotiating interpersonal conflict in a close team of student performers and/or crew members)
- Inclusion (practiced when bonding with fellow cast and crew members – the ability to make friends and feel included is consistently reported by our program participants)
- Motivation (practiced when students work to improve their performance and/or backstage skills and knowledge)
- Organization (keeping track of materials, blocking, lines, costumes)
- Problem-solving (the show must go on – and problems must be solved every day to do so!)

OST also designed its curriculum to support students in meeting one or more benchmarks of the Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards for Theatre. These include:

- Standard 4.1.T.5, Grade K-4 Standard of Creative Expression Through Production: “Students imagine and describe characters, plots and settings.” OST’s ‘Storytime Playshop’ program, which can be found in the form of a week-long summer camp and/or periodic one-day workshops, has students aged 4-8 learning how to hear a story and translate it into a play by making their own sets and costumes.
- Standard 11.1.T.6, Grade 9-11 Standard: “Students use a script to inform their performances and technical designs.” The Off Square Players, a group of students in grades 8+, present their own interpretation of a script, including performance and design choices, with a completely student-run production.

OST's arts education programming is an area where we see and hear about our impact every year. When we hear from parents about their student's growth in the classroom, welcome alumni of our programs into professional roles, or listen to a student's story about how theatre has helped them through their difficult middle school years, we know that theatre arts education is invaluable to youth.

Our parent/participant surveys from 2025 and previous years included the following testimony from parents and participants:

From students: "Off Square Theatre has allowed me to branch out and meet incredible, creative, and kind people. Their productions are always one of the highlights of my year, and having the chance to work with and learn from their incredible production team is an invaluable opportunity."

"Off Square has helped me explore who I am and helped me grow as a person. As my confidence has grown because of Off Square, I've become able to take chances I wouldn't have taken years ago. I'm sure everybody has felt like they don't belong or they're out of place, and this is one place where I know I belong. This is my happy place."

From parents: "Off Square gives students the opportunity to be creative and showcase talents beyond the classroom. It helped my third grader to become more organized, responsible, and social. She took risks and rose to challenges."

"Having attended parent-teacher conferences last week, I heard from several of my daughter's teachers about how she has really come out of her shell, she is speaking up more in class and is willingly volunteering answers and questions in the past several weeks. I can't help but think that her time on stage has had this influence on her."

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

At OST, we know that our students' mental wellbeing is improved through high-quality relationships with caring adults outside their immediate family. As we select our teaching artists, we look for professionals who are not only passionate about and experienced in theatre, but also able and excited to form these important and protective relationships with our students.

OST's education programs exist under the supervision of Sadie Frank, Education Director. Sadie is an actor, director, and collaborative theatremaker. She holds a BA in Drama from Vassar College, during which time she spent a semester studying acting at the Moscow Art Theatre School in Russia. Since graduating college, she has identified a passion for teaching theatremaking to students of all ages. She taught at OST for two years and directed the summer camp program for one year before coming to the helm as Education Director in 2023.

Please find below a selection of artists working in the education programs.

#### Youth Musical

Music Director: Laura Huckin – has been involved in music education and performance as a conductor, accompanist, and teacher for over 20 years. Laura is currently Artistic Director of Cathedral Voices Chamber Choir and has taken her ensemble to Carnegie Hall, Austria, and Dublin in recent years. In addition to choral conducting, Laura currently teaches general music (K-8th grade) in Swan Valley, Idaho and serves as Music Director at the Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole.

Vocal Coach: Jeffrey Scott Stevens - NY & Regional Credits: “The Christmas Rose” at Carnegie Hall, Hunter in [title of show] (The Secret Theatre Off-Broadway), Patsy in “Spamalot!” (Ogunquit Playhouse), “Young Frankenstein” (Gateway Playhouse), “Shrek: The Musical,” (Lord Farquaad), “Mamma Mia” (Harry), “Newsies” (Bunsen) at Tuacahn Center for the Arts Amphitheater in Southern Utah. Locally, Jeffrey has appeared at The Jackson Hole Playhouse and currently teaches Music & Performing Arts at The Teton Science School.

Director: Taralee Fairclough - studied Musical Theatre at Elon University and gained her Bachelor’s in Psychology with a minor in Theatre from the University of Utah. She has worked professionally as an actress for the past ten years and taught drama and music at the Mountain Academy of Teton Science School.

Choreographer: Jaclyn Hansen-Kaufman – BFA in Musical Theatre from Long Island University Post. She has performed in numerous productions with the Post Theatre Company, Post Concert Dance Company, and the Jackson Hole Playhouse.

#### Missoula Children’s Theatre (MCT)

Touring since 1973, MCT visits over 1,200 communities across the world, including all 50 states, 5 Canadian provinces and 15 countries. With 65,000 cast members and 750,000 audience members every year, the MCT staff are experts in producing children’s theatre.

MCT has completed an annual residency in Teton County for over a decade. MCT’s residency with OST in 2025 will be led by two MCT Tour Directors from MCT’s team. All Tour Directors are professional performers trained in MCT teaching methods. MCT will assign specific Tour Directors from their team to OST’s residency a month prior to the program.

Most artists identified above will teach in OST's summer camps. All our teachers are selected from local and guest artists using criteria developed by staff based on the age group, theatrical skills, and specific milestones for each class, workshop, program, and camp.

### **Budget Narrative**

Funding Sources: OST maintains diverse funding sources, deriving 58% of revenue from individual contributions, 8% from events and corporate donations, 19% from ticket sales and participation fees and 15% from grants. We maintain a robust reserve account and currently have a half-year of revenue goals banked.

In-kind: OST receives donations of guest artist housing and operates volunteer programs.

Partnerships: OST enjoys key partnerships with local organizations. The Center for the Arts is a programmatic partner and marketing/outreach partner. One22 partners to provide scholarships. Other arts and education organizations, including the Teton County School District, Teton Science Schools, and Teton Music School, are programmatic partners.

Budget Alignment: 71% of our expenses are programmatic, including rental space for productions and classes, programmatic staff, and production design costs. The remainder of the budget goes to administration and development.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

OLD WILSON SCHOOLHOUSE COMMUNITY CENTER

[WWW.OLDWILSONSCHOOL.COM](http://WWW.OLDWILSONSCHOOL.COM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Songwriter Series at the Schoolhouse

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission is to preserve the spirit of a historic building through community building.

A former two-room schoolhouse serving the entire Wilson area, the Old Wilson Schoolhouse Community Center (Schoolhouse) is now a non-profit community center and prominent historic structure as designated by the Teton County Historic Preservation Board. Our goal is to preserve the schoolhouse as a historic hub of community activity by providing space for vital services and hosting community events of all kinds.

The Old Wilson Schoolhouse Community Center's Board and Staff prioritizes community needs when developing free, local programming. We host the only holiday bazaar in Wilson, and with free admission, this event offers a fantastic opportunity for community members to connect to local artists and makers. Our annual pumpkin carving party is also a huge hit, with over 200 individuals participating annually from all corners of the Teton area. Last year, we were a sponsor of the Wilson Jubilee, which featured a free community art project at the schoolhouse and a concert across the street at Owen Bircher Park. A main point of community feedback following this event was a request for more free music in Wilson. The schoolhouse board and staff subsequently decided to develop free, community-based music programming at the schoolhouse. The songwriter series represents the first step in meeting this community need.

### Community

The Schoolhouse is a non-profit community center serving the entire Teton area. We provide vital space for events, programs, meetings and celebrations of all kinds, and maintain partnerships to ensure necessary services are offered in rural Wilson. We partner with Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), the Senior Center of Jackson Hole and Okano's Kitchen to provide AA meetings and senior services in rural Wilson, as well as commercial kitchen space for the preparation of free meals. We also provide a free venue for multiple local memorials every year. Furthermore, Wilson Baptist Church hosts a weekly service out of the schoolhouse, and Pumpkin Patch preschool has offered early childhood development services out of their on-site classrooms and playground for more than 20 years. The schoolhouse hosts numerous community events throughout the year, including annual holiday gift shows featuring local artisans, pumpkin carving festivals and community potluck dinners. All of our events are free

to ensure we remove all barriers to entry. As a result, our programs are all very well attended by a diverse set of community members, including low-income, hispanic and senior residents. The schoolhouse is an ADA compliant facility, and Amanda Moyer, our Executive Director, routinely solicits feedback through surveys and other informal means.

We routinely accommodate community requests for programming and sponsor offerings as needed. Recently, the community has requested more opportunities to see music in Wilson. The schoolhouse hosted a trial songwriter showcase on Saturday, March 1st and it was an incredible success. This free, all ages event was very well attended and received great feedback. The community is hungry for more and we desire to provide that service at the schoolhouse.

### **Evaluation**

The Old Wilson Schoolhouse Community Center evaluates the impact of our programming and services through community participation. All of the recurring programming sponsored by the schoolhouse draws a large and diverse crowd every year. For example, our trial songwriter event held on Saturday, March 1, 2025 was standing room only, and on-site feedback at the event expressed a strong community desire to continue the offering. The AA meetings and senior programs hosted at the schoolhouse through our community partnerships maintain a large and faithful following as well, underscoring the continuing need for these programs and services to be offered in Wilson. The Old Wilson Schoolhouse Community Center also rents out space for trainings, non-profit meetings and events, and private celebrations of all kinds. We collect feedback through informal conversations and formal surveys to ensure our facility continue to meets the diverse needs of our community. The schoolhouse board and staff responds to this feedback by altering programs and/or providing new offerings as needed, as well as completing annual facility improvements that ensure the building continues to evolve in step with the changing needs of our community.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Old Wilson Schoolhouse Community Center will provide two free concerts during the Songwriter Series at the schoolhouse, one in November 2025 and another in February or March of 2026, depending on the producer's scheduling preference. The schoolhouse presented a trial songwriter event on Saturday, March 1, 2025, featuring local songwriters Mark Engel, Hilary Camino, Jack Eidemiller and Morgan Ostergren, and the event was an enormous success. We exceeded our planned attendance at the trial event, with attendees standing and sitting on the floor in order to take in the music. The feedback was all positive, with attendees asking for more songwriter showcases, and local songwriters reaching out to the event producer requesting to be included in future events. The schoolhouse is eager to respond to this clear need for more access to live music in Wilson.

The two songwriter events planned for the winter 2025/2026 season will follow a similar structure to the trial event held in March 2025. We will feature four local songwriters at each event, who will all play original compositions. The schoolhouse provides an incredibly intimate setting for music in Wilson; with its historic wood

floors and small 120 person capacity, the schoolhouse offers an amazing opportunity to get up close and personal with artists. Eric Odlin of Epic Craft Sound and Stage will provide vital production services and Susan Jones will continue to produce the events, ensuring we continue to provide a professional production within this unique and historic setting. Jones is a multi-instrumentalist and local music teacher of piano, guitar, and ukulele. She currently plays keyboard for Chanman Roots Band and is an early provider of Music Together, a family music program for parents and children ages 0-5. Jones teaches at Teton Music School and leads the multi-generational music class, Jam 55.

The \$1500 in requested project funds will be used to help support event staging (e.g. professional sound technician and a small stage), event marketing (physical flyers, social media posts, newspaper advertisements and sponsored articles), venue cleaning fees, Susan Jones' compensation as a private contractor for producing the events, as well as talent compensation at a rate of \$100/musician per show. We anticipate receiving in-kind donations of newspaper advertising space hosted by our community partner Nora's Fish Creek Inn, as well as in-kind food and beverage donations from community partners Hungry Jack's General Store and Wilson's Pizza. The Old Wilson Schoolhouse Community Center will donate the venue rental fee for both events. Susan Jones is well connected within the local Songwriter scene and already has a extensive lists of artists eager to play at these events. She will ensure a diverse line-up of local artists are represented at each showcase. The total budget for the two shows is \$5,764.

The Old Wilson Schoolhouse will acknowledge the Wyoming Arts Council as a sponsor of this programming in all marketing materials and in-person during the winter songwriter series events. We anticipate these events will serve over 200 residents of Wilson of all ages, allowing them a unique opportunity to access live music and see new artists in an intimate setting right in the heart of Wilson, all for free.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The schoolhouse generates funding through rental fees, community sponsorships and grants. Community sponsorships comprise of both cash donations as well as in-kind donations that support community events. We have maintained a key partnership with the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, which has granted the schoolhouse several large competitive grants throughout the years to support facility improvement projects, as well as supplied matching grants for funds raised through the annual Old Bill's Fun Run fundraising drive. Our Board Treasurer provides financial oversight for the organization.

This diverse income stream supports our non-profit's operational costs and community programming, as well as facility maintenance and annual improvements. We anticipate funding the winter songwriter series events through

a combination of grants and in-kind donations. We are applying for funding through the Jackson Hole Travel and Tourism Board to provide the cash match for this grant request.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

OPERA WYOMING

WWW.OPERAWYOMING.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Opera Wyoming Season 8

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

#### Mission

Opera Wyoming enriches Wyoming's cultural landscape by producing high-caliber operatic and musical theater performances, supporting local performing artists, and offering diverse educational opportunities in the performing arts.

#### Goals for the Next Five Years

##### Audience Development

Continue to blend familiar repertoire with innovative productions to cater to a broad audience.

Expand our touring across Wyoming, enhancing accessibility and engagement in more communities.

##### Board Development

Strategically expand and diversify our board to represent the communities we serve and bring a variety of strengths and perspectives to our organization.

Implement a structured analysis of current board members' strengths and strategically recruit new members to fill gaps.

##### Support for Wyoming Artists

Produce a range of works that cater to the varying experience levels of local artists, providing them with meaningful opportunities to grow and showcase their talents.

Initiate new collaborations to enrich our artistic offerings and provide unique opportunities for our artists.

#### Educational Initiatives

Enhance our school outreach programs to include live interactions with artists, focusing on the inclusivity of the operatic community.

Provide continuous learning opportunities for our artists, board members, and volunteers, including professional development in new artistic methods and administrative skills.

Extend our educational outreach to more deeply educate communities about the richness of opera as an art form.

Expand our artistic training to develop the skills of local performers.

#### **Community**

Casper, Wyoming is a central hub with a population of around 60,000, blending rural and urban communities. The region's economy centers around energy production, and access to arts programming can be limited, especially in outlying areas. Opera Wyoming serves both Casper and the broader state, identifying community needs through public conversations, feedback from our patrons, and audience surveys. These insights guide our programming choices, educational outreach, and community partnerships. Specific locations are still being established, but we plan to tour at least 5 towns outside of Casper this season.

We strive to make the arts accessible and relevant by offering low-cost and free events, educational workshops, and touring performances across Wyoming. Our programming reflects the cultural interests of our audience while introducing new ideas and perspectives. We visit assisted living facilities, offer discounted tickets for students, seniors, and veterans, and create youth-focused performances through our Theater for Young Audiences (TYA) program.

We are committed to inclusivity and accessibility. We have autistic volunteers and performers, and based on their feedback and previous training, we offer sensory-friendly performances, especially for TYA audiences. We also practice blind casting to ensure diverse artists are represented on our stage and are working to diversify our board to reflect the broader community.

Volunteers are invited to communicate any accommodation needs during our onboarding process, and ticket buyers can request accommodations during checkout. We are continually evolving to ensure a welcoming and enriching experience for all.

#### **Evaluation**

We use a variety of methods to evaluate and measure the impact of our programs and services across Wyoming. Links to audience surveys are provided in programs and at workshops to gather direct feedback from patrons, participants, and community partners. This data helps us assess satisfaction, identify areas for improvement, and tailor future programming to better meet community needs.

We track quantitative metrics such as attendance, ticket sales, and participation in outreach programs to monitor growth and engagement over time. Qualitative feedback is collected through interviews and conversations with key stakeholders—including community leaders, volunteers, and partner organizations—offering deeper insight into the effectiveness and relevance of our work.

We conduct formal program evaluations at the end of each show or season to assess artistic and logistical success. Social media analytics also play a key role in measuring our reach and impact. We monitor engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments, and reach) across platforms to understand what resonates with our audience and expand our visibility statewide.

Our open board meetings and regular discussions with community members ensure we stay connected to local needs and responsive in our decision-making. By combining data-driven analysis with community dialogue, we continue to refine our offerings, strengthen partnerships, and demonstrate the value of Opera Wyoming's work to supporters, funders, and the public.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Opera Wyoming operates on an annual cash budget of approximately \$120,000—a significant increase from past years that reflects our growing programming, increased statewide reach, and our ongoing transition to a professionally operated organization. We are committed to bringing high-quality productions, concerts, tours, and educational programming to communities that have limited access to the performing arts.

Breakdown of Operating Costs (July 1 – June 30):

Rent: \$15,000

Securing rehearsal, performance, and storage spaces remains one of our largest fixed costs. Stable and accessible venues are essential for delivering consistent, high-quality programming to the public.

Personnel and Professional Services: \$27,500

The largest increase in our budget is dedicated to paying artists and administrative staff. Personnel included in our day-to-day operations includes a stipend for our Executive Director and pay for part-time administrative support. For

the first time, we are actively working toward fair compensation for our team—a necessary step as we professionalize our operations, apply for larger national grants, and increase our artistic impact.

Supplies: \$3,500

This includes production materials, office needs, and equipment and materials for our educational and outreach programming.

Marketing and Promotion: \$1,000

We have greatly expanded our marketing budget to meet the needs of our growing season. We now regularly invest in paid advertising, graphic design, social media campaigns, printing, and promotions to raise awareness and engage audiences across Wyoming.

Other Operational Expenses: \$9,000

This includes insurance, accounting services, software subscriptions, and other necessary administrative costs to support a growing organization.

Requested Operating Funds Allocation: \$2,500

We request \$2,500 in operating support to be allocated as follows:

Rent: \$2,500 – To offset rehearsal and performance space costs and ensure continued program delivery.

This support will help us maintain stability as we grow, expand our reach to new communities, and strengthen our presence as a statewide cultural leader. It reflects both our responsible financial management and our bold vision for the future of opera and musical theatre in Wyoming.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Opera Wyoming's 2025 season is an ambitious combination of operas, concerts, musical theatre, youth programming, and statewide outreach. From July 1 to June 30, we will present performances and educational offerings in Casper and tour multiple locations across Wyoming.

Our season centerpiece is a tour of our new full production of Bizet's Carmen, reimagined in 1879 Laramie, Wyoming. This bold staging will feature an ensemble, a chamber orchestra, dancers, a children's chorus, and a mix

of seasoned professionals and emerging local talent. For our Carmen tour, we will collaborate with local choirs, singers, and dancers in each town we visit, engaging community members directly in the production. These partnerships build local pride, provide performance opportunities, and connect communities to professional opera meaningfully.

We are casting guest artist tenor Leo Williams as Don José. A graduate of Indiana University and recipient of the Georgina Joshi International Grant, Jacobs Premier, and Schmidt Foundation Scholarships, Williams has sung with Palm Beach Opera, Detroit Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Gulfshore Opera. Pianist Susan Stubson, a graduate of Eastman with experience at the Juilliard School, the Orchestra of Saint Lukes, and the Metropolitan Opera, will serve as pianist and vocal coach. Other lead singers Emily Quintana, Daniel Quintana, and Michelle Forster have performed in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, New York, and internationally. Choreography will be led by Fathom Swanson, whose extensive knowledge of stylized dance and the American West will add to the immersive experience, and Anthony Gamroth, director of Opera Wyoming's dance corps, who danced with Ballet Northwest, studied under renowned artists and has taught ballet and partnering workshops across Washington state and Wyoming. Local actor, photographer, and director Clint Saunders will provide intimacy choreography and artwork.

We are producing a double bill in collaboration with Opera on Tap, Wyoming: Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief* and Wolf-Ferrari's *Il Segreto di Susanna*. These one-act operas in English provide the opportunity for dramatic and comedic exploration and are accessible to new audiences.

Our concert programming includes a statewide tour, bringing highlights from opera and musical theatre to rural communities, and a new holiday concert featuring Saint-Saëns' *Oratorio de Noël*, alongside seasonal solos and choral selections.

In addition, we will remount our Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) production of *Spookley the Square Pumpkin*, offering sensory-friendly performances. Our dance corps will also present a new work (currently in development), shaped by the dancers cast. Finally, we will present two full musical theatre productions in Casper. While the titles are not finalized, they will be chosen to balance artistic merit and accessibility. Directors will be Paul Alexander Hughes and Steven Spicher, both of whom have professional credits and are highly regarded in the community.

We request \$7,500 in project support:

\$5,500 will be used toward personnel costs for our operatic productions, including honoraria for guest artists, conductors, pianists, stage directors, and choreographers.

\$2,000 will support production costs for the season, including sets, costumes, and props.

As Opera Wyoming continues to grow as a statewide cultural leader, this support will help us bring exceptional opera and musical theatre to communities across Wyoming.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Opera Wyoming is proud to present a diverse lineup of arts learning programs between July 1 and June 30, designed to foster skill development, artistic confidence, and lifelong engagement with the performing arts. Our workshops are open to participants of all experience levels and are led by professional artists dedicated to education and inclusion. Through these programs, we aim to increase access to high-quality arts education in our region, especially for underserved populations.

#### **1. Opera Workshop**

This flagship program introduces participants to the multifaceted world of opera. Designed for individuals of varying skill levels—from beginners to emerging professionals—the workshop provides training in vocal technique, stagecraft, and dramatic interpretation.

Key components include:

Vocal Coaching: Individual and group instruction focused on healthy technique, expression, and expanding vocal range.

Acting & Stagecraft: Participants develop character interpretation, movement, and stage presence through practical exercises.

Repertoire Study: A wide range of operatic literature, from classical to modern, will be explored to broaden stylistic knowledge.

Performance Opportunity: The workshop culminates in a public showcase, giving participants a chance to apply their learning and gain valuable stage experience.

#### **2. Dance Corps Workshop & Specialized Dance Classes**

Led by professional choreographers and dancers, this immersive experience helps participants build technical and creative skills.

Key components include:

Technique Classes: Ballet, contemporary, jazz, and other forms help build strength, flexibility, and precision.

Choreography Labs: Dancers collaborate to create original works and explore musical and narrative themes.

Specialized Dance Courses: We now offer classes in tap, musical theatre, and cabaret, each designed to expand stylistic versatility and performance confidence.

Performance Opportunities: Workshops culminate in a dance showcase or performances integrated into Opera Wyoming productions.

### 3. Technical Theatre Workshop

This hands-on program introduces participants to essential backstage skills.

Key components include:

Lighting Design: Basics of equipment, safety, programming, and design.

Sound Design & Mixing: Participants learn to create soundscapes and mix live performances using our sound board.

Real-World Application: Skills are applied in live productions throughout the season.

### 4. Audition Workshop

This program prepares participants for auditions in opera, musical theatre, and dance.

Topics include:

Audition etiquette and preparation

Selecting audition materials

Choosing headshots and formatting resumes

Participants receive coaching and feedback from industry professionals.

All workshops are offered in a supportive and inclusive environment, with a strong emphasis on accessibility. We provide scholarships and fee waivers for participants facing financial barriers, and we prioritize outreach to rural communities and underrepresented groups.

We anticipate reaching 75–100 participants over the course of the season, with programming designed to support both personal enrichment and pre-professional training. Opera Wyoming’s arts learning programs foster creative exploration, skill-building, and community connection, and are a cornerstone of our mission to make the performing arts accessible and empowering for all Wyoming residents.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Opera Wyoming’s Arts Learning goals are crafted to promote skill-building, creative exploration, and increased access to quality arts education across opera, dance, and technical theatre. These goals were developed collaboratively by our artistic team, instructors, participant feedback from past workshops, informal community input, and an identified regional need for high-quality, inclusive arts learning opportunities.

Our overarching goal is to foster a culture of artistic excellence, confidence, and lifelong engagement in the arts while supporting local talent development and career preparation for aspiring artists.

#### **Opera Workshop Goals**

1. **Develop Vocal Technique:** Participants will strengthen foundational vocal skills, including breath support, resonance, diction, and pitch control. This goal addresses the need for quality vocal instruction and provides tools applicable to opera, musical theatre, and solo performance.
2. **Foster Dramatic Expression:** Through acting and movement training, participants will learn to convey emotion, develop character, and connect with audiences. This goal reflects opera’s interdisciplinary nature and supports confidence in live performance.
3. **Expand Repertoire Knowledge:** We aim to introduce participants to operatic works across styles, eras, and languages, encouraging a broader understanding of the art form and enhancing audition readiness.



4. Provide Performance Opportunities: Participants will showcase their learning in a final public performance, gaining stage experience and developing poise in a supportive setting.

#### Dance Corps & Specialized Dance Workshops Goals

1. Improve Technical Proficiency: Participants will enhance their technique in ballet, contemporary, jazz, and stylized forms like tap and musical theatre dance. This addresses participants' requests for well-rounded dance education in our area.

2. Improve Stage Presence and Confidence: We offer movement training inspired by classic burlesque in a theatrical, character-driven context. This empowers participants to explore storytelling through movement, build confidence, and develop their stage presence.

3. Stimulate Creative Exploration: Through choreography labs and collaborative dance-making, dancers will develop their own choreographic voices, explore narrative movement, and experiment with performance styles.

4. Cultivate Ensemble & Performance Skills: We prepare participants for performance by focusing on musicality, partner work, expression, and audience connection, culminating in a live dance showcase or inclusion in productions.

#### Technical Theatre Workshop Goals

1. Address Regional Gaps in Technical Skills: This workshop addresses the gap in technical training, building our community's production capacity and preparing participants for employment or continued learning.

2. Master Lighting Techniques: Participants will learn to hang, focus, and program lighting equipment, developing the ability to enhance theatrical storytelling through light and design.

3. Master Live Sound Mixing: Participants will learn to mix live musical theatre using our digital sound board, adjusting EQ, balance, and effects in real-time—skills that are in high demand for regional productions and event tech.

#### Audition Workshop Goals

1. Prepare for Real-World Auditions: Participants will learn professional audition etiquette, how to select material, and how to present themselves confidently.

2. Build Practical Tools: We'll help participants create or refine headshots, resumes, and artist bios, empowering them with materials they can use for auditions across genres.

These goals form a structured yet flexible framework that addresses participants' aspirations while supporting Opera Wyoming's mission to inspire, educate, and connect through the performing arts. They ensure that our programs are both accessible and transformative—meeting learners where they are while preparing them for future opportunities.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Opera Wyoming's Arts Learning programs are led by a team of highly qualified artists, educators, and professionals selected for their expertise, teaching experience, and commitment to arts education. These individuals were chosen based on their credentials, community involvement, and alignment with our mission to deliver inclusive and skill-building performing arts experiences across Wyoming.

#### **Emily and Daniel Quintana – Opera Workshop Leaders**

**Qualifications:** Emily and Daniel have received training from renowned coaches affiliated with The Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, and New York City Opera. Daniel has over 30 years of performance experience including at Carnegie Hall and major Las Vegas venues. Emily brings over 20 years of professional vocal and music directing experience, specializing in Puccini and Verdi.

**Involvement:** They will lead all aspects of the workshop, providing vocal coaching, acting instruction, repertoire selection, and stagecraft guidance.

**Selection:** As founders of Opera Wyoming, they were selected for their extensive performance credentials and dedication to community-based opera education.

#### **Anthony Gamroth – Lead Instructor & Choreographer**

**Qualifications:** Anthony is a classically trained dancer who has danced professionally with Ballet Northwest and Seattle's DASSDance, performed in *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Men in Dance*, and studied under NYCB's Wendy Whelan and Jennifer Ringer.

**Involvement:** He will lead technique classes, choreography labs, and performance rehearsals.

**Selection:** Chosen for his strong classical background, professional experience, and long-term commitment to Wyoming's dance community.

#### **Fathom Swanson – Cabaret-Style Movement Instructor**

**Qualifications:** Fathom has over 20 years of experience in ballet, jazz, tap, cheer, and belly dance. She has choreographed and costumed nearly every Opera Wyoming production and is co-founder of the vaudeville troupe Keyhole Peepshow.

**Involvement:** She will lead our cabaret-style movement classes, supporting storytelling, theatricality, and performance confidence.

Selection: A founding member of Opera Wyoming, Fathom was selected for her versatile background and leadership in creative movement.

#### Cameron Michael Fehring – Tap Instructor

Qualifications: Cameron is a multi-talented theatre artist, composer, designer, and performer. He teaches musical theatre at Casper College and has written, directed, and designed for companies including Montana Actor's Theatre, Wyoming Shakespeare Festival Company, and the Fremont County Dance Association.

Involvement: Cameron will teach tap, integrating his extensive background in performance and choreography.

Selection: Selected for his wide-ranging experience in movement, music, and theatre education, and commitment to Wyoming students.

#### Tiana Saunders - Lighting Training

Qualifications: Tiana received training at ETC Lab to gain proficiency in lighting operation and design.

Involvement: Tiana will lead the Lighting Workshop and mentor participants in basic lighting techniques.

Selection: Tiana has been the lead lighting designer/programmer for Opera Wyoming's last season and has shown a long-term commitment to theatrical excellence in Wyoming

#### Sound Design & Live Mixing Trainers (TBD)

Qualifications: Final candidates are being selected based on expertise in live sound engineering, theatre audio systems, and teaching experience.

### **Budget Narrative**

Opera Wyoming operates with a growing budget, aligning financial resources with our expanding statewide programming and educational offerings. Most of our expenses are program-focused, including artist fees, venue rentals, touring costs, and education initiatives. Funding comes from a mix of ticket sales, individual donors, grants, and corporate sponsorships. We receive valuable in-kind support including costumes, props, and rehearsal space. Donated professional services and waived or reduced artist fees make up the bulk of our in-kind contributions. Key partners include The Lyric, Stage III Community Theatre, Casper Children's Theatre, and the Nicolaysen Art Museum. We look forward to forming new relationships as we tour the state and collaborate on projects like Carmen. We are also working to grow sustainable income by following the "1 fundraiser, 10 grants, 1,000 donors" model and expanding business sponsorships.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ORIGINAL OYSTERGRASS INCORPORATED

WWW.OYSTERRIDGEMUSICFESTIVAL.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Oyster Ridge Music Festival

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Oyster Ridge Music Festival is to bring arts to a rural community, enhance the quality of life through education and culture experience, build partnerships with other entities and have substantial economic impact.

We are a completely new board for ORMF this year. The previous committee has stepped down after 20 + years of devotion. We are 8 community members resolved to see ORMF continue. We are open to new ideas and to upholding traditions when either/or enhance the experience for all audience members.

### Goals

1. To keep ORMF a free festival, allowing for a more comfortable and affordable access for visitors of all demographics.

This reaches the greatest number of audience members and facilitates our other goals. This is achieved by diligent fundraising, grants, donors, sales and providing for more vendors this year and also providing access and safety to all under served communities.

2. To provide a meaningful cultural experience for all members of our community and the greater surrounding areas.

This will be achieved by booking quality eager musical entertainers and diverse vendors presenting a variety of cuisines and artisan wares. The newly reopened Hamsfork Museum will be on site creating an educational experience on Bluegrass, ORMF, local music history and providing art supplies and direction for attendees with more of an aptitude and interest in visual art.

A band scramble will be held providing interested talented visitors an opportunity to actively participate creating an atmosphere of personal involvement in the festival.

3. To encourage participation in Kemmerer and SW Wyoming culture, arts, history, recreational and geological resources.

This benefits locals, visitors and hopefully surrounding communities. This will be achieved by a Chamber of Commerce booth, encouraging more local vendors by closing down main street to create more space, and upholding free camping and continuing the services of local breweries.

## **Community**

Kemmerer is a rural community in SW Wyoming, population 2400. It has a rich history steeped with characters & events and opportunities for outdoor lovers.

Demographic needs

Location is 90 miles from prominent cultural venues

Economy is lower middle class, blue collar, transient workers, struggling local businesses

Kemmerer is an isolated community. Diversity, cultural opportunities are a challenge. ORMF meets the needs of economically & geographically isolated members by providing a free event. It brings culture, arts, diverse perspectives & also economic benefits to our small community.

Inviting & engaging all community members is a need & focus of this committee. We will meet with community members that represent under-served demographics. Hispanic leader & business owner, passionate advocate for the handicapped, music teacher & artist, former legislator & faith leader voice their concerns & ideas for their communities. We will continue with our diverse range of volunteers, every one is welcome. 8th graders fund raise for D.C. Children have a designated play area, frolic & hula hoop in front of the stage. Vendors arrive with very multicultural backgrounds, eager to share their creations & process.

Free transportation, bathrooms are handicap accessible. Wide side walks surround the Triangle park & run through it. It is flat & well kept & this last year, curbs were redone to meet all ADA requirements. Having said that I think we can do more. I am excited to meet with our passionate activist.

Accommodation requests can be addressed by an e mail on our website and fliers. We will have fliers posted at the main/info booth & announce on stage prior to performances. On our committee, one member is a licensed 1st responder and 3 others are trained in 1st aid.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation will be a huge part of how we gauge the success of this years festival and our job as a new committee.

To measure our goal of being accessible to all community members, out of state residents and under served communities, we will create an audience survey available at the main/info booth and also handing out, giving us an opportunity to talk to the audience. This will include demographic information, age, residency, accommodations needed, and also band and vendor feedback. We also have a similar survey on our website and Facebook. We will use participation numbers in free programs such as band scramble, safe ride program and the educational art booth. Attendance will be measured/estimated by wrist band and merch sale, camping and motel registration.

We will measure our support of local businesses by using a survey that includes number of patrons, estimated financial gains and recommendations for next year. This should be delivered and discussed in person by a committee member. We will also have a survey at the Chamber of Commerce booth inquiring about interest in businesses and and SW Wyoming recreation.

To evaluate a meaningful art and cultural experience we will tally the number of participants at the educational/art booth, the band scramble, visitors to the Hamsfork Museum. We will also have a survey for the vendors, tallying participation in their arts, wares, and cuisine.

The committee will use this feed back to determine bands, programs, vendors for next year.

We will share results with Fossil Basin Promotion Board & Chamber of Commerce.

Goals for year 2025

At least 5,000 attendance

50 vendors

15% of yearly income for businesses

70 participants in band scramble

350 participants in educational/art booth

\$25,000 into next years budget

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

The Oyster Ridge Music Festival will be held July 25th – 26th, 2025 in the historic Triangle Park in Kemmerer, Wyoming.

The lineup is as follows:

FRIDAY, July 25:

Noon: Opening Ceremonies

1-2 PM Kessinger Brothers	West Virginia
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2-3 PM Fiddle Express	Melba ID
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3-5 PM Gangstead	Colorado
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5-7 PM Two Headed Trout	Logan UT
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7-9 PM Bob Lefevre and the Already Gone	Laramie WY
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9-11 PM Arkansauce	Arkansas
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SATURDAY, July 26:

8-9 AM Band Scramble Registration

9-11 AM Band Scramble

12-1 PM Kessinger Bothers

1-3 PM Liam and Layne Jordan	Hyattville WY
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3-5 PM Jalan Crossland	Tensleep WY
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5-7 PM Maygan and the Birdwatcher	Minnesota
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7-9 PM Tonewood Stringband	Denver
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9-11 PM Pixie and the Partygrass Boys	SLC
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The largest portion of project support funds will be allocated to pay for bands. We are operating this years ORMF on half the budget compared to previous festivals. We hope this years handling of the budget will create the model for continuing ORMF for many years to come.

Zach heads up booking the bands but all committee members are involved in scouting, discussing and weighing financial decisions.

We have had to shy away from more expensive, well known bands and look towards more up and coming bands, eager to be a part of our festival. This is not a weakness. This is an opportunity to showcase overlooked talent, with bands bringing fresh sounds and energy to the stage. We did not find this process troublesome. Being a part of ORMF carries some prestige and bands were excited to work with us. 3 bands from Wyoming might be the most ever for the festival.

Last years bands \$52,600. This years bands \$27,000.

If we receive the full allocated funds, \$9,000 will go to pay for bands. This would cover over 1/3 of our band costs.

The remaining allocated funds would be used to create an arts and educational booth at the festival. There is a need for educational opportunities and participation in the arts. This is a start.

We will be collaborating with the Hamsfork Museum. The booth will display the roots of Bluegrass, history and fun facts of ORMF and history of music and musicians in Kemmerer. We will be providing art supplies for young and old to compose original snapshots of the festival. If they wish, artists can display their work at the booth.

The booth will be open from 11am – 8pm Friday and Saturday and will be located next to main/info booth.

I will be working with Deb, the director of the museum, to create the displays & attend the booth. I am an elementary art teacher and this is right up my alley. Much more than grant writing.

The booth will highlight the genre of Bluegrass, the culture of ORMF, and make audience members want to see what else is down at the Hamsfork Museum.

Audience members who participate through creating art will be rewarded with a new way of expressing their experience of the festival. A quiet portrait of a friend, or clouds composed behind the stage or quick energetic strokes of trying to capture the music.

If we receive the full allocated funds 1,000 will go to implementing the educational booth.

Printing and laminating and foam board 250

Gallery panel with clips 200

Watercolor paper 200

Variety of art media and clip boards 350



## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

ORMF receives funding through a diverse number of sources.

Fossil Basin Promotional Board grant 5%

Company sponsorship Williams, R.M.P., Exxon 20%

Local businesses Dental G, Ace, Wind River brewery, first bank of WY, many others 20%

individual community members 10%

fundraising raffles, events 10%

Vendor booth rental 10%

Merchandise, beer, wristband sale 25%

Our community comes together for in-kind donations, raffle items, approx. 25 volunteers & 160 hours over the weekend

Our budget aligns with our program goals by allocating the largest portion for booking bands, stage rental, light & sound, security & accessible restrooms.

Another portion goes to an educational booth and the hopes to bring back the State Flat Picking contest.

Financial decisions are made by all committee members, prioritizing costs and goals.

Financial planning for ORMF operation entails budgeting to carry us over to the next year, future fundraising & continuing to work with local individuals & businesses.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

PARK COUNTY ART COUNCIL

PARKCOUNTYARTSCOUNCIL.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Park County Arts Council Community Support 2025-26

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Park County Arts Council's mission is "to support and encourage the arts in Park County Wyoming.

To fulfill this mission, PCAC will maintain an office, part time Executive Director, and sponsor a 2025-2026 Season of Events.

In June of 2023, the PCAC Board met to update our Strategic Plan. Consultant, Tara Kuipers, was hired to facilitate the session. After reviewing our challenges and opportunities, the board began to view the council transitioning into a "grand parenting" role. The arts in Park County have grown into a strong branch of the region's identity. We recognize the flowering of many arts related organizations and businesses that contribute to the area arts. Rather than offering additional arts events and activities, we decided to focus on the ways we can support other arts organizations with their events and activities. Another concern was the declining audience attendance for our community programs. We have seen increased free performing arts events in Cody and Powell over the past ten years and feel that our residents have begun to expect the arts to be offered at no charge. Responding to this, the board decided to reduce our community arts events. Rather than provide an event for each community, we will bring one significant annual event for the county. Using our social media presence, we will advertise and advocate other arts organizations' activities and events. The board will increase support and attendance of arts activities and events in the county.

Our Arts in Education programs have been well received and have grown over the last decade so the board elected to continue providing the high school and elementary level Shakespeare residencies as well as Missoula Children's Theatre residencies.

The Strategic Planning session resulted in the following PCAC Strategic Goals:

1. Be a promoter of and presence at Park County Arts events
2. Refine PCAC events and offerings

### 3. Increase and improve Board participation and engagement

## **Community**

Park County, Wyoming is located in the Northwest corner of the state just east of Yellowstone National Park. The 6,967 square mile area is geographically isolated with the nearest interstate highway and urban area 100 miles away (Billings, MT). The county population of 30,505 (2022 Census) has a 10.8% poverty rate. The 2020 student eligibility for free and reduced meal programs places our Powell school district at 29.5%, Cody at 22%, and Meeteetse at 42.5% (state average is 34.6%).

Cody (pop. 10,406) is a tourist town with services and attractions geared to the "romantic west". Powell (pop. 6,607) is a farming/ranching community and home to Northwest Community College. Meeteetse (pop 327) is a small ranching community, with a one block classic "western" downtown. A significant number of our residents moved to the area from other states, often to retire. Consequently, our residents have a wide variety of artistic tastes. PCAC intentionally works to offer a diverse representation of artistic genre and discipline.

Printed or on-line surveys are made available on our website, Facebook page, and after events to ensure positive experiences regarding community needs.

To engage our underserved communities, we hold performances in ADA compliant public school auditoriums with hearing devices. Programs are available with large print addressing individuals with sight impairments. We offer 2 free performances by MT Shakespeare in the Parks and provide complimentary and reduced rate tickets to seniors, students, and those in need. When budget permits additional activities are given to senior centers and VFW Auxiliaries. Other accommodation requests are handled on an as-needed basis ensuring that individuals with specific needs can fully participate in our programs.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluations of our programs are collected throughout the year combining board member reports after attending PCAC events with the written, on-line, and face to face comments and suggestions from county residents. They provide attendance numbers, diversity of audience, success or failure of arts programs, suggestions for preferred artistic genre/discipline, services, and ticket pricing. These evaluation results are documented in monthly board meeting minutes. Results are tallied and reviewed by the Planning Committee influencing recommendations made to the board for future programming and services. Surveys are conducted on line every 2-3 years adding additional information.

The board and Executive Director meet with area residents, school administrators and teachers, and organizations throughout the year and receive requests and comments about the PCAC services. Current board members are actively engaged in their communities serving as volunteers to other organizations. This involvement allows them to spread the word about PCAC events and services available to the county residents. Board members share their artistic expertise throughout the county and collect information regarding the arts related needs in their

communities. These comments, requests, and suggestions are discussed at board meetings and become part of the Planning Committee's considerations for the upcoming season.

Over the last two years we realized that our programming was not serving our Mormon community. We find they are not inclined to attend arts events held where alcohol is served and prefer family appropriate performances without suggestive costuming and dance movement. They are willing to buy tickets for such performances, which helps us cover the costs involved in presenting such artists.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Over the July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026 timeframe, PCAC will maintain an Executive Director and pay for his/her salary. The director will provide space for an office. PCAC will cover operating costs including a computer, internet and phone services, insurance, postage, printing, repairs, taxes, accounting, and supplies. The Community Arts Program will bring arts activities to Cody, Powell and Meeteetse with school outreach combined when appropriate. Our Arts Education programs are listed under the Art Learning section of this application, as requested. The public performances are included under the Project Support Narrative portion of this application.

A standard computer, lap top, hard phone line, and cell phone are maintained as part of the office and are provided and maintained by PCAC. The Executive Director's homeowners insurance policy covers Insurance expenses for the office and equipment. A separate policy held by PCAC covers liability for our events. PCAC pays for a bulk mail permit annually and prints and distributes a fund drive mailing soliciting donations every year. This continues to be an effective manner of collecting donations as over 50% of our annual income is generated from this fund raiser. Supplies, regular postage, printing, taxes (payroll and state license), phone services, bank fees, and repairs are paid out of operating costs. Our accounting is provided in kind by a generous accountant. Tax accounting is paid through a local accounting office. We use an on line ticketing service for our public performances. They charge a fee to cover their services in addition to the credit card bank fees. On line credit card donations are collected through this ticketing service.

The operating support funds granted from this application will be combined with income generated from other grants (WESTAF, Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, Wyoming Community Foundation, and local grants), fund drive donations, and ticket sales and are held in the PCAC checking account. Expenses are paid by the PCAC Executive Director from this account.

The income granted from this application will primarily cover about one fourth of the salary for the PCAC Executive Director (\$5,000). The PCAC Board of Directors requested a raise in the salary for the Executive Director in this application. It is apparent that the position requires a half time salary to cover the time needed to conduct all services. The remaining portion of the grant allocation will help cover some of the expenses of maintaining the PCAC office (about \$1,000) and artist fees (\$4,000).

### **Project Support Narrative**

The PCAC board consists of 12 arts active members with involvement as professional visual and/or performing artists, educators, arts business owners, and art advocates. Four teach in our public schools and provide strong

voices for arts learning needs. Two are visual artists. One owns and operates a theatre company. One owns an art supply/gallery business and the remainder are arts advocates. Most have degrees in Arts or Education and are actively engaged in extra arts activities in the county. With their varied occupations and contacts, the board collectively provides a well rounded representation of the county's art needs and wants.

Our 2025-26 season kicks off with two free, outdoor performances by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. "As You Like It" will be performed on July 13th in the Washington Park band shell in Powell, WY at 6:30pm. And on July 15th, the troupe will perform "Henry V" at Canal Park in Cody at 6:30pm. This company is a nationally recognized educational outreach component of the Montana State University's Department of Art and Architecture. They tour two different plays by Shakespeare or other classical playwrights every summer employing 12 professional actors who audition for the parts annually. The actors have strong educations in theater and extensive performing records. All work full time in this field. Montana Shakespeare in the Parks addresses our resident's interest for classical and historic theater and a fondness for Shakespeare and this company in particular. The only requirement made by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks is that these performances are provided free to the public. These two public Shakespeare performances provide the only live, professional theater to our county.

PCAC has selected "Cleo Parker Robinson Dance" to fill our community event. We have set April 20-22, 2026 for this 3-day residency which will present workshops in all three communities and a performance in Cody on April 22nd. We are working out details with the company, schools, and dance studios to incorporate outreach activities as appropriate. Cleo Parker Robinson Dance is based in Denver. Founded in 1970, the company is internationally esteemed as one of America's foremost modern dance companies. The company consists of professional dancers from throughout the nation.

We also are planning performances and outreach by Women of the World. This a cappella group sings in 37 languages and plan a US tour in February 2026. Mentored by Bobby McFerrin, these four women began touring in 2007. Details for this residency are underway.

We will also present Brigham Young University's "Young Ambassadors" on October 21, 2025 at the Powell High School Auditorium. This group of music and theatre students perform contemporary music and dance and tour annually to over 70 different nations around the world. This performance serves the art needs of our LDS residents.

PCAC partners with the Park County Libraries bringing the University of Wyoming Artmobile to our three county libraries. Once curated, the exhibition will tour over the 2025-26 season. The art is selected from the UW Art Museum collection providing an exhibition otherwise not available in our area. The Artmobile curator holds a BFA degree from UW in painting and conducts printmaking workshops along with tours of the exhibition.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The PCAC Arts in Education Program 2025-26 combines Recurring Activities and Changing Activities.

The Recurring Activities include the following residencies brought to our three school districts annually:

1. Shakespeare in the Schools is an educational outreach program developed by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. The 2025 high school residencies will include a staged, costumed, 70-minute performance of "Richard III" conducted by eight professional actors, a pre-performance discussion explaining the play's historical significance and relevance to our times, a post-performance Q & A, and four acting workshops for English and Drama students. Scheduling takes place in the late summer. PCAC contracts for one residency in each of our three school districts. These residencies increase student's knowledge and understanding of theatre with focus on Shakespeare. A study guide is provided by the Shakespeare organization two weeks prior to residencies. It is used by teachers to prepare their students for the 10th grade English required study of Shakespeare. The guide focuses on the play being performed.

2. Montana Shakes is the elementary level Shakespeare residency developed by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. Each of our three school districts will receive a Spring residency that targets 4th and 5th grades. It includes a 30-minute compilation of Shakespeare's plays, a Q&A session, and nine interactive workshops split between the communities elementary schools. Typically we schedule Montana Shakes residencies in April each year. Cody and Powell have 3 elementary schools and so select one to host their district's performance and bus in students from their other 2 schools. The acting troupe divides into three groups to conduct workshops at each school.

3. Missoula Children's Theatre: Week-long K-12 residencies will be brought to Cody, Powell, and Meeteetse over the winter of 2026. This traveling theater company provides a team of two actors who conduct after-school open auditions, rehearsals, two performances, and three in-school 5th grade drama workshops. PCAC contracts for an extra workshop for our Wapiti School. The Missoula Children's Theatre residencies provide the only theatre opportunity for grades k-8. The workshops and theatre production develop students understanding and skills in theatre art.

4. PCAC partners with the Park County Library to bring the University of Wyoming Artmobile to each of its three branches and will provide the changing annual exhibition compiled from the University's Art Museum collection and printmaking equipment for the facilitator to conduct hands-on workshops. The exhibition and printmaking workshops are open to all ages.

The PCAC Arts in Education Changing Activities consist of outreach conducted in the public schools piggy backed onto the PCAC Community Arts Program. As funding permits, dance, voice, and music workshops or lecture demonstration performances will be conducted by Cleo Parker Robinson Dance and Women of the World. The outreach activities provided by these artists will increase arts understanding in dance, voice, and music. By

combining this set of outreach with the theatre and visual art residencies in our Recurring Activities, we will enhance knowledge, skills, and understanding of a broad spectrum of art forms. The PCAC Board of Directors has expressed intent to engage these artists in all three county communities to impact a greater percentage of our student residents.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our primary Arts Learning goal is to bring at least one annual arts education activity to each of our three communities, Cody, Powell, and Meeteetse. This goal was established early on in the formation of PCAC to address the needs of our public schools to bring professional arts to their students, with a focus on theatre. Continued requests from the schools has supported the growth of this goal. Regular meetings with teachers and administrators have determined that the PCAC's Arts Learning programs are the most beneficial way to expose students to the arts. All three school districts have expanded participation in the Shakespeare residencies and now require all students and staff attend the performance. Teachers are enthusiastic about any workshop activities we can provide. PCAC provides 4 arts residencies in each of our 3 school districts. We maintain that activities held during regular school hours reach the broadest representation of our student population.

The goals of our Arts Learning Program include:

1. to instill creativity and self confidence in our students through arts experiences
2. to bring professional artists into our public schools
3. to insure that every student over their primary and secondary education is exposed to the arts programs we offer.
4. to provide theatre opportunity to our k-8 grade students who have no other opportunity to participate in a theatre performance

The residencies we sponsor annually were selected based upon needs within the communities. Missoula Children's Theatre was the first arts learning program adopted by PCAC, to address the lack of any theatre opportunity for the k-8th grade students. Although the auditions, rehearsals, and performances are after school activities the residency includes drama workshops for all 5th graders during regular school hours insuring all students receive theatre exposure over their elementary years. Shakespeare in the Schools residencies were added serving requests from high school teachers for assistance teaching Shakespeare. The company provides a teacher's manual two weeks prior to the residency for teachers to use to prepare students for the performance. It is recognized that Shakespeare is best understood through a live performance. Three drama workshops at the high school level are included in this Shakespeare residency, Schools choose the grade level or classes best suited for these workshops. "MT Shakes," introduces young elementary school level minds to Shakespeare in preparation for their required high school study. From the theater art standpoint, this residency brings professional actors into the schools providing a live performance and drama workshops for active participation. Piggybacked onto the PCAC Community Arts Program are outreach activities. These provide a broader representation of disciplines and genre. As budget allows, the artists from Cleo Parker Robinson Dance and Women of the World will conduct lecture demonstration performances and/or workshops for our schools and dance studios.

These arts learning activities address the following arts education standards:

**Standard 1: Creative Expression Through Production:**

Students create, perform, exhibit or participate in the arts.

**Standard 2: Aesthetic Perception:**

Students respond to, analyze, and make informed judgments about the arts

**Standard 3: Historical and cultural context:**

Students demonstrate an understanding of the arts in relation to history, cultures, and contemporary society

**Standard 4: Artistic Connections:**

Students relate the arts to other disciplines, careers and everyday life.

**Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The PCAC board consists of 12 arts active members with involvement as professional visual and/or performing artists, educators, arts business owners, and art advocates. Four teach in our public schools and provide strong voices for arts learning needs. Two are visual artists. One owns a visual arts supply and gallery business. One owns and operates a theatre company. All board members are arts advocates. Most have degrees in Arts or Education and are actively engaged in extra arts activities and community work. PCAC partners with our schools, NW College, the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, By Western Hands, the Homesteader Museum, Rocky Mountain School for the Arts, Cody Performing Arts Center, and the city councils and chambers of commerce in Cody, Powell, and Meeteetse. These partnerships strengthen events by sharing responsibilities.

PCAC partners with our three school districts using their facilities for arts learning residencies, performances, and workshops. Communication with them is ongoing and their input impacts our selection of artists. They continue to want the Shakespeare residencies we provide for high school and elementary school levels due to the assistance these residencies provide for teaching Shakespeare. Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, an outreach program of Montana State University's Art and Architecture Department, provides Shakespeare in the Schools for high school aged students and MT Shakes for elementary students. These residencies provide teacher's manuals prior to the residency including performances, Q & A's, and drama workshops. The residencies are given by professional actors selected from competitive auditions conducted by the company. These artists have Bachelors or Masters in Theatre Arts and work professionally full time.



PCAC conducts evaluations and surveys with the community. These continue to show strong support for Missoula Children's Theatre residencies providing the only theatre opportunity for k-8 grades. Our schools also support this residency as it provides theatre workshops for all 5th graders in the county. The acting teams are professional artists with college degrees in theatre and training in the education of theatre arts.

Surveys, evaluations, and communications provide direction for selection of artists for our changing performances. Strong response for modern dance, world music, and rock n roll have been expressed. We plan to piggy back workshops or lecture demonstrations with the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance and Women of the World performances.

The Cody School Board eliminated 2 visual arts teachers in the k-5th grade levels to meet prior budget cuts. We are supportive and working to promote area visual arts classes and activities to off set this loss. We will continue to partner with our county libraries to bring the UW Artmobile each year. The curator holds a BFA in painting and BA in Arts Education. The Artmobile brings an exhibition selected from the UW Art Museum collection and printmaking equipment for participatory workshops. We see a necessity to use the Artmobile format to provide additional visual arts opportunities using area professional artists. We are currently organizing an event for students to participate in creating a mural for the storage unit at Gestalt Studios in Powell. We will be hiring an area professional artist to assist with this project.

### **Budget Narrative**

The PCAC Board maintains a fiscally responsible organization maintaining a balance to cover a years' operating and programming expenses. Our funding sources include ticket sales, grants, donations, an annual home tour fund raiser, business sponsorships, in-kind contributions, and partnerships. Our annual mailed fund drive, fund raiser, and business sponsorships provide over 50% of our annual income. Ticket sales average 10% and grants 40%. In kind donations from area motels for free or reduced rate lodging and our strong volunteer base off set 30% of our expenses. Reduced advertising rates for non-profits are offered by area newspapers and a "two ads for the price of one" from our radio network. The number of annual performances and fees can be cut or expanded as funding is determined.

We partner with area chambers of commerce, non-profits, and businesses to share costs and combine audiences. An example: PCAC has provided the music for the Homesteader Museum's Dinner Fundraiser.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

PINE BLUFFS SENIOR CENTER, INC

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PINEBLUFFSENIORCENTER](https://www.facebook.com/pinebluffseniorcenter)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Rural Laramie County Senior Centers Arts Program

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Pine Bluffs Senior Center, Inc.'s Mission Statement is to celebrate, embrace, and serve older adults for the betterment of our community. This mission statement becomes more true each year as Wyoming's senior population grows. Rural Wyoming has become a place for people to retire, and this is where our centers come in. We look to expand our programs each year to include the variety of seniors we get with the growing population. In the past years we have added programs as needed: transportation, in-home respite, and last year, we opened a new senior center in Burns, WY. Engaging in arts and culture can significantly benefit older adults, promoting well-being, cognitive function, and social interaction, while also fostering creativity and a sense of purpose. This is especially important in rural Wyoming, where services are scarce. Our current Arts activities we offer monthly are: simple crafts, a dance that we DJ ourselves with a YouTube playlist, and Graffito's from Cheyenne comes down to with pottery to paint. We hope to add new programs to enrich our current senior members' lives and to bring in new members by providing programs that interest them.

### Community

We are senior centers for both the communities of Pine Bluffs & Burns, WY. The town of Pine Bluffs is 1,100 people and our center has served the community for 24 years. The town of Burns has a population of 300 people, and the center there was a new addition as of October 2024. Our center's current membership is 260 members. Over the years, our center has added programs to fit the needs of our growing and changing senior population. Pine Bluffs is the next largest town in Laramie County after Cheyenne and Cheyenne's surrounding areas. Many people from the county come to Pine Bluffs instead of dealing with the hustle and bustle of going to Cheyenne. Our centers attract different communities of different needs, and many of our programs are helpful for more than just our seniors. We serve people with disabilities, veterans, people below the poverty level, people of minority status, community members, and their families. Within our current members, 7% are of minority status, 20% have an income level that is below the poverty level, and 28% live alone. Our buildings and staff are already accustomed to serving seniors with mobility issues, hearing loss, and eyesight limitations. Our programs are non-discriminatory with regard to Age, Gender, or Disability.

### Evaluation

With our current funding, we are required to keep track of all participants to all of our programs. Success will be measured by attendance at the programs and by surveys of clients who participated. We take vocal feedback during and after the programs we do host. We mail surveys that are tailored to the program for special new

projects we are trying out. Feedback is used internally to help us curate an activity schedule that is varied and will bring people in. We have used other forms of surveys in the past, such as social media polls.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

### **Project Support Narrative**

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

We would like to establish guided, hands-on, group workshops to add a variety of techniques from traditional and mixed media to fine craft to our centers. Art workshops can offer seniors numerous benefits, including improved cognitive function, enhanced emotional well-being, and increased social interaction, while also providing opportunities for self-expression and skill development. We will need support to help with supplies, mileage, and the hourly wage of the artist to provide the classes. Engaging in creative activities like painting, drawing, or sculpting can stimulate the mind and improve cognitive skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and spatial reasoning. Workshops we would like to provide are: Traditional Media: Watercolor, Acrylic, and Mixed media; Printmaking; Mixed Media: Paper Mache, Collage, Mosaics, Paper sculpture; Specialty/Fine Craft: Miniature-based projects, Stained acrylic glass, Paper clay, Found object projects. Adding a variety of different mediums will enrich the lives of our senior clients because learning new techniques and art forms can challenge the brain and enhance memory and cognitive function. We would like to offer monthly workshops for participants at the Pine Bluffs & Burns Senior Centers during FY26 July to June. Each workshop will take roughly 1 to 1-5 hours to complete. All supplies will be provided by the Senior Center and/or through Support from Arts Cheyenne and the Cheyenne Creativity Center. Each workshop will cost around \$272 for the center to provide. \$163 will be wages of the artist, \$58 for mileage, and around \$50 for new supplies depending on which media we will be using at the time. Both partners have some supplies that will be provided at no cost. The \$50 would be for anything additional. Mastering a new artistic skill can translate to other areas of life, encouraging seniors to try new things and stay active. We are very excited to be able to add these art programs to the Pine Bluffs and Burns communities, and once established, maybe to our future centers at Albin and Carpenter. Thank you for your consideration. We will look forward to working with you.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

We have had many requests over the years to add more to our art programming. Our main goal is to establish a reliable program at both centers. We would also like to increase participation throughout the year and to add enrichment to our older adult participants. I hope that these workshops provide an opportunity for my members who participate frequently to add variety to their schedules and to bring in my less-frequent members to join us more often.

Another goal would be to provide a platform for seniors to learn a new artistic skill which can translate to other areas of life, encouraging seniors to try new things and stay active.

Although difficult to measure, we like to see our seniors who walk away from our activities that are overjoyed to have learned something, made a new friend, or just improved their overall mood.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Desiree Brothe has met with us and created a workshop proposal. She is also able to identify stand-in artists from her organization if she is unable to continue with our program herself.

Desirée is a visual artist working in painting, illustration, printmaking and mixed media sculpture under her business, Magpie Creations. She has a degree in K-12 Art Education, and has taught community arts classes for over 15 years, which include courses for older adults based on the Lifetime Arts model. Currently, as the Executive Director for Arts Cheyenne, Desirée oversees the operations and five program areas for the organization.

### **Budget Narrative**

Our organization gets funding through the Older Americans Act, Wyoming Senior Services Grant, WYDOT, and the Laramie County Commissioners. We received In-kind donations from both the Towns of Pine Bluffs & Burns for the rent of our buildings. We have a few volunteers that run some of our current programs. Our crafts, card groups, and bingo are all organized and hosted by senior center volunteers. This program aligns directly with the funding we get to provide services to our older adult community members. Our center has been able to procure funding through multiple avenues to piece together all of the services we need to be able to provide. The Community Support Grant will be a complementary funding source alongside our OAA Title III B Activities funding we receive, so we will be able to provide these types of programs. OAA funding is 63% of our normal operations budget, WSSB is 17%, WYDOT at 10%, and our Matching funds are 10%.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

PINEDALE COMMUNITY THEATRE, INC DBA PINEDALE THEATRE COMPANY

[HTTPS://PINEDALETHEATRE.COM/](https://pinedaletheatre.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Pinedale Theatre Company 25-26 season

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Pinedale Theatre Company's mission is to bring high-quality live theatre to our sparsely-populated remote county, to provide opportunities for members of our diverse populations to work together, and to help community members learn about theatre arts.

PTC will produce the musical, Matilda, based on the book by Roald Dahl, with music by Tim Minchin, October 23-25, at Sheppard Auditorium in Pinedale. The play will include a local cast of 30 adults and children and an orchestra of 10 musicians. An additional 35 plus people will assist with production tasks including lights, sound, costumes, sets, stage crew, marketing, fundraising, and ticket sales. We will hire 9 artists in residence (AIRs) to help produce the play and teach our volunteers about their areas of expertise.

The director will teach two workshops, one for each high school, at the request of the teachers. The director will lead one free community event presenting additional information about the production of Matilda two weeks before the play. Several cast members will join him to sing numbers from the play.

We will invite families with developmentally challenged members to a free performance that allows them to attend the show together and not worry about disturbing other audience members.

PTC will enroll up to 25 children in a July 21-28, 2025 Summer Theatre Camp, grades 4-10, taught by two actors and one amateur performer. The camp will teach a variety of theatre skills and history and finish with a performance by the participants for family members on the last day.

The play and camp will be marketed through the schools, social media, posters, and word of mouth as we try to reach into our underserved communities, as well as seniors, hispanic, LGBTQ+, and veterans to welcome them to join in the project.

Scholarships will be offered for the camp, and free or reduced tickets will be available through the schools, Senior Centers and Social Services for low income families and individuals.

### Community

PTC serves a population of 9000 in Pinedale and Big Piney in Sublette County. Ranching, oil and gas, tourism and government are the economic drivers in this remote, 5000 sq. mile county.

PTC has identified 6 underserved groups within our population. We identify community needs through Informal conversations with members, surveys, direct outreach to community leaders and organizations and observation of community participation and feedback. The groups are listed below along with how we determined their needs, engage with them and our accommodation practices:

PTC actively invites underserved communities. We provide free tickets for low-income individuals and seniors. The Senior Centers/social service offices identify them. The Senior Centers provide buses to the performances. We also cast Seniors in our productions and they volunteer to help with production tasks.

We provide a special performance for developmentally challenged individuals and their families.

We have identified leaders in the hispanic community who help share information about our projects.

We have a strong relationship with the LGBTQ+ community whose members have helped with our shows. We announce inclusion policies to volunteers for each project and foster open dialogue.

We offer summer theater camps with scholarship opportunities for students and choose shows that include children's roles.

We reach out to veterans through local vet groups to provide tickets and invite their participation.

We use newsletters, social media, and direct invitations to promote events and encourage participation by the general community.

We hold our events in government/public building which are ADA compliant. One person on our board is the contact for Accessibility requests. We will develop an ADA plan for PTC this year.

## **Evaluation**

We will measure success by achieving the following goals:

Sponsor a children's summer Theatre Camp and enroll 20-25 children (5 more than last year), provide 5 scholarships, and offer acting, production, and technical theater skills and conclude with a performance by students for families.

Produce the musical Matilda by recruiting 80-90 participants, including 30 actors (7 new), 10 orchestra members (2 new), and 40-50 production crew (8 new), provide free workshops at the 2 county high schools requested by the teachers and taught by the play director, sponsor an audition workshop for newcomers to the process, host a free director's lecture for the community to increase audience access to information about the play (60-80 attendees) and offer a dress rehearsal performance for diverse audiences (50-70 attendees).

Performances: Present 4 performances with an audience of 900-1200, including free tickets for underserved populations, survey audience, participants and our artists-in-residence for feedback about their experiences seeing or working on the show, new skills they learned and suggested improvements.

Strengthen the organization: Recruit 2 new board members who will strengthen the organization by increasing our management skills and representation of the community across ages, genders, and geographies. We will expand

our funding by creating a new event around Foundation 23's half-marathon, which supports local non-profits by matching donations. New revenue will help cover the increasing cost of our productions and allow us to increase the hours of the part time staff position. Currently we fund PTC through tickets sales, grants and donations. A new event will help us both raise money and awareness of PTC and our benefit to the community.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

PTCs overhead costs include a part time salary, program and board insurance, website fees, accounting software, state incorporation fees, and office space.

Currently we employ part time help 2 hours/week average for marketing and computer work.

The school district requires us to have our own insurance in order to use their facilities for both our Theatre Camp and the musical production in the auditorium.

We carry Errors and Omissions insurance for board member protection.

We will purchase an accounting software program to maintain our own books which have previously been handled by Pinedale Fine Art Council (PFAC) when they acted as our fiscal umbrella.

We pay a hosting fee for our website.

We pay an annual corporation fee to the Wyoming Secretary of State.

In-kind:

- Our office space is currently donated by several people and PFAC.
- Board of Directors donated management hours are listed as an in-kind expense.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Pinedale Theatre Company is requesting project funding for its production of the musical Matilda. This show aligns with our mission by offering local citizens opportunities to participate in or attend a high-quality theatre production. The production includes roles for both adults and children, as well as opportunities to learn about the various aspects of theatre production. The play's message that good wins over selfishness appeals to both adults and children.

Auditions will be held in August and rehearsals will start September 2. The show opens Thursday October 23 with an evening performance. There is an evening show on Friday, and a matinee and a final evening show on Saturday the 25th.

School Workshops will be held in October. A community lecture will be October 8, at the County Library.

We will be collaborating with School Districts #1 and #9, the county library, PFAC, both Senior Centers, Foundation 23 and the Community Church. We hope to recruit more participants and audience members from Big Piney this year.

PTC hires artists-in-residence (AIRs) so that the shows we present are professional. Our volunteers are able to learn from the AIRs and to be part of an exceptional production and our audiences experience a polished performance.

The following artists will serve as AIRs for this production:

Mark Hennessey - director. Mark is a professional actor/director recommended to us by Kari Dewitt who worked with him in Colorado. Mark directed Guys and Dolls, Oklahoma, Oliver and Beauty and the Beast for us.

Madeline Iverson - stage manager. A 2025 graduate of Weber State University Madeline has a degree in Theatre Arts, a minor in sound production and 6 years of stage management experience.

Doug Vogel - lighting designer. Doug has lighted all of our shows. He is from Jackson, works with most theatre groups there, and has worked professionally as a designer nationwide.

Greg Allen is our music director. He has worked on and been in most of our productions. He is the vocal music teacher for Pinedale High School and also runs the theatre department for the high school.

Travis Swanson - orchestra conductor. He is the instrumental music teacher at Big Piney High School, and conducted Beauty and the Beast and The Music Man for us.

Sheldon Pickering - Assistant Conductor/keyboard. Sheldon is from New Mexico and a genius who can fill in wherever we lack instruments. He worked with us on Beauty and the Beast and The Music Man.

Stasia Hamilton - Choreographer. Stasia graduated from the U of Wyoming with a degree in Dance. She worked with us on Beauty and the Beast and Music Man.

We also intend to hire a set designer, and a sound engineer.

The funds we are requesting will be use to help pay the stipends for the Artists in Residence.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Summer Camp (July 2025): Enroll 20-25 children, primarily from 4th to 10th grades, offering 5 additional spots and 5 more scholarships than the previous year.

Musical Production of Matilda (Fall):

- Host free theatre workshops at both county high schools, focusing on theatre skills in collaboration with director Mark Hennessey, aiming for 40 or more participants.
- Offer a free audition workshop in Pinedale for 15-20 participants, especially those auditioning for the first time, led by four artists in residence.
- Conduct a free director's lecture to increase audience engagement and appreciation, expected to attract 30-50 attendees. This lecture, presented by Mark Hennessey, will provide insights into Matilda and theatre in general.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**



The specific goals for our camp include:

- Provide students the opportunity to study entry-level acting, production, and technical theatre skills in a small setting for more focused, personalized learning.
- Offer a second-year track of classes for students who participated in the camp previously, allowing them to build on their prior knowledge and deepen their skills.
- Increase access to theatre for economically diverse communities by providing scholarships.

The goals for our High School workshops include exposing students to theatre professionals, increasing student knowledge about theatrical history, and expanding acting and production skills.

Our audition workshop is intended to help provide a safe space for those who may have previously been intimidated by trying out.

Our community lectures are intended to encourage an understanding of the show's history, social issues surrounding the story, and technical issues associated with producing the show.

These goals were identified based on community feedback from surveys and discussions with previous camp participants and parents, production participants, high school teachers, artists in residence, and audience members.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Camp staff:

Anne Mason (Camp Director). She is a University of Wyoming fine-arts graduate, theater artist, and nonprofit administrator, winner of the University of Wyoming's 2021 Rising Alumni Award and a 2022 winner of the Governor's Arts Award. She has also been involved in many prior PTC productions.

Francesca Mintowt-Czyz (Assistant Camp Director). She is an Assistant Professor of Voice and Movement at Weber State University, and a multifaceted professional in the performing arts industry, as an actor, theatre arts educator, director, choreographer, and dialect coach. She holds an MA in physical theatre and devising from RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) and an MFA in Performing Arts from SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design).

Tilly Evans (Camp Student Teacher). Student at Big Piney High School (BPHS), who has been an actor in 2 prior PTC productions, and 2 BPHS productions.

The key artists, consultants, and partners involved in Matilda are:

Mark Hennessey (Director): A professional actor/director recommended by Kari Dewitt. Mark has directed productions such as Guys and Dolls, Oklahoma, Oliver, and Beauty and the Beast for the organization. His extensive experience in theatre made him a natural choice for directing.

Greg Allen (Music Director): Greg has been involved in numerous productions, both on and off stage. He is the vocal music teacher and theatre department head at Pinedale High School, bringing expertise in both music and theatre to his role as music director.

Travis Swanson (Orchestra Conductor): Travis is the instrumental music teacher at BPHS and has conducted for productions such as Beauty and the Beast and The Music Man. His experience with orchestral conducting and music education made him a key figure for leading the orchestra in the productions.

Each of these professionals was selected based on their qualifications, prior experience with the organization, and recommendations from trusted collaborators. Their ongoing involvement ensures high-quality performances and educational value.

## **Budget Narrative**

PTC funding sources are as follows:

Grants (53%). Key grant providers include the Sublette County Recreation Board, Sublette BOCES, the Wyoming Community Foundation, and the Wyoming Arts Council. These grants are crucial for sustaining core programs like theater camps, workshops, and artist residencies.

Ticket Sales (32%): Revenue from ticket sales is used primarily for sets, costumes, and marketing expenses.

Donations (15%): Individual donations and matching funds through Foundation 23. These are applied to expenses, such as AIR travel and food.

In-kind Donations & Partnerships:

Sublette County School District 1 provides the auditorium and auditorium manager services at no cost.

Sublette BOCES facilitates the Theatre Camp by providing facilities.

Sublette County Library provides meeting rooms and marketing assistance.

Pinedale Fine Arts Council provides cross marketing.

Pinedale Community Church provides rehearsal space.

Individuals donate their time and energy to our success.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

PINEDALE FINE ARTS COUNCIL, INC.

WWW.PINEDALEFINEARTS.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Community Arts Programming & Arts Education - Pinedale Fine Arts Council FY26

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Pinedale Fine Arts Council (PFAC) is to present quality performing, literary and visual arts to educate, engage and entertain the people of Sublette County. Our organizational goals include:

- Offering comprehensive arts education opportunities to the students that support local and state education benchmarks
- Bringing culturally diverse artists to our communities that reflect and expand our awareness
- Building partnerships with other organizations to facilitate community input
- Increasing audiences and reaching underserved populations in our county
- Keeping ticket prices affordable so that access to the arts is possible

As part of our mission to "educate, engage, and entertain the people of Sublette County" we aim to offer every student in Sublette County at least two exposures to the arts, one of which is a hands-on experience. For instance, a student will might participate in a week-long classroom residency and later attend an in-school performance.

### Community

Sublette County is a blue-collar community with an economy rooted in ranching, natural gas extraction and tourism. The nearest city to Pinedale (county seat) is 77 miles away so the community is quite rural and isolated. Residents, primarily young families and seniors, appreciate small town life and share a love for the outdoors.

Access to arts programming in Sublette County is very limited because of low population, isolation and the cost of accessing arts activities in other communities. PFAC was established 50 years ago to address this issue because no other organization was doing so.

Our primary demographic is young families who, when they aren't exploring the outdoors, enjoy our programs and many made the decision to move here partly based on what PFAC has to offer.

PFAC takes great strides in engaging our underserved-communities. Our Fringe Age Group Initiative targets both seniors and Pre-K students with arts programs and on-site performances. Our Dementia Care Art Classes directly engage seniors living with Dementia. And through our low-ticket prices, free ticket program for senior centers and

Summer Camp/Art Club Scholarships we make all arts programming accessible to low-income families/individuals. Accommodation requests (scholarships for low income students) are handled on a by-family basis with a scholarship request form.

PFAC works closely with city/county government, school administrators and the community. The Town of Pinedale requests programming to help strengthen the downtown economy; our High School requests a dance residency to help meet curriculum requirements and art instructors request residencies to offer new and exciting projects for students while developing future teaching repertoire.

## **Evaluation**

PFAC measures the impact of our programs in a variety of ways. We collect quantitative evidence by tracking the number of participants, ages and number of volunteers for each program and activity. We reach every student in Sublette County K-12 and make over 10,000 contacts in the community each year.

We use a variety of tools to evaluate the success of a project. With our school arts programs we request formal written evaluations from staff/student and include pre/post surveys. This data is used by our Programming Committee to plan future residencies and is shared with teachers who often use it as a benchmark for reaching state standards.

We also use visual observation and verbal feedback to evaluate our school programming. For instance, with in-class residencies, participating teachers will send an email to the school board commenting on the success of a residency as well as excitement for future residencies. Our two person staff sits in on every school and community program to observe, take notes and, in most case, we are active participants and help visiting artists directly work with students and community members. In today's social media world it's important for staff to document and record everything we do to better communicate our offerings to the community.

With regards to our stage productions, we do bring in consultants to evaluate our venues and make sure we stay up to date on safety, lighting and rigging to better accommodate artists.

We have learned from the evaluation process which programs work and which programs are not a good fit for our audience/community. By evaluating attendance numbers, box office reports and gauging audience feedback we know which genres don't work and focus our programming on productions we know our community will love.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

Requested project support funds will help pay artist fees and production costs associated with the following performances:

### **5-Show Performing Arts Series**

For 50 years PFAC has presented everything from Grammy-winning musicians to nationally-touring theatre productions in the 519-seat Sheppard Auditorium. Our aim is to serve as curators to our community with a goal to

always "keep it fresh" and not book similar genres/styles year-to-year. Our upcoming 25/26 performing arts series will be our 50th anniversary season and will include:

THE RED HOT CHILI PIPERS\* –Cultural/Music – Sept. 27, 2025

Internationally acclaimed ensemble featuring three highland bagpipers and traditional marching snare - backed by a five-piece band.

- The band has four music degrees from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and have played at the top level in bagpiping from New York to Beijing to Melbourne.
- Formed in 2002, the band became popular internationally in 2007 after winning the BBC talent show When Will I Be Famous?

THE VIENNA BOYS CHOIR\* – Choral/Music/Classical - November 5, 2025

The gifted, impeccably trained young singers of the famed Vienna Boys Choir sustain a musical tradition that dates back to the 15th century, an unbroken chain of artistry that resonates

with current audiences as it has for centuries.

- Vienna Boys Choir is the best known boys' choir in the world. The boys are selected mainly from Austria, but also from many other countries.
- The choir is a private, non-profit organization. There are approximately 100 choristers between the ages of nine and fourteen.

BALLET ARIEL'S THE LION THE WITCH & THE WARDROBE\* – Ballet/Classical - Dec. 5, 2025

Ballet Ariel is a professional ballet company located in Denver, Colorado specializing in expressive, narrative ballets that meld classical traditions with contemporary themes and interpretations.

- Founded in 1998 by Director Ilana Norton, Ballet Ariel has evolved into a laboratory for developing original classical ballets; a collaborative environment where the beauty of classical ballet comes together with narrative storytelling and a contemporary vision.

THE PEKING ACROBATS\* – Theatrical/Acrobat – Feb. 5, 2026

For over thirty two years, THE PEKING ACROBATS have redefined Chinese acrobatics with their daring maneuvers and technical prowess at such arts as trick-cycling, precision tumbling, juggling, somersaulting, and gymnastics.

- Since their founding in 1986, THE PEKING ACROBATS have been featured on numerous television shows and TV specials. These include Nickelodeon's Unfabulous, Ellen's Really Big Show, The Wayne Brady Show, That's Incredible, ABC's Wide World of Sports, and NBC's Ring In The New Year Holiday Special.

- THE PEKING ACROBATS have performed with many of the most prestigious Symphony Orchestras in North America today.

LUCA STRICAGNOLI\* - Classical Crossover - April 23, 2026

Luca Stricagnoli is considered one of the most unique guitarists in the world. Luca's creative style, which led him to invent instruments like the Reversed Triple Neck Guitar and the Reversed Slide Neck, vastly contributed to the modern evolution of acoustic guitar.

- Luca has been hailed as a phenomenon and a prodigy by influential magazines and newspapers all over the world, including NME, Guitar World, Der Spiegel, La Repubblica, Daily Sabah, Frankfurter Allgemeine and more..

\* Artist will perform outreach performance and/or workshop for K-12/Pre-K students – see arts learning section

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

SCHOOL RESIDENCY PROGRAMS:

PFAC will present a total of 7 week-long artist residencies in the Pinedale and Big Piney Schools (5 in Pinedale, 3 in Big Piney/LaBarge). Programs include:

Dancers' Workshop - Pinedale Elementary (November 2025), Pinedale High School (April 2026), Big Piney & LaBarge Elementary Schools (May 2026)

Elementary residencies focus on both original choreography and exploration through movement. High School residency focuses on line, two-step and swing dancing. High school residency is held the week leading up to Prom and prepares students for real-life application of dance concepts learned during the residency.

Missoula Children's Theatre - Pinedale K-12 grades including home-school students (April 2026)

MCT actor/directors will arrive in Pinedale on a Monday to rehearse 60+ students for a Friday musical performance starring all local students. MCT also offers school workshops during the day with focus on stage combat, voice for acting and improv. Students will learn lines, music, and choreography all the while gaining lifelong skills including teamwork, dedication, creativity, communication skills and self-esteem.

Eurekus S.T.E.A.M. - Big Piney Middle School (March 2026) and Pinedale Middle School (April 2026)

Students on both ends of the county explore engineering and electronics through hands-on creative experiences. Projects include soldering, circuits, mechanical engineering & electronics, motors, LEDs, micro-controllers and more. These programs spark deep, inventive and authentic learning.

#### COMMUNITY PROGRAMS:

##### After-School Art Club - Tues-Thursday (Jan-June)

Our newest offering allows K-8th grade students the opportunity create a variety of different crafts and projects each week at Pinedale Art and Craft immediately afterschool. Also provides much needed relief for working parents. Scholarships offered.

##### Summer S.T.E.A.M. Camp - August 4-8, 2026

Campers (3rd-8th graders) will design custom games, gadgets and gizmos to inspire creativity and robust learning. They'll further explore mechanical engineering through a scaffolded series of design challenges with focus on emerging technology and soldering, circuits, electronics, motors, LEDs & more. Campers will revel in the design process through imaginative fun while boosting artistic and technical skills.

##### DEMENTIA CARE ART CLASSES - Third Wednesday's of Each Month

Monthly art classes for local seniors living with Dementia and their caregivers. Projects range from painting to ceramics to block printing to string art. Creating art provides a sense of mastering and a social opportunity to engage with others.

##### CLASSICAL CONCERTS FOR KIDS SERIES (CCK) - Fall/Winter 25-26

Fun/informative concerts for Pre-K students introducing classical music and featuring touring classical musicians.

##### SCHOOL CONCERTS FOR PRE-K THRU 12TH GRADE:

In conjunction with our 5-show performing arts series, touring artists (see project section) perform for Pinedale and/or Big Piney students prior to a public performance. Concerts feature an educational component and Q&A. 2025-26 school concerts include:

Red Hot Chili Pipers\* – CCK Bagpipe Performance (Pinedale Pre-K)

Vienna Boys Choir\* – Open Rehearsal (Pinedale High/Middle School)

Ballet Ariel\* - Local dance students included in performance

Luca Stricagnoli\* - Student Concert for Big Piney Schools / CCK Performance (Pinedale Pre-K)

## PEKING ACROBATS\* - Performance for Pinedale High School

\* - see project section for more artist info

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### 1. Quality Lecture Demonstrations

Our goal for booking performing groups for our winter series is that they provide quality lecture demonstrations/workshops/performances for students. The outreach activities need to be a valid sample of the art form and also provide an educational component so students have a context in which to place the art experience.

#### 2. Help Develop Performance Vocabulary/ Etiquette

It is further our goal with the lecture demonstrations/performances to provide students the opportunity to experience quality live performances (aesthetic perception) and build a listening vocabulary as well as develop the foundation to fully appreciate future performances. Observing the stage presence exhibited by artists gives students examples to emulate for their own productions or performances (applications to life). Additionally, students have an opportunity to learn about concert etiquette as well as gaining an appreciation for the performing arts in our community.

#### 3. Student Retention of Material

Our school residency learning goal is rooted in the entry/exit surveys. We work with the teacher and artist of each residency program to create a series of questions to test the impact of the residency on the students. We administer a test before and after a residency to gauge the impact on the students.

For example, consider our Dancers' Workshop Residency entry/exit data. Students in grades 1-5 answered a series of questions about spatial relations, shape and positive and negative space. On the entry survey, 47% of students answered the questions correctly. On the exit survey, after the workshop, 74% of students answered the questions correctly. We also collect general student feedback following residencies in a focus-group setting. This all provides us and the school districts evidence that students are retaining the material we are providing and active learning is taking place.

#### 4. Teacher Implementation/Adaptation of Curriculum

The evidence collected has shown us that teachers appreciate the reliability of having programs return year after year. It allows them to incorporate the material into their curriculum plan, know the artist presenting, develop a long-term personal relationship and more effectively incorporate the material and techniques into their other lessons throughout the year. With this feedback, we have focused on an overall goal of having consistent programming over a long period of time which reaches the greatest number of students possible. However, we also introduce new artists and programs into the mix to reach a broader audience (see #7).



## 5. Improved Well Being Through Elder Care Arts Learning

Our dementia care program learning goal is to infuse creativity into the local elder care system. By teaching elder care specific art techniques and programs our goal is to improve the well-being of our dementia care/senior community through creativity and connection.

## 6. Helping Teachers Reach State Standards

It is further our goal to help teachers reach Wyoming State Standards when possible. Our Dancers' Workshop residency helps Pinedale High School P.E. instructors reach the "movement, fitness and personal/social responsibility" standard and our DW residency in Pinedale Elementary applies to the following standards:

2.PE.1.4 Demonstrate fundamental movement concepts related to space, effort, and relationships.

5.PE.3.5 Participate in creative movement that promotes self-expression.

5.HE.4.10 Describe how individual, social, and cultural differences make us unique, and demonstrate the ability to value/show respect for others.

## 7. Continuing to Reach New Audiences by Implementing New Programs

Our After-School Art Club for instance is an example of reaching our goal of introducing new programs to reach new audiences.

These goals were identified by our Programming Committee which consists of a current teacher, school board members, PFAC Board members, parents and other community stakeholders.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### ARTISTS & CONSULTANTS

Dancers' Workshop: DW has been enriching lives by providing excellence in movement through education, performance and outreach for students and audiences of all ages. Residency instructors Luke Zender, Babs Case and Michaela Ellingson, who we work closely with on our dance residencies, are each accomplished professional dancers, choreographers and arts consultants.

Missoula Children's Theatre: MCT serves to empower children and adults through theatre education and performance to develop lifelong skills while enriching communities worldwide through live productions. Monica & Tyler Aiello (EUREKUS Steam): In the space between art and science exists the creative explorations of Monica and Tyler Aiello. The Denver-based husband and wife team bring a wealth of experience to helming our STEAM programs in Pinedale & Big Piney.

Mae Orm: Local artist Mae Orm teaches our Dementia Care Art Classes and After-School Art Club. She also owns Pinedale Art & Crafts in Pinedale. An accomplished artist in several mediums (clay, oils, watercolors, etc), Mae's versatility helps her bring fresh ideas/topics to the monthly classes.

#### TEACHERS & OTHERS KEY PARTNERS

Teachers often reach out to PFAC for help in addressing a Standard (for instance Dance Standards for Physical Education) or if they have interest in broadening their curriculum. Once a residency is formed, we work with the teacher and the artist to facilitate communication, planning and scheduling, as well as implementation. Teachers and other key partners include:

Katie Facklam: Katie is the Pinedale High School Art teacher with who we coordinate arts residencies to reach both advanced and beginner level art students. Katie is also a PFAC Board Members and consults on all PFAC offerings.

Brian Brisko: Pinedale High School Principal Brian Brisko helps us coordinate school concert performances for Pinedale K-12 students.

Amy Bell: Big Piney Elementary School Principal Amy Bell helps us coordinate school concert performances for Big Piney K-12 students.

April Rose: April is the Executive Director of the Pinedale Senior Center and assists in scheduling and facilitating our Dementia Care Art Program.

Kristi Hibbert and Anthony Riggo: Kristi and Tony are the middle school science teachers in Big Piney and Pinedale (respectively) whom we coordinate with on our Eureka Steam residency.

Kyle Sullivan and Jess Nugent: Kyle and Jess are the elementary school P.E. teachers in Big Piney and Pinedale (respectively) whom we coordinate with on our Dancers' Workshop residency.

Jen Wilkinson: Jen is the Pinedale High School P.E. teacher whom we coordinate with on our High School Dancers' Workshop residency.

Camille Kainer: Camille is a recent Pinedale High School graduate and serves as our summer intern. Camille handles everything from poster distribution to merchandise sales and has participated in PFAC residencies and programs since she was a child.

#### PFAC PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

Our Programming Committee collects input from the school districts, Senior Centers and all five preschools in developing arts education programs. Each committee member was selected based on previous involvement with PFAC programming, interest in the arts and experience teaching.

The artists involved are selected on merit, portfolio and experience teaching their particular discipline in a classroom setting. Some artists are recommended by teachers and others are discovered by PFAC staff via partnering organizations.

### **Budget Narrative**

PFAC receives funding from a variety of sources.

At the Federal/State level PFAC receives funding from The Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Cultural Trust, Wyoming Community Foundation, Creative West (formerly WESTAF) and the NEA.

Locally, we receive funding from Sublette BOCES & the Sublette County Recreation Board

Corporate sponsors include: Tegeler & Associates, PureWest, Marathon Oil, Rocky Mountain Power, Stantec and First Bank.

In-Kind discounts include: Bookkeeping, Tax prep, hotel discount, discounted use of venues and countless volunteer hours.

We receive funding from a diverse group of organizations/individuals and that diversity is reflected in our programming offerings. Keeping our organization fresh, innovative and in the black keeps our donors and funding intact. Furthermore, with just one full-time staff member and one part-time staff member, our funding goes primarily to our arts programming and not to overhead. This is something our contributors value greatly.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

PLATTE VALLEY ARTS COUNCIL, INC.

WWW.PLATTEVALLEYARTS.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Platte Valley Arts Council-general operating and project support

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Platte Valley Arts Council's mission is to "foster awareness and participation in any form of the arts with the aim of developing a vibrant and cohesive community." Plate Valley Arts Council (PVAC) demonstrates that art can be a part of our everyday lives. Areas of arts concentration include performance, musical, literary, and visual. The goal is to be a community in which art is valued and revered and attracts others of the same mindset to visit or relocate, thereby improving the economic landscape. The service area includes the communities of Saratoga, Encampment and Riverside.

GOAL #1 ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY-- The Board of Directors will mentor and educate the Administrative Assistant with the goal of evolving into a full-time Executive Director position. This will be done by

- Encouraging a stronger leadership role
- Supporting the Administrative Assistant's professional development
- Increasing the scope of work for the Administrative Assistant
- Increasing the monthly contract compensation to reflect the additional duties

GOAL #2 FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY—PVAC needs to strengthen current income streams (memberships and fundraising) to meet financial goals. The Board will:

- Increase membership numbers and levels
- Create a signature event which creates significant revenue
- Offer limited-edition bronze maquettes for purchase

GOAL #3 PROMOTING LOCAL ARTISTS—Local artists are under-utilized by PVAC. The Board will engage and improve relationships by:

- Using local artists to lead workshops and activities
- Creating a comprehensive directory of local artists, authors, craftsmen and musicians on the PVAC website
- Establishing an 'artist guild' to support networking

## **Community**

PVAC brings the arts to the underserved by collapsing barriers to those with low or fixed incomes and offers free or nominally priced events and programs. Platte Valley has an 11.3% poverty rate. Approximately 22% of Saratoga households have an income below \$30,000; attributed to white females, or white individuals over the age of 64. Elderly residents and those in the long-term care facility are invited to attend and participate in all activities.

In this rural and isolated area, race is homogenous (86.8% White). Between 2000 and 2022, those who identify as White have decreased 6.6% as other races have increased. Virtually all households speak English (98%).

The median household income in Saratoga is about \$68,000. The cost of living in the area is 20% lower compared to the US. Because 77% of residents are homeowners, one might conclude that they earn a living wage.

Saratoga's median age is 41.1 years and over 35.2% have a bachelor's degree or higher. There are 453 K-12 students enrolled in Saratoga and Encampment schools. An overall marriage rate of 54% infers that a majority of young, married professionals with families live in the service area.

To accommodate the 9% of the population who self-identify as being disabled, events are held in the Platte Valley Community Center which is ADA compliant. For example, the theater has a wheelchair lift, designated seating with companion seats, and several accessible parking spots next to the building. Headphones are also available for those who request. These features are printed in theater performance programs. When an attendee asks, staff make every reasonable request to accommodate the need.

(all stats are from US Census Bureau).

## **Evaluation**

PVAC has created an on-line customer satisfaction survey that was recently sent to all current members/patrons. Results will help the Board of Directors gauge their expectations and direct further programs. In addition to asking which programs are most valuable, the survey requests suggestions for future programming. Direct benefits of membership/patronage will also be evaluated.

As outlined previously, PVAC will measure the success of its goals as follows:

#### GOAL #1 ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY—

With an increased scope of work for the Administrative Assistant, the estimated time needed to complete the tasks will increase from 20 hours to 30 hours per month by November 2025. The compensation will increase 10% after six months and 20% after one year of contract fulfillment. The Admin will attend one non-profit training conference within the year.

#### GOAL #2 FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY—

Membership numbers will increase to 75. Coupled with increased levels of membership, 30% more income will be generated over the previous year. One signature event will result in attendance of 150 people and a net income of \$2,500. The pre-sale of five (5) bronzes will generate a net income of \$12,500 this year.

#### GOAL #3 PROMOTING LOCAL ARTISTS—

Twenty (20) additional artists will be added to the website directory and all artists will have complete contact information and biography in their profile. A new collective group of artists (10 members this year) will meet quarterly to participate in activities such as educational seminars for photographing and marketing their work, studio visits of fellow members, and the sharing of information such as artist RFPs. These activities should increase the value of PVAC, reflected by additional membership.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

An OPERATING SUPPORT award would be used for personnel expenses.

Forty-two percent (42%) of PVAC expenses are fixed, such as web maintenance, postage and printing, insurance, storage shed rental, office supplies, scholarships, and contract labor. Event and program related expenses (instructor fees, space rent, performance fees, supplies, and marketing) make up 58% of the budget.

A recently hired part-time contracted Administrative Assistant who will be trained to keep financial records, maintain the website, and support patronage activities. Success could be rewarded with an increase in the monthly contracted amount and/or additional duties and responsibilities such as:

- building evaluation and tracking techniques of events
- increasing communication with existing patrons and cultivating new relationships
- developing targeted marketing efforts for events and programs
- contributing to more efficient planning and implementation of programs
- organizing and maintaining all documents, both physically and electronically
- creating all graphic design needs, such as flyers, social media posts, and brochures
- establishing clear policies and procedures for all activities

Furthermore, PVAC's three goals are directly related to the Administrative Assistant's job duties. Each goal has details of the objectives, methods and expected outcomes.

Currently, the Administrative Assistant is paid \$450 per month or \$5,400 per year. It is expected that the stipend would increase to \$6,500 per year. Without additional financial resources, the position's scope of work cannot be expanded.

Ideally, this person would transition into a part-time Administrative Assistant (annual salary between \$20,000 and \$48,000) and eventually an Executive Director with a salary between \$48,000 and \$96,000.

PVAC's 2025 projected income is \$50,000 and categorized as follows:

GRANT INCOME \$20,000 (40%)

PATRON/MEMBER INCOME \$15,000 (30%)

FUND RAISING \$15,000 (30%)

The projected expenses are as follows:

FIXED COSTS TOTAL \$ 20,825 (42%)

Operations/Administration: \$ 7,000

Contracted staff: \$ 6,500

Education/professional development: \$ 650

Scholarship Program: \$ 1,525

Fundraising expenses: \$ 5,150

PROGRAM COSTS TOTAL \$ 29,175 (58%)

Dance Programs: \$ 1,000

Music Programs: \$ 15,000

Literary Programs: \$ 600

Public Art Programs: \$ 3,375

Children's Activities: \$ 1,000

Visual Arts Programs: \$7,500

Performing Arts Programs: \$ 700

### **Project Support Narrative**

PROJECT SUPPORT grant funding would be used to commission an artist for a new mural and/or sculpture.

To appeal to various underserved communities, PVAC has a robust public art program. PVAC owns fourteen public art murals and sculptures which are listed in a printed map/brochure available throughout the valley. The PVAC website includes an interactive map with information on how to access these free, family-friendly pieces with 24/7/365 access. Most of the public art is wheelchair accessible, albeit outdoor. Any public art located indoors is accessible during business hours.

A call for RFPs will begin as soon as possible with a submission deadline of May 30, 2025. Based on concepts submitted, one or more artists are to be invited to meet with the Board of Directors. Preference will be given to Wyoming residents and/or those with ties to the communities of Saratoga, Encampment, Riverside and Carbon County Wyoming.

The PVAC Board of Directors shall identify an installation site for the new piece. It may include a city park, private businesses property, or highway rights-of-way. The site will be selected based on ease of physical access, willingness of property owner to partner with PVAC for maintenance needs in perpetuity, security plans, and



relevance of artwork to location. The site will be located within the communities of Saratoga, Encampment and/or Riverside.

Artists might use materials such as steel or bronze, recycled items, topiary, paint, mosaics, glass, and other weather-resistant products. Installation must be tamper-proof and theft resistant and the art piece must require little or no maintenance. Insurance coverage will be provided by the artist while in the execution and installation phases. PVAC will ensure final installed pieces.

Each proposal requires a preliminary budget for design, materials, execution, installation, and maintenance. The PVAC Board estimates spending between \$5,000-12,000, however the amount will be based on type of piece, scale and materials used. The commissioned artist will be paid 50% upon proposal acceptance by the Selection Committee, and 50% at completion of installation.

The chosen artist will have 3-6 months to execute and install their piece. The artist, PVAC Board, and site owner will negotiate a final installation deadline based on the location and weather conditions. If the art is not installed by the deadline the artist will forfeit 75% of the commission.

The final public art piece will become property of the Platte Valley Arts Council, Inc.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

An OPERATING SUPPORT grant award would help to pay for the Administrative Assistant's annual contract.

A PROJECT SUPPORT grant award would help to pay for the expenses associated with a commissioned and installed public art piece.

Reserved funds will eventually be used to sustain the position of an Executive Director, which leads to a more stable organization.

A grant award would help ensure that all regular events and programs will proceed as planned, without disruption to the operating budget or use of reserved funds. Programs include the Dance, Music, Literary, Visual Arts, and Performing Arts Programs as well as Public Art and Children's Activities.

Board directors track their donated time, usually about 500 hrs and valued at over \$15,000 per year. Various collaborations have produced in-kind contributions of meeting room rental fees, food and catering expenses, accounting services, storage shed rent, and art supplies. These contributions are valued at over \$20,000.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

PLAZA DIANE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

PLAZADIANE.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Plaza Diane Community Center for the Arts Staff Support

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Plaza Diane Community Center for the Arts updated its mission statement earlier this year. While we still maintain our focus on the arts, board members had two objectives in mind – to simplify our messaging and to promote greater inclusivity. Our new mission reads, ‘Plaza Diane inspires community through creativity and connection.’

Our 2025 goals are to:

- Offer programming that promotes our ‘Community Center’ image.

We work to balance artistic offerings that include varied visual arts and education inside the gallery with performances on the plaza through our annual summer concert lineup as well as showcasing local dance and music groups on our outdoor stage. We are joining forces with a local bar and grill that has previously sponsored concerts in the park. This will make serving food and beverages more readily available at Plaza Diane (we have struggled with the reliability of various food trucks), while also expanding attendance from combining our respective audiences for events. Plaza Diane also organizes Powell’s annual ChristmasFest holiday celebrations as a bridge to the greater community.

- Expand marketing and community outreach.

We initiated activities last year to engage senior citizens in arts enrichment programming by taking classes into two residential facilities. We want to sustain this collaboration in some regular manner. We will also continue to meet with new and existing partners to identify programming expansion opportunities.

- Generate \$55,000 of revenue for regular operations.

We seek to raise additional money from expanding our membership base, securing event sponsorships, and bringing in more grant dollars. Community-wide programming and enhanced outreach should also support our fundraising efforts.

### Community

Powell is a community of 6,300 located in northwest Wyoming. As a rural farm town, Plaza Diane has had to deflect elitism associated with being an art gallery. We have intentionally focused on being a 'community center' that includes a gallery space and offers comprehensive programming.

Home to Northwest College, there are more young people, aged 15-24, than the state average. Alternately, we have a higher proportion of older residents, ages 65-plus, with retirees who seek our moderate weather and want cultural enrichment activities. From an ethnic perspective, Powell is 92% Caucasian, 5% Hispanic and 3% all others.

Plaza Diane maintains strategic links to NWC's Art, Music and Photography departments as well as the Homesteader Museum for coordinating exhibits and performances that appeal to both young adult and older audiences.

In 2024, Plaza Diane conducted its second large-scale, online survey to address current community needs and desires. We also connect directly with senior centers, a facility serving adults with developmental disabilities, and programs supporting single parent families to determine their desires for specific arts programming.

Our building is handicap accessible with an open gallery/performing space. Furnishings are limited and can be easily rearranged to accommodate patrons with special needs. Our art labels feature large-print titles and thoughtful placement for accessibility and readability. The Plaza itself slopes to the street with parking to aid accessibility. Most of our events are free, but we maintain a scholarship fund to cover workshop costs for low-income participants.

Located in the heart of Powell, Plaza Diane infuses life into the downtown area, helping build a strong, vibrant community and enhance the quality of life.

## **Evaluation**

Plaza Diane's goals drive evaluation discussions in annual planning retreats, but evaluation is also an ongoing part of our conversation at regular Board meetings. We actively track participation numbers and evaluate trends in activities. Following gallery exhibits, artists are asked to provide feedback about their experiences and make suggestions for improvements. As a marketing partner, the Park County Travel Council requests feedback from our festival or events from attendees regarding marketing channel selection and attitudinal information.

Plaza Diane conducted a survey in spring 2024 of its members and those of the local Chamber of Commerce to assess current program effectiveness and preferences for desired future offerings as well as to determine where people go for information regarding events. The most requested topic was for additional community events. We

also learned there is not much demand for adult classes. Local newspapers and social media provide the best avenue for promoting our activities.

Other success measures are membership numbers and corporate sponsorships for events. Participation remained solid in 2024 with 68 individual/family memberships and 51 business sponsors associated with our activities.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Plaza Diane Community Center for the Arts resulted from a State of Wyoming grant that transformed a 1950's retro-style gasoline station into a gathering place based around the arts. Located in the heart of downtown, the facility is owned by the City of Powell and leased to Plaza Diane for \$1 per year.

Our gallery space features 8-10 art exhibits a year, rotating every 5-6 weeks and ranging from elementary student showcases to collaborative themed exhibits and individual artist shows. The facility offers both indoor and outdoor venues for classes, music, and entertainment, including solo musicians, bands, and various dance groups. The outdoor green space includes picnic tables under large shade sails, a performance stage, gardens, and a water splash pad.

Summer brings our Plaza@ 5:30 events on multiple Thursday evenings, with live music, food options and a beer garden. Outdoor activity culminates in August at our annual arts festival. Art, food trucks and beverages, vendors, musical entertainment, and children's art projects are highlights.

During the school year, elementary-aged students benefit from monthly art workshops at Plaza Diane. These after-school 'Art Club' sessions are led by area artists and craftsmen and often themed to align with exhibits featured in the gallery. Art Club has been vastly important because the local school district does not provide formal arts instruction in the elementary schools. We also offer adult classes with less frequency in drawing, watercolor, landscape painting and such.

Community-based events like Powell's ChristmasFest showcase school groups in holiday-themed music and dance performances and provide hands-on arts and craft activities for kids. These celebrations engage people in the arts who might not otherwise participate in our programs.

Volunteer energy carried the day for Plaza Diane in its early years, but further growth required the addition of paid staff. A half-time coordinator oversees Plaza Diane's programming. Our challenge remains in generating ongoing revenue to sustain this part-time position.

Ashlee Ganoung was hired in early 2025 as our new Coordinator. She brings a full resume of logistical planning, event coordination and non-profit experience that will serve our arts center well. Ganoung is a 2003 alumnus of Northwest College. Her primary role is to facilitate exhibits, manage classes, and assist in planning events.

Operating Support grant funds from the Wyoming Arts Council will be used to help cover the coordinator's pay of \$17,100, or 26% of last year's budget.

Plaza Diane's programming costs totaled \$20,300, or 29%. They included \$9,700 for marketing/advertising; payments for artist sales of \$700, special event costs of \$4,500 with \$2,900 paid to musicians; and \$2,500 for activity expenses such as art supplies for classes.

Operating costs accounted for \$14,000, or 20%, which broke down as \$5,300 in utilities and phone; \$2,200 for property tax and liability insurance; \$2,200 for membership software and website fees; \$2,800 for janitorial service and supplies, and \$1,500 for accounting and business fees.

We collaborated with the City of Powell last year to install a new quartz finish on the gallery floor. The city granted us \$13,000 and Plaza Diane paid \$5,000 for the cost. This project accounted for 25% of our budget.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Plaza Diane Community Center for the Arts generates revenue from memberships and donations, events and sponsorships, class fees, art sales, grants, and rental fees.

Some key partnerships are vitally important to our success. We lease space from the City of Powell virtually free of charge. A local graphic artist provides in-kind design work for our marketing and we receive discounted printing from a local vendor. Finally, we rely on key volunteers who manage business operations and conduct events.

Plaza Diane's budget breaks into three areas. Payroll is our largest single budget expense. Programming costs such as artist and musician fees, class materials, and marketing are a second significant category. The third is comprised of Operating costs such as utilities, insurance and taxes, and facility maintenance. We also work to hold some savings as a cushion.

The Community Support Grant helps maintain staffing and is critical to ongoing operations for Plaza Diane's future.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

POWDER RIVER SYMPHONY

PRSYMPHONY.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025 - 2026 Powder River Symphony concert season

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

OUR MISSION STATEMENT: "The Powder River Symphony is an ensemble founded on the belief that great music should be available to everyone. With dedication to serving the citizens in northeast Wyoming, the mission of the orchestra is to enrich the cultural lives of adults, expand the musical horizons of children and provide an outlet for the creative talents of musicians in the region by performing for an expanding audience. The ensemble provides opportunities for members of the community, young and old, to develop a lifelong relationship with music and the orchestra".

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS: The primary goal of the orchestra is to promote live music and to share the experience of live orchestral music with the area adults and young people.

Our additional strategic goals are to :

- 1 - provide professional development for music educators in the area.
- 2- provide high quality music experiences to local amateur musicians in the area.
- 3 - expose the community to guest conductors and performers.
- 4 - provide rehearsal and performance opportunities for local adult musicians and student musicians above and beyond their classroom opportunities.
- 5 - provide social outreach to the community through the concerts.

### **Community**

We invite all to attend our concerts and schedule them on Sunday afternoons at 3:00 PM – a time we feel is advantageous to our audience especially the seniors, veterans, and those with disabilities. We are the only classical orchestra music outlet for Campbell, Crook, and Weston counties. The community that we serve is



Northeast Wyoming, and our concerts provide our patrons and area musicians with a culturally enriching experience.

All are welcome and no one is turned away. PRS continues with a “admission by donation” attendance policy allowing everyone, even those with little financial means, to attend. Our programs are selected and presented from multiple cultural sources without discrimination based on identity, race, or cultural background.

Requests for special accommodation to aid groups or individuals for attendance are granted upon application to the board. An example would be arranging transportation of patrons from a nursing home or other residential facility. The Camplex Theater is our chosen venue which has handicap ramps, disability features (ADA), and staff is available to assist our handicap patrons.

### **Evaluation**

QR codes are posted at each concert that allow patrons an easy access to an evaluation form that they can fill out on line. These questions focus primarily on repertoire, concert presentation and the quality of the concert event. At our concerts we will provide a similar questionnaire (to our on-line survey) which are collected and evaluated. The board also includes 2 questions in the evaluation form: one about advertising options that succeed with the patron and one about how to promote the symphony. Local music educators, some of whom are on the symphony board, are also polled regarding their thoughts concerning the concert design, dates, guest artists, and repertoire. This assorted information is evaluated by our board.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

on average - per concert:

Camplex theater rent runs about \$1550.00.

Concert advertising \$600.00.

Imported musicians \$3150.00.

Hotel expenses for imports and director \$1100.00.

director costs \$3000.00.

Amortized insurance per concert \$300.00

Average per concert expenses total - \$9700.00

4 concerts per year total: \$38,800.00

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Powder River Symphony has remained financially sound and solvent up to and through the 2024 / 2025 season. Our past and current season format, with a contract conductor and strong local player involvement, has allowed us to keep our overall concert expenses low and lean. Several long-time business supporters (Ida Snead State Farm, Peregrin Global Foundation, Holiday Inn Express, First National Bank, and others) continue to support the symphony. Grants from the Wyoming Community Foundation and Campbell Co Community Recreation District are some of the current financial grant supports. We are also active with WyoGives, “Walk in the Park”, and the “Parade of Homes” annual events. The proceeds of these events are channeled 100% to the symphony. In the recent past we have expended all our annual income on our concerts and programs and we hope to continue to break even as a true non-profit organization.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

RELATIVE THEATRICS

WWW.RELATIVETHEATRICS.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Relative Theatrics 25-26 Season and Play/Write Arts Education Program

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission: Relative Theatrics engages community in thoughtful, contemporary theatre, expands worldviews, and connects us to collective humanity.

We do this through a number of avenues. We:

- present transformative theater and chatbacks in an intimate theater setting that promotes dialogue
- increase interest in theater through community outreach to individuals and organizations
- promote partnerships with organizations/businesses for innovative programs and community events
- make theater accessible with affordable pick-your-own-price tickets and free readings
- support and promote student and community artists
- provide arts education
- support play creation

In June 2024, our Founder and Producing Artistic Director, Anne Mason, stepped down from her leadership role. We have hired our first full-time Executive/Artistic Director, Sean Coyle. In January 2025, he met with the board for a strategic planning session to create goals for the year. Our organization goals fall into three areas:

#### 1. Finance

- Apply for 12 grants
- Contact 5 businesses for corporate sponsorships
- Encourage board members to invite guests to productions and promote ticket sales

- Continue excellent donor stewardship by thanking donors regularly and providing monthly donors with special material such as videos from artists or other play-related content

## 2. Community

- Collaborate with 7 partners
- Meet with Christi Zimmerman from UW Theatre & Dance at least once per semester to coordinate collaborations and to develop a proposal for creative research opportunities for faculty

## 3. Programs

- Produce a successful season of 4 plays, 2 Read, Rant, Relate play readings, and our Play/Write Education program; plus consider other community opportunities that fit our mission
- Create a proposal for a new play submission program

Goals for our Play/Write Education Program are included in the Arts Learning section of the application.

## Community

Programming will take place in Laramie (pop. 32,000) and Rock River (pop. 240). In Laramie 55.8% of people over 25 have a bachelor's degree. In 2023, median income was \$52,414. 8.3% of people under 65 are disabled. 11.7% of the population is Latina/o, 1.4% Black, 1.1% Native American, and 7.2% are two or more races. Our plays reflect Albany County demographics and tackle topics that resonate for many groups and individuals with multifaceted cultural backgrounds.

We invite participation in many ways. We reach out to Ark Services for the differently abled and collaborate with the Senior Center. We advertise that we offer free tickets to low-income patrons.

We use collaborations to engage with nondominant communities and we reach out to include them in our programs and discussions. We pair RT plays with nonprofit service organizations to share the partner's mission, to spark conversations about its impact, and to inspire civic engagement. RT champions community-driven events. Past examples include partnering with the city on a play reading in a skate park and with Laramie Mainstreet on a free reading in an empty storefront.

RT's arts education program serves Albany County, where 24% of students come from low-income families, 73% of students are white, 18% Hispanic, and 7% other. The program includes Rock River, an isolated rural community where the poverty rate of children under 18 is over 30%.

The theaters we use are ADA compliant. The accessibility page of our website outlines our available accommodation methods such as special seating or large-print programs. We have welcomed a guide dog for the blind and used a ramp for accessible stage seating for wheelchairs. We had sign language interpreters at our 2023 Play/Write Showcase.

## **Evaluation**

RT uses quantitative and qualitative evaluation. For our education program, we track showcase audiences and numbers of students/teachers served. We collect feedback. We evaluate how students are meeting learning standards. We use feedback to inform future plans.

For theatre productions, we track audience numbers, mailing lists, and social media metrics to measure our success in increasing interest in theatre. Observation of post-performance chatbacks allows us to subjectively measure a goal of starting dialogue. Requests for collaboration with other arts organizations are a positive evaluation of our program quality.

Audiences are an integral part of evaluation through feedback surveys, provided in paper form and online. They include open-ended questions such as “What specific thoughts or questions were sparked by this play?” and “Please offer additional feedback about the play or the theatre-going experience.” We transcribe and review all feedback. The responses inform our decisions. We had comments about uncomfortable seats so we bought cushions. Some patrons said they like light-hearted ways of looking at difficult topics so the play selection committee considers that when choosing a well-rounded season. We plan to inform patrons how we use their feedback and how it has affected our decisions.

Responses show impact. We see positive feedback such as “Love the quality of the shows and that they make me think about things in a new way.” We also received positive feedback about the impact of our community organization partnerships. For one play, 24% of respondents had not heard of Hospice and 52% learned new things about it. Patrons said they were happy to see our partnerships and that they were learning more about organization services and volunteer opportunities.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

RT is requesting \$8000 in operating support in order to facilitate presenting our season of theater and our Play/Write education program.

RT expenditures include studio rent (\$10,608), Google Suite, Network for Good, QuickBooks, and other software subscriptions (\$3857), insurance (\$1950), platform fees (\$2320), accounting services (\$8690), theater rental

(\$11,400), production and marketing costs (\$21,390), artist fees (\$41,000), and other costs, such as professional development, hospitality, memberships, postage/supplies, etc. (\$6487). Costs also include salaries and payroll taxes for our full-time Executive/Artistic Director and for our part-time staff: Tech Director, Production Manager, Education Director, Teaching Artists, and an intern (\$111,532).

The staff and artists are instrumental in presenting a year of theater and arts education in Laramie. Our past Producing Artistic Director/Founder donated much of her time in-kind. Our new ED/AD position is full-time to reflect the amount of work and compensation needed for a sustainable organization. Grants and donations are essential in order for RT to continue to make theater accessible to all through affordable ticket prices.

WAC operating funds of \$8000 will be used toward the \$111,532 in staff salaries.

### **Project Support Narrative**

We are requesting \$2000 in project support. The funds will be used for artist fees and can support 4 actors for a production.

Season 13 includes 4 productions with 6 performances each, all in intimate black box settings at the Gryphon Theatre, the Cooper Center for the Arts, and the UW Buchanan Center for the Performing Arts. We will also present 2 free readings as part of our READ, RANT, RELATE program, in which actors read contemporary plays and patrons join a humanities scholar in a discussion. RT also responds to opportunities to bring free performances to public places.

#### **SEASON 13**

MARY GETS HERS by Emma Horowitz; UW BCPA; Sept. 4-13, 2025

In this new play inspired by Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim's closet drama-comedy "Abraham, or the Rise and Repentance of Mary", when two overzealous hermits, during the 10th C. plague, find an abandoned orphan, they scheme a saintly rescue mission to protect her purity. Mary, however, has other plans for herself.

STRAIGHT WHITE MEN by Young Jean Lee; Gryphon; Nov. 6-15, 2025

When Ed and his 3 adult sons come together for Christmas, they enjoy cheerful trash-talking, pranks, and takeout Chinese. Then they confront a problem that even a happy family can't solve. When identity matters, and privilege is problematic, what is the value of being a straight white man?

FEAST by Megan Gogerty; Gryphon or Phoenix; Feb. 12-21, 2026

In this reimagining of the Beowulf story, Grendel's mother throws a party to seek justice for her son's murder at the hands of a brutal strongman, only to confront her own complicity in his death and the spread of authoritarianism. The play asks us to consider our own responsibility to confront our climate, income inequality, and state-sponsored violence.

MAPLE AND VINE by Jordan Harrison; Cooper Center; April 10-18, 2026

Katha and Ryu have become allergic to the 21st-century. After they meet a charismatic man from a community of 1950s re-enactors, they forsake cell phones and sushi for cigarettes and Tupperware parties. They are surprised by what their new neighbors - and they themselves - are willing to sacrifice for happiness.

READ, RANT, RELATE:

THE NEW GALILEOS by Amy Berryman; Fall 2025

72 MILES TO GO by Hilary Bettis; Spring 2026

Directors/actors include Anne Mason, Kim Lockhart, and Sean Coyle. Designers/actors will be chosen by directors.

Kim Lockhart and Sean Coyle have performed in, directed, and designed many RT plays. Their bios are in the Arts Learning section.

Anne Mason founded Relative Theatrics in 2013 where she served as the organization's Producing Artistic Director for 11 years, producing over 40 productions. Anne holds a BFA in Theatre Performance from UW. Anne was named the Wyoming Woman of Influence in the Arts in 2023 and is a 2022 recipient of the Wyoming Governor's Arts Award.

The design teams include community members, UW students/graduates specializing in theatre design and UW employees with design/technical skills. Frequent RT designers are Don Turner (UW Production Manager), John Wilhelm (professional sound engineer and designer), and Ben Boyd (RT Tech Director), who is a Digital Media and Lighting Designer. His designs have been showcased at Theatre Silco in Silverthorne, CO, Grandstreet Theatre in Helena, MT, the University of Wyoming, and RT. Recent credits include Projection for THE HALF LIFE OF MARIE CURIE, Lighting for THE MOUSETRAP, Lighting/Projection for THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL, and Lighting for HEROES OF THE FOURTH TURNING.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### RT's Arts Learning Programs

#### Elementary School students:

RT's Play/Write program is an in-class arts education program that teaches playwriting and performance skills to 5th graders in participating schools in Rock River and Laramie. RT's program began in Fall of 2022 and is modeled on a successful program that Project Director, Will Bowling, developed in New Orleans schools. The curriculum leads students through the playwriting process: brainstorming and visual thinking strategies, prewriting and first draft, individual and group editing revisions, and finally, publication of their finished play.

In the first semester, students work with Relative Theatrics teaching artists to develop creative writing skills and to learn basic theater skills. In the second semester, Play/Write focuses on four areas: 1) leading students through a more refined creative writing process by identifying one of their stories for full length play development with strong dialogue, character development, and stage directions; 2) teaching students about theatre production, including staging, set, light and costume design, and the roles of director, performers, designers and technicians; 3) publishing student works in the Dramatist format: students receive copies of their own work and school libraries receive copies of all plays; and 4) a culminating showcase and community celebration.

In April, RT will select 9-12 student works for performance, and contract theatre companies for production. Each company will receive an artist fee and a budget for design, and has 4 weeks to rehearse. The May performances will have 2 components: a daytime field trip for all participating students/teachers, and an evening community-wide free performance at the University of Wyoming. Participants will see their works performed by theaters from around the state - lights, costumes, sets, etc. The showcase will be a community celebration of the creative endeavors of young writers and the community of artists and audiences that have gathered together to bring the plays to life. The result is a deepened interest in the creative process and involvement in the arts. The chosen theatre companies will reflect geographic and age diversity, including university students, senior citizens, and companies from other parts of Wyoming. Some of the companies will be the WYO Performing Arts and Education group from Sheridan, Communal Pancake from Lander, and The Unexpected Company senior theater group in Laramie,

#### UW Theatre & Dance students:

UW students will be involved in RT productions, be taught/mentored/monitored by RT staff, will gain skills in theater production and management in a professional setting, and will take on various roles in productions. Some students will be chosen to act, and some will be chosen as designers. Each student will work on a Relative Theatrics play and will be involved in the entire production process, including production meetings, read-throughs,



rehearsals, and performances. They will learn how to perform or design for a professional theater under the direction of RT artists and staff. They will learn the schedules and expectations of a professional theater company.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Goals of the Play/Write program:

- to create skill and passion for writing: each student produces original writings and sees their work published;
- to foster creative thinking: students practice creativity through brainstorming activities that help them write their plays and become more confident public speakers through consistent performance practice;
- to introduce students to theater as an art form and create a lifelong interest in the arts: students write their own plays, see them performed by professional theater companies, and receive published copies of their writing;
- to engage classroom teachers in the teaching of theater arts

The Play/Write program goals were identified based on its successful implementation in New Orleans since 2010. The Play/Write program supports literacy education, community artistic programming, and educator professional development. By targeting common core writing standards as an entry point for the integration of creativity, we expand the public school population's knowledge of theater arts, foster a new generation of creative writers, and a new generation of theater audiences for the state. Additionally, the program provides arts training to classroom teachers, equipping them with the skills to teach theater arts independently.

Measurable Goals for 25/26:

- 1) 120+ plays created by students;
- 2) 300+ audience members for the showcases;
- 3) 6+ Albany County teachers trained in arts education;
- 4) 4 participating schools;
- 5) 4+ performing arts groups;
- 6) Comprehension and mastery of Common Core writing standards W.5.3,.4,.5 and .10, reading standards RL.5.2,.3,.5 and.6, and theater standards TH:Cr.2.5a, PR.4.1.5a, Re.7.1.5a, and Cn.10.1.5a.

The theater education standards include:

Devise original ideas for a drama/theater work that reflect collective inquiry about characters and their given circumstances

Describe the underlying thoughts and emotions that create dialogue and action in a drama/theater work

Explain personal reactions to artistic choices made in a drama/theater work through participation and observation

Explain how drama/theater connects oneself to a community or culture

Goal of the UW Theatre & Dance collaboration:

- to mentor 5+ students so they gain theater knowledge beyond the classroom and to involve them in productions so they learn skills in a professional setting

The goal of the UW Theatre & Dance collaboration was determined in discussions with the faculty. UW is currently producing one play, one musical, and one dance performance during the school year. A need has been identified for UW Theatre & Dance students to have more opportunities and professional experience not accessible at the academic level.

Using National Core Arts Standards for Theater,

Acting students will:

- integrate cultural/historical contexts with personal experiences to create a character that is believable and authentic in a theatre work
- collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions and make interpretive choices
- use and justify a collection of acting exercises from reliable resources to prepare a believable and sustainable performance and apply a variety of researched acting techniques as an approach to character choices
- synthesize cultural and historical information related to a theatre work to support or evaluate artistic choice; and

Design students will:

- synthesize knowledge from a variety of dramatic forms, theatrical conventions, and technologies to create a complete design
- collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions/make interpretive choices
- apply a high level of technical proficiencies to the rehearsal process to support the story and emotional impact
- explain and justify the selection of technical elements used to build a design that communicates the concept of a theatre production.

They will meet the Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards for Theatre FPA11.1.T1-6, FPA11.2.T.5, and FPA11.4.T1-2.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Will Bowling - RT Education Director, Project Manager and Teaching Artist for Play/Write - will be in charge of the management of the Play/Write program in Albany County and will be the lead teaching artist in participating schools. Will has been working in nonprofit arts production and education for over a decade. He is the Founding Artistic Director of the New Orleans based company, Goat in the Road, and spent 13 years there making original, ensemble devised performance works with a company of artists. In 2010, Will helped develop the Play/Write program in New Orleans, and was a principal teaching artist until 2017. He has also worked extensively in classrooms as a theater and music teaching artist, and has worked with KIDsmART and Young Audiences. Will ran an arts integration program for Louisiana's largest public school district, developing curriculum designed to integrate arts-based strategies into common core curriculum, and created professional development programming for teachers and administrators. Will holds an MA in Performance Studies from the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University.

Kim Lockhart - RT Production Manager and Teaching Artist for Play/Write - will teach playwriting and theatre skills to participating 5th grade classrooms. Kim received her BFA in Theatre Directing and Playwriting from the University of Wyoming in 2013. Kim became Production Manager for RT in the summer of 2021. Since then, she has also played the role of Actor, Director, Stage Manager, and Prop Designer for many RT plays. Directing credits include WITCH, BURST, and BRILLIANT TRACES, along with several Read, Rant, Relate readings. While living in Denver, Kim worked with elementary students teaching drama and drawing classes for after school programs. Kim has been teaching the Play/Write program since its inception in 2022.

Sean Coyle - RT Executive/Artistic Director and Teaching Artist for Play/Write - Sean has directed, designed, and performed in Relative Theatrics productions for many years. He was Scratch in WITCH, Moriz in BONE RECORDS and Coach D. in TIGHT END. He directed HEROES OF THE FOURTH TURNING and EXIT, PURSUED BY A BEAR. He has also provided lighting design for THE ROOMMATE, EXIT, PURSUED BY A BEAR, MISSION ABORT, ARSONIST, BRILLIANT TRACES, BONE RECORDS and RIDING BICYCLES IN THE RAIN. He holds a B.A. in Theatrical Performance from the University of Wyoming and a Master's of Library Science and Information from the University of Central Missouri. He has worked as a youth and teen services librarian as well as a reading instructor. Sean has been a Play/Write teaching artist since 2022.

Play/Write theater companies - Participating theater companies for the Play/Write Showcase include groups such as RT, UW Theatre & Dance Students, WYO Sheridan, Lander's Communal Pancake, and Laramie's Unexpected Company in order to create a multi-generational celebration of writing and a unique evening of performance for students and our community.

Albany County School District 1 - The Play/Write program is made possible through a strong partnership with Albany County School District 1 (ACSD1). District staff play a critical role in helping to identify schools, act as a

liaison between Relative Theatrics and school administrators, and help champion the program to the public. The administration, principals, and teachers are all collaborators in the success of the Play/Write program.

### **Budget Narrative**

RT relies on multiple sources: grants, donations, corporate giving, ticket sales, and merchandise. We regularly receive grants from Wyoming Humanities, City and County Community Partner Funds, and private foundations. We have a reserve fund for times of transition or uncertainty.

Volunteers provide over 1000 hours of in-kind service. Artists receive compensation but donate much of their time. The Gryphon Theatre, Laramie Plains Civic Center, and UW Theatre & Dance provide some in-kind services.

Key partnerships are with the Gryphon Theatre, UW Theatre & Dance, and Albany County School District #1. A new partner in 25-26 will be the Cooper Center for the Arts. RT collaborates with local organizations for our plays and with Wyoming theater groups for our Play/Write education program.

The budget aligns with RT programs by allocating most spending to the production costs, marketing, rehearsal studio rent, and independent artists/staff that create/teach our programs.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

RIOT ACT INC.

WWW.RIOTACTINC.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025/26 Season and Operations

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission: Riot Act, Inc. delivers exceptional theater that explores meaningful issues, expands community perspectives, and empowers local actors, directors, and playwrights.

Riot Act, Inc. annually produces 2 full-length plays plus our Series of Shorts featuring the 3 winners of New Production Festival (NPF). Shorts coincides with Fall Arts Fest in Sept. with 4 shows. This year we will add a holiday radio show staged reading running between Thanksgiving and the end of Dec., with 6 performances in Jackson and 3 in Teton Valley, ID. We produce 1 bigger, well-known play on the Center Main Stage in Mar. with 6 shows. We stage a smaller play in our studio with 6 shows in May. Our theatre education program offers a mix of free classes and fee-based workshops. We offer 1 workshop in the fall and 1 in the spring with shorter classes during the year.

Strategic goals include increasing funding by 5 to 10%, growing social media, and creating more opportunities for our community. We will explore smarter marketing, increasing exposure. We plan to increase pay to our Director, serving as a contractor, and bring on a part-time person to help manage company operations.

We offer opportunities for local actors, directors, designers of all levels to practice their craft in an environment that is brave and nurturing. NPF provides an opportunity for artists to see their short plays produced. People behind the scenes assist with costumes and set, sound and lights, backstage, and more. Based on the production, between 10 and 30 crew, production team members, actors, and designers participate. Our studio seats 30 people and usually sells out. Our Mainstage play sees between 75 and 100 audience members per show.

Access to theatre strengthens our community by creating shared experiences. Our programs offer the chance not only to view quality theatre, but opportunities for people to express themselves. Theatre builds self-esteem, provides bonding, and proficiency in public speaking.

### Community

Serving Teton County, population 23,232, our participants, volunteers, and audience members live in the county and the counties of Sublette, Lincoln, and Teton County, ID. The gateway to Grand Teton and Yellowstone Parks, a ski destination, and National Forest access, it is also a cultural hub. Our area has been labeled the most inequitable community in the US; the gap between the ultra-wealthy and middle class is substantial.

We cater to the local working class. We provide an artistic outlet for all residents. Many of our productions are issued based, creating conversations in our community. We hold talk back sessions including topic experts to

investigate the play's issues. For our recent production of Assassins, we collaborated with Teton County Library and The Mental Wellness Collaborative to host Behind the Curtain. This event, held weeks before the shows, allowed the attendees to explore the issues and history of the musical.

We adopted Theatre Standards documenting our commitment to inclusivity and safety. Our production of Lear included performers of all ages, a physically disabled actor and LGBTQ+ performers. No Roosters in the Desert focused on our local Latinx community with optional Spanish translation. Tribes embraced the hearing impaired with a Deaf actor, sign language, and closed captioning. Our Artistic Director and board members engage in continuing education. The spaces we use are ADA friendly.

We do our best to accommodate individual needs. Examples include large type scripts, speaking louder for those with hearing loss, and adjusting for mental or physical disabilities. For Lear, we worked with an actor who has one full arm. We added extra pockets and pouches in the costume and worked with our fight director for safe one-limb sword fights.

## **Evaluation**

In the 20+ years since the company was founded, it has grown to be a driving force in the Jackson artistic scene. We look at participation numbers to measure success. Our performances are staged in a variety of spaces, with seating anywhere from 30 to 100. This past season saw 46 artists join our 3 productions, 691 audience members, 15 students for classes, and 3 instructors.

We invite community members to join our season choosing committee, engaging in programming decisions. The committee meets several times in early winter to discuss and choose the upcoming season.

After each program, we create and send program specific electronic forms to audience and participants to voluntarily fill out. Submitters may provide contact information or submit anonymously. Completed evaluations are reviewed and discussed by the board and Artistic Director. Comments and suggestions are taken under advisement.

We review social media comments and verbal feedback. Here are some recent social media posts from Assassins:

English: "You guys did amazing!!! Thank you for working so hard on this production to make it funny, sad, entertaining and so much more! Proud of each of you!! Can't wait to watch the next one!"

Ian: "Joining Riot Act has been one of the best decisions in my life. I started on "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" and have since been in multiple productions with them. Due to some wicked stage fright, I never thought I'd get to perform on stage. Follow your dreams cause who knows where you will go."

Mason: "Rediscovering the theater as an adult has been a great way to rediscover myself. It's impossible to overstate just how integral to my daily life it's become. I love this community here, and I simply don't know how to say no to these wonderful opportunities."

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Featuring local artists, programs include adult theatre classes, a playwriting competition, and several staged productions per year. We remain the only organization in the valley consistently providing these opportunities specifically to locals.

We do not take our studio at the Center for granted. For its first 17 years, Riot Act was nomadic. In 2019 space in the Center opened up. We jumped at the chance to join this community. Knowing other artists struggle to find affordable space, we regularly sub-let our studio to others when we are not using it.

A staple for over 20 years, Riot Act, Inc. prides itself in offering quality affordable theatrical experiences, involving community members from all walks of life. Our productions offer residents the chance to view quality theater, support their community, and gives many the chance to express themselves artistically. We offer discounted tickets for students and seniors too.

Some of the funds from this grant will support operational expenses. These include rent at The Center, annual insurance, monthly pay to our Executive Artistic Director (EAD), annual fees, and rent for our storage unit.

We use our studio at The Center, for rehearsals, smaller productions, and workshops and classes. We collaborate each summer with Art Association for The Art of Theatre kids' camp. Children write and stage a play with us in the mornings. In the afternoon, they create set pieces, props, and costumes with Art Association. At the end of the week they perform the play. We regularly rent the space to other organizations and individuals when we are not utilizing it. Other organizations who sub-let our space include MusicLand, Music Together, JH Symphony, Off Square, JH Community Band, local bands, and Teton Music School.

We keep a storage unit to house props, costumes, and set pieces. Having a space to store these elements allows us to reuse items from show to show. For example, our very handy loveseat has seen more stage time than any one actor in the valley. By storing and reusing specialty pieces, we spend less money and time searching for items needed in each production.

Annual insurance covers our organizational activities and space at the Center. It also provides insurance protection for our board members. Insurance is a necessary cost of responsibly running an organization.

We subscribe to a patron management platform to streamline our administration and our front of house audience interaction. For the past 5 years, we have used Network For Good (NFG) for this purpose. Due to high cost with NFG, close to \$6000 annually plus fees passed onto patrons, we recently switched to On The Stage (OTS). Instead of requiring an annual user fee, they only pass on a small fee to patrons. OTS is geared towards performing arts, where NFG covers all types of nonprofits. We hope the change reduces costs for us and provides a better experience for our patrons.

Previously voluntary, we began paying our EAD monthly, as a contractor, in 2022. While the amount is low, we feel it is important to continue the stipend to show our appreciation and to set up a precedent for future leaders and employees.

Offering a theatrical outlet is a vital part of a thriving community. Partaking in the arts has been proven to support and strengthen mental health. We are often told by participants that comradery experienced with Riot Act improves their lives. We hope you agree that keeping Riot Act, Inc. alive in Teton County is worthwhile.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Riot Act, Inc. seeks funding for its 23rd season including our Annual Series of Shorts (Shorts), a staged holiday radio show, a big production, and a spring production.

While we have yet to recruit the artists for next season, we do have regular participants. Macey Mott directs at least one play per season. Holding a degree in theatre, she has 20+ years of directing experience and is a costume designer and actor. Angel Wise has been acting with Riot Act for the past 7 years, growing with each show and learning about other areas of theatre. Deborah Supowit has been acting for over 20 years and has also directed several plays. Ian Chapman auditioned for almost every production in the past 5 years, growing as an actor with each new show.

Shorts features winners of the New Production Festival (NPF) during Fall Arts Festival, highlighting performance art during a time traditionally focused on visual art. NPF selects 3 one-act plays to produce in September. Proposals from playwrights, directors, and designers are accepted starting in April 2025 with final entries due in June 2025. Finalists are notified by the end of July 2025. Judges are theatre and writing professionals. All participants receive feedback through a standardized critique from judges. This is an opportunity for artists to gain valuable feedback and see their work produced.

Between Thanksgiving and December holidays, we will bring a holiday themed radio show to life. While we have yet to pick the play. We will present 6 performances in our studio and 4 to 6 performances in Teton Valley, ID.

Our big show is an adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* by Kate Hamill the Center Main Stage the first week of March 2026. This play includes 8 actors, 4 production crew members, 4 to 6 backstage crew, and 5 designers. New to directing, Angel Wise wants to direct. To create the best experience for both Angel as a new director and the other participants, we will pair her with a more experienced director.

This isn't your grandmother's Austen! Bold, surprising, boisterous, and timely, this P&P for a new era explores the absurdities and thrills of finding your perfect (or imperfect) match in life. The outspoken Lizzy Bennet is determined to never marry, despite mounting pressure from society. But can she resist love, especially when that vaguely handsome, mildly amusing, and impossibly aggravating Mr. Darcy keeps popping up at every turn?! Literature's greatest tale of latent love has never felt so theatrical, or so full of life than it does in this effervescent adaptation. Because what turns us into greater fools...than the high-stakes game of love? ~DPS

May of 2026, *When We Were Young and Unafraid* by Sarah Treem lights up our studio stage. The play requires 5 actors, a director, a stage manager, designers, plus 4 to 6 crew. We will hold talk back sessions, inviting experts from the community. These may include Community Safety Network, The Mental Wellness Collaborative, and others.

In the early 1970s, before *Roe v. Wade*, before the Violence Against Women Act, Agnes has turned her quiet bed and breakfast into one of the few spots where victims of domestic violence can seek refuge. But to Agnes's dismay, her latest runaway, Mary Anne, is beginning to influence Agnes's college-bound daughter Penny. As the drums of a feminist revolution grow louder outside of Agnes's tiny world, Agnes is forced to confront her own presumptions about the women she's spent her life trying to help. ~DPS

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**



Riot Act, Inc.'s adult education program offers classes that are a mix of free classes and workshops with a nominal fee. Topics include Introduction to Theatre, Basic Acting, Scene Study, Movement for Actors, Stage Combat, Theatre Management, Tech Skills, and more. We discovered a need for classes in the off-stage theatre skill set. Instructors proficient in the topic guide students.

Classes are currently open to teens and older, with our focus is on educating adults. As our local school drama programs dwindle, we do find there is a need to reach out to all students interested in theatre. A goal for the next year of our program is to establish if there is need for theatre education to younger students outside of summer camps. We will investigate whether a partnership with the schools may help to bolster their theatre programs.

To reach the most people, we offer classes and workshops in several formats, lengths, and times. In October and November of 2024, Lynnette Turner Parry instructed a Musical Theatre Workshop over 6 evening 2-hour sessions. The workshop spent time on the triple threat of singing, dancing, and acting. Lynnette is a skilled musical theatre performer who worked in Utah, New York, and on cruise ships before moving to Wyoming. While some of the students took the class to gain knowledge, it helped others get ready to audition for our winter musical, Assassins. May 2025, Macey Mott is scheduled to teach a beginning directing workshop. The workshop will offer a combination of round-table discussion and hands-on experience. Classes will run for 3 hours over 4 total sessions. Macey has 20+ years of directing experience and holds a degree in Theatre.

For the upcoming season, we plan to offer a similar diversity of classes. Specific classes have not been scheduled yet. We plan on offering classes and workshops in Fall, Winter, and Spring.

We will collaborate with JH Writers to form an on-going playwrights' roundtable in conjunction with our New Production Festival (NPF) competition. Playwrights planning on entering the NPF will have the opportunity to get constructive feedback from peers before submitting their work to the NPF. The roundtable will continue to be available year-round for participants to meet regularly.

For the past several summers, we have partnered with Art Association offering The Art of Theatre camp for youth. Art Association heads up the administrative side of this program. For 1 week in July, students spend the morning with Riot Act, Inc. writing, directing, and creating their own play. In the afternoons, they work with Art Association to create the set, costumes, and props for their play. They perform their play for parents on the last day of the camp. We are scheduled to continue this kids summer camp this year.

This year we will introduce Salons. The brainchild of board member, Brian VanHatten, Salons will be hosted once per month early Sunday evening. Each Salon will be guided by a theatre professional. Salons allow artists to bring work for feedback, sit back and participate, and connect with other artists to explore and possibly create new work; exploring vulnerability as a spring board for creativity.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

Goals of our adult theatre education program include giving our local artists the tools to succeed, training backstage teams, and creating camaraderie throughout our theatre community. In accordance with our mission, our education curriculum provides opportunities for local theatre artists to grow and learn.

Similarly to our productions, we encourage people with levels of theatre experience from novice to veteran to join our classes. We provide high quality education to both those taking classes for fun and for those serious about

expanding their theatre tool kit. Our program seeks to be affordable, accessible, and inclusive. We offer scholarships on a need-based basis, but our tuition remains low to keep a focus on learning.

Riot Act, Inc. currently is the only organization offering theatre technical and backstage training in our area. By teaching local theatre artists the basic knowledge needed to run a lightboard, stage manage or run sound benefits all performance arts. The trained may go on to work on a production utilizing their new skill set. It may even develop into a career with local production companies.

Learning about the different jobs that bring a theatre performance to life helps all participants to understand and respect what each other brings to the stage. Even if a person never wants to act, it is beneficial for them to take an acting class to see what that is all about. Conversely, an actor learning to run a light board helps them to understand how lighting enhances a performance.

There are many studies (see links below) out there linking improved brain function to theatre participation. Several of our students are retired and aging. They find the classes strengthen their social and memory cognitive functions. Participating in theatre programs is also proven to help those struggling with mental health issues. It offers emotional release, increases creativity, encourages real life social interactions, builds confidence, and provides safe spaces to explore. Past students with ADHA, Autism, and learning disabilities thrive in our class environments. Studying theater helps people to work collaboratively, improve public speaking, and learn to read other people.

Once each workshop or class is complete, we email out an evaluation form. Data gathered from this form helps us to understand what is working and what needs to change. We have also sent out a survey asking what type of classes folks want to take, when the best dates and times are for them, and how much students are willing to pay for a class. This has helped us to create a thoughtful and accessible program.

These goals were identified through need in our community. Patrons asked for classes, telling us why they wanted to take theatre classes. We noted a need for more experienced technical theater people. Our team experiences firsthand the benefits of including theatre in our lives. Since our program is focused towards adult learners, we have not aligned it with any specific state educational requirements.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10048456/>

<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/5-ways-the-performing-arts-make-young-people-and-adults-feel-better/>

<https://med.umn.edu/news/spotlight-mental-health-and-theatre>

<https://www.resetbrainandbody.com/blog/how-the-performing-arts-benefit-mental-health>

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

We are fortunate to have many talented people in our community with professional theatre and arts backgrounds. These folks are eager to share their knowledge and educate our community.

Over the past several summers, we have collaborated with Art Association to run a kids camp entitled The Art of Theatre. In the morning, students work with Riot Act to write their own short play, go through the casting process,

run rehearsals, and put the show together. In the afternoons, they work with Art Association to create sets, props, and costumes. At the end of the week-long camp, the play is presented to their parents.

Charley Daveler is a local visual and theatre artist. Charley will be tapped to teach script writing workshops and well as set and prop design and creation classes. She has recently become a competent puppet maker and performer. Charley often runs The Art of Theatre kids camp collaborating with B. J. Hanford.

B. J. Hanford is a former Broadway dancer who ran Dancers' Workshop in the 1990s. She is no stranger to creating and running performance arts education programs. Before moving to Wyoming, she ran and taught at her own studio in Brooklyn. B.J. advises the program and teaches movement and acting classes.

Macey Mott, Executive Artistic Director, is a seasoned actor, director, and costume designer. Macey will help to facilitate the program as well as teach some of the classes and workshops. Macey is working to become a certified intimacy director and mental health coordinator. Once certified, she will be able to pass on her knowledge.

Professional Stage Manager, Jamel Baker, taught a beginning stage management workshop in Spring of 2024. Since Jamel is located in Philadelphia, the class was offered on Zoom. The students who participated have already put their skills to work. One stage managed our June 2024 production of *The Outsider*. Another stage managed our recent production of *Assassins*.

Samantha Kaufman is a professional fight director and intimacy director. Originally from eastern WY, she currently lives in the Chicago area. She has traveled to Jackson to work on four productions with us. Each time she is here, she also teaches either stage combat or intimacy for the stage as a weekend class. Most recently she joined us for our production of *Lear*. While here she taught a whips class and a knife class.

Michael Jerome Johnson is a semi-retired professional actor and fight director. Michael will lead Readers' Theatre and run stage combat workshops.

Others will be tapped for their specialties as needed: Doug Vogel for a lighting design workshop. Evie Lewis for mask making. Chad Graham from Hughes Productions is interested in teaching a sound technical class.

We will also tap some very talented musical theatre professionals that live in Jackson including Jeffrey Scott Stevens and Lynnette Turner Parry.

With our diverse talent pool, we hope to create an education program that will allow students to learn all aspects of theatre. Even if someone's focus is in one area, we believe it is beneficial to learn what the other folks involved do on a production. We are eager to work with more talented local performance artists.

## **Budget Narrative**

Overhead expenses include rent for our studio at The Center, storage unit rental, and insurance. In 2022 we begin paying our Executive Artistic Director a small stipend. We hope to increase this amount and to hire a part-time staff member. Individual artists are contracted on a project-by-project. Teachers are paid hourly. Expenses such as design elements and performance space occur with each production.

Income comes from grants, donations, ticket sales, and tuition. Patrons have the opportunity to donate when buying tickets. An annual fundraiser yields income from tickets, silent auctions, and event activities. Adult Education program provides revenue from tuition. We participate in Old Bill's Fun Run, garnering annual donations. We sublet our space to other artists and organizations. It not only provides additional funds but allows

others space for their programing. In-kind comes from volunteer hours, borrowing or having donations for sets and props, and discounts on services.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

RIVERTON SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER, INC.

RIVERTONSENIORCENTER.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Enhancing Senior Engagement Through Music

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of older adults by providing accessible programs, services, and cultural opportunities that promote lifelong learning, creativity, and social connection.

Our strategic goals include:

Expanding arts and cultural programming to support self-expression, cognitive engagement, and emotional well-being.

Increasing access to inclusive arts experiences, ensuring individuals of all abilities can participate.

Strengthening community partnerships to bring diverse artistic opportunities, including music, visual arts, and performance, to seniors.

Fostering intergenerational connections through shared creative experiences.

Ensuring accessibility by addressing physical, financial, and social barriers to participation in the arts.

Through these efforts, we create a vibrant, welcoming space where older adults can engage in meaningful artistic expression, celebrate cultural traditions, and connect with their community.

### **Community**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center serves older adults in Riverton, Wyoming, a rural community in Fremont County with a population of about 10,500. Many seniors face challenges such as limited access to healthcare, social isolation, and financial constraints, with many living on fixed incomes. Fremont County has higher-than-average poverty rates, and rural residents often struggle with transportation limitations.

To identify community needs, we engage directly with seniors and their families through surveys, feedback, and collaboration with local organizations to ensure our programs address specific challenges. We have suggestion boxes placed around the building that are checked at least monthly. All staff members, including the Executive Director, are available to accept feedback at any time, with department heads (kitchen, transportation, ED) making weekly efforts to facilitate informal listening sessions to get feedback in real-time whenever possible.

We focus on underserved communities, particularly older adults, individuals with disabilities, and those from rural or economically disadvantaged backgrounds. By offering accessible programs in a familiar, welcoming environment, we remove barriers like transportation and financial constraints. We also offer a variety of arts and social programs to meet the diverse needs of our community.

We are committed to ensuring full participation by providing accommodations such as accessible facilities, hearing devices, and large-print materials. We also offer flexible seating and specialized equipment to address specific needs, and we encourage participants to communicate any requests to ensure an inclusive experience.

## **Evaluation**

To evaluate the impact of our programs, the Riverton Senior Citizens Center uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to measure participation and personal experiences.

We track attendance at all programs, including weekly lessons and quarterly recitals or other larger group events, providing insight into engagement and identifying trends over time. Pre- and post-program surveys are distributed to assess changes in participants' confidence, cognitive health, social connection, and enjoyment. These surveys provide measurable data on key outcomes, such as improved cognitive function, physical health, and socialization.

In addition to surveys, we conduct informal interviews and focus groups with participants to gather qualitative feedback on the personal impact of our programs. This helps us understand emotional well-being, community belonging, and personal growth, allowing us to adjust future programming to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

Instructor evaluations also play a key role. We ask instructors to assess participant progress and engagement, which helps us ensure the programs are meeting individual and group needs while maintaining high artistic standards.

Finally, we track broader community impacts, including the growth of social networks, increased involvement in community events, and overall satisfaction from participants, their families, and community partners. All data collected is used to refine services and ensure the continued success of our programs, fostering an environment where older adults can thrive through arts engagement.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center seeks operating support to cover essential expenses that will enable us to continue providing arts and cultural programs to the senior community in Riverton, Wyoming. Our operating costs during the timeframe of July 1 – June 30 include rent, utilities, supplies, and staffing, all of which are vital for maintaining a welcoming and accessible environment for our senior participants.

We are requesting a total of \$5,000 in operating support, which will be allocated as follows:

\$3,000 will be used to support the salary of our Activities Director, who is responsible for coordinating and overseeing arts and cultural programming, including music lessons (such as our weekly choir classes), regular music jams or recitals, painting workshops, martial arts, creative writing groups, dance classes and dance events, and cultural presentations. These activities provide creative expression, cognitive engagement, and social interaction, enriching the lives of our senior participants. (Project Support funding)

\$2,000 will be allocated to cover utility costs, ensuring that the Senior Citizens Center remains operational and comfortable for all participants. These utilities include electricity, heating, water, and other essential services that directly support our creative programming by providing a safe, well-lit, and climate-controlled space for classes, rehearsals, and performances. The Center houses all the events listed above and also supports our local musicians and jammers when they need a location to gather at no additional cost. (Project Support Funding)

Operational funding is critical to sustaining and expanding our arts programming. Without it, we risk limiting these vital opportunities that combat isolation, encourage lifelong learning, and foster a vibrant creative community among seniors. By securing this support, we can continue providing high-quality arts experiences that inspire and engage our senior population.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center is requesting project support funding for our upcoming music program, which will run from July 1 through June 30. The project will provide music lessons and performance opportunities for seniors, focusing on learning instruments such as the ukulele and cajon drums, as well as engaging in group rhythm

sessions. This initiative aims to foster cognitive health, emotional well-being, and social interaction among seniors by offering creative outlets in a comfortable and accessible environment.

To ensure that the program is led by skilled professionals, we will engage two highly qualified musicians: Erica Flom and Feike van Dijk. Both are experienced music instructors with backgrounds in teaching and working with seniors. Erica is a professional musician with a history of teaching music to diverse age groups, while Feike has experience in teaching percussion and ukulele to community members and has worked with seniors in the past. They will be responsible for leading the weekly lessons, organizing performances, and ensuring a supportive and inclusive environment.

The requested project support funds will be allocated primarily to the purchase of instruments and supplies needed for the program. Specifically:

Cajon Drums: \$1,000 for 10 drums at \$100 each.

Cajon Brush Stick Kits: \$300 for 10 sets at \$30 each.

Percussion Rhythm Sets: \$400 for 2 sets at \$200 each.

Ukuleles: \$750 for 10 beginner ukuleles at \$75 each.

Total project support request: \$2,450

These funds will enable us to purchase the necessary instruments to ensure that all seniors in the program have access to quality, accessible musical tools. By investing in these instruments, we are enhancing the overall quality of the program, allowing participants to engage fully in lessons and performances. Additionally, these instruments will support our goal of creating an inclusive, emotionally safe space for seniors to develop new skills, socialize, and experience the cognitive and emotional benefits of music-making.

The Arts Learning support will be used to fund instructor. Each instructor will be compensated for their efforts over a 12-month period at a rate of \$2,500 per instructor. They will submit their time monthly or quarterly.

The project support funds will also be used to support the instructors' time in preparing and leading weekly lessons, as well as organizing quarterly recitals and music jams for participants. These events will allow seniors to showcase their progress and foster a sense of achievement and community. Weekly check-ins with participants, statistical data, and formal written feedback will be used to evaluate the response from the participants. We anticipate approximately 20 participants, including students, and at least 400 recital attendees who will showcase their skills.



We are excited to offer this program and believe it will make a meaningful impact on the lives of seniors in our community.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center is requesting funding to support an Arts Learning program for seniors, providing opportunities to develop musical skills and techniques through structured lessons in ukulele and percussion. This program, running from July 1 to June 30, will take place in a low-risk, supportive environment, helping seniors improve cognitive health, enhance motor skills, and build musical confidence while fostering social well-being. Participants will engage in weekly lessons focusing on rhythm, technique, and ensemble playing, culminating in four recitals or jam sessions to showcase their progress.

The program will be led by two experienced musicians, Erica Flom and Feike van Dijk, both skilled in instruction and working with seniors. Erica is a professional musician with expertise in music theory, instrumental instruction, and ensemble coaching, while Feike specializes in percussion techniques and rhythm development, having worked with senior communities. Together, they will provide personalized instruction, helping participants master basic musical concepts such as chord transitions, strumming patterns, rhythmic coordination, and ensemble performance skills.

Beyond individual growth, this program will foster community engagement by encouraging group collaboration and performance opportunities. Seniors will not only learn music theory and technical skills but also gain confidence in playing and performing together. The quarterly recitals will serve as a platform for seniors to demonstrate their musical progress, receive positive feedback, and develop a sense of achievement. These performances will also help reduce feelings of isolation, an important factor for older adults in rural areas.

The program is inclusive of all seniors, including those with physical or cognitive disabilities. Instruments such as ukuleles and cajon drums have been specifically chosen for their ease of use, accessibility, and adaptability to different ability levels. Instruction will be tailored to accommodate diverse learning styles, ensuring that every participant can engage meaningfully in music-making.

Requested funding (project support) will be used to purchase 10 ukuleles, 10 cajon drums, and percussion rhythm sets for the program, totaling \$5,000. These instruments will be available for lessons, individual practice, and performances, helping seniors develop their technical skills, musical literacy, and ensemble playing abilities. Additionally, funds will support instructor compensation (arts learning support) and the organization of recitals, which provide essential opportunities for participants to apply their skills in a live setting.

By offering this program, we aim to empower seniors through arts learning, promoting lifelong creativity, technical skill development, cognitive engagement, and social connection. With the Wyoming Arts Council's support, we can continue to provide high-quality music education that inspires seniors, nurtures their artistic potential, and strengthens community bonds through shared musical experiences.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center's Arts Learning program aims to enhance seniors' cognitive, emotional, and social well-being through music education. The program targets improving cognitive health, motor skills, reducing isolation, boosting self-confidence, and fostering lifelong learning and creative expression.

#### Arts Learning Goals:

**Enhance Cognitive Health:** Learning music improves brain activity, memory, and overall brain function. The ukulele and percussion instruments will stimulate seniors' cognitive abilities, supporting mental engagement and helping reduce cognitive decline. Music education has been shown to slow cognitive decline, particularly for seniors at risk of dementia, enhancing mental sharpness and overall brain health.

**Improve Motor Skills:** Playing the ukulele and percussion instruments strengthens both fine and gross motor skills. Ukuleles help with finger dexterity and hand-eye coordination, while cajon drums engage larger muscle groups, supporting physical health. The hands-on nature of these instruments promotes physical dexterity and muscle strength, which is particularly beneficial for seniors in maintaining mobility and independence.

**Foster Social Interaction:** The program reduces isolation by providing opportunities for seniors to connect through music. Quarterly recitals and jam sessions will encourage collaboration and create a sense of community among participants. These social interactions provide a space for seniors to share experiences, build relationships, and support one another, reducing feelings of loneliness that are often experienced in rural areas.

**Boost Self-Confidence:** Learning an instrument and performing helps seniors gain self-esteem and a sense of achievement. By providing a supportive environment, the program allows seniors to express themselves and feel accomplished. Performing in front of others not only boosts confidence but also promotes a sense of pride in personal growth and development.

**Inclusive and Accessible Environment:** The program is designed to accommodate seniors with physical or cognitive disabilities. Instruments like the ukulele and cajon drums are chosen for their ease of use, allowing seniors with varying abilities to participate fully. These instruments offer an accessible entry point for those with limited fine motor skills and are adaptable for individuals with cognitive challenges.

Promote Lifelong Learning: The program offers seniors an opportunity for creative expression and continuous learning. It provides a new, fulfilling way for them to engage with music, enhancing their emotional well-being. Lifelong learning opportunities help seniors maintain a sense of purpose and vitality, promoting both mental and emotional health.

#### How the Goals Were Identified:

The goals were developed through feedback from seniors at the center, healthcare professionals, and music educators. Many seniors expressed interest in learning music but lacked opportunities. Research supports the cognitive, emotional, and social benefits of arts programs for seniors, particularly in rural areas. Feedback from seniors highlighted the need for programs that address isolation, and music education was identified as a valuable tool for reducing this.

Consultations with music educators and health professionals confirmed that instruments like the ukulele and percussion are accessible, engaging, and suitable for seniors with varying abilities. These instruments require minimal motor control, making them ideal for seniors with physical or cognitive challenges. The simplicity of these instruments fosters participation and success, ensuring that all participants, regardless of ability, can enjoy a fulfilling arts learning experience.

Through community input, research, and professional consultation, we developed goals that are both relevant and beneficial to the seniors we serve.

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center's Arts Learning program will be led by two highly skilled and passionate musicians who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the project: Erica Flom and Feike van Dijk. Their combined qualifications and dedication to the community make them ideal for teaching and leading this program.

Erica Flom is a Wyoming native, professional musician, and fourth-generation cattle rancher. With an early start in music, she began playing the violin at age 3 and won her first Wyoming State Old Time Fiddling Championship at age 6. She holds the record for the most titles ever won in Wyoming State Fiddling Championships across all divisions. Additionally, Erica has competed nationally, winning the Fanciest Fiddler and Female Entertainer of the Year awards. Her professional experience spans extensive touring, performing in various genres, and sharing her talents in multiple community service programs. Erica plays the fiddle, mandolin, guitar and ukelele, and has taught students of all ages to play over the years. Erica's passion for teaching and giving back to the community is central to her work. She has used her platform to engage with audiences of all ages, spreading joy through music.

Her qualifications include over two decades of experience as a performing artist and instructor, making her uniquely qualified to lead the ukulele instruction in the Arts Learning program.

Feike van Dijk is an internationally recognized percussionist, music arranger, drum facilitator, and vocalist. Originally from the Netherlands, Feike's musical journey began at a young age, influenced by his Dutch and Indonesian Moluccan community. His formal education in music began at the Muziekschool Twenthe, followed by advanced training in world percussion with renowned percussionists, including professor Nippy Noya. Feike later continued his studies in London under the guidance of Dave Markee, a former member of Eric Clapton's band. His extensive background includes performing across various genres, from symphonies to jazz and rock bands, making him versatile in his musical approach. Feike's career spans 20 years of live performances and studio recordings, and he has toured over 35 countries, collaborating with artists such as Mick Cox, Rita Springer, and the Fremont County Symphony Orchestra. Feike is a REMO-endorsed Drum Facilitator, with a special focus on the therapeutic power of rhythm. He has facilitated drum circles worldwide, working with diverse communities, including in refugee camps, VA hospitals, senior centers, and juvenile justice systems. Feike's expertise in percussion, especially his ability to connect people through rhythm, will make him an invaluable resource in teaching percussion in this program.

Both artists were selected for their exceptional qualifications, wide-ranging experience, and deep commitment to using music as a tool for community engagement and healing. Their diverse backgrounds in performance and teaching, combined with their passion for working with individuals from all walks of life, align perfectly with the goals of this Arts Learning program. The program will be greatly enriched by their expertise, creativity, and ability to connect with participants of all levels and backgrounds.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Riverton Senior Citizens Center is funded through grants, donations, and partnerships with local and state organizations. Key grant sources include the State Area on Aging, WYDOT, AmeriCorps, and the Rocky Mountain Power Foundation. In addition to grants, we receive in-kind donations from community members and local businesses, helping reduce operational costs and allowing more resources to support direct services.

Our budget aligns with our programs by requesting funding for instructors (\$2500 per instructor) to support educational initiatives, such as music lessons and performances for seniors. This ensures seniors have enriching opportunities at no cost. By combining grants and in-kind contributions, we meet the financial needs of our programs while maintaining quality and accessibility.

Our organization's financial management ensures sustainability, enabling us to adapt to future needs and continue providing valuable programs that support seniors and the broader community.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ROCK SPRINGS RENEWAL FUND, INC.

[HTTPS://WWW.DOWNTOWNRS.COM/](https://www.downtownrs.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025-26 Broadway Theater & Cultural Enrichment Program

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission statement: Enriching the Rock Springs arts community by presenting and hosting diverse performances, from local theater productions to guest artists from around the world, fostering creativity, connection, and accessible arts in our community.

Vision statement: The Broadway Theater will be a lively home to productions, concerts, and performances, ensuring accessible and enriching arts experiences for both residents and visitors.

Extra info: Downtown Rock Springs is on a mission to become the Arts & Culture District for Rock Springs, Sweetwater County, and the entire region. One of the most significant parts of this mission is the Broadway Theater. The theater is home to four locally owned theater companies, produces various arts events and activities, and expands public arts initiatives throughout Downtown.

Some of these Arts & Culture projects include: large-scale Downtown murals; weekly lunch-time summer public shows; a blues festival every June; and Arts Month, a spring highlight on local arts, crafts, and culture. In 2021, we launched the Mayor's Art Awards, recognizing local artists and arts patrons.

These and many more Arts & Culture programs have earned us recognition in 2020 as a pilot community for the Wyoming Arts Alliance's training series. The Broadway Theater is contributing heavily to Downtown Rock Springs' mission as a hub for Arts & Culture for the Sweetwater County community. With additional funding from the Wyoming Arts Council, the Broadway Theater can further invest in and contribute to the spirited arts community of Southwest Wyoming.

### Community

At the Broadway Theater, each season is carefully curated to be diverse, engaging, and accessible to the communities we serve. With a focus on the greater Rock Springs area—home to nearly 42,000 residents—and the broader Sweetwater County community, we prioritize programming that reflects our region’s diverse demographics. Sixteen percent of Sweetwater County’s residents are Hispanic or Latino, the median age is 33, and the median household income is approximately \$70,000. Keeping these factors in mind, we strive to present performances that appeal to and are accessible for everyone.

Our programming is designed to serve a wide range of audiences. While many of our shows are family-friendly or family-focused, we also recognize the importance of offering performances that cater to older audiences as well as younger patrons looking for a night out. To ensure broad community appeal, our volunteer board of directors—consisting of engaged community members—helps choose each season’s shows. We also seek out input from the public through social media channels, yearly patron meetings, and suggestion boxes, allowing our audiences to have a voice in the theater’s programming.

Accessibility is another priority for the Broadway Theater, both within our venue and in our outreach efforts. Our theater and its external programs are ADA-compliant, and we work closely with local assisted living facilities and group homes to ensure all patrons have access to the arts. Additionally, to further inclusivity, we translate our show posters into Spanish, helping to engage a broader audience and strengthen our connection with the entire community.

## **Evaluation**

Since our primary focus is booking shows at the Broadway Theater, one of the most effective ways to track our impact is through ticket sales and event frequency. Our ticketing software tracks sales by ZIP code, revealing that 20% of our recent ticket sales came from Green River, Wyoming—highlighting our growing reach as a regional hub in Sweetwater County. We also monitor not only the number of events hosted each season but also ticket sales trends, including advance purchases and door sales. With a grant from the Wyoming Arts Council, we look to expand both the number and variety of events offered while making sure they appeal to a broad audience.

Beyond attendance, we consistently assess the quality and appeal of our programming. In the past, we have collected audience feedback through post-event surveys and plan to continue this practice at certain events. We will expand our efforts by utilizing SurveyMonkey to gather and analyze insights from theatergoers.

For our Brown Bag concert series, we conduct on-site surveys at every show. We plan to increase the use of these surveys at the Broadway Theater, engaging attendees in real-time to gather feedback. To encourage participation, we will incentivize these surveys by offering a drawing for a free dinner to those who complete them, for example.

For outdoor, non-ticketed events, we estimate attendance and assess audience reception through direct engagement. Intercept surveys help us track group size, event experience, suggestions for improvement, and

promotional reach. Additionally, we conduct “parking lot surveys” to gain insights into where our patrons are traveling from, helping us better understand our regional audience and marketing reach.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

n/a

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Broadway Theater would utilize funding from the Wyoming Arts Council to support our 2025-26 season, enriching the variety of shows and expanding opportunities to host more artists from other communities. This funding would allow us to bring high-quality, diverse performances to Rock Springs, ensuring our programming remains engaging, accessible, and representative of a wide range of artistic disciplines.

Our past seasons have featured an exciting mix of performances, including:

- Opera Wyoming
- The Grand Kyiv Ballet
- Annual screenings of The Polar Express
- The premiere of Last of the Wild: A Red Desert Story with a Q&A featuring the directors
- Free classical concerts by the Piatigorsky Foundation
- The John Denver Experience
- Twin Flames
- Silent Film Festival
- The Bar D Wranglers - A Western Christmas
- ABBAFAB - The premier ABBA Experience
- Hank Thunander in concert
- Utah Shakespeare Festival
- And many more!

While we haven't booked any shows for upcoming season due our budget timeline, we are looking at the following shows:

- ARTrageous
- Jazz at the Lincoln Center
- Folsom Prison Experience - An Electrifying Johnny Cash Tribute
- The Will Baxter Band/Elvis Tribute Show
- Nashville Songwriter Spotlight
- Dirty Cello
- 90's Mixtape Live!
- Buffalo Bill Boycott's The Legacy of Wyoming
- LP And The Vinyl

With additional funding, we can continue expanding our reach and impact, bringing in performances that might otherwise be out of reach for our community. These funds will help us cover artist fees, technical production needs, and marketing efforts to ensure every performance reaches the widest possible audience. Additionally, support from the Wyoming Arts Council would allow us to offer more free and low-cost events, increasing accessibility for underserved community members.

By securing this grant, we can strengthen Rock Springs' reputation as a regional hub for the arts, fostering cultural enrichment, artistic excellence, and a thriving creative community.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

At the Broadway Theater, we are resourceful in securing funds and building partnerships. Our primary funding sources include a dedicated line-item in the City of Rock Springs' annual budget, which covers staffing and O&M costs along with some programming. We also routinely seek grants from organizations like the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund and the local tourism board. Sweetwater BOCES funds our internship program, and we host annual fundraisers, patron programs, and corporate partnerships to offset performance costs while media companies often provide in-kind advertising. Our liquor license generates additional revenue, with all profits reinvested into programming. To balance our budget, we present a variety of shows featuring local performers who receive a modest stipend along with higher-profile productions that command larger fees. This balance allows us to stretch our resources, ensuring that we can offer diverse, high-quality events.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

ROCKY MOUNTAIN DANCE THEATRE

[WWW.ROCKYMOUNTAINDANCETHEATRE.ORG](http://WWW.ROCKYMOUNTAINDANCETHEATRE.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025/2026 Rocky Mountain Dance Theatre Program Funding

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Rocky Mountain Dance Theatre's (RMDT) mission is to introduce young people to the performing arts, encourage cultural development through public performance, and inspire young dancers to learn and strive for excellence in technique, self-discipline, self-confidence, and artistic expression. Our vision is to help our students develop a life-long appreciation for the arts, use the foundation of their training for personal growth, and instill discipline and work ethic in young dancers, which they will carry into the world as contributing citizens. RMDT focuses on creating and maintaining a safe environment for the students in our program. We encourage them to be individuals and learn to find a common bond with those who may be different from them, through their love of dance. Within this, we hope they will view each person they encounter as a fellow human being in which they can find a common thread, focusing on this commonality versus their differences.

### Community

RMDT's community is anyone who wishes to take part in the performing arts and serves its community in the following ways:

**Demographics:** Our performances include patrons from almost every state and many foreign countries. Patrons hail from every socioeconomic class, age faction, and a broad range of racial and ethnic groups. We do not discriminate based on race or ethnic group when casting our productions.

**Economic Status:** The "Dream to Dance" scholarship program provides scholarships to low-income families and creates meaningful access to the arts by ensuring the local and surrounding area schools can witness a live dance performance free of charge. RMDT provides costumes for The Nutcracker, ensuring accessibility to all. Ten percent of our students are on scholarship, seven hundred children attend The Nutcracker free of charge, and over two hundred costumes are provided.

**Age Diversity:** Reduced ticket prices are available for all our Assisted Living and Nursing Home performances. We perform at the local Assisted Living twice a year. Fifty percent of our audience is sixty-five or older.

Disabilities/Veterans: We encourage people with disabilities to perform with us, and for those who are unable, they can be involved by helping in the “front of house”. We offer free tickets to people with disabilities and their families. We organize backstage events such as “meet the guest artists” and “experience the stage”. For Wild West, we built handicap accessible platforms with easier access and better viewing. For those with exceptional circumstances, we arrange different seating and help to/from seating. New this season, we will offer hearing impaired headsets for our performances at The Cody Theatre. We offer reduced ticket prices to veterans.

## **Evaluation**

RMDT uses several ways to evaluate our programs. Tix Management, online ticketing software, enables us to capture contact information for all ticket purchasers and gives us the ability to provide a marketing survey. Donor Perfect, a program dedicated to documenting all donations, includes information on when a donation is acquired, restrictions, tracking of new donors, donor retention, and the number of donations. Constant Contact, to reach out to our current base of over a thousand households, and to promote events and publish eblasts, along with a way to track the number of people who read our information, including how many people click on links to visit our website and ticket site. We have a strong social media presence in which we engage followers through dialogue regarding our programs and performances. The Wild West Spectacular is available to review on TripAdvisor, which is monitored and used to help improve and evaluate the show. Our public relations director makes herself available to hear comments and answer questions after each show.

Most importantly to RMDT, we cultivate a strong personal connection to our dance families, alumni, and repeat patrons. Their feedback is important as they are in a unique position to compare current programming to past programming, providing us with a continuing barometer to the vitality of our program. We also cultivate open dialogue with our current roster and continually use their feedback to improve our programs. In addition, we receive personal contact from many of our patrons through typed notes, thank you cards, and pictures and notes written by the school children who attend The Nutcracker through our Dream to Dance Program.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

RMDT offers diverse performances and educational opportunities in dance and theatre. In the summer, RMDT will offer an educational program that includes dance master Natalia Magnicaballi, former Principal ballet dancer, Randy Pacheco, current Principal ballet dancer for Ballet Arizona, and performers, in residence, for this season of Wild West Spectacular, The Musical, providing classes in theatre dance and techniques. The summer program is designed to give dancers intensive training in several disciplines and to learn about choreography, staging, and terminology while providing the opportunity to study with master teachers. The summer training opportunity is open to various children and young adults of varying abilities. The summer months also include the tenth annual Wild West Spectacular, The Musical, which provides a unique theatrical experience by telling the story of Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show. This show incorporates local artists and performers from various areas of the United

States. Students from universities nationwide and young working actors apply to perform in the Wild West Spectacular, The Musical. Over two hundred performers apply online through websites designed for this purpose. Local actors are also encouraged to audition, and several local performers are a part of the show, including actors and songwriters. There are parts for local younger actors and dancers. Through the Wild West experience, RMDT has created a bond between the performers and Wyoming, creating a positive image of our local community. This is proven by their desire to return to this area and through the encouragement of their contemporaries to audition for the show.

In October, we will provide another performing opportunity and encourage the adult artists and performing community to audition and work with our youth by participating in The Wizard of Oz musical. Through this endeavor, RMDT hopes to provide dancers with diverse opportunities for performing and to create a connection with adult artists and performers within our community.

Our largest performance in terms of cast and patrons in our annual Nutcracker. Auditions for the twenty-eighth annual production will be held in May, and rehearsals will begin in August. Over one hundred local children, two professional dancers, a professional tech crew, and several volunteers, bring to life The Nutcracker, held in December. RMDT offers three performances, one of which is a free performance for elementary schools. Unique in our programming, The Nutcracker allows dancers to perform with professional dancers on stage. One of the most prized events of the weekend is two master ballet classes taught by professional dancers. One class is specifically for boys, and the other for girls, free of charge, and open to the cast. The Nutcracker continues to be affordable to all students and is focused on providing an opportunity to all demographics.

To end our season, Masterpieces of Ballet, held in May, focuses on classical ballets and highlights dancers of all ages. From Sleeping Beauty to Giselle, students are taught the history, foundation, and story behind these ballets, creating an understanding and knowledge of classical ballet. Following is our Annual Spring Production, which focuses on personal expression through the art of dance by sharing ideas, emotions, life experiences, and character development.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

During our Summer programming, guest artists will come to Cody, Wyoming to provide training and share their knowledge of the performing arts. Classes will be offered to several levels and are open to children ages ten to eighteen and any adults who wish to take advantage of this opportunity. These offerings include asking questions, working one-on-one with the teacher, and encouraging understanding of the performing arts world. Guest artists invited to teach are artists whose technique, artistry, training experience, and ability to work with young people are well-known to the resident faculty of RMDT. The guest artists also are aware of the foundational training that the students are taught, therefore guest artist teaching is a continuation of what the students know, but also

dancers are asked to reach beyond their current comfort zone, learn to work in different ways, and broaden their knowledge in each style. Dancers do not have to be advanced to participate, but a general base is required to gain the most benefit from the classes. The focus of each professional is different, giving a wide range of training and motivations. RMDT encourages participation in this program as it offers an opportunity locally. This is much more affordable for most families as it doesn't require travel or living expenses. Secondly, students need to encounter different teachers, ideas, and ways of learning.

A unique part of the summer program is the opportunity to learn from the actors and dancers from all over the United States who perform in the Wild West Show, The Musical. Each of them will teach a class to RMDT students, highlighting different aspects of theatre. These classes include special technique classes in stage combat, stage make-up, acting techniques, auditioning techniques, and movement classes specific to theatre. This program gives RMDT students the rare opportunity to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds, providing different approaches and ideas to the courses they teach.

Rocky Mountain Dance Theatre students can also travel to New York City every other year. They participate in classes at dance studios where current and aspiring dancers teach and take classes. Part of the experience is attending Broadway performances where dance is mainly featured. The New York Experience offers students the space to work with current professional teachers in dance. It also provides students with perspective. For many students, their first plane ride is the New York Experience. RMDT provides financial help to participating students by sharing the profits of our fundraisers with them. RMDT also covers expenses that are beyond the original estimated price for the trip.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Rocky Mountain Dance Theatre's goal for Arts Learning is to provide the performing arts community with an opportunity to work with different masters in the field of dance and theatre, to create a broader knowledge base, understand new ways of working, provide perspective, and to discover the movement qualities and ideas of different teachers. RMDT also hopes to give the chance to discover the bond between artists and help create a feeling of security so that learning is welcomed and inspiring.

Because we are somewhat secluded and traveling isn't necessarily something everyone can afford, RMDT feels it is important to bring teachers to the area, allowing more of our youth to work with different and exciting teachers, and to experience dance from another perspective by working in creative processes that are contrasting to what they have done before. Being well versed in diverse ways of working creatively is a tool anyone can use in any endeavor, making this training a life skill. Also, it is a way to connect with the performing world outside our area and create essential contacts.

RMDT has found that providing perspective to young artists helps them reach beyond their current sphere and understand there is a larger picture to view. Within this perspective, RMDT feels young artists can uniquely look at their future, expanding what they "thought" they could achieve and give them the understanding that they are capable of more than they realized. RMDT believes the performing arts are a perfect catalyst to inspire forward

thinking through the hard work, dedication, and requirement to put themselves in a position that enables them to trust in themselves by using the many ideologies they have learned through their performing arts training.

Rocky Mountain Dance Theatre understands that it is important to inspire young artists so they will always remain artists, whether performing or simply living a life inspired by the arts and becoming life-long supporters of the arts. Understanding is vital to the sustainability of the performing arts, and each opportunity to experience the arts with different people and philosophies will hopefully ensure artists for future generations.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Natalia Magnicaballi will be the first artist to join us this summer. She will teach three days of intensive ballet classes for several age groups, beginning at age nine. Classes will include ballet technique, pointe, and ballet repertoire. Originally from Argentina, Natalia started dancing at seven at a local dance school. Due to her aptitude for ballet, at nine, she was accepted into the Instituto Superior de Arte, located in Buenos Aires. After training, she danced in Europe for an Italian ballet company before moving to the United States, where she gained citizenship. She became a principal dancer for Ballet Arizona and The Suzanne Farrell Ballet. Suzanne Farrell is a former George Balanchine dancer; therefore, Natalia has danced in the Balanchine style of ballet. Natalia's ability to impart this knowledge is one of the reasons RMDT has chosen her to guest teach. The Balanchine style of ballet defined ballet in America and is essential to understand from both a movement perspective and historically. Natalia's broad experience in the professional world and the information she can pass on is an excellent resource for RMDT students and teachers. Natalia is now retired from professional dancing and dedicates her time to teaching, mainly in Phoenix, Arizona. She loves RMDT and makes special arrangements to work with students at RMDT because of their dedication, work ethic, and overall desire to learn.

Randy Pacheco will follow Natalia this summer as a guest teacher. Randy began his training at the age of nine in Camaguey, Cuba, his hometown. He became a soloist for a ballet company in Cuba and then in Mexico before he became a member of Ballet Arizona, where he still dances professionally. Randy has been a guest dancer for RMDT's Nutcracker for a few years and taught boys a ballet class while in Cody for the performances. RMDT has seen a dramatic increase in boys participating in The Nutcracker and ballet training, directly resulting from Randy's inspiring classes. This past season, Randy also taught a separate class for girls. He has partnered with two of our local dancers in the past two Nutcrackers and has imparted invaluable information in the partnering technique. Randy is kind-natured but has a way of getting the absolute best from each dancer and is one of the best teachers RMDT has ever had the privilege of working with in ballet training. Because of these experiences, and Randy's desire to impart his knowledge, RMDT has chosen Randy to teach five days this summer.

### **Budget Narrative**

RMDT faces many obstacles living in a small community, yet the support from our community is humbling. We are fortunate to have an incredible volunteer base that has helped to ensure the success of RMDT. Our recurrent in-

kind contributions include local businesses as well as: Jennifer Kaelberer, who donates several hours as Director of Public Relations, and Elizabeth Fernandez, who donates all her hours. RMDT is historically supported by the following, with the percentage each revenue stream generates in parenthesis: Grants (9), donations from both individuals and businesses (26), ticket sales (47), participation fees (6), and a sound annual fundraiser calendar (12). Each revenue stream is vital to supporting our program. RMDT faces new financial challenges as we balance cost increases and an affordable program. With unwavering attention to our mission and vigilant dedication to supporting our program, we believe we will find adequate financial support for continued success.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SALT RIVER ARTS SOCIETY

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: SRAS Operating Support and Community Programming

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission is Building Community through the Arts. Our vision is that that Ford Theatre will become a Center for the Arts and Arts Education, running at capacity, connecting the community together and to mainstream businesses. Downtown Afton will become a cultural destination for the community and tourists alike.

Our current goals are:

--continue major renovations to our building, using funding from the Cultural Trust Fund and private donors. We recently completed a new roof and re-sloped the parking lot, which was necessary as the basement was consistently flooding. Additionally, we finalized plans for the renovation of the building facade.

--offer a wide range of programming for the community to enjoy. This includes concerts, small performances and classes.

--offer opportunities for local performers to share their talents with the community through community offering featured performances and through community programs such as the Salt River Community Theatre, Salt river Symphony Chorus, etc.

Accommodations are made as requested and to the best of our ability. We have some accessible seating, along with companion seating. One of the intentions as part of the renovation is to make building access easier for people with mobility issues, and to create more seating. Long term we are interested in creating better stage access for people with disabilities. We will also be looking into hearing accommodations.

### Community

The Ford Theater and SRAS are in Afton, WY, although we aspire to serve the entire Valley, which runs along the western edge of Wyoming between two mountain ranges and includes 14 communities, with Afton the largest at 2213. There are slightly more females than males in the county and a large percentage of married couples. Family-friendly activities are favored, as the area includes many larger families. This may begin to change as more retirees

move in. As people migrate to Star Valley, they will want to enjoy many of the things from the more populated areas they came from, including high-quality arts programming. Star Valley is a predominantly white community (88% in Afton), with the second largest being people of two or more races and no significant African American, Hispanic, or Native populations. We have a large Latter-Day Saint population influencing community activities and values. There is a deep love of the arts, as evidenced by strong music and art programs in the schools and churches.

Our programs are kept as affordable as possible to meet the needs of people who are lower-income. We actively invite and work with places that serve the needs of older adults, who consistently attend our programs.

Accommodations are made as requested and to the best of our ability. We have some accessible seating, along with companion seating. One of the intentions as part of the renovation is to make building access easier for people with mobility issues, and to create more seating. Long term we are interested in creating better stage access for people with disabilities. We will also be looking into hearing accommodations.

## **Evaluation**

Our primary method of evaluation is through attendance, donations and anecdotal feedback. We also do an annual survey, and for programs like arts education classes and the Blue Sky Music Camp. We have a suggestion box in our lobby. Our goal is to have programming 2- 3 times per week year-round with good attendance. Currently we are at an average one 1/week, but we are also working on renovations to our building. We consistently receive excellent feedback, and use that to adjust programming.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

We are in the process of working on the building to make it more self-sufficient, through rentals in the classrooms and the two apartments above. SRAS is fortunate to have very reasonable rent--the owners charge just enough to cover the mortgage, property taxes and insurance and utilities--but it still takes a very large chunk of our budget for the year. It costs on average 3,250 per month to keep the doors open. This includes an average of over \$1000 per month in utilities. Many little charges also add up quickly such as snow clearing in the winter, and keeping the parking lot plowed. We also have ongoing supply needs to serve the public and make the office functional, in particular the toiletries for the bathroom and clean supplies. Prior to receiving operating support, these items ate up all available funds. Since we have received OS, we were able to hire a part time director, who is responsible for working with scheduled artists and events, marketing, and ensuring we can meet any equipment needs or special requests. This person is also supporting marketing and other administrative needs. She is currently donating significant time to the organization, as we have far more needs than money! Our board is now able to work more intensively on our rentals and on developing donors for the renovations of the building. While we feel we are very lucky to have understanding owners who share our vision of the building as a community asset, we would also like to either purchase the building ourselves or find some other method of ownership that would ensure the Ford Theater is a community building in perpetuity. Operating support funds will be used towards our part time person



and other operating needs necessary to keep the building functional. Operating support supports all our programs, including the arts learning programming listed below, but also a concert series, the Salt River Symphony Chorus, the Salt River Community Theater

### **Project Support Narrative**

Salt River Symphony Chorus consists of instrumentalists and vocalists that are residents of Star Valley who want to come together and create beautiful music for our community. We provide 2 concerts a year that involve the full Symphony and choir as well as concerts of choir only and Symphony only. The combined concerts include a biannual performance of favorite selections from Handel's Messiah, a long standing tradition that brings the community together. The Symphony performances includes an outdoor Pops Concert in June in conjunction with the town of Afton's Freedom Festival and a classical music concert in the fall. This last year members of the orchestra provided a live pit band for the community theatre's fall musical, a wonderful collaboration we hope to continue. Members of the choir are brought together to provide the choir for the annual performance of Michael McLean's Forgotten Carols. This year (2025) the choir is planning to do a Patriotic concert the week of Independence Day. James Arbizu is our conductor He plays freelance fiddle and violin, including 5 years as lead fiddle in Bar T 5 out of Jackson. With a masters in conducting, he conducted the Consortium on New Music and two orchestras at BYU, and has worked with several youth symphonies and community orchestras. He taught music to grades 5-12 for 7 years. He currently owns a music store, teaches private music lessons, runs the Ford Theater and is a principal in Blue Sky Music Festival.

The Salt River Community Theatre is an adult education and participation program. Our artist in residence so to speak is Tami Neilson who has been in plays, starred in them, been involved in production, directed them over 30+years, primarily in the Idaho Falls region. She has overseen the artistic endeavors for the plays the first two years, with huge success in the community. In fall of 2024, Jaclyn Lechner, who has been involved in various capacities with the community theatre from the beginning, directed Bright Star. It was another great success. In 2025 Tami will be directing again and has yet to determine the upcoming musical. The community theatre is 100% volunteer. We have a number of other professionals with music theatre degrees and retired drama teachers that are interested in joining the committee to add to our roster of professional teachers and producers. We have had other artists involved as music director, set design, and choreography but have yet to commit interested artists to specific roles. Auditions are in August. Practices start in August 3 times week and run until the week before November when they perform Thursday Friday, Saturday and Monday. The casts are typically around 15-19 people. With 3-4 additional help such as those listed above. The past 4 years Jaclyn has also directed "The Forgotten Carols". With a cast of about 5-7 people, practicing 2 times a week beginning the end of October into December. It has been another successful community theatre event that the community has enjoyed each year. We plan to continue to offer this to our community.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

In June of 2026, we will again offer Blue Sky Music Camp which brings in professional musicians to teach kids the skills they wished they learned in orchestra and band. The camp serves primarily stringed instruments, guitar, and folk instruments. Any student ages 11-18 with at least one year of experience on their instrument can participate. Mornings are dedicated to technique and skill building, and afternoon is playing in an ensemble. Each student participates in 2 ensembles, which teach a range of skills from arranging music to working with others. We hold jam sessions in the evening. Two concerts, open to the public, are held: a faculty concert midweek and a student closing concert. We have around 50 -80 students participate with a faculty of approximately 7 teachers.

We are in our fourth year of co-hosting a musical theatre camp with the Star Valley Arts Council. The camp is in June, every day in the morning for three hours. They perform three times, in June 18-20 in the evening and possibly a matinee on the 20th as well. In 2025, the musical is Alice in Wonderland; 2026 has yet to be selected. These performances are directed by Tina Crowther with another adult leader. They work with about 60 kids in these musicals. Last year, we added an option to participate in a Dance Camp concurrently which was very successful. We will be doing that again this year. The program is designed to put together a full-scale dance production with a storyline, similar to a ballet, however, with modern/jazz/hiphop elements. The camp will correspond with the Summer Theater Camp, and take place for 3 hours each afternoon, so that participants interested in both can participate. It will culminate in a performance.

The SRAS will offer a youth choir again this year. It is free with a requested materials fee of \$25. We have two concerts a year. One on the first weekend in December, the other at the end of April. We had 30 students sign up for 2024-25 and plan for 50 next year.

For adults, we offer both the Salt River Symphony Chorus and the Salt River Community Theater. Both of these community organizations are run by educators and focus on technique and skills while also putting together productions. The theater does an average of two plays per year, one musical and the Forgotten Carols. The Symphony Chorus does a minimum of two performances per year, and this year is adding one in July.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our overall arts education goals include:

--building on skills and knowledge in the arts in our community's children. We have excellent music programs in the schools, and Blue Sky Music Camp and classes will build on those skills.

--introducing students to new ideas and ways of using their talents in the community

--building appreciation for music and the arts

--offering classes and performance opportunities to adults who are interested in learning a new skill or continuing to hone their skills

Our programming is specifically geared to allow all ages to practice and perform their skills. It gives emerging artists an opportunity to expand and hone their skills in front of an appreciative audience. For example, the Community Theater and the Symphony Chorus are geared towards adults and provide both education in theater or vocal music, but also a place for retired and amateurs to participate and perform. Run by retired theater and music educators, every session is an opportunity to learn more. Both the Theater and the Symphony Chorus emphasize collaborative skills. Both groups strive towards excellence and are always learning.

The Children's Summer Theater camp seeks to teach acting, projecting, and technical theater skills. The new dance camp will provide intensive dance education in a range of styles, offering students an opportunity to learn what they might enjoy pursuing in the future.

Blue Sky Music camp has some specific arts education goals including:

- learning to work with other musicians in a new grouping quickly (playing in a band)
- music arrangement
- playing by ear and chord
- building technique and skill

Goals were developed primarily by James Arbizu, a certified music educator who has taught all ages both in the schools and privately. He consulted with the board committees involved in education programs, and with other artists providing classes and opportunities.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Tami Neilsen has directed, choreographed, and starred in over 70 productions. Tami is delighted that all three of her children are way more talented than she is, and hopes to act with her husband, Jason, someday. Tami is an elementary school teacher by day.

Jaclyn has been involved with theatre for most of her life in various capacities and is now enjoying a new experience, directing. For the past two years, she has directed The Forgotten Carols and now Bright Star. She has enjoyed being a part of bringing theatre to this beautiful valley for the past three years and is looking forward to seeing this program continue to grow.

Blue Sky Music Camp:

--Aaron Ashton, violin, fiddle, viola: Currently a freelance musician in the Salt Lake City area, Aaron has performed on multiple soundtracks and played with Smokey Robinson and Josh Groban. He has won multiple festival awards.

--Colin Botts guitar, banjo, bass, mandolin: Played Mandolin for Utah Symphony. Had a signed artist contract with record label (Ryan Shupe and the Rubber Band... He was the Banjo man for their hit that charted, "I play the Banjo"),

--Miriam Hone, piano, violin: Concert Master of the Evanston Community orchestra. Graduate in piano performance at BYU. Frequent artist teacher at Arts Inc's MAT Camp

--James Arbizu, beginning strings, fiddle, beginning guitar. Plays freelance fiddle and violin, including 5 years as lead fiddle in Bar T 5 out of Jackson. With a masters in conducting, he conducted the Consortium on New Music and two orchestras at BYU, and has worked with several youth symphonies and community orchestras. He taught music to grades 5-12 for 7 years. He currently co-owns Mountain Music of Wyoming, teaches private lessons and runs the Ford Theater.

--Daphne Arbizu holds a bachelors in music education from Weber State University. She has taught band and orchestra and played with the Arioso String Quartet, among others. Daphne has taught violin, viola, piano and other instruments privately for over 20 years. She participates in the Salt River Symphony Chorus, organizes Blue Sky Music Camp and co-owns Mountain Music of Wyoming.

The Salt River Symphony Chorus is led by Charity Williams. Charity is an incredibly talented musician who lives in Star Valley. She plays the upright bass and has performed locally, and has traveled to perform as well. She has directed the choir for the Forgotten Carols the past 3 years. She also directed and performed in the band that accompanied Bright Star, our community theatre musical last year.

#### Children's Summer Theater Camp

--Katie Thygersen holds a bachelors in theater education, a masters in curriculum and instruction and currently serves as para-librarian at Etna Elementary School.

--Christina Crowther has a masters in family and child studies and a bachelors in elementary education. Both have run independent theater productions for children for many years, managing all aspects from teaching students to directing, stage managing, and ensuring that all the technical components are correct.

--Krista Hardcastle has been teaching and performing an array of different styles of dance for the last two decades. She owns the 307 Dance Hall and works as a professional choreographer. Krista will also lead the dance camp option coming June 2025 concurrently with the theater camp.

### **Budget Narrative**

SRAS applies for multiple grants each year and is constantly seeking new sources of funding. We have been fortunate to find several donors who grew up in Star Valley and are excited to see the Ford Theater active again-- right now, they are focused on renovating the building, but we hope to convert them to regular supporters of our

programming as well. We had a second very successful fundraiser in the Alpine area, which we used to raise awareness about our programs and offerings, develop new friends and raise money. We have a strong working board which contributes significant time to the organization and an active volunteer base who spend many hours making our events go smoothly. Much of our publicity is donated, with both the newspaper and radio being very generous with articles and support. Our entire budget is focused on the mission of building communities through the arts, and on renovating our building (not included in this request).

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SCIENCE LOVES ART, INC.

[HTTPS://WWW.SCIENCELOVESART.ORG/](https://www.science loves art.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Science Loves Art All Around Wyoming

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Science Loves Art (SLA) is a Wyoming nonprofit created to bring art experiences inspired by nature through discovery, creation, and exhibitions to isolated and rural communities and the general public. SLA supports both physical and virtual connections through workshops, exhibitions, SLA Kits and community events.

SLA's primary concepts of discovery, creation and exhibitions are important because we believe art, when presented as an experience, creates curiosity and connection to all individuals.

Discovery allows for exploration while working with our projects, events and art kits. Our programs are created with varying projects and techniques. All Kits and projects are designed considering these factors. 1. To be easily transported using supplies that are packaged responsibly, refillable and reusable, 2. All ages should have success creating artwork that is unique, and 3. the art medium is created through the help of science. Many people, of all ages, do not believe they are "good" at art and don't want to try. When they are allowed to experience and enjoy "creating", every single person walks away with an enjoyable experience and a nice piece of artwork.

Our newest festival, the BumbleBrew Fest, combines our Pollinator Festival and Fermentation Festivals. Our festivals bring all ages together through live music, live art, gardens and the healthy and artful presentation of science, nature and food.

Our mission includes providing art to isolated people and communities. Our original goal was to bring art to Wyoming rural and isolated communities, but through our online outlets, we realized there are many isolated people and communities beyond Wyoming. SLA continues to expand our virtual access through our website, growing social media (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and others). We share art projects, create companion videos to our Kits and will share our festival events and live music to those near and far.

### Community

Science Loves Art's home base is Laramie, Wyoming at 4th Street Studios. Sitting on the edge of downtown Laramie, this studio provides a place for SLA to store supplies for Kits and art experiences, kit assembly and distribution, host events and art parties and is our working studio.

We also have access to 4th Street Studios Greenhouse, built in 1926 and part of Laramie history. This location is very convenient for our Laramie community, but our goals include communities outside of Laramie where art is difficult to find.

As one of our main objectives, SLA finds ways to connect with isolated, rural individuals and communities without resources or availability and access to art supplies. We've discovered that by providing "Kits" we can curate projects and supplies with easy access to videos that demonstrate and inspire the user to discover and create artwork at their leisure.

Many of our in-person school visits are in the Albany County area and include rural schools outside of Laramie. We also ship to small towns and after school groups across Wyoming.

Since 2018 and with the use of online tools, we have met groups and individuals that are "isolated", disabled and without the tools to find quality projects they can do at home or with a group easily. We customize projects, supplies and Kits and share easily by mailing the packaged materials and providing videos through YouTube and our social media.

Most of our Kits are distributed to schools, after school programs and groups either free or at our cost. We have shipped Kits and hosted camps and events across Wyoming for free to these communities.

## **Evaluation**

SLA uses a variety of evaluation techniques for measuring our impact and obtaining feedback.

SLA designed a database tool for documenting our outreach and impact.

We include data regarding the date and location of the outreach, age of participants and what type of outreach. We also ask collaborators and statewide nonprofit partners with details of interactions, location, # of

participants, gender and age of participants and income/at-risk level. We gather information about the perception of art and science after the individual's experience. For example, is the participant more interested in science or art after this experience? Are they more likely to participate in science or art in the future?

SLA monitors marketing and online contact with the public through our active Facebook,

Instagram, website and growing SLA YouTube channel.

SLA asks for feedback after art experiences of any kind, reviews of projects and surveys during festivals. We often reward participation with options for prizes and rewards to participating.

Most of our Kits are free or at cost however, SLA Kits are sold online as another revenue source for matching grants and supporting our mission. This online connection allows SLA to receive reviews, feedback and demographic information that is part of our evaluation and impact. Online tools help identify states, communities and groups across Wyoming and the USA and how our Kits and art experiences can be modified to accommodate even more groups and communities.

It is reassuring to see the connection of art as a learning tool or even entertainment and relaxation among friends, family, groups and companies that want to use art for team building.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

This year, SLA is requesting \$4,000 for operating costs and \$6,000 for project costs.

Operating expenses include artist and music stipends during festivals and events, workshop and art kit supplies, marketing, website and digital services, office expenses, rent and utilities.

Personnel expenses include part time Executive Director salary, part time employees for Kit assembly and art events.

SLA receives in-kind donations for some operating expenses.

The requested operating expenses of \$4,000 will be used to match other funding to continue our growth with art programs that include SLA Kit design, assembly and distribution. The Kit design involves digital designs for Kit packaging, written instructions with images, video filming and production for all Kit designs. Every SLA has a unique theme or project. Suminagashi Marbling, a traditional Japanese floating ink technique and Acrylic Paint Pour are the primary Kits that begin the art experiences. Once the art technique is introduced to the participant, ongoing projects continue based on the needs of the group or individual. SLA creates projects and inspiration for projects with the artwork such as collage, handmade cards, bookbinding and journals, origami and the exploration of marbling on other materials. SLA is always expanding these programs into studio art events, access to projects at our festivals, school and nonprofit group collaborations and team building.



Kits design and materials include detailed written instructions, responsibly sourced materials, high quality videos that require cameras, audio, editing software and training. Expanding these projects through video include Kit materials and also projects created using nature. We provide art and science opportunities using video to demonstrate simple projects using recycled materials or earth. Updating video and audio equipment as we improve our skills and grow this program is important for this part of our programming to remain high quality.

Funds will also be used to support artists and musicians in our festivals. SLA believes in supporting local artists and musicians. Live music and festivals will be recorded and shared beyond the one day event. It is important to SLA and part of our mission to share experiences beyond the event with high quality videos. Recording art projects presented at our festivals and introducing projects to others with ideas for them to create at home or with friends is part of our mission and goals for this fiscal year.

SLA collaborates with nonprofits and invite them to participate in events, festivals and outreach. We support their mission by attending, creating and hosting art activities in person when possible and with supplies and programs that we ship.

SLA supports over 10 bands per year and over 20 artists in various methods. We also support local businesses, downtown groups, work with tourism and cultural groups and provide art experiences for businesses, team building and company parties.

Along with creating SLA Kits and hosting festivals, we also curate exhibits that bring artists, scientists and music together. Working with scientists to present their work through art and exhibitions rather than the traditional scientific methods of presentation. SLA often has requests from scientists, schools and groups to help create and use art experience to communicate a message. We are working with scientists on water research projects across Wyoming using Suminagashi.

### **Project Support Narrative**

This fiscal year, SLA is requesting \$6,000 for a new project based on our main programs using a new concept, "Art Across Wyoming – A Visual Tour". Grant funds will be used to match other funding and will be used for travel, video and audio equipment, professional editing and creating art programming with artists and communities.

This project, "Art Across Wyoming - A Visual Tour", is a project that brings artists and Wyoming culture, the natural landscape and history together. Science Loves Art (SLA) will interview, video and collaborate with communities, artists and makers across Wyoming to discuss their inspiration, their connection to Wyoming and also bring to light Wyoming's unique characteristics. SLA has grown our audience beyond Wyoming through art experiences and online connections. This year, SLA is expanding these experiences to include more connections across Wyoming through videography, photography and podcasts to share our growing social media platforms. Art is the perfect communication tool for all ages and we enjoy the challenge of using art to communicate messages, especially when inspired by nature and Wyoming!

This project will collaborate with scientists and artists in unique regions across Wyoming. Unique stories will be told of their inspiration, connection to Wyoming culture, the history of their craft while creating high quality videos. Videos will be edited using high quality film equipment experience from Jon Firestone, a professional cinematographer. Our goal is to use this project to connect art processes, artists, Wyoming and when available, create Kits that can be share to audiences within and beyond Wyoming.

SLA will collaborate with artist coops, art galleries, museums and maker spaces across Wyoming to bring our final work to the communities through art exhibitions.

René Williams is the founder and President of SLA. As an artist with a BFA from the University of Wyoming and a retired CPA and small business consultant, she provides these in-kind services to SLA. René was a grant recipient with the National Science Foundation and Wyoming EPSCoR in 2017 as the artist on a 5 year grant for education and outreach. René has curated exhibitions, participated in outreach and created artwork for Cherry Creek Festivals, art galleries in Austin, Steamboat Springs, Denver and Australia and is a glass, metal, jewelry and sculpture artist. René mentors interns, students, scientists and volunteers in methods for art presentation, exhibition, science communication using art and helping community groups with programs.

Jon Firestone is a cinematographer and has shot eight feature films and taught animation for three years in a program which he helped to pioneer at the Colorado Film School. . He has operated camera on aials for Chevy, Aspen Tourism, and National Geographic.

Austen Williams, an art graduate from UW, animator and videographer trained and graduated from Vancouver Film School will consult, edit and shoot photography and videos.

Approximately 20 artists will participate in this project in various levels and projects.

Cassidy Post, a BFA graduate, Art Education and Honors major is part of the creative and administrative team.

Emma Dixon, marketing, tourism and outreach

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

During this WAC grant year, SLA will provide arts learning activities through all of our programs, events and festivals. Again, this year, SLA will design, assemble and distribute SLA Camp Kits and create science and art

experiences to over 1,000 participants. The name “camp” suggests summer activities and fun projects. These Kits are created however, for all ages. Camp Kits are unique in that they contain 5 projects. Activities may include Suminagashi Marbling (floating ink), a traditional Japanese technique, and from the papers that are created, more projects are introduced that include origami, card making, bookmaking, collage and expands into color theory techniques and mixing colors, fluid dynamics and experimenting with altering the water surface, marbling on papers besides the traditional rice paper. We encourage participants to find rocks, concrete objects, various watercolor papers or other papers to experiment with marbling on other surfaces. All SLA Kits are designed with responsible materials that are recyclable, reusable and refillable and include graphic and interesting instructions, images, QR codes and links to companion videos and additional information about our inspiration and sponsors.

In addition to the Camp Kits, SLA provides custom programming to summer programs across Wyoming. Teachers, camp directors, community centers, libraries, senior centers and other groups across the state ask for resources and assistance with programs during the summer and school year. SLA provides custom art supplies based on our Kit projects along with “Instructor Guide”. Based on the age and the situation, we create the right amount of supplies for many projects. Many of our teachers and camps can request refills of supplies to continue their programs year after year. We provide the teacher with special instructions or ideas for inspiring their group to explore and discover techniques, explain how science creates the artwork along with videos that can be played on a large screen while everyone creates. Our philosophy is to create artwork experiences that are artful, enjoyable, satisfying and in the end, everyone creates something they are proud of.

SLA also hosts events and festivals throughout the year that bring art to everyone through experiences. Our newest festival, BumbleBrew Fest, (April) combines our Pollinator Fest and Fermentation Fest into a fun community. SLA financially supports live music and local musicians, local artists and makers, chefs and foodies and garden/home ecofriendly projects. Hands on projects are diverse and unique and bring art and nature together. Some projects include garden dyes, upcycled sun catchers using thrift store beads, mosaic rocks, origami bees, hypertufa pots, paint a pot & pick a succulent to name a few. We create food and drinks from plants and flowers, create bug spray that can be used as body spray, and talk about the art of composting. We invite nonprofit collaborators to bring outreach to the festival and share bees, fermenting and pollination with our families.

SLA videos will record the art projects, live music and events to be shared after the festival. We plan to create Kits/videos so that people near and far can create art, listen to live music and enjoy so fun outdoor projects.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our programs are designed to introduce art to all ages that may not otherwise be interested or believe they can create art. Teachers, team leaders, after school programs, camp leaders, businesses and individuals of all ages are seeking art as a vehicle for relaxing, socializing, experimenting, accomplish teaching goals, create interesting camp

and options for workshop experiences. SLA customizes our programs to create these experiences based on needs of the participants. Artists and artist instructors have used our Kits and projects for their workshops.

Our net is wide and using our online and social media, we can reach audiences beyond Laramie. Wyoming has so many rural and isolated communities and people, we strive to think of them when creating our art programs and outreach goals. Travel is difficult in Wyoming most of the year, but access to phones and computers allows most to have access to online programs.

SLA tries to create art projects and programs that are inspired by nature, created by science and traditional in method because this combination is easy for everyone to identify.

SLA's Strategic goals also include reaching out to artists that have connections to Wyoming, our culture, our craft and connect with nature or science in some capacity. We mentor artists, interns and new graduates to include their ideas, work and influences on our projects. SLA has also curated exhibitions that include emerging artists, scientists that want to use art to present their research, students that would like exhibition experience and art education majors. Our goal is to bring many interests and capabilities together to create fresh and interesting experiences for all ages through studio events, festivals, camp and outreach Kits.

We use our home studio and greenhouse (4th Street Studios and Greenhouse) for art and garden workshop (we call them art experiences because we teach through discovery) but the majority of our programs and art education happens as we travel to schools, ship to schools and nonprofits across Wyoming and ship across the USA.

SLA establishes our goals based on the feedback we receive from our website, collaborators and teachers/schools and community groups. We were surprised that team building and company parties want to use art as a tool for entertainment but through our programs, they are learning traditional art techniques and how science and art work together.

Our programs, art projects, SLA Kits, events and festival reach over 2,500 participants each year.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

René Williams is the founder and President of SLA. As an artist with a BFA from the University of Wyoming and a grant recipient with the National Science Foundation and Wyoming EPSCoR in 2017 as the artist on a 5 year grant for education and outreach. René has curated exhibitions, participated in outreach and created artwork for Cherry Creek Festivals, art galleries in Austin, Steamboat Springs, Denver and Australia and is a glass, metal, jewelry and sculpture artist. René mentors interns, students, scientists and volunteers in methods for art presentation, exhibition, science communication using art and helping community groups with programs. René continues to collaborate with scientists and the National Science Foundation to create art projects and programs for research outreach across Wyoming.

Jon Firestone is a cinematographer and has shot eight feature films and taught animation for three years in a program which he helped to pioneer at the Colorado Film School. Jon is the Blackwing ASL Director of Photography. Jon is the Director of Photography for Furniture Row and travels the globe as a DP for Westin Hotels with Jason Dewey Photography. He has operated camera on aerials for Chevy, Aspen Tourism, and National Geographic.

Austen Williams, an art graduate from UW, animator and videographer trained and graduated from Vancouver Film School will consult, edit and shoot photography and videos.

Cassidy Post, a BFA graduate, Art Education and Honors major is part of the creative and administrative team.

SLA collaborates with many nonprofit organizations including Wyoming Community Foundation, Wyoming Afterschool Alliance, Downtown Laramie and similar groups across Wyoming, libraries, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Albany County, City of Laramie, University of Wyoming, UW Art Museum, Cheyenne Botanic Gardens, Denver Botanic Gardens to name a few.

### **Budget Narrative**

SLA receives funding from Wyoming Community Foundation, Albany County, City of Laramie, Visit Laramie, sponsors and donors. Our sponsors and grants are increasing this year to include tourism entities as we combine Wyoming, art, culture and tourism together. SLA also receives in-kind donations for accounting, art design and mentoring, administrative services by René Williams, a retired CPA. Our festivals support local artists and musicians and also use this event as a fundraising opportunity. SLA retail Kits and online shop provides ongoing financial resources for our programs.

Our budget is growing every year as our financial resources improve and grow as we become more established. We often allow for donations in exchange for art experiences, events and festivals to include more participants and not exclude those without the financial means to participate.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SENIOR CITIZENS COUNCIL DBA THE HUB ON SMITH

THEHUBSHERIDAN.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Arts and Community: Reducing Social Isolation

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Hub on Smith's mission is to celebrate, embrace, and serve older adults for the betterment of our community.

The Hub's current strategic focus is on building connection and community to reduce social isolation for the clients we serve across all programs. Through public transportation, dining room and home-delivered meals, in-home services, caregiver support, education and support groups for brain change, Fun & Wellness activities, and adult day care, we aim not only to meet essential needs but to intentionally connect each patron to their community. This connection is key to improving mental health, reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, strengthening the immune system, increasing life expectancy, boosting self-esteem, and supporting overall social, emotional, and physical well-being. We don't just want people to age in place, we want them to age in community.

### Community

The Hub on Smith serves Sheridan County, Wyoming, comprised of approximately 32,000 residents. Our primary focus is on adults aged 60 and over, which is 29% of Sheridan County's population. We served over 3,400 unique older adults last year, over ten percent of the population of our county. This segment includes individuals facing challenges such as fixed incomes, limited mobility, cognitive decline, transportation barriers, and social isolation. Many of our patrons live alone or without nearby family support, and economic realities combined with geographic isolation compound the difficulties of aging in place. We are able to identify the needs of this sector of our community through intake questionnaires we use for each patron.

The Hub is committed to welcoming and engaging underserved populations across every service area. This includes older adults with physical and cognitive disabilities, individuals living with dementia, veterans (17% of patrons), and economically disadvantaged individuals. Because our programs are diverse, we are trained to address unique challenges faced by these populations.

We actively work to reduce barriers to participation through a suggested contribution model, ensuring that no one is turned away due to inability to pay. Our programs are designed to be physically, emotionally, and socially accessible.

Requests for accommodation are met with flexibility. Whether it's adapting an art class for someone with limited dexterity, ensuring ADA-compliant access to our facility, or offering one-on-one volunteer support for an individual, we strive to meet each person where they are. Staff are trained to be sensitive to the diverse needs of our patrons and to adapt programming to ensure everyone can participate fully and meaningfully.

## **Evaluation**

The Hub on Smith is committed to continually evaluating our programs to ensure they are meeting the needs of the older adults we serve and making a meaningful impact in their lives. Currently, we track participation data, including the number of individuals attending each program and how regularly they engage over time. This helps us identify patterns in attendance, adjust scheduling, and better understand which offerings are most impactful and accessible.

Looking ahead to July 1, 2025, we are implementing a pre- and post-activity survey tool designed to measure changes in physical, social, and emotional well-being among participants. These brief surveys will gather qualitative and quantitative feedback on how individuals feel before and after engaging in our programs. Questions will focus on areas such as mood, sense of connection, energy level, and feelings of isolation—giving us clearer insight into how our services support overall wellness and building community.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The Hub on Smith's Fun & Wellness programs are designed to support the health, wellness, and social connection of older adults in Sheridan County. These programs offer a wide variety of engaging activities that reflect the interests and abilities of our patrons, with 40% of all programming centered on the arts. This includes vibrant, regularly offered classes such as Happy Feet Dance, Piano Lessons, Ukulele (Uke 'n Strum), Tap Dance, Watercolor, Woodcarving, Poetry, Sewing, and Crocheting. These opportunities promote not only creative expression, but also social engagement, cognitive stimulation, and emotional well-being.

To support the delivery of these arts-based programs, The Hub incurs annual operating costs totaling \$23,853, which include:

- Occupancy (Utilities, Snow removal, Janitorial): \$15,533
- Administrative (Insurance, Printing, Phone, Maintenance, Office Expenses): \$8,320

Operating support from this grant will be equitably applied across these cost areas, allowing us to maintain program quality, ensure accessibility, and cover the facility costs.

The breadth of these programs rely on significant usage of The Hub on Smith's facility, utilizing our wellness room, community room, and art room for all activities.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Between July 1 and June 30, The Hub on Smith will continue to offer a broad range of arts-based programs through our Fun & Wellness Department, with the goal of reducing social isolation and improving overall wellness. These arts programs make up approximately 40% of our total programming and served 372 patrons last year.

Project costs for the arts-based programming are \$30,372 and include:

- Personnel: \$28,734
- Instructor Fees: \$400
- Program Expenses: \$1238

Planned programs include weekly and monthly classes such as:

- Happy Feet Dance led by Sherry Mercer, a retired professional dancer
- Tap Dance taught by Jennifer Kahm, a long-time local tap instructor
- Piano Lessons taught by piano teacher Janet Ruleaux
- Uke 'n Strum Ukulele Class led by in-house staff members
- Watercolor Painting
- Woodcarving
- Poetry Workshops with local writers
- Sewing and Crocheting Circles

These classes are offered at low or no cost and are adapted to meet the physical and cognitive needs of older adults.

Our instructors—many of whom are retired professionals or long-time community teaching artists—offer their time either as in-kind contributors or for modest stipends. Their qualifications range from professional careers in music and dance to extensive experience leading community-based art programs. Each is selected for their expertise, teaching ability, and deep understanding of working with older adult populations.



Requested project support funds will be allocated toward:

- Artist stipends to compensate instructors for their time and expertise
- Art supplies and materials needed for hands-on classes
- Program outreach to increase awareness and participation
- Personnel expenses to manage the volunteers, teachers, and communications for all classes

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Hub on Smith Fun & Wellness program is funded through federal grants, private foundations and individual donations, and significant in-kind contributions. The Hub saw 702 in-kind volunteer hours given just for the arts-based programming the last fiscal year. Volunteers drive our programming breadth and availability to the community and are incredibly generous as teachers for the classes.

The Hub on Smith has been serving Sheridan County for over 50 years and remains a solid and stable community presence. Current cuts from the federal government are forcing restrictions to our overall organization, but we are making necessary preparations to keep our mission strong.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SHERIDAN ARTISTS' GUILD ET AL.

[HTTPS://WWW.ARTINSHERIDAN.COM/](https://www.artinsheridan.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: FY26 SAGE Community Art and Education Programming

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

At SAGE Community Arts, our mission is clear and unwavering: to build and inspire community through the visual arts. Rooted in the heart of Sheridan and reflective of Wyoming's creative spirit, this mission comes to life through our three guiding pillars: See Art, Create Art, and Promote Art.

To See Art, SAGE offers the community free access to two galleries year-round. The Members Gallery showcases the talent of local and regional artists, welcoming creators of all skill levels and backgrounds. The Exhibition Gallery brings in a broader scope of work through professional solo and group shows, including juried exhibitions featuring artists nationwide. Together, these galleries offer a window into visual art's diverse and dynamic world, exposing our community to a rich array of perspectives and mediums.

Through Create Art, SAGE delivers community arts education programs that span age groups and experience levels. Our classes and workshops, taught by professional artists, empower individuals to explore new techniques, express themselves creatively, and grow personally and artistically. From youth art camps to advanced adult workshops, we believe hands-on artmaking builds confidence, connection, and joy.

The third pillar, Promote Art, is woven into everything we do. Both galleries serve as platforms for artists to gain exposure, sell their work, and connect with new audiences. Through curated exhibitions, marketing support, and public events, SAGE actively supports the professional growth of artists while deepening the public's appreciation of the visual arts.

SAGE Community Arts is proud to be a creative force in Wyoming. Through the arts, we foster inclusion, innovation, and inspiration and strengthen the fabric of our community with every class, exhibition, and shared experience.

### Community

Located in Sheridan County, home to just over 30,000 residents, SAGE serves a diverse and vibrant community rooted in Western heritage and cultural richness. Our population includes aging adults, veterans, multi-generational ranching families, rural workers, and households spanning the income spectrum. As our region evolves, SAGE embraces our history's deep roots and the progressive spirit shaping a growing creative economy.

SAGE is committed to reducing barriers to participation and ensuring that everyone in our community has access to the arts. We offer affordable membership options, discounted class rates, and numerous free programs in our

galleries, always open to the public at no cost. Through partnerships with organizations like the YMCA, we reach rural and low-income youth by offering art camps, after-school classes, and scholarship opportunities to ensure access regardless of financial means.

We also work closely with nondominant communities, including individuals with disabilities and those served by partners such as Easterseals of Wyoming, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Sheridan Foster Parent Exchange. We aim to create a space where every participant feels welcomed, supported, and inspired.

SAGE dedicates funds annually to scholarships for class registration, membership, and national juried show fees. Our facilities include step-free access, handicap-accessible restrooms, and elevator access to our lower-level programming spaces. We partner with other organizations to accommodate special requests or unique participant needs when needed.

SAGE continues to be a place where art is for everyone and where community members of all backgrounds can come together to learn, express, and connect through the transformative power of the visual arts.

## **Evaluation**

SAGE Community Arts evaluates its impact across its three pillars—See Art, Create Art, and Promote Art—using qualitative and quantitative measures to guide program development and ensure mission alignment.

Under See Art, we track gallery foot traffic, artist reception attendance, and event participation. We assess diversity in mediums and artist backgrounds (age, gender, race/ethnicity) and types of engagement, including exhibitions, talks, and demos. Our Art Selection Committee reviews past programming to ensure continued variety, inclusivity, and relevance.

In Create Art, success is measured through class enrollment and the breadth of offerings. While previous evaluations relied heavily on word of mouth, our Education Committee has implemented two new tools for FY26: a Community Programming Survey to gather input on class topics and scheduling and a refreshed Post-Class Survey to assess participant satisfaction and impact.

For Promote Art, we monitor art sales in both galleries, alongside marketing metrics such as social media engagement, email open rates, and website traffic. Feedback from artists and community members provides insight into how effectively we elevate and support artists. We also track the ratio of members to non-members participating in programs to ensure we reach a broad audience.

Together, these evaluation tools—both quantitative and qualitative—allow SAGE to adapt, refine, and grow our programs to meet the needs of the community we serve, while maintaining the integrity of our mission to Build and Inspire Community through the Visual Arts.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

SAGE respectfully requests operating support to sustain and strengthen the day-to-day activities that allow our organization to fulfill its mission: To Build and Inspire Community through the Visual Arts. This funding request directly supports staffing and operational infrastructure—the essential backbone of all SAGE programming and gallery operations.

SAGE currently operates with a small but dedicated paid staff, not volunteers, who manage the organization's daily functions. Operating funds help cover wages for the Executive Director, Gallery Manager, and Part-Time Marketing

Coordinator, all of whom are essential to delivering programs, managing exhibitions, artist communications, marketing, and outreach. In FY25, SAGE expanded staff to include a Part-Time Gallery Attendant. This new role provides crucial support during public gallery hours and assists with classes and youth art camps, significantly enhancing our community programming capacity.

Personnel costs include class instructors, contracted professional services, and payroll taxes. These are vital for maintaining high-quality instruction, financial administration, and smooth daily operations. General operating expenses include artist commissions, workshop supplies, marketing, HOA dues, office expenses, operating supplies, utilities, and insurance.

The requested funds are not tied to a specific event or one-time activity but instead support the year-round operations of two public galleries: the Members' Gallery and the Exhibition Gallery. These spaces are open to the public Tuesday–Friday from 11:00 AM to 5:30 PM and Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, serving as a consistent cultural presence in downtown Sheridan.

The Members' Gallery supports over 120 Wyoming and regional artists, offering them a venue to display and sell their work regardless of experience level. It is often the first professional gallery setting for emerging artists, advancing SAGE's goal to Promote Art. This space also serves as a key entry point for visitors to "See Art," showcasing various media and styles while providing economic and professional support to local creators.

The Exhibition Gallery supports the See Art and Promote Art pillars of SAGE's mission. In FY24, SAGE will host eight exhibitions, including two national juried shows, solo and group exhibitions, 3D installations, and student shows ranging from high school to college level. These exhibitions are curated with the guidance of the Executive Director and Art Selection Committee using criteria emphasizing diversity of media, artist backgrounds, and community engagement. The national juried shows attract submissions from over 30 states and are juried blindly by nationally recognized artists, giving the Sheridan community access to a broader spectrum of professional visual art.

Public Receptions for these exhibitions bring together artists, patrons, and community members—SAGE anticipates over 1,270 reception attendees in FY25 alone. These events highlight the exhibiting artists and help cultivate a vibrant, culturally rich community.

The requested operating funds are foundational, supporting the staff and systems that run all of SAGE's programs, galleries, and educational offerings. By supporting salaries, utilities, and day-to-day infrastructure, this grant enables SAGE to continue providing free access to visual arts, support for regional artists, and creative education for all ages throughout the year.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

SAGE's Community Arts Education Program offers year-round creative learning opportunities for youth and adults in a welcoming, inclusive, and professionally guided environment. Instruction is delivered by local and visiting artists, allowing participants to engage with various artistic voices, styles, and techniques.

SAGE's programming continues to evolve in response to community needs and strategic priorities. In FY26, SAGE will continue the growth trajectory by deepening its programming and doubling its Youth Summer Art Camps from 6 to 12 camps—a significant goal reflecting our commitment to serving Sheridan County's young artists.

These 12 camps will explore a variety of visual arts and incorporate creative writing, ensuring that children with a range of artistic interests can explore and express themselves. Camps will serve youth ages 7–14. Our expanding partnership with the Sheridan YMCA aims to reach even more families across the county by increasing accessibility, registration visibility, and support for working families.

SAGE's arts education programming is delivered through various formats to accommodate different schedules, skill levels, and learning preferences. Planned offerings for FY26 include:

12 Youth Summer Art Camps (visual arts, creative writing, mixed media)

5-Week Fall and Spring After-School Art Classes (ages 7–12)

Multi-Day Workshops

4-5 day intensive sessions taught by visiting and exhibiting artists

Focused on intermediate to advanced adult learners

Specialty Workshops

1-day deep-dives into techniques or mediums (e.g., bookmaking, collage, gouache)

Beginner to advanced levels

Multi-Week Classes: 4–5 week sessions taught by local professionals, Rotating offerings for beginner to advanced learners, Notable instructor: Jenny Wuerker's Intro and Advanced series (Fall, Winter, Spring)

Life Drawing Sessions: Ongoing weekly open studio, October through May, 3-hour sessions focused on human form study

Flow Art Workshops: 5–6 workshops designed to combine mindfulness and creativity

Printmaking Series: 5 workshops exploring linocut, mono-printing, and mixed techniques

Paint Party Workshops: Two fun, casual painting events that make art approachable and social

SAGE is proud to collaborate with community organizations to bring art learning to underserved populations. In FY26, SAGE will continue offering free creative opportunities through partnerships with:

Easterseals of Wyoming (serving individuals with physical and mental disabilities), Big Brothers Big Sisters (providing "Bigs and Littles" shared class experiences), Uprising, Sheridan Foster Parent Exchange

These partnerships ensure that the healing and empowering qualities of the arts are available to all corners of our community, regardless of age, ability, or background.

In addition to hands-on learning, SAGE hosts the Tributary Artist Lecture Series, held every Fall and Spring. This series features artist talks, demonstrations, and panel discussions. These events allow the public to engage with

professional artists and gain insight into their processes and perspectives. This program enhances arts appreciation and community dialogue.

SAGE anticipates offering at least 45 arts learning opportunities and reaching over 500 participants throughout FY26. By expanding youth programming, deepening adult learning tracks, and broadening partnerships, we are creating meaningful, inclusive access to the visual arts, keeping Sheridan's creative spirit vibrant and growing.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

"Making art is making connections—between the present and the past; between cultures and peoples; between the self and the world." This guiding principle from the 2022 Wyoming Fine & Performing Arts Standards (WYFPA) speaks directly to the mission of SAGE Community Arts: To Build and Inspire Community through the Visual Arts.

SAGE's Community Arts Education Program is designed not only to teach artistic technique but to nurture well-rounded artists who can engage critically with their work, present it professionally, and connect deeply with both their subject matter and audience. These goals directly align with SAGE's three pillars—See Art, Create Art, and Promote Art—and form the basis for our learning outcomes.

Through our current Strategic Plan (2025–2027), we've focused on moving the visual arts beyond the gallery and studio walls, helping artists integrate their work into real-world contexts. One of our strategic initiatives is positioning SAGE as an artist business resource, offering professional development and creative guidance to help artists grow in their practice and careers.

SAGE has traditionally assessed alignment with the WYFPA Standards by reviewing instructor-submitted lesson plans prior to classes. Beginning in FY26, we will also use feedback from our new Community Programming Survey and Post-Class Evaluations to further align class offerings with the WYFPA Standards and refine how instructors structure their classes based on learner needs and community interests.

SAGE strives to achieve the following outcomes, aligned with the WYFPA Visual Arts Standards and our mission:

Engage in critique and refine work in response to artistic vision (12.FPA.VA.C3 – See Art & Create Art)

Evaluate and apply display methods suited for specific shows or venues (12.FPA.VA.P2 – Create Art & Promote Art)

Analyze aesthetic and empathetic responses to art (12.FPA.VA.R1 – See Art & Promote Art)

Explore personal experience through observation, research, and experimentation (12.FPA.VA.CO1 – All Three Pillars)

By designing classes that reflect these outcomes, SAGE supports artistic development that extends beyond technique—helping participants grow as creators, curators, and contributors to a vibrant arts community.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Rachel Ruleaux, a SAGE Member and art instructor, graduated from Oregon College of Arts and Crafts in Portland in May 2011. She studied studio arts, art history, and humanities, concentrating on printmaking, papermaking, and book arts.

Rachael Esh created Weirdly Typical Works to publish children's books, sell paintings, and teach art/science classes. Rachael Esh is the owner. She specializes in teaching summer camp classes on writing and illustrating for 8-13 year-olds.

Arin Waddell, SAGE member, instructor, and curator, is an accomplished artist from Sheridan Co. She holds a B.A. in Fine Arts from Hamilton College, an M.A. from CA State Uni, Chico, and an M.F.A. from the Uni of TX, San Antonio. She has a passion for teaching the arts to student artists (High school and younger)

Jenny Wuerker, SAGE instructor and juror, holds a B.A. in Fine Art from Yale University and an M.F.A. from the American University. She has taught art classes at the Taft School, Smithsonian Institute, and in the Connecticut Community College system. Jenny is a key instructor for the intro-level classes and is expertly able to teach advanced/master classes.

Stephanie Zier, a SAGE member and instructor, creates jewelry out of metal clay and precious stones. She is drawn to the versatility in shape and texture of metal clay and often incorporates geological textures, fossils, and gemstones into her work. Stephanie specializes in single-day workshops that draw many community members.

Barbara Berry studied drawing and painting at the Wayne Art Center and in workshops led by esteemed artists. She teaches pastel painting in association with The Painter's Alliance, The Wayne Art Center, and the Art Center at Ambler.

Randy Stout, a watercolor artist who has lived around Sheridan all his life, has studied with many accomplished artists locally, regionally, and internationally. His iconic style of Trees and Rocks is a popular class request.

Lin Sanford works in acrylics and Flow Art media. She has shown all over Wyoming, most recently at the Nicolaysen Art Museum. Lin's talent for working with artists of any age or level makes her an invaluable instructor. Her flow art classes are also a huge draw for the self-proclaimed "non-artists" of the SAGE member base or community.

Sonja Caywood, SAGE member and instructor, joined over 20 years ago while attending SAGE art classes. With SAGE's mentorship, Sonja is now an accomplished painter, selling her work internationally. As a local favorite, Sonja's 2-3 hour "Paint and Sip" classes are hugely popular and always fill up and are requested.

Ashley Cooper, a former high school art teacher turned full-time artist, brings multiple art disciplines to SAGE. With proficiency in Printmaking, photography, mixed media, and mindful art creations, Ashley has been key in expanding SAGE's programs.

Rachel Mathews-Landis hails from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Theater from the University of Alabama with an emphasis on Costume Design for Theatre and has a minor in Studio Arts. She pursued fashion designing after high school and worked as a Fashion Coordinator for Yaohan, a Japanese department store in Kuala Lumpur.

Frank Sheehan, Ridgewood, NY; A painter; Frank's lines connect his past with his present and reflect his journey in the search for the sublime in nature. Irish-born, he has made his home in the USA and currently teaches at the New York School of Interior Design.

## **Budget Narrative**

SAGE sustains its mission through a diverse mix of public, private, and earned income sources. We proudly partner with local and state organizations, including the City of Sheridan, Wyoming Community Foundation, Wolf Creek Charitable Foundation, Scott Foundation, and the Perkins Foundation, as well as many generous individual donors and local businesses.

SAGE generates income through arts education programming, gallery art sales, membership dues, and entry fees from national juried exhibitions. These revenue streams help maintain our dynamic programming while fostering sustainability.

SAGE also benefits from in-kind support, which includes:

Volunteer service from our Board of Directors and four active committees

Help with art installation, gallery maintenance, and event support

Use of free online design platforms

Discounted printing and accounting services

Donated art supplies for beginner classes

Funding from this grant also directly supports the operations of SAGE's two galleries



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SHERIDAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[WWW.MUSEUMBIGHORNS.ORG](http://WWW.MUSEUMBIGHORNS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 3rd Thursdays History and Art Activities

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Sheridan County Historical Society doing business as the Museum at the Bighorns is a local and regional history & cultural museum located in Sheridan, Wyoming. The museum's mission is to preserve our local history and keep it accessible to the Sheridan community, tourists and visitors. Currently, the museum is in an expansion project with moving and opening to a new museum site on Sheridan's Main Street. The museum has three planned hands-on activities that combine history and art during the monthly 3rd Thursday event. The 3rd Thursday Street Festival is organized in downtown Sheridan Main Street area and is free to all community members to visit these community members can visit the Museum at the Bighorns art activity table during the months of July, August and September. This street festival offers the Museum at the Bighorns an opportunity to engage with community members since the museum is currently under an expansion project for 2025 and currently doesn't have a site for community programming. These 3rd Thursday activities will help determine if the hands-on activities combining history and art will be developed further for future programming with youth school tours and The Hub on Smith (Sheridan senior center) when the museum finishes its expansion project and opens the museum's exhibit space with yearly programming.

### Community

Our community and neighbors include youth, older adults, veterans, economically disadvantaged individuals, regional tribes, individuals with multifaceted identities & cultural backgrounds and rural communities. Since the 3rd Thursday Street Festival is organized in downtown Sheridan Main Street area and is free to all community members to visit these community members can visit the Museum at the Bighorns art activity table during the months of July, August and September. The Museum at the Bighorns staff and volunteers will host a welcoming creative atmosphere for combining a hands-on activity with history and art. Staff and volunteers will offer background information and instructions on the art supplies for each activity, while determining the current space around the table and maintaining seating and standing capacity at the site. The Museum at the Bighorns addresses accessibility with allocating enough space for wheelchair and stroller accessibility at the activity table, while being in the public street domain with sidewalks leading to the front of the building, which features ramps and Handicap-accessible parking spaces. These ramps are a short walking distance to the museum's event site for the events. The visuals that are reproductions from the museum's collections will be printed in a larger format and any accompanying text with the visuals will be printed in a larger text for low vision needs. Currently, with the museum in its expansion project we have available on our visit website page the museum's contact information, so we can accommodate the accessibility needs during our summer scheduled events.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation of the 3rd Thursday activities will include a couple of different methods. Volunteers and Museum at the Bighorns staff will keep an attendance count of participants who visit the activities table at each of the three 3rd Thursday's events. Besides a total number of participants, we will also keep an attendance number for specific demographics such as youth and the aging population. Casual conversations with the participants will include inquiring how far they traveled to attend the 3rd Thursday event. These casual conversations will help determine how many visitors are from our rural areas in Sheridan County. Volunteers and museum staff will be given guidelines before each event about how to maintain these casual conversations and report the location to the person who is maintaining the attendance sheet with their participant location information. Other conversations and observations from the activities will include how the participants engage with the activity and art supplies. This part of the evaluation will help determine if the hands-on activities combining history and art will be developed further for future programming with youth school tours and The Hub on Smith (Sheridan senior center) when the museum finishes its expansion project and opens the museum's exhibit space with yearly programming.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

This funding is for a portion of the museum director's salary and purchasing of the art supplies for these planned activities during the three events. The Museum at the Bighorn's community/ education programs are managed by the museum director, Carrie Edinger. Carrie has an arts background and multidisciplinary background with community programming. She has planned and organized these 3rd Thursday community activities and event needs such as scheduling volunteers and art supplies. Compensation for the museum director is essential as the Museum at the Bighorns is working on its expansion project for 2025. We expect growth with our community programming when the museum's new site reopens to the public.

## **Project Support Narrative**

Three free hands-on activities that combine history and art will be offered during the 3rd Thursdays Street Festivals in Downtown Sheridan. Community members will engage with local history in a multidisciplinary way. Community members will observe reproductions from the museum collections and engage in an art process during the three events. This community outreach experience will allow the Museum of the Bighorns to bring local history content within a short-term program that is part of a larger free community street festival. Carrie Edinger, the museum director organized these hands-on activities for a range of skill and age levels. Museum volunteers have a role with welcoming community members and being on hand to give a background to the history theme, art supplies and completed project.

July 17th I Love a Parade Book Historic photographs of parades on Sheridan's Main St are used for reference. Art project uses accordion style book, collage, drawing and stencil techniques for the illustrations of the book.

August 21st Paper Railroad Lanterns A Conductor's Lantern was part of train communication using various signals. Art project a three-dimensional paper lantern and practice the railroad signals.

September 18th Portraits Historic Portraits (photography, drawing and painting) are used as reference. Art project create a portrait with collage, drawing and stencil techniques. Paper frames will be available to finish the project.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

## **Budget Narrative**

The Museum at the Bighorn's community/ education programs are managed by the museum director, Carrie Edinger. She has planned and organized these 3rd Thursday community activities and event needs such as scheduling volunteers and art supplies. Compensation for the museum director is essential for the museum as we are working on its expansion project for 2025. We expect growth with our community programming when the museum's new site reopens to the public. This funding is for a portion of the museum director's salary and purchasing of the art supplies for these planned activities during the three events. The in-kind contribution of the volunteer's time during the three 3rd Thursdays contributes to a welcoming and accessible art project and aiding in evaluating the programming during each event. The Museum at the Bighorns addition income sources that cover the operating expenses and staff salaries include government grants, memberships, donations, fundraising events, and sponsorships.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SHERIDAN COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION, INC.

[HTTPS://SHERIDANCOUNTYLIBRARY.ORG/](https://sheridancountylibrary.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Fulmer Creation Room & Branch Creation Stations

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Sheridan County Public Library System (SCPLS)

Nurturing Lifelong Curiosity, Enrichment, and Community

Vision Statement: To be a vital partner in the community where all can discover, create, connect, and thrive.

Sheridan County Public Library's (SCPL) mission, vision & strategic plan was developed by the Library System Director & Board of Trustees between March & May 2024.

### 2024-2027 Strategic Plan

Below are our three-year strategic initiatives & their corresponding goals. Over the next three years, the Library staff will work on clearly defined tactics designed to achieve our goals & initiatives.

#### Community Outreach:

- o Develop & execute a community engagement & outreach plan that fulfills our mission.
- o Improve the visibility & involvement of the Library in the communities of Sheridan County.
- o Improve transparency & understanding about what the Library provides for the community.
- o Improve alignment & teamwork across stakeholder groups to increase effective community support.

#### Organizational Structure:

- o Provide & improve clarity, consistency, & alignment internally to support staff & organizational success.

- o Improve team work & communication through improved consistency, accurate information, & training.
- o Provide clear job expectations & well organized digital & physical spaces.
- o Invest time & resources in the Wyoming Room to preserve & maximize use of the collection.

#### Financial Stability

- o Develop & communicate a financial strategy that supports long term success of the Library.
- o Sustainable Library funding & spending practices.
- o Transparent financial picture of the Library.

#### Situational Awareness & Preparedness:

- o Prepare the library system to respond or adapt to challenging situations.
- o Clear, consistent, comprehensive priorities across the organization: financial, internal, external, & situational.
- o Improve teamwork & communication through improved consistency, accurate information, & training.

### **Community**

Sheridan County had a population of 31,176 in 2022, with an 8.68% poverty rate. The County population reached 32,519 by July 2023, with a 1.5% increase since 2022. Our four branches serve Sheridan, Tongue River, Clearmont, Story, unincorporated areas of the county & parts of Montana. With this continued growth in population, it is essential that we address the expanding needs of our community.

The SCPLS is a uniquely accessible resource for information, technology, meeting spaces, and events. Programs include sensory-safe Storytime with R.E.A.C.H., an art exhibit by CHAPS Equine Assisted Services, and partnering with Little Goose Enrichment for the Dia De Los Muertos Children's Festival, featuring Folklórico dance. Our creative aging programs combat loneliness among seniors & we run a food pantry with The Food Group. Homebound Services deliver visual aids, large print & talking books three days a week for visually challenged or homebound individuals. While there's no formal accommodation request process, we handle each request carefully, offering one-on-one craft sessions for children with selective mutism & distributing surveys to tailor programming. We encourage patrons to seek help from staff & staff actively offer assistance. We collaborate with sight-impaired individuals for inter-library loans, mailing items at no cost, and work with the Utah State Library Program for the Blind & Disabled to facilitate free returns.

### **Evaluation**

To evaluate and measure the impact of this project on our ability to expand our programs and services in the Sheridan County Community, we plan to use three methods. First, we will track the attendance in both active and passive programs we host. Additionally, we will distribute feedback forms for all programs to gather participants' insights and suggestions. Finally, by thoroughly tracking the increased number of partnerships with community arts organizations and artists. The collected data from all three methods will be compiled into our annual report which will be publicly available, and include the prior year statistics, as visible evidence of the effectiveness of the project and the growth it allowed us to achieve.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

NA

### **Project Support Narrative**

In 2025, the Sheridan County Public Library System received a \$1,751,550.50 AARPA grant to modernize library services & facilities, including flattening stadium-style risers in the Children's Storytime theatre to increase programming flexibility.

The library is seeking funding from the Wyoming Arts Council Community Support Grant to further improve the upgraded Storytime room, enhancing it with secure storage, art supplies, and technology for online tutorials, transforming the space into an innovative programming & DIY craft area. Additionally, scaled Creation Stations will be set up at each satellite branch to meet their specific needs.

#### **Project Objectives:**

##### **Enhance Accessibility**

Sheridan has a rich artistic heritage but few free opportunities for hands-on creation. We will increase access by providing a free space for artistic exploration & by partnering with local artists & organizations by sponsoring programs and exhibitions.

##### **Foster Artistic Expression**

The Creation Room will host programs, activities, parties, and drop-in use, equipped with art supplies like paint, crayons, and paper clay. Programs will include craft classes, unique projects, and open craft hours. A new evening craft series will feature arts & crafts classes such as cyanotype printmaking, basket weaving, and more.

##### **Integrate Technology**

The project will integrate new technologies like Sphero & Cubelets kits for hands-on experiences, linking arts & problem-solving skills. It will feature a projector for group work & tablets with headphones for individual crafts tutorials.

## Facilitate Community Engagement

The completed project, providing a modern, professional, flexible, space, will attract local artists, arts education professionals, and community organizations for partnerships. This project will also allow us to seek out a partnership with the Sheridan College Arts Department to create internships for undergraduates pursuing degrees in arts & arts education.

## Support Rural Branches

Compact Creation Stations at satellite branches will be scaled to meet the specific needs of each branch. They will feature arts & crafts supplies, along with tablets & headphones for digital tutorials. Additionally, a monthly craft program kit will provide new learning opportunities. To our knowledge, this initiative & its accompanying programming will be the first of its kind in the nation.

The project is led by a highly qualified team under Library Director Amy Long. The Community Engagement Manager holds an MFA in Studio Art. The Programming and Events Assistant, holds an MFA in Arts Education. The Children's Services Supervisor has over ten years of experience in creating inclusive, accessible programs. Key community partners already include artist Denica Shell, with a BFA in Studio Art, & Stephen Mullins, an MFA in Ceramics holder & Red Bison Clay owner.

The additional resources made available through the Wyoming Arts Council's Community Support Grant for our project will—by investing in materials, supplies, and safe, lockable storage cabinets—enhance library services, create more opportunities for the community to engage with the SCPLS, and allow us to expand & improve program offerings to better serve community needs. This project benefits not just the City of Sheridan but also the entire County and will enrich the lives of our community members by thoughtfully improving our facilities & expanding access to valuable resources and programming.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Sheridan County Public Library System for FY 24-25 is funded by Sheridan County, an Optional One Cent sales tax, and library income. Two 501(c)(3) organizations support it: the Library Foundation, handling endowments and donations, and the Friends of the Library, providing annual funds to purchase collections materials. Local donors and foundations are vital for securing matching funds for grants and provide crucial support for library upkeep. Each satellite branch receives support from either local 501(c)(3) organizations or the City Council.

Programming, a key library service, receives 1% of the budget, divided between children's and adult programming and rural branches. To maintain the successes that the Community Support Grant will allow us to achieve, we will be re-allocating donation funds from collection development to programming to more closely align our budget with the growing demand for arts education and programming.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SKYLINE SINGERS

SKYLINESINGERS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Skyline Singers Present "Made in Wyoming and Montana" Concert

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Skyline Singers was founded in 2019 as a professional chamber choir (8-12 singers) in residence at Sheridan College and was incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) Nonprofit Corporation in Wyoming in July of 2022. Skyline Singers does not have an official mission statement, but our stated goals are:

- To give public concerts of choral music—in a variety of styles and from diverse time periods over the past 500 years.
- To expand the audience for concerts of choral music by live performance.
- To provide educational instruction about choral music.
- To promote arts and artists generally in our society.

Through our performances and educational outreach, we hope to expand the audience for choral music of the past 500 years. Skyline Singers is also dedicated to facilitating first performances of new choral music. We have previously presented world premiere performances, and other Wyoming premieres of very recently-composed choral music. For our October 2025 concert, we plan to present a "Made in Wyoming" concert which features choral music composed by Wyoming composers. Since our founding, we have performed nine concerts, usually one during each academic year.

Though we are not requesting arts education funding this year, we do regularly engage in educational outreach with Sheridan College music students and with High School musicians in the Sheridan area. We typically present a convocation event the date before our concert where High School and College student musicians can observe our rehearsals, interact with the group, and ask questions of the musicians. In years past, we have also involved Sheridan College and Casper College music students directly with the concert, by having them sing selected pieces with Skyline Singers.

## **Community**

Skyline Singers serves the Northern Wyoming and Southern Montana areas. Our singers have come from Wyoming cities: Sheridan, Gillette, and Casper; and from Montana cities: Bozeman, Billings, and Big Sky. All our singers have earned professional degrees in music and other areas, and most are employed as choral and/or vocal music professionals in the K-12 or higher education systems.

We serve a large geographical area where there are few concerts of choral music presented by professional choirs. Our primary audience members are those who enjoy choral music. Our concerts typically present both sacred and secular music in a variety of languages and styles. Our most recent concert in November of 2024 was a concert performance of Henry Purcell's opera Dido and Aeneas.

Recent surveys show that our typical audience member is aged 35-55, and more than 50% of respondents had attended more than one of our concerts. The average person drove 5-20 miles to attend one of our concerts, but 25% of respondents reported driving 100 miles or more to attend.

The primary Concert Hall for our performances is Kinnison Hall at Sheridan College. To date, we have received no specific requests for accommodation because Kinnison Hall and all its facilities are ADA compliant. The ticketing system clearly indicates which seats are reserved for patrons who use wheelchairs or have service animals. For patrons who are unable to travel to our concerts, we also offer a livestream option. In addition, patrons at Kinnison Hall have access to electronic audio enhancement technology (personal hearing devices) for those with hearing disabilities. Lastly, we offer reduced ticket prices for senior citizens, veterans, and K-12 students at our concerts.

## **Evaluation**

We are tracking our concert attendance, plus our livestream and online concert video views. These figures show that our LIVE concert attendance dropped from 80 in 2019 to 29 in 2020 with COVID masking protocols in place, but that in-person attendance has since rebounded, averaging about 79.5 since 2021. Our concert at the opening of the January 2023 All State Music Event in Sheridan was attended by well over 500 people. Our livestream views have increased from about 25 to 30 each year, and views of our concerts on YouTube have increased to 345 for our most recent concert in November of 2024, when we also had 91 in-person audience members. Beginning with our Fall 2023 concerts, we solicited satisfaction/impact feedback data from our audiences to help evaluate our services. We gather this data with an online survey, and we direct audience members to the survey by the use of a unique QR code in our concert programs, and we also email the survey link directly to those patrons who have purchased tickets to our concerts.

Skyline Singers recently surveyed the singers who have performed with the group to gauge their satisfaction with the ensemble, and to invite feedback about processes, procedures, and future projects. Survey responses showed

that 80% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied. 55% found their experience to be very valuable, and 44% found it valuable. In terms of wants, 60% of singers requested travel stipends (currently not paid) and 70% expressed an interest in rehearsing more often. (We typically rehearse one time about 6-8 weeks before the concert, then spend one day before the concert making final adjustments.)

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Skyline Singers plan to present our next concert on October 25, 2025. The concert theme will be “Made in Wyoming and Montana,” and the concert will feature choral music written by Wyoming and Montana composers. Some of the choral works performed will be from the existing repertoire, but we are also planning to present world premiere performances of at least three new choral pieces by Wyoming and Montana composers on this concert.

Should we receive grant funding for project support, we would use these funds to help contract and pay the 10 singers for this concert, and to assist with lodging costs, as some of the composers would like to travel to Sheridan to be present for performances of their works. Skyline Singers has already secured other funding to cover commissioning fees for two of the new choral pieces, so no grant funding will be used for commissioning expenses. As we will be redirecting some of our other cash funds toward commissioning expenses, we would use all grant funding to assure that we can pay our singers at our normal rate for this concert and provide lodging for all singers and composers who will be traveling to Sheridan for the concert.

For the October 25, 2025 concert, we plan to commission new choral works from Wyoming composers Dr. Eric Richards, who received his Doctorate in Composition from the University of Maryland, and Dr. Christian Erickson, who received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Colorado—Boulder. We also plan to perform choral works by Dr. Anne Guzzo, Professor of Composition and Music Theory at the University of Wyoming and founder of the Wyoming Festival of Contemporary Music, and a work by Montana Composer Athena Carson, who is currently a Doctoral student in Music at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I am working to include some choral works by Paul Jernberg, who teaches at Wyoming Catholic College, and we are in the process of finalizing arrangements to include works by Montana Composer Maren Haynes Marchesini, who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Washington. The list of choral works by Wyoming and Montana Composers will certainly grow between the time of the grant application deadline and the concert.

Singers for this concert will include:

Elise Dye (Billings, MT)

Michelle Forster (Sheridan, WY)

Erin Henke (Bozeman, MT)

Logan Henke (Bozeman, MT)

Leah Hoblit (Casper, WY)

Anne Kania (Billings, MT)

Robert Psurny (Sheridan, WY)

Zachary Vreeman (Casper, WY)

Daren Small (Billings, MT)

John Zirkle (Big Sky, MT)

Support funds would be allocated to supplement the pay for each of these singers to a flat Performance Fee of \$700 for the dress rehearsals and concert, and to help pay for two nights' lodging in Sheridan for those singers and composers coming from out of town. (Housing costs for our 2024 concert were \$1700, and I believe these costs will be closer to \$2500 for 2025, as we have more singers coming in from Montana this year plus composers who will want to attend performances of their choral pieces). It should be noted that several of the musicians for this concert will drive more than 600 miles for rehearsals and performance, so we attempt to keep the performance fee high enough to cover some of the travel costs, since we are not able to reimburse all travel expenses, pay mileage, or per diem fees.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Skyline Singers receives most of its budgetary funding from partnerships and from individual charitable donations. Our primary partnership is with Sheridan College, which makes an annual donation to Skyline Singers, provides concert publicity, and allows use of Kinnison Hall. In return, Skyline Singers provides a concert for the Sheridan Community, educational outreach to Sheridan College music students, box office receipts, and other value-added benefits to the College, such as the prestige of having a professional choir in residence. Skyline Singers became a 501 (c)(3) Nonprofit in 2022, so we will be soliciting more individual charitable gifts and grant funding. More than 95% of our total annual budget goes toward paying singer stipends for performance, and lodging. In a typical year, we receive approximately \$6000 from Sheridan College, and \$1000 from individual donations.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

STAGE III INC

WWW.STAGEIIITHEATRE.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Stage III 2025-2026 Season

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Stage III Community Theatre's mission is to provide quality theater performances and educational programming for Casper and the surrounding communities. We strive to participate in meaningful ways in community activities across Natrona County. We embrace cultural and educational values and strive to cultivate a professional, accessible, and inclusive environment for our volunteers and our audiences. Our primary goal is to be known as a nonprofit organization that is supported by our community. We endeavor to provide quality live performances to our audiences and enhance opportunities for community members to experience live theater through volunteering both on and off stage. We strive to keep live theater affordable by maintaining affordable prices while not sacrificing high standards of production.

### Community

Stage III Theatre is located in Casper, Wyoming, a town in central Wyoming with a population of 60,000. Casper is home to a vibrant arts and cultural community, and its central location makes it a popular choice for statewide events and tourists. To meet the needs of Casper volunteers and audiences, Stage III conducts surveys, has a diverse board, and utilizes membership input.

Volunteers of all ages, backgrounds, and experience levels work together to create quality theater productions for the community. We work with local nonprofits to put on performances to raise money for other nonprofit organizations. For example, this past season, we donated ticket sale revenue for one performance to Project Kenny, a 501c3 that connects service dogs with veterans, and played to an audience of patrons with service animals. Our productions are affordable, with discounted rates for seniors and students, and we also invite groups from assisted living facilities to attend our shows. Our theater is easily accessible for wheelchair users, with no steps between the parking lot, lobby, restrooms, and theater. In 2023, we purchased black box seating which increased the number of wheelchair-accessible seats, ensuring that patrons in wheelchairs are no longer limited to one side of the theater. We have also invested in assistive hearing technology to increase accessibility for people with hearing loss. For any other accommodations, patrons can contact our General Manager, the box office, or request assistance when purchasing tickets online in the notes section. State III also provides reasonable accommodations for volunteers to fully participate. Examples include large print scripts, extra on-stage support, food adjustments for allergies, modified schedules, and gender-neutral bathrooms.

## **Evaluation**

We evaluate our impact through surveys for each show that are completed by the cast, the crew, and the board members. Analysis of our ticket sales demonstrates that matinee shows are favored by senior patrons and those in assisted living facilities, so in the 2024-2025 season we added an additional matinee the first weekend of each production. Ticket sales have also demonstrated that our patrons prefer musicals and comedies, so we have cut back on the number of dramas we produce. We will continue to analyze ticket sales to improve our community connection. Based on responses to cast, crew, and board members surveys, we provide feedback to directors to hone their skills and provide cast and crew members with a more satisfying experience. Our board of directors reviews our 5-year plan annually to ensure we are making progress on our long-term goals and to make sure that those goals are still in line with community needs. Volunteers and season ticket holders are invited to vote on the season's best work, and favorites are honored during our annual Star Night Volunteer Appreciation celebration.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Our total operating costs include many things like Contract Services (bookkeeper and accountant), Facilities and Equipment (printer rental), Postage (mailers), office supplies, insurance, fundraising expenses, utilities, employee compensation, repairs and maintenance, membership dues(AACT), sales tax, banking fees, and property tax. Our total operating costs come to approximately \$65,000 per year.

We are requesting \$4,000 to apply towards our facility operating costs, to offset some of the expenses such as our utilities, supplies, and basic maintenance (\$1,000 per quarter).

## **Project Support Narrative**

Costs directly related to our projects for the 25-26 season productions include royalties and scripts, sets, props, costumes, printing, and transaction fees. Production costs this season are approximately \$19,400. The 25-26 season will open with the musical "The Musical of Musicals: the Musical" by Eric Rockwell and Joanne Bogart. It is a clever, satirical musical that parodies the signature styles of five legendary musical theater composers: Rodgers & Hammerstein Stephen Sondheim, Jerry Herman, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and Kander & Ebb.

Next will be "Rumors" by Neil Simon, a farce that centers on a missing dinner party host and the wild rumors that circulate among the arriving guests.

Our Christmas show will be "Every Christmas Story Ever Told and Then Some" by Michael Carleton, James Fitzgerald, and John K. Alvarez, a mash up of traditional Christmas stories, worldwide traditions, and pop culture icons.

2026 will present "Silent Sky" by Lauren Gunderson, the historical story of Henrietta Leavitt and a team of female astronomers who charted stars in the early 1900s.

"Pouf!" by Lou Clyde is a comedy about a 1950s housewife who opens a beauty salon in her living room in defiance of her husband, who will not let her get a job.

Closing out the season will be "A Few Good Men," Aaron Sorkin's classic play about the violent culture of the US marines.

Volunteer directors will include Kris Kontour, who has performed, directed and designed sets, lighting and sound across Casper and for professional companies across the country. Kris will oversee many of the design aspects of the season and will take the lead on training volunteers in multiple aspects of theater; current members of the board Rocky Hopson and William Wallace; and long-time volunteers Marty Scott and Dob Wallace.

We are requesting \$6,000 to support production costs such as royalties, scripts, props, costumes, set construction, etc. (\$1,000 per show).

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

We are planning to continue to offer free workshops similar to those we have offered in the past and also expand into classes, camps, and workshops throughout the year, offering schedules and prices that accommodate the needs of Casper, increase involvement, and educate the community in different facets of the theatre arts. These programs may include workshops in stage management, improvisation, directing, clowning, makeup, and other specialty skills as well as acting instruction and Shakespeare for both kids and adults.

For example, kids will participate in a summer camp where they learn about Shakespeare through writing and performing an original Shakespeare Murder Mystery.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Patrons have approached board members with requests for improvisation workshops and classes for kids. Based on these communications, the board feels that the community is asking for more education opportunities at Stage III. Our goals for these programs are to engage community members of all ages to explore theatre and expand their comfort level and skills in theatre arts. Additionally, we would like to expand the skills of our volunteer base to better the quality of productions and increase community support and enjoyment.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Three of our board members are educators and will be heading up coordination and instruction. Michelle Hancock has an MA in education and has been teaching theatre arts for over twenty years to ages four through adult. She was the director of the Southeastern Teen Shakespeare Company in Florida for ten years and has served as education director of Pensacola Little Theatre.

Rocky Hopson has 25 years of experience in theatre and has taught classes at Texas State University, Midwestern State University, and Tarrant County College. Beyond teaching, he has also worked as a producer and a dramaturge. He holds an MFA in directing and has directed internationally.

Deb Nelson has 42 years of experience in theatre and is a certified special education teacher who has been teaching in Casper for ten years.

Kris Kontour has been a technical director for fifteen years and regularly teaches volunteers all aspects of technical theatre.

Other teachers may be hired when needed.

### **Budget Narrative**

Our revenue comes from: ticket sales 45%, fundraisers/special events 8%, grants 11%, individual donations 17%, season tickets 10%, program ads 2%, show sponsors 2%, and concessions 5%. Our volunteers supply hours of in-kind support through labor, on and off stage as well by donating costumes, personal items, and food. Another funding source is our themed escape rooms which enhance the live theater experience for our community. We have a solid patron base and are expanding with every show. We provide a safe place for a variety of community members to connect with live theater. Our board ensures we are good stewards of the funds we receive and stay focused on improving the live theater experience of our volunteers and our patrons.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

STUDIO THEATRE AT CCPA

[WWW.STUDIOTHEATRECCPA.ORG](http://WWW.STUDIOTHEATRECCPA.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Free Performing Arts Education for Youth and Adults

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

Studio Theatre at CCPA ignites creativity and self-expression for individuals of all ages and abilities by providing affordable, high-quality performing arts classes and experiences in a positive and welcoming environment. We believe everyone deserves access to the transformative power of the arts, and we strive to make our programs fun, exciting, and enriching for all. Through a variety of learning experiences, we empower individuals to build self-confidence, explore their talents and discover a lifelong love for the arts.

#### Goal 1) Expand Accessibility and Affordability

We will achieve 100% capacity for our programs and reach underserved communities and individuals facing financial barriers. We will develop scholarship and financial aid programs and partner with local organizations serving all populations.

#### Goal 2) Enhance Program Quality and Variety

We will develop and implement a curriculum that caters to an array of abilities and interests while maintaining high artistic standards. We will provide innovative workshops and classes in various performance disciplines and partner with professional artists and educators.

#### Goal 3) Cultivate a Welcoming and Supportive Atmosphere

Studio Theatre will create clear guidelines and procedures for staff and participants for respectful conduct and communication. We will celebrate the unique talents and perspectives of all participants.

#### Goal 4) Foster an Environment of Fun

We will continue to adapt our programming based on instructor feedback and participant surveys. We know kids learn best when they're enjoying themselves, and this helps us with retention in our programs from year to year. Student retention is a key factor of our mission to spread a lifelong love of the arts.

## **Community**

Studio Theatre at CCPA serves Park County by offering the widest variety of performing arts education programming in the region. We do this at low or, in most cases, no cost to the participant. Historically, we have offered music, clowning, dance, creative play and theatre arts classes. Over the past ten years, enrollment in our after-school and summer classes has continued to thrive. We consistently enroll youth with special needs and learning disabilities, and our certified special needs advisor to the Board works with us to continue to provide enriching opportunities for all of our students ages 6-18. Our theatre programming takes place at Cody Center for the Performing Arts (CCPA). This facility is on one floor with flexible seating in an intimate 65-seat space. CCPA has ADA parking access and accessible restrooms. We are committed to making our art education programs accessible to every young person. Over the years, we've successfully accommodated all parent requests and believe that every child benefits from the enriching experiences we provide.

Over the past year, Studio Theatre has approached several agencies to invite and engage under-served communities including our local CASA branch, the Department of Family Services, Cody Partners (a local non-profit that supports adults with disabilities in Park County, through work, recreation, and community) and the Language Arts Department of the Cody Middle School to promote programming. Studio Theatre advertises our classes and programs widely via social media, print media and through direct marketing strategies, noting that our programs are supported in part by the Wyoming Arts Council and our generous donors. This contributes to our enrollment success and allows for anyone with an interest to enroll.

## **Evaluation**

Parent and student evaluations are sent out after each of our programs conclude. Past survey results have been positive. In 2024-2025, Parents indicated that their children enjoyed their camps or classes (100% Agree or Strongly Agree), that the camps and classes built confidence and inspired creation (97% Agree or Strongly Agree). Parents also said that they would recommend our programs to other parents (82 % Strongly Agree). Finally, 46% of parents who responded to surveys indicated that they would not be able to afford the programming if it were not offered free of charge.

Retention is also a big part of our evaluation process. This year, our retention from our fall session to our spring session was 60% with most other slots being filled by students who have participated in a different class or program in the past (a summer camp, for example). In our current after-school program, only one student is new to Studio Theatre. This is encouraging and is an indication that we could expand our programming in the future to include even more youth.

Our enrollment goal for the 2025 -2026 grant cycle is 100% capacity (20 students/session). In fact, our summer 2025 programming "sold out" the first week of the enrollment period.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

Studio Theatre at CCPA begins the grant cycle by offering a free, 3-day camp in July. Students enrolled in IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME will learn and participate in various aspects of Greek culture including theatre, mythology, history and physical activity. In August, campers will take center stage in a week-long BROADWAY BOUND camp. Here, students will engage in several theatre arts including, acting, design and stagecraft. They will then perform on a big stage (CHS Auditorium) for the community. These classes are at capacity with waiting lists.

In 2024, Studio Theatre offered a 6-week after-school program: DABBLING IN DRAMA. This is an intro course to theatre arts that includes games and activities designed to spark imagination, build confidence and ultimately get students comfortable in front of an audience. Basic set design, makeup, costuming and stage combat are also taught. There were a total of 23 students enrolled last fall for this weekly, 75-minute class. We will offer this class in Fall 2025.

In Spring, our 9-week DRAMA & PERFORMANCE class further develops skills in acting, expression and design. This session culminates in a final staged production of an original play, created in part by the participants. This year's play CANDY KINGDOM CATASTROPHE will be presented to a small audience of parents and friends on April 11 at Cody Center for the Performing Arts (CCPA) with an ice cream social following the performance. Again, this model will be used in Spring 2026.

In February 2025, Studio Theatre hosted two free playwriting workshops for youth on a non-school day. Each age-appropriate session was three hours and included storytelling and imagination games, basic playwriting instruction and sharing of ideas and compositions. This is just one example of the many types of workshops that Studio Theatre hosts. Stop motion animation classes, clowning, Play-in-a-Day programs and vocal master classes have all been offered in the past. We will host one of these types of programs on President's Day in 2026.

In June we will offer a Play-in-a-Day (PIAD) program and a week-long Performing Arts Camp (PAC). PIAD is a six hour workshop in which students audition, rehearse, design and ultimately perform a play by the end of the camp day. In PAC, students help to write an original script and then work through the week toward a performance. Family and friends attend the final performances of both of these camps in CCPA's Studio Theatre space which holds 65 audience members. This June, we will celebrate our 10th annual PAC.

Overseeing the education programs is Bethany Sandvik, director of Studio Theatre. Sandvik has a BA in Theatre and an MS in Arts Admin. She has been a professional theatre artist for over 25 years. She was the CHS Drama Coach for 9 years, and has served on the board of the Wyoming Educators for Secondary Theatre. Angie McKenzie, Director of CCPA will assist with programming. She has been CCPA's Director for 20 years and has taught dance to over 2,000 Wyoming youth. Qualified contracted personnel will round out the staff and serve as class assistants.

Studio Theatre at CCPA is the resident theatre company of Cody Center for the Performing Arts. However, our organizations are independent of each other. CCPA contributes some admin services in-kind. However, we pay to use the space for our programming. We request support that will help to pay rent, class and performance supplies, marketing efforts, and contracted staff.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Currently, Studio Theatre at CCPA and Cody Center for the Performing Arts are co-hosting a new dance program for adults with disabilities called DANCE STARS. DANCE STARS is designed specifically for adults with special needs and provides a safe and fun environment to try new things and to connect with other special needs adults.

Students in this class dance to a variety of genres including pop, classical, rock and hip hop. They learn different styles of dance with these genres and add to the skills each week to improve coordination, memory and to help build self-esteem. As they progress, students will learn combinations, work across the floor, use props and have mobility obstacle courses. No prior dance experience is necessary to participate in this class.

Dance has numerous mental and emotional benefits that go far beyond physical movement. Learning choreography improves memory, focus, and problem-solving skills. Dance encourages self-expression and imaginative thinking, and choreographed movement helps individuals become more aware of their bodies and how they function. Practicing routines requires concentration, patience, and perseverance and mastering new skills, and performing in front of others fosters self-assurance. Dance helps people process feelings in a healthy way, and dancing with others creates a sense of community. The act of dancing itself can be uplifting, bringing happiness and a sense of accomplishment

DANCE STARS has just begun at Cody Center for the Performing Arts and has enrolled 10 students. We would like to continue this partnership next year and will work toward two 8 - week sessions (Fall and Spring). We hope to increase attendance by 50% in the Fall and by 100% in Spring 2026 through targeted marketing initiatives, more strategic partnerships and word of mouth. Both sessions will offer the opportunity for a public performance, either through CCPA's Christmas and Spring recitals or through a different community event sponsored by Studio Theatre at CCPA.

Cody Center for the Performing Arts has been offering dance instruction to youth and adults for 41 years. At CCPA, students of any ability have always been able to participate and learn in a safe, welcoming and structured

environment. CCPA is partnering with Studio Theatre to offer this specific program after watching many of our former dancers, now adults look for opportunities within our community that did not exist.

Working with this group of people helps our organizations better connect with our community and helps us bring performing arts to an underserved population. Our primary objective is that this project will create wider opportunities for individuals with special needs and foster greater understanding within the broader community.

DANCE STARS is free to all participants. For this year's pilot program, instructors Angie McKenzie and Emma Foley are volunteering their time. We would like funds to help compensate them for their instruction. Funds will also support marketing efforts and help pay for class and performance supplies.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The DANCE STARS program was created with the following goals in mind. As we progress with our pilot program, we may modify these goals based on participant/caregiver feedback and instructor experiences.

#### **Goal 1: Enhance Physical Abilities & Coordination for our Students**

Students will develop muscle memory, coordination, and flexibility through progressive exercises. This improves fundamental motor skills like jumping, turning, and spatial awareness. Instructors will track progress weekly to build strength and confidence in movement in our dancers.

#### **Goal 2: Build Confidence & Leadership Through Dance**

Our instructors will encourage their students to engage in choreography, teamwork, and dancing with peers. This helps to empower them to take leadership roles in class and feel confident performing on stage. This class fosters self-expression and personal growth through creative movement.

#### **Goal 3: Promote Awareness in the Dance Community**

Studio Theatre and Cody Center will continue to nurture a welcoming and accepting space, sharing our insights with the wider dance community and emphasizing the mental and emotional rewards of dance beyond physical movement. By partnering with regional and local dance groups, we aim to encourage collaboration and build a stronger community for dancers with special needs. We will also celebrate these dancers in our recitals and performances, allowing all Cody Center dancers to witness the benefits of dance for everyone and participate in a supportive environment

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Angie McKenzie leads this class. Angie began taking dance class at five years old at LaDonna's School of Dance in Glendive, MT. Eventually becoming an assistant in classes she knew she wanted to become a dance teacher and share her love of the art with others. In 2001, she moved to Wyoming and began her teaching career at Cody Center for the Performing Arts (CCPA). Under the mentorship of Cindy Aune and through continued education with dance professionals at workshops, classes, and conventions, Angie solidified her passion for teaching. When the opportunity arose to take ownership of CCPA, she eagerly embraced it. In 2004, she became the owner and director, and she has been dedicated to sharing her love of the arts ever since.

Teaching students of all ages and abilities has always been a priority for Angie, as she firmly believes that dance is a powerful tool for self-expression, confidence-building, and cognitive and physical development. In 2015, she expanded CCPA by collaborating with Bethany Sandvik establishing Studio Theatre at CCPA, creating a dedicated space for theatre arts in the community. Her commitment to expanding arts opportunities didn't stop there— in 2021, she purchased Heart Mountain Gymnastics and founded Cody Center for Gymnastics, further broadening the center's offerings.

Angie's vision is to provide a safe, accepting, and inspiring environment for arts education in as many forms as possible. This year, inspired by her close friend and former student, Emma Foley—an adult with special needs—she launched a dance class specifically for adults with special needs. Angie has worked as a respite care provider for many years and has experience as a special education paraprofessional substitute in the school district. Over the years, she has taught numerous students with special needs and has built deep, meaningful connections within this community.

Empowering individuals to become the best versions of themselves and guiding them toward success in their passions is one of Angie's greatest aspirations.

Angie will be assisted by Emma Foley, a former dancer at CCPA who began her dance training at the age of five. Emma was born with biliary atresia and a form of autism; she received a life-saving liver transplant at just seven months old. Emma's determination, strength, positive spirit and love for movement led her to flourish in ballet, jazz, hip hop, modern, and contemporary dance. Dance also led her to participate with the High School Cheer Team and she was named Spirit Sister. Over the years, Emma developed not only as a performer but also as a dedicated member of the CCPA community. Now an employee at CCPA, she plays a vital role in administrative tasks, assists in younger classes from time to time, and has become a master at curating music playlists for dance instruction. She has been training under Angie McKenzie to teach DANCE STARS, a program designed for dancers with special needs, with the goal of independently leading classes and expanding opportunities for inclusivity in dance education. Emma's vision is to make dance an accessible and empowering experience for all. Beyond dance, Emma enjoys special olympics, the outdoors, cooking, and spending time with family and friends.

## **Budget Narrative**

Studio Theatre at CCPA generates funds from grants, individual donations and, to a smaller degree, ticket sales. Registration fees are now being waived as much as possible, so we no longer include them as a revenue source. Over the years, we have been awarded grants from the Shoshone Rec. District, the WY Humanities Council, and the WY Arts Council among others. Studio Theatre's Director has had a long career in Development and actively seeks out additional sources of funding for specific projects. Volunteer hours and administrative costs make up most of our in-kind support from Cody Center for the Performing Arts. We also receive physical donations such as costumes, props and building materials from the community.

In 2024-25 grants accounted for 54% of our annual income. Contributed income was 40% with ticket and registration income at 14%.

Our 2025 summer programs are already full. Because our programming is free, grants and contributed income are essential for our organization.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SUBLETTE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WWW.MMMUSEUM.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: History Through Art - Mountain Men and Plains Indians

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Museum of the Mountain Man is to preserve and interpret the history of the Rocky Mountain fur trade era. It is dedicated to telling the real story of the traders, trappers and natives that were part of the Rocky Mountain fur trade during the rendezvous era of the 1820s and 1830s.

The Museum of the Mountain Man's strategic plan is called the Bicentennial Expansion Plan (revised February 2024). The Bicentennial Expansion Plan is a five-year strategic plan to advance collections stewardship and access by (1) updating the existing exhibits to be more immersive and interactive, (2) documenting the recently acquired Bad Hand Plains Indian Collection to tell a more complete story of the Mountain Man including the native perspective and creating exhibits to showcase the collection, (3) improving collection care (proper storage, climate control, security, etc.), and (4) expanding the museum facilities and offerings.

### Community

The community served by the museum includes its 10,000 visitors annually, the 700 to 800 school children who participate in Living History Days, 1,000 to 1,500 Rocky Mountain Fur Trade Journal subscribers, and the 650 American Mountain Men members who coordinate closely with the museum on a variety of initiatives. The Museum engages with underserved communities through the Living History Days, which reaches 700 to 800 rural and economically disadvantaged youth each year. In addition, the museum regularly partners with diverse cultural groups, including native Plains Indians, for programs and activities, specifically targeting Plains Indian youth to deepen their connection to their culture and heritage. The Museum accommodates any requests for disabilities or other special needs; they provide wheelchairs and walkers, they have an elevator, and outside venues are accessible. Online videos have closed captioning. Each year during Living History Days we send two mountain men to The Learning Center to give hands on demonstrations to pre-school children with learning disabilities that can not attend the programs at the Museum.

### Evaluation



The Museum of the Mountain Man evaluates and measures the impact of its programs and services in the community through a combination of strategic planning, formal assessment programs, data collection, and engagement with key audiences.

Museum Assessment Program (MAP) and Collections Assessment Program (CAP): Conducted in 2020 and 2022 through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), these assessments have helped the museum benchmark operations, identify areas for improvement, and plan strategically for future growth.

Visitor and Stakeholder Feedback: The museum involved visitors, local educators, historians, American Mountain Men members, and supporters in shaping the Bicentennial Expansion Plan, ensuring community needs and interests are directly addressed.

Programming Evaluation: Signature programs like Living History Days and Green River Rendezvous are assessed informally through participation numbers and feedback. For example, Living History Days in 2024 brought in 721 schoolchildren and 111 adults, demonstrating strong regional educational impact.

Visitation and Demographic Tracking: MMM tracks detailed visitor data. The museum currently hosts over 10,000 annual visitors from all 50 U.S. states and 30+ countries. This data helps evaluate program reach and cultural tourism impact.

Economic Impact: The University of Wyoming completed The Economic Impact of the Museum of the Mountain Man and Expansion Alternatives report in March 2023. The study shows that the direct and indirect economic impacts of the museum under its current operations is \$964,005 annually and supports 8.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Background: Art collector Tim Peterson helped the Museum of the Mountain Man (MMM) develop a contemporary art exhibit called "One With the Land," featuring 72 pieces of original artwork from 38 contemporary artists that celebrate the historic mountain men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade. The artwork is valued at \$1,000,000 for insurance purposes and is all on loan from the Peterson Family Collection. The exhibit has been on display at the Museum since May 1, 2024 and will be kept on display until November 1, 2025. It is the largest exhibit of contemporary mountain man art on display in the county. The collection was featured during the

Green River Rendezvous in July 2024 and during the National Fur Trade Symposium in September 2024.  
<https://museumofthemountainman.com/one-with-the-land/>

The exhibit was curated and developed by Tim Peterson (all volunteer) and MMM Curator Andrea Lewis. As this represented a significant step up in quality and significance for the MMM, numerous changes were necessary to accommodate the collection. In total, \$13,751 in upgrades were made to facilities, including refinishing the lower gallery walls (\$5,580), installing a wire hanging system for art (\$3,423), upgrading exhibit lighting for art (\$3,513), and upgrading the security camera system so all artwork can be continuously monitored (\$1,226). These are permanent capital improvements that will benefit MMM and enable similar exhibits going forward. In addition, MMM paid \$9,679 to ship the artwork from Boston with a fine arts shipper, and additional insurance for the collection for one year cost \$1,088.

The exhibit was viewed by approximately 10,000 visitors in 2024 and received widespread praise. The quality of the exhibit was rated 'extremely high' by 84% and 'high' by 14% of the written comments from visitors. It was advertised in Western Art Collector and Muzzle Loader magazine in the spring of 2024.

Proposal: The current exhibit will be on display until November 1, 2025. During the winter of 2025-2026 while MMM is closed, the "One With the Land exhibit" will be taken down and shipped back to Boston using US Art, a fine arts shipper. At the same time, a new exhibit will be developed and curated with the help of Tim Peterson, featuring artwork focused on the Plains Indians of the 1800s with an emphasis on interactions between the natives and mountain men. The exhibit has not been named yet but will be placed in the same gallery encompassing about the same number of paintings and featured artists. It will be on display from May 1, 2026 through at least November 1, 2026, but will likely be two years.

Costs to swap out exhibits include return shipping to Needham, MA of the "One with the Land" artwork budgeted at \$10,000; Shipping of the Plains Indian artwork from Needham, MA to Pinedale, WY budgeted at \$10,000; Insurance for 2025 budgeted at \$1,100; and advertising budgeted at \$4,500. This does not include the hundreds of hours that will be donated by Tim Peterson, nor the hundreds of hours of staff time to develop, install and interpret the new exhibit. We are requesting \$10,000 in support from the Wyoming Arts Council to cover half of the shipping costs. The remaining expenses will be paid by MMM and donors.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Arts Learning Programs: From experience with the “One with the Land” exhibit, there is clear interest in how art can help tell history, especially the Rendezvous Era of the 1820s and 1830s. At the time there were no cameras and only one artist, Alfred Jacob Miller, attended a rendezvous. His art is the only visual window into that rich part of history. While journals and records from the time tell the story, it takes modern artists to create images of the events and culture of the time. This has been going on since the era ended. In 2025, MMM will use the existing exhibit and the coming Plains Indian exhibit to show how modern artists have helped bring that era alive. This is done in partnership with modern reenactors like the American Mountain Men (AMM), who intensely study the era and try to recreate the lifestyle. Artists commonly use them as models.

In July 2025, at the Green River Rendezvous, MMM will bring together AMM members and modern artists to discuss how their partnership can be used to create historically accurate images that not only correct misconceptions but also tell visually compelling stories that are now only told in words. Details of the program are still being finalized, but will include experienced historical artists Dave Wright, Tim Tanner, Polly Capps Paule, and hopefully others whose artwork is on display at the Museum, along with experienced models from AMM, including Doc Ivory, Richard Ashburn, Moki Hipol, and a couple of dozen others.

Looking forward to the Plains Indian art exhibit, we hope to also bring together historian and living history reenactor Michael Bad Hand with a few of the hundreds of artists that he has modeled for over the past 40 years. Bad Hand has helped redefine the historical accuracy of 1800s Plains Indian art through his modeling. MMM is currently purchasing the Bad Hand material culture collection, which represents 15 Plains Indian tribes, to develop an expansion of MMM. The MMM collection also has over 1,300 original prints taken and developed by artist James Bama of Michael Bad Hand that were used to produce some of his most famous artwork. We will also include the Bird In Ground brothers from the Crow Nation who are experienced models and will model during Bad Hand programs.

The programs will all be professionally recorded and posted on the museum website to reach a broader audience and create a lasting legacy.

Expenses for programs, including art programs at Green River Rendezvous will include AMM stipend and travel fees (\$10,000), Bad Hand program fees (\$10,000), up to 5 artist stipend, travel and lodging fees (\$5,000), and at least four Bird In Ground brothers stipend and lodging (\$2,750).

We are asking the Wyoming Arts Council for \$5,000 in support of the art programs at Green River Rendezvous.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Develop Historical Interpretation Through Visual Art

Learners will understand how contemporary artists interpret and represent historical events, figures, and cultures—particularly the Rocky Mountain fur trade and Plains Indian history—through artistic mediums.

#### Analyze the Role of Art in Historical Memory

Learners will explore how modern artwork can fill visual gaps in history (such as the pre-photography Rendezvous era) and influence public understanding and memory of past events.

#### Recognize Artistic Collaboration with Living Historians

Learners will examine how artists partner with reenactors (e.g., American Mountain Men, Michael Bad Hand, Bird In Ground brothers) to enhance historical accuracy and authenticity in artistic depictions.

#### Compare Artistic Styles and Storytelling Techniques

Learners will evaluate various artistic approaches and techniques used by contemporary artists to depict complex cultural interactions between mountain men and Plains Indians.

#### Foster Cross-Disciplinary Creativity

Learners will engage in activities that connect art, history, and cultural studies—seeing how these disciplines inform one another through visual storytelling and reenactment.

#### Promote Inclusive Narratives Through Art

Learners will identify how diverse voices, especially Indigenous perspectives, are represented and honored through contemporary artwork, shifting traditional historical narratives.

#### Encourage Reflective and Critical Engagement with Art

Learners will build visual literacy by interpreting symbolism, composition, and cultural references in artworks, and consider how artists express meaning, identity, and historical nuance.

#### Engage in Legacy Building Through Documentation

Learners will understand the importance of preserving and recording artist and reenactor collaborations to create enduring educational resources accessible beyond museum walls.

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Michael Bad Hand is a Plains Indian historian, lecturer, replica maker, and living history participant. He will participate in the arts learning project and a live model for artists. He brings 40 years of research and living history and has become a leading expert on Plains Indian lifestyle and culture, specializing in distinctions between dozens of tribes and the evolution of culture within each tribe. He is dedicated to dispelling misconceptions, stereotypes, and historical inaccuracies of native American culture through lectures, presentations and publications. He was selected because he has been doing art modeling for 30+ years and has helped to revolutionize the historical accuracy of modern Plains Indian art industry through modeling, setting up scenes and providing materials for more than 100 of the top contemporary artists. It is hard to find any issue of a major western art magazine that does not feature Bad Hand influence.<http://www.warriorsplus.com/>

Dave Wright (<https://davidwrightart.com/>) is a premier artist of the American frontier, he is professionally trained as a artist, studied in Europe, and his paintings have been featured in television documentaries and as covers for numerous books and magazines. He was commissioned to do a major painting for Cumberland Gap National Historical Park entitled "Gateway to the West - Daniel Boone Leading the Settlers Through the Cumberland Gap, 1775". Mr. Wright was chosen to participate in the Arts Learning Program due to his talent and his most passionate subject: the American frontier.

Other artists include Tim Tanner and Polly Capps Paule, among others.

## **Budget Narrative**

Operation income comes from Sublette County (40-50%) and earned income and fundraisers (50-60%). The museum has an endowment. The museum holds 6 months of operation expenses in reserve, capital reserve for maintenance and upgrades, as well as smaller reserves set aside for the Homestead, Human Resources, and Special Projects. The museum holds zero debt and has a fiscally strong track record.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SUBLETTE COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION

SUBLETTECOUNTYLIBRARY.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Arts Programming for the Sublette County Libraries

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Sublette County Library is to provide the community, through its collections and inviting spaces, the opportunity to access information, engage with culture, and experience lifelong learning. We value the arts and integrate them into our programming, offering opportunities for all ages to engage in creative expression.

The strategic goals of the Sublette County Library are to provide equitable services, encourage curiosity, support learning, build community through partnerships, connect people with life-changing stories, and foster civic engagement with diverse viewpoints. We are committed to ensuring all community members have access to artistic experiences that enhance their lives and to learn new skills.

Our partnerships play a vital role in bringing arts and culture to life, strengthening community connections. For instance, we collaborate with the Pinedale Fine Arts Council to host Folk for Kids concerts and with organizations like the United States Forest Service and Tip-Top Search and Rescue to offer educational programs that engage youth through art, storytelling, and hands-on activities. Last summer, we partnered with Brittany Williams to host a Zumba for kids program, where children learned new dance moves and stayed active. This summer, we are excited to have local painter Mariah Nystrom to the library to teach our teens acrylic painting techniques.

Additionally, we will partner with Stained Glass Sundays for a storytime, featuring local artist Hayley Ruland, who will showcase her art and teach children about the stained glass creation process. These collaborations help provide creative and educational experiences that bring art to the library, fostering a strong sense of community and shared learning.

Through these partnerships, we continue to offer unique artistic opportunities for all ages, bringing people together and building connections that strengthen Sublette County's cultural fabric.

## **Community**

Sublette County has a population of 8,969, with 25.7% under age 18 and 24.5% aged 65 or older. The median household income is \$82,791, and the poverty rate is 7.6%. While 88% of residents are White, there are also Hispanic, Black, and American Indian populations. Many families, especially those with children, struggle financially. Nearly 20% of students in local school districts qualify for free or reduced lunch, highlighting the economic challenges they face.

Our library serves a diverse community, including disadvantaged families and those with disabilities. All programs are free, and parents have praised the art programs their children otherwise couldn't access. Due to demand, we've expanded afterschool programs to two sessions per week and will add arts-focused drop-in activities for the 2025-2026 school year to match the new four-day school schedule.

We identify community needs through regular feedback and program attendance. Our library provides accommodations such as large print and audio books, Spanish translations, and Braille materials and advertises its availability via flyers in the library and on our website, and in-person requests. Twice a month, we bring books and DVDs to nursing homes, allowing seniors to browse and check out items without needing to travel. Patrons can also use the Libby app to access ebooks and audiobooks, with features like adjustable font sizes and the option to download books for offline reading, helping rural and homebound patrons. To meet growing demand, we've purchased additional ebook licenses for Libby to expand our offerings.

By continually adapting our services to meet the needs of the community, we ensure that everyone, regardless of ability or circumstances, can fully participate in library offerings.

## **Evaluation**

To evaluate the impact of our programs and services, we employ a multi-faceted approach. We track attendance at every event, comparing these figures to previous years to assess growth and engagement. However, for us, a successful event is not solely defined by attendance but also by its tangible impact on the community. Many of our art-based afterschool programs directly benefit local residents and organizations. Participants have created bookmarks, door signs, and Valentine's banners for nursing home residents, and made wreaths for a local museum's Christmas auction and a decorated toy box for another museum's auction. We're also proud that our afterschool programs positively impact families by providing kids with a safe, educational place to go while parents are at work. By evaluating both the number of individuals we engage and the positive contributions our patrons make, we assess program success.

We also apply this evaluative approach to our adult programming. In addition to tracking attendance, we consider a program successful if it attracts new patrons to the library. One of our key goals is to encourage curiosity, support lifelong learning, and build community. When a program helps patrons learn new skills or form new connections, we celebrate it as a success.

Based on results we've tracked, we adjust our programs to meet community needs. Due to high turnout, we've expanded textile art for adults and continue offering popular two-day painting workshops in Big Piney. We will add more Friday drop-in programs in Pinedale next year to match the local school's new schedule.

By tracking these metrics and considering both tangible and intangible outcomes, we ensure we are meeting the diverse needs of our community and shaping our offerings for the future.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

The funds requested through this grant will help sustain and expand our arts-based programming at Sublette County Libraries. We are seeking support for five dedicated program leaders who are essential to the success of our initiatives.

The children's programmer at the Sublette County Library in Pinedale will lead afterschool programs on Mondays and Thursdays, along with storytimes on Wednesdays, and introduce arts-based drop-in programming on Fridays due to the new four-day-a-week school schedule. This funding will allow her to purchase supplies and continue offering popular programs such as artist studies (Warhol, Rothko, Seurat), STEAM activities (basketball hoops, dog houses), and artistic techniques (cyanotype printing, tie-dye, oil pastels). This summer, she will collaborate with local stained glass artist Hayley Ruland to incorporate stained glass activities into storytime and partner with the Lonesome Heroes for a Folk For Kids show with the Pinedale Fine Arts Council. In the fall, she plans to introduce a Van Gogh study, wax resist paintings, and Newton spinner wheels, enriching the creative experiences for children while fostering a love of art.

The young adult programmer in Pinedale organizes afterschool activities three days a week, offering arts-based activities on Wednesdays and Makerspace projects on Fridays. This funding will help continue programs like Halloween wreaths, portrait drawings, and fleece pillow designing, and replenish materials for the Makerspace. This summer, she will collaborate with local artists Hayley Ruland and Mariah Nystrom to offer stained glass and painting workshops for teens. In the fall, she aims to organize holiday rock painting for gifts to nursing home residents, reimagine book covers with different media for her book club, create Halloween macrame keychains and restock the Makerspace with essential supplies.

The children and teens programmer in Big Piney will continue to offer afterschool programs and storytimes with artist studies, mosaics and sticker-making, responding to growing demand despite limited resources. In the fall, she



plans to introduce an Andy Warhol artist study, encourage young patrons to experiment with various media during storytime, and restock supplies to ensure these programs continue to run smoothly.

Adult programming in both Pinedale and Big Piney will also benefit from this funding. The adult programmer in Pinedale offers art journaling, Watercolor Wednesday, and textile programming, in addition to hosting a popular summer music series featuring local and regional artists. She plans to offer a gel plate printing class and a "Bind Your Own Mixed Media Journal" workshop, expanding creative options for adult patrons. In Big Piney, the adult programs have included an annual two-day painting workshop led by experienced art teacher Susan Bowen, along with holiday door sign making and ceramic pumpkin painting. Looking ahead, the Big Piney adult programmer will introduce a woodburning workshop and start a weekly crochet club, further broadening the arts programming for local adults.

These funds will be used to purchase art supplies and pay guest artists, ensuring we can continue providing accessible and impactful arts experiences for all community members, especially as budget constraints limit our programming resources. With this support, we can continue building community connections, fostering creativity, and promoting lifelong learning across all age groups.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Sublette County Libraries are funded through a portion of the county's general fund mill levy. The Sublette County Library Foundation helps cover non-fixed costs like programming and received a grant from the Wyoming Community Foundation for Summer Reading 2025. We are requesting funding from the Wyoming Arts Council for art supplies and to hire artists to teach at our library, ensuring high-quality arts programs for our community in fiscal year 2026.

About 90 percent of the Library's budget is tied to fixed staffing costs, leaving little flexibility. As a result, the Library relies on the Foundation for help funding non-fixed costs. Due to county budget cuts, programming funds are expected to decrease, and the Library will depend more on the Foundation's support. While the Library can still offer programs, the number may be scaled back, with limited materials and reduced outside artist partnerships. This grant will help sustain arts programming that fosters community engagement.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SWEETWATER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #2 - GREEN RIVER HIGH SCHOOL

[HTTPS://GRHS.SWCSD2.ORG/](https://grhs.swcSD2.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Vocal Jazz Academy

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

As a distinguished part of Green River High School, the Music Department is dedicated to individual achievement, diversity, global citizenship, and community vitality through exceptional and dynamic learning

environments. We strive to provide a comprehensive music education to our high school students in addition to local elementary and middle school students, and the community at large through the efforts of our vibrant faculty and staff. We are committed to furthering the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, ethical, and aesthetic growth of all our students through creating, performing, connecting to culture and historical contexts, and responding to artistic works that are performed and studied.

In line with the mission of our music department, our goals include:

- Be responsive to the continuing education and cultural needs of the community.
- Be responsive to the needs of students and the community in future planning.

### Community

Roughly 41,000 people within 2 communities make up the service area of our High School. Services include public education, workforce training, and college classes offered in partnership with Western Wyoming Community College. Our campus is located in Green River Wyoming. Both on-site and online instruction is available. Nearby towns include Rock Springs, Lyman, Mountain View, and Granger.

While the arts can sometimes be seen as under-appreciated in the region, the GRHS Music Department is dedicated to continually providing quality music education, events and experiences. There is an ongoing need to build the artistic community through performances and to provide experiences for students that go beyond those who can afford to be a part of these types of opportunities. Our student body comes from a large range of socio-economic backgrounds. Many have only experienced living in rural communities and have had little exposure to the fine arts. In an attempt to expose our audiences, and students to the arts and music, we are motivated to provide engaging cultural experiences that will broaden learners in music education.

The Vocal Jazz Academy event specifically invites people of all ages and backgrounds to take part whether or not they have any familiarity with the arts. Community members, College, High School and Junior High aged students throughout the the state are invited to attend. We make sure all educational classes and workshops we host focus on accommodating individual needs by adapting the environment or routine to the individual need.

## **Evaluation**

This event will include a post event survey distributed to participants and staff. This information is gathered and reviewed in a post event meeting. Tweaks to scheduling and programming have come about as a direct result of these surveys. Any comments related to the caliber of performers and adjudicators trigger a thorough examination.

We will always follow up with direct communication to any participant who may have concerns. I can assure you that we endeavor to uphold our mission and goals. The success of complex events like these are built upon relationships. We hope the various schools and individuals that participate will come to value the attention that they receive and the quality of the instruction that they or their students experience. We have also hosted events like this in the past such as festivals and district wide clinics. While many aspects of these events have been in place for decades in some cases, we are still responsive to change. An example of this responsiveness includes our changes with our WHSAA host sight state choir auditions. Next year our changes will include a more accommodating schedule, using less recording rooms, adding a back up recorder and adding a more accessible listening kiosk so that students can more easily review the integrity of their recorded audition immediately after it is uploaded. This is to ensure a smoother process and easier accessible technology for schools who will be attending. In the past, we have also reviewed adjudicator scores the students receive, making necessary changes and respond to any concerns or feedback given from our community.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

### **VJA OPERATING COSTS**

Educator and staff expenses include fees, plane tickets/travel, lodging and meals (\$2,400). Meals and reading packets will be provided for workshop participants (\$915). Additional expenses include advertising through printed posters, newspaper ads, radio spots, and social media advertising (\$3,100). Other costs are secretarial support (\$1,000), and online fees/registration (\$550). The expenses

total is \$7,965.

## **Project Support Narrative**

### **VJA DETAILS**

The Vocal Jazz Academy (Sept 7th or 14th, 2024) is an educational workshop that provides a unique opportunity for community members, students and teachers of all ages and experience levels to familiarize themselves with America's only original art form. Attendees will be able to take part in sessions that include ensemble singing, solo performance, audition techniques, improvisation, vocal percussion, and more. The clinicians that will be brought in to host these sessions are renowned educators, performers, and arrangers who are well respected in the jazz community. Furthermore, the music faculty at NWC will offer support through sound engineering,

accompaniment, and workshops. NWC students will act as a "host group" which further allows them to grow as musicians and connect with their community. A free, public concert closes the event.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Vocal Jazz Academy is a one-day event that strives to educate and connect vocal jazz educators/students as they prepared for the new school year. Their mission is:

- support and equip vocal jazz educators in their continuing educational journey
- reach out to and educate students in vocal jazz regardless of experience level
- emphasize a variety of skills in both jazz choir and jazz solo performance
- emphasize the importance of developing secondary skills like jazz piano, improvisation, working with a rhythm section, music technology, sound engineering, and arranging
- provide sound foundation of and appreciation for the traditions of jazz while actively seeking to evolve the music in today's culture.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The Vocal Jazz Academy goals are as follows:

1. Provide a student-centered education environment that fosters positivity, inspiration, diversity, and a thirst for knowledge.
2. Offer a multitude of settings for student learning including: masterclasses, clinics, and live performances
3. Hire quality jazz educators that are capable of delivering a top-level education to the students.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Vocal Jazz Academy event is put on by a number of renowned jazz educators and musicians who are well-known and respected in the vocal jazz community. In particular, one guest director is brought in to direct our mass choir and lead workshops while being supported by local/regional qualified directors. The guest director is chosen based on their experience as a jazz educator and their involvement with the Vocal Jazz Academy as well as their schedules and availability. Matt Falker, is the piano, theory, and vocal jazz professor at MiraCosta College in Oceanside, CA. He is a professional jazz pianist, vocalist, arranger, and publisher who sings bass in the group True North. He is also the current leader of Anchor Music Publishing which is responsible for hosting a large number of vocal jazz publications from members of the community. He has been a clinician and guest artist at many jazz festivals around the world.

Danielle Forbush is the current director of choir at Green River High School and Middle School. She directs the vocal jazz ensemble at Green River High School and leads 5 more Choirs additionally between the two schools. She

is highly active in bringing students to events like All-State and the Northwest Jazz festival. She teaches private voice and piano lessons through her music business the Wyoming Music Academy. Her students have been accepted to prestigious schools like Shenendoah Conservatory of Music, AMDA, and NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

Quinn Kalinski is the current band director at Green River High School. He directs the marching band, symphonic band and three jazz bands. He is active in participating in the WHSAA marching band competition each year and takes students to marching band competitions in Wyoming and Colorado. He also brings students each year to All-State band and orchestra.

### **Budget Narrative**

Music events at Green River High School rely on the funds provided by the Sweetwater School District #2. Choral activities at GRHS also rely on contributions through private donations and community fundraising. We have partnerships with and are supported by the Wyoming High School Activities Association, Hill Music of Casper, Wyoming Music Educators Association, and the Wyoming Jazz Educators. These organizations and our community donations provide money for activities and event fees, equipment, facilities, transportation, and advertising. Private donations and fundraising are our primary source for enrichment beyond what our school district is able to provide. Donations currently provide some fees and support for students. We do not currently have funding to bring to our community world class musicians and adjudicators. The Vocal Jazz Academy budget aligns with our ability to create a memorable and inspiring day for our regional students and teachers.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

SWEETWATER MUSIC KEYS

[WWW.SWMUSICKEYS.ORG](http://WWW.SWMUSICKEYS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Sweetwater Music Keys Program Funding

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

Our mission is to enrich our community through accessible performing arts experiences, fostering creativity and connection among students of all ages. We offer programs from early childhood through adults. We are committed to supporting music education in schools and empowering teachers in our community through ongoing professional development opportunities. We seek to offer opportunities otherwise unavailable in our community, especially to homeschoolers, and underserved populations.

We fulfill this mission through offering programs that include, but are not limited to:

1. Piano lessons, including group piano for ages 7-100. Discounted lessons are available for retired individuals and on a need-based basis for other students.
2. Musikgarten classes for young children ages 0-7 and their families.
3. Youth choral groups, such as Tavaci for K-6th grade and Top Note for 7-10 grade.
4. Performing arts groups for adults, such as Sweetwater Singers.
5. Scholarships for students wishing to study other instruments.
6. Providing space for other performing arts groups to rehearse.

Our goals are to see an increase in arts involvement and personal development in students of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

### **Community**

Sweetwater county is the fourth most populated in the state, with some challenges. On recent WYTOPP testing, we had among the lowest scores in the state. 24% of our population is under 18 and adult education levels are among the lowest in the state. Music education is proven to improve academic performance, which leads to more opportunities. While the schools do offer some choir, theater and band classes, performing arts classes and after-

school programs are limited, particularly for children. Our local community college has recently cut all music programs. There is also a gap in music education and performing arts programs for homeschooling families and older adults and seniors in Rock Springs.

Sweetwater Music Keys strives to offer lessons and classes to students of all abilities and income levels. Some of our students have special learning needs, which we accommodate with input from caregivers. Sweetwater Music Keys also intentionally creates programs that are inclusive and allow people of all abilities to participate. All of our children's programs are available to students of all abilities. Early childhood music classes are based on participation and play, not performance. We have recently started a private lesson scholarship program where students from Sweetwater County may apply to receive money for lessons from any teacher in Wyoming, helping reduce the cost of private instruction. Reduced-cost piano lessons for seniors allows more of them to receive the benefits of music instruction. Our location is ADA friendly and was chosen specifically for that reason.

Music classes support the physical, emotional and mental health of all people, and should be accessible to everyone, regardless of any considerations.

## **Evaluation**

We evaluate our efforts in five major ways:

1. Measuring enrollment in programs. For the school year of 2024-2025 we have served over 140 students ages 0-70. That is a 40% increase over the previous school year. We have seen enrollment growth in all programs, Musikgarten, private piano, group piano and our Tavaci and Top Note choirs. We have lots of new students and a very high retention rate.
2. Community outreach and service - Our students perform throughout the community, including for people in assisted living, churches and in the schools. Last year we provided over 15 free performances throughout the community.
3. Community Sponsorships - We have been able to receive multiple sponsorships from the community large and small. Receiving these helps us to know the community sees value in what we are providing.
4. Parent and student feedback - We conduct an annual end of year survey that helps families give us feedback on what they have seen in our programs and at our school.
5. Student Achievement - We also note the achievements and opportunities that our students are able to pursue during and after music study here. Some of these include participating in ACDA all-northwest choir, qualifying for All-State band and choir, and participation in local, state and national piano festivals and evaluations.

We have not yet figured out a way to survey our community at large. However, we would like to so that we can see the impact of our programs on the community and what needs are still not being met.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Fixed expenses for annual operating costs are:

Rent - \$15,600 (\$1300 per month)

Utilities (gas, electric and internet) - \$3000 (monthly amount varies)

Insurance - \$900

Software fees - \$500 This entails scheduling and accounting software, Canva, and Microsoft Office

Office and Location supplies - \$1000 (office supplies, cleaning supplies, toilet paper etc.)

Equipment Maintenance - \$400

For a total of around \$22,000

Adjustable expenses include:

Teaching Supplies - \$3000 - These include teaching materials and manipulatives, music purchases, and digital teaching subscriptions

Instructor Wages - \$30,000-50,000 - this number could varies depending on funding received and student enrollment

Administrative Wages - \$10,000 - we have a strong goal of keeping administrative costs low, focusing funds into teaching students directly.

Total Annual Operating Costs: \$60,000-70,000

Operating funds provided by this grant help cover the fixed operating expenses: rent, utilities, and insurance. We have actively sought out grants from major employers in the area as well to assist in reducing tuition for the programs. We were able this year to start our inaugural year of our music scholarship program with some of those funds.

## **Project Support Narrative**

NA

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

We are applying for the arts learning grant to provide funding for our Musikgarten and group piano courses. We have two trained teachers Emily Durrant and Leesa Kuhlmann. They provide music classes for ages 0-10 that prepare students for future music making. These classes are researched-based instruction that provide connection



and a foundation for all music learning, as well as other needed skills in school and life. We want to offer these classes to as many young families as possible. The classes are Family Music for Babies (0-18 months), Family Music (ages 12 months - 3), Cycle of Seasons (ages 3-5), Music Makers at Home (ages 4-6) and Music Makers around the world (ages 5-7). Each class sequentially builds on the last one, allowing students to connect with their families as they learn the basic patterns and building blocks for future music study. All classes are play-based learning allowing all students to participate. Group piano allows students to start piano lessons in an economical and fun way. Students come in small groups of 4-5 students.

One or two of each class is offered each semester, attempting to meet student scheduling needs. We also reach out to local preschools and offer to teach students at their preschools, to increase our community outreach. Per-child it costs \$300-500 annually. This cost includes all materials and teacher wages, but not overhead costs. We would like to continue to offer it to families below cost. Funding received would allow us to continue to offer more courses, as well as work on parent education to show the benefit of classes. Using the arts learning grant this past year we were able to double our enrollment while being able to reduce the cost to students. We would like to continue to offer that to our families.

We are seeking funding for these programs because we feel that giving students a strong foundation in music education will allow them to build on that throughout their lives. We would like those opportunities to be available to all families. Our students who have grown up with that foundation are doing great things and excelling in high levels of music education. We want to make these opportunities available to even more children.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Students should be able to identify the main rhythmic and tonal patterns that make up music.

Students should gain a repertoire of familiar music, based on folk music from around the world.

Students should gain confidence in an ability to share music with those around them.

Students gain music literacy, which has been defined as being able to see what you hear, and hear what you see.

Students should gain the ability to sing in tune and keep a steady beat.

Students should be able to use instruments in musical expression.

Students should be able to express music through whole body movement.

Students should gain the ability to listen to, and understand sound, independent of visual stimulation.

Students should gain a sense of community and connection.

Students should connect to nature through music and observation.

Students should be able to set goals for future music learning.

These goals are identified by researchers such as Zoltan Kodaly, Edward Gordon, Shinji Suzuki, Maria Montessori, Lorna Heyge, and more. These are identified as the major building blocks to a child's development, and the skills that children need to develop future musical skills.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Emily Durrant has been teaching music for over 20 years. She has a bachelor's degree in piano performance, as well as Level 1 Kodaly certification and is a certified Musikgarten teacher. Emily actively seeks further education opportunities through webinars, conferences, reading and observation. She brings a passion for helping students discover the beauty that is found throughout music and a love of letting students grow from wherever they are. She founded the organization and oversees the training of other teachers.

Leesa Kuhlmann is a retired certified music educator with over 30 years of experience. She has taught music at all levels in the public schools, from elementary through high school. She is Kodaly and Orff trained. Leesa has been teaching for us for one year and joined us as we were searching for a new Musikgarten teacher. We were thrilled to have her join as an educator based on her experience. The children have enjoyed having her in class.

### **Budget Narrative**

We have actively sought multiple funding sources this year. Our main grant has been from the Wyoming Arts Council for operation support. Other key sponsorships have included a large corporate grant from Church and Dwight employee giving fund to start our new scholarship program, as well as a large private donation from Sheila and Barry Neelands for equipment. We have smaller community partners that have made donations towards our scholarship program and other donations. Our programs continue to be mainly funded by student fees.

One hundred percent of our budget has been used to support our programs. This year for the first time we have balanced our budget and been able to receive revenue equal to expenses. We are also excited that we have acquired most of the equipment necessary to running all programs.

Going forward we hope to be able to apply for more grants to continue offering more for our community.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TARGHEE MUSIC FOUNDATION

[WWW.TARGHEEMUSICFOUNDATION.ORG](http://WWW.TARGHEEMUSICFOUNDATION.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 17th Annual Targhee Music Camp

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission Statement: The Targhee Music Foundation, a 501c3 (non-profit) organization, is dedicated to educating and inspiring people of all ages to actively participate in music through camps, workshops and events.

The Targhee Music Foundation supports and runs the 17th Annual Targhee Music Camp, a four day music education camp for adults and children held every August at the Grand Targhee Ski Resort in Teton County, Wyoming. World- class instructors teach topical workshops and offer primary classes in guitar, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, bass, singing, songwriting, resonator guitar and topical music.

Founded in 2005, Targhee Music Camp has served over 1,600 students and hosted over 150 world class music instructors and performers from around the world. Scholarships are available in three categories; younger, local and general; and any prospective student may apply for tuition assistance.

The primary goal of the Camp is to educate and inspire people of all ages to actively participate in music. In addition to our regular camp, we offer a specialized children's track for those 18 and younger which involves activities that focus on a younger demographic. This unique experience and the financial assistance available allows music students the opportunity to share their music and learn in a supportive environment in the beauty of the Grand Tetons and western Wyoming.

The Targhee Music Foundation supports the local community and demonstrates that the Teton County, Wyoming area continues to be recognized, not only for its natural beauty and abundance of outdoor activities, but for its varied musical contributions, including the Targhee Music Camp and its staff. The camp instructors hold local public performances leading up to and after camp, further sharing their musical artistry with the local community.

### Community

On a broad scale we are serving the adults and children musicians in the local Wyoming community and around the world who would like to learn how to improve on their instrument with high level musical instruction. We offer

a Children's track for younger campers. By having a music camp in Alta, Wyoming at Grand Targhee Ski Resort, students have an opportunity to attend a music camp in a unique setting that lends itself well to an educational camp and also brings the opportunity for students who live in this remote rural setting the ability to attend music classes and learn from high level instructors. There are limited opportunities for music education in Alta, and this annual event draws students from the local community to attend.

It is our mission to make the camp accessible and enjoyable to all. The camp contracts with Grand Targhee Ski Resort to use their facilities, an organization that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure that the camp events, classes and workshops are accessible, regardless of physical or mental disability. The resort offers handicap accessible parking and wheelchair access to all areas during camp.

To increase accessibility to attend camp we offer 3 types of scholarships to assist with the tuition of Targhee Music Camp; Local, Young and Open. Open scholarships are for anybody who would like to apply no matter of age or geographic location. Local scholarships are given to those who live within 100 miles or so of Grand Targhee Resort. Young scholarships are for students who are under 18 years of age who would like to participate in camp. All 3 scholarship opportunities have been utilized by members of the local community on an annual basis and scholarships have been available since the first camp.

## **Evaluation**

We use a few different methods to assess the impact of its programs. One of our main evaluative measures will come from classroom observation and written feedback received from students and instructors who attend the camp. At the end of every camp we ask everyone to fill out a evaluation form and return it to us in order to provide feedback from their experience. We encourage everyone's participation in completing these evaluations, and therefore return rate is very high. We are able gain a lot of insight from these recommendations from both students and instructors, and many of these changes are implemented in the camp the following year.

Camp registrations are another method for measuring. These numbers are tracked each year, and are reviewed annually for different trends in attendance and interests. Which classes/instructors were popular, and which classes generated the most interest? This helps us evaluate which instructors we may ask to return, and which classes or topics would be good to repeat at another camp.

Other important data includes how many campers did we have in our Children's track and how many folks had attended camp before. Registrations also determine the geographic location of where our students are coming from and give valuable insight into the community we serve. We monitor to see how many are local in Teton County/Valley, how many are from nearby states (Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Montana), how many are from further places in the United States, and how many attend Internationally.

The Board of Directors and staff have a wrap up meeting at the end of camp, and then another meeting after all camp bills have been paid and evaluations have been read. This is where the preparation starts for the following year and any changes may be implemented.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

We are requesting operating support in the amount of \$5,000 to go towards the Resort Rental Fee to hold the camp at Grand Targhee Resort. The rental fee has increased every year for the last 3 years, and In 2025, the Grand Targhee Resort Rental Fee will be \$10,000 for the four day camp. Although there are many operating expenses involved with the Targhee Music Camp, this rental fee is a crucial part of our ability to operate camp, and with annual rising rental costs this is where we are in need of the most support operationally.

2025 Operating Costs (Budget overview):

- \$73,020 Instructor Salaries, Lodging, Meal Plans
- \$43,320 Camp Support Staff
- \$25,000 Foundation Expenses
- \$17,500 General Camp Expenses
- \$10,000 Resort Rental Fee
- \$5,339 in Office Rental/Expenses
- \$1,068 in Event and Directors and Officers Insurance
- \$2,500 Sound Reinforcement
- \$4,200 Tent Rental

On August 4-7, 2025 the 17th annual Targhee Music Camp will be held at the Grand Targhee Resort in Alta, Teton county. The camp starts on Monday morning and will end on Thursday afternoon.

This is a music camp for adults and children that will host 24 world class artists to teach primary instrument classes in guitar, mandolin, banjo, old--time banjo, bass, fiddle, singing, songwriting, and topical music. These instructors will also teach workshops outside of their primary classes, on various musical topics of their expertise. There are also nightly instructor performances during camp.

### **Project Support Narrative**

We are requesting project support in the amount of \$5,000 to go towards music instructor salaries. In 2024, the Targhee Music Camp instructor salaries totaled \$45,000.

On August 4-7, 2025 the 17th annual Targhee Music Camp will be held at the Grand Targhee Resort in Alta, Teton county. The camp starts on Monday morning and will end on Thursday afternoon.

This is a music camp for adults and children that will host 24 world class artists to teach primary instrument classes in guitar, mandolin, banjo, old-time banjo, bass, fiddle, singing, songwriting, and topical music. These instructors will also teach workshops outside of their primary classes, on various musical topics of their expertise. There are also nightly instructor performances during camp. Below is a list of the 2025 Targhee Music Camp instructors with a brief bio on a few headliners. More information about the artists, their achievements and qualifications, can be found on our website.

#### 2025 Targhee Music Camp Instructors

##### Lindsay Lou - Singing

Named among NPR's "12 Best Live Performances" in 2015, Lou has long been beloved as a live performer, from Telluride Bluegrass Festival to Stagecoach, Celtic Connections to Australia's National Folk Festival, and a "Can't Miss Act" at AmericanaFest—not to mention acclaim from PBS, No Depression, Billboard, Holler, Paste, and The Bluegrass Situation, among other outlets.

##### Joe Craven - "Jerry and Dawg Revisited"

Joe Craven recorded and performed with Jerry Garcia & David Grisman from 1990 – 1994 in "Garcia Grisman" and he will bring insight and ideas to your understanding of their music throughout the week. We'll create a band (or bands) playing together if time allows.

##### Big Richard - "Band-in-Residence"

Big Richard siphons from traditional bluegrass, oldtime, classical, modern bluegrass, country, and pop. The four-piece band masterfully mash up genres, often using traditional fiddle tune pieces as instrumental flights of fancy between its storyteller original songs. The group also refreshingly reinvents beloved traditional tunes. The quartet is bursting with jaw-dropping virtuosity; playfully irreverent stage banter; stunning four-part harmony vocal interlace; imaginative arrangements; a refreshingly eclectic repertoire; and a healthy dose of lady rage.

##### John Lowell - Songwriting

In December of 2024 John Lowell was awarded the Montana Governor's Arts Award in a ceremony at the Montana capitol building in Helena. This award represents the highest honor that Montana bestows on artists that work in the literary, visual or performing arts. The International Western Music Association (IWMA) also named Lowell 2024 Songwriter of the Year and his 2024 release Snow On The Wineglass was named Album of the Year.

Caleb Klauder - Mandolin

Andrew Collins - Mandolin

Ross Martin - Guitar

John Showman - Fiddle

Reeb Willms - Guitar

Chris Coole - Stringband Class

Bonnie Sims - Mandolin

Eve Panning - Fiddle

Courtney Hartman - Guitar

Joy Adams - Old-time Banjo

Hazel Royer - Bass

Brian Wicklund - Fiddle

Paul Lee - Fiddle, Workshops

Caroline Oakley - Children's Camp and Square Dance Caller

Simon Leone - Children's Camp

Tom Murphy - Beginning Jam Class

Ben Winship - Stringband Class

Roy Andrade - Old-time Banjo, Workshops

Ellie Davis - Children's Camp

Tashi Litch - Children's Camp

Thomas Sneed - Camp Coordinator

**Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

On August 4-7, 2025 the 17th annual Targhee Music Camp will be held at the Grand Targhee Resort in Alta, Teton county. The camp starts on Monday morning and will end on Thursday afternoon.

This is a music camp for adults and children that will host 24 world class artists to teach primary instrument classes in guitar, mandolin, banjo, old--time banjo, bass, fiddle, singing, songwriting, and topical music. These instructors will also teach workshops outside of their primary classes, on various musical topics of their expertise.

The campers are there to improve and learn how to better play their instruments. In addition to the regular music camp, we offer a Children's track for younger campers. This gives the opportunity for young artists to learn in a class that is designed especially meet their needs.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The primary Arts Learning goal of the Camp is to educate and inspire people of all ages to actively participate in music. By the end of camp, the expectation is that the students are better musicians and more informed about music history and styles, and they are inspired to continue improving and practicing while playing with others.

These goals were identified by the staff, Board of Directors, and the over the history of the music camp. These goals are reviewed annually to make sure that the mission of the Targhee Music Camp is followed.

This is a music camp for adults and children hosting 24 world class artists/instructors to teach primary instrument classes in guitar, mandolin, banjo, old--time banjo, bass, fiddle, singing, songwriting, and topical music. These instructors will also teach workshops outside of their primary classes, exposing other students to their knowledge, experience and expertise. Students will spend the morning and a portion of each afternoon in primary classes, supplemented by workshops and performances.

### **Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Content and Performance Standards**

Targhee Music Camp addresses Wyoming Standards:

Creating and performing. Students at camp have the opportunity to perform and create music all week long. From our structured and scheduled "jams", Band Scramble student concert, High on a Mountain Top jam, Student performances, and the main stage performance of the "camp song" at the Grand Targhee Bluegrass Festival over the weekend, there are many opportunities for students to perform and create on their instruments.



FPA4-11.1.M.1 - Primary Classes, Band Scramble and Workshop

FPA 4-11.1.M.2 - Band Scramble, Student Performances

FPA4-11.1.M.3 - Primary Classes and Workshops, Jamming

FPA 4-11.1.M.4 - Primary Classes, Workshops, Jamming, Performances

FPA 4-11.1.M.5 - Primary Classes and Workshops

Aesthetic perception. Students have the ability to learn not only from their primary classes, but the large variety of workshops presented at the camp. This gives them the ability to learn new styles and critically think about the information that they are processing. Asking questions is encouraged, and classes are adequately sized to give students the opportunity to maximize their learning.

FPA4-11.2.M.1 - Songwriting, Primary Classes, Workshops

FPA4-11.2.M.2 - Workshops

FPA4-11.2.M.3 - Songwriting Class, Performance Workshops

FPA4-11.2.M.4 - Primary Classes, Songwriting Class, Workshops, Jamming

Historical and cultural context. Music is a universal language and students attend Targhee Music Camp to help further their understanding and increase their fluency. Music history is a large part of the camp and the expertise and experience provided by the artists in the many workshops at camp, give students great knowledge on the origins and development of music and musical styles, giving them the opportunity to reflect on the historical and cultural significance of music.

FPA4-11.3.M.1 - Workshops

FPA4-11.3.M.2 - Primary Class, Workshops, Jamming

FPA4-11.3.M.3 - Performance and "Music as a Business" Workshops

Artistic connections. This is one of the biggest assets of TMC. Artists come from a variety of musical backgrounds as well as the students. Professional relationships are made among the artists and instructors in attendance, as well as lifelong friendships and bonds among the students. Different styles and types of music are shared, and the Targhee Music Camp "family" continues to grow. With four days of uninterrupted time to create music, incredible bonds are formed among and with students and instructors, who would not normally be as accessible outside of Targhee Music Camp.

FPA4-11.4.M.1 - All Classes

FPA4-11.4.M.2 - Primary Classes, Workshops

FPA4-11.4.M.3 - Performance and "Music as a Business" Workshops

FPA4-11.4.M.4 - Performance and "Music as a Business" Workshops

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Targhee Music Camp will host 24 world class artists to teach primary instrument classes in guitar, mandolin, banjo, old--time banjo, bass, fiddle, singing, songwriting, and topical music. These instructors will also teach workshops outside of their primary classes, on various musical topics of their expertise. There are also nightly instructor performances during camp. Below is a list of the 2025 Targhee Music Camp instructors with a brief bio on a few headliners.

Artists are chosen by the camp staff and Board of Directors based on their high level teaching skills and instrument mastery. Almost all artists are regularly touring professional musicians, and are chosen for their abilities and knowledge of their instrument or the subject that they are teaching.

Our children's track is lead by Caroline Oakley who has decades of experience working with children in music classes. Her support staff are also experienced with teaching younger students, and have all taught at the music camp in the past.

#### **2025 Targhee Music Camp Instructors**

##### **Lindsay Lou - Singing**

Named among NPR's "12 Best Live Performances" in 2015, Lou has long been beloved as a live performer, from Telluride Bluegrass Festival to Stagecoach, Celtic Connections to Australia's National Folk Festival, and a "Can't Miss Act" at AmericanaFest—not to mention acclaim from PBS, No Depression, Billboard, Holler, Paste, and The Bluegrass Situation, among other outlets.

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Chris Coole - Stringband Class

Bonnie Sims - Mandolin

Eve Panning - Fiddle

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Joy Adams - Old-time Banjo

Hazel Royer - Bass

Brian Wicklund - Fiddle

Paul Lee - Fiddle, Workshops

Caroline Oakley - Children's Camp and Square Dance Caller

Simon Leone - Children's Camp

Tom Murphy - Beginning Jam Class

Ben Winship - Stringband Class

Roy Andrade - Old-time Banjo, Workshops

Ellie Davis - Children's Camp

Tashi Litch - Children's Camp

Thomas Sneed - Camp Coordinator

### **Budget Narrative**

Our organization is funded by the following methods:

-Camp registrations (\$135,375)

-Instrument Raffle at Camp (\$6,000)

-Private party donations (\$10,000)

-Fundraising through Old Bill's Fun Run in Teton County which is held annually in September (\$12,000)

Our budget aligns with the program and services we provide by offering a high quality music camp with affordable registration fees. To increase accessibility to attend camp we offer 3 types of scholarships to assist with the tuition of Targhee Music Camp; Local, Young and Open. Open scholarships are for anybody who would like to apply no matter of age or geographic location.

Founded in 2014, the goal of the Targhee Music Foundation is to keep the Targhee Music Camp sustainable and affordable. The organization has been financially sound since the creation of the non-profit organization, and the camp continues to grow and flourish.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TEN SLEEP RECREATION DISTRICT

[HTTPS://TOWNOFTENSLEEP.COM/](https://townoftensleep.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Ten Sleep Harmony Park

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The mission of the Ten Sleep Recreation District is to ensure safe, economical and enjoyable recreation programs and equipment for our community.

### **Community**

Ten Sleep, Wyoming, is a small town located in Washakie County. As of 2022, it has an estimated population of 236 residents.

Situated in the eastern part of the Bighorn Basin, Ten Sleep lies at the western base of the Bighorn Mountains. The town covers an area of approximately 0.47 square kilometers (0.18 square miles).

The median age in Ten Sleep is 54.5 years, indicating a relatively older population compared to the state median age of 39.1 years.

Age distribution data from the 2019 Five-Year American Community Survey (ACS) is as follows:

Under 5 years: 3.3%

5 to 19 years: 16.4%

20 to 24 years: 5.1%

25 to 34 years: 4.7%

35 to 54 years: 22.0%

55 to 64 years: 21.0%

65 years and over: 27.6%

In 2022, Ten Sleep's population consisted of approximately 59.1% males and 40.9% females.

The racial composition of Ten Sleep is predominantly White. According to the 2019 Five-Year ACS data:

White: 98.1%

Two or more races: 1.9%

Black or African American: 0.0%

American Indian and Alaska Native: 0.0%

Asian: 0.0%

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: 0.0%

Other race: 0.0%

Economic data indicates the following:

Median Household Income: \$37,500 (2022)

Average Household Income: \$46,003

Per Capita Income: \$21,250

Poverty Rate: 37.38%

Specific data regarding disability status or the percentage of residents with disabilities in Ten Sleep is not readily available.

In summary, Ten Sleep is a small, predominantly White community with a median age significantly higher than the state average. The town faces economic challenges, as evidenced by a median household income below the national average and a high poverty rate.

TSRD seeks to provide recreation opportunities to our small and underserved community.

### **Evaluation**

Through communication with the town council, and community survey if applicable. We interact with the community through Facebook and have received a lot of positive feedback about the experiences that people have using the existing installations at the park as well as our youth sports and other community programs.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Ten Sleep Recreation District seeks funding to enhance our community park by purchasing and installing Harmony Park equipment. This addition will create an inclusive and engaging outdoor musical experience for people of all ages and abilities, fostering creativity, social interaction, and well-being in our town.

Our town park is an ideal space for interactive recreational opportunities that cater to diverse age groups and abilities. The addition of Harmony Park equipment will provide an inclusive space where community members can

engage in musical exploration, physical activity, and social bonding. This project aligns with our mission to create vibrant, accessible, and family-friendly recreational spaces.

Objective: To install high-quality, weather-resistant outdoor musical instruments that encourage community engagement and accessibility.

Scope of Work:

Purchase and install a set of Free Notes Harmony Park musical instruments, including chimes, drums, and metallophones.

Prepare the designated park area with appropriate landscaping and accessibility features.

Promote community participation through an official launch event and ongoing programming.

Timeline:

Grant approval and funding allocation: Spring/Summer 2025

Equipment procurement: Summer/Fall 2025

Site preparation and installation: Fall 2025

Community launch event: TBD

Project Budget:

Harmony Park Equipment \$15,832

Project Management \$1600

Installation & Site Preparation \$8000

Accessibility Enhancements \$6000

Promotion & Community Event \$2500

Total Budget \$33,932

This project will benefit the community by:

Enhancing accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.

Providing a unique recreational experience that promotes creativity and mental well-being.

Encouraging intergenerational interaction and community bonding.

Ensuring long-term maintenance through collaboration with local organizations and volunteers.

By completing this project, Ten Sleep Recreation District will support a lasting enhancement to our town park, making it a more engaging, inclusive, and vibrant space for all residents and visitors alike. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to the opportunity to bring this vision to life.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

Ten Sleep Recreation District manages an annual budget that supports recreation programs for our community, but the small size of our budget limits our ability to take on larger projects that will provide a longer-term impact to the town and its residents. TSRD is seeking partnerships to help us achieve our goal of installing high-quality, weather-resistant outdoor musical instruments that encourage community engagement and accessibility. We are reaching out to multiple organizations who can help provide funding for the purchase of the equipment and accessibility enhancements. TSRD will provide funding for the installation and related costs like planning and community outreach.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TETON MUSIC SCHOOL

[HTTPS://WWW.TETONMUSICSCHOOL.ORG](https://www.tetonmusicschool.org)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Teton Music School 2025-26 Fiscal Year

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Teton Music School (TMS) was founded in 2019 to respond to Teton County's need for music education—there had been limited opportunities for private and group instruction outside the school system. We began with 50 enrolled students in that first year. Since then, enrollment has more than quadrupled, we have created programs for students aged 0-80+, and we are committed to growing an infrastructure to sustain these programs. TMS adopted a new strategic plan in fall 2023, updating our mission, vision, values, and strategic goals.

### MISSION

To educate and inspire people of all ages to create and share music.

### VISION

To transcend boundaries, inspire community, and enrich the lives of all those touched by the transformative power of music.

### VALUES

- Joy: Everything we do is rooted in joy!
- Creativity: We inspire each other to make and perform music we love.
- Inclusivity: We meet people where they are, striving to remove barriers to participation.
- Self-Discovery: We foster curiosity, lifelong learning, and skill development.
- Connection: We are committed to connecting music, people, and community.

## STRATEGIC GOALS - 2023 -2026

- 1) Grow organizational capability: Hire a second full-time staff member to support Executive Director in leading TMS's strategic growth. Evolve Board from a working to a governance board, enabling a more focused approach to leadership and sustainability. Create career paths, offer professional development, and strengthen systems to retain teaching faculty.
- 2) Ensure financial stability: Increase donor contributions, with a goal of raising \$25,000 for the scholarship fund, \$50,000 for the opportunity fund, and growing the operating reserve to cover six months of operating costs.
- 3) Focus and refine program development for community impact: Identify and invest in signature programs for TMS that address community needs, complement the efforts of other organizations, and strengthen the overall music education ecosystem in the region.

### **Community**

Teton County is a rural community known for its natural beauty, tourism economy, and significant wealth disparity. The 2023 Census shows a mean household income of over \$112,000, an average per capita income of \$471,751, a 7% poverty rate, and that 80% of the population is white. Teton County School District (TCSD) reports that 26% of its enrolled students qualify for free/reduced lunch, 10% are served under IDEA, 33% are Hispanic, 28% are English Language Learners (ELL). Working class people are increasingly displaced by rising costs, and artists, musicians, and creative professionals struggle to find affordable housing and outlets for their work. As these groups are pushed out, the region's cultural vibrancy weakens.

To reach and make music education accessible to the community and underserved individuals of all ages, TMS: 1) partners with local programs One22 and Boundless to offer scholarships to low-income families; 2) works with One22 for Spanish-language translation services and casework support to improve outreach to Hispanic families; 3) offers music therapy for individuals with special needs and adaptive lessons for students with disabilities; 4) subsidizes tuition for creative aging programs; 5) cultivates partnerships with TCSD and other service organizations (Senior Center, Community Entry Services, Sage Living); and 6) creates meaningful opportunities for musicians to live and work as artists in our community.

All TMS programs are held in ADA-compliant facilities, and our accommodation request process is clearly outlined on a dedicated page of our website: Individuals needing accommodations should contact us at least 3 days prior to an event or enrollment; we discuss each request with the applicant to assess needs and determine feasible accommodations.

### **Evaluation**

TMS is in the process of revamping our evaluation methods, moving beyond collecting enrollment data to better measure program and service impact. We see growth opportunities for us in what/how we analyze, the systems

used to track it, and how we use data to inform our programs and organization. We will focus on quantitative and qualitative data that supports:

#### STUDENT PROGRESS/CONFIDENCE

Student surveys to self report progress through programs and sessions, measuring empowerment and growth in musical skills to help us understand how programs contribute to students' confidence and self-expression, informing teaching methods and program design.

#### TEACHER FEEDBACK/STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Encourage teachers to provide structured observations on student engagement and learning outcomes. Develop a consistent feedback process across programs to better understand how students interact with the material and whether teaching approaches are effective.

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/CULTURAL REACH

Collect feedback from participants and non-participants to evaluate how programs resonate with the broader community using standardized surveys, attendance data and engagement for performances and workshops. Collaborate with partners that have direct reach into different or underserved communities.

#### STAFF/BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Evaluate Executive Director and staff annually. Expand this process to the board to support their evolution from a working group to a governance-focused model.

Evaluation results will be shared with stakeholders (community, students/families, funders, partners, faculty, staff, board) as appropriate, to help shape future decisions. We want both data and the human, experiential aspects of the arts informing our decision-making processes and the development of our programs.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

TMS follows a strategic plan focused on ensuring organizational stability to help create a sustainable future for music education in Teton County. Our multi-year lease in Jackson's Center for the Arts demonstrates our long-term commitment to students, teachers, and local music ensembles. In the six years since TMS was created, we have grown into a vital community resource.

Our daily work focuses on program development and delivery. We provide enrollment-based and public music education programming both in our studios in The Center and in community venues. We plan, advertise, staff,

enroll, facilitate and instruct individual and group music education for students of all ages, seeing more than 250 students each week. Our annual calendar aligns with the local school schedule and scholarships are offered for all programs.

Personnel is our largest expense: a faculty of 16 professional music instructors, and a full-time administrative staff of two. While faculty is made up of passionate, talented musicians, many balance TMS commitments with performing, and some are new to teaching. The realities of our local economy (extreme cost of living) make it difficult to attract and retain qualified educators over time. For stability and longevity, TMS must take an intentional approach to cultivating and sustaining its teaching faculty through compensation and creating a work environment where educators can thrive, grow, and see a future. Our efforts to address this include exploring teaching artist training programs, considering a shift from independent contractors to employees, and implementing merit-based tiered compensation structures. We are cultivating relationships with specialized training partners, including private entities, University of Wyoming's music department, and statewide resources like WMEA, to develop these programs. Related expenses will be critical in coming years as we work to build a sustainable faculty from our local community and continue offering high-quality music education.

TMS relies on an integrated technology ecosystem to automate and streamline our work. Each component is billed monthly and handles: accounting/billing (QuickBooks); marketing/communication (MailChimp, Canva, Box, Dialpad); registration/payroll (Opus1io/Gusto); website (WIX); and virtual connection (Zoom). Our donor database (Salesforce) and online giving program (GiveLively) require programming expertise (hourly contracts) to support our needs. TMS holds robust insurance policies commensurate with our program and engages professional services for accounting and bookkeeping. TMS pays a 3% processing fee for tuition paid by credit card. With 65% of our annual revenue from tuition, these fees add up. To meet demand, we are adding two new lesson spaces at The Center, bringing our number of teaching rooms to seven. We will purchase new pianos to support this expansion. Pianos and specialized equipment require regular upkeep, like repairs and tuning, for spaces to remain functional. Occupancy requires rent and a cleaning contract, and general costs are minimal, like paper and toner and music purchases.

TMS has demonstrated and increased our capacity for providing music education by forging strong collaborative program partnerships with other local organizations who are invested in bringing music and arts education to our community.

### **Project Support Narrative**

NA

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

TMS is a year-round community music school in The Center for the Arts offering a wide range of music education programs for students of all ages, from babies through adults, with opportunities for sequential learning, social engagement, and skill development across various instruments and music genres. With local musicians as educators, participants receive authentic, student-centered instruction in modern, community-oriented music not

typically available in schools. We collaborate with Teton County School District (TCSD) to design programs that support their efforts to retain students in music through upper grades, offering earlier exposure to instruments and keeping students engaged over the summer. TMS aims to ensure our programs complement existing offerings, avoiding overlap in scheduling and teaching styles across organizations. Scholarships are available for all tuition-based programs, and we promote offerings in English and Spanish. TMS also offers no-fee programs off-site, reaching underserved students through community partnerships and improving access to music education outside our primary location.

\*

#### SCHOOL YEAR

(September 2025 - June 2026)

More than 250 students of all ages participate in 32 weeks of instruction that aligns with the public school calendar, culminating in a year-end performance.

#### PRIVATE LESSONS (Youth & Adult)

30- and 60-minute private lessons in a range of instruments: piano, drums, violin, cello, guitar, ukulele, banjo, voice, woodwinds, and music production.

#### GROUP CLASSES & ENSEMBLES (Youth)

Music Together: Award-winning, licensed curriculum for babies through age 5 and their grownups, offered twice-weekly.

Bucket Band (Grades 3-5): Street drumming

Rock Band Prep (Grades 3-5): Intro to keys, strings, and drums

Youth Choir (Grades 2-5): Open ensemble

Rock Bands (Grades 3-5 & 6-12): Auditioned ensembles

#### GROUP CLASSES (Adult, 55+):

Uke55: An 8-week introductory ukulele course (sequential skill building)

Jam55: For folk instruments like ukulele, guitar, bass, banjo, etc (open jam)

\*

#### SUMMER

(July - August 2025)

Nearly 150 students participate in 6 weeks of instruction through week-long day camps for youth and weekly private lessons

PRIVATE LESSONS - same as school year

#### CAMPS

Junkestra (Grades K-2 & 3-5), June 30 - July 3: Students make homemade instruments from found objects and recycled materials, learn music fundamentals and perform in a "junk" orchestra at the end of camp, in partnership with Art Association.

Arts Sampler (Grades K-2 & 3-5) July 21-25; July 28-August 1: an exploration of music, dance, theater, and visual art in collaboration with Dancers' Workshop, Off Square Theatre, and pARTners.

Summer Sing (Grades 6-9) July 7-11: singers learn different musical styles and genres and various vocal techniques from classical to pop, with TCSD Choir Program.

Summer Strings (Grades 6-9) July 14-18: violin, viola, cello, and bass students learn from Grand Teton Music Festival musicians, attend open rehearsals, and perform at Walk Festival Hall, with TCSD Orchestra Program.

\*

#### OFF-SITE PROGRAMS

(Year Round)

As many as 75 participants served in community settings.

After-the-Bell Strings (Grades 4-5): TCSD students learn stringed instruments and build a strong foundation for middle school orchestra.

Music Therapy: Group sessions for individuals with special needs at TCSD special education classrooms (youth) or Community Entry Services, a residential treatment facility (adults).

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

TMS offers a student-centered, flexible approach to music education. Our instructors bring diverse methods and curricula, tailoring lessons to the individual needs and goals of their students. This flexibility fosters meaningful, personalized growth for each student, whether they are developing technical skills or exploring creativity. We aim to create an environment where students feel empowered, safe, and confident in their ability to explore and grow within the music they create and perform. Our arts learning goals are designed to foster a connection between students' musical learning and their personal interests, with the overall objective of nurturing a lifelong love of music.

#### PRIVATE LESSONS

Goals are tailored to each individual based on their skill level, experience, personal goals, and the teaching approach of the instructor. Students collaboratively develop their goals through ongoing assessments and

feedback from instructors, creating a strong connection between the music they play and their everyday lives. For example, an intermediate piano student who wishes to play a specific video game song will learn theory, technique, and musicality through that piece, expanding their knowledge while developing technical skills.

## ROCK BANDS & GROUP PROGRAMS

With a trajectory from absolute beginner to advanced band member, the goal is for students to develop the ability to lead or perform in a rock band. Beyond the skills needed to play an instrument (students must also take private lessons), all aspects of musicianship are explored. Students learn music theory, ensemble etiquette, proper setup and teardown of band equipment, responsibility, promotion, and teamwork. Rock Band Prep serves as the launchpad, giving students in grades 3-5 with little to no musical experience a taste of being in a band. They learn fundamentals of keyboard, strings, drumming, and song structure, honing individual skills while learning to work as a team. Elementary Rock Band builds on this, giving grade 3-5 students with basic proficiency further musical literacy and rehearsal techniques. Intermediate students in grades 6-12 join bands that allow advanced growth, including writing and performing their own original music. Similar individual and group goals apply across our other group classes.

## CREATIVE AGING

For older adults, programs like Uke55 focus on building skills necessary to play music in a group, providing a fun, accessible entry point to learning the ukulele. Arts learning goals are for participants to gain a basic understanding of rhythm, melody, harmony, specific techniques, and the development of group cohesion and communication skills. Participants engage in hands-on learning and experience the joy of making music with others. This social and musical engagement promotes community-building, improves self-esteem, and fosters lifelong learning.

## COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS & OUTREACH

Goals vary by program. The goal of After-the-Bell Strings is to provide students with foundational skills to prepare them for 6th grade orchestra in school—learning the parts of their instrument, how to properly hold it and their bow, techniques for bowing and plucking the strings, beginning to read music, and the ability to follow a conductor in a group setting. Music Therapy goals are highly individualized for each client and are co-developed with the primary care providers in each setting to achieve non-musical outcomes. For example, someone might experiment with musical dynamics to reach a sensory goal of increasing comfort with loud sounds or trade off phrases of a group song to achieve a social goal, such as making eye contact.



## NOTE

We consulted the Wyoming Arts Council and confirmed that alignment with state and national arts curriculum standards is not expected for this application. Instead, we were encouraged to emphasize the unique, student-centered approach we use to create meaningful learning outcomes tailored to our students' needs.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

TMS teachers are working professional musicians with many years of experience of professional teaching and performing, recording, composition, and theory. Teachers are responsible for private lessons, ensembles, group classes and summer camps. They are selected for musical and teaching skill and their ability to foster an engaging, inclusive learning environment.

## FACULTY

Collin Binko, saxophone/Jazz Band/camps - Bachelor in Music Education/Jazz Performance, Duquesne University; Milken Educator Award winning music teacher at Jackson Hole High School, TCSD Fine Arts Coordinator.

Emma Bittner, violin/cello/After School Strings - Bachelor in Music Education, University of North Texas; Music teacher, Colter and Moran Elementary Schools

Ed Domer, drummer/percussionist/Rock Bands - toured with The Letterman, The Drifters, Jennifer Batten; over decades of teaching, many of his students are now professional musicians

Melissa Elliott, camps - singer/songwriter with Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies, University of Denver. Director of Choirs, JH Middle School.

Tom Goicoechea, piano/guitar/Music Therapy - Board Certified Music Therapist, multiple music degrees; taught youth -college level; Music Therapist at C-Bar-V Ranch Residential Treatment Facility

Vince Gutwein, camps - Director of Strings at JH Middle School since 2005; Music Director JH Youth Orchestra; Music Education Bachelors and Masters, University of Wyoming

Clay Humphrey, guitar/ukulele/piano/banjo/mandolin - rooted in the bluegrass and western traditions of his family's musical theater, Bar J Chuckwagon

Susan Jones, piano/guitar/ukulele/creative aging - educator since 2009, keys with Chanman Roots Band; multi-generational and creative aging trained.

Tori Lund, piano/voice/guitar/songwriting - Bachelor of Arts in Music, Masters of Music in Vocal Performance, cofounder/vocalist/guitarist of band A Few Miles South

Joe Rudd, piano/woodwinds/production/Rock Bands - Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies, University of Utah; composer, music producer.

Molly Moon Thorn, voice/piano/guitar/ukulele/Music Together/camps - Bachelor in Theatre Arts, The University of the South, singer/songwriter/vocalist with Chanman Roots Band

Lynnette Turner Parry, voice/youth choir - Bachelor of Fine Arts, Utah State University; Disney cruise ship performer, Riot Act, Inc. and Jazz Foundation of JH

Taylor Upton, guitar/bass/ukulele/Rock Bands - co-founder, lead singer, guitarist of Jackson's premier live events band, Whiskey Mornin', professional performer and collaborator

Clint Weaver, Rock Band Prep/camps - Music Education degrees, Baldwin Wallace Conservatory and Eastman School of Music; additional certification, Gordon Institute of Music Learning; Music teacher at Wilson Elementary

KEY PARTNERS

Partners share resources, co-develop programs, and demonstrate commitment to arts and community, alignment with TMS values, and an ability to partner equitably.

Center for the Arts - TMS is one of 20 lease-holding, nonprofit arts resident organizations

One22 - matches scholarships

Grand Teton Music Festival - world class summer classical music festival with year-round community programming

Off Square Theatre Company, pARTners, Dancers' Workshop, Art Association - Center resident organizations with theater, visual art and dance expertise.

Teton County School District (TCSD) - public school district's after-school program collaborates with community partners to deliver enriching arts content.

### **Budget Narrative**

TMS operates on a fiscal year of July 1 - June 30 with a conservative business model; core programs like private lessons are self-funding. Two-thirds of our budget comes from earned revenue (tuition, rental income), with the remaining third from grants, charitable contributions, and in-kind donations (mostly musical instruments). TMS builds partnerships to extend the impact of our available funds, for example, One22 matches extracurricular scholarships for low-income families, effectively doubling the impact of TMS's awards, and The Center provides TMS with below-market rent as a resident organization. Our expenses—teaching and program personnel, occupancy, musical equipment, administrative expenses, and marketing—directly support our programs and mission. As TMS grows, we are developing a structured fundraising plan to ensure long-term sustainability for the organization and offer more support for our teachers, providing them with career stability and growth opportunities.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN JACKSON HOLE, WYOMING

WWW.STJOHNSJACKSON.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Jackson Indigenous Art Market 2025

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

“St. John’s is a passionate, imperfect family dedicated to making a love-spreading difference in our community and beyond.”

Our mission is intentionally broad as we are always seeking new and creative ways to spread love. JIAM exemplifies this spirit.

There are 2 main goals for this event: to expose our community to new artists, art forms, and cultures, and to create a welcoming environment for artists to display and sell their work. Jackson is an ideal location to maximize exposure for the artists. In its third year, JIAM is becoming a thriving arts event for underrepresented artists, leading to strong sales and significant growth in recognition for participating artists. 100% of sales go directly to the artists. Specific goals for 2025 include: hosting 25-30 artists and attracting 400 visitors over the 2-day event; ensuring a wide range of tribal representation and diverse art forms; fostering lasting connections between artists and the community; further establishing JIAM as a premier event for Indigenous art in the Mountain West; engaging more the local community members through volunteer opportunities; exploring sponsorship opportunities with local businesses to diversify funding sources.

### Community

Teton County presents a unique demographic landscape characterized by contrasts. In our community is made up of a diverse group of individuals—including tourists, longtime residents, affluent second homeowners, and essential workers. Our goal is to bring all of these people together to share in cultural enrichment through art. We strive to provide a range of artistic offerings accessible to people at all income levels, from original pieces to affordable prints. JIAM is free and open to the public. To reach a diverse audience, we promote the event through newspapers, radio, social media, and banners. Our commitment to radical hospitality encompasses inclusivity for individuals of all ages, abilities, cultural backgrounds, and gender identities. We maintain a wheelchair-accessible campus and have trained volunteers on-site during the event to assist visitors with various needs. This includes addressing accommodation requests and resolving issues as they arise. We continuously refine our strategies for community engagement and accessibility. For instance, last year a visitor in a wheelchair told us that having the tents several feet from the sidewalk made it more difficult to access the exhibits, which we will address in our layout in 2025. We strive to create a welcoming environment where all individuals feel valued and empowered to

participate in our cultural offerings. In summary, our community engagement efforts are clearly defined, demonstrating our commitment to inclusivity and accessibility for nondominant communities, including those with disabilities. By fostering an environment of welcome and support, we aim to enhance access and participation for all members of our diverse community.

## **Evaluation**

Our evaluation methods for JIAM focus on both the artist and visitor experiences, aligning with our goal of creating an environment of radical hospitality for all participants. The data gathered informs planning for future events.

Visitor Experience: Quantifiable measurements include head counts periodically throughout the event to estimate visitor numbers and identify peak times and slower periods. Interactive measurements include engaging visitors in conversation to gather feedback on their experience. We ask if they enjoyed the event, what they enjoyed most, whether they made any purchases, what they would like to see more or less of at future events, and if they would attend again.

Artist Experience: Quantifiable measurements include tracking the number of participating artists, diversity of tribal representation, represented art forms and price points, sales and commissions made during the event. Interactive measurements include engaging artists in conversation about logistics - the ease of the check-in/check-out process and whether artists received adequate support and care throughout the weekend – as well as suggested improvements, what they enjoyed most, and whether they would participate again. In 2025 we will provide volunteers with an evaluation form to use in these conversations so we are asking consistent questions of all the artists.

Additionally, we conduct a post-event debrief with staff and volunteers to review what worked well, what didn't, and identify potential improvements for future events. This collaborative reflection helps us enhance logistics, marketing, and artist support while informing strategic decisions about the event's growth.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Our general operating budget prioritizes maintaining the critical aspects of our core work as a church community. We support a large campus, a vital staff of a dozen people, a vibrant community, and multiple mission projects. For special events like JIAM, we offer support through space and significant in-kind donations (valued at approximately \$8,500), while seeking donations and matching grants to offset hard costs. Through other grants and donations, we are able to cover a number of expenses, including, hotel accommodations, equipment rental licenses/permits, event security, food and drinks, gift bags, volunteer thank you gifts, a photographer and sound technician, for a total cost of \$45,800. Requested operating support from this grant would help cover the following:

1. Facility Maintenance & Supplies (\$2,200): Ensures a safe and welcoming environment for all attendees, fostering a sense of belonging and increasing community engagement, particularly for those who may feel marginalized.
2. Artist Fees (\$4,500): Compensates artists for their expertise in planning the event, as well as art, dancing, and drumming demonstrations, attracting high-quality talent that provides enriching cultural experiences and fosters cross-cultural understanding within our community.

3. Marketing (\$7,500): Funds targeted outreach initiatives to promote JIAM and increase community engagement.

This operating support will allow us to leverage our existing in-kind contributions and grants to create a high-impact event that benefits both artists and the community and directly supports the church's mission. Over the next two years, we are actively pursuing additional funding sources, such as sponsorships from local businesses, to help ensure the long-term sustainability of JIAM. By clearly defining our operating costs and intended allocation of funds, we demonstrate our dedication to transparency and responsible stewardship of resources, ultimately enhancing our ability to foster cultural understanding and appreciation through art.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Together with Our Father's House in Ethete, St. John's is proud to host the 3rd annual Jackson Indigenous Art Market on the St. John's Campus October 4-5 from 10:00-4:00. The event features authentic artwork from the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes, along with acclaimed Indigenous artists from the high plains and greater Mountain West. The event will enhance exposure to a diverse array of Indigenous art forms and artists, promoting a deeper understanding of unique and varied Indigenous cultures, individuals, and art forms.

JIAM is distinguished by its exclusive focus on contemporary Indigenous fine art and incorporates educational elements such as artist talks and demonstrations of traditional craft techniques, as well as the hugely popular traditional dancing and drumming demonstrations. We intentionally keep the event small – no more than 30 artists – focusing on quality over quantity. The event's limited size provides the artists and visitors the unique opportunity to deeply engage with one another, which is not possible in larger events. In the first two years, many artists sold out, received commissions, or established connections with local gallery owners, contributing to a vibrant exchange of ideas and cultures.

Our core team is blessed to have the expertise of three world-class indigenous artists, Jackie Sevier, Robert Martinez, and Bruce Cook. To guarantee the quality and diversity of art, the event is by invitation only, although artists can submit their names for consideration. Sevier, Martinez, and Cook evaluate, invite, and coordinate the artists for JIAM. Sevier, a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe, draws inspiration from the legends and traditions of her native Wind River Reservation, and has received numerous awards for her work. Martinez, of Chicano and Northern Arapaho descent, holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and his work is featured in prestigious collections, such as the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. Cook is an acclaimed Haida artist who creates sculptures, silk-screen prints, carved masks, canoes and painted drums. He trained under the guidance of his uncle, Warren Peele, a master artist in the Village of Hydaburg, Alaska. The expertise of Sevier, Martinez and Cook provides invaluable connections that enhance the quality and authenticity of JIAM.

JIAM 2024 included artists Dan Simonds (Pequot), Marty Red Bear (Oglala and Sicangu Lakota), Eugene Ridgley (Northern Arapaho), Debbie Rattling Leaf (Northern Arapaho), Jeff Gloyd (Northern Arapaho), Morningstar Martin

(Lemhi Shoshone-Piute), Wade Patton (Oglala Lakota), Gene Swallow (Oglala Sioux), Brent Learned (Cheyenne-Arapaho), Ben Pease (Crow/Northern Cheyenne), Joanne Brings Thunder (Eastern Shoshone), Carlin Bear Don't Walk (Crow/Northern Cheyenne), Della BigHair Stump (Crow), and Neta Old Elk (Crow).

Anticipated outcomes include great cultural exposure for our community; artist connections with art collectors and local gallery owners; community engagement that fosters a deeper understanding of Indigenous cultures; sustainable growth that establishes JIAM as an annual cornerstone event in Jackson. JIAM creates a valuable experience for both artists and our community, facilitating meaningful conversations and deepening understanding. By connecting artists, art lovers, and curious art novices, we enrich our region's cultural landscape.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

JIAM has received funding from the Episcopal Foundation of Wyoming, Teton County Tourism Bureau, and Wyoming Arts Council. We offset costs through in-kind donations from St. John's, including the event location, on-site staffing, event setup and teardown, sound equipment, and hospitality services, as well as essential supplies, cleaning, facility maintenance, and the provision of tents, tables, and chairs for the artists. The requested grant funds will help cover the cost of equipment rentals, security services, marketing and advertising, performer stipends, food and beverages, and hotel accommodations.

This budget reflects a carefully planned and balanced approach to financial management, demonstrating our commitment to the long-term sustainability and growth of JIAM. The diverse funding sources and strategic partnerships underscore our ability to effectively manage resources and deliver a successful and impactful event.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

GILLETTE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

GILLETTECHAMBERSINGERS.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Gillette Chamber Singers 2025-2026

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission Statement: To offer adults in the community and region an opportunity to prepare and perform choral music, contributing to the cultural enrichment of the community through live choral performances and collaborations with professional musicians, students, and religious organizations.

Strategic goals flow from the Mission Statement, are reviewed and revised annually by the Board of Directors and shared with the membership.

Goals based on "offering the community and region an opportunity to prepare, perform and listen to choral music":

- 1) Providing members the opportunity to grow in musical skills and appreciation through rehearsals and performances.
- 2) Holding periodic auditions for new singers to grow membership. Making audition information available on our website.

Goals based on "contributing to the cultural enrichment of the community":

- 1) Offering a minimum of four free public performances in the community annually.
- 2) Seeking to increase audience diversity by identifying and performing at outreach venues. Two new outreach performances took place in 2024.
- 3) Developing a more effective audience evaluation tool. New tool to debut in 2025.

Goals based on "collaborations with professional musicians, students and religious organizations":

- 1) Seeking out opportunities for collaborations through networking and relationships. Established collaborations include the Powder River Symphony, Gillette Community Band, Gillette Ministerial Association, and Gillette Children's Choir. One new partnership took place in 2024.
- 2) Engaging with young people by hosting an annual high school choral workshop with adult singers. The Fall Choral Festival began in 2023. An analysis of the event resulted in several recommendations for improvement implemented with the second event in 2024.



Additional operational goals:

- 1) Continue to develop alternative sources of funding to ensure future stability. We received one new grant in 2024.
- 2) Operate with fiscal responsibility.

## **Community**

Campbell County is the third most populous county in Wyoming, situated in the Powder River Basin, the largest coal-producing region in the U.S.

According to the Census Bureau, Campbell County's population in 2020 was 47,026. 72% of the population is aged 18 and over, and 28% is under age 18. People with disabilities under age 65 account for 9.4% of the county's population and the population density per square mile was 9.8.

The Gillette Chamber Singers (GCS) considers demographic data to encourage participation in its activities by members and audiences, focusing on increasing access for older adults and those with disabilities in our rural area.

Gillette has a vibrant performing arts community, but GCS is the only group of its kind and fulfills a unique niche by regularly performing live choral music.

GCS actively works to include and engage nondominant communities by providing:

A minimum of four free public concerts annually.

Opportunities for senior citizens to experience live choral music in locations where they live and gather.

Promotion of concerts in locations with access to public transportation, i.e., senior centers.

Appropriate translations of lyrics in performance programs when selections are not sung in English.

Sign language interpretation at public concerts for the hard of hearing.

Outreach activities to engage students in learning and performing choral music.

An audition process open to all interested adults.

A process for members to request financial assistance with annual dues.

GCS addresses requests for accommodations by providing:

A primary rehearsal and performance venue that is ADA accessible, including an elevator.

Secondary performance venues that are ADA accessible.

Specific accommodations for singers that are unable to stand during performances.

## **Evaluation**

The impact of our programs and services in the community is measured through these data collection methods:

Counting audience attendance at each performance.

Qualitative feedback from audience members is gathered and compiled.

Qualitative feedback from singers is gathered and compiled.

Qualitative feedback from any guest artists and other collaborators is gathered and compiled.

Concerts are donation only, with donation amounts noted and compared to those from previous performances.

Additional donor monetary support is documented and compared to previous programs and/or seasons.

Social media is monitored to encourage feedback and comments from followers. This feedback is provided to the Board as appropriate.

The GCS website has a Contact Me function to gather feedback and answer questions.

GCS implements an audience survey at each concert, using a Google form accessed via QR code in the program, with paper forms also available.

GCS surveys its membership using a Google form at the conclusion of each season to evaluate repertoire, communication, rehearsals and musical development.

In addition, artistic evaluation is the ongoing responsibility of the Artistic Director, with opportunities for constructive artistic exchange between the Artistic Director and the singers.

The data is evaluated by:

Comparing measurements against program and operational goals as established annually by the Board of Directors. As gaps are identified, the Board of Directors can develop and implement strategies to address them.

Qualitative data from the audience and membership surveys is brought to the Board for discussion and evaluation.

All data is shared annually with the membership, and there is a group discussion after each event and/or concert to solicit feedback.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

GCS operating costs include annual compensation for the Artistic Director, Assistant Director, and Accompanist/Music Archivist. The Artistic Director is responsible for all artistic decisions and conducting rehearsals and performances with support from the Assistant Director and the Board. The Assistant Director is responsible for conducting any rehearsals and performances in the absence of the Artistic Director. The Accompanist/Music Archivist is responsible for providing piano accompaniment during rehearsals and performances and oversees the GCS music library. Grant funds received will be allocated toward a portion of salary expenses for these positions, for a total request of \$7,500. Other GCS operating costs include purchasing music, marketing for concerts and performances, website design and maintenance fees, program printing costs for concerts and performances, performance fees for any guest artists, rental fees for some concert venues and travel expenses for performances outside Gillette.

GCS annual expenses are detailed below:

Artistic Director compensation: \$12,000

Assistant Director compensation: \$6,000

Accompanist/Music Archivist compensation: \$4,000

Storage rental: \$540

Music library insurance: \$120

Guest musicians/clinician compensation: \$2,500

Annual fundraising event expenses: \$22,000

Music: \$600

Liability insurance: \$750

Printing: \$500

Postage: \$500

Piano tuning: \$400

Non-profit licensing fee: \$25

Website maintenance: \$600

Travel expenses for outreach performances: \$2,500

Total annual expenses: \$52,435

GCS has historically been able to hire a highly qualified Artistic Director. The current Artistic Director has over 29 years' experience in choral conducting and has been a choral clinician and adjudicator since 1990. This ensures our commitment to providing our singers and audiences an engaging and satisfying musical repertoire and high-quality performances. Even though GCS is an auditioned choir, there are varying levels of expertise among the singers, requiring an Artistic Director with the ability to match repertoire with the abilities of the choir, and successfully teach and direct adults to create a pleasing and unified choral sound. A highly qualified Artistic Director also enhances the group's credibility when seeking to create collaborations with other choirs and musicians, both in Gillette and surrounding communities. The current Assistant Director has 31 years' experience teaching music and has been the GCS Assistant Director since 2015. Having a qualified Assistant Director ensures that rehearsals and performances can continue in the absence of the Artistic Director, or as needed for additional performances, such as singing the National Anthem at local events. The GCS accompanist has been with the group since its inception in 1986. An experienced Accompanist/Music Archivist is essential to the success of both rehearsals and performances. We have an extensive music library, and all music purchases are labeled, filed and included in our digital catalog.

Any additional grant allocations will be used to offset travel expenses for choir members to perform concerts outside of Gillette. In 2024 GCS traveled to Casper to perform a joint concert with the Casper Civic Chorale and

Cheyenne Capital Chorale. In 2025 the group performed with the Natrona County High School Choirs in Casper, Wyoming. A joint concert with Black Hills University in Spearfish, South Dakota is planned for 2025.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

Budget planning and monitoring occurs on a continuing basis, utilizing the following funding sources:

Annual membership dues.

Donations from attendees at concerts and other performances. Donations from "A Service of Lessons and Carols" are donated to a local nonprofit organization.

GCS participates in WyoGives, an annual online giving day that raises funds for nonprofits in Wyoming. Funds raised assist in compensation for three staff positions.

Ticket sales from the Christmas Dinners fundraiser assists with expenses associated with this event.

Two community grants assist with expenses for the annual Fall Choral Festival for high school students.

Key partnerships include:

First Presbyterian Church: in-kind donation for our rehearsal and performance venue.

Campbell County Community Public Recreation grant: expenses for the Fall Choral Festival for high school students in northeast Wyoming.

Budgetary decisions are based on strategic goals and are reviewed and approved by the Board.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

THE JACKSON HOLE CHORALE

JACKSONHOLECHORALE.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Jackson Hole Chorale FY 26 Operating Support Request

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

JACKSON HOLE CHORALE MISSION STATEMENT: Providing a community choir, open to all, for learning and performing choral music

The Jackson Hole Chorale provides participants with musical education in classical and contemporary choral music and performs vocal music of the highest caliber for the community.

Our non-auditioned choir consists of 40 – 60 members and performs two major and several smaller concerts each year. We have two choirs: The Jackson Hole Chorale and The Jackson Hole Chorale “Singers”. They represent a mixed group of singers with varying levels of skill and musical backgrounds. All ages and abilities are welcome to come and sing and the Chorale is proud of its ability to meld many voices into a successful ensemble.

Typical concerts feature a large work performed by the entire choir, such as the Mozart Requiem or familiar songs from Broadway and popular music. The “Singers” represent the Chorale in outreach events; the group performs throughout the community, sharing their love of music at the National Museum of Wildlife Art, Senior Center, Rotary Club, People’s Market and the Annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the Town Square. Events include collaboration with other music organizations and guest instrumentalists to enhance the program. We inspire audiences of all ages and each concert typically includes a robust selection of sing-along songs.

### JACKSON HOLE CHORALE STRATEGIC GOALS:

High artistic standards

Innovative programming

Musical and vocal technique education

Community outreach

Recruitment and retention of a high-caliber Artistic Director/Conductor is key to achieving all of our missions. Ronald Fabry has been with the Chorale for 11 years, holds two Master's in music and has deftly managed the task of selecting, coaching and performing a vocal music repertoire that meets and exceeds the expectations of its diverse singers and audiences. The Accompanist/Co-Conductor is also integral to successful rehearsals and performances.

## **Community**

The Jackson Hole area has a wide variety of residents of all socio-economic levels from service workers to the highest-end earners. Selection of each program's music is planned to engage participants regardless of skill level and tastes. Our open door policy, with no auditions required, attracts new singers with a wide range in musical expertise as well as age and background. Rehearsals include ongoing instruction so all participants may understand and master the language of music.

Dues are waived if a participant is financially challenged. No one is denied access to membership. Attendance is encouraged through non-ticketed FREE concerts, removing financial barriers from those who enjoy vocal music.

Selection of the repertoire is key to making the music attainable for the less experienced and engaging for seasoned singers. Using web-loaded recordings of voice parts for at-home practice supports those who are in need due to handicaps or limited musical backgrounds, making it possible for members with visual and hearing difficulties who might not be able to participate otherwise to learn all pieces. We engage sound engineers at concerts to offer the best clarity of sound. Rehearsal and performance venues are accessible with handicap parking, wheelchair and walker access via ramps and elevators. Venues are chosen to encourage public participation by a wide variety of people, including the elderly, youth, veterans, people living in institutions, and other underserved communities with limited access to the Arts.

Invitations and posters and ads are placed throughout the area including the Senior Center, St. John's Medical Center, Sage Living Center and at places for those who have available transportation through their facility but may not have known of our event.

## **Evaluation**

This year our grant writer has done a training in evaluation strategies offered by the WY Arts Council: From Insight to Impact: Evaluation Strategies for Arts and Culture Entities and hopes to implement some new methods:

FOR AUDIENCES: One measure of the success of artistic quality and caliber of performances is how many guests attend each event and the amount of free-will donations. Ushers assist with audience count, demography and collect free-will donations at our post-concert community reception. This year we will also offer a QR code at events which attendees can scan and offer their thoughts on music selection and quality. Another way to engage our audiences in completing post-concert evaluations is to make an evaluation sheet become a raffle entry for a modest prize. Choir members (easily recognizable in concert attire) make themselves available before and after concerts, thanking them for attending and asking how they heard about the event and any comments they may have, which are then relayed to the Board via emails post-concert.

FOR CHOIR MEMBERS - Growth in choir membership is one measure. Following all events, Ron Fabry, Artistic Director, takes time to discuss with choir members their evaluations and ideas on the performance. Members will be given a confidential annual online survey each year providing feedback on their experience with the choir, music preferences and suggestions. The Board is given a summary of the answers in order to work on and maintain a healthy organization.

FOR THE CHORALE BOARD MEMBERS - Their governance and quality of oversight are evaluated by the choir members in the confidential online annual survey. Lively Board discussions of priorities, fundraising and oversight of the budget are key to the success of the organization.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The financial health of the Chorale has been successful primarily due to consistent funding received from grants, ardent fundraising projects, oversight from the Board of Directors, and increased attendance at our events (therefore, more opportunities for increased free-will donations). Our 2023 Christmas Concert was attended by over 475 audience members. The organization has proven its ability to keep up with changing times while maintaining a healthy organization through over forty years of continuous operation. With our community's needs and demand for choral arts entertainment, we are confident that funding support from this grant will anchor the budget, allowing for adequate compensation for performances.

Within operating expenses, almost 50% of our costs are paid as a stipend to Artistic Director/Conductor Ronald Fabry, whose musical expertise and infectious joy in vocal music attracts and retains singers and engages audiences. Our Accompanist/ Co-Conductor Xinlu Huang, a highly-skilled pianist, is also key to rehearsals and performances. Other significant expenses include the purchase of music and the Chorale's online music tracks. These tracks are critical to Chorale members with varying musical skill sets, visual impairment, and physical disabilities that impede regular attendance at rehearsal. For example, one song may have as many as six different "parts"; each of these is available to members on the website for practice at home.

Promotion and advertising costs are a key component of the budget for this grant year. Our programming and participation attracts those who are new to the area as well as visitors and those who maintain part-time homes

here. Many of these folks no longer use the local newspapers as their main source of information about opportunities relating to the Chorale. Previous budgets did not allow for updating our website and Facebook pages and utilizing new media such as online newspapers and local radio. No current members of the choir have the skills to complete these tasks on a volunteer basis so we hope to raise funds to cover these costs. Based upon preliminary quotes, we expect a cost that would be approximately 15% of the annual budget on a one-time basis, with an ongoing cost to maintain these resources of \$2000-\$3000 per year. In addition to improving our social media outreach we are also planning to secure other online outlets to get our message out to prospective members and audiences. For example the local online news outlet, "Buckrail" advertises upcoming events with ad campaigns ranging from \$630-\$1500 per season.

We have generous in-kind support - especially in the value of weekly rehearsal space from St. John's Episcopal Church for 9 months per year, which otherwise would comprise over 20% of funds. Local businesses and donors provide goods and assistance for post-concert receptions where guests and singers may mingle and enjoy refreshments after the programs.

Other expenses include:

- honoraria for collaborating instrumentalists
- performance venue rent
- printing of posters, postcards and postage costs
- accounting and administrative expenses
- storage rent for the music library
- liability insurance
- concert attire for the choir

The Chorale runs a lean operating budget with a focus on granting access to as many members and audience participants as possible. Thoughtful use of funds has allowed us to offer quality choral music to the community for over forty consecutive years.

### **Project Support Narrative**

This year we hope to rejoin our choir with the Teton County School District as we did in 2023. The music program at the school district is administered by Collin Binko, who recently received the Milliken award for Excellence. Creating opportunities to rehearse with students is time-consuming and incurs unique expenses. Any funding towards this project will allow us to help with any expenses incurred for rehearsal venues, insurance, music and honoraria for additional accompanist hours (\$150/session).

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**



## **Arts Learning: Goals**

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

## **Budget Narrative**

Chorale income is a blend of grants, donations, special events, dues and the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole's "Old Bill's Fun Run" fund-matching event.

St. John's Church provides a significant in-kind contribution as rental of a centralized space that includes a piano, seating and acoustics for singers is a scarce and expensive commodity. About 50% of the Chorale budget is for Artistic Director and Accompanist/Co-Conductor, whose qualifications as well as their skills in vocal music training are key to accomplishing the missions of the organization.

This upcoming year includes a plan to bring the website (JacksonHoleChorale.org) up to date. Managing and advertising via social media is a necessary means of communication but is costly. We plan a large one-time expenditure that is expected to represent about 15% of this budget, then return to the maintenance/ongoing costs.

The Chorale banks around six months of funding, which reflects the careful fiscal oversight by our Board.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

THE JACKSON HOLE LAND TRUST

[HTTPS://JHLANDTRUST.ORG/](https://jhlandtrust.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Through the Lens: Wyoming's Land Stewards

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Jackson Hole Land Trust's mission is to protect and steward Northwest Wyoming landscapes for current and future generations. We envision a legacy of resilient open spaces, wildlife habitat, working lands, and community places, forever protected across Northwest Wyoming.

Connection with our local communities is a key part of our conservation work, and arts projects are one of the ways that we make those connections. We feel that place-based art highlighting conserved landscapes is an excellent way to connect people to the land, and to inspire the next generation of land stewards and explorers while working together with local artists.

### Community

The Jackson Hole Land Trust (JHLT) works across Northwest Wyoming, with program areas covering Park, Lincoln, Sublette, Fremont, and Teton Counties. Our goal is to work cooperatively with local landowners and land managers to help safeguard ecosystems, protect migration corridor connectivity, and support agricultural producers and the local heritage of working lands using conservation easements.

To achieve our conservation goals, we must successfully connect with the diverse communities within our program areas across NW Wyoming. As conservation easements are voluntary, the JHLT can only move forward with protection projects when community members value the remarkable landscapes of NW Wyoming, wish to protect those landscapes, and understand the tools available to support that protection. Tied in with habitat and open spaces is also an important element of protecting local and regional agricultural heritage, particularly in Park and Sublette Counties where this project will primarily be focused.

The JHLT engages with our community through public events, periodic listening sessions, and one-on-one conversations with landowners and community members and leaders. As our program areas are focused on a geographic landscape within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, the JHLT must work with communities and communicate our message across the different demographics of areas such as Park, Sublette, and Teton Counties.

Visual arts in particular have become an important part of these communications, as they help to relay our conservation mission and connect community members to the impacts of our work in a way that just words cannot. Making use of visual arts for our communications also allows the JHLT to support local artists through commissions and collaborative exhibitions.

## **Evaluation**

Success for this project will be evaluated through several lenses. This will include the attendance figures at exhibitions of the photos from the project in Park and Sublette Counties, as well as feedback from event attendees. It will also include the successful development of a photo pool that can be used for broader JHLT communications across our program areas, through mediums such as social media, digital communications, and print materials. Feedback on these communications will also help us to evaluate the impact of the photo project.

Another important evaluation lens will be the relationship between artists and the Jackson Hole Land Trust. Success will come in the successful creation of the commissioned art pieces, as well as through satisfactory interactions between the JHLT and commissioned artists. We will request direct feedback from the participating artists and will continue to refine the artist commission process as we have in past years.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

The Jackson Hole Land Trust is seeking support for a visual art project that will highlight the landowners and land managers who make conservation possible in Northwest Wyoming, specifically focusing on our program areas in the Green River Valley (Sublette County) and Park County Open Lands program areas. The goal of this photo series is to capture the spirit of the people and show the essence of the places that make Northwest Wyoming so special, and to use the resulting images to communicate the JHLT's collaborative conservation mission with the broader community.

The Jackson Hole Land Trust's communications and outreach strategy has long included a connection to the arts, which we have found to be an effective tool for communicating our work, our mission, and our conservation goals. Visual arts have helped to connect our communities to conservation challenges and opportunities in a way that words alone cannot, and working collaboratively with local artists has also helped the JHLT to better understand differing community perspectives.

The photo project, titled "Through the Lens: Wyoming's Land Stewards", will allow the JHLT to highlight the people who make land conservation possible in our region – the landowners and land managers who work in connection with the landscape, with a variety of conservation goals and reasons for working towards land conservation. Through striking imagery of Wyoming's vast, protected landscapes and the dedicated landowners who safeguard them, this project will honor the enduring legacy of conservation easements in preserving the West's open spaces for future generations. By putting a spotlight on working lands by focusing on the people connected to them, the

JHLT hopes to honor our partners and highlight the importance of collaboration across communities towards larger goals of landscape-scale conservation.

Structurally, the project will consist of three elements: the development of the photo pool, the hosting of public exhibits in target communities, and the dissemination of the photos through broader means such as social media, email, and print materials. While specific photographers have not yet been identified, the JHLT plans to recruit local photographers within the two target regional program areas to photograph people and properties connected to the Land Trust's work and mission. The plan is to highlight at least three properties/groups within each target program area, hosting at least one photo exhibition per program area (most likely in Pinedale and Cody, respectively, where regional offices are located). Outside of physical exhibitions, the photos that result from the project will provide a useful resource for further sharing and communications.

The exhibitions and photo pool will provide our communities the opportunity to see community members and the places they live through a new lens, sharing the value of the visual arts and our conservation message with the community in a fresh way.

Grant funds will be used to pay for photographers' fees, and for printing costs for hosting the photography exhibitions. Funding from the Wyoming Arts Council will allow the JHLT to conduct the project at a larger scale than would otherwise be possible, increasing the reach of impact, the number of people and places that can be highlighted, and the number of photographers who can be commissioned.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Jackson Hole Land Trust (JHLT) has a stable, diversified funding model. Our work is funded through the generous contributions of individual donors and foundations, grant funding, and investment revenue from five endowments and quasi-endowments.

Our Stewardship team pursues technical equipment donations, and we seek food and beverage donations to offset community event costs. Our budget aligns closely with our mission and land protection efforts. Given the extremely high land prices in this region, our protection and stewardship budgets reflect the significant costs associated with land conservation. Our arts-related projects are typically connected to our communications and outreach work and are tied into those budgets.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

FREMONT COUNTY PIONEER ASSOCIATION

[HTTPS://WWW.MUSEUMOFTHEAMERICANWEST.COM/](https://www.museumoftheamericanwest.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Eagle Spirit Singers and Dancers Performance Series

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Fremont County Pioneer Association's mission is to support and assist the Fremont County Pioneer Museum of Lander, which is dedicated to the preservation of the natural and cultural history of the South Pass, Wind River, and Sweetwater regions of the Central Rocky Mountains. Our goals are to broaden our patrons' appreciation and understanding of the historically significant role this area played in the expansion of the American West.

Education is an integral part of our mission, and we support programs which bring authentic cultural history to life for visitors of all ages. Our museum complex includes the log cabin that housed the first and oldest historical museum in Wyoming, a Pioneer Village of original cabins and buildings housing themed displays from our history, a modern indoor museum space for art, artifacts, and educational displays, picnic areas, nature trail, and outdoor dance arena built for the Eagle Spirit summer dance series.

### Community

Lander, Wyoming is home to hard-working laborers and wealthy retirees, young mountain bikers and 5th generation ranchers. In the summertime, vacationers from all over the world visit our community. Our museum, outdoor pioneer village, and the Wednesday evening dance series are a welcome stop for travelers passing through on their way to national parks. Many stay in Lander to enjoy its access to backcountry adventure and historical sites like the Oregon Trail and South Pass City.

The sound, color, and motion of the dance are accessible for all ages and all abilities. The dancers range in age from toddlers tagging along with their parents to champions on the national circuit, to elders. In keeping with the Native tradition of respect for elders, seniors and people with disabilities are warmly welcomed at these events. Each performance opens with a moment of silence to honor veterans. Disabled adults from the Lander community are frequent attendees and welcomed as participants.

Native Americans are not "nondominant" at our events. We are proud to host an event that is popular with such a wide range of ages, abilities, and cultural backgrounds. The seating area around the dance arena is level grass, wheelchair-accessible, and has easy access to parking and restrooms. Volunteers greet visitors and help carry

chairs, picnic baskets, and blankets. An electric utility vehicle is available to transport visitors or belongings if necessary.

## **Evaluation**

We keep records of attendance, donations, and hometowns of our visitors. The records help us evaluate the best dates for our events, so we can review and schedule accordingly for the next year. They also help us to target our advertising - to churches hosting exchange students, for instance, or organizations who might not be aware of the program. Each year we re-evaluate the schedule, funding, and community response to the dance series before making commitments to the performers.

Throughout the season, the board meets to discuss any concerns or difficulties observed during the events. Most issues can be addressed immediately, like setting out folding chairs in a shady spot on the hottest evenings. Other concerns require more time. Last summer the leader of the Eagle Spirit Dancers asked us to update the name of the event. It's been referred to as "Indian Dances" for many years, and we just needed a little push to start ordering new signs and changing our publicity.

We believe that open communication and record-keeping helps us make the dance series a little better every week and every season.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The Native American Dance Series is held every Wednesday evening from mid-June to mid-August, at our beautiful dance arena shadowed by tepees, with a view of the sunset behind the Wind River mountains. We are requesting support for six dances in July and August of 2023, and two in June of 2024. Ninety-two percent of the requested funding will be used to pay the performers, with the rest for advertising.

The Eagle Spirit Singers are the heartbeat of the event. Seated around their huge drum, they choose the songs and set the mood and rhythm for each dance. The forty or so dancers range in age and skill, from young children to elders, and from novices to seasoned national competitors. Some come every week, and we often have visitors from other tribes and locations, always with something new to share. They demonstrate various costume and dance styles, each with its own distinctive style of dress. The master of ceremonies for the event is George Abeyta, a champion dancer, as well as a schoolteacher on the Wind River Indian Reservation. In his Fancy Feather Dance regalia, he shares Native folklore with respect and humor, drawing connections between past and present, native and non-native. George schedules the performers, and at each event he explains the history and symbolism in the costumes and dances.

Each performance begins with an acknowledgement of the sacrifices of veterans in the Native community and in the audience. Groups of dancers then take turns demonstrating different styles, each accompanied by an appropriate song chosen by the drum group. The dances usually include Traditional, Fancy Feather, Grass Dancing, Jingle Dress, Fancy Shawl, and usually conclude with an amazing Hoop Dance. Partway through the presentation, the emcee cajoles audience members to step into the arena and dance in a style of their choosing. The results are predictably comical, and occasionally impressive. A few of the Eagle Spirit dancers act as judges, choosing finalists

and then awarding each winner with a Sacagawea dollar coin. At the close of the evening, performers bring audience members into the arena for a Friendship Dance.

First-time spectators as well as those who have been to dozens of performances are equally moved by the dazzling regalia, the wild singing and drumming, and the warmth of the gathering. They may not realize that the performers are benefitting even more. They see each gathering as an opportunity to learn from each other, to encourage younger dancers, and to strengthen pride in their cultural heritage.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

#### **Budget Narrative**

The Pioneer Association is able to host the Eagle Spirit Dance Performance Series with support from a number of sources, including visitor donations, contributions from local businesses, funds from our annual barbecue, matching donations through Lander Community Foundation's annual Challenge for Charities, and grants from the Lander Recreation Board and Lander Chamber of Commerce. Grants from Wyoming Arts Council has been one of our most important sources of support.

Our dedicated volunteers handle publicity, grounds maintenance, set up of chairs, tables, public address system, refreshments for performers and spectators, and restroom cleaning at the end of each event.

We continually seek ways to streamline operations and stretch our limited funds so we can continue providing valuable experiences - like the Eagle Spirit Performances - to our community's residents and visitors.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

THE NEW MUSEUM AT THE BRADFORD BRINTON RANCH DBA THE BRINTON MUSEUM

[HTTPS://THEBRINTONMUSEUM.ORG/](https://thebrintonmuseum.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Exhibitions, Research, and Arts Learning Programs Support - The Brinton Museum (Big Horn, WY)

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

(Mission Statement) The Brinton Museum connects people to the past, present and future of the American West through its historic Quarter Circle A Ranch, Fine Art, and Western & American Indian Art Collections.

(Vision Statement) Enriching connections to the land, people and cultures of the West.

(History & Context) The Brinton Museum was established as an institution dedicated to American Indian art and culture and American fine and decorative art. It is our desire to continue and expand upon the work of Helen Brinton, who in 1960 established an institution named after her brother Bradford. Helen's intent was to preserve the Quarter Circle A Ranch and the Brintons' collections of fine art, furnishings, historic and American Indian artifacts and make them accessible to the public. Building and expanding on the vision of our founders, The Brinton Museum will focus on collections development, outreach, and scholarship for 2025-2026.

(Strategic Goals) 1) An assessment of the collections led by the museum's curatorial department with the professional assistance of highly-qualified persons in the field. Assessment work began in February 2025 and continuing through the end of the year with an end goal date of January 2026. Outside principal consultants include Christina E. Burke and Michael R. Grauer. Ms. Burke's qualifications include curatorial responsibilities at the Philbrook Museum of Art, National Museum of the American Indian, and the National Museum of Natural History. Mr. Grauer held the position of McCasland Chair of Cowboy Culture/Curator of Cowboys Collections and Western Art at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum from 2018-2024. 2) Development in community outreach and building partnerships in exhibition and educational planning. 3) Broadening the scope of scholarly research to support exhibitions. 4) Installation of appropriate door hardware at the entrance to the Forrest E. Mars, Jr. Building to better meet ADA compliance.

### Community

The Brinton Museum (TBM) is located Big Horn (pop. 492), 12 miles south of Sheridan (pop. 19,543), and receives more than 25,000 visitors annually from all 50 states, and abroad. Sheridan County (pop. 32,519) is a thriving artistic community serving a rural/residential population and a vibrant tourism industry. TBM partners with a variety of arts-related and educational organizations to provide quality educational programming, diverse visual and performing arts experiences, and enrichment related to the stories, history, traditions, and unique geographic



location of Sheridan County in the American West. Educational programs serve Native American communities, seniors, K-12, and post-secondary education. TBM works with Sheridan College in providing student internships which focus on Museum Studies and provide a strong foundation in the various curatorial operations of a world-class museum. TBM has been enormously successful in working with Little Bighorn College on the Crow Reservation, Northern Cheyenne Tribal Preservation Office, and the Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Office in addressing relevant issues pertaining to matters of cultural significance. The dialogue between the museum and Northern Great Plains Indian Peoples echoes a vital, larger national conversation. The Brinton is equally supportive of Bighorn Arts Collective, an interdisciplinary arts entity, and is an active partner and program participant.

Our accessibility adherence includes ease-of-access ramps, an elevator, wheelchairs, handicapped parking, and handicapped restrooms. Requests for accommodation are taken by our visitor services staff who work in partnership with various departmental staff to ensure visitors, regardless of their specific needs, can participate in all offerings of the museum.

### **Evaluation**

The museum tracks its visitation numbers through electronic kiosks in the entrance lobby. This system allows the museum to collect data on the diversity of visitors (if known), percentage of repeat visitors (such as members and patrons), and also the percentage of new visitors. Since opening the FEMJ Building in 2015, the museum has seen an annual increase in overall visitation numbers showing an expanding audience. Visitation/participation from schools, workshops (summer art camp, science art camp), artists' workshops, and educational lecture programs are well-attended and draw engagement from a broad circle within the area and also outside of Wyoming. Evaluation of the visitor experience through a brief survey provided on an iPad at the reception desk has been successful in collecting feedback from visitors on the collections, programs, maintenance of the grounds, and the overall visitor experience. The reception desk has been successful in acquiring visitor comments and reviews after touring the exhibit galleries, grounds and ranch house. These comments are shared with the curators and upper management. Review of data collected takes place at a staff level with relevant departments providing thoughtful discussion on the success and/or improvements that can be implemented. The Board is kept apprised of these issues and is encouraged to share critical thoughts with senior staff. The museum continues to reach out to the community in various ways to make visitation and programs accessible to an at-large audience. An example includes members of the curatorial department providing transportation for visiting artists from local residencies to bring them to The Brinton Museum for guided tours of the exhibition galleries.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Brinton Museum serves the community by furthering its mission through scholarly exhibitions and educational programming with a focus on history and diverse cultures of the region. The museum seeks funding to support research, development and presentation activities for three exhibitions over the course of the grant period: "Her View: Women Artist in the Collection", "The Unfinished War: The Battle of the Little Bighorn in Native American Art", and "New Light on the American West".

The 2025 season at The Brinton focuses on women of the West, culminating with the exhibition of "Her View", featuring works by women artists in the collection (October to December 2025). Women have always been a force in the arts even if overshadowed in a field historically dominated by men. According to the National Museum of Women in the Arts, 51 percent of visual artists today are women. "Her View" features 15 modern/contemporary women artists represented in the institution's permanent collection and comprises nearly 40 works of art. Featured artists include Marie Dorothy Newell Dolph (1884-1979), a Wyoming artist; Ludmila Dranchak (1946-2018), a Ukrainian refugee who made Wyoming home; and Neltje (1934-2021), a nationally-known abstract expressionist painter and patron of the arts. Additional artists are primarily from Wyoming with a few residing outside the state. A woman speaker for the Fall Into Art educational lecture programs will be invited to present a talk on women and their role in the arts. The museum is seeking funding to support administrative and curatorial staff fees as well as travel expense, meals, and honorarium for a guest speaker.

The 2026 season focuses on shared histories with two major exhibitions planned: "The Unfinished War: The Battle of the Little Bighorn in Native American Art" and "New Light on the American West".

"The Unfinished War: The Battle of the Little Bighorn in Native American Art" (summer 2026) looks at the visual records that Native American pictographic artists created to memorialize the defeat of the Seventh Cavalry. Brinton Museum Curatorial Director Jochen Wierich, PhD. is seeking important loan material for this show and is the primary research person leading this program. No other battle between American Indians and the U.S. military has so persistently occupied the American collective psyche, and this exhibition turns the table on what has been the myth of General George A. Custer. It examines the events of June 25, 1876 through Native American eyes. The museum requests support for extensive research and loan fees for borrowed works in the exhibition.

"New Light on the American West" (fall 2026) comprises a contemporary reevaluation of 19th and early 20th century photography. This exhibition showcases historically important photographs of Western America and early Wyoming related to geological exploration by highly-regarded photographers of the period. Topics include The Survey Aesthetic, Yosemite & Yellowstone, Expansion & Exploration, Indians, and the American West. Former Senior Curator of Photography at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, author, and consultant, Keith Davis, a resident of Sheridan, is the lead curator for this exhibit. The museum is seeking support for extensive scholarly research over the grant period for the use in origination of print material, gallery interpretation text, and educational programs.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Arts learning opportunities serve as a key component in The Brinton Museum's growth and engagement. The museum cultivates a core group of docents who are trained to give guided tours of the exhibition galleries and are available to interact with visitors to answer questions about artists, art, and the history of the Quarter Circle A Ranch. Seasonal staff is trained to give tours of the Ranch House and grounds and also assist visitors by directing them to the access points for two nature trails on the property.

Our popular Summer Art Camp continues each year offers hands-on art activities for children (suggested ages 9 to 12). The art camp structure comprises 3 art instructors working in different media ranging from bookmaking and learning the intaglio print process, to painted portraits and jewelry making. This past year ceramics was introduced and will continue to be offered as a summer program. Scholarships for under-served populations are made available through museum application by contacting the education department. Grant support will be used for instructors' honorariums, art supplies, lunch meals, and instructors' stipends. Summer Art Camp instructors must have a solid background in the visual arts and demonstrate an ability to work well with a young audience.

An outdoor 3-day Nature Camp takes place in July. The camp comprises up to 3 instructors from Bighorn Audubon Society and also Dave McKee, an archeologist from the area. Participants are provided walking tours of the trails and learn to identify various bird species, plants, trees, and the biodiversity found along Little Goose Creek. Participants are then provided an opportunity to create art projects incorporating the biodiversity topics which are focus of the camp. Grant support will be used for instructors' honorariums.

The "All-Schools 5th Grade Student Art Show" held each year in February is a highly successful art program open to Sheridan County School Districts 1, 2 & 3; Johnson County schools, elementary private schools in Sheridan, Story Elementary School, and is open to participation by the Crow/Apsaalooke elementary schools in Montana and the Northern Cheyenne elementary schools also in Montana. Each teacher may submit up to 20 works with the finished exhibitions displaying as many as 200 items. This past season's two exhibit receptions were attended by more than 350 students, parents and teachers.

Various lectures by visiting historians and scholars are held throughout the year in complement to the exhibitions programs. The 2025 Fall Into Art lecture series focuses on history, culture, and the museum's collections. Previous speakers have lectured on topics such as Plains Indian pictographic painting, Blackfeet culture, and American artist Bill Gollings. The 2025 series will include guest speakers addressing Native American culture and traditions; women in the arts; and a look at the upcoming 2026 exhibition on the 150th anniversary of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. In addition to Curatorial Director Jochen Wierich, potential speakers to be confirmed are Donovan Sprague (Lakota) who teaches history and political science at Sheridan College, including Wyoming Tribal History and American Indian History & Culture, and Christina E. Burke, former Curator of American Indian Art at the Philbrook Museum in Tulsa who specializes in Plains Indians pictographic art. Grant support will be used for guest speaker honoraria, travel, hotel accommodations, and meals.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Arts Learning Goals are intertwined with the museum's overall aim to provide informative, educational opportunities through its exhibitions programs, workshops, and lectures as well as informing visitors about the fascinating history, culture, and traditions of the Quarter Circle A Ranch. The Brinton Museum is unique in that its holdings of Western and American Indian art offer a direct connection to the geography and the history of the peoples who once called the foothills of the Bighorn Mountains home. The "To Honor the Plains Nations" American Indian Gallery is an excellent example of items, pre-reservation era and post-reservation era reflective of the Great Plains Nations and the tribes who hunted in the Bighorns and camped along Little Goose Creek, running diagonally through the Quarter Circle A property. The core of Bradford Brinton's collections of Western Art, Native American

art, and also fine art by 20th & 21 century artists such as Pablo Picasso, Edward Hopper, and George Bellows, to site a few examples, offer a plethora of rich material. Bradford Brinton collected art of Western subject by artistic masters of the early 20th century: Frederic Remington, Charles M. Russell, Frank Tenney Johnson, and Winold Reiss. Their works are on display in the Gallery of Western Art, offering multiple connections to the history of the American West.

In developing educational programming, the museum strives to interweave these subjects into the content of its arts learning projects. The Summer Art Camp experience for a young audience is intended to foster a hands-on appreciation for the arts as well as an understanding of different art mediums. The success of the participants finished art projects are a testament to the intensity of the program. The goal is for each student to have accomplished a solid sense of learning something new about various arts activities. While this program is very successful, marked by its sold-out nature each year, we continue to work to diversify the instructors, art mediums and community demographics that are engaged with this program.

The Brinton Museum's Fall Into Art educational lecture series expands on the content and context of the museum's exhibitions and collections. Knowledgeable speakers are asked to present critical thinking about art, artists, and also history, traditions, and culture. Attendees are encouraged to participate in Q&A time which always leads to lively discussion.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The Brinton Museum engages a number of artists, educators and consultants in the implementation of our Arts Learning activities. These individuals are selected through a collaborative brainstorming process that includes members of our American Indian Advisory Council, National Advisory Council, curatorial staff and Executive Director. Input is also sought from our museum membership base through an annual membership survey requesting feedback on subjects for educational programming.

The museum will engage three guest art instructors to lead Summer Art Camp:

- 1) Sophia Clarke is a secondary education art instructor from Rapid City, SD. Originally from the Bahamas, Clarke now resides in the Black Hills, where she focuses on art and English education. Her work draws on themes of folklore, social issues, and the natural world, all connected to her cultural roots.
- 2) Hope Christofferson, an MFA candidate at the University of California, Santa Barbara, will also assist specializes in traditional mediums, particularly watercolor and oil painting, with an interest in ceramics as well. Christofferson is a graduate student at UCSB and traveling the world researching mythological creatures for a modern bestiary, exploring the intersection of myth and technology.
- 3) Katie B. H. Wolff holds an MFA in Print Media from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is a Professor at Black Hills State University. Wolff is an interdisciplinary artist working in printmaking, fibers, collage, sculpture, and writing. She brings a diverse skill set to her teaching and creative practices.

The museum will also engage four guest instructors for Nature Camp:

- 1) Margo Hennes, is a veterinarian and educator with a passion for animal welfare. She has worked across clinical medicine, education, research, product development, and data analytics, and brings a unique perspective to the nature camps.
- 2) Dave McKee is an archaeologist with 36 years of experience with the U.S. Forest Service. He has served as both an archaeologist and tribal liaison at Fort Phil Kearny.
- 3) JoAnne Puckett leads the Bighorn Audubon Society, focusing on education, bird counts, and conservation efforts in the region.
- 4) Pam Moore is a retired music educator and author. After a 24-year career teaching music, Moore shifted her focus to birds and authored Wyoming Birds for Kids. She is now an active member of the Bighorn Audubon Society, based in Sheridan, Wyoming, where she shares her love of birds with others.

The museum is still confirming guest lecturers for Fall Into Art, but those who are being considered include:

- 1) Donovan Sprague (Lakota) who teaches history and political science at Sheridan College, including Wyoming Tribal History and American Indian History & Culture.
- 2) Christina E. Burke, former Curator of American Indian Art at the Philbrook Museum in Tulsa who specializes in Plains Indians pictographic art.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Brinton Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and our annual operating budget is funded through three primary sources. Private donations cultivated through fundraisers, from private and public foundations in the form of grants, and from private individuals support 50% of our annual budget. Distributions from endowment earnings support 25% of our annual budget, and the final 25% of our annual budget is supported through earned income from the operation of our bistro, catering and event services, and museum store.

The museum's annual operating budget supports free admission to over 25,000 visitors annual and supports a robust exhibition and education program schedule. Each year, The Brinton Museum presents an average of twelve rotating exhibitions, maintains three permanent collections exhibits, preserves our historic ranch holdings and collection of American Indian and Western art, and offers approximately 40 educational programs and events to the public and our members.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

THE SCIENCE ZONE INC.

WWW.THESCIENCEZONE.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: steAm at The Science Zone

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

Mission Statement:

The Science Zone seeks to Inspire Curiosity by becoming the statewide nucleus of interactive Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) exploration.

Strategic Objectives:

Create Partnerships: Establish partnerships in every county in Wyoming to expand outreach and accessibility.

Develop Unrestricted Funds: Attain funds equivalent to 25% of the operating budget to ensure financial sustainability and flexibility.

Create Quality Programs: Design programs that address community needs and align with educational goals.

Implement Growth Master Plan: Develop and execute a comprehensive master plan for museum growth and development.

Core Values:

Inquiry: Foster scientific exploration and understanding as the foundation of our mission.

Inclusion and Diversity: Recognize the value of diversity and promote inclusive practices in STEAM education.

Service: Increase access to STEAM education through collaborative partnerships and outreach efforts.

Growth: Constantly improve our offerings and reach to enhance impact and relevance.

Adventure: Embrace the excitement and discovery inherent in scientific exploration.

Values Driven Strategic Framework:

The Science Zone's current 12-month strategy focuses on Building and Maintaining Relationships, emphasizing statewide partnerships with libraries and other agencies in every county in Wyoming.

#### Additional Emphasis:

The organization values high-quality and inviting museum experiences, excellence in service, continuous learning, and active community support. We strive to focus on each area of STEAM, partnering with related field experts and other agencies to provide high-quality programming and real-life career exploration.

### **Community**

The Science Zone primarily serves Natrona County. We work with other community service agencies such as Natrona County School District, Natrona County Library, Natrona County Prevention Coalition, and others to learn the needs of the community, partner to better serve, and ask our participants what programming they'd like to see. We provide a Free Family STEAM Night weekly throughout the school year. This event is free and open to the community. Each week has a different theme with a variety of hands-on activities for families to discover together. Every week has an art component within the activities. We also host "Curation Stations" which are pop-up, interactive activities throughout the week. These are also free to the public. Out of the 60 we've hosted in 2025, 50 of them have an art component.

Through our partnership with Natrona County Library and funding through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), we have been able to expand our reach over the last 24 months to include outreach programming and exhibit tours in 13 rural and frontier communities, 11 counties, and will continue to serve the counties not yet visited through the next year. Each agency we work with in those communities tells us what their community needs and we tailor our community outreach event to their needs. This means that we may have an open house community event or an afterschool program that is running while we are present. To best serve each community, we listen to their needs.

We serve underrepresented families through scholarships so financial barriers don't limit STEAM learning. Partnerships expand access to resources. Programs emphasize inclusion and adaptive activities. Outreach efforts bring STEAM education to rural and underserved areas as part of a statewide goal.

### **Evaluation**

To evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and services, we look at a handful of metrics to determine whether or not we're providing programs that meet the needs of the community we are serving.

We look at attendance and signups to determine if what is offered is wanted and needed. We pay particular attention to repeat visitors / attendees. If people are returning to our programs, it tells us we're serving a desired need in our community.

While attendance tells us a significant amount about a program's effectiveness. We also rely heavily on anecdotal conversations with our guests and members. Hearing first-hand stories and encounters from members tells us so much about what we're doing right and how what we did had an affect on them and their family, etc. We take feedback from our guests very seriously, share it among our team, and when applicable, utilize it to spark meaningful changes.

During our Family STEAM Nights, we utilize a simple survey tool which asks, among other things, their perception of science. We see a significant number of patrons' attitudes towards science improve after attending this program.

A recent member and stakeholder survey indicates that while our museum exhibits need improvements, our statewide initiatives have been overwhelmingly well-received and we are taking intentional steps to correct the short fallings of current exhibit upkeep as well as new, incoming exhibits.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Operating costs will support day to day operations as we bolster the A in STEAM through programs like Family STEAM Nights and Curation Stations that have significant art components. These funds will be used to help offset the materials, staff time, and marketing costs associated with these programs.

An upcoming exhibition, "How People Make Things," the installation and marketing efforts will be another utilization of the funds.

These general operating funds are vital to the success of the organization and allow our team to exercise their ability to combine and teach Science and Art.

Allocations will include:

Program Expenses: Marketing; Exhibits; Supplies

Payroll Expenses

Operational Expenses

A full list of operating cost sections include:

Auto Expenses: Fuel and

Financial Expenses

Facility Expenses

Operational Expenses

Payroll Expenses

Program Expenses

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**



## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

We receive both earned and contributed income to support the operations of The Science Zone. Earned income is derived from admission to the museum, membership & gift shop sales, and camp & program revenue. This roughly makes up about half of our budget each year. We seek operational and programmatic support funds from a variety of foundations, individuals, and corporations to ensure we're able to meet our mission of inspiring curiosity.

Key partnerships include Natrona Collective Health Trust, Institute of Museum and Library Services, Wyoming Community Foundation, Verdad, McMurtry, and True Foundations.

Programmatic funding opportunities directly impact supplies, personnel, and scholarships ensuring our programs are top-tier - yet accessible to our community.

Included ex

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

THE STAR VALLEY ARTS COUNCIL

[WWW.STARVALLEYARTS.ORG](http://WWW.STARVALLEYARTS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Arts Across Star Valley

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of the Star Valley Arts Council is to promote the cultural arts to residents of the community through education, study and performance sponsorship; assist local residents in developing and using their talents; and to further the enjoyment of and appreciation for the performing and visual arts.

Our current goals are to expand programming to more areas of the Valley, add visual arts programming, increase our director's hours to full time, and to improve our financial viability.

We have been working hard with communities other than Afton to create additional programming, and have been very successful! We created the Alpine Arts Festival, hosted a visual arts workshop this winter in Alpine and helped put on the Chalk Arts Festival in Thayne last year. We added a fundraiser held in Alpine which included a lot of arts programming and was very successful for both the Star Valley Arts Council and the participating artists. We continue to work with the other communities in the area to see how we can better serve the whole valley. Our director is currently at 1/2 time but works many extra hours. We are working to add sponsors and grow our fundraiser so that we can confidently pay her for the hours she works. We have a plan for improving our financial position by making each of our annual events self-sufficient, so we can both pay our director more and take advantage of opportunities that arise. We are working to increase our visual arts education and programming. We now have three established visual arts events: Star Valley Plein Air, the Alpine Art Festival, and the Art Auction. We have plans for up to 5 painting workshops this season.

### Community

Star Valley runs along the western edge of Wyoming between two mountain ranges and includes 14 communities, with Afton the largest at 2213. The area is primarily blue collar, with a background in dairy farming and ranching, although today light manufacturing and construction form the basis of the economy. It's a very rural area, and can be quite remote especially in the winter, when driving conditions can make leaving the Valley difficult. Jackson is

about an hour away, but not accessible either driving-wise in winter or financially for regular programming or arts education. Lincoln County is the 3rd fastest growing county in the state, especially in the 55 and up population range. Family-friendly activities are favored, as the area includes many larger families, although we are attracting more retirees, who have different expectations and desires in terms of arts experiences. Star Valley is a predominantly white community (88% in Afton). We have a large Latter Day Saint population which influences community activities and values. For low-income families, we offer free tickets to events for anyone who volunteers to help with said event. We seek to provide a mix of programming that serves different populations.

We accommodate any request on a case by case basis. We select locations which are accessible to those with less mobility, and will provide other accommodations as needed.

## **Evaluation**

Online ticket sales - This captures location information of our patrons, and overall attendance at different events. This helps us gauge the overall reach of our programming, community interest, and helps us estimate the overall economic impact made on each community. We continue to use this information to refine our advertising strategies, as we can see clearly the impact of a mailer or an ad. We also ask patrons when we take tickets how they heard about the event to better understand the best marketing strategies.

Patron survey - We use an annual online survey to identify areas of improvement and what types of events and programming our community is enjoying. The survey asks patrons about their satisfaction with events, suggestions for improvement or future events. We also take time toward the end of our survey to ask how the responder may be interested in being involved in the future, such as being a supporting member or volunteer.

Youth participation - Several of our events and programs have an emphasis on youth involvement. We track how many youth are directly involved, either as participants and volunteers. Events and programs directly involving our youth this season will be the Stars in the Valley Concert and the Children's Summer Theatre Camp. We survey parents and children after the concert and the theater program to ask what they learned and what suggestions they may have.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

We intend to use the funds for a combination of operating and project support. Our operating support expenses include staff, insurance, marketing, postage and storage, among others. We are fortunate to have a half-time executive director who plans events, markets, fundraises and generally keeps us moving. In addition, we contract

with an accountant and a grant writer. Storage is a critical need in order to maintain our sound equipment and other supplies. We utilize a variety of marketing strategies, including mailers, posters in the post offices and local businesses, the newspaper (which is very generous with articles), radio, and online, as well as an email list and posters around the area. Operating funds will support our ED, who is developing fundraisers and sponsorships geared towards better supporting our operating expenses in the future, and may also cover expenses such as postage, printing, insurance and so on, depending on the need. Overall, our operating expenses are about 1/3 of our total budget for the year; the rest goes to artist fees, contracts with technicians, travel and lodgings for artists.

### **Project Support Narrative**

We will use part of the funds to support programming. We have applied for other grants and are seeking sponsorships, so we will use project support to fill in wherever needed during our year of programming. This year, we are planning to bring back Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, a professional traveling theater troupe. Our plan is to bring them twice this year, instead of just once, to two different communities. They produce two plays a year, and this will also allow Star Valley two professional theater experiences. Other performances include the Brigham Young Ambassadors, who will provide a winter concert. This dynamic audition-only group sings beloved Broadway songs that are highly choreographed. They have come to the Valley before, and are always very popular. The Art Auction Fundraiser will also include a performance with artists yet to be selected.

We are growing festivals here in Star Valley year round! It will be the third year of Star Valley Plein Air, which has steadily grown and is attracting out of state artists, as well as locals, to come and paint in our beautiful environment. The auction and sale that goes along with this is providing residents with a wonderful opportunity to purchase artwork for their homes and businesses. As part of our goal of expanding our work in the Valley, last year we started the Alpine Art Festival, the Sidewalk Chalk Festival in Thayne and the Winter Jubilee Snow Sculptures in Alpine and plan to do these again. With the Art Festival, which runs concurrent to the Alpine Car Show, we work to attract artists to set up booths and provide a public art component. At the Sidewalk Chalk Festival and the Winter Jubilee, we will be adding artists to do quick workshops on site to help participants be more successful, as well as working to attract artists from outside the community. We also meet regularly with community leaders to represent the arts and to find out how we can expand offerings or add to existing programming.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Children's Summer Theater runs for a month in June, 3 hours per day for 6 days a week, and culminates in four, usually sold out, performances. Last year we had 65 children, ages 6-16, participate; we hope that in June 2026, we will have about 80. The musical currently planned for 2026 is High School Musical, Jr. In 2025 we will do Alice in Wonderland, Jr., and in 2024 we did Suessical, Jr. which was wildly popular with both students and audiences. Our production crew has grown from one to three this year. Directors hold degrees in education and theater, and have strong backgrounds in music and music education. These summer camps offer a special opportunity for students to participate in a theater production. Theater is only offered in high school, so this camp allows younger children, as well as homeschooled children, an intensive theater experience. We love that it is run by local theater education professionals, instead of bringing in outsiders. Students are involved in all aspects from acting, managing, and technical theater. It's an immersive camp and the children and their parents love it. We are charging \$75 per child this year, with \$50 per additional child for families with multiple children participating.

We are planning three to five visual arts workshops, all in painting, by excellent Utah/Texas artists who all teach workshops regularly. These will be open to teenagers and adults. These multi-day workshops have been very popular both with locals and have brought artists from Jackson and further afield to take them as well. Shanna Kunz (<https://www.shannakunz.com/>) will offer a plein air oil workshop as part of the Star Valley Plein Air event; Heather Holm (<https://www.heatherholmart.com/>) will provide an acrylic workshop and Lester Lee (<https://leelesterstudios.com/>) a watercolor workshop. These will take place around the Valley to increase access at different times during the year. These are beginner workshops, which assume no knowledge of the medium prior to attending. Workshops include intensive instruction and plenty of time to paint, as well as group critiques. The workshops we have put on in the last two years have been very successful, with artists asking for more opportunities.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Children's Summer Theater Camp: Our goal is to provide a realistic experience of theater for students who have limited or no background in the performing arts. To that end, we provide instruction on acting, stage management and technical theater. Students are involved in every aspect and we want them to have a good overview of what it takes to put on a theater production. We also hope for them to learn some specific acting skills such as how to create a character, voice projection, and how to work in a group situation. Theater also supports reading comprehension, as an actor playing a part needs to understand the part thoroughly to know how to create a character and to understand why they make the movements and actions they do.

The goals for the painting workshops are to teach new techniques to teenagers and adults looking to expand their skills in painting and to work with a noted artist in the field. Each of them will provide specific instruction in working with their selected paint medium. All workshops will offer time for painting under the supervision of the artist, one on one time to discuss painting questions, and group critiques, lectures and discussions. Interacting with artists of this caliber also helps amateurs learn about getting into shows and galleries and making a living from their artwork.

Shanna Kunz will discuss working outside with oils, creating sketches and working back in the studio, capturing light, tools and supplies that work well in the field, selecting the right view and more. This workshop assumes some experience in oils and/or plein air painting.

Lester Lee is a watercolor artist that has won many awards in our Star Valley Plein Air event. The community has specifically requested him as a workshop presenter in order to learn more about his watercolor methods. This workshop assumes no previous experience in watercolors, but is structured to be helpful to both beginners and those with some experience.

Heather Holm is an acrylic artist who has received awards and exhibited widely. We selected an acrylic artist because many casual painters use acrylics, but may not fully understand the potential of the medium. Heather will teach a variety of techniques to use with acrylic paint. This workshop assumes no previous experience in acrylic, but is structured to be helpful to both beginners and those with some experience.

Goals for each program were identified by the instructors.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Christina Crowther has run children's theater programming for nearly 10 years. She holds an MS in child and family studies from the University of Mississippi and a bachelors in elementary education. She has written scripts, choreographed and taught dance and singing for theater, and managed all aspects of technical theater.

Katie Thygerson loves theater and reading in all its forms! She holds a BA in theater education and a MA in Curriculum and Instruction and has spent time working at various levels in theater. Currently she works as a para-librarian building love of reading at Etna elementary school.

We added a third director this year, Katherine Harris, who has been playing the piano and singing since a young age. She enjoys playing the piano for her kids to sing, and teaching music to children in the community.

We are delighted to work with these highly talented and dedicated local people.

The following three artists were selected for painting workshops because they are well-known artists who exhibit and teach regularly regionally. They also responded to the requests of people who have been taking workshops.

Shanna Kunz (<https://www.shannakunz.com/>) will offer an plein air oil workshop as part of the Star Valley Plein Air. Shanna was raised with a strong connection to the land and a deep sense of place. Her upbringing in the Wasatch Mountains of Northern Utah, as well as her experiences exploring the mountain ranges and deserts of the West, have heavily influenced her work. Shanna seeks to capture intimate imagery that resonates emotionally with her viewers, rather than depicting specific locations. Her paintings are characterized by their complexity, moodiness, and honesty, and are often described as transcendental by those who view them. Shanna firmly believes that the world, in its current state of turbulence, desperately needs beauty in the form of art, love in the form of relationships, and spiritual uplift through personal connections.

Heather Holm (<https://www.heatherholmart.com/>) will provide an acrylic workshop. There was no shortage of inspiration growing up in the wilds of San Juan County, Utah. The sublime sandstone canyons, rich in iron, hardship, and old ghosts shaped my artistic sensibilities. After receiving a degree in painting and drawing at the University of Utah, my focus is mainly contemporary landscapes, but also still life and figures, which helps to reset my brain. My interpretation of the world around me is not meant to replicate, but to express a vibe or a feeling. My work is biographical, based on nostalgia, storytelling, and remembrance.

Lee Lester (<https://leelesterstudios.com/>) will offer a watercolor workshop. Lee Lester grew up roaming the pristine prairies of Southeastern Colorado where the abundant wildlife, the silence, and the vast vistas provided him the opportunity and time to carefully observe the fauna and flora that became the finely executed subjects of his future oils, watercolors, and bronzes. Lee began his artistic career sketching the wildlife around him when he was a young fellow on the Colorado prairie. Later the Rocky Mountain School of Art in Denver helped polish and develop his natural artistic skills. Over decades Lee studied many classical and modern artists, drawing something from each, but he attributes his main inspiration to Carl Rungius, one of America's finest wildlife artists. Lester feels that he owes much of his sense of composition to the legendary Rungius.

### **Budget Narrative**

SVAC applies for multiple grants each year and is constantly seeking new sources of funding. We are actively working to increase our reach across the Valley, and to take advantage of sponsorship opportunities that come available as we are more visible across the Valley. We have a strong working board which contributes significant time to the organization and we actively partner where possible. Much of our publicity is donated, with both the newspaper and radio being very generous with articles and support. 70% of our budget goes to programming while the other 30% is operating and salary costs. In the past two years, most of our programs have been restructured to break even or make a small profit, reversing our history of consistently losing money. In 2024 and 2025, we started some new fundraisers which were very successful. Our goal is to develop a cushion for ourselves so we can move to a full time director and have sufficient funds to carry us through thin times.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

THEATRE OF THE POOR

WWW.THEATREOFTHEPOOR.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Professionalizing Casper Theatre, Teaching the Next Generation

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Theatre of the Poor promotes theatre arts in Central WY through low-cost, accessible productions, classes, and workshops. TotP's resident ensemble and arts educators, The Grex, collaborate with community partners to bring performances to diverse and underutilized spaces under the direction of Dr. William Conte. TotP strives for professionalization, inclusivity, and expanding access to world theatre and actor training at little to no cost for participants and audiences.

#### Mission:

- 1) To produce classical, original, and/or experimental works of theatre in found and alternative spaces on shoestring budgets, and to make these works available to all who wish to see or participate, irrespective of ability to pay;
- 2) To support the professionalization of local actors by paying stipends for their services;
- 3) To educate actors and audiences about the history, theory, and literature of the theatre by means of workshops, classes, lectures, podcasts, the rehearsal process, and the productions themselves;
- 4) To provide actors and audiences opportunity to reflect on compelling themes and issues through plays representing a wide range of perspectives;
- 5) To provide space for musicians, poets, and performers to exhibit their work.

### Community

We know from observing and interacting with our audience that they comprise a cross-section of Casper's population. They are well educated and interested in our mission, the shows we do, and the way we do them: everyone from high school students to older adults, from hipster to square, from rich to poor. We enjoy seeing colorfully arrayed LGBTQIA+ youth in our audience adjacent retired bankers, lawyers, realtors and their spouses. By interacting with them before and after shows and on social media, we find that their common need is for productions that provoke thought, challenge expectations about theatre, and are both creatively directed and



powerfully acted. The diversity of our audience reflects the diversity of our company: the social array described above appears on our stage as well.

Most frequently our older patrons request front row seating to ease their passage through our space; we meet this request by reserving the ground-level front row for them or anyone needing easy access to the space. Our actors, who are part of the community we serve, are accommodated by being cast in roles consistent (or inconsistent) with their gender identity expression, as is decided after discussion with the director. To increase access for people with disabilities, we are producing four of five productions this season in easily accessible public spaces, such as the alley adjacent our Studio, Washington Park, and the Bart Rea Learning Circle.

## **Evaluation**

To measure the impact of our programs quantitatively, we use ticket sales and website/social media analytics. We have observed increases in ticket sales and social media followers over the past four years, as WAC funding has made it possible to expand our presence in both real and virtual space.

Our “Stipends for Actors” initiative will be evaluated by:

- Tracking number of actors auditioning for shows and returning to audition.
- Using audience surveys to determine increased engagement and satisfaction with the quality of our productions.

Our Arts Learning program will be evaluated by measuring:

### **1. Student Participation & Retention**

- Track the number of students enrolled per production and over the 18-month period.
- Measure audition turnout to assess community interest.
- Monitor student retention rates, noting how many participants return for multiple productions.

### **2. Skill Development & Learning Outcomes**

- Use pre- and post-program surveys to assess student growth in acting skills, confidence, and knowledge of theatre history.
- Have instructors conduct performance evaluations using a rubric for acting technique, historical understanding, and technical theatre skills.
- Track student progress through self-reflections or portfolio work (e.g., journaling, recorded rehearsals).

### 3. Performance & Audience Engagement

- Count total audience attendance across six TotP KIDS productions in the 18 month period July 1, 2025 - December 16, 2026, and the 4-5 productions staged by the adult company (the Grex).
- Use audience surveys to measure engagement, enjoyment, and understanding of students' work.
- Gather feedback from parents and community members through comment cards or post-show discussions.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

TotP operating costs include monthly rental on our studio theater, internet/wifi, event insurance, domain name renewal, marketing and public relations, concessions, maintenance, administrative and creative personnel.

An important part of our mission is the professionalization of Casper theatre, which is dependent entirely on amateur actors. Without their willingness to volunteer and subsequently donate upward of a hundred hours each to rehearse and perform in community theatre productions, there would be no community theatre. Nevertheless, these amateur volunteers can't help noticing that some community theaters are run by well compensated staff; that directors and guest directors receive generous stipends; that technicians and designers are paid fees for their work; and that few if any musicians set foot in a theater without a clear expectation of remuneration. We agree that the aforementioned are deserving of appropriate compensation for the skilled labor and expertise they provide.

What strikes us as odd is that acting at the community theater level is not regarded as a service requiring as much skill, training, and expertise as directing, designing, and administrating. The justification lies in the tacit consensus that community theaters exist not only for the entertainment of local audiences, but also for the recreation of local amateurs who typically view acting as a hobby and social outlet. We do not deny the value of this understanding, since there are over 6000 community theaters throughout the country successfully galvanizing communities while providing opportunities for a community's actors to pursue their hobby. However, we want to see what happens when we hand checks to actors, whether this causes them to consider their hobby in a new light. As playwright David Mamet says in his singular patois, "A pro is how you think about yourself." We have seen how even a small stipend can animate a cast and encourage them to strive for greater things in themselves. In fall 2023 we were able to pay 12 actors \$500 stipends each from funding raised for the staging of a lost 19th century melodrama at NCHS, but since then it's been business as usual. Whereas no theater can operate without actors, in our reporting to WAC we regard actors' contributions as in kind services, which amounts to tens of thousand of dollars of uncompensated time--not counting the hours they spend learning lines, the time spent commuting to and from rehearsal, and the money spent on gas . We are asking for support in creating a new trend, where professionalization means actually paying local actors even a token sum as reward for their generous donations of time and talent.

50% of the requested operating funds will be allocated toward offsetting the annual cost of renting the Studio; 50% will underwrite stipends of \$100 - \$250 each to the approximately 20 actors needed to cast our season. Stipends will be proportional to the size of the role, with \$250 paid to leads, \$200 for supporting roles, and \$100 for bit parts.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### Project Description

Established last year thanks to a WAC Arts Learning Grant, Theatre of the Poor's TotP KIDS program will continue to provide long-term, affordable education in acting, performance, technical theatre, and theatre history for children and teens in Natrona and Converse Counties. Modeled after the Casper Children's Chorale, this program will establish a young actors' ensemble that meets after school and on weekends for classes, rehearsals, and performances. Instruction will be led by Theatre of the Poor artistic director Dr. William Conte, members of the resident TotP acting troupe (The Grex), and arts education professionals in the community.

#### Project Goals

The primary goal of TotP Kids is to offer a high-quality theatre education that is accessible to Central WY youth while fostering creativity, collaboration, and an appreciation for theatre history. Through hands-on learning and performances, students will develop acting techniques, technical theatre skills, and an understanding of historical production styles. Additionally, the program aims to break down traditional theatre preconceptions by performing in diverse spaces (some found and some scenic locations) and expanding young actors' understanding of theatre's possibilities. This abolishes preconceptions of what theatre is and encourages new understandings of what theatre can be.

#### Project Timeline

The project will run for 18 months, during which students will stage six productions in 12-week blocks. Each cycle includes:

Weeks 1–4: Instruction in acting, theatre history, and technical production.

Weeks 5–8: Rehearsals and workshops (at TotP Studio Theater; and onsite at performance locations).

Weeks 9–12: Final rehearsals, performances, and audience engagement activities (at TotP Studio Theater; and onsite at performance locations).

## Programming & Schedule

Block 1: Helen by Euripides (Labyrinth, Amoco Park, July 1–Sept. 20, 2025)

Block 2: The Blue Bird by Maurice Maeterlinck (TotP Studio Theatre, Sept. 22–Dec. 20, 2025)

Block 3: The Summoning of Everyman (TotP Studio Theatre, Jan. 5–March 28, 2026)

Block 4: Peter Pan (playground, April 6–June 27, 2026)

Block 5: The Epic of Gilgamesh (Washington Park, June 29–Sept. 19, 2026)

Block 6: Les Romanesques by Edmond Rostand (TotP, Sept. 21–Dec. 12, 2026)

## Project Execution

Students will be required to audition, but selection will prioritize commitment, passion, and potential rather than prior experience. Open auditions will occur for each production, allowing flexible participation for students with busy schedules. Returning students will be guaranteed placement in subsequent productions, ensuring continuity while welcoming new participants. Instruction will be led by Dr. Conte, trained members of the Grex, and local theatre professionals, incorporating Poor Theatre techniques to maximize creativity while using minimal resources.

## Target Audience and Beneficiaries

This project is designed for youth ages 8–18 in Natrona and Converse Counties, providing them with year-round theatre education and performance opportunities. The program is open to all students from all identities, backgrounds, and experiences, with a focus on accessibility.

## Cost(s) to Participants

TotP KIDS workshops will be initially offered at no cost to participants. Audience members, including parents, educators, and the broader community, will also benefit from free or low-cost performances that showcase young talent and diverse theatrical traditions.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

The primary goal of TotP Kids is to offer a high-quality theatre education that is accessible to Central WY youth while fostering creativity, collaboration, and an appreciation for theatre history. Through hands-on learning and performances, students will develop acting techniques, technical theatre skills, and an understanding of historical production styles. Additionally, the program aims to break down traditional theatre preconceptions by performing in diverse spaces (some found and some scenic locations) and expanding young actors' understanding of theatre's possibilities. This abolishes preconceptions of what theatre is and encourages new understandings of what theatre can be. This goal was identified after noticing the paucity of opportunities for young people to perform in our community without parents paying fees of \$250 per child to participate. High school drama programs usually

produce two shows a year; while this is sufficient to supplement the educational experience of most high schoolers, those with the talent and drive toward becoming actors/theatre artists have relatively few opportunities for growth and mentorship.

#### Target Audience and Beneficiaries

This project is designed for youth ages 8–18 in Natrona and Converse Counties, providing them with year-round theatre education and performance opportunities. The program is open to all students from all identities, backgrounds, and experiences, with a focus on accessibility.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Artistic Director Dr. William Conte is a theatre historian, director, actor, writer, and career educator with 35 years' experience teaching at the college level. He earned his Ph.D. from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY) in 2010. He will direct the arts learning program and mentor the assistant directors. He was selected for the breadth and depth of his theatre experience going back to the late 1980s in New York City, and the over 100 productions that he has directed, written, produced, or acted in. Dr. Conte is grateful to have been awarded the 2024-25 Wyoming Arts Council Fellowship for the Performing Arts in Theatre.

Asheton Stratton-Capps (Assistant Director/Coordinator) has been working with TotP since fall 2020. He was in the first class of TotP Apprentices (2021-22) and is now a member of the Grex. Ashe has performed numerous roles including Laertes ("Hamlet"), the running slave Messenio in "Menaechmi," Jaxon in "The Thanksgiving Play," and the Apothecary/Louis in "The Imaginary Invalid." In June 2024 Ashe led a seminar on Queer Theory, and assists Dr. Conte in directing the current session of TotP KIDS. Ashe continues his theatre education as a protegee of Dr. Conte's, meeting regularly with him to study theatre history and theory; at this time he is working with Dr. Conte as assistant director of TotP's May 2025 production of "Medea."

Drew Stratton-Capps (Assistant Director/Coordinator) joined TotP in 2021 as part of the first class of TotP Apprentices and is now a member of the Grex. He has performed with every theatre company in Casper; with TotP his signal roles were Prof. Leopold Nettles ("Largo Desolato"), the college professor John in "Oleanna," Menaechmus in "Menaechmi," and Mr. Smith in "The Bald Soprano." Drew also leads TotP's workshops on commedia dell'arte and coordinates programs for kids and families in his job at the YMCA.

Clint Saunders, artistic director of Outlaw Theater, has been active in Casper for over twenty years as an actor and director. He has a Masters in Fine Arts from the Academy of Art University San Francisco and teaches at Dakota College at Bottineau. He is a certified intimacy coordinator, and this year Clint will complete his MFA in Directing.

Clint will teach workshops on the protocols for representing intimacy on stage. He was selected on the basis of his many successful productions and established credentials.

William T. Wallace is along with Dr. Conte a co-founder of TotP, established in 2016. He is a fixture on Casper stages, performing in dozens of productions since childhood. Will completed his Bachelor of Applied Science - BASc Organizational Leadership from the University of Wyoming in 2021. He will lead the "Fight Scenes for Actors" workshop, which Will developed from his martial arts training, and which focuses on how to stage fight scenes both convincingly and safely. The material will be drawn from plays throughout history in which stage combat is represented, so that the actors have the full context for their training as they learn to incorporate dialogue with fight choreography. Will was selected on the basis of his success teaching stage combat to the TotP Apprentice Class of 2021-22, and staging fight scenes for TotP productions.

### **Budget Narrative**

TotP has benefited greatly from several years of WAC support, which we have successfully matched by means of ticket sales, fundraising events, donations of goods and money, grants received from other sources such as the Joint Powers Board, and in kind donations of the services of directors, workshop presenters, and actors. Partnership with Ft. Casper Museum brings revenue to the company, which is hired to perform at Caspar Collins Day. We also are in partnership with Stage III and Opera Wyoming in sharing of resources and personnel. We are a "poor theatre" presenting world classics by means of the creative use of limited resources, and compelling performances by the best actors in town. As a result, our budget is entirely focused on keeping a roof over our heads. Without a headquarters, we'd have no way to pursue our arts learning objectives, nor any place to prepare for our outdoor shows, which are free to the public.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TOGA PRODUCTIONS, INC.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: WHAT Fest 2026

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

WHAT Fest provides access to music and the arts in rural Wyoming, empowering residents by fostering creative expression, community connections, and cultural engagement. Through diverse performances, interactive experiences, and educational opportunities, we ensure that the arts remain an essential and accessible part of life in Wyoming's rural communities.

#### Goals:

Expand Access to the Arts – Bring high-quality live music and artistic experiences to underserved communities, ensuring affordability and inclusivity.

Support Emerging & Local Artists – Provide a platform for regional talent to reach new audiences, gain professional experience, and build careers in the arts.

Engage Youth & Families – Offer workshops, hands-on activities, and performances designed to inspire the next generation of artists and art lovers.

Foster Community & Cultural Exchange – Strengthen connections among attendees, artists, and local organizations through shared experiences.

Ensure Sustainability & Growth – Develop strategic partnerships, maintain financial transparency, and implement eco-friendly practices to sustain and expand WHAT Fest's impact.

### Community

WHAT Fest began in the summer of 2003 when a group of college friends asked: "What can we do to support music and the arts in Wyoming?" Since then, the festival has traveled across the state, reaching communities in Cody, Clark, Riverside, Centennial, Laramie, and Saratoga. The 2025 location will continue this tradition of bringing music and arts to rural areas with limited cultural opportunities.

Wyoming's vast landscapes and small, isolated communities mean many residents lack access to live music, visual arts, and cultural festivals. WHAT Fest fills this gap, creating a rare and meaningful artistic experience. The

festival's 20-year success, strong attendance, and enthusiastic community feedback highlight the need for these programs.

WHAT Fest prioritizes inclusivity by actively engaging underserved populations. We offer free or low-cost tickets and collaborate with organizations like Rawlins Music Academy, Wyoming Singer-Songwriters, Wyoming Public Media, and the Laramie Plains Civic Center. Our accessible programming serves families, youth, older adults, and economically disadvantaged individuals.

To ensure full participation, we provide ADA-compliant facilities, accessible pathways, and designated seating areas. A coordination booth and a direct accessibility hotline allow attendees to arrange accommodations in advance. We also work with community leaders to identify and address specific needs.

Through partnerships with arts advocacy groups, the music industry, local businesses, and community organizations, WHAT Fest fosters an inclusive, welcoming environment where all Wyoming residents can experience music and the arts.

## **Evaluation**

WHAT Fest is committed to measuring its impact through clear goals, structured evaluation methods, and data-driven improvements. Our primary objectives include increasing access to music and the arts in rural Wyoming, fostering community engagement, supporting artists, and contributing to local economic growth.

To evaluate our success, we track:

Attendance numbers & demographics – We collect ticket sales (Showpass software), survey attendees (In-person), and analyze geographic reach to measure community participation.

Artist participation & feedback – We survey artists about their experience, opportunities gained, and overall event satisfaction.

Community engagement – We track partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, and volunteers to assess regional involvement. For instance in 2024 we enjoyed support from over 16 business and non profits from 4 counties across the state.

Economic impact – We gather data from vendors, businesses, and accommodations to understand how WHAT Fest supports the local economy. We purchase from and contract with local small businesses as much as possible working with 12 Wyoming based vendors in 2024.



Accessibility & inclusivity – We document the participation of underserved groups and assess the effectiveness of accommodations. This is particularly for us as we evaluate the effectiveness for people with disabilities, and or special accommodations (age, etc).

In conclusion, we utilize post-event surveys, ticketing data, and community feedback to refine future festivals, ensuring continuous improvement in accessibility, engagement, and overall impact.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

WHAT Fest 2025, scheduled for July 25-26, 2025, will celebrate 20 years of bringing live music and arts to rural Wyoming. The festival will feature ~33 artists spanning multiple genres, offering attendees a diverse and high-quality artistic experience on a beautiful property 5 miles north of Saratoga, WY. Programming includes live performances, interactive workshops, youth arts activities, and community engagement initiatives.

Artists involved in WHAT Fest are carefully selected based on their talent, experience, and connection to the region. Many have performed at nationally recognized festivals, released professional recordings, or have deep ties to Wyoming's music and arts community. Additionally, we prioritize emerging and local artists to provide them with a platform to reach new audiences.

Project Support Fund Allocation: Funding will support artist fees, production costs, accessibility accommodations, and arts education initiatives. Estimated allocations include:

Artist Fees: Ensuring fair compensation for performers (~\$17,000).

Production, Marketing & Staging: Professional sound, lighting, and backline equipment (~\$15,000).

Accessibility Services: Sanitation, Camping, ADA accommodations, inclusive programming (~\$3,000).

Youth & Community Arts Engagement: Art supplies, youth tent programming (~\$1000).

Festival Operations & Community Impact: Attendees of WHAT Fest 2025 are expected from Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana, with approximately 76% from Carbon, Albany, and Laramie counties, 14% from other Wyoming counties, and 10% from other states. Many attendees return annually, reinforcing the festival's role as a cultural mainstay.

WHAT Fest provides:

Two main stages, a side stage, and youth activity tent

On-site camping, sanitation, security, and first aid

Coordination with local, state, and federal agencies

Professional production teams ensuring high-quality performances

By leveraging grant funding alongside ticket sales, sponsorships, and in-kind support, WHAT Fest continues to grow while maintaining financial sustainability. This support will help expand the festival's impact, engage more artists, and strengthen its role as a vital cultural event in Wyoming.

Please note we do not yet have a final lineup for WHAT Fest 2025; however, you will find a lineup from WHAT Fest 2024 below. We anticipate the scope of WHAT Fest's lineup in 2025 to be similar.

Lineup WHAT Fest 2024:

The Unlikely Candidates

The Patti Fiasco

Screen Door Porch

Jake Clayton Band

Cruz Contreras(The Black Lillies)

Susan Gibson

Peculiar Patriots

Lonesome Heroes

Pleasure People

Jason Lenyar Buchanan and the Short Timers

Stillhouse Blues

Harpoon the Whale

Rubby Bear

Cicada Summer

Angelus Errare

Kira Dawn

Shawn Hess/ John Poland

Night Fire

Elise Wunder

Aquille

Cora Wood

Scott Robinson

Zach Scott

Micah Paisley/Steve Davis

Adam Kirkpatrick/Micah Wyatt

John Cory

April June

Seth Latka

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

WHAT Fest relies on a diverse funding model, including ticket sales, sponsorships, in-kind donations, vendor fees, and grants. Partnerships with local businesses, arts organizations, and community groups provide crucial support. In-kind contributions, such as venue space, volunteer labor, and discounted services, help offset costs and maximize resources.

Our budget aligns with our mission to provide high-quality arts experiences in rural Wyoming. Project support covers administrative costs and community outreach, while expenses include artist fees, production, accessibility accommodations, and youth arts programming.

Grant funds will support project-based needs, ensuring financial stability and growth. We prioritize transparency and realistic budgeting, balancing revenue sources with expenses. By leveraging grants alongside other funding,

WHAT Fest can expand its impact, engage more artists and attendees, and strengthen its role as a vital cultural event in Wyoming.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TOWN OF BASIN

[HTTPS://WWW.THETOWNOFBASIN.COM/ONLINE-PAYMENTS.HTML](https://www.thetownofbasin.com/online-payments.html)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Basin Mural Project

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our new councilwoman Linda Weeks presented the formation of a Beautification Committee to the Town Council and Mayor and it was voted on to form the committee. It was advertised on Facebook and we have six members from the community. About half of the members are transplants from other states and the others were born and raised in Basin. Many of the volunteers are retired and willing to give up their time to work on this project. The committee's first meeting determined the following objective/vision:

Our objective/vision is to create an environment in the Town of Basin that gives residents and visitors a community, hometown feeling. We want residents to be proud of our town and encourage visitors to stop in Basin.

The group discussed how much we all enjoy living in the Basin community. We all expressed a vision of focusing on areas of Basin which would help make the town more visually desirable so that folks driving through would stop and residents would be proud of their town. We want to create a more vibrant community and focusing on the arts seemed like a good place to start. A mural that is located in the center of town as you enter town is a very visible and beautiful way to introduce people to our town. Using local artists draws attention to the talent in the Big Horn Basin and will encourage more murals to be painted in local towns. A mural was presented and approved by council a few years ago and the town is very supportive. The driving force behind this committee is to encourage our residents to be proud of the community they reside in while appreciating the culture, including the arts, of our area. The mural will be designed and painted by local artists. We hope this will be the first of many other cultural and artistic projects in our community.

Other projects: Yard of the Month, Flower pots at businesses in town, community map project, planting lilac trees at Welcome signs

### Community

Basin has approximately 1290 residents with 20% of the population being seniors and 11.5% veterans. Medium income is \$69,167. The majority of residents are white. The Wyoming Retirement Center is in our town.

Incorporated in 1902, Basin is 60 miles east of Cody, WY and 110 miles from Yellowstone National Park's east entrance. A short drive east will put you in the Big Horn Mountains in 25 miles. We are at the heart of the Big Horn Basin and all that it has to offer.

The Town of Basin was founded in 1896 by Winfield Collins and named for the Bighorn Basin. In 1897, it became the county seat, following a raging fight for that designation between Otto, Basin and Cody. Basin was known as Basin City until it was incorporated in 1902 and City was dropped from the name. Basin is often called the "Lilac City" and hosts an annual Lilac Days Celebration in June and is the host for the Big Horn County Fair each August.

Because we are a pass through town on the way to the Big Horns and Yellowstone we are not a destination to stop. This mural in the center of town will encourage folks to stop and take photos and spruce up a large area in the town that is underdeveloped. The mural will also bring focus to an area of town that can be used for events or a focal point. Our Home for the Holidays event uses that corner for the central location with Santa. This area will become even more of the central area for events. Once we have funding secured we will begin to engage the town by advertising the project, encouraging volunteers and once completed have a town event to celebrate this wonderful achievement. The mural will be easily accessible for anyone with a disability as there are no obstacles to get to it.

### **Evaluation**

We will engage residents on our Facebook page by announcing the project and encouraging volunteers to assist with it. We continue to discuss it at Town Council meetings and the local paper writes articles about the projects we are pursuing. Once we have funding we will begin to announce the timeline, promote the project and add signing to the wall "Coming Soon - Basin Mural Project". Our Beautification Committee consists of residents who care about our town and will reach out to other residents to spread the word about our mural project. We will also create flyers to distribute at businesses throughout town.

In order to encourage feed back we will do a poll on our Facebook page. If we get positive feedback we will look for another possible location for another mural or arts project. We do have a Basin Arts Center and I believe we could join forces on other projects.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

n/a

### **Project Support Narrative**

The town will enter into an agreement with two local artists for the mural. Here is the contract information: In consideration of the services rendered and the supply of materials by the Artists, the Town of Basin agrees to the following Payment Terms and Compensation:

Fee for painting services and materials: \$70 per square foot on the letters, \$10 per square foot for the background, and \$20 per square foot on the lilacs.

A deposit of 50% is due prior to the Basin Mural project commencing, ideally 10-14 days before the project begins, in order for the Artists to purchase the supplies and materials to begin work. The remaining 50% will be due upon completion of the mural and no later than 7-10 business days.

These costs per square foot cover the cost of the artists' time, travel, consultation to finalize mural design, paint materials and scaffolding. The cost per square foot does not include the cost of large equipment, such as a scissor lift.

If 1099 forms are to be issued, the Town of Basin will issue the forms to the Artists.

<https://www.bhcagwyoming.com/about-1> - The President Rebecca Kinane and Member Deanna Skillman of the Big Horn County Arts Guild were chosen to paint the mural as they were integral in creating the Greybull mural. They have a commitment to paint a mural in each town in the Big Horn Basin. Using each letter in the name Basin they will incorporate the highlights of our community including agriculture, wild life, history and culture. Each letter will be 6'x9' on a dark royal purple background. This project is expected to take 2-3 weeks for painting and would begin in mid-August.

Our beautification committee is committed to transforming our town and focusing on a mural which highlights the arts is the best way to make an impact. We feel art is an integral way to connect the residents of Basin to our history, culture and future.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The project involved four organizations: Big Horn County Art Guild, South Big Horn County Water District, Town of Basin and the Basin Area Chamber. The Water District is providing the wall at no charge, the Basin Area Chamber will seek donations from local businesses in the amount needed on top of any grant funding this will include monies from the chamber and the town . We will also be reaching out to WCTF for grant funds.

The committee will commit to a minimum of 30 volunteer hours. The Town of Basin will provide storage for the paint materials while the project is going on.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TRINKLE BRASS WORKS, INC.

WWW.TRINKLEBRASSWORKS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025-2026 Trinkle Brass Works General Operating and Project Support

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Trinkle Brass Works, Inc. (TBW) is a small, federally recognized artistic organization whose mission is to provide concerts, lecture-demonstrations, workshops, clinics, seminars, and professional development opportunities for audiences of all ages in order to increase appreciation and knowledge of music. Since 1985 TBW has traveled to smaller, underserved communities throughout the United States to fulfill part of its mission to provide programs to audiences large and small of widely varying socio-economic levels and ethnicities. TBW produces programs of classical and contemporary music through a variety of ensembles including a salon orchestra of 9-15 musicians (Portable Masterpieces), a chamber orchestra, brass/organ ensembles (Feste Fantini), and mixed chamber groups of 2 to 5 musicians. TBW also commissions music for brass, percussion and mixed instrumentation ensembles. To date, the group's commissioned composers have included Thomas Albert, Gunther Tautenhahn, Roberto Sierra, and Harry Lockwood, all award-winning composers. For the last decade TBW has focused on producing innovative projects that expand and develop the cultural environment through cooperation and partnerships with local communities, libraries, churches, and educational institutions. The projects have included three tours of vintage opera houses covering Wyoming, Nevada, Utah and California; the Casper Mountain Music Festival; four tours by Feste Fantini (brass, organ, percussion) performing in Wyoming, Colorado, No. Carolina, and Germany, and chamber concerts in communities around Wyoming (Sheridan, etc.). TBW's strategic, defined and measurable goals: 1) to provide performance opportunities for Wyoming musicians, 2) to continue to build a strong audience, and 3) to provide high-quality concerts and educational outreach for regional communities. All projects, events and outreach engage musicians and audiences in unique cultural performances and experiences to fulfill the TBW mission.

### Community

The target area is the general population (youth/adult) in western Wyoming communities whose sociological composition reflects the general data for Wyoming. According to the US Census, the population is 83.1% white, 1.2% Black, 1.5% Native American, 10.8% Hispanic, .1.2% Asian/Pacific Islander and 2.3% reporting 2 or more races. TBW does not charge for tickets: all activities are open to the public regardless of socioeconomic level, ethnicity, disabilities, or age and are advertised, marketed and engaged through email, snail mail, posters, social media, and invitations to directors of facilities, elected government representatives and local leaders. TBW works to engage local leaders by coordinating with arts and civic organizations, and chambers of commerce, to identify and prioritize needs when planning programs. TBW presentations are informal by interacting with the audience to develop a rapport that is comfortable for them. Concerts often take place in "non-traditional" venues (libraries,



businesses, community centers, etc.) to attract and serve a wider audience and local volunteers serve as on-site coordinators helping to arrange performance venues, disseminate publicity materials, and assist with contacting local media outlets to increase community involvement. TBW accommodates requests through direct contact by phone, email, or the contact page on the TBW website. Performances have occurred for many non-dominant communities including assisted living/nursing homes located in low-income communities, hospitals, and facilities for persons with disabilities. All performance and outreach venues are ADA compliant with closely available parking, assistive technology, accessibility signage at doors, ramps, and restrooms. Programs are also available in large print.

## **Evaluation**

To ensure that TBW is fulfilling its mission/goals and addressing donors' funding, one-page surveys (in English and Spanish) are distributed at and included with programs at all events; programs also include QR codes to gather survey responses. Qualitative and quantitative information is solicited, and responses are tabulated to help the TBW Board of Directors determine impact (positive or negative), program quality, appeal, presentation, and the effect on the community and audience. Responses also assist in focusing on the most cost-effective and far-reaching means of marketing, publicity and communication with the general public and non-dominant populations. Past responses and feedback have indicated a 95-98% favorability rating for performances and programs. To quote one audience member, "it's like attending a live public television program or TED talk - lots of accessible information and context - great performance and personalization." Public opinions and responses are also solicited through social media, email and newspaper announcements/requests. On-site coordinators and local music educators (some of whom perform with the ensembles) provide more in-depth responses regarding their experiences working with TBW, reflections about programs and repertoire, and audience response. Audience numbers are tracked for every event and show growth (3-5% annually) indicating an increase in community access and attendance. Two examples are the Feste Fantini tour in 2023 and the "Cowboy Overtures" performance in 2024. Over the past five years audience contributions by private donors have grown by 2-4% annually with significant contributions by trust funds and family foundations. Results from all evaluations are collected and discussed at board meetings to guide programs.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Total operating budget and project expenses for 2025-2026 = \$57,500 total.

General operating costs: \$10,000 total:

Office space/rent and utilities (\$4000); Telephone, printing, postage, computer, supplies, website fees and maintenance (\$6000) - office space and utilities are provided at a significantly discounted rate by a donor; direct mail postcards, flyers, paper, postage and printing rates have risen considerably; computer applications and printer ink are almost double from two years ago.

Personnel: \$31,000 total:

Executive Dir/Conductor (\$6,000); Administrative Assistant (\$8,000); Contractual/artistic personnel (\$17,000) - TBW prioritizes quality over quantity: musicians are paid \$120 per service for rehearsals and concerts plus per

diem of \$100 per day on tour (Union and GSA Accounting Office rates). All personnel (musicians and staff) are on a part-time or per service basis with no benefits. Travel/transportation, and housing for musicians (as needed) are covered by TBW; housing expenses have doubled in the last two years. While some negotiation with hotels is possible for reduced rates however a basic fee of about \$80+ per room must be covered making the use of Airbnb homes more practical and cost effective with the added benefit of turning back money into the community.

Project/Performance Production: \$16,500 total:

Equipment/truck/van rental, transportation, music rental and performance insurance (\$7,000); Marketing/publicity, radio spots, newspaper: (\$5,000); Performance/rehearsal space rental fees (\$2,000); Stage manager/sound/lighting (per service) (\$2,000); ASCAP/BMI fees (\$ 500) - Occasionally performance/rental fees may be donated as in-kind, however insurance must be covered; mileage rate for use of a personal vehicle are now .70 per mile; music rental rates average \$500 per work (when possible TBW uses it's personal library or borrows from other ensembles). The Semiquincentennial in 2026 is being organized to recognize the anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Our intent is to honor the contributions of all Americans by providing concerts that inspire the audience to look ahead toward the future - to the next generation and beyond. Because some musicians are music educators and graduate music students concerts must be held during the early summer (late May/early June) after schools have closed for the academic year. Given distance and travel costs, we anticipate that the operational and project budget will help underwrite 4 performances; part of the project budget will include a planning period to set a firm timeline, organize resources and the finalize logistics.

Wyoming Arts Council funds (\$10,000) will be dedicated towards Contractual/Artistic personnel (\$4,000); Project (\$3,000), and Operating costs (\$3,000).

### **Project Support Narrative**

For 2026, a tour is in the planning stages of four western Wyoming communities in celebration of the country's semiquincentennial using Portable Masterpieces. Prospective sites include Lander, Thermopolis, Basin, and Powell with alternative concert sites in Worland, Greybull, Cody and Lovell. Wyoming became the 44th state in 1890 populated by Native Americans, fortune seekers, fur trappers, ranchers, miners, railroad men and others prior to this time. This project will celebrate and acknowledge Wyoming's pioneer achievements, and reflect on milestones that give Wyoming character. Emphasizing it's rich history through stories and music the purpose is to inspire the audience to reflect on the past, strengthen their love of country, and renew a commitment to the ideals of independence by celebrating the state's resilience through boom and bust. The program will include music that highlights the history of and turning points in Wyoming with "The Hills of Old Wyoming" by Morton Gould, and "Prairie Overture" by Robert Ward among others. Concerts will focus on information, historical links or details about the music, social context and composers of each work. A detailed program with additional information and resources will be distributed to the audience.

Musicians are auditioned and selected by director Steven Trinkle based upon repertoire needs, musician quality, and personality, drawn from current graduate music students, WY music educators, retired professionals, and college professors. Portable Masterpieces is a small salon orchestra performing light classical, ragtime, operetta,

and period music in the manner of the orchestras used for radio shows, community opera theaters in the late 19th and early 20th century. The ensemble brings to life the ambiance and experience of the vaudeville stage for the modern audience with period arrangements written specifically for salon/theatre orchestra representing American music history and culture. Past performances have included concerts in Sheridan, WY at the WYO Theater, Pioche, NV at the Thompson Opera House, Virginia City at Piper's Opera House, among others. Portable Masterpieces is an ensemble that is flexible and virtuosic; capable of performing music from diverse genres with a high degree of musicianship and expression, performed by some of the area's finest musicians.

Key artists for this project are Steven Trinkle and Eugenie Burkett. Steven Trinkle, (MM Ithaca College) conductor/executive director/trumpet, has held trumpet positions with the Houston Symphony, Kansas City Philharmonic, Augusta, and Shreveport symphonies, and Orchestra Sinfonica RAI in Turin, Italy. A professor at several universities and colleges (USC, Marshall) many of his former students are playing professionally in the USA, South America and Europe. Trinkle's ensembles have toured the US, Switzerland, Italy and Brazil. In 2023 he was guest conductor for the Belo Horizonte Symphony (Brazil) and toured North and South Carolina with Feste Fantini, in spring 2025. Eugenie Burkett, (Ph.D. University of Wisconsin/Curriculum, M.M. Percussion, Manhattan School of Music) produces concerts, serves as an educational advisor and performs as a timpanist, percussionist, pianist, and organist. She has performed with the Kansas City Philharmonic, Orchestra Sinfonica RAI (Turin, Italy), Orquesta Sinfonica de Maracaibo (Venezuela), the Augusta (GA) Symphony and is a co-founder of TBW, performing under the WESTAF Touring program.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

TBW draws from national, state, and local funding sources including grants from the NEA, Union Pacific, PacifiCorp, Black Hills Energy, First Interstate Bank, etc. : 25% government grants, 30% foundations, 20% corporations and 25% cash donations. Partnerships include local arts councils, libraries, and civic groups. Events are without charge. Management of TBW has remained stable for 45 years securing consistent corporate funding; TBW carries no debt; 90% of funds are dedicated to production costs and musician stipends. Board members do not receive remuneration; permanent staff is part-time without benefits volunteering many hours beyond the minimum. Our dedicated musicians are a priority; essential to the success of events and must be compensated fairly. The rise in travel costs has resulted in higher expenses; musicians stipends have remained flat. Tax benefits have faded as the standard tax deduction has risen resulting in smaller (but more) single cash donations and fewer grants.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TROOPERS DRUM & BUGLE CORPS, INC.

TROOPERSDRUMCORPS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Enriching Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps' Musical Storytelling From A Final Sunset to the Next Horizon

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps (operating continuously from Casper since 1957) is to provide a youth activity with positive educational experiences that promote the growth and development of specific life skills consistent with the Trooper Tradition of Excellence. The mission is annually accomplished via the creation of an artistic marching music storytelling production presented by 165 young performers.

The Strategic Goals of the 2025 summer tour and the transition to 2026 outlined in the proposed project time frame include:

--Continue to positively change students' lives through a rigorous rehearsal schedule led by highly-qualified instructional staff. The life-altering experience comes via a summer performance tour that builds character, fosters maturity, and develops leadership as the members and staff work together to create an increasingly complex and engaging artistic production.

--Support the learning experience and resulting presentation with professional musical instruments and equipment as well as with a safe tour and quality rehearsal facilities

--Improve the artistic programming shared with audiences across the country, continuing to improve the upward competitive trajectory the corps began in 2021.

--Prioritize the health and wellness of our members, staff, and volunteers.

--Provide an environment promoting dignity, respect, and personal growth.

--Support the corps leadership's sharing of the artistry and opportunities of drum corps.

--Share the Western spirit embodied by the Troopers and, by doing so, expand the corps' avenues for member interest and engagement as well as for revenue and financial stability.

--Transition to fall planning, creative show design, and member recruitment for 2026.

--Begin planning for TroopCon26 events in Casper in June 2026.

## **Community**

The Troopers serve its members, alumni, and staff. The corps entertains audiences and fans.

Members of the Troopers are diverse within the age limits set by the governing body. Staffing, volunteers, and interns are unrestricted. The Troopers now also field an all-age corps. The ensembles thrill an array of spectators at many shows.

Troopers D&BC has been a leader in inclusivity since it was founded. Membership is open to all genders, religions, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Staff positions are open to anyone with the requisite skills. We offer scholarships to young musicians without the financial means to march.

The corps has a support system for LGBTQIA+ members.

We welcome individuals from other countries or those who do not speak English as their first language.

The all-age Legacy Corps welcomes all ages and physical capabilities.

The Troopers foster a safe environment for ALL participants. All adult educators and leaders must pass a background check.

When the Troopers organize and host drum corps shows and viewing opportunities, we plan for accessibility.

Individuals with special dietary needs can be excluded from the activity because marching can burn 5,000+ calories daily. Previously, such physicality excluded participation by some individuals. Our mobile kitchen and unique staff support the participation of those with diabetes, food allergies, etc.

The Troopers have pushed boundaries to include non-traditional activity instruments such as harmonica or cello, allowing other students to participate. One such instrument will be included in the final performance of the 2025 season.

## **Evaluation**

The Troopers' success at creating engaging programming will be measured objectively by the following: 1) monitoring website traffic & click-throughs from email and social media to the corps' new news portal and 2) measuring souvenir sales against previous years.

Subjectively, staff will monitor social media and crowd responses at performances in July and August.

The 2025 artistic storytelling through music, design, and choreography will be measured in competitive scoring from July to August. Judge comments will drive improvements to the show.

The success of the improvements to music and marching performance can be evaluated by increases in scoring. Additionally, the scoring can be compared to scores from the same points in the previous season.

The success of the 2025 storytelling mission can be assessed by the interest forms and subsequent fall auditions and camp participation for the 2026 season.

The education and member services components will be evaluated by member retention and from the results of the post-season member feedback survey.

To help transition to creative planning for 2026, the Troopers will review judging commentary from late season 2025 and conduct a staff post-season survey.

The success of creating an appealing new story arc can begin to be assessed by interest forms and auditions for 2026.

The success of engaging drum corps enthusiasts in Casper will be impacted by the school district's ability and willingness to host the corps for spring. If the corps is welcomed in Casper, attendance at nightly rehearsals will be monitored and compared to 2024. Additionally, participation numbers and financial success of TroopCon2026 can be compared to TroopCon 2024.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The last 3 weeks of tour see the corps travel from the heart of Texas to the Midwest to the southeastern US to the mid-Atlantic region back to the Midwest for the Drum Corps International World Championships. The members will perform the gritty cowboy themed show "The Final Sunset" nearly two dozen times.

Operating costs during this time include 1) school rental for housing and rehearsal sites, 2) travel/fuel costs to move the corps on tour, and 3) operation of the mobile kitchen that feeds approximately 200 people four daily meals.

A WAC operating bequest would be applied toward rehearsal/lodging sites, mobile kitchen/nutrition program, and safe travel for performers.

Each summer, members sleep on gym floors at school facilities where rehearsals occur. From locker room showers to site locations, quality facilities make a huge difference in the satisfaction of the member experience, which impacts rehearsals, which impacts performances.

The final weeks of tour bring technical program changes to improve the show based on judges' feedback. Creative surprises are introduced to enhance the musical storytelling. Young musicians in the Troopers will rehearse music, show design, and choreography up to 10+ hours daily. Doing so at a workable site – which can cost upward of \$1,000 per day – can help members learn better and deliver high-caliber performances that represent the traditions of excellence for which Wyoming's Musical Ambassadors are known.

Safe, reliable buses to travel cross country are essential for a successful tour. Quality transportation supports the member experience.

Marching members can burn the same calories as a marathon runner day after day. The mobile kitchen prepares four meals each day, serving up to 200 people each time. Fresh, nutritious food is essential for arts learning and for members to perform their best.

The final 3 weeks of the summer are the most important. Operating assistance during those weeks is much needed.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Troopers have a renowned reputation for creative Western storytelling through stirring music, resonating narratives, and engaging design and choreography. As we finish the current story arc this summer, it is imperative to transition to a new creative theme that maintains the corps' identity. The easily identifiable culture of the Troopers serves two purposes: keeping the corps connected to its Wyoming roots and positing the ensemble as a desirable home for marching hopefuls. The Troopers' themes, productions, approaches to musical training, and commitment to continuing artistic excellence are key to maintaining nearly unmatched audience appreciation in the modern-day activity.

The Troopers respectfully request support for the creative process that allows the group to maintain its reputation as America's Corps. Immediately upon the conclusion of the 2025 marching season, the ensemble must begin the planning and design work necessary to create its next world-class production. Using the right creative minds – those who understand Troopers' culture and history as well as what is needed to succeed in modern drum corps - is imperative.

A grant of \$2,000 would help the Troopers secure the top creative visionaries and designers as well as begin pursuing music rights and hold the necessary planning and production meetings.

Artists and creators Troopers D&BC hopes to work with to transition the Troopers to 2026 and beyond include:

Tim Snyder, a visionary brass arranger and program designer, has worked with several World Class Finalist drum corps. His creations since 2021 have catapulted Troopers back into position as a perennial World Finalist. Tim's



creative designs are extremely engaging while his brass arrangements have brought the Troopers' horn line growing respect in recent years.

Andrew Ebert is a designer and educator based out of Greenville, SC. A former drum corps participant, Ebert has written for programs across the country including National/World finalists in BOA, DCI, and WGI.

Chris McCarthy is a color guard educator, designer, and consultant. His choreography and attention to artistic aesthetics have been helping restore the Troopers' guard to a position of creative respect.

The work of these creators would be supported by several other visual design and production design talents.

Along with the creative planning for a 2026 marching music field show, at the same time, Troopers' administration would begin initial planning for TroopCon 2026, a series of performance events and concerts celebrating marching music and drum corps in Wyoming, targeting Casper for the world premiere of the corps' 2026 artistic program.

This initial creative work for 2026 begins in July 2025 and runs through the end of the year. The creative design work is advanced during the fall audition process.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Troopers take the mission of developing outstanding young adults seriously. A drum corps production of music and choreography may be what the audience sees, the obvious result of learning. However, drum corps and the education it provides are vehicles used to grow leaders, teach about life, and instill traditions of excellence.

Learning about the art they produce and developing their related skills is what happens for and to marching members of the Troopers throughout a season. Playing members in brass and percussion are instructed in music, choreography, and performance. Guard members are instructed in choreography and performance.

Members work in a variety of settings every day of the season: in sections, when sections come together for caption rehearsals, and in full ensemble. Additional individual rehearsal time is pursued when possible. Remedial opportunities are provided individually and in small groups for those who need additional support.

Intensive learning must happen from late July through the end of the season. This period can be when major show improvements or additions must happen quickly. Members must learn to learn new approaches to art quickly and then perform it quickly

Having quality teaching staff, the best settings for learning, suitable lodging, and the support of medical and nutritional staff is critical to the fast-paced arts learning drum corps members face in late July and early August.

The process of drum corps learning is where the real individual growth happens. Through their drum corps experience, each Trooper develops life skills such as time management, teamwork, and more. The intense, immersive arts learning also helps marching members develop important character traits including honor, loyalty, dedication, integrity, and more. Some Troopers go on to be school band directors and college music professors, developing future generations of musicians. Others become renowned conductors with orchestras or performers with stage productions like Blue Man Group. Drum corps also produces business leaders, N.A.S.A. scientists, lawyers, doctors, and more.

At a time when younger generations can be considered unmotivated or lacking in work ethic, drum corps – in the right setting, with the right support - provides a musical and artistic learning setting that turns that narrative upside down to produce future artists and art patrons.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Fast-paced changes to music and design happen as a drum corps tour progresses. To effect those changes, members of the Troopers must lean into learning and growing ever-changing art, being ready to publicly perform new work quickly but at ever-improving quality levels.

From July 1-August 9, the Troopers will present “The Final Sunset” to audiences across the U.S. Show changes requiring learning continue through the last week of the season. The art and the learning needed to perform the show in public continually evolve.

Goals for that season include increasing positive show evaluations, successfully responding to constructive suggestions for improvements, improving scores for the show from performance to performance, and growing audience engagement and appreciation.

Goals for learning to reach the above goals include:

--Teaching the drum corps artistic model

--Supporting members to learn quickly

--Helping members to use supportive technology such as virtual drill books and digital music apps--Encouraging members to connect with artistic performance and audience engagement

These overarching goals have been developed over time since the corps was founded in 1957. The focus on improving scores has increased as the Troopers' success has increased in recent years and is the basic underlying model of the activity.

Increasing focus on audience appreciation has become more important over the last five years because it informs recruitment, staffing, volunteers, and even fundraising.

Interest requests from potential members and year-end surveys compel providing a quality experience and offering a show the young marchers are empowered to perform.

All learning goals can be assessed via improving adjudication feedback, audience response, member morale, and positive results in the year-end member survey.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The young performers (age 16-22) work toward the outlined goals and the mission of the Troopers with help from corps' educators. Section leads are highly trained and were selected through a careful vetting process for their skills as well as their fit within the Troopers' culture. The full educational staff list is available at [www.troopersdrumcorps.org](http://www.troopersdrumcorps.org).

The following individuals are among the corps' top-ranking educators, exemplifying the talent and vision necessary to provide members a quality educational experience.

Lauren Teel is in her 12th year as Troopers' Percussion Caption Head. Teel is one of the rare female percussion leaders in drum corps. She earned her M.M. in Percussion Performance at Indiana University and a B.M. in Percussion Performance from the University of North Texas. She is currently a Visiting Professor of Percussion at Jacksonville State University. Teel worked previously with other university band programs including the University of Alabama's Million Dollar Band Front Ensemble. She has traveled internationally to perform and appeared in the 2013 blockbuster, "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire," as an on-screen timpanist. Lauren was inducted into the Troopers' Hall of Fame in 2023.

Matty Parker brings 18 years of DCI teaching to his position as Co-Brass Caption Head. His specialty is low brass. Parker marched drum corps from '87-'90. He holds a degree in English and American Literature with a minor in Philosophy. Currently, Matty works with several marching bands in Arizona, including The Sudler Trophy-winning Pride of Arizona Marching Band of which he is a proud alumnus.

Carol Weirich helps lead brass teaching staff as Brass Co-Caption Head with Parker. She graduated from Butler University where she studied horn and piano. Carol marched drum corps with the Troopers and has served on teaching staff for three drum corps. Wierich is an assistant band director at Discovery Middle School in Indiana. She has also studied, conducted, and performed internationally.

Dr. Chelsea Toner has been involved with color guard since 2018, participating in both drum corps and winter guard. Toner has had a successful career conducting top scholastic indoor guards. She is returning for her second year as Caption Head with the Troopers where she will lead a talented staff of former drum corps performers dedicated to teaching the current generation of color guard enthusiasts, covering the disciplines of dance, performance, and working with the visual equipment that propels the field show's story.

These instructional leaders oversee a diverse stable of accomplished drum corps technicians who care deeply about the Troopers and its members. All will use their talents to advance the field production, support learning, and care for members.

During the tour, staff rotates to meet the travel limitations of a drum corps while providing fresh, vibrant instruction. An arts learning grant will allow the corps to bring in more of its part-time educational staff at critical points late in the season when show changes are the most necessary to meet the previously stated learning goals.

### **Budget Narrative**

Revenue streams for the Troopers are diverse and changing.

The purchase of learning materials and camp and audition fees are important.

Troopers alumni support via donations and in-kind donations.

In-kind donations include legal services, trucking, and vehicles. Troop partners with vendors that partially support uniform, props, and instruments.

Donation campaigns include a scholarship fund, meal sponsorships and the Rocky Mountain Rivalry.

Troopers Bingo is revenue stream providing local entertainment.

An engaging show increases merchandise sales, a growing revenue source in partnership with a Casper vendor.

The Troopers write grants and participate in WyoGives.

Troopers coordinate events such as TroopCon, bringing performances to fans.

The admin costs are small. Nearly 90% of the budget covers two primary components: staffing/education/member experience and creative artistic programming shared with audiences.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

TUMBLEWEED CREATIVE ARTS

[HTTPS://TUMBLEWEEDCREATIVEARTS.ORG/](https://tumbleweedcreativearts.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: "Granite" Literary Journal - Volume 1

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Tumbleweed Creative Arts supports and cultivates local creatives by offering unique performance opportunities, an inclusive and accessible venue space, artistic education, and production of consistent, diverse programming.

### Community

Tumbleweed Creative Arts (TCA) exists to elevate original work and creative individuals in Teton County. Pioneered by local artists, TCA consists of a staff of 2 theater junkies, 121 volunteers, 172 contracted artists, 9 board members, and the Jackson Hole community.

Recently, local nonprofit arts funding has favored outside talent and tourism-focused events over supporting homegrown artists. As the steward of the historic Pink Garter Theatre, TCA offers a stage for new playwrights and performance artists to debut their original work.

Teton County's economic divide makes it difficult for amateur artists to establish themselves in the area. Many—who hail from complex families and multifaceted backgrounds—struggle to find local venues for expression, and often turn to out-of-state organizations to platform their work. TCA seeks to rewrite this narrative by fostering our communities creative voices and empowering local artists to build their careers.

In 2025, TCA transitioned to a sober, community-driven entertainment space. With few substance-free venues in town, many seeing alternatives to nightlife lack access to cultural experiences. TCA is proud to provide community programming and pave the way for an alcohol free, engaging and welcoming arts scene.

Regardless of financial standing, TCA offers discounted rates and/or free participation opportunities. "If someone wants to be a part of Tumbleweed, we find a space for them. We figure out what they're interested in and if that opportunity doesn't exist, we build it. We're not just a building a business, but enhancing community culture," said Munz. In turn, TCA is becoming a valuable staple; a home for creative misfits; a launchpad for artists; a stage for the wealthy and the common; a theatre that welcomes everyone.

### Evaluation

Various program outlets including class participants, production audiences, and mentorships have recently provided TCA with constructive feedback, identifying communal support and future success for the nonprofit. "An organization like Tumbleweed Creative Arts should not just be seen as a vessel for entertainment, but a true resource for the Jackson community," said local artist Graham Kotten, who performed in 2024's world premiere of the original play, "The Black Ibis".

Our board of directors is highly involved in ensuring the overall health and evolution of TCA. Armed with volunteers who fiscally support TCA and believe in its success aid in identifying areas for improvement to better serve the community and enhance future events.

Constant evaluation of community engagement, relevance, and stability in our artistic community are a primary focus for staff. For each program and event, TCA evaluates its successes by tracking ticket sales, and audience response/feedback. TCA has produced 20 original productions, with 57 performances serving approximately 4995 audience members throughout our first production season. Additionally, TCA has offered meaningful mentorships and fun community service opportunities since its inception.

On a deeper level, TCA aims to become a regionally recognized organization and theatre that actively supports and amplifies the careers of the artists who contribute to our local culture. Just last year, TCA paid individual artists \$66,819.00 in stipends.

Success for Granite's inaugural issue specifically, will be measured by its ability to provide a high-quality platform for Teton County's creative voices and establish a foundation for long-term sustainability. "Granite" will be another extension of TCA's commitment to its ambitious mission.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

TCA aims to support Teton County's creative writing populous by inviting locals of all ages to submit to a new literary journal titled, "Granite", edited by TCA board member and National Book Award finalist Téa Obreht ("The Tiger's Wife", "Inland", "The Morningside").

Wyoming has strong traditions in storytelling, yet few publishing opportunities exist to highlight original work from this region. Organizations like Jackson Hole Writers and the Jackson Hole Book Festival do not offer publishing opportunities. While Wyoming Arts Council offers fellowships for writers (Artistic Director Andrew Munz is the recipient of 2024 Creative Writing Fellowship-Fiction, and the 2021 Performing Arts Fellowship), they do not actively publish submissions. TCA aims to fill this gap with "Granite", offering a curated space for regional artists.

From April 1 through May 31, 2025, we aim to receive at least 50 submissions from local writers, poets, and artists. Based on an internal rubric, roughly 20 works will be selected for the journal's first issue. TCA will generate media coverage and promotional press outreach to establish a model for future issues, expand submissions, editorial workflow, and develop sustainable funding strategies. Upon publication, TCA will host a launch event at the Pink Garter Theatre in early December, featuring readings and discussions with contributors, attended by at least 150 community members.

Using book publisher Mixam, TCA will produce 1,000 paperback copies of "Granite" and distribute to Teton County libraries, schools and die hard locals. Copies will also be available for purchase through local bookstores and

businesses. Our mission with "Granite" is to offer writers a local outlet to showcase their work, thus ensuring that literary arts from Wyoming can thrive in Wyoming.

"Granite" founder and TCA Artistic Director Andrew Munz has successfully published and sold out of 1,000 copies of his book, "I Can Ski Forever" (2020), and 500 copies of "Jackson Hole: A Love Letter" (2023), with no remaining copies after the initial publication. Sales were exclusive to Teton County retailers who supported his previous works, and similar demand is expected for "Granite".

Success will be measured by its ability to amplify Teton County's creative voices and lay a foundation for long-term sustainability. All proceeds will be reinvested into the success of future editions of "Granite".

TCA remains committed to a full programming schedule. Our season opens with "Petticoat Rules: The Jackson Hole Revue", an original and historical musical about Jackson's first all-women Town Council, premiering at the Pink Garter Theatre in celebration of its 25th anniversary during Old West Days. The production features a fully-local cast, and a live band. For the first time, composer Pam Drews Phillips will be performing her musical score live at each performance and writer Mary Murfitt, will be collaborating with director Andrew Munz to revive the production.

Programming for the remainder of the year includes originally written scripts by high school students Drew McPeak and Hugh Reid, a murder mystery titled "Disco 99" written by Munz, an adaptation of "The Velveteen Rabbit" with an original score written by local Jesse Morgan. TCA will also continue presenting "Original Works", a program for emerging and established artists to present their work ranging in modalities of photography, poetry, dance, and music in an informal open-mic format.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

With Arts Learning funding, TCA will formalize an apprenticeship program that allows students to engage directly with the production of "Granite".

Under the artistic direction of Munz and Obrecht, two high school students will be invited to join the submission panel to help review and curate works for the publication. Not only will they be involved in the editorial process, but they will also walk away with a renowned author to add to their resumes- an experience that will set them apart in future creative endeavors. Additionally, interns will learn correlating administrative logistics, and gain operational insight through marketing and distribution needs of "Granite". If the internship proves to be a successful educational endeavor, TCA will work collaboratively with the apprentices to create a 200 word column for the final publication.

This year alone, 2 students ages 14 and 16 have individually approached Munz in search of mentorship for their original scripts, demonstrating the trust and respect he has already cultivated among young creatives. Acting as an aid in their creative education exemplifies our faith in this creative project. We hope that by harvesting enthusiasm and ambition will further encourage them pursue their artistic passions, and empower them to shape their own futures in the arts.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**



TCA's primary goal is to cultivate the next generation and empower them to keep the arts alive and thriving. We aim to teach critical thinking skills, collaboration, and creative direction. Mentorship and guidance will allow apprentices to take ownership of their artistic growth, nurturing their individual potential and stretching their comfort zone.

TCA sees this program as a way to initiate a "passing the torch" by creating a supportive educational opportunity. In the face of a shifting philanthropic landscape and limited funding for the arts, our program offers a way to instill the value of artistic work in a younger generation.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Téa Obreht: TCA board member and award-winning author and National Book Award finalist

Andrew Munz: TCA Artistic Director, author, actor and comedian

Ryan Hittner: Founding Co-Owner of Snowday Marketing

Amelia Hufsmith: TCA Development Director

### **Budget Narrative**

"Granite" was introduced to donors last year and instantly supported. Currently, TCA is negotiating a recurring gift to further support the publication. We predict this support will inspire a consistent donor pool, ensuring long-term viability. Sales and collaboration with local retailers will help support copyright, publishing and design costs, and artist stipends for selected submissions. TCA is also seeking funding from Wyoming Community Foundation alongside Wyoming Arts Council for this project. We hope that matching this grant 1:1 with another Wyoming based organization will help secure funding in full.

Federal funding is not yet available to TCA, highlighting the need for state and local support. Crucial grants allow organizations like TCA to carry out its mission.

If successful locally, we envision a future where "Granite" allows TCA to expand submissions beyond Teton County and establish a regionally-recognized, competitive platform for original work from voices across Wyoming.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

UCROSS FOUNDATION

[WWW.UCROSSFOUNDATION.ORG](http://WWW.UCROSSFOUNDATION.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Interconnected: Art, Community, and Land at Ucross

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The mission of Ucross is to foster the creative spirit of working artists by providing uninterrupted time, studio space, living accommodations, and the experience of the majestic High Plains while serving as a responsible steward of its historic 20,000-acre ranch. Since our first residency session in 1983, we have supported nearly 3,000 artists from around the world while showcasing Wyoming's important role in the national arts landscape.

The fundamental values of Ucross are supporting creativity and the artistic process; deepening our connection to the local and statewide community; cultivating and sustaining partnerships; increasing artist awareness of place and our connection to the land, history, and region; and embracing Wyoming and the High Plains as our unique identity. These pillars directly guide our strategic goals. Going into this grant period, Ucross will continue to be recognized as a preeminent artist residency program and continue to be a vital and relevant source for artists of all disciplines. Through partnerships, donations, and grant awards, it will be financially sustainable. By focusing on its location, its land, and the sense of place in the modern American West that makes it unique, Ucross will offer an experience to artists around the world that is meaningful, productive and extraordinary, as well as provide local and regional community members and passers-through with programs and exhibitions that reflect the depth and breadth of contemporary art. We will continue to tell the Ucross story to a broader audience, building a strong community of friends and alumni. Through educational programming, exhibitions, and events at the Ucross Art Gallery, the Raymond Plank Center, and The Park at Ucross, and in partnership with local organizations such as Sheridan College and the Wyoming Girls School, we aim to be a meaningful, consistent resource for our community.

### Community

Ucross Foundation is situated on a 20,000-acre working cattle ranch in Ucross, Wyoming, a rural community with a population of 26. In addition to private living accommodations and individual studios, the Ucross campus offers communal spaces such as our public park with seasonal gardens, interdenominational chapel, art gallery, and café. As an artist residency program, Ucross hosts ~120 artists from around the world annually and situates them alongside neighboring ranchers, regional visitors, and tourists. This creates a unique microcosm of diverse ages and socioeconomic backgrounds that is continually changing with our bi-monthly rotation scheduling throughout the year. In addition to public programming that draws 3,000+ participants each year, the sprawling layout of our

ranch provides opportunity for interaction between locals and artists. Many thought-provoking conversations have been had between a rancher moving sheep and cattle and an artist walking to their studio.

Ucross strives to provide an inclusive environment for all. Studios and public areas are all physically accessible, and our facilities are managed with the utmost care and proactive approach to address inclusive accommodations. While we employ all modern methods of communication, such as social media posts and email newsletters, we appreciate that some rural communities operate successfully using traditional forms of communication, and we connect with those communities by hanging posters across our communities in Sheridan and Johnson Counties, as well as utilizing print and radio ads to better reach audiences of all demographics. We also send special invitations to schools, veteran facilities, and senior centers, offering close parking and special seating for those with limited mobility.

## **Evaluation**

Ucross values feedback from a broad spectrum of people who interact with our artist residency program, our ranch, and our community programming. We hear directly from artists-in-residence, students, event attendees, gallery visitors, partner organizations, and other community members through evaluation forms, exit surveys, one-on-one conversations, dedicated meetings, and testimonials. Our guest books in the gallery and chapel provide opportunities for comment, as well as a suggestion box that enables visitors to fill out an evaluation card with written feedback. We seek ongoing feedback from all types of constituencies, from the public to local legislature representatives to art critics.

We employ multiple methods of collecting quantitative data to measure our impact. We monitor gallery visitation numbers; social, print, and online coverage; and geographic reach. We utilize free ticketing services to gauge attendance of our public events, allowing us to stay connected with registrants for future outreach. We track our email marketing and newsletter growth (~6,000 subscribers); website analytics (~62,000 unique visitors per year); and social media engagement and followers (~4,000 Facebook and 7,800 Instagram). Through this following, we receive instant feedback from both in person and virtual visitors.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Ucross Foundation's 2025 operating budget is \$2.1M, which is predominantly related to the costs of running the residency program for 120 artists each year, the maintenance of facilities, and utilities.

The anticipated direct costs for the exhibitions, events, and programs included in this grant request are \$220,000. Specific gallery expenses include installation, curator fees, shipping, supplies, publications, insurance, and outreach. Specific costs connected to the other events include production fees, artist honoraria, outreach, and supplies. If received, the \$10,000 from the WAC will be allocated toward exhibition costs, event production costs, and artist fees.

## **Project Support Narrative**

Ucross requests support for its public programs and community-based activities, including exhibitions and related events in the Ucross Art Gallery, as well as the Ucross Arts Festival, the Community Christmas Celebration, and Founder's Day. All programming is free and open to the public.

The Ucross Art Gallery delivers world-class contemporary art exhibitions in the rural setting of Ucross (pop. 26). As part of one of the most distinguished artist residency programs in the country, the Ucross Art Gallery's objective is to enhance, support, and champion the creative work of our artists while providing our local communities with access to contemporary national artwork. We value our role as a cultural hub and are dedicated to showcasing the work we've supported to the public through exhibitions and events.

During the grant period, we will present *Luminous Forms* (guest curator: Emily McElwreath, featuring 8 artists), on view from July 2025 through January 2026, and our annual Native American exhibition (title TBD, guest curator Marwin Begaye), which will feature the 2025 recipients of the Ucross Fellowship for Native American Artists, on view from late January through June 2026. We expect between 2,000-3,000 people to visit these two exhibitions.

A new site-specific project, *Confluences*, will be unveiled in summer 2025. *Confluences* is a sound-art installation blending the stories and sounds of Ucross in a layered composition that covers the main campus. As they walk the grounds, through a special GIS app, visitors will hear stories from local ranchers, artists-in-residence, and community members: a narrative representation of the connections of Ucross, at the confluence of three creeks on our ranch. This self-guided tour will serve as an additional draw for community interaction.

We will provide key support for the second annual Collective Arts Festival, in partnership with regional arts organizations, held at Whitney Commons in downtown Sheridan on Aug. 9. This event is expected to attract more than 1,500 attendees from across the region.

Shortly after, on Aug. 17, we will host the fourth annual Ucross Arts Festival, featuring musical performances, poetry giveaways, and family-friendly printmaking activities. Last conducted in 2023, this lively event historically draws over 400 local and regional attendees who enjoy music, food, and performances by alumni on the expansive lawn of the Park at Ucross.

Now in its 13th year, the Ucross Community Christmas Celebration remains one of our most popular events. The evening includes a reading by bestselling author Craig Johnson, carols by the Buffalo High School Balladiers, an alum performance, crafts for children, refreshments, and fireworks. Based on previous years, we expect to serve between 400-500 people in the Raymond Plank Center that night.

Set for May 30, 2026, Founder's Day is a community event that provides a rare behind-the-scenes look at our artist residency program. Visitors are welcome to enjoy a day at Ucross: explore the grounds, meet artists in their studios, get guided tours of the art gallery, and enjoy picnics on the lawn.

Throughout 2025-2026, we will continue to offer our partners at Sheridan College and Wyoming Girls School the opportunity for artists to provide a workshop, reading, or talk for classes and individual students. We will also continue to heighten our efforts to host talks and readings for the public, both onsite and with our community partners.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

During the WAC grant period, Ucross will provide arts learning activities within each of our community-based public events and exhibitions. Exhibiting artists and guest curators connected to Luminous Forms and the Native American exhibition will participate in these programs, including curator-led tours and talks, artist panel discussions at Ucross and Sheridan College, and workshops with the Wyoming Girls School. Ucross also offers arts education activities within Founder's Day, Ucross Arts Festival, and the Community Christmas Celebration. These activities include open studio discussions with artists; arts activities for kids at large-scale events that are guided by artist-alumni and staff; and readings/lectures that help increase the knowledge and understanding of the creative process. The new and ongoing sound installation, Confluences, is brimming with opportunities for sensory learning, including guided walks with students and visitors that will foster a personal and tangible relationship to the landscape.

In addition to those involved in the exhibitions or public events, artists-in-residence during our Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 sessions will also participate in arts learning and community engagement activities. Each session, Ucross artists-in-residence connect with the Wyoming Girls School, as well as other area schools. Our long-time involvement with WGS is an important component of our outreach: WGS often travels to Ucross for exhibitions and artist workshops, and Ucross artists also go to WGS to provide workshops and class discussion. These interactions allow the students to have a one-on-one experience with the artist(s), enhancing their reflection and engagement with the art. The positive relationship between art and mental wellness has become more apparent, and these visits provide a meaningful and often therapeutic interaction with the arts on a deeply personal level. Our artists-in-residence also work with other community-based groups, local schools, and student groups. We have a strong partnership with Sheridan College, and our artists often present publicly in the Whitney Center of the Arts. Lastly, we are heavily involved in the Sheridan arts community and partner with local arts organizations to help enliven the arts in our greater community, including as a founding organization in the Bighorn Arts Collective.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our community-based programs are designed to deepen the learning experience of the participants, visitors, or audience members; connect the world-class artists in our residency program and alumni base to our community in a very rural setting; and strengthen Ucross's role as a meaningful resource for artists and the community.

Exhibitions and activities in the Ucross Art Gallery, including curator talks, artist talks, workshops, panel discussions, and public receptions aim to 1) connect our exhibiting artists to the local community and Wyoming, in general; 2) offer opportunities for local groups or individuals to increase their knowledge or interest in the creative process; 3) discuss the role of contemporary arts in our culture; and 4) contribute to the vibrancy of our community through our shared connection to humanity.

Similarly, our goals through events such as the Ucross Arts Festival, Collective Arts Festival, the Community Christmas Celebration, Founder's Day, and deepen our educational engagement in the community and with our partner organizations; enliven arts learning, knowledge, and participation in the creative process; give special access to Ucross's network of world-class contemporary art and artists with our community; and increase awareness of Wyoming's role in nurturing and supporting artists who have a major impact on the nation's arts and letters.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Ucross provides time and space to more than 120 artists each year through our core residency program. Since our first residency session in 1983, our program has become one of the leading residency programs in the country. At Ucross, our artists are free of obligations and distractions. We protect their time. Simultaneously, many artists who come through the program seek out community engagement activities. Often this is part of their artistic practice. Our team facilitates their interaction with the community. This activity can take many forms, including artist talks, workshops, lectures, classes, open studios, and so on, but it always at the direction of the artists.

After the selection process is complete, the invited artists are contacted by the Residency Associate, who asks if they are interested in community engagement. Once that process is complete, the team organizes workshops, discussions, panels, individual art critiques, or other engagement activities that connect the artist to Sheridan College, local schools, nearby reservations, or the Wyoming Girls School. In short, the engagement activities are fluid, but many artists choose to take advantage of this opportunity.

For exhibition-related programming connected to the Ucross Art Gallery, the exhibiting artists are often selected at least 18 months in advance. At that time, the Gallery Associate inquires about their availability for a visit to Ucross and participation in a workshop, panel, and/or exhibition event. Several artists mentioned in Luminous Forms and the next Native American Fellowship exhibition will participate in public talks at Sheridan College, WGS, and other workshop events with area schools.

Lastly, the artists involved with the proposed public events include the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo High School Balladiers and Jazz Band, Craig Johnson, Emily McElwreath, Marwin Begaye, Hayden Pedigo, and artists-in-residence during Founder's Day 2026, as well as others to be booked as we get closer to the events. Luminous Forms artists include Damien Davis, Inka Essenhigh, Alannah Farrell, Will Hutnick, Darina Karpov, Nancy Kim, Linn Meyers, and Marilyn Minter. The Native American Fellowship Exhibition will feature Annette Saunooke

Clapsaddle, Gina Herrera, Sarah Ortegon Highwalking, and the Fall 2025 recipients in writing and visual arts (to be selected April 2025).

Since many of the participating artists are Ucross alumni, they are vetted and qualified artists who were accepted into Ucross's residency program, which has a 6% acceptance rate (2024-2025). Ucross staff, as well as the selection committee comprised of external jurors from across the nation, are committed to selecting a range of artists by background, discipline, and stages in career

### **Budget Narrative**

Ucross remains in a strong financial position. Like many residency programs, the operating budget is heavy in personnel (~58%) and facilities costs, but we expend nearly 10% of our overall budget on community-facing activities. We are mission-driven to provide time and space for artists, so our budget reflects that commitment to mission and the Ucross experience. Nearly 50% of our total revenue comes from endowment income and lease income; about 5% comes from earned revenue (application payments, gift shop/cafe; gallery purchases); and the remaining 45% comes from fundraising revenue, including individual gifts, institutional grants, partner support, and fundraising events.

Ucross is committed to streamlining its operating expenses: The 2025 budget reflects a 25% decrease in overall spending. The Ucross team continues to deepen its programming, but always with a focus on sustainability and fiscal responsibility.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING / ART MUSEUM

[WWW.UWYO.EDU/ARTMUSEUM](http://WWW.UWYO.EDU/ARTMUSEUM)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: UW Art Museum Cyanotype Workshop Series in conjunction with Symposis Exhibition

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The University of Wyoming Art Museum (UWAM) shares in the transformative power of art through exhibiting, preserving, and interpreting visual culture from around the world. As an integral part of UW, we foster a deeper connection with humanity and a creativity that envisions new futures by engaging academic, local, state, national, and global communities. UWAM's ongoing exhibition and program goals include:

- Produce scholarly, socially relevant, original exhibitions that draw on UWAM's collections and showcase new content from highly reputable artists that encourage interdisciplinary teaching and learning
- Create innovative approaches to object-based teaching by initiating and participating in transdisciplinary curricular programs across campus and beyond
- Elevate expectations for the research and creative activities of UWAM faculty and staff through collaborations with colleagues at UW and other institutions, pursuit of relevant research opportunities, public presentations, and publications

### Community

UWAM is a public-facing institution serving Laramie and our larger region, including the city's population of 31,407 with a median age of 25.7 in addition to visitors. We serve families, students from PreK to graduate level, and those in nondominant communities - incarcerated, veterans, people with varying cognitive, emotional, and physical abilities, and the diverse public.

UWAM presents high-caliber artwork that represents artists from a range of identities to support empathy and learning. In 2023, UWAM presented a 50th anniversary exhibition, The New West, working with an Indigenous curator to develop an exhibition recontextualizing our Western American art. In 2024/25, we hosted 100 of Harold Garde's unseen works to honor his 100th birthday and developed public programs with partners on and off campus. We established partnership with the Native American Education Research and Cultural Center for ongoing programming and exhibitions. In 2025/26, UWAM will partner with exhibiting artists Nora Ligorano and Marshall



Resse to provide both public and private cyanotype workshops exploring themes of Wyoming ecology and developing programming and educational opportunities for the Sympoiesis exhibition.

UWAM prioritizes accessibility through free admission and extended Thursday hours. Many programs are free. For paid workshops, UWAM covers the cost for those who need financial assistance. PR materials include information on how to request accommodations. In partnership with UW's Disability Support Services, we honor these requests if received 1-3 days in advance for transcription, captioning, or ASL services.

## **Evaluation**

UWAM employs qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods. Staff participate in evaluation by discussing program ideas as a team and with members of the general public. Targeted surveys are used to solicit feedback through open-ended questions. Attendees self-identify as UW students, K-12 teachers, UW educators, Art Museum board members, or members of the general public. Attendance information is used to track which populations we are reaching. Programs are designed to engage broad sectors of the population. Staff conduct evaluations following programs to assess the successes and challenges of exhibitions and programs and how they align with our goals and strategic plan. Visitor services staff and student docents are trained to capture information through dialogue and observations, including empathetic responses. They also track general visitation numbers, allowing us to draw conclusions based on repeat visits and attendance fluctuations. We have completed three Museum Assessment Program reviews through the American Alliance of Museums: institution, collections, and community engagement. These reviews provided professional guidance through self-reflection, community focus groups, and expert consultant reports. In 2022, we completed the Education and Interpretation MAP. In 2023, we completed AAM's reaccreditation process and thoroughly reviewed the museum's exhibitions and programs. These evaluation methods allow UWAM staff to develop more impactful programs and exhibitions

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

UWAM requests support for workshops exploring Wyoming ecology and the cyanotype technique in conjunction with visiting artists Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese and the Sympoiesis exhibition. Nora and Marshall's large-scale cyanotypes will be installed in UWAM's lobby, surrounded by the sunlit windows. The artworks feature endangered and extinct species and are designed to fade over time due to light exposure, creating a poignant statement on extinction and ecology. Cyanotypes are a photographic process that produces a distinctive blue image by exposing a light-sensitive emulsion to UV, resulting in a monochromatic print.

Nora and Marshall will be at UWAM in July and will feature in the annual K-12 Summer Arts Camp. The museum will begin a series of cyanotype workshops that will continue through FY26. Workshops will integrate the knowledge of local artists and ecologists to offer public programs and education related to exhibition themes.

UWAM will host public workshops and target local constituencies identified as having less engagement with the museum, developing new partnerships to broaden the reach of visual arts across the region.

Partnerships include Public Educators, Laramie's senior population, adults with developmental disabilities, UW Native American students and faculty, Wyoming's Veteran population, and Laramie adults living with mental illness. Workshops provide UWAM teaching artists with professional development to reach more communities in Wyoming.

UWAM will provide 12 workshops in 2025/26, and focus on the following constituencies throughout to provide arts programming free of charge:

UWAM will host a workshop for local Public Arts Educators in teaching cyanotypes across ACSD1 schools. Public school teachers receive a stipend for their participation. UWAM teaching artists will attend to build skills.

UWAM will partner with the Eppson Center for Seniors, a nonprofit serving Laramie's 60+ community members. Laramie's senior population will benefit from arts education programming themed around creative aging.

UWAM will partner with The Cooper Center for Creative Arts, a Laramie organization serving adults with developmental disabilities. An honorarium will be provided to the center to offset travel costs and incidentals. UWAM educators will develop skills for working with communities that require differentiation in educational strategies.

UWAM will expand an ongoing partnership with UW Native American Education Resource and Cultural Center to provide Indigenous students, faculty, and staff with museum education and arts training.

UWAM will partner with the UW Veteran Services Center and UW Lecturer TK Stoudt to teach Cyanotypes to UW students who have recently transitioned into the academic community after military service. Stoudt regularly partners with UWAM to explore connections between exhibitions and experiences of military veterans.

UWAM will partner with Robbie's House, a nonprofit that provides community resources, job training, and wellness support to adults in Laramie living with mental illness. UWAM teaching artists will continue training in curriculum development for learners who require differentiation and accommodation.

UWAM will partner with SAFE Project, a nonprofit that supports survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. UWAM will offer community-building arts programming centered on collective art-making.

UWAM will offer five workshops to the public.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

UWAM is first and foremost a teaching museum. In addition to exhibiting world-class visual arts, our programs and collections provide valuable teaching opportunities for K-12 Students, UW faculty, staff and students, and Laramie residents. As such, all museum programming is based on the idea of Arts Learning.

For this proposal, the Arts Learning services provided will be two-fold: teaching the cyanotype technique to a diversity of UW populations and Laramie residents, and professional development for K-12 arts educators and UWAM museum educators enabling them to apply the skills gained after workshop activities have concluded.

For all workshops, participants will first visit Nora and Marshall's exhibition, which features large-scale artworks of endangered and extinct species designed to degrade and fade over time due to light exposure, creating a poignant statement on extinction and ecology. Participants will spend time examining and reflecting on the works. Educators will provide probing questions, prompts, and reflection sheets. After becoming familiar with the artworks, participants will move to the museum art studio to learn the cyanotype technique. After creating cyanotypes, participants will return to the exhibition to make connections between the installation and their works. Museum educators will facilitate this process through guided and written reflection.

The workshop for K-12 Arts Educators and UWAM Museum Educators will follow a similar format, with a greater emphasis on learning the technique itself to ensure it can be effectively taught in public school classrooms. UWAM will provide K-12 educators with reflection sheets and conversational prompts that can be used outside the museum context.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Through a series of workshops, participants from a diversity of demographics and communities will explore, learn, and demonstrate the cyanotype emulsion and exposure process.

Participants will be able to: 1) describe one or more concepts or techniques; 2) apply a concept or technique of cyanotypes to a personal artwork; and 3) if they are educators, demonstrate and teach cyanotypes to others.

UWAM educators design educational programs based on National Core Arts Standards to establish direct connections with the Common Core Wyoming standards taught in local classrooms. We focus our teaching on three areas: Creating, Responding, and Connecting. These standards support student learning outcomes through big ideas – enduring understandings and essential questions. Standards and questions differ according to grade level and age group. While National Core Arts Standards apply to students in grades PreK-12, the high-achieving standards for high school students also apply to adult populations participating in the workshops.

By focusing on creating, responding, and connecting, students will be able to make personal connections to exhibitions, ask probing questions, and engage more deeply with visual arts.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese

Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese have collaborated as LigoranoReese since the mid 1980's. Through their interdisciplinary practice, their sculpture, woven fiber optic data tapestries, video, limited edition multiples and public artworks intersect new technologies with traditional forms. Their practice focuses on how social systems intersect, relate, and affect society, leading to that 'aha' moment.

Rhiannon Jakopak – Guest Artist and Wildlife Ecologist, WY Game and Fish

Rhiannon ecologist and artist with roots in the rugged landscapes of Wyoming. She uses artistic practices built on careful observation and play to foster connection with the surrounding world, both within herself and others. She is excited to try new media, styles, and concepts whenever possible, but she typically returns to depicting the animals and plants of the Rocky Mountains through printmaking, hand stitching, painting, and illustration.

William Bowling – UWAM Education and Public Programs Coordinator

Will is an arts and culture worker, public educator, and outdoor enthusiast and creates public programming and educational opportunities for the UW Art Museum. He is the Education Director for Relative Theatrics, and runs a program with the school district that teaches theater arts and creative writing in three Albany County elementary schools.

Reinette Redbird-Tendore – Director, Native American Education Resource and Cultural Center

Reinette Redbird Curry serves as the Director of the Native American Education, Research, and Cultural Center at the University of Wyoming. She has her BA in Elementary Education and a Masters Degree in Social work. Reinette is an enrolled member of the Northern Arapaho, Northern Ute, and Pyramid Lake Paiute tribes. She emphasizes the importance of NAERCC's programs in aiding student retention and success, while also helping students maintain their cultural identities.

Oscar Lilley – Executive Director, Robbie’s House

Robbie’s House is a clubhouse for people with mental illness that offers a wide range of services and activities that empower individuals to regain control over their lives and thrive despite their mental health challenges.

Jessi Colehour – Board Member, SAFE PROJECT

Jessi has worked holds a Master’s degree in Social Work through Colorado State University. Jessi was recruited to work at Alternatives to Violence supervising three non-residential programs where she specialized in working with survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault.

TK Stoudt – Lecturer, UW Veteran Services Center

Stoudt is a Higher Education consultant, Educational Developer, and temporary lecturer at the University of Wyoming. He teaches undergraduate Veteran Specific Courses including a first-year seminar. His research interests are relational leadership theory, prior learning assessment and student-veteran transition. TK works with UWAM staff regularly to provide arts learning opportunities for his students.

Other artists, educators and key partners from Cooper Center, Epson Center, as well as UWAM teaching artists will also be participating. At the time of this proposal, exact staff and personnel have yet to be identified.

Carissa Isom – Program Director, Cooper Center for the Arts

Angie Fessler – Activities Coordinator, Epson Center for Seniors

Cassidy Post - UWAM Interim Master Educator

### **Budget Narrative**

The University of Wyoming Art Museum is funded partially by State of Wyoming block grant dollars allocated to the University, partially funded by donor-established endowments, gifts, planned giving, and grant funds. These funds allow UWAM to pay staff and visiting artists to show exceptional exhibitions from renowned artists and objects from the permanent collection and create related interpretation and programs. Funding allows UWAM to carry out its mission. This budget will support the project by providing a series of workshops teaching the Cyanotype processes and techniques. It will cover artists’ fees for visiting artists Ligorano and Reese to engage in

UWAM programming during residency hours, local guest artists TBD, and administrative, material, and labor costs incurred by UWAM. It will additionally cover the cost of materials, travel for students with developmental disabilities, and stipends for participating K-12 Public School Arts Educators.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

## UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING / BUCHANAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS SPECIAL EVENTS

### FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: UW Fine Arts Outreach/Buchanan Center Special Events: Fränder

#### Application:

#### Mission/Goals

The University of Wyoming previously hosted a cultural program series (UW Presents) and attendant outreach and educational activities through UW Cultural Programs and the Fine Arts Outreach office.

Now simply Fine Arts Outreach, this function is overseen by the College of Arts and Sciences and housed within the Buchanan Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA) staff center, which serves all the fine and performing arts units on campus.

Fine Arts Outreach works with academic fine and performing arts units to support curricular, professional, and training goals. The producing arm of Fine Arts Outreach is Buchanan Center Special Events, which is committed to presenting culturally diverse and unique performing and visual artists, as well as commercial artists who do not typically tour in rural areas with a lower population base, for Laramie and its surrounding communities. While serving these presenting aims, we are committed to maintaining an emphasis on the educational needs of University of Wyoming students. All events are produced by Buchanan Center for the Performing Arts staff, but may take place in larger venues across campus, such as the Arts and Sciences Auditorium, as needed.

#### Community

The University of Wyoming is in Laramie, the county seat of Albany County in southeastern Wyoming. As Wyoming's land grant and flagship school, UW is a nationally-recognized research institution that draws ~13,000 students from all 50 states and ~90 countries. Laramie's demographics reflect the transient and underemployed student population, with a median age and household income below and cost-of-living above State averages.

Buchanan Center Special Events is the producing arm of Fine Arts Outreach, committed to presenting a wide variety of high-caliber fine and performing artists to the University and local communities, who would otherwise be unlikely to tour or perform in Wyoming due the State's low population base.

Buchanan Center Special Events aims to provide enhanced opportunities for area audiences to attend quality arts events, while keeping prices as low as possible, which is especially important to local and surrounding communities, which have a relatively high cost of living but lower median incomes.

UW's performing venues are ADA-compliant, with clear entry signage, zero-entry doors, ADA parking spaces and seating, and accessible bathrooms. Special requests are accommodated as needed (e.g., sign language interpreters). UW websites are ADA compliant. UW Paratransit provides busing to event sites as requested.

Buchanan Center Special Events offers tickets on a discounted sliding scale for students and seniors from the general public ticket price, as well as group discounts. Buchanan Center Special Events works with units on campus to select artists and coordinate residencies and to link artists to appropriate academic programs.

### **Evaluation**

Buchanan Center Special Events is the producing entity of Fine Arts Outreach, working in tandem with academic arts units to provide the University and surrounding community with access to high-caliber performing and visual artists, whether in performances, master classes / presentations, or gallery shows and demonstrations.

Buchanan Center Special Events Special Events coordinates with visual and performing arts units to assess their current curricular, networking, and training needs as it develops its event season. Arts unit faculty help to evaluate the quality and type of artists presented, and their feedback on programming offers a guide for future endeavors. Work associated with classroom teaching (e.g., a master class) is assessed according to standard academic measures.

Outreach and service activities are vetted by producing staff, as well as the unit faculty involved (which can extend beyond the arts units; e.g., the Honors College or the School of Computing) to meet the needs of the population served. These activities are assessed through surveys and reported through UW's Office of Engagement and Outreach.

Audience response is assessed by tracking social media interactions, attendance, box office receipts, and soliciting direct feedback.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

Buchanan Center Special Events is funded by the University of Wyoming College of Arts and Sciences, endowment monies, and ticket revenue, which when combined provide artist fees and accommodate technical and hosting requirements of artist contracts. The number and caliber of events offered annually is limited by the funds available. Augmenting these funds allows us to vie for higher-profile artists and retain guest artists to serve the artistic goals of academic units.

For the 2025-2026 season, Buchanan Center Special events is planning the following:

- A country music concert in tandem with UW Homecoming and UW Athletics;
- A dance troupe residency;
- A collaboration with UW Symphony Orchestra to play a live score for a discounted showing of the film of "Frankenstein;"
- Residency of the Swedish and Estonian band Fränder in January 2026.
- Collaborative work with local music scene partners and UW Music staff to provide training and performance opportunities to increase performer exposure and professional experience; and



- Free, public move nights for area families.

We are requesting WAC project support specifically to help host Fränder. Formed in 2015, Fränder blends Swedish and Estonian folk traditions with a modern twist, creating a contemporary "heavy folk" sound. The result is a driving, robust, utterly unique style. Fränder conjures an expressive musical landscape, evocative of the mystery and beauty of the ancient Scandinavian woodlands. The band has toured worldwide to acclaim, from Scandinavia to Japan to Canada and the U.S.

The band's current tour lineup features founding siblings Gabbi Dluzewski (Swedish mandola and vocals) and Daniel Dluzewski (double bass and vocals), playing alongside Gabbi's wife Sade Tatar (flute and vocals), the percussionist expert Andreas Berglund (specialized on Japanese classical marimba), and the stellar fiddler and family friend Gabriella Josefsson. On their most recent album, II, FRÄNDER continues to redefine the future of European music.

Fränder will be in residence at the end of January 2026 for three primary events:

- A public lecture-demonstration about the history of Swedish and Estonian music, which exemplifies classical elements of these forms, and how the ensemble implements such into their repertoire;
- A singing workshop, open to vocal students in the University's performing arts academic units. The workshop will focus on exposing participants to traditional Nordic vocal techniques, specifically "kulning," or "lokking" (in Norwegian), the high-pitched, directed, melismatic (ornamented) herding calls originally used to communicate with livestock and over long distances. Over time, the calls evolved into a unique and powerful vocal tradition.
- A ticketed, public performance for area audiences, funded by the Open Doors Performing Arts Endowment. The Endowment aims to enrich student and community understanding and appreciation for the performing arts in a wide variety of cultural contexts and to support performances and workshops, hosted through UW's performing arts academic units that reflect the vast diversity of the sights and sounds of performing arts around our country and throughout the world.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Annual operating costs include one full-time staff salary/fringe, some artist fees, and overhead (e.g., office supplies, IT) paid from the College of Arts & Sciences unrestricted funds (~\$144,000); box office staff salaries paid from ticket fees; and artist fees and technical/hosting support paid from endowment monies and ticket revenue. UW venues are free for UW units to use. Required technical personnel are either directly involved with events as paid staff or contracted for temporary hire.

We aim to increase the frequency and variety of arts programming for patrons and training opportunities for students. We keep ticket prices low, generally a fraction of prices charged in CO. The number and type of events we offer is limited by funds available. High-profile artists typically have base fees over six figures. Developing a

meaningful event series requires securing high-caliber artists within our budget who can also offer training, networking, and performing opportunities to students.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING / DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE

[WWW.UWYO.EDU/THD](http://WWW.UWYO.EDU/THD)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: University of Wyoming Department of Theatre and Dance: Multiple Projects for 25-26 Production Season

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Department of Theatre and Dance is driven and inspired by the character and spirit of Wyoming and the land-grant mission of the University of Wyoming. We strive to prepare students for meaningful lives as theatre and dance professionals, scholars, educators, and arts advocates by providing a rigorous, vibrant, creative, and supportive academic environment.

We believe that students learn best by doing and we provide extensive one-on-one and practical educational opportunities through comfortable class sizes and strong faculty mentorship. Students can build a portfolio of experiences based on their degree and individual interests. We support and encourage students with multiple interests inside and outside the program. We support and encourage students to study abroad.

We enrich the cultural life of campus, Laramie, and Wyoming by staging a wide range of high-quality performances, workshops, conferences, and events that showcase our students', faculty's, staff's and guest artists' talents and creative work. We bring the world of theatre and dance to Wyoming and Wyoming to the world.

We strive to engage with the broadest possible audience with planned seasons of ambitious theatre and dance. We believe in the positive contributions and impacts that the arts can play in society with the potential for personal and cultural transformation and for social change. The arts are a substantial part of the economy, and we train our students to be ready for the many possible paths their careers and lives may take them.

Students are the heart of our program, and we continue to elevate the program's spirit, enhancing student training and success.

At the heart of our mission are five strategic actions we have committed to pursuing:

- Enhance student success
- Pursue institutional excellence
- Provide a supportive community
- Engage with and serve the state of Wyoming
- Cultivate financial stability and diversification

## **Community**

The University of Wyoming is located in Laramie, the county seat of Albany County in southeastern Wyoming. As Wyoming's land grant and flagship school, UW is a nationally-recognized research institution that draws ~11,000 students from all 50 states and from around the world. Laramie's demographics reflect the transient and underemployed student population, with a median age and household income below and cost-of-living above state averages. UW Theatre & Dance is an academic performing arts program that provides high-quality educational and pre-professional training opportunities to students and high-caliber arts engagement and experiences to the local and state community.

We engage across the state, sharing informal performances, lecture/demonstrations, and workshops, free of charge, to under-served areas of the state. We will be hosting the Wyoming State Thespian Festival for secondary school students, and we provide outreach to K-12 schools through performances and workshops. We offer discounted tickets for students, seniors, and university groups, and school-only performances for free. We also offer "pay what you can" matinee performances to support arts accessibility for all in the Laramie community, and we collaborate with other departments and units on campus, linking our performance offerings to enhance student curricular experiences.

UW's performing arts venues are ADA-compliant, with clear entry signage, zero-entry doors, ADA parking spaces and seating, and accessible bathrooms. Special requests are both welcomed and accommodated (e.g., sign language interpreter). UW websites are ADA compliant. UW Paratransit provides busing to event sites as requested.

## **Evaluation**

We are an academic program with specific curricular goals to provide pre-professional training opportunities to students and artistic goals to provide high-quality productions to audiences. Many of our projects involve external adjudication by professional organizations (e.g. Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, American College Dance Association, and by peer institutions).

Work associated with academic credit / classroom experiences is assessed according to standard academic measures and student company members receive class credit for performance, creative, and technical work, which is evaluated using academic assessment tools. Guest artists are selected according to professional expertise and how those expertise align with student needs as value added to classroom and practical training. Outreach and service activities are vetted by faculty to ensure they meet the needs of the populations served, and these activities are assessed through surveys, and reported through UW's Office of Engagement and Outreach.

Additionally, production projects rely on regular and ongoing assessments in weekly production meetings, anonymous surveys administered before, during and post process to ensure the integrity and quality of work by our creative production team, students, and patrons. Production activities are documented and archived to the extent allowed by licensing agreements. Audience engagement and response is assessed through tracking expenditures, attendance, box office receipts and soliciting patron feedback.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Department of Theatre and Dance has programmed works designed to engage audiences and grow the quality and quantity of artistic experiences that participants and communities can access. The season includes three fully produced works, hosting the Wyoming State Thespian Festival, two staged readings, and student directed / choreographed projects. The guest artist residencies outlined below bring artists with a multitude of perspectives, experiences, and voices into direct conversation with the campus and Laramie communities and represent areas where enhanced project support funding will have the broadest impact.

EL SUEÑO Dance Residency - Request for support for a one week creative residency in September of 2025; the company will work with students and community members in a series of workshops, culminating in a performance that features the collaboration between the company and community that has unfolded over the course of the residency; \$10,000 budgeted, \$3,500 requested.

EL SUEÑO, based in Seattle Washington USA, utilizes art as a platform for community engagement, healing, and empowerment of marginalized communities. Their work brings Indigenous people into the present and provides a powerful statement of identity, resiliency, and the contemporary Indigenous experience. Director Alicia Mullikin is an Indigenous Mexican-American dance artist and bead-worker who is descendant from the Naáyari Cora people of Mexico.

WHAT WAS OURS / WHO SHE IS Devising Residency - Request for guest artist support for a one week creative residency in January of 2026, where artists Jordan Dresser and Sarah Ortegón will work with students and community members in the devising and performance of a series of monologues inspired by the documentaries

“What Was Ours” directed by Mat Hames and “Who She Is” by Jordan Dresser; \$6,000 budgeted, \$3,000 requested.

Jordan Dresser is a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe located on the Wind River Indian Reservation in central Wyoming. Jordan is featured in the documentary, “What Was Ours,” that explores issues of reparation, museums and who owns the material culture of Native people. Dresser also wrote “Who She Is,” a short documentary about Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, which was an official selection for the 17th Native Spirit Film Festival 17 Oct—7 Nov 2023, UK Premiere. Actor Sarah Ortegon was born in Denver, Colorado, tenth in a family of twelve children. As an enrolled Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, their work, “Home is Where the Heart Is”, is a part of The Denver Art Museum collection, and they also appear in the PBS Film, “The Art of Home” (2019).

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING Directing Residency - Request for guest artist support for an eight week production residency with actor and director Dee Dee Batteast, who will work with students and community members directing a contemporary iteration of Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing, set for production in April / May of 2026. \$10,000 budgeted, \$3,500 requested.

Dee Dee Batteast serves on the faculty at Ball State University, where she teaches courses in beginning acting, auditioning, one-person show, and Shakespeare. She has worked as an actress, social activist, and youth advocate, and volunteered at Girl Be Heard, a not-for-profit theatre company dedicated to social justice and issues affecting young women. Dee Dee received her MFA from UNC-Chapel Hill, and spent 3 years as a company member of PlayMakers Repertory Theatre.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Throughout the 2025 2026 academic year, University of Wyoming will commission works from Repertory Dance Theatre (RDT) and Contemporary Dance Wyoming (CDW) to be set on University of Wyoming dancers. With additional works created by University of Wyoming faculty, this repertory concert is slated to tour Wyoming high schools, dance studios, and communities in late March 2026 as part of a series titled Snowy Range Dance Festival Tour (SRDFT), offering educational programming, enrichment workshops, and live performances at no cost to Wyoming communities. This request for Arts Learning funding will support these SRDFT touring activities, and help to expand the reach and impact of dance across the state.

Through these residencies on campus with dance professionals, University of Wyoming students will engage with these companies across a broad spectrum of activities, including dance technique classes, improvisational workshops, creative studio sessions, and educational programming development. These residencies will culminate in a series of programming that includes interactive educational lecture / demonstration, creative and improvisational experiences, and performance repertoire that can be shared in a variety of formats and spaces with broad and inclusive audiences. This programming will then serve as the basis for the presentation and touring activities slated to take place in late Spring 2026.

Faculty and students will conduct a minimum of two touring loops (from the five identified below), visiting local high-schools, community arts programs, studios, and other arts adjacent entities, to share their touring program and be in conversation with dancers, performers, artists, and creatives across Wyoming communities.

#### Tour Loop Possibilities

- Jackson-Star Valley-Pinedale
- Casper-Glenrock-Douglas-Big Horn-Sheridan
- Cheyenne-Wheatland-Gillette-Torrington-Black Hills
- Rawlins-Rock Springs-Green River-Lyman/Fort Bridger-Evanston
- Lander-Riverton-Thermopolis-Whorland-Cody-Powell

In each of these instances, activities will be offered at no cost to participants, with the aim of increasing arts visibility, accessibility, participation and engagement. Through collaboration with professional artists, UWYO dancers are able to share broadly the knowledge and skills developed through these creative touring residencies with Wyoming dancers and community members across the state, ages 13 through adult. The focus on education and arts access enhances the Wyoming creative economy while simultaneously augmenting the professional training that students receive.

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The Snowy Range Dance Festival Tour (SRDFT) will present a rigorous program of dance education and performance experiences that addresses the following Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards for Dance, whether in classes and seminars, during creative expression through participation in workshop activities, and through the viewing of dance performance.

(1) Improve technical skill as dancers and choreographers (FPA4.1.D.1, FPA4.1.D.2, FPA4.1.D.3, FPA4.1.D.4, FPA4.1.D.5, FPA8.1.D.1, FPA8.1.D.2, FPA8.1.D.3, FPA8.1.D.4, FPA11.1.D.1, FPA11.1.D.2, FPA11.1.D.3);

(2) Learn technical dance terminology and make informed judgements about their work and that of others (FPA4.2.D.1, FPA4.2.D.2, FPA4.2. D.3, FPA8.2.D.2, FPA8.2.D.3);

(3) Learn about different types of dance and their context (FPA4.3.D.1, FPA4.3.D.2, FPA4.3.D.3, FPA8.3.D.3, FPA8.3.D.4;

(4) Learn about dance careers and related disciplines, recreational opportunities, healthy practices, and how to set goals (FPA4.4.D.2, FPA4.4.D.3, FPA4.4.D.4, FPA4.4.D.5, FPA8.4.D.2, FPA8.4.D.3, FPA8.4.D.4, FPA11.4.D.2, FPA11.4.D.3, FPA11.4.D.4);

The goals of the SRDFT program are many - to provide arts learning experiences for all ages; to provide dance training and experiences to relatively under-served populations of the Mountain West; to increase student understanding of the profession of dance and related careers; to provide a fun and accessible environment for students and communities to learn; to enhance arts awareness; and to create opportunities for professional artists to improve expertise to dance teaching.

As SRDFT tours through high schools, dance studios and communities, participation in the SRDFT activities will also allow dance educators across the state to address these same standards with their own students in their own communities. Teachers from throughout the region will be able to hone their own dance skills and learn best pedagogical practices. Older students will benefit from improving their technique in dance workshops and experiences offered. University of Wyoming students will benefit from opportunities in touring organization, management, and community engagement, all important capstone experiences for university students who are transitioning to professional work, whether in local dance education environments, arts promotion and management, or other dance and arts adjacent careers.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Repertory Dance Theatre (RDT), founded in 1966 in Salt Lake City, Utah, is a professional modern dance repertory company dedicated to the creation, performance, perpetuation and appreciation of modern dance. For over 50 years, RDT has pushed the boundaries of modern dance, while preserving and celebrating its legacy. In addition to public performances, RDT produces a variety of community-based programs and has a long-standing commitment to arts-in-education. Outreach activities include lectures, informal performances, teachers' workshops, open rehearsals, annual summer workshops and year-round classes which all serve to train and ignite the creative voice in people of all ages.

UWYO Dance Faculty member Aaron Wood is a previous member of RDT, and has facilitated previous engagements with RDT with great success. Planned residency activities will include classes, workshops with company artists, setting a choreographic work on UWYO students for touring, and additional interdisciplinary public lecture and performance by RDT for Laramie and University communities.

Contemporary Dance Wyoming (CDW) is an ensemble of professional dancers that inspire through their power of movement in modern dance performance.

CDW Associate Artistic Director Francesca Romo trained and graduated from the Royal Ballet School and the London Contemporary Dance School and danced for The Richard Alston Dance Company from 2002-2006. She Co-



founded Gallim Dance Company based in New York City and also served as the Associate Director from 2007-2014. She has toured nationally and internationally and has set work on major dance companies in Europe and America. Francesca currently resides in Jackson Hole Wyoming where she is a Rehearsal Director and Co-creator with Contemporary Dance Wyoming.

Michaela Ellingson began her training at Dancers' Workshop in Jackson, Wyoming. She received her BFA in dance from SUNY Purchase where she had the opportunity to perform work by Doug Varone, Mark Morris, Netta Yerushalmy, Ori Flomin and Nelly Van Bommel. She danced with EDge Postgraduate Company at London Contemporary Dance School receiving her MA in dance. She has performed with Contemporary Dance Wyoming for 6 seasons performing work by Babs Case, Gina Patterson, Francesca Romo and Luke Zender. She has had the opportunity to work on projects with Bill T. Jones/ Arnie Zane Company, David Dorfman Dance and Robin Mineko Williams in collaboration with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. At Dancer's Workshop Michaela is the director of the Dancers' Workshop Junior Repertory Company.

UWYO Theatre and Dance and CDW are working to establish an ongoing partnership of collaboration, most recently with CDW artists Francesca Romo and Michaela Ellingson serving as guest faculty at the 2025 High Desert Regional ACDA Conference hosted at the University of Wyoming. This residency continues that collaboration. Planned residency activities will include classes and workshops with company artists, setting a choreographic work on UWYO students for touring, co-presenting CDW and UWYO Theatre and Dance as part of the SRDFT touring activities, and solidifying pipeline opportunities from community to higher education to profession.

Additional SRDFT faculty creatives and collaborators include UW dance faculty - Aaron Wood, Sarah Lass, and Beth Twiggs.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Department of Theatre & Dance employs a variety of funding sources to support production and arts learning activities. Faculty / Staff salaries and benefits are supported through unrestricted funds (state allocations and tuition dollars), as are additional overhead costs, including office supplies, IT, and marketing and recruiting support; production season budgets are primarily supported through the use of mandatory student arts fees and ticket revenue, as well as private donations received through annual giving campaigns

Audience participation is steadily growing, and we anticipate continued ticket revenue commensurate with production scale. While our production activities do generate ticket revenue, they often come with high production costs. Guest artists (WYOpen stages, SRDFT touring, and other production artists) require external funding beyond the annual production budget, and are an important part of the educational experience for students and the community.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING / WYOMING PATHWAYS FROM PRISON

[HTTPS://WWW.UWYO.EDU/GWST/WPFP/INDEX.HTML](https://www.uwyo.edu/gwst/wpfp/index.html)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Wyoming Pathways from Prison: Music Program

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Wyoming Pathways from Prison is a trans-disciplinary and trans-professional statewide collaborative that aspires to support currently and formerly incarcerated people in navigating the waters of higher education and life more generally. Currently, we have two cohorts earning a B.A. in General Studies from UW at no cost to our students, and they have excelled in music and theatre classes in particular.

Wyoming Pathways from Prison has four strategic goals: [1] provide no-cost college credit, in partnership with the University of Wyoming to incarcerated people; [2] engage in valuable service to the state of Wyoming; [3] mentor UW students in teaching and leadership; [4] provide students with valuable real-world experience through teaching and assistance to the Department of Corrections.

Wyoming Pathways from Prison provides high quality college programs to incarcerated women and men through generous support provided by University of Wyoming faculty, staff, students, and external partners. We do this work because we believe strongly in the power of education to transform lives, both within and outside prison walls, by creating opportunities for skill-building, personal growth, and self-reflection.

Wyoming Pathways from Prison emerged from an action research project that took place from December 2014 to August 2015, when Susan Dewey, Cathy Connolly, Bonnie Zare, and Rhett Epler conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with 71 women currently and formerly incarcerated in Wyoming. Results indicated great potential for success in providing increased educational opportunities to incarcerated women. Since summer 2016, Wyoming Pathways from Prison has consistently offered high quality college courses at no cost to incarcerated women and men, and will continue to grow.

### Community

WPfP invites, engages, and creates alongside our students, who are arguably the most marginalized and "non-dominant" members of the Wyoming community. Contrary to popular belief, prisoners are very busy with commitments and jobs for which they make less than minimum wage. To us, this work model is only one step up from slavery, and we are anxious to empower students to feed their minds through humanities based courses and inquiry. Our programing is only successful when students in prison feel heard and respected. Our students have input into our curriculum, delivery methods, evaluation, promotion, and accommodations.

We honor all requests for accommodations which are well-documented, closely monitored, and strictly enforced in Wyoming prisons. Likewise, all of our facilities are ADA-504 compliant. Additionally, our students benefit from the same disability support services and resources that any other UW students have and they are made aware of such services at the beginning of each course via each syllabus and verbal discussion. Most recently, we have hired a project coordinator who has student support services, including the logistics of delivering such services in prison contexts, as a large part of his job description. Without breaking confidentiality, we can disclose that we have honored ADA requests for vision, hearing, and ADHD.

## **Evaluation**

We have several methods to measure the impact of our programs and services. First, just like any other course at UW, students get multiple chances to provide feedback about the content and delivery of the course material and instructor. Our course evaluations have questions about impact directly and we enjoy a 100% response rate among our students. Second, we receive testimonial evidence from students' loved ones about the impact of our programs and services (available upon request). Third, as researchers, we track all of our students upon release and the benefits of education directly impact incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families as well as the communities to which they return. Wyoming currently spends nearly \$45,000 per inmate per year in institutional costs. Nationally, incarcerated individuals who participate in prison education programs have a 43% reduction in recidivism rates: the higher the education, the lower the recidivism rate. Formerly incarcerated individuals who participate in prison education programs enhance their employability and increase and improve their economic and occupation opportunities. This makes their reentry smoother and more successful, particularly since successful reentry often depends on gainful employment. Postsecondary prison education has been shown to have a profound impact on the children of incarcerated parents, offering an opportunity to break the vicious cycle of inequality and incarceration that plagues so many families. Studies have found that every \$1 invested in prison education will save taxpayers \$4-\$5 in re-incarceration costs.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Our operating costs stem from activities in Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities, UW, and the long distances between them. DOC and UW facilities are publicly funded, but the DOC staff merit special mention. Despite being chronically understaffed, the DOC staff makes these programs possible through logistical support and going above and beyond their normal duties to see incarcerated students succeed. It is not uncommon to see a DOC staff member stay late after a shift to make sure a student receives what they need after an interruption for an incident. Student tuition and fees costs are funded by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) through its Second Chance Pell Experiment and we are grateful for their continued support. Smaller Wyoming Pathways from Prison operating costs include small stipends for faculty to teach courses, travel funds for faculty to go to each facility, and supplies

(e.g., specially designed tablets for students, musical instruments). Requested operating funds for this grant will go only towards supplies for students in our facilities. More specifically, we will allocate these funds for a rock band set-up at Wyoming Women's Center (WWC) in Lusk and Weston Detention Facility (WDF) in Newcastle and the related maintenance expenses for implementing these programs. No WAC funds will go towards stipends for teachers. Now in our second year, we have an acute need for left-handed guitars and specialty keyboards that have clear plastic casings (which eased DOC security concerns).

### **Project Support Narrative**

The purpose of this project is to equip students in WWC and WDF with the same music making capabilities as students in the Wyoming State Penitentiary (WSP, the maximum security facility in Wyoming). In short, thanks to generous support from the Wyoming Arts Council and other organizations, students in WSP have a full rock band set-up which has helped scores of inmates cope with their time. One such inmate coped so well (and was the inmate in charge of music during the pandemic) that he was given a reduced sentence and transferred to WDF (minimum security). Unfortunately, WDF does not have musical instruments at this time, which was one impetus for this project. Similarly, WWC has some musical instruments, but they are in disrepair and there are not enough of them to serve the cohort of students currently earning their B.A. in General Studies. Funds from last year's WAC grant went a long way in fixing instruments, but we still have much work to do.

Dr. Tiger Robison leads the musical aspects of Wyoming Pathways from Prison and serves as a member of the executive team with UW faculty Dr. Robert Colter (philosophy) and Dan Fetsco (criminal justice). Tiger Robison is associate professor of music education at UW who has published repeatedly in the flagship journal of his field and presented research at all major music conferences in the English speaking world. He serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Popular Music Education and the Journal of General Music Education. Since this time last year, Rob Colter has given keynote presentations at international conferences about the importance of stoicism and other philosophy study in prison (some of which our students have based their music upon). Dan Fetsco is under contract for a book about the effect of life sentences which intertwines with the students' musical work.

Project support funds (as different from operational support funds) will be allocated towards recording equipment and related expenses so that we may capture and promote WPfP students' original songs and narratives. We suffered a setback with the massive construction project at Wyoming Women's Center, but we still managed to complete some work in which WPfP students wrote lyrics and melodies and UW campus students provided the music. One example is available here (please ignore if external links are not allowed):

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yFWrzmPvULTyJvCS\\_ZZvF1NVhj4PVrES/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yFWrzmPvULTyJvCS_ZZvF1NVhj4PVrES/view?usp=sharing)

Selected students at UW enrolled in the B.A. in Music Industry Studies will help Robison create avenues (e.g., Spotify or other streaming platforms) where loved ones and eventually the general public may hear their work. One plan is a book edited by Robison, Colter, and Fetsco in which students have a chapter to share their story and

an accompanying QR code with a link to their original song (currently a submitted prospectus to Routledge Publishing).

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

WPfP will offer music courses to currently incarcerated students as part of their B.A. in General Studies. If this proposal is funded, those courses can be participatory music courses such as Progressive Music Methods and Songwriting. Progressive Music Methods refers to a new UW course in which students gain proficiency at popular music instruments (electric guitar, bass, drums, and keyboards) with no experience necessary. Similarly, Songwriting is a new UW course in which students produce at least five original songs in popular music style. These courses have organized syllabi that have already passed the scrutiny of the highest UW curriculum committees.

Regarding Progressive Methods: This course is designed to prepare students to perform in and teach a popular music ensemble in several contexts. Students will gain foundational and applied pedagogy skills on drum-set, electric guitar, bass guitar, keyboard, and popular style vocals. No previous experience with these popular music instruments is required.

Regarding Songwriting: This course is designed to prepare students to write songs in popular music styles and teach others to do so in several contexts. The primary aim of the course is to develop and refine the ability of class members to express themselves through songwriting. Songs are one of the most powerful means for personal expression, incorporating aspects of culture, individuality, poetry, and music.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

These arts learning goals were created to meet the standards of the National Association for Schools of Music (NASM) as well as the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and UW curriculum committees.

Regarding Progressive Methods:

By the end of this course, students can expect to be able to:

1. Understand the key components of popular music pedagogy: student-centered approaches, culturally relevant teaching, informal learning, and scaffolding.
2. Demonstrate proficiency on drum-set, electric guitar, bass guitar, keyboard, and vocals in styles that include but are not limited to rock, country, and hip hop. Proficiency is defined as the ability to perform several works on each instrument from the last 50 years of Billboard Magazine's "Hot 100" (see <https://www.billboard.com/charts/hot-100/>).

3. Perform successfully on each popular music instrument and with proper stage presence in an authentic public venue with a live audience.
4. Demonstrate proficiency with basic improvisation on each popular music instrument.
5. Teach a song on popular music instruments to their peers within specified guidelines.

#### Regarding Songwriting:

By the end of this course, students can expect to be able to:

1. Understand artistic characteristics of existing songs through the critical analysis of lyrics, harmony, melody, rhythm, form, and arrangement.
2. Develop compositional ability through the writing and performing of at least six songs throughout the semester.
3. Critique the songs of other class members in a constructive manner, demonstrating an understanding of various viewpoints and compositional styles.
4. Reflect on one's own personal journey as a songwriter through maintaining a songwriter's journal.
5. Write at least five songs within specified guidelines.

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Dr. Tiger Robison is the primary artist involved as a member of the executive team with UW faculty Dr. Robert Colter (philosophy) and Dan Fetsco (criminal justice). Tiger Robison is associate professor of music education at UW whose qualifications are described earlier in this proposal. Will Flagg, recording engineer and lecturer at UW, will also play an essential role. Additionally, as available via Zoom, Tiger is grateful for the collaboration of Dr. Gareth Smith (Boston University), Dr. Brian Powell (Montclair University), Dr. Mara Culp (Eastman School of Music), and Dr. Candace Davenport (University of Southern California), all of whom have likewise hosted Tiger as a guest collaborator in their classrooms.

Traditional students at UW, selected by Tiger by merit, will also get opportunities to collaborate in these classes, but one must be 21 years old to volunteer in correctional facilities. Students under 21 will have the opportunity to collaborate via songwriting platforms such as Soundtrap.

#### **Budget Narrative**

We are grateful for several funding sources, the largest of which is the Department of Education Second Chance Pell Grant which covers students' tuition and fees and therefore almost makes our program self-sustaining, but we at WPfP must find funds to maintain our programs and keep expanding. At UW, we have been grateful for a seed

fund from Provost Carmen which helped us equip facilities for remote learning. Most recently, we have been grateful for a three-year grant from the Ellbogen Foundation to hire a person with both UW and DOC credentials who can support students and provide logistical support for our programs and services. These combined funding sources cover our basic budget including small stipends for faculty and related travel expenses. They do not help us provide for musical instruments.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING/ MUSIC DEPARTMENT

[HTTPS://WWW.UWYO.EDU/MUSIC/](https://www.uwyo.edu/music/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: UW Cello Festival and Outreach

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The UW Cello Festival has a mission to enrich Wyoming and surrounding regions by fostering community engagement through music education and cultural appreciation. Guided by master cellists, participants (including young musicians, educators, and professionals) participants enhance their skills, while the public experiences world-class performances, strengthening the state's commitment to the arts. Strategic goals include expanding outreach through advertising, strengthening partnerships with regional cellists and presenters, and increasing engagement via social media. By ensuring accessibility regardless of experience or financial barriers, the festival hopes to serve and inspire communities across Wyoming, northern Colorado, and neighboring states.

As a supplement to the festival, the UW Cello Festival Outreach Program (UWCFOP) runs year-round offering free, weekly after-school music sessions for students in Title I elementary schools (grades PreK-5) in Laramie, with the strategic goal of fostering children's emergent artistry through creative expression. Utilizing the inclusive Orff process, this program ensures accessibility for all students, regardless of prior experience or access to expensive instruments. Our mission has taken on greater urgency in recent years as children's music programs have been eliminated in Laramie (band and orchestra instrument lessons eliminated from 5th grade for example). Specific goals include obtaining head voice, obtaining a steady beat in duple and triple time, expressive musicality through movement, shared focus in folk dances, artful singing, and active listening to masterworks of Western tonal art music.

### Community

The UW Cello Festival provides opportunities for musicians to develop their skills through instruction, collaboration, and performance. Participants engage in masterclasses and interactive sessions that support their artistic growth, while audiences experience a range of musical programming. The festival welcomes students (grades 7-12), college musicians, educators, and community members, with 2025 attendance exceeding 100 cellists, 300 in-person attendees, and 300 online viewers. Information is shared widely through our mailing list and social media platforms to ensure broad access. The festival actively engages non-dominant communities, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and low-income students, by removing financial and logistical barriers to participation.



The Outreach Program extends this mission by offering a free after-school music program for students in Laramie's Title I schools, addressing educational disparities and introducing young learners to music. According to GreatSchools.org, 39% of students in Laramie schools come from low-income households, reinforcing the need for inclusive programming. Using the Orff approach, the outreach program provides accessible music education regardless of prior experience or access to instruments. The festival is committed to ensuring accessibility for all participants. ADA-compliant venues provide accessible seating and pathways, and assistive listening devices support those with hearing impairments. Transportation assistance is available for Outreach Program students, and financial aid is offered through scholarships and fee waivers. Meals provided at festival events accommodate dietary restrictions, and participants' accommodations needs are a priority.

## **Evaluation**

The UW Cello Festival undergoes annual evaluation through surveys and interviews, allowing us to tailor the event to best meet the needs of our participants. We incorporated these recommendations into our offerings (e.g., now providing livestream and/or Zoom options for remote participation). Our programming now includes content specifically designed for both younger and older attendees, ensuring inclusivity across all age groups. To enhance accessibility, we've introduced multiple levels of cello choir music, making this ensemble accessible to all. Our commitment to fostering an environment conducive to advanced learning has resulted in increased attendance and enthusiastic support from our community. In 2024, the quality of musicians exceeded our expectations and, based on feedback, we implemented an audition process for those interested in performing in a masterclass, resulting in a highly competitive pool of applicants.

UW Cello Festival Outreach Program has a research component and therefore contains evaluation methods based on previous research (valid survey instruments, semi-structured interviews with parents and students). Quantitatively, we examine any statistically significant relationships among satisfaction, impact, and demographic variables (e.g., 3 years ago, there was a statistically significant difference between boys and girls and their satisfaction with singing, with girls preferring it more). Qualitatively, we code interview transcripts to arrive at emergent themes (parents again expressed great support for creativity outlets for their children instead of notation-based methods). We presented our findings at an international research conference this summer and have disclosed WAC funding.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The UW Cello Festival, with an annual budget in excess of \$22,000, is fortunate to receive funding from a diverse array of sources, encompassing private donations, corporate sponsorships, and grants from both state and non-state entities. We receive funding from the UW Music Department, the UW A&S Dean's INREACH initiative (through competitive application), from registration fees, and support from outside entities, including the National Music Teachers Association and the Viola da Gamba Society of America. We are very grateful for fantastic support

and in-kind contributions from the University of Wyoming which include our venue, the beautiful Buchanan Center for the Performing Arts, assistance from the UW Box office, artist contact support from UW Outreach, and help with publicity and marketing, which also includes hosting and designing the UW Cello Festival website. Our publicity materials are designed by Kathy Kirkaldie at UW. Additionally, we anticipate continued support from our longstanding corporate sponsors, including Denver Violins, Robertson's Violin Shop, Barenreiter Editions, Pirastro Strings, Jargon Strings, Leatherwood Bespoke Rosin, Luther Strings, Schott Music, Ovation Press, GEWA, the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, and Larsen Strings. These sponsors contribute either financial assistance or in-kind donations to our cause. With funding sourced from these various channels, coupled with the backing from the Wyoming Arts Council Community Support Grant and meticulous financial planning, we've successfully maintained a balanced budget every year since our inception in 2016. To aid in our efforts to balance the budget, the UW Cello studio has an annual silent auction fundraiser. For 2026, funds for the WAC will go towards our biggest expenses, including artist fees, artist transportation, collaborative pianists, student intern honorariums, and participant lunches. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Wyoming Arts Council for their invaluable support in previous years.

UW Cello Festival Outreach Program has an anticipated annual operating cost far greater than our inaugural year in 2023, an estimated \$10K. To meet the demand of our participants and their families, our biggest costs will be portable recording equipment and stipends for more student workers who can help solve logistical barriers for families. All requested operating funds will be allocated for the costs detailed above by the Artistic Director, Tiger Robison with oversight from the UW Music business manager and department head. UWCFO holds weekly, hour-long music making sessions at rotating venues (UW campus and Title I elementary schools). Robison (vetted through a national search for his position), UW students (two-thirds of whom are from historically marginalized populations), and tenured area music teachers will collaborate to deliver instruction. UWCFO improves arts learning by increasing children's knowledge, understanding, and skills in music primarily, but also in movement and poetry through Orff pedagogy. Funds for outreach are mostly for reasonable stipends for the three UW students (Robison takes no funds for a stipend). Supplies, such as instruments and related accessories, are the second biggest expense.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The 2026 UW Cello Festival will be a one-day event featuring workshops, masterclasses, concerts, and cello choirs designed for cellists of all levels. The festival will take place on May 18, 2026, with an anticipated record attendance, driven by the participation of our special guest, Zlatomir Fung. Acclaimed for his artistry and technical mastery, Mr. Fung is regarded as one of the most outstanding musicians of his generation. Our Artistic Director, Dr. Beth Vandeborgh, with degrees from Manhattan School of Music, Eastman School of Music, and the University of Maryland, is well known to Wyoming audiences as Principal Cello of the Cheyenne Symphony, Cellist of the Helios Trio, and Professor of Cello at the University of Wyoming.

With a growing reputation as a hub for cello education and performance, the UW Cello Festival continues to expand its programming to serve both performers and educators. Our format allows us to provide a balance between training performers and equipping music educators with the skills and mentorship needed to guide the next generation of musicians in Wyoming. By combining professional development opportunities with high-level

artistic experiences, the festival ensures its impact extends beyond the event itself, strengthening music education throughout the region. The festival's expansion has been made possible by an increase in sponsorships and donor support. In addition to our longstanding partnerships with Denver Violins, Robertson and Sons Violin Shop, Barenreiter, Pirastro, Leatherwood Rosin, Luther Strings, Schott Music, and Larsen Strings, we are pleased to welcome new sponsors such as GEWA. Furthermore, we are excited to integrate support from local Laramie-based sponsors such as the Curiosity Shop and Crowbar, reflecting the growing community investment in this cultural event. Funding for the 2026 festival comes from a variety of sources, including private donations, corporate sponsorships, and grants. The University of Wyoming Music Department has committed funding for artist fees and transportation costs, while also providing the venue, marketing support, and logistical assistance.

The Wyoming Arts Council Community Support Grant has been instrumental in maintaining a balanced budget since our inception in 2016, and we are grateful for its past and ongoing support.

For 2026, funding from the WAC will help us to cover guest artist fees, collaborative pianists, student interns, meals, printed materials, participant lunches, and logistical costs. We are committed to providing high-quality resources for both students and educators, ensuring the festival remains an accessible and enriching experience.

Beyond the main event, the outreach program remains dedicated to providing music education for elementary students in underserved schools, particularly those facing financial challenges. This year, funding will go toward acquiring and maintaining instruments, with a focus on expanding the use of Modern Band equipment, an increasingly popular approach in elementary music education. The decision to incorporate instruments like electric guitars reflects community interest, as many families prefer options that allow for music-making at home over traditional classroom percussion instruments.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

UWCFO has weekly, hour-long music making sessions at rotating venues (UW campus and Title I elementary schools) in all but the summer months. UWCFO improves arts learning by increasing children's knowledge, understanding, and skills in music primarily, but also in movement and poetry through Orff pedagogy. Founder Carl Orff summarized it this way, "Elemental music is never just music. It is bound up with movement, dance and speech, and so it is a form of music in which one must participate, in which one is involved not as a listener but as a co-performer."

The Orff process usually begins with learning a short rhyme or poem, putting part or all of that poem into rhythmic speech ostinato, then transferring it to body percussion and/or movement, then to unpitched percussion (drums), then to pitched percussion (e.g., classroom xylophones, now also popular music instruments such as electric guitar) and adding other elements such as improvisation as students see fit. There are no previous musical skills necessary (e.g., years of instruction on an expensive band or orchestra instrument). The emphasis is on children's emergent creativity and their processes, not a product such as a high-stakes performance. However, most recently, participants and their families have requested ways to record their body of work, which is a focus for this year.

More specifically, each session starts with a "Question of the day" in which each student answers a musical question (such as "what's your favorite color") by singing it back to the teacher. The purpose of this activity is to have each student attain their head voice, which if not attained by the end of 1st grade, is unlikely to happen in one's lifetime. We are proud to report that each class has a 95% success rate by the end of the year, which helps students in all area schools as they "graduate" to kindergarten and serve as models.

The second activity is "Keeping the beat" in which students copy or create movements in duple and triple time. The purpose of this activity is to obtain a steady beat, without which there is no rhythm and therefore no recognizable music.

The third activity is a folk dance, the purpose of which is to display a steady beat and musicality through one's body. The younger students are, the more they understand the world through their body. We use authentic recordings from countries including the US, Canada, Israel, France, Germany, and Italy.

The fourth activity is story-time, the purpose of which is to meld literacy to artful singing. The instructor sings the book to the students (either a song-tale storybook designed that way, or a short musical adoption after each page). Students sing along and add their own variations.

The fifth activity is game-time described earlier in this prompt, which leads to the students' own variations and eventually creations (rhythmic speech to body percussion to unpitched percussion to pitched percussion and some popular music instruments such as 1 finger chords on guitar). We take listening breaks in which we feature strings music and specifically cello music.

The key to this routine (or "musical workout") is to make it structured enough to be efficient in our limited time, but not so structured that students that they are bored.

After-school music opportunities for children in Laramie are more urgent now because public school instrumental programs for 5th grade were eliminated and the UW String Project is no longer offered.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

The UW Cello Festival's specific arts learning goals vary based on participants' feedback which, in turn, determines the topics for masterclasses and lectures for the next year. More broadly, ongoing arts goals for the festival are improved ensemble playing among cellists (an opportunity not usually available to cellists in rural communities), and increased facility on the cello (e.g., shifting, vibrato, bow control).

UWCFOP follows the National Association for Music Education's (NAfME's) national standards, as is strongly recommended for all public schools (see [nafme.org](http://nafme.org)). Specifically, we honor these standards:

MU:Cr1.1.4a Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain connection to specific purpose and context (such as social and cultural).

MU:Cr1.1.5b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and accompaniment patterns) within specific related tonalities, meters, and simple chord changes.

MU:Cr3.1.4a Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal music, applying teacher-provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to show improvement over time.

More broadly, the overarching goal of UWCFO is to help children realize their creative potential in music or the arts in general, especially those children that do not find satisfaction in the notation-based and teacher-centered methods found in some other music settings. There is a difference between music education and notation education. The mantra for participants is "You're as good as anyone, and better than most." One of our long-term goals is to empower our "alumni" to share their work through future opportunities afforded to them in Wyoming and beyond. While our goals are always driven by the children, we would be very happy to see current and former participants enter singer-songwriter festivals and poetry slams, create podcasts (perhaps with their families), or even submit work to the John Lennon Songwriting Contest.

The purpose and goals of each activity was described in the Arts Learning Project Narrative, but more details are available in this section.

The goal of the "Question of the Day" is to have each student attain their head voice, which if not attained by the end of 1st grade, is unlikely to happen in one's lifetime. It is important to give students repeated opportunities over time, not ask students to try and correct themselves more than once until it becomes frustrating. The whole class praises effort for each student, not achievement.

The goal of "Keeping the Beat" is to obtain a steady beat in duple and triple time, without which there is no rhythm and therefore no recognizable music. Students tend to gravitate towards music that is 120-136 beats per minute (bpm), so we start the year with music at this tempo. However, by the end of the year, we work to music that is 90 bpm, which takes careful attention and concentration.

The goal of folk dance is which is to display a steady beat and musicality through one's body, but also an idea of "shared focus." The only way a folk dance works is if every student fulfills their role in time, thereby fostering cooperation. Students help each other when they change directions for example. We also aim for global enculturation by using our authentic recordings.

The goal of story-time is to meld literacy to artful singing. A secondary goal is to expand singing into the home as students "teach" their families the musical adaptations to canonized stories they already have at home.

The goal of game-time is to teach student-centered musical play, which students then initiate on their own time and to area schools as they move to kindergarten.

The goal of listening breaks is to expose students to masterworks of Western tonal art music, but also to teach active listening (listening for certain aspects of music such as melodic ideas, texture, rhythmic motifs, and timbres).

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

On the festival side, we welcome cellist Zlatomir Fung, and we expect record attendance. Acclaimed worldwide for his profound musicianship and technical mastery, Mr. Fung enjoys a unique reputation as one of the finest

musicians of his generation. He burst onto the scene as the first American in four decades (and youngest musician ever) to win First Prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition Cello Division. He has since garnered accolades, critical acclaim and standing ovations at performances around the world, more and more widely recognized as one of the preeminent cellists of our time. Astounding audiences with his boundless virtuosity and exquisite sensitivity, the 25-year-old has already proven himself a star among the next generation of world-class musicians.

In the 2024–2025 season, Fung gives recitals in New York City, Boston, and St. Louis, and performs the complete Bach Cello Suites at Mechanics Hall in Worcester, Massachusetts and in Arcata, California. He returns to the Aspen Music Festival and makes his debut at the Ravinia Festival. As concerto soloist, he joins the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the San Antonio Philharmonic and the Billings Symphony Orchestra, among others. Internationally, he performs with the Barcelona Symphony in Spain, the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra in Taiwan with Jaap van Zweden conducting, and he returns to the London Philharmonic Orchestra; he also appears in Japan, China, and Italy.

In January 2025, Signum Records releases Fung’s debut album, a collection of opera fantasies and transcriptions for cello and piano, which is emblematic of Fung’s endless curiosity and his interest in unusual repertoire. The recording includes Fung’s own fantasy on Janáček’s *Jenůfa* and world premiere recordings of Marshall Estrin’s *Fantasia Carmén* and a virtually unknown transcription of Rossini’s *William Tell* by 19th-century composer François-George Hainl.

Fung served as Artist-in-Residence with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for the 2023–2024 season, appearing at London’s Cadogan Hall and touring the UK with the orchestra. Other notable appearances of late include his debuts with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille, and BBC Philharmonic, as well as the Baltimore, Dallas, Detroit, Seattle, Milwaukee, Utah, Rochester, and Kansas City Symphonies.

On the outreach side, UWCFOP founder is Dr. Tiger Robison, associate professor of music education at UW whose qualifications have been vetted through a nationwide search for his position. He has won multiple university-wide awards for his teaching and service and has published or presented his research in the flagship music education journals and international conferences in the English-speaking world. Robison invites UW students based on their merit in coursework and ability to provide diverse perspectives on creativity or help families solve logistical issues (i.e., high-achieving students who happen to speak Spanish, come from historically marginalized populations, or overcame significant poverty or isolation issues in their backgrounds). Three students (two of whom self-identify with one or more of the descriptions) have agreed to participate pending funding, but they asked not to be identified by name in this application. UW students’ level of involvement is high, both in planning and the sessions themselves, complete with weekly debriefs where they can share their most recent thoughts on teaching and artistry.

### **Budget Narrative**

The UW Cello Festival is fortunate to receive funds from a diverse array of sources including private donations, corporate sponsorships, and grants from both state and non-state entities. The UW Music Department has committed funding for 2026 to partially cover the artist fees and expenses for Mr. Fung, as well as providing in-kind support. We have applied for funds from the UW A&S Dean’s INREACH initiative. The UW Cello Festival has an annual fundraiser of which all proceeds go to operating expenses. We hope for continued support from our longstanding corporate sponsors and key partners; Barenreiter, Schott Music, Denver Violins, Larsen Strings,

Pirastro, and Jargar. For 2025, funds fund will go towards Mr. Fung's fee, paying other guest artists, collaborative pianists, student interns, providing lunches, programs, and many assorted logistical costs. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Wyoming Arts Council for their invaluable support in previous years.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

VERITAS ACADEMY

WWW.CODYVERITAS.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Veritas Academy Music and Arts Program

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

"Veritas Academy provides challenging academic study with a nurturing community. Students are encouraged to develop their individual, God-given talents, as well as to discover and fulfill their roles in family, church, community, and the world beyond. Our goal is to graduate disciples of Jesus, lifelong learners, creative problem solvers, and servant leaders who are equipped to make an impact in their ever-changing world."

Veritas Academy is a classical Christian school. It follows the Trivium approach, which teaches in three stages: grammar, logic, and rhetoric. The curriculum is faith based, however, students learn other world theories (evolution, for example) through the rhetoric phase of the Trivium cycle. The school is non-denominational, and does not require families to have a Christian (or any other) faith for admission. We also emphasize fine arts through early music training, both choral and instrumental, as vital part of being a classical school. Our music program grows every year, started by one person, now employing four instructors, with 69 students. As a classical school, we also emphasize performance and recitation, and have recently been performing outside of school, within our local community.

Music students have started interacting and performing at community holiday events, charity events, fundraisers, and are working toward field trips that involve playing music with students at other schools, and playing the National Anthem at the local rodeo.

### Community

Cody, Wyoming is located in Northwestern Wyoming. It has a 2025 population of 10,370, with a growth rate of 0.63% annually. The average household income is \$88,978 with a poverty rate of 8.06%. The average family income is \$109,649.

There are 7,841 adults in Cody, 1,972 of which are seniors. The most dominant age bracket in the population is children between the ages of 10 and 15, with a total of 984.

The racial composition of Cody is 91.58% White, 6.24% two or more races, and smaller percentages for Asian, African American, Native American, Pacific Islander, and multiracial populations.



In 2023, Veritas Academy started a "specials only" program, which invites students outside of the school to participate in one or more (or all) of our 1st-8th grade specials. These include PE, Art, Choir, and Instrumental Music. They are divided into two age groups (1st-4th and 5th-8th), and each have a designated day of the week, for the last 45 minutes of the school day. The cost per outside student to participate in this program is \$250 per semester, or \$500 for the entire year. (Cost is included in tuition for students currently enrolled in school.) This gives us an opportunity to share our Arts program with more families, regardless of whether they prefer to school at home, public, or part time.

## **Evaluation**

Cody has a modest population, at approximately 10,000. The size of the community allows for ties to many different families and businesses, many different ways. Veritas Academy often receives questions or feedback through word of mouth, with our students having so many other avenues to know their peers through sports, music outside of the school, theatre, and community events.

Aside from Academics and Arts, Veritas still teaches manners, kind language, integrity, and chivalrous qualities, as part of the entirety of our program. We have received positive feedback many times from people in the community with no affiliation to the school, about our students stopping to help someone in need, or general politeness. (They are easy to identify when they're out in their school uniforms.) This impacts our community in a positive way, and our program will always encourage kind, positive behavior.

The instrumental music program in particular also shows work ethic in our students, as they play in our community. Some of them have been training under the same instructor for 3+ years, and their hard work shows in their skill levels. The school sends a musical group to our local Compete for a Cause charity event, which takes place over the summer, and this year in addition, in April of 2025, where we have been invited to play at this event in Sheridan, WY. The event chooses a child with severe medical needs for each event, and donates 100% of its proceeds to the chosen family. We are excited to continue participating in this event, and contributing to the impact that it has on local families in need.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Operating cost needs are mostly for instructor salaries. With 69 active music students, and a steady enrollment rate that creates a larger projected number of students for the 2025-26 school year, one of our goals is to hire 1 or 2 more music instructors, to balance out the teacher student ratio in guitar class (1:12), and to finally debut a small school band, as we are receiving a small handful of flutes, clarinets, and cornets from a generous donor, to get the program running.

We pay our choir director, Yvonne Emery, \$5000/year. Her salary is covered mostly through tuition funds, but also through fundraising, which we can still provide as a 50% match with our growing program. Violin/cello instructors Joe Jewett and Conor Jacobson are each paid \$200/week, totaling \$400 a week by the school. Veritas Academy receives a generous cash donation of \$3400 every year from one of our school families, specifically to cover \$100/week for the entire year, to help with the violin teacher salaries, leaving the school cost at \$300/week for approximately 34 weeks.

Kenneth Mars, our cello specialist, currently works as a volunteer. He teaches beginning cello once every week. One of the music program director's goals is to pay Mr Mars \$850 over the course of the school year, for his time and efforts. The program would also like to pay a high school Veritas student, Madison Schlosser, \$100 per month to assist with beginning guitar class. We are seeking a new guitar program director to replace Emily Young, so she

can use that time to teach beginning band. Salary for a senior instructor/director for the guitar program will be approximately \$3400.00

Emily Young, Veritas Academy's Instrumental Music Director, currently works as a volunteer for the music program, is on staff in other areas of the school, and does not seek a salary for her involvement in the music program at this time.

The school is using an electric piano for its choral program. The piano has a broken pedal and isn't compatible with the current sound system. We would like to replace it with a Casio PX-770 Console Digital Piano, priced at \$800.00.

To sum up, with current operating instructor salaries of \$15,200 (not including \$3400.00 paid by one of our school families), plus salaries for additional necessary instructor support of \$5250.00 for a growing program, plus updated equipment needs, our projected minimum operating cost is \$21,250.00.

Veritas Academy would like to request \$10,000.00 for operating support.

### **Project Support Narrative**

The Veritas Academy string orchestra, within the last school year, have started performing outside of school events, within the local community. In August of 2024, six members of the second year violin/cello group, auditioned, trained, and performed for Cody's annual Compete for a Cause. The performance was a fundraiser for the medical needs of a local seven year old and his family. Axel was born premature at 26 weeks, and was in need of specialty surgeries to expand his airway, and eliminate his feeding tubes. The performance raised \$29,175.68 for Axel and his family! Our group of six put in 18 hours of extra training time with their string teachers over the summer and worked hard to memorize their material for the stage. They have been invited to perform in Sheridan, WY this April 5th, for Sheridan's first annual Compete for a Cause. Sheridan's C4C is raising money for a three year old with Pompe disease. We plan on sending a group to collect sponsors and perform for Cody's C4C in August of 2025, and possibly Sheridan again next Spring of 2026. Project Support funds will be allocated here with the cost of extra summer training and transportation costs. \$1100 was spent in training and preparation for the Cody C4C in August of 2024, and \$200 for April 2025 (this amount is much less, with school still in session, they get some of the practice they need in their normal school class).

Another yearly project our music group has been working on, is playing music on the Cody Trolley, with a sound system projecting it out, through the Cody Christmas Stroll (parade). Approximately 12 kids did this for the first time in November of 2024, and we plan on sending a group again in November 2025. Funds here would be allocated in the cost of their music instructors, to ride the trolley and organize their play list, and also the rental of the sound system.

Veritas Academy would like to request \$1000 in project support. Please disregard if this request isn't allowed after the full \$10,000 requested for operating support.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Veritas Academy Music Program has 69 active students. Enrollment has more that doubled at this Classical School in the last 5 years, which has increased involvement in the arts, and provided the school with larger choral and instrumental groups, spanning over more grades, allowing the hire of two professional string orchestra teachers, both with extensive musical training and performance.

Every year in March, the school holds an annual fundraising gala, where the students can showcase their instrumental pieces and group choir material to a crowd of 200 family members and community members. The gala has a silent auction with items fashioned by the school's classes, donations from families and local businesses, and art made by Veritas students. There is also a live auction and catered dinner at the event. The venue rental is \$1900.00. Instruments are hauled from school, carefully and set up on stage. The music show put on by the students at this event is extremely popular and very worth the time spent setting up.

Joe Jewett teaches another school group in Pryor, MT at the St. Charles Catholic School on the Crow Reservation. One of the goals for our students in the coming school year, is to take a field trip to Pryor, and to meet and play music with the students at St. Charles. Veritas Academy was recently given a school bus by Grace Point Church in Powell, WY. Most of the cost of this trip would be in diesel fuel for the bus to transport approximately 30 students, plus music teachers and staff to supervise the groups. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students, to travel to the reservation and play music with some of their peers, some of whom are playing the same songs and material as them.

Veritas will send a musical group to the charity event, Compete for a Cause, in August of 2025. This event gives the groups a chance to perform at the Wynona Thompson Auditorium, which seats 750. They also get a chance to watch other performers from their local community showcase their talents for a child with medical needs. Aside from Veritas' music group, C4C provides a wide variety of local talent, from dance groups, to comedy, poetry reading, young soloists, and even "bench dancers."

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Recent Arts Learning Goals have involved a lot of performing and events within the community. We have opened a program that allows students to take ONLY arts classes at our school, giving the substantial homeschooling community in Cody an opportunity to take school arts classes with their peers in a small, safe environment. These part time students also take part in performances in the community, including three Christmas performances; one at school, one at the local Pinnacle Bank, and a group playing instruments while riding through the Christmas parade.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Music program staff are as follows: Emily Young (Instrumental Program Director, Guitar Instructor), Yvonne Emery (Choir/Dance and Movement Director), Joe Jewett (Violin Program Lead, Violin and Cello Instructor), Conor Jacobson (Advanced Violin Instructor), and Kenneth Mars (Cello Instruction Specialist).

Emily Young grew up in Portland, Oregon and has studied piano since age 6. She was taught by Jay Herrigan for the first 10 years. Emily was actively involved in band, playing several instruments, instructed by Jeanne Berg, of the "One More Time Around Again Marching Band" in Portland. She studied guitar through a program at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center in the late 1990s. She has a passion for music and teaching children (Emily also teaches for the Kindergarten and Preschool classes at Veritas Academy.) Mrs. Young has been involved with Veritas Academy since moving to Cody in 2017 with husband and family. She has three children enrolled at the school.

Yvonne Emery is a long time music teacher, and has three grandchildren at Veritas. Mrs. Emery a Composite Music Major in Voice and Education with a minor in Speech from Valley City State University with a K-12 B.S. She has taught music education in the Valley City Public School District in North Dakota, Kenai Peninsula SD in Alaska, Dunsieith Indian Day School in North Dakota, and most recently Veritas in Cody. Other music experience includes

private voice instructor, concert soloist, after school music theater director, and mentoring teachers and students in promoting music education in South Africa.

Joe Jewett is an active soloist, conductor, chamber and orchestral musician. His performance of the Bruch Concerto with the Waltham Philharmonic was praised as "excellent" by professor Burton Kaplan of Manhattan School of Music. Me. Jewett has been a soloist with the Great Falls and Helena Symphonies, and the String Orchestra of the Rockies (SOR). He has conducted the Waltham Philharmonic, MIT Symphony, Mozart Society Orchestra at Harvard, Cambridge Symphony in Massachusetts, Glacier Orchestra, and the Spoleto Festival Orchestra in Italy. He attended Interlochen Arts Academy, Indiana University, and U of Michigan, and received his Masters from New England Conservatory.

Conor Jacobson grew up on a farm near Pavillion, WY. He began studying violin when he was four years old, and would make a weekly trip to Casper for violin lessons, with the support of his grandfather. He continued music studies at Casper College and the U of Arizona before deciding to pursue his interest in historically informed performance (HIP) at the world renowned early music department of the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, Netherlands. Professionally, he has performed extensively in the Netherlands as well as in numerous concerts in Belgium, France, Germany, and Chile. He returned to Wyoming and still remains active as a performer, devoted to teaching, family, and farm.

Kenneth Mars is the Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cody. He is the father of 7 children, the youngest of whom is in 5th grade at Veritas. He has been playing cello since sixth grade, and plays for his church ministry, along with several of his children and family members. He has played in the Orchestra at Texas U, and is still active in the NW Pacific Orchestra locally.

### **Budget Narrative**

Veritas Academy operates mostly on school tuition and fundraising. These finances support the purchase of our curriculum, and the salaries of our staff. The school does not make a profit off of tuition. (Please contact Ashlee Lundvall, head of school, for any specific proof of this, as the person writing this grant doesn't have access to specific figures, only general information.)

The school is currently seeking a new location and funding to build a larger school, with space for more students and activities. In kind donations have been made toward this fund, though not totaling enough yet to move forward with it. We have started wait listing families, as we are running out of space in the wing that we rent from the First Presbyterian Church in Cody.

Our music program receives an in kind donation every year from our local neurosurgeon, which enables us to pay 25% of our orchestra instructors' salaries. (Salaries for Arts instructors are not covered through tuition.)

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

VISTA 360, INC.

[WWW.VISTA360PROGRAMS.ORG](http://WWW.VISTA360PROGRAMS.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Saddle Up! Celebrating and Preserving Traditional Cowboy Functional Arts

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The MISSION OF VISTA 360° is to help protect and strengthen mountain cultures through exchange and cooperation. Our organization was founded in 2003 to help mountain communities protect their local arts and culture while taking advantage of opportunities offered by global connections. We have a 22-year history of international arts programming, including producing festivals, tours, education, heritage exchange and leadership training in cultural preservation. During the pandemic, we decided to focus future programming 100% on support for the traditional cowboy artisans in our own Northern Rockies region.

These traditions are the unique functional art of the American West, including saddle making, boots, hats, leatherwork, silversmithing, bits and spurs, artist blacksmithing, horsehair hitching, rawhide braiding, woven cinches and buckskin clothing. These are "heritage crafts", rooted in a common history, passed on from generation to generation and requiring advanced skills and specialized knowledge.

In 2021-22, we carried out research to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the field. In April 2023, we convened a gathering of artisans and their support organizations in Jackson, which led to the creation of a coalition of artisans and support organizations called the Cowboy Trades Association (CTA). Vista 360° serves as Convenor and Project Manager for CTA.

The MISSION of CTA is to recognize, celebrate and support the traditional cowboy artisans in the Northern Rockies, strengthen their enterprises and assure that this heritage is preserved and continues to grow and evolve with future generations.

The GOALS of CTA are:

- 1) assuring the survival, revival and preservation of these traditions
- 2) supporting today's artisans so that their work can thrive and reach wider audiences.

CTA serves these goals through public education and community engagement, support for today's artisans and training for the next generation.

## **Community**

This project serves traditional cowboy artists and the communities where they live and work. It also serves the general public by helping celebrate and preserve our shared Western heritage.

Most of these artists live in small towns and rural areas and have roots in ranching and agriculture. They usually work isolated in their workshops and have limited access to resources to help them preserve these traditions. They have a very strong commitment to preserving these traditions.

Needs Assessment: In 2021-22, we conducted an inventory and identified more than 100 traditional cowboy artists in Wyoming. We did interviews with 25 artists to better understand their challenges. This led to convening 35 artists and organizations for a gathering in Jackson in April, 2023. We had a 2-day conversation about needs, challenges and opportunities, which led to the formation of CTA. A Steering Committee met for 6 months to develop a strategic plan for CTA to allow artists and support organizations to collaborate toward clear goals. This project is implementing CTA's strategic plan.

Working with Underserved Communities: We work with folk and traditional artists, who are recognized as underserved by WAC. CTA is led by traditional artists who decide our direction and priority.

Community engagement: We believe that cultural heritage preservation must be rooted in the local community's commitment to understanding and protecting their own heritage. In return, preserving these traditions helps to strengthen community identity and well-being.

Accommodation: Our programming takes place in fully-accessible venues. Everyone is needed and welcome and we do everything we can to accommodate requests. We will make this clear on the exhibit website, now in development.

## **Evaluation**

The first goal for evaluation is to measure the positive impact, if any, on participating artists. As UNESCO states, preserving heritage crafts should "... concentrate on encouraging artisans to continue to produce craft and to pass their skills and knowledge onto others, particularly within their own communities." This is what CTA exists to do. We will be surveying all artists annually to determine if CTA's activities are beneficial.

Project-specific evaluation will have two components.

- First, the exhibit will be displayed at the Jackson Hole History Museum for five months in 2025-26. Evaluation will be based on audience attendance numbers, audience feedback through an audience survey and online reviews. Artists who loan their work to the exhibit will also be asked for feedback and suggestions for improvement.
- Second, the project also includes booking other sites in Wyoming for 2026. The exhibit will showcase this heritage to the people who share this history and organizers will actively engage these communities in the appreciation and preservation of their own traditions. Evaluation will include: 1) audience surveys; 2) tracking how many people were engaged in preservation activities sparked by the exhibit; and 3) a community survey to measure levels of awareness.

Evaluation will also be done to determine long-term community engagement as indicated by participation by elected officials, participation by business and arts leaders and community-based activities focused on cultural heritage preservation that can be traced to the impact of this exhibit. The tools for this long-term evaluation process will be part of the strategic plan being developed by CTA in 2025. We intend to evaluate impacts of exhibit over period of five years.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

We are requesting operating support for Executive Director salary between July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025. Total part-time salary for this position for this period (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026) is \$34,320. We are requesting WAC funding of \$5,000 or approximately 15% of total salary. This salary was full-time prior to the pandemic and has been stabilized at 22 hours/wk (\$34,320/yr) since 2022. The Executive Director serves as CTA Project Manager and is also responsible for fundraising and grantwriting.

Other staff salaries are a part-time CTA Outreach Director (\$12,000/yr) to support community engagement related to the traveling exhibit. Payroll expenses are projected at \$7,000/year. All salaries are based on \$30/hr rate.

Fees include an annual accounting fee of \$7,200 and graphic design services/website upgrades and maintenance @\$1,000/month, annually \$12,000. This consultant helps with general communication needs and also works on special projects not included in specific project budgets. This will be especially important as we develop the regional online Directory for teaching and learning these artforms. We are seeking \$1,000 to help cover the cost of these services.

Other operating costs during this period are phone/internet costs and services @\$200/month, office supplies @\$200/month, storage at \$185/month and graphic design services/website maintenance at \$500/month. We have a donated rent space, estimated as an in-kind donation of \$24,000/yr.

Vista 360° will be managing four projects during this grant period, all related to CTA activities.

1. A traveling museum exhibit showcasing the work of artist-masters, touring 3-5 sites in Wyoming, and focused on using the exhibit as a spark for broad community engagement with cultural heritage preservation;
2. An educational hub and online Directory to increase access to existing teaching and learning opportunities as well as pilot program for outreach to high school and college-level students who may be interested in exploring a career as a traditional artisan;
3. A gathering of traditional cowboy artisans in April 2026 to review progress of CTA, strengthen collaborations, nurture relationships and establish priorities for CTA's next steps. A convening of national leaders in the field is being planned as part of this gathering to explore best practices for heritage craft preservation for the 21st century.
4. A five-year strategic planning for CTA will be undertaken with the advisory assistance of the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Planning will be grounded in interviews with artists, clients, support organizations, folklorists, etc.

Operating support for Vista 360° is support for a collaborative network of traditional cowboy artisans. While all traditional arts in the U.S. are important and expressive of the diverse cultures that shape our national identity, the cowboy heritage crafts are quintessentially American. Derived from a weaving of several cultures -- Native American, Hispanic, European -- who met and mingled in the West, the cowboy traditions that emerged from this history have become part of American mythology like no other. If these traditions are to be preserved, it will have to be done by the people in our communities who carry this heritage forward.



In summary, \$5,000 for salary support for Executive Director (15%) and \$1,000 for fee support for graphic design/website consultant (8% of annual fee).

## **Project Support Narrative**

PROJECT: COWBOY TRADITIONAL TRADES TRAVELING MUSEUM EXHIBIT

Goal: The goal of this project is to help preserve cowboy traditional crafts in Wyoming by increasing public awareness of the beauty and value of these traditions and to offer opportunities to connect to further education and training. We strongly believe that this goal depends upon increasing community-based support for cultural heritage preservation. CTA's Executive Committee decided that the creation and tour of a traveling exhibit will be a powerful strategy to pursue this goal.

Project Overview: We are creating a beautiful traveling museum exhibit about traditional cowboy artisans in the Northern Rockies to introduce these artists to our region, to show why they do what they do to keep traditions alive and to invite audience members to join them in learning these skills and preserving this heritage. The exhibit will be used as a focal point to engage each local community in celebrating this aspect of their Western heritage. We hope that each installation will result in the creation of a long-term group of community leaders committed to celebrating cultural heritage on an ongoing basis, with support from CTA members.

Present Status: The design concept for this exhibit was completed by the award-winning exhibit design firm of Ralph Appelbaum Associations in April 2024. The exhibit is now being fabricated and will be installed at the new Jackson Hole History Museum on July 17 for a five-month exhibition, concluding on January 5, 2026.

Use of Funds: We are requesting \$4,000 to enable CTA to book 2-3 other venues in Wyoming for January-June, 2026, especially as the exhibit might relate to various "250America" activities around the State. Many "250America" celebrations are intended to celebrate our shared cultural heritage and this exhibit is a perfect fit. WAC funds will partially support salary for an Outreach Coordinator responsible for booking the tour, managing the logistics of travel and installation and, most importantly, organizing complementary programming at each site to showcase local traditional artists and to engage the community in preserving this heritage. No funds will be used for the planning, design or fabrication of the exhibit itself.

Beneficiaries: Both the communities we visit and Wyoming's traditional cowboy artisans will benefit from increased "visibility, viability and value" of these traditions.

Who: A Project Leadership Team drawn from CTA's membership will oversee the execution of the project, facilitated by Candra Day, who is President of Vista 360°, the non-profit Convenor for CTA.

Where and When: We plan to present the exhibit in 2-3 additional sites around the state in 2026, ideally with 2-3 month installations at each site. We have identified five possible sites for this exhibit and will begin the booking process in July, 2025. We will generally be seeking smaller venues which require shorter lead times so we will also be researching other possible sites such as art centers, historical society museums, libraries and community centers.

1. Western Wyoming Community College Art Gallery - Riverton
2. Wyoming State Museum - Cheyenne
3. Cheyenne Frontier Days Old West Museum- Cheyenne
4. Brinton Museum - Big Horn
5. Lander Art Center - Lander

We will also be applying to exhibit at the Buffalo Bill Center Center of the West in Cody and the Nicolaysen Art Museum in Casper for a later time frame.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

We are requesting \$4,225 for an educational program for children and youth related to the traveling museum exhibit described above. This program has two components. One component will bring traditional artists to enrich the summer camp program offered by History Jackson Hole at the Jackson Hole History Museum in August, 2025. The second component is a stand-alone program in October and November, 2025 to introduce children and youth to these artforms in the context of exploring our cultural heritage.

The first component, with a request of \$575, will bring two artists to participate in the Museum's Crafty Camps for campers entering 3rd-5th grade to connect the Camps' program with the CTA exhibit, which will be located in a gallery next door to the Camp classroom.

- We are seeking a fee of \$375 for Olive Parker to lead a leather painting workshop for 15-20 campers, including drawing their own designs on a leather "canvas" and painting them to be decorative wall hangings. Parker was selected for this program because she is the artist who has created the well-known leather paintings in the Wort Hotel bar in Jackson, including a new painting in 2024. She will show photos of her work at the Wort as part of this workshop. Parker is a professional leather artist, owner of Montana Leather Design, who has several years of experience working with children. We are requesting an additional \$50 for supplies for this workshop.

Campers will also have a tour of the exhibit guided by Parker, who will share stories of her life as a traditional artist.

- We are also seeking a fee of \$150 for two performances at the Crafty Camp programs by Golden Garnick, a Julliard graduate with a lifetime of experience performing with his family at the Jackson Hole Playhouse as an actor, singer and dancer. Garnick grew up on a dude ranch in Dubois and has a repertoire of children's cowboy songs, dances and mime performances for children in this age group. He will also perform for a Crafty Camp for children entering 1st and 2nd grades.

The second component is a six-week program for children and youth presented by CTA in conjunction with the exhibit. This program is inspired by European Heritage Days, which takes place in 70 countries, with millions of participants, one weekend in September each year. The European Heritage Days have a different theme each year to highlight various aspects of Europe's cultural and natural heritage. There is a strong focus on involving children and youth because "the future of heritage lies in the hands of young people". They have developed hundreds of ideas to invite children and youth to explore, discover and share their local heritages. We are proposing to borrow from this model as part of the community engagement aspect of our exhibit.

From October 1-November 15, we will be offering a variety of activities related to horses and cowboys, linking these experiences to learning about cultural heritage and how it can only be preserved by young people for the future. We will use the love of horses and cowboys as a common thread that appeals to many young people and allows us to partner with Jackson Hole Rodeo, 4-H and other equestrian groups in Teton County.

Over this period, there will be several hands-on workshops offered by visiting artists as well as tours of the exhibit. In addition, we'll be offering activities that will introduce young people to heritage preservation and invite them to contribute.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The first goal of this program is to teach children and youth about their cultural heritage in Teton County, building on their enthusiasm for horses and cowboy, to enable them to personally contribute to its celebration and preservation. Participants will learn the concept of cultural heritage and what it means to them personally. They will also learn to recognize the Western cultural heritage of their own community and connect this directly to their love for horses and cowboys.

The second goal is to invite children and youth to use creative expression and artistic skill to contribute personally to Jackson Hole's heritage celebration. We hope to delight them with a journey of exploration and discovery. Each activity will be presented as part of their personal inheritance, to encourage a sense of ownership and

responsibility. They will be learning about traditional cowboy artforms while they learn about their heritage in a memorable way.

One example: One element will be a Young Heritage Makers competition which invites small groups of young people (2-5 participants in each group) to delve into their own local heritage related to horses, cowboys and ranching with the help of a facilitator. The theme will be "Saddle Up! Celebrating and Preserving Traditional Cowboy Crafts". As these small groups discover stories that inspire them, they will create an artwork that communicates their stories to the community. These artworks -- photos, videos, paintings, writings - will be juried by their peers and prizes will be awarded to winning three entries in each of two age groups: 6-11 and 11-17. Prize-winning artworks will also be displayed at Teton County Library. Each small group will work with a facilitator who understands the educational goals of the program as developed in detail by European Heritage Days.

Other elements for this six-week time period will include a variety of entertaining activities around this theme: photography walk and workshop with a professional photographer; an informal concert sharing music about horses, with young people choosing their favorite songs; a cowboy fashion show for people under 10 (design your own style); a "bring-your-horse" gathering at the Fairgrounds where youth will be invited to share stories about their favorite horses. We will also collect original poetry and favorite fairy tales that feature horses or cowboys and publish these in simple formats to be circulated at the Library. Young people will also be invited to share stories about encounters between horses and wildlife.

Does this vision meet the definition of arts education for this grant? We are proposing that teaching young people about their cultural heritage and how they can participate creatively in preserving it for the future is integral to arts education. These fun and memorable activities will increase knowledge of traditional cowboy artforms and strengthen understanding of the concept of cultural heritage. Participants will learn that this heritage is their inheritance and that they can contribute to its appreciation, understanding and protection. They will also learn how important young people are to the future of this heritage.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Artists for the August Program:

Olive Parker is a leather engraver and leather painter who creates a wide variety of objects, including paintings, jewelry, belts, table runners, home decor. She is especially know for her very find leather feathers, which are offered as jewelry. Olive loves everything about living in Montana and life on a tiny ranch between the Sapphire and Bitterroot Mountains. She raises registered Welsh Ponies and Welsh Cobs, and enjoy carriage driving, riding and training. She also loves to mine sapphires in nearby Philipsburg, Montana.

Golden Garnick is a singing Cowboy actor hailing from the mountains of Wyoming. He has been passionate about acting since a young age, and when not performing, you can find him working on the family ranch, riding horses, or running his family's live theater, The Jackson Hole Playhouse. Julliard-trained as an actor, Golden is known for his captivating and hilarious physical theater and mime performances for children. He has toured with Vista 360° several times to present American cowboy culture under the auspices of the State Department -- to Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. He lives and works in Jackson and we want to take advantage of this talent right here at home.

#### Artists for the October-November Program:

The program will reach out to high school artists to serve as volunteer creative partners for younger children, especially highlighting rodeo riders and other high school artists who love horses, 4-H, etc. These self-selected high school students will work with the Young Heritage Makers' small groups, with the help of a trained facilitator, to help them to transform their stories into artworks. We hope to engage high school artists in this way to widen the impact of the program.

Several of CTA's master artists will be offering workshops and special exhibits in Jackson during this time period and will also lead an activity for children or youth as part of their residency. These are all accomplished traditional artists living and working in the Northern Rockies. Current Wyoming CTA participants include Ernie Marsh (Lovell), who is an award-winning silversmith and maker of bits and spurs. Ernie is a founding member of Traditional Cowboy Arts Association (TCAA) and has received numerous awards for his work. His brother and partner, Jesse Marsh, is also a CTA member. Amy Erickson (Evanston) is a silversmith and member of CTA who has recently completed a mentorship program with the American Craft Association. Amy is a recent recipient of a Wyoming Arts Council Folk Arts mentorship award. She also received a 2020 Bit Making Fellowship from Arts of the Cowgirls.

We will also be asking local artists to participate. This includes renowned hat makers Christy Sing Robertson of Sing Hat Company and Kelly Frye of JW Bennet Hat Company, who will lead a storytelling session about cowboy hats and how they first learned how to make a hat. This will also include Steve Fontanini, artist blacksmith, who will lead a group for a walking tour of artistic iron in downtown Jackson. Saddle maker Keith Valley will show horse owners how he fits a custom saddle.

These artists were selected based on recognition of their high-quality work by their peers as well as awards at trade shows and other fellowships. They have also been selected based on their demonstrated dedication to preserving these traditional artforms as CTA volunteers and leaders.

## **Budget Narrative**

- Our organization is supported by grants from government, private foundations and businesses as well as individual donors. We also receive support from membership fees and earned income for operations. In-kind contributions include office rental, volunteers and services such as website creation. Key partnerships include History Jackson Hole, which is collaborating with us for this exhibit. Folklorists at the State Arts Agencies of Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Utah are also key partners, helping to guide our development. Other partners include the Artists Blacksmith Association of North America and other artisan support groups.
- We are a small organization with a small staff so we depend on volunteers to make the Cowboy Trades Association programming possible. Our first major project as a coalition is the traveling museum exhibit described in this application for which we received significant enabling support from NEH.
- Our overall financial situation is modest, but stable.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WASHAKIE MUSEUM

[WWW.WASHAKIEMUSEUM.ORG](http://WWW.WASHAKIEMUSEUM.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Arts for the Big Horn Basin 2025-2026

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Washakie Museum and Cultural Center's mission is to serve as a community cultural arts center and history museum for the preservation, education, cultural enrichment, and development of the Big Horn Basin in Wyoming.

This project advances the mission of our organization by presenting high quality music, theatre, and visual art exhibits at affordable costs, furthering the artistic development of the Big Horn Basin through cultural arts enrichment. This project addresses three of the four strategic goals identified in the Washakie Museum 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Priorities include: 1) Have programming for a wider range of audiences – all ages and income levels; 2) Increase the museum's engagement and partnerships in the community; and 3) Attract more tourists/travelers from outside the area. This project was approved by the WM Board of Directors as part of the 2025 Organizational Workplan for the museum.

### Community

Located in Worland, WM serves the people of Washakie County and WY's Big Horn Basin which comprises six counties and a total population of 101,132 residents (2020 Census). The median age in Washakie County is 43.6 years and the median annual income is \$32,845 for females and \$50,502 for males (2020). The largest population groups are 82.2% White and 14.2% Hispanic with 3.6% representing Black, American Indian, and Asian. The percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher is 23.4%. Worland and all other towns in the Big Horn Basin have a population of less than 10,000. Limited access to arts due to geography and economics makes it difficult for residents to take part in quality cultural programming. WM is the main local source for affordable educational and cultural activities outside of the school system. WM programs involve community members on the WM Board of Directors and collaboration with numerous organizations such as the Washakie County Schools, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, UW Extension Office, Sagebrush Artisans, Worland Senior Center, and many individuals who serve as teachers, artists, and volunteers.

WM invites and engages under-served communities by providing scholarships for youth programs, discounted admission for seniors, veterans, families, and free admission for children 6 & under and active-duty military. School tours are admitted at a discounted rate. Free performance tickets and museum tours are provided to local

disability support organizations. WM offers free events such as Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, STEAM Saturday, and Indigenous Peoples Day. WM meets all federal guidelines for accommodating people with disabilities. All requests for accommodation are considered and fulfilled, provided we have the available resources.

## **Evaluation**

Surveys, photos, attendance, and program evaluation will be collected for each program in this project. Online and written surveys will be the primary methods used to evaluate the projects. The surveys are used to measure success by assessing the project's ability to meet WM's mission, reach our target audience and attendance goals, and determine interest for future programs. Suggested changes and feedback from last year's evaluations are incorporated into planning this project. Surveys are both qualitative and quantitative and include free space for participants to provide feedback. Evaluations from children in education programs are obtained through verbal interviews and an easy fill-in-the-blank form. Instructors and parents receive a survey by email to complete after workshops, and participants in adult art workshops are asked to fill out a survey at the end of the class. Surveys are included inside the programs for theatre and music performances. These methods are a significant way to analyze the WM's ability to positively impact participants, satisfy community needs for cultural enrichment, and increase outreach to wider audiences. Evaluation results are reported to the Board of Directors to measure progress towards strategic priorities identified in the WM Strategic Plan.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

Throughout 2025-2026, WM will present a series of performing arts programs and visual art exhibits. WM staff will plan and implement each program. Staff includes Marian Bender, Executive Director; Chloe Stine, Events Manager; Angela Reddick, Educator, and Jacquelyn Dennis, Assistant Curator.

July 11 – 16, 2025: Shakespeare Immersion Week – includes “An Evening with Shakespeare” featuring local speakers, musicians and performers on July 11; and a free performance of “As You Like It” by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks (MSIP) in Sanders Park, Worland on July 16. Artists include actor Dominic Damiano, Shakespeare expert Tim Trippel, and Northwest College music instructor Eric Hageman. MSIP has brought outdoor theatrical productions to regional communities since 1973, and WM has partnered with them for over two decades. The total estimated attendance is 250.

July – August 2025: Art Exhibit featuring Thermopolis artist Teri Gergen. Teri is a full-time artist and local art guild member. She has participated in WM's Quick Draw for three years. The exhibit will be on display for one month with approximately 400 viewers.

September 2025: Community Theatre Production of “Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella” directed by Naomi Durrant. Volunteer actors and singers will be selected as cast and crew with auditions and rehearsals at WM until the week of performances. Naomi studied theatre at the University of Wyoming and has 17 years of directing



experience. The expected audience is 850 between three shows at Worland Middle School's Performing Arts Center.

February 2026: Jazz Concert featuring regional musicians including Worland music educator Willie Wright (woodwinds); Jeff Troxel of Northwest College and Univ. of Montana (guitar); Kelly Dehnert of CWC in Lander (trumpet, keyboard); Andrez Goncalves of CWC in Riverton (double bass); and Sean Francis of Fremont Music in Lander (keyboard, vocals). The estimated attendance is 60.

February – March 2026: Art Exhibit featuring Greybull artist Deanna Skillman. Deanna helped create the Big Horn County Arts Guild and owns an art gallery in Greybull. The exhibit will be on display for one month with approximately 400 viewers.

April 2026: Art Exhibit featuring the work of local art guild Sagebrush Artisans. The exhibit features over 100 pieces with 2-4 from each guild member. The guild started in 2023 with Big Horn Basin members ranging from hobbyists to professional artists. The exhibit will be on display for one month with approximately 400 viewers.

May 2026: All School Art Show featuring the artwork of Washakie County K-12 students in collaboration with Worland and Ten Sleep schools. The exhibit will be on display with free admission for one month with approximately 400 viewers.

Project costs for WM arts programs include staff wages, artist fees, theatre license fees, advertising, printing costs, and supply costs for art materials, costumes, and sets. Our project involves a dedicated team of experienced WM staff, artists, and educators providing unique skills critical to the artistic impact and success of this project. Awarded funds will be applied toward the cost of the artist fees, license fees, and relevant staff wages. Project expenses are based on similar prior year actuals, and projected expenses and revenue included in the 2025 WM Operating Budget and Workplan. The remaining revenue will come from ticket sales, museum memberships, other non-federal grants, donations, and local sponsorships.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The WM 2025-2026 Arts Education programs consist of three adult visual art workshops, one youth visual art class, and two youth performing arts programs. All programs, except Missoula Children's Theatre, will be held at the Washakie Museum.

July 2025: Youth STEAM Workshop – Art day of WM's STEAM Camp led by Melissa Hill, Jacquelyn Dennis, and Angela Reddick for ages 8+. Students will participate in a drawing activity related to the live falcon demonstration and create a diorama habitat for robot dinosaurs.

August 2025: Adult Art Workshop – Thermopolis artist Teri Gergen will teach a class on oil painting techniques. Supplies will be provided for participants to create their own unique pieces. This workshop is for 20 adults, high school and up.

September 2025: Art Workshop – Worland artist Sarah Miller will teach participants printmaking techniques, and they will create their own pieces inspired by our temporary exhibit “Metaphor, Myth and Politics: Art from Native Printmakers.” This workshop is for 20 people, ages high school and up.

March 2025: Missoula Children’s Theatre – free program consisting of one week of workshops and rehearsals directed by two professional actors. Auditions will be held for 60 students in grades K-12 to be cast as actors and stage crew in a full-scale production at the Worland Middle School Performing Arts Center. The cast will rehearse each day after school throughout the week for two public performances.

April 2026: Adult Art Workshop – Greybull artist Deanna Skillman will teach a class on acrylic painting techniques and lead participants in painting landscapes based on a photo, using a realistic approach with the provided supplies. This workshop is for 20 adults, high school and up.

June 2026: Performing Arts Camp – Director Naomi Durrant will lead three weeks of day-long workshops and rehearsals for up to 25 students ages 9-18. Students will learn acting skills, vocal performance, set design, choreography, teamwork and more while they work to put on a show for the community. Full and partial scholarships based on need are made available. Two performances will be held June 27 – 28. The total expected audience is approximately 250.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Washakie Museum education programs view the arts as an important tool for teaching and learning any subject or event. WM’s youth education programs annually reach over 600 K-12 students in Washakie County and the surrounding areas. The WM Arts Learning goals have been identified through the WM 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Standards.

The WM 2025-2026 K-12 Arts Education programs will address the following goals and standards through the listed workshops and camps:

1) Encourage students to create, perform, and participate in the arts. 2) Increase students’ skills and knowledge of art techniques, styles, media, and formats. 3) Foster creativity and confidence through engaging visual and performing art production. 4) Provide the opportunity for students to observe and learn unique art techniques from the expertise of professional Wyoming and regional artists.

Visual Art – Standard 1: Creative Expression Through Production: Students create, perform, exhibit, or participate in the arts. The STEAM art workshop and Printmaking workshop will provide equipment, materials, and instruction

for students ages 8 and up to create and exhibit works of visual art expressing ideas, experiences, or stories. Fulfilling standards: FPA4.1.A.1-5, FPA8.1.A.1-5, FPA11.1.A.1-5.

Visual Art – Standard 3: Historical and cultural context: Students demonstrate an understanding of the arts in relation to history, cultures, and contemporary society. In the printmaking workshop students will recognize that the arts have a historical and cultural context and demonstrate an understanding about art in relation to Indigenous cultures in Wyoming. Fulfilling standards: FPA8.3.A.1-3, FPA11.3.A.1-3.

Visual Art – Standard 4: Artistic Connections: Students relate the arts to other disciplines, careers and everyday life. In the STEAM art workshop students will delve into the visual art involved in the study of dinosaurs, examining how these studies influence and connect other disciplines. Fulfilling standards: FPA4.4.A.1, FPA8.4.A.1-3, FPA11.4.A.1-3.

Theatre – Standard 1: Creative Expression Through Production: Students create, perform, exhibit, or participate in the arts. The Missoula Children's Theatre residency and Performing Arts Camp will provide participatory theatre opportunities for K-12 students involving self-discipline, theatrical skills, collaboration, vocal performance, character development, movement exploration, staging, and more. Fulfilling standards: FPA4.1.T.1-5, FPA8.1.T.1-6, FPA11.1.T.1-6.

The WM 2025-2026 adult arts education programs will address the following goals through the listed visual art workshops:

1) Art instruction and creation in unique art mediums by professional artists. 2) A community classroom environment that is engaging and non-judgmental. 3) Artists will demonstrate and teach traditional and individual techniques. 4) Provide programming for adults 55 and over.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The project committee for the 2025-2026 art education programs consists of WM's: Angela Reddick, Educator; Jacquelyn Dennis, Assistant Curator; and Marian Bender, Executive Director. Angela Reddick is responsible for the planning and execution of Missoula Children's Theatre, Performing Arts camp, and STEAM Saturday children's programs. Jacquelyn Dennis plans and implements all visual art programs including exhibits and workshops. Marian Bender oversees planning, finances, and marketing. The select staff have been chosen to coordinate and lead programs based on their expertise and professional roles.

Artists are selected on the following criteria:

1) Workshop artists are chosen based on their level of artistic skill and ability to teach their art form. 2) A preference is given to local artists to provide opportunities for them to demonstrate their talents and to further involve the community. 3) Professional artists/organizations are chosen based on their experience in providing high-quality arts education and enrichment for students.

#### Artists/Instructors:

Jacquelyn Dennis, Worland, is the WM Assistant Curator and artist contact. She studied art in college and has a BFA in Technical Theatre, with a concentration in Scenic Design and Props. Jacquelyn coordinates artist exhibits and organizes art workshops for both youths and adults.

Angela Reddick, Worland, is the WM Educator and has over twelve years of experience as an educator in museum settings. She has bachelor's degrees in Geology and Mathematics, and a master's degree in Geology. She has focused most of her studies on the Prehistoric Natural History of the Big Horn Basin.

Melissa Hill, Cody, is the live raptor program manager for the Draper Museum Raptor Experience in Cody. She is a Certified Interpretive Guide and a published author of two children's books series about raptors.

Teri Gergen, Thermopolis, is a full-time artist and local art guild member, and has participated in WM's Quick Draw for three years. She specializes in painting, with a focus on light and shadow contrasts and textures. Influences on her work include artists Phil Starke, the late Mary Bentz Gilkerson, Chris Kolupski, Tara Will, and Nicholas Wilton.

Sarah Miller, Worland, creates art as a hobby and has exhibited her work at WM. She teaches linocut and printmaking youth workshops and has volunteered to help with various art and children's activities in the community.

The Missoula Children's Theatre (MCT), MT, is the nation's largest touring children's theatre, and has been touring extensively for nearly 50 years from Montana to Japan. This year they will visit nearly 1,100 communities with up to 44 teams of Tour Actor/Directors. MCT guarantees educational and performance quality in its programs and holds a strong belief in their mission: to develop children's life skills through participation in the performing arts.

Deanna Skillman, Greybull, is an experienced artist who has taken part in WM's annual Quick Draw. In the spring of 2022, she helped create the Big Horn County Arts Guild. She owns an art gallery in Greybull and works in the mediums of acrylic, graphite, oil, and pen and ink.

Naomi Durrant, Worland, is a trained theater director with 16 years of experience with the Worland high school drama department. She studied theatre at the University of Wyoming and has directed the museum's community theatre productions and annual Performing Arts Camp since 2017.

#### **Budget Narrative**

The financially solvent WM has diverse funding sources including an endowment (34%); donations and memberships (24%); grants (10%) and program revenue (32%). We partner with the Rotary Club on our largest annual fundraising event, and with other community groups including Kiwanis, the community center, and school district on programs each year. Over half of WM's expense budget (64%) goes to programming (exhibits, education, cultural events); 15% goes to facility maintenance/repair; 13% goes to administration; and 8% goes to fundraising. Approximately 44% of WM programs (art exhibits; youth and adult art classes; annual Quick Draw fundraiser; plays and concerts) directly involve visual or performing arts. WM is financially healthy with cash reserves to cover more than a year of operating expenses. WM financial records are reviewed or audited annually. Risk exposure is primarily limited to stock market fluctuations which would affect the value of WM endowment and invested securities.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WIND RIVER COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

[WWW.WINDRIVERCOMMUNITYALLIANCE.ORG](http://WWW.WINDRIVERCOMMUNITYALLIANCE.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Wind River Artists Collective

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Wind River Artist Collective Mission Statement:

To Empower Indigenous Artists in the Greater Wind River Reservation, by providing a platform to share their authentic art work nationwide.

Strategic Goals: Diversify economic development, inspire a self sustainable workforce, encourage community engagement/workshops through traditional and non-traditional art, and create a friendly/knowledgeable ecosystem for our local Indigenous Artists that helps to educate about the Wind River Indian Reservation and both our two tribes.

As an Indigenous led organization, the Wind River Artist Collective encourages and nurtures a lifestyle of culture and values. The WRIR is considered an area which suffers from great economic distress. The annual income for those living on the Wind River Indian Reservation is approximately \$18,000 per person, well below the national average. Start up costs for a business, specifically individual artists, is not an easy venture, especially due to the lack of accessibility to brick and mortar structures on the WRIR. The Wind River Artist Collective was created to provide a sovereign and intentional social/physical platform for our local artists to house and market their artwork. By providing this platform each artist is in charge of their own business and have the means to supplemental income and growth. inward facing each artist is responsible for their own artwork, outward our artists provide a diverse market for all to experience. The WRAC empowers our community, artists and culture. Artists are able to collaborate and showcase their work on a national scale. The WRAC encourages success, community driven problem solving, the sharing of the culture of two separate tribes, which is unique for the whole United States. Through collaboration and partnership locally and through out the state, the WRAC has created many opportunities, provided invaluable resources and will continue to support an encourage local artists to strive and prosper.

### Community

The Wind River Indian Reservation is located in the heart of Wyoming but exponentially lacks individual opportunities due to our persistent distressed communities. The focus of the Wind River Artist Collective is

coalition style forum for our local artists. The Artist Collective was launched May 22, 2024, after local artists had voiced their need for access to either funding for marketing, or a brick and mortar structure to display their art work. Programming, workshops and wrap around services are provided with no charge through the partnership with Wind River Development Fund, Women's Business Center and Wind River Community Alliance. Through social media, emails, partnerships with other tribal programs we advertise to call all artists to join the collective. Keeping the membership costs to join the WRAC as minimal as possible, the above listed organizations are helping to launch and manage the platforms, ensuring any and all Indigenous Wind River Artists are able to participate in the collective. All of our artists and their authentic artwork deserve the opportunity to create successful and viable businesses. We have open meetings once a week to connect, share information about WRAC and discuss new ideas.

We understand individuals needs, and implement reasonable accommodations that enable them to access and utilize our services, while ensuring confidentiality and compliance with relevant laws like the ADA. At the WRAC building we provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with accessible facilities, auxiliary aids, and services that enable individuals to be successful. If there is an accommodation request from any artist, when we book events and lodging, we discuss the accommodation needed by communicating in advance and calling ahead of time.

## **Evaluation**

Measuring the effectiveness of the individuals that are members of the Wind River Artist Collective (WRAC) will involve looking at key performance indicators such as providing evidence of achieving the desired results of the collective, by prioritizing the needs of the community and assure that research is done based on specific Indigenous cultural principles. Program evaluations will be culturally sensitive and will include important contextual factors (historical, social, cultural, and environmental) that are aligned with the particular guidelines or regulations governing an Indigenous Nation's engagement with non-Indigenous institutions. We hope to see Indigenous artists being treated fair and with respect , and feel comfortable in the process of booking art fairs/events on their own when they choose to. The Wind River Community Alliance will have cultural celebrations to provide opportunities to survey participants, the community, and host events for the artists to share success stories of their experience being in the collective. An excellent measure of the success of the WRAC will be seen in the relationships that are built between community members and surrounding organizations. Measurements will be analyzed thoroughly and quickly in order to provide the most effective, engaging, and impactful programming during the series, and in the future. We support and strive to see our artists create successful, financially stable, native owned businesses of their own. A way to do this is attending more exhibition events and fairs, A great example of this is: Two members of the WRAC are in art exhibit at the Center For The Arts from April 28th through June 28, 2025, including doing a podcast, and the other now sells her jewelry in a local store in Jackson Town Square.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

The Wind River Artist Collective supports the understanding, awareness and advocacy of contemporary Native communities through the development and promotion of Native contemporary artists and their work. Artists are welcome based on self-identification, or other public acknowledgement of their Native or Indigenous heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation. The group of artists are made up of any type of genre including painters, textiles, sculptors, photographers, immersive artists, quilters, historic beadwork, quillwork,

basketry, ribbon work and more. Artists have a shared goal or vision and work together to promote each others work to make art more accessible to the public. We work to bridge the gap between general society and indigenous communities by capturing their stories, expressed through authentic art. The Wind River Artists Collective will provide support and connect Native artists and culture bearers with resources, community leaders. WRAC provides an affordable studio/art space to work, display/gallery style artwork from members from the WRIR. The public will be able to view authentic art, while interacting with the artists by attending art fairs, art exhibit, museum events and showcases. The proposed budget will go directly towards partial rent, marketing, staffing, materials, and packaging fees. The website that has been created has the capacity to function as a national platform for our artists, which is ran as a business for each individual artist. It is designed to meet the specific needs of our artists as a whole as well as the function to highlight each individual artist separately. The artist collective is asking for support to have a complex inventory and sales tracking equipment to support the growth of sales nationally, along with the growth of the members of artists as the artist collective expands. We will accomplish this by hiring a part time manager. Operating costs will include the rent for physical space which has been identified in the Wind River Community Alliance Community Center at 1202 S. Federal Blvd. Riverton, WY 82501. The identified space will be used to house the artists work physically and will be the first gallery owned, operated and located on the Wind River Indian Reservation. Necessary supplies will be stocked at the building for the mailing of artwork to non-local buyers. Management and salary is included in the operating costs. The manager of the Artist Collective will be a crucial role to the success of the business. This position is required to keep all artists and artwork organized, stocked, tagged and priced properly, along with the management of the website and shipping of artwork when bought off of website. The manager will also be responsible for running the gallery during the year, specifically during peak tourist season.

Gallery space rent \$600 /month X 6 months (July 1 - June 30, 2026) = \$7200

Part Time WRAC Program Manager \$25/hour @ 1040 hours = \$26,000

Marketing to highlight artists as members of the WRAC, and their stories 1/4 page ad in the Riverton Ranger, Lander Journal, and the Wind River News, to run weekly for the year. Total: \$3588.00. We will also continue to share information on our social media platforms.

Accountant, tracking software to manage program. \$3000 /year. Mailing supplies and Ship station \$636/year.

## **Project Support Narrative**



Project support funds will help members of the Wind River Artists Collective to achieve their goals in advancing to the next level of sharing and selling their art nation wide to reach new audiences and markets. The artists have come together, as they meet bi-weekly to brainstorm and share with each other events that are coming up such as art fairs, Three day Indian relay events, art exhibits and to showcase at art museums. Odessa Oldham, she is a member of the Navajo Nation and is a Silversmith, Navajo jewelry maker. She is a Fifth generation artist and now owns and runs her own business. Miracle Seminole is a 22 year old, Native entrepreneur building her own business. She is a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe and lives on the Wind River Reservation. The art of creating start quilts was passed down from her mother. Miracle now teaches beginners star quilt classes for the community at the WRAC building, with the hope that she will inspire other youth to create healthy ways of supporting themselves financially. Mirae Hughes is an enrolled member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe, living on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. She learned the Indigenous art of bead-working from her elders at 17. Mirae says "Beading is a way to help keep the Northern Arapaho culture alive Making a piece involves prayer, patience, love, creativity, and guidance. Meagan Jones is a member of the Osage Nation, and a Special Education Teacher in Fremont County. She began beading as a hobby in 2022 and launched her business in the Spring of 2024. "I would love to continue to grow my business and reach new audiences across the nation." Eugene RidgeBear Jr. is a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe. He has been an drawing/painting artist for over 50 years, doing watercolor and acrylic pieces. Eugene is a fluent speaker of the Arapaho language and teaches the language through his art at the WRAC building every Saturday. John T Brown Jr. is an member of the Northern Arapaho tribe. John utilize the art space in the WRAC building to continue his paintings. His goal is to create his own business in art. Lenny HorseCloud is a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe. Buffalo skull painting, and he shares buffalo culture and stories through his art. He is a well known artist on Tiktok. Funds will be used to cover costs for:

Sept. 19-21, 2025 Championship of Champions Indian relay races at the Central Wy Fairgrounds in Casper, Wy. (7 artists) vendor booth 10X20 \$900 MainStay Suites 5 rooms \$2033.

August 15-17, 2025 Art Fair in Jackson, WY(7 Artists attending)Booth Fee: \$500 X 2 = \$1000 Hotel(in partnership with Rockwell Inn Jackson WY. Contact person-Eldon Doloroso) Locked in price at \$118 + special tax \$4.62 = \$122.62 per night 5 rooms @ \$122.62 x 3 nights = \$1839.30.

March 1, 2026. National Museum of Wildlife Art "First Sunday" The first Sunday of winter months, the NMWA organizes a family-friendly day with special programs and events for showcasing Indigenous Art. March is Indigenous month and WRAC in partnership with NMWA bring our artists up to this event. 5 Artists (no fee for the WRAC)Hotel @ Rockwell Inn 4 rooms @ 1night X \$122.62 =\$490.48

April 29-May 2, 2026 Central Wyoming College and Center For The Arts Powwow and Art Exhibit (Native Visions program @ CWC) in Jackson WY Booth Fee: \$175 X 2 = \$350 (7 artists attending)

Hotel @ Rockwell Inn 5 rooms @ \$122.62 x 3 nights = \$1839.30. We will highlight these events in the 3 local newspapers and on social media

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Indigenous Artists come from families of storytellers. We will provide reciprocal support to the professional and personal growth of our fellow artists by partnering with outside organizations, and provide the space at 1202 South Federal Blvd. Riverton, WY 82501, to host educational workshops for the artists. For instance, we provide the supplies, space and an honorarium to our local Indigenous artists to facilitate a learning workshop/class to the community in the arts. Classes/workshops could be anywhere from teaching how to bead, how to make star quilts, how to make traditional drums, storytelling and teaching our traditional language through painting or drawing classes. Indigenous artists on the Wind River Reservation are so talented and want to pass down what was passed down to them. The Wind River Artists Collective provides the space and the opportunity to do just that by scheduling a time and day of the artists choice to start an educational/teaching workshop. We have had ribbon skirt and ribbon shirt maker, Ms. Rana Mandan that has taught a class for One day a week for Four weeks. She would like to do another class on ribbon skirt making in August 2025 when the children are out of school for the summer to provide a healthy activity over the summer and also to make their own ribbon skirts for the girls and ribbon shirts for the boys. We have a beading artists, Ms. Jocey White that will come in on Saturdays from 3-5pm and teach how to make beaded earrings. This is a teaching that has been passed down by her grandmother, that raised her since she was a young girl. We have been in contact with Mr. Lance Oldman who is a traditional hand drum and big drum maker, he will teach a class on how to make the drums. Lance currently is employed at the White Buffalo Recovery Center. We have a partnership with WBRC as they refer their clients to our classes as a Peer Support group per the clients requirements to get so many hours a month. We provide those healthy sober activities for the clients. All of our classes are open to you, adults, we encourage families to come together, and all of our classes are open to the community. We will have these events to the public, by putting them on our website calendar of events, our social media platforms such as Facebook, instagram and in the local newspapers that will run every Wednesday from August 2025 to August 2026.

In addition to the arts learning provided the Wyoming Women's Business Center (WWBC), located in Cheyenne, WY will collaborate with the Wind River Artist Collective to provide services to local artists, such as one-on-one business counseling, artist development workshops, business education workshops, and budgeting classes.

The Wind River Development Fund (WRDF) located in Fort Washakie, WY, will provide financial and development services for our communities, providing local entrepreneurs and businesses with access to capital, technical assistance, support, training, and professional capacity in retaining, expanding and developing enterprises throughout Fremont & Hot Springs Counties of Wyoming. Support the artists if they choose to expand their business. WRDF offers support and workshops educating artists on what it takes to create their Employer Identification Number, open a business bank account, provide resources to assist in a way for them to sustainable and continued wrap around services as needed.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Indigenous artist will pool their resources in order to have a larger platform to promote each other's work and to make art more accessible to the public, to create a sustainable business in the world of Arts, by drawing on their ancestral connections, combining these with their knowledge and engagement with contemporary international art practices. The resulting art is often a critique of current social conditions that are the consequence of colonial histories. Education on Indigenous art is important because it is inseparable from indigenous culture and plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting cultural identity. Indigenous art has been used as a form of expression, healing, and resistance against cultural genocide. It engages individuals in life skill-building, learning, emotional

regulation, and spiritual healing, supporting overall wellness, increasing enjoyment and engagement in the Wind River Artist collective.

Identifying these goals has been done through, being actively engaged in the lives of Artists and by having "boots on the ground" strategies and involvement to understand the needs of the Greater Wind River Reservation. Additionally, the arts play a crucial role in retaining and re-enlivening elements of indigenous culture that may have been lost. As we bring our traditional knowledge keepers in to share the arts, culture through art expression, history through the arts and storytelling through the arts we are strengthening our community and families and to pass down the knowledge in a healthy way for generations to come. The Wind River Artists Collective has weekly classes at the building located at 1202 S. Federal Blvd. Riverton, WY. These Six week classes include:

Traditional Language classes and story-telling through art. Example: Eugene RidgeBear will offer a canvas painting class, participants will paint a picture of their choice and at the end everyone will explain their painting in the traditional language, with assistance from the fluent speakers in the class.

Miracle teaches a star quilt making class Two times a year for Six weeks at a time. Starting August 2025 and again in February 2026. She teaches this class the way it was passed down to her. Participants are guaranteed to create at 60x60 baby quilt by the end of the class to take home. In the process Miracle assists the participants with resources to assist them in creating their own business, if they choose. Miracle uses and shares her experience and resources, that assisted her in being successful in providing financial stability for herself through her art. Indigenous arts are shared and offered as often and requested as possible. There are specific times in the year where our two tribes celebrate through ceremony. Prior to these specific times, we hold classes that help families and individuals get ready to participate in ceremony. We tie our cultural timeline into a reflective timeline to hold community engagement. There are times when classes are offered during the long winter months. This helps for the community to join together, while hearing stories from elders, while they learn about beading, drum making, or other cultural appropriate forms of artwork. This helps to reduce depression and isolation, especially around the holiday seasons. As Indigenous people, everything that we do has a connection. Whether its a connection with the land, our water, the animals or each other, we always honor, respect and encourage that connection among our people and our culture.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Cherokee Brown, a Star quilt maker and educator has worked in the Greater Wind River Indian Reservation Community for decades, establishing trust and building relationships. Her background being in Human Services, General and Addictions option, She is a certified facilitator of the Native American Fatherhood and Families Association and has weekly classes at the Wind River Community Alliance center to community members, native and non native. Erika Yarber, has been acknowledged for her leadership role in the Greater Wind River Reservation. She is the Chief Operating Officer for the Wind River Development Fund

Patti Baldes, Executive Director of the Wind River Native Advocacy Center since 2018. The WRNAC serves as a unified voice for the Native American people and their communities in Wyoming. She is an educator and sharing the knowledge about Rematriation and the history about the buffalo.

Snowball RidgeBear, teacher and consultant, An elder, he has experience as Cultural Resource Specialist, and Arapaho Language/Cultural Educator. He holds a BA in education from UWY, and Art Education from CWC. Fluent Arapaho speaker and educator in the community

Mary Ann Duran teaches moccasin making, beading, and storytelling, She is an Elder and the Cultural Educator at Arapahoe Elementary School on the Wind River Reservation.

Lance Oldman, teacher, scholar of Arapahoe language, traditional song, and traditional crafts including drum, moccasin making, and feather work on traditional fans for indigenous regalia. All of the identified artists and educators are very excited to be part of the artists collective movement. The Bootstrap Collaborative program under the Central Wyoming College, and the RISE grant there offer scholarship opportunity for help with initial meetings with accountants, lawyers and marketing entities to help individual artists be successful with their business. The Wind River Community Alliance is a partner in the Wind River Artist Collective. WRCA is the host site, the employer for the manager, and the physical site providing the traditional classes for the community. The key partners and organizations involved in the Wind River Artist Collective are the Wind River Development Fund which is the only Native CDFI (Community Development Financial Institution) which provides access to capital to entrepreneurs who would have difficulty obtaining funds through institutionalized banking. WRDF also, provides free wrap around services pertaining to budgeting, financial coaching, and workshops geared towards marketing, excel and QuickBooks. Wyoming Women's Business Center has been invaluable partner in the evolution and launching of the Wind River Artist Collective. The WWBC has expertise and has successfully set up their own gift shop and website that has been used as a blueprint for the Wind River Artist Collective. Hopa Mountain, a non-profit that invests in rural and tribal citizen leaders, adults and youth, who are improving education, ecological health, and economic development, and acknowledges the skills, talents, and positions within communities of these local leaders, Hopa Mountain endeavors to provide them with the means—primarily through training, networking, mentoring, and financial support—to generate and expand much-needed opportunities in their communities. Provide them with the means—primarily through training, networking, mentoring, and financial support—to generate and expand much-needed opportunities in their communities.

### **Budget Narrative**

The Wind River Development Fund, Wyoming Women's Business Center and the Wind River Community Alliance are organizations that have collaborated and will contribute to contribute in-kind donations through the life of the grant and as long as needed to make sure the Wind River Artist Collective is a sustainable community business. The Wind River Community Alliance has secured matching funds from an anonymous donor and have applied for grants with NDN Collective -Radical Imagination grant, and the Walking Together grant for our artists collective. The WRAC will be provided with private donations as we have fundraising events monthly. We have an accountant that manages income and expenses for the WRAC. Managing and maintaining the website to ensure nation wide exposure for our artists and through our donate page we will secure funding from individuals. As we get more artist in the collective, the membership fee to join the WRAC will contribute to financial sustainability for future success

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

DUBOIS CHAMBER MUSIC

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Dubois Chamber Music 2025 Season

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

We are a 5-year-old organization that became an independent 501c3 last autumn. Our mission, as stated in our Bylaws, is to "diversify the kinds of professional-standard live music performance beyond the Country and Western genre that is available to residents of and visitors to Fremont County, and particularly the area surrounding Dubois, at prices that are affordable. A second purpose is to offer students in the Dubois school the opportunity to hear professionals performing on the kinds of instruments used in classical music."

Strategic goals:

1. To always provide something new and unusual, adding further variety to our programming. Last year, we featured a woodwind quintet rather than stringed instruments. This year, we intend to feature jazz in one concert. We are in discussion with a choral group for next year.
2. To demonstrate strong and increasing community support and reduce reliance on grant funding. We will continue to sell advertising in our concert programs to defray printing costs. We will also work to add more patrons (we gained 13 last year, with donations of \$1,300) and to reach our goal of \$2,000 in new donations. We will investigate and apply effective means of donor retention beyond receptions and quarterly newsletters.
3. To learn why some people are not attending our events, and document general support in the community. Are there other individuals who would enjoy our events, if we could enhance our outreach? We will conduct a community-based survey focusing on local residents who do not attend our concerts. Are they not seeing our advertisements? Do they not like classical music? Would they be more likely to come if we offered a reception?
4. We are eager to add at least one new Board member, ideally a newcomer to the community.

## Community

Dubois is a small, remote rural village with many elderly and low-income residents. It is a community of diverse backgrounds: Descendants of homesteaders, retirees and remote workers, and young people drawn from elsewhere by outdoor careers and activities and the Western culture.

Being remote, we are under-served by cultural events, except Western-themed ones. This is a need we aim to address with our concerts.

Location: 80 miles equidistant from Jackson (W) and Riverton and Lander (SE)

Demographics: Town population: 911 (but many people live in the valley or mountains nearby)

Economy: Median income (Dubois town) \$42,454. (Wyoming: \$65,204 US: \$69,717) Many living outside town boundaries are affluent. There are many second homes here.

Median age: Dubois zip code 82513: 63 Wyoming: 39

Ethnicity: Overwhelmingly white. Native American, Asian, Hispanic: 3.5% Black: 0%

Our audiences number from 40-60, mostly people over age 55. We do not reach out specifically to veterans, who are well served in our town (home to the National Museum of Military Vehicles, which honors them) or to the disabled, who attend our concerts regularly. Our venues are all at street level and served by ramps. Hearing is no issue: We hold concerts in intimate spaces where audiences are close to performers. We have never had a request about accessibility, but if we did we would address it immediately. To include elderly, young, and low-income attendees, we keep ticket prices low (\$20 or \$15 for young and elderly). We have advertised on the Wind River Reservation, to no effect.

To involve youth under-served by professional classical music performance, we sponsor programs in the school.

## Evaluation

In the past, surveys at our concerts have measured:

-- audience age (overwhelmingly 55+)

-- repeat attendance (last season: 45%. Therefore 55% were newcomers last season. This is great news! Our appeal is spreading)

-- home town of attendees (about 60% Dubois, about 20% elsewhere in Fremont County, a few from outside Wyoming)

-- effectiveness of particular advertising media (including more good news: 22% of responses mentioned "word of mouth")

-- response to programs (unanimously enthusiastic, so we have stopped asking that question)

-- what people were doing afterwards (most in Dubois went home, many of those from elsewhere planned to go out to eat at a restaurant or meet with friends)

We have not yet decided whether to conduct surveys during concerts this season.

However, we will carry out a community survey, focusing on those who do not attend our concerts.

Goal: to assess the support for our programs in the community and learn ways to increase attendance.

Method: Online survey via Survey Monkey, distributed through Chamber of Commerce weekly e-newsletter. Also an in-person survey in restaurants and coffee shops.

Target audience: 100 Dubois residents who do not attend our concerts.

Last year we asked an audience member who is not a member of our Board to evaluate each concert. These audience reviews, which were both very favorable, will be included in the Final Report for the 2024 season. We will use this evaluation method again, although we may instead offer free admission to a qualified professional or seek out someone who does not ordinary attend for a different perspective.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

On July 16, our first event will be a free chamber music concert co-sponsored with Tour de Wyoming, a bicycle group passing through Dubois on that day. Local residents will be able to attend. The program is being arranged by Beth Vanderborgh, professor of cello at the University of Wyoming and co-founder of the Helios String Trio, which has performed here under our sponsorship in the past (thanks in part to funding from the Wyoming Arts Council). The July concert will feature professional musicians appearing this summer at the Grand Teton Music Festival (GTMF) in Jackson, which brings a varying roster of top-rank classical musicians to Jackson every summer to form an orchestra. BBC Music Magazine and the New York Times have named GTMF one of the best music festivals in North America.. The details of our July 16 concert are not yet in place.

Vanderborgh is planning this concert in conjunction with violinist Jennifer Ross, who performs with the GTMF. Ross began her professional life at the age of 19 as Associate Concertmaster of the Honolulu Symphony and later joined

the Cincinnati Symphony before being named Principal Second Violin of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Besides performing, Ross now devotes herself to teaching and conducting workshops for young musicians. (See <https://www.jrviolin.com/>)

Our next concert, on August 17, will feature improvisational jazz performed by a trio headed by Ben Markley, who is professor of jazz at the University of Wyoming. Markley earned his PhD in Musical Arts from the University of Colorado with a specialty in jazz. "I give Ben and all his players a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED rating," wrote the editor of Contemporary Fusion Reviews last month, and one of his albums won a 4-star (top rank) review from the jazz magazine Downbeat.

We are delighted and honored that Markley's group is willing to make time for Dubois, and excited to add this new musical genre to our offerings. It will be interesting to see (and assess formally) the response of our audience to this genre.

The final concert, as always, will be an appearance by classical musicians brought to Dubois by our partner organization, Jackson Hole Chamber Music (JHCM). Each year, starting shortly after the end of the Grand Teton Music Festival (where some of its founders also perform), JHCM brings a few highly skilled classical musicians to Jackson to appear in small ensembles during a week of concerts. Again this September, a concert in Dubois will be an official part of the JHCM series. We are very proud of this partnership.

The full details of its 2025 season are not yet in place, so we are unable to say which musicians will be performing the September concert. But there is no doubt about the quality of their musicianship. In surveys conducted during previous JHCM concerts in Dubois, respondents raved about the "energy" and "verve" of the "wonderful performers" and the "highly talented classical music." Our chief contact with JHCM is its president, Rebecca Racusin, who is principal violin of the Inscape Chamber Orchestra and a member of the Smithsonian Chamber Players. (See [jhchambermusic.org](http://jhchambermusic.org))

Our seasons are planned by our Board of Directors. One is the school music teacher, another is an amateur pianist and flutist who plays regularly at church, and a third has performed with professional choruses.

The requested funds will be used to pay fees for the Markley trio and the JHCM performers, and per diem costs for the latter.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**



## **Arts Learning: Goals**

## **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

## **Budget Narrative**

1. Funding sources: Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, Dubois Opportunity Shop grant program, Never Sweat Recreation Board, County 10, local businesses, ticket revenues, private donations, in-kind contributions from individuals. Partnerships: Jackson Hole Chamber Music, Piatigorsky Foundation, Dubois Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Tour de Wyoming, and the University of Wyoming music department.
2. Our budget is entirely devoted to our services. We pay fees and expenses for musicians, venue-related costs, advertising and printing costs, and costs for banking, PO Box, and receptions.
3. We are a new 501c3 nonprofit organization with a 4-year record of operating at a modest profit under fiscal sponsors. We await final reconciliation of funding from our former parent organization, but with previous ticket revenues and donations added to the prior balance, we expect to start the season with sufficient funds to cover costs, assuming grants are awarded.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYO THEATER, INC.

WYOTHEATER.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: WYO Performing Arts & Education Center 2025-2026 Educational Series

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The WYO's mission is to inspire, educate and entertain. Our vision is to be the regions premier choice for experiencing and supporting the performing arts, providing space to be seen, heard and felt.

Our strategic initiatives are:

- 1) Continue to diversify and strengthen our funding model to ensure long-term sustainability and growth
- 2) Broaden our marketing efforts to increase local and regional engagement with the WYO
- 3) Cultivate and retain new patrons, participants, volunteers and donors
- 4) Optimize organizational structure to provide appropriate staffing and competitive compensation in order to retain and recruit quality staff

"The WYO is a place to be entertained and engage in creating entertainment."

### Community

The WYO serves approximately 39,000 residents in Sheridan and Johnson Counties, including Sheridan and surrounding rural communities. While our population is predominantly white (95%), we also serve individuals who identify as American Indian (1.7%), African American (.8%), and Asian (.7%). Many in our region face barriers to arts access due to distance, transportation, or limited financial resources.

Serving the entire population described above means providing arts access to all. One way the WYO accomplishes this is by offering free or discounted tickets to disadvantaged individuals and groups such as the Wyoming Girls School, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Volunteers of America, and the Sheridan VA Medical Center. We also provide

outreach activities to community members of all ages and income levels through WYO PLAY, our education and engagement program. By identifying groups lacking proper connections to the arts, the WYO offers mini-performances and lecture demonstrations as artists are available.

A strong and dedicated volunteer base helps us welcome guests, support events, and extend our reach. The WYO is committed to accessibility—our facility is wheelchair accessible, offers assisted listening devices and companion seating, and our team is ready to respond to individual needs to ensure a safe, welcoming experience for all. We are currently in the process of forming an Access Advisory Committee made up of staff, board members, and community volunteers. This group will help us proactively identify and address barriers to access and will meet regularly to review facilities, policies, and programs to ensure the WYO remains inclusive and welcoming to everyone in our community.

## **Evaluation**

The WYO uses a variety of methods to evaluate and measure the impact of its programs and services. Audience feedback plays a key role—attendance provides baseline data, but we also listen carefully to individual responses shared in person, via email or social media, and in conversations with staff following performances. This helps us understand overall audience appreciation and community engagement.

For educational programming, we collect survey responses from both teachers and students. Questions focus on timing, content relevance, curriculum connections, communication, accessibility, and entertainment or learning value. These responses help us assess outcomes and document the program’s effectiveness. Participation numbers, survey data, and anecdotal feedback are all reviewed and considered.

Artist feedback is another important tool. We connect with artists following residencies or outreach events to learn more about their experiences with students and the community, and to evaluate what worked well and what could improve.

Finally, we work closely with local educators, who help select artists and reflect on the quality and impact of past programs. Their insights are invaluable in shaping future seasons. By combining attendance data, survey results, artist input, and community conversations, the WYO is able to track outcomes, document success, and continue evolving to meet community needs.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Support Narrative**

The WYO's 2025 Educational Series runs from September through May and includes eight events designed to engage and inspire students through live performance. These programs are offered to schools across Sheridan and Johnson Counties and include pre- and post-show learning materials to enhance the experience.

This season's Educational Series includes:

- Villalobos Brothers – This acclaimed trio blends Mexican folk, jazz, and classical music with high-energy storytelling and virtuosic performance. They will serve as the featured entertainment for the WYO's community-wide Day of the Dead celebration, which includes cultural displays, educational activities, and family-friendly programming produced by the WYO in partnership with local organizations.
- Wind in the Willows – A solo theatrical adaptation by Theatre Heroes (Austin, TX), known for inventive storytelling and multimedia design. Two free student matinee performance will be offered with materials to support classroom discussion.
- Valencia Baryton Project – A unique chamber ensemble focused on the rare baryton instrument. Their educational performance introduces students to classical music, instrument history, and the value of cultural preservation through music.
- Cirquetacular: Shimmer – A dazzling contemporary circus that blends acrobatics and dance into a family-friendly visual narrative. Students will be invited to a free matinee performance specifically tailored to school groups.
- Repertory Dance Theatre – One of the nation's most respected modern dance companies, RDT will offer a multi-day residency including workshops with local students, movement-based learning experiences, and a free student matinee performance.
- Janet's Planet – This high-energy, interactive science program makes STEM learning exciting and accessible for elementary students. Janet's performance will be offered as free student matinees, supported by teacher resources for classroom extension.
- Hare & Tortoise – Presented by Tutti Frutti Theatre Company (UK), this vibrant and imaginative retelling of the classic fable will include a free student matinee designed for early learners, combining movement, music, and visual storytelling along with a public performance for families.

- Cat's Glasses – A jazz ensemble from Denver, CO, that brings professional jazz performance and education into local schools. Their visit includes workshops introducing students to improvisation, jazz history, and musical collaboration.

These events are central to the WYO's commitment to equitable arts education and serve over 3,000 students annually. Artists selected for the Educational Series are experienced in youth engagement and education and bring high-quality, age-appropriate programming to our community. All are selected in consultation with local educators to ensure alignment with student interests and curriculum.

Requested project support funds will be used to offset artist fees, travel and lodging, production and technical costs, promotional and educational materials, and staff time required to coordinate school participation and in-school engagement. The Educational Series is a key part of WYO's mission to inspire, educate and entertain and directly relates to initiatives 2 (Broaden our marketing efforts to increase local and regional engagement with the WYO) and 3 (Cultivate and retain new patrons, participants, volunteers and donors).

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

We are currently planning a multi-day residency with Repertory Dance Theatre (RDT) for February 2026 and are working closely with the company to shape a meaningful and engaging experience for our community. While the final schedule is still being developed, our goal is to create a residency that has broad reach and long-lasting impact—engaging students, local dancers, educators, older adults, and the general public through both performance and participation.

RDT is a nationally respected modern dance company based in Salt Lake City, known not only for its high-caliber performances but also for its commitment to dance education and community engagement. Their teaching artists are experienced in working with a wide range of age groups and abilities, and their residencies are designed to promote creativity, collaboration, and accessibility.

In Sheridan, the residency will include movement-based workshops with local dance students in collaboration with area studios or schools. The company will also work with community partners such as The HUB on Smith, offering creative movement sessions tailored to older adults or those new to dance. These outreach efforts are key to expanding arts learning beyond traditional settings and reaching individuals who may not otherwise have access to professional dance experiences.

The residency will include a free student matinee performance for area schools and a ticketed public performance at the WYO Theater. Both performances will showcase RDT's engaging repertory and may include opportunities for post-show discussion or Q&A. Educational materials or study guides may also be made available for school groups to help contextualize the work and support deeper engagement.

A sample residency schedule may look like this:

February 4, 2026

- Load-in and technical rehearsal
- Workshop/masterclass with a local dance school or student group

February 5, 2026

- Masterclass with Sheridan College Theatre & Dance Students
- Free student matinee performance at the WYO Theater

February 6, 2026

- Community workshop (e.g., with The HUB on Smith)
- Public performance at the WYO Theater

While the details are still being worked out, we're committed to ensuring the residency reflects the needs and interests of the Sheridan community. With input from RDT and local partners, we'll shape a rich and accessible experience that connects people of all ages with professional dance, creative learning, and meaningful community interaction.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The WYO's Arts Learning goals for this residency are centered on deepening access, engagement, and impact through high-quality, in-person arts experiences. These goals guide our planning and programming and are designed to serve students, educators, and the broader community through inclusive and participatory learning opportunities. Our specific Arts Learning goals are as follows:

1. Increase access to live, professional arts experiences for students and youth

We aim to provide free or low-cost opportunities for students to experience professional performing arts in a live setting. This includes a free student matinee with Repertory Dance Theatre (RDT) during their February 2026 residency. By eliminating cost barriers and offering daytime performances, we hope to serve schools across Sheridan and Johnson Counties and ensure equitable access for rural and underserved students.

How this goal was identified: Teachers and administrators have expressed appreciation for the opportunity to bring students to live performances during the school day, especially when cost and logistics are minimized. Feedback over time has shown that free student matinees are one of the most effective ways to ensure broad participation and exposure to the arts.

## 2. Foster creative self-expression and physical engagement through movement-based workshops

The RDT residency will include interactive workshops with local dance students and broader community groups. These sessions are designed to promote confidence, creativity, and body awareness in participants. A key goal is to provide learning environments that are hands-on, collaborative, and accessible to a wide range of experience levels.

How this goal was identified: This reflects feedback from local dance instructors and educators who want students to engage with professionals beyond passive observation. Community partners, including The HUB on Smith, have also expressed interest in programming that supports physical wellness, creativity, and intergenerational connection.

## 3. Support lifelong learning through community-based arts engagement

By offering community workshops and outreach experiences during the residency, the WYO seeks to provide meaningful arts learning for older adults and nontraditional learners. These sessions, such as those planned with The HUB on Smith, are designed to be inclusive, low-pressure, and socially enriching.

How this goal was identified: This goal stems from conversations with service organizations and community groups who seek arts engagement opportunities for older adults and those who may not typically attend evening performances. In past years, we've seen strong interest and positive outcomes from these types of intergenerational and nontraditional learning opportunities particularly from our Creative Aging programming.

## 4. Strengthen partnerships with educators, schools, and community organizations

Our final goal is to continue developing meaningful partnerships that help shape and support our Arts Learning programming. From selecting artists to coordinating matinees and outreach events, these partnerships ensure that programming is relevant and responsive to the needs of the people we serve.

How this goal was identified: We work in ongoing collaboration with school district staff, teachers, studio owners, and nonprofit partners who help inform what types of programming are most needed and effective. Their input is essential in helping us evaluate past efforts and improve future offerings.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Based in Salt Lake City, Repertory Dance Theater (RDT) is one of the nation's most respected modern dance companies, with over 50 years of experience in both professional performance and arts education. Their artists are not only accomplished performers but also highly trained teaching artists with a strong background in classroom and community engagement.

The WYO has a long-standing relationship with RDT, having hosted them multiple times over the years for public performances, student matinees, and outreach events. Their ability to adapt workshops for all ages and experience levels makes them a particularly strong fit for our region, where learners range from elementary students to seniors.

Locally, the WYO is collaborating with:

Donna Spielman, owner and director of Donna's Dance Academy, who has over 30 years of teaching experience. She is a certified member of Dance Masters of America and is well known for her dedication to technique, performance training, and developing young dancers in the region.

Christina Davey, owner and director of Pieknik's School of Dance, brings more than 25 years of experience in ballet, jazz, and contemporary dance. Christina is recognized for her work in choreographing high-quality student productions and fostering a strong studio community.

Stephanie Koltiska, Assistant Professor of Dance at Sheridan College, holds an MFA in Dance and has an extensive background in both professional performance and higher education. In addition to teaching composition, technique, and dance history, she frequently facilitates artist residencies and outreach programming for college students and community members.

These local partners were selected based on their ongoing commitment to arts education, their deep roots in the Sheridan dance community, and their willingness to collaborate with touring artists. Each brings a unique perspective and helps ensure that the residency is welcoming, well-organized, and impactful for a broad range of participants.

Together with RDT, this team will help shape a residency that brings professional dance education and performance to life in our community—connecting learners of all ages to the power of movement, creativity, and collaboration.

### **Budget Narrative**

The WYO's funding comes from a combination of earned income (ticket sales, rentals, and concessions) and contributed income from individual donors, businesses, foundations, and grants. We rely on partners like the Scott Foundation, Robbins Dermatology, and the Thickman Family Foundation for consistent annual support, particularly for our Educational Series. In-kind contributions from businesses such as Alphagraphics and the Best Western Sheridan Center help reduce costs by providing printing, lodging, and other services for visiting artists. Our budget



prioritizes program-related expenses—artist fees, production, marketing, and student matinees—alongside essential operational costs like staffing and utilities. This support ensures we can deliver high-quality, accessible arts education experiences throughout the year.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING ALL STATE MARCHING BAND

WWWASMB.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Operations & Recruitment

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The mission of the Wyoming All-State Marching Band is to afford high school band members from around the state an opportunity to have a collaborative marching band experience. We hope to foster an environment that encourages self-discipline, develops leadership skills, and enhances self-esteem through the art of music performance.

Our main goal is to allow students to collaborate with both students and directors from other communities in Wyoming in the music-making environment. Our vision is to allow the collaboration to create a large and advanced marching band ensemble capable of performing challenging music. Many of the smaller and more rural school communities in Wyoming have wonderful band programs that lack the size and experience to perform marching band music. Through this cross-community collaboration, these students will be able to perform music in an ensemble setting that was, before, unachievable for them.

Our strategic goal is to amass a band of between 150-300 students consisting of members from a minimum of 12 Wyoming communities. These students would be asked to collaborate throughout the summer months of July and August, performing a minimum of 3 community parades across Wyoming.

### **Community**

The current roster of students in the band reaches over 20 different school communities and we perform in 4 to 6 different Wyoming communities each summer.

The goals of the WASMB. is to provide a true marching band experience for students in ALL our Wyoming communities. Creating this collaborative band environment meant that even if a student came from one of our rural school communities with small band programs, these students could experience the thrill of performing band music with appropriate instrumentation, ability, and nuance. Meanwhile, larger school communities have students striving for leadership roles and enrichment opportunities.

One example of how we support underserved students is by offering scholarships for students with income-related difficulties. This year we plan to award ten \$1,000 scholarships to students in need. In many of these cases, we reach out to traditionally low-income communities and specifically low-income rural communities. We have identified that this is our lowest participating demographic and the scholarship program is our attempt to fill that gap.

We are also very proud that when our band performs in these communities we perform for children, veterans, politicians, businesses, and nearly every demographic a community can provide. We have had many students with medical needs, physical disabilities, and income challenges who have participated in the band performances. Some examples of accommodations include developing plans for pushing students in wheelchairs through the parade route and developing a specialized harness to hold brass instruments for students with disabilities. Students are asked for accommodation requests as part of their registration and it is the goal of WASMB to meet all accommodation requests.

### **Evaluation**

Our greatest method of evaluation is a satisfaction survey sent to both parents and students of the ensemble. Each year we send an extensive satisfaction survey home to students and parents asking for input on multiple levels of evaluation including the level of support given to students, musical growth shown by students, communication efficiency, and general satisfaction. We also send out satisfaction surveys to the high school band directors in the State of Wyoming. We send out these surveys to all the band directors regardless of whether they had students in the ensemble or not and we classify this information based on the school involvement level. Finally, we do a group demographic analysis to evaluate how diversified our clientele remains. We strive to reach different communities as well as different demographics within those communities.

One example of how we use this information is part assignment. We make sure this survey includes information about ability-based part assignments. We have kept a close eye on how students feel like they are performing on their part, and if we see that the students on the 1st part (i.e. 1st trumpet) are feeling unsuccessful then we need to evaluate if we are not recruiting/retaining high-level musicians or are we failing to meet the needs of our highest level musicians. The team of directors meets after the season is over and evaluates data like this to determine where areas of improvement needed.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The band operates on a two-year performance cycle. Year one is the development phase and involves the application for the event itself, band recruitment and training, band registration, and securing of equipment and facilities. Year two of the two-year performance cycle involves the performance summer with performances around the state and one major national performance. This operating budget only reflects year one as that is the year under this grant timeframe.

The main cost of operations centers around the organization's annual operations fund. This includes the annual cost of maintaining our equipment, office supplies, technology subscriptions, executive technology and phone allowances, and executive stipend.

#### Marketing - \$2,500

The marketing budget includes classroom advertisement posters, information pamphlets for students and parents, mailings to all Wyoming secondary band teachers, and letters and communication for direct mail to families. These funds are necessary to support the mission of the WASMB, which is to put together a band & reach students across the state. These posters, pamphlets, and flyers help us spread the word and leave parents with information about the band. Doing so helps us recruit enough members to make the program viable.

#### Insurance - \$2,000

Insurance includes an annual policy for catastrophic event insurance, insurance on band-owned musical equipment, event insurance, liability insurance, and auto insurance on the band-owned equipment trailer.

#### Technology - \$4,000

The technology budget includes funds for annual web-based technology platform subscriptions such as Google, Formsite, Dropbox, Quickbooks, Finale, ChatGPT, Hostgator for website and email, as well as smaller subscriptions for apps and music software. One of the main goals of the WASMB is to have members from as many schools across Wyoming as possible. Managing the WASMB program has a very difficult set of circumstances. Having a band made up of students from all across the state means collecting information, data, sharing resources, and communicating all has to be done through technology. Virtual meetings, email, sharing platforms, digital payments, and other software help our executive director better streamline this information to help make managing the band more successful.

#### Office Equipment & Postage - \$2,500

The office supply budget includes funds for basic office materials, printer ink, printer lease, paper, and occasional replacement of office equipment.

#### Miscellaneous Expenditures - \$1,000

The category is used for those items we have not thought to budget for yet. This includes prizes and awards for staff, parent volunteers, and students.

#### Computer & Phone Allowance - \$2,000

This fee is paid to the Executive Director for the use of a phone and computer (not owned by WASMB) for band business.

Executive Salary - \$10,000

Funds are set aside to pay the WASMB Executive for coordinating all band business. The importance of having a paid executive to manage the organization can not be understated. The team of directors that teach the WASMB are all volunteers. Asking these volunteers to give us any more of their time would be a very big ask. Asking one paid executive to do the bulk of the heavy lifting for the organization frees up responsibility from the rest of the team. This means all band correspondence, financial matters, and logistics become the workload of this one executive.

Total = \$24,000

### **Project Support Narrative**

The key aspect of the project support will focus on school visits. These school visits cover many different aspects of the project logistics. The first round of visits includes recruiting and vetting new members. During this process students are informed about what the organization is about and what being a band member would look like. Then we work with the directors to evaluate the band and its members. As often as we are able, these visits also include parent meetings to answer questions about band travel and logistics.

These visits come at a great financial cost to our organization and to our executive director. Time, fuel, lodging, and meals are all part of the cost of business. We do our best to combine many schools together on these trips, but the funds have not allowed us the opportunity to get to as many schools as we would like to. We know these meetings make a huge difference in the students who end up enrolling in the program. Logistically, we have had to make the choice to visit our largest band programs first and foremost in the recruitment process. We can see a direct correlation between the schools we visit and the enrollment in the program. Logically, visiting more schools and more diversified programs will lead to a larger and more representative band.

The marketing material and postage are a big part of the program recruitment phase as well. In the schools where we only visit with students and are unable to meet with the parents, having material for those students to hand to the parents is very helpful. This material must look good and contain all the information parents need to help decide on participation.

Finally, once the band has been selected, funding training sessions prior to the full training camp is very important to the success of the WASMB. Doing leadership training as well as working with the elite sections of the band

including drumline and color guard are mission critical events. These events mean more travel costs and logistics. Again, all of this work becomes the sole work of the WASMB executive director.

We will have a staff of 7 directors helping teach students during the performance tour. Each director brings years of musical and educational experience to the team. Our staff includes:

Brent Rose - Director of Bands at Kelly Walsh High School in Casper (24 years experience in education)

Aric Hageman - Director of Bands at East High School in Cheyenne (21 years of experience in education)

Aemalemalo Seui - Director of Bands at East High School in Cheyenne (23 years of experience in education)

Steve Schofield - Director of Bands at Thunder Basin High School in Gillette (26 years of experience in education)

Gino Hernandez - Director of Bands at South High School in Cheyenne (26 years of experience in education)

Michelle Ottoes - Librarian and Color Guard coach in Cheyenne (31 years of experience in education)

Jenny Ash - Staff Nurse - Registered Nurse at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Wyoming All-State Marching Band (WASMB) provides students with advanced training in instrumental music performance and the marching arts through hands-on instruction from experienced staff. During this grant cycle, WASMB will conduct statewide school visits to evaluate, train, and recruit student musicians, ensuring accessibility to students across Wyoming.

#### **Program Components & Budget**

##### **1. Band Equipment & Supplies – \$5,000**

Maintenance and upkeep of essential equipment, including drum heads, drumsticks, mallets, color guard silk flags, sound equipment, and miscellaneous supplies necessary for student use and performance preparation.

##### **2. Trailer Maintenance – \$1,000**

The band-owned trailer is a vital asset for transporting instruments and equipment to school events. Funds will support routine maintenance, bearing checks, tire replacement, and storage upkeep to ensure safe and reliable transportation.

### 3. Staff Travel & Expenses – \$10,000

To recruit, retain, and train band members, the staff will travel to over a dozen schools across Wyoming, engaging with students and educators. This funding supports mileage reimbursement, fuel costs, lodging, and meals necessary for outreach efforts.

### Educational Goals & Standards Alignment

The program is designed to enhance students' musicianship, technical precision, and performance skills through structured individual and group instruction. Training will be divided into two key areas: Music and Visual Performance.

- **Music Training:** Students will receive sheet music, engage in rehearsal, revision, and performance, and refine their musicianship through independent practice and ensemble collaboration.
- **Marching Techniques:** Instruction includes marching fundamentals, posture, movement coordination, and memorization techniques specific to the marching arts.
- **Specialized Instruction:** Students will be grouped into Woodwinds, Brass, Percussion, Color Guard, and Leadership, each guided by a dedicated director with expertise in that area.
- **Comprehensive Learning Experience:** Beyond music, students will participate in leadership development, physical endurance training, and wellness education to foster both artistic and personal growth.

The program directly aligns with Wyoming Performing Arts Standard #1 – Creative Expression Through Production, empowering students to create, refine, and perform in the arts. Through multiple live performances throughout the summer, students will apply their learning in real-world performance settings, strengthening both their individual artistry and ensemble collaboration.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### Arts Learning Goals & Identification Process

One of the primary goals of the Wyoming All-State Marching Band (WASMB) is to support and enhance high school band programs across Wyoming by aligning our Arts Learning goals with the Wyoming Performing Arts Standards. Specifically, our instruction is centered around Wyoming Performing Arts Standard 1 – Creative Expression Through Production, focusing on two key benchmarks:

- Benchmark FPA11.1.M.1 – Students refine musicianship through individual practice, rehearsal, revision, and performance.
- Benchmark FPA11.1.M.2 – Students perform independently and collaboratively, refining musicianship and technical accuracy across a varied repertoire.

## Arts Learning Goals

### 1. Musicianship & Technical Proficiency

Students will refine their tone quality, articulation, technique, and ensemble balance through structured rehearsals and performance opportunities. As all students will have prior instrumental experience before joining WASMB, our focus will be on advancing their musicianship to a higher level suitable for marching performance. These skills will be evaluated at the school visits and will be addressed, taught, and continually evaluated at the training sessions, training camp, and during rehearsals throughout the program process.

### 2. Marching Performance & Visual Acuity

For students with marching band experience: We aim to expand their visual performance skills, including posture, instrument carriage, precision marching techniques, and the ability to execute synchronized movements while playing memorized music. For students from schools without marching programs: The goal is to build foundational skills from the ground up, introducing concepts such as basic marching technique, instrument carriage, playing while moving, and endurance for long parade performances. These skills will be addressed specifically at the summer training camp and during all summer rehearsals as part of the parade performances.

### 3. Accessibility & Individualized Support

We strive to meet the needs of all students, including those facing hardships or disabilities. Accommodations and modifications will be made to ensure that every student can fully participate and improve their skills, tailoring our approach to their individual needs. These needs will be identified as part of the application process and will be addressed at the school visits. These issues will need constant attention at all camps, training, school visits, and performances.

## Assessment & Evaluation

To measure student progress, we will implement a combination of:

- Formative Assessments: Ongoing evaluations during ensemble rehearsals and sectional breakout sessions to provide immediate feedback and track individual and group improvement.



- **Summative Assessments:** Performance-based evaluations conducted during parade performances, where students demonstrate their acquired skills in a real-world setting.
- **Reflective Group Discussions & Evaluations:** Post-performance reviews will allow students and staff to analyze progress, identify areas for improvement, and set goals for continued development.

By integrating these learning goals, assessments, and individualized support strategies, WASMB ensures that students receive a high-quality arts education experience that aligns with statewide standards and supports the growth of marching arts across Wyoming.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Brent Rose is currently the Director of Bands at Kelly Walsh High School in Casper and has 24 years of experience in education overall. Brent will be asked to oversee the overall music performance of the ensemble. Brent will act as musical director and conductor of large ensemble rehearsals. Brent was chosen based on his history of outstanding performances by the school groups he conducts in Casper and Buffalo.

Aric Hageman is the Co-Director of Bands at East High School in Cheyenne and has 21 years of experience in education. Aric will be asked to be the visual coordinator of the program and will oversee the marching performance aspects of the ensemble. Aric was chosen based on his years of experience leading marching bands and has been on the instructional staff for the WASMB for 6 previous tours.

Aemalemalo Seui is also the Co-Director of Bands at East High School in Cheyenne and has 23 years of experience in education. Aemalemalo will be the director of brass music and will oversee the entire brass section of the band. Ae was chosen based on years of experience, quality of work with high school band students, and many years of experience marching in the DCI circuit with the Casper Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps.

Steve Schofield is the Director of Bands at Thunder Basin High School in Gillette and has 26 years of experience in education. Steve will be the visual teaching staff members and will lead the band in daily marching fundamentals rehearsal. Steve was selected based on years of experience and comes highly recommended as an educator and specialist in the area of marching arts.

Gino Hernandez is the Director of Bands at South High School in Cheyenne and has 26 years of experience in education. Gino will be our woodwind section director and will oversee all the woodwind students in the band. Gino was asked to join the staff based on his proficiency as an educator and as a musician. Gino is on demand in the front range as one of the finest jazz saxophonists in the area.

Michelle Ottoes is a Librarian and Color Guard coach in Cheyenne and has 30+ years of experience in education. Michelle will teach our visual color guard members in sectional, rehearsal, and performance. Michelle was chosen for the staff based on her many years of experience performing and teaching with the Casper

Troopers Drum & Bugle Corp.

We maintain a staff nurse to travel with the band at all time. Jenny Ash is a veteran nurse at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center. She has had experience in the band world as a musician and parent. Jenny travels to all major band events to deal with physical, medical, and mental health issues.

### **Budget Narrative**

The WASMB is funded mostly by student participation fees. During the two-year performance cycle, we charge the students a participation fee that we budget to fund the band over a two-year period.

The majority of our in-kind donations come from Admiral Beverage (Worland) and Arrow Moving and Storage (Cheyenne). These organizations help us store and move our equipment on an annual basis.

Student participation fees will be allocated to cover the majority of event costs including uniform, student travel, and training camp costs.

In an attempt to secure additional funding sources in order to create a sustainable financial future, we are applying for 3 additional grants and working with local music businesses across Wyoming on potential financial partnerships.

Project Support funds would be used for the operating expenses of the organization while the Arts Learning funds would be used to defer costs for the school visits where we will train & evaluate the incoming band members.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING ARTS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

WYADI.ORG/

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Seminars for emerging artists and organizations

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission is: We empower artists to embrace their creativity, define their futures and change the world through the power of art.

Our goals are:

--Empower artists to take the next leap forward through information and education

--Empower small cultural organizations to become more professional through information and education

--Create connections wherever possible: between artists, between organizations, between artists and organizations

### Community

Our organization is very new, but we envision our audience as artists who are emerging: this could be young artists, or artists who are embracing their creativity later in life and looking to move into the world with their art. Another audience we look to attract are small organizations which are new, or perhaps have had significant turnover in their board/staff, who are looking for information and support as they determine their way in the world. We seek to serve Wyoming first. We are based in Star Valley, and have been actively involved in outreach in the Valley. Our goal is to slowly spread out until we can serve the western part of the state, and eventually, the entire state. However, our first project will be open to and advertised across the state.

We will address accommodations on an as needed basis. Offering programs via zoom reduces many barriers, but can create others.

### Evaluation

We plan to evaluate in the following ways:

1) we will ask our presenters for feedback and suggestions

- 2) we will gather data from seminar participants before beginning to gauge needs, knowledge, and interests
- 3) we will gather data again at the end of the seminar gauge changes, and for their recommendations
- 4) we will reach out again after a year to ask how the seminar impacted them, and what their recommendations for future changes might be

We will do this primarily through online survey although we also intend to talk in informally with all participants and offer a lot of opportunities for feedback.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

We are a brand new organization with some experienced people involved. We came together because we see a need for an arts service organization which provides basic information and support to emerging artists or organizations. This can also include people who are new to the world of being a non-profit board member, or organizations which are looking to take the next leap forward. Our board is currently 4 people plus our director, and three of us have direct experience working with artists who are struggling with the business of being artists, and whose lack of knowledge/skills are holding them back. To that end, we look to offer:

--educational programming that provides basic information to new artists and new organizations

--create connections between artists and the opportunities available to them

--connect organizations with the supports available to them

We are starting in Star Valley, with the goal of eventually being statewide.

Our expenses currently include: executive director stipend, zoom account, domain and website startup costs, advertising, presenter stipends, and facilitator stipends.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Our first project is two seminars, which will be held on zoom and offered statewide. Designed and developed by Jennifer Wilkins, a circus artist who currently runs Star Valley Circus and who has practiced as a artist in residence, and Camellia El-Antably, a gallery owner with experience working in arts administration, these seminars will offer practical advice and information that both of us learned over our years of practicing as an artist and organization/business owner. In addition, we intend to make use of the many connections we, and our other board members, have with experts in various areas to serve as guest speakers. We have already begun talking to the Community Foundation and the Non-Profit Network, both of whom are enthusiastic about working with us. Each week comes with an assignment that will take the information used to turn it into immediately useful plans of action for either artists or organizations. We plan to hold both between January and April 2026; each week will be a 2 hour seminar with optional time before and after to ask questions and get to know each other. Recordings of each session will be available for use at a later time. Participants will be able to sign up for one, some or all the sessions as seems appropriate to them. Please find below an outline of each seminar planned. Seminars will be publicized to the mailing list we are developing of non-profits and artists in Star Valley, and through the WY Arts Council newsletters, Studio Wyoming on Facebook (for visual artists), and other places which reach artists and small organizations.

## 8-Week Seminar

### Small Arts Organizations (For-Profit & Nonprofit)

Equip small arts organizations with the tools to build, grow, and sustain their efforts while addressing challenges unique to Wyoming's arts and cultural landscape.

Week 1: The Role of Arts Organizations in Wyoming

Week 2: Strategic Planning for the Future

Week 3: Financial Literacy and Budgeting for Arts Organizations

Week 4: Fundraising and Sponsorships

Week 5: Grants and Proposal Writing

Week 6: Professionalism and Organizational Branding

Week 7: Marketing and Advertising

Week 8: Phases and Organizational Development

### Additional Features

Guest speakers: Local arts leaders and representatives from the Wyoming Arts Council.

Resource toolkit: Templates for proposals, budgets, and marketing plans.

Networking opportunities: Sessions with other small organizations to build partnerships.

## 6-Week Seminar

### Transitioning into a Professional Role as an Individual Artist

This course is designed to help individual artists step into a professional role by introducing them to essential organizations, skills, and strategies needed to navigate the business side of art effectively.

Week 1: Introduction to Key Resources and Organizations

Week 2: Budgeting and Financial Literacy

Week 3: Fundraising and Proposals

Week 4: Professionalism and Work Etiquette

Week 5: Portfolios and Marketing

Week 6: Networking and Building Professional Relationships

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

We are a new organization just figuring out our sources of funding. We have applied for grants from the Wyoming Community Foundation and Silver Star Communications. We will also charge some tuition to participants. We intend to become a membership organization, and all of our board members have joined at this time. Currently we run on a shoestring with a lot of donated goods and services.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING BAROQUE

[WWW.WYOMINGBAROQUE.ORG](http://WWW.WYOMINGBAROQUE.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Wyoming Baroque Statewide Tour: All About Baroque Bass

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Mission: Wyoming Baroque promotes, performs, and advocates for music and music education in Wyoming and beyond, with particular attention to historically informed performance practice.

Strategic Goals: Wyoming Baroque is dedicated to expanding historically informed performance (HIP) in Wyoming and beyond through high-quality concerts, education, and outreach. As the state's only professional early music ensemble, we strive to make Baroque music accessible to diverse audiences while fostering deeper engagement with its performance traditions.

Expanding access to arts programming in underserved communities is a key priority. Many Wyomingites have limited exposure to live classical music, and we work to bridge this gap. We engage with schools, retirement homes, soup kitchens, and community centers to reach audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

Our educational outreach focuses on arts enrichment for public secondary and post-secondary students statewide. We introduce young musicians to HIP principles through workshops, masterclasses, and school visits, broadening their artistic perspectives and technical understanding. We aim to inspire students to explore historical performance practices while deepening their appreciation for Baroque music.

We also seek to encourage engagement with national and international standards of musical expression, particularly within HIP. Our work with Early Music America and recent national recognition demonstrates our commitment to aligning with global best practices.

Central to our artistic mission is the understanding and application of rhetorical techniques that enhance musical expression. By emphasizing these elements in both performance and education, we equip young musicians with tools to interpret Baroque repertoire authentically and expressively.

Through these initiatives, Wyoming Baroque continues to promote, perform, and advocate for early music while enriching Wyoming's cultural landscape.

## **Community**

Wyoming Baroque (WYB) serves communities across Wyoming, a state with a largely rural population, limited access to professional arts organizations, and diverse economic and cultural backgrounds. WYB collaborates with schools, libraries, religious institutions, soup kitchens, and community centers to assess local needs. With educators and community leaders, we identify arts participation barriers and develop inclusive programming. Key partners for 2025/26 include the Lunch Together Soup Kitchen (housed at the First Congregational Church in Sheridan, WY), Johnson County Library, Sheridan HS, Neltje Center, Campbell County HS, Casper Chamber Music Society, Johnson County Library, and the University of Wyoming.

WYB prioritizes accessibility by offering free concerts and education/outreach events. Ticketed performances include discounts for seniors, veterans, and students. We engage underserved communities by performing in nontraditional spaces such as soup kitchens and libraries, making early music available to audiences who might not otherwise have access. Additionally, WYB presents repertoire by 18th-century composers from underrepresented communities, including recent music performances by Occramar Mareycoo and selections from the Codex Trujillo del Perú. This season, our programming includes 18th-century vocal pieces in multiple languages, including German and Haitian Creole.

WYB provides enhanced audio devices at our ADA-compliant University of Wyoming venue and offers live-streaming options for those unable to attend in person. To improve accessibility efforts, we seek audience feedback via an online survey available in English and Spanish. WYB honors accommodation requests in consultation with concert presenters to ensure full participation in our programs.

## **Evaluation**

Wyoming Baroque (WYB) evaluates and measures the impact of our programs and services in our community in the following mission-driven ways:

- Meet with institutional partners and key stakeholders after each event to ensure we meet expectations and solicit feedback about improvement. We analyze attendance, ticket sales, and community engagement data to track trends over time and identify areas for growth and additional opportunities to fulfill our mission.
- Ask institutional partners and audience members to complete a survey about their experiences on Survey Monkey. The survey is available in English and Spanish.



- WYB members meet after all public events to exchange ideas on what went well and explore ideas for improvement.

- Solicit feedback from colleagues in the field about our programs when sharing videos and recordings.

- Promote and monitor engagement with social media sites, including YouTube.

- Meet with community arts leaders to plan arts/outreach events, including those involved with secondary education. We also explore new venues that help us fulfill our mission. This year, we will perform at Lunch Together, a soup kitchen offering free meals at First Congregational Church in downtown Sheridan.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

Wyoming Baroque is a lean organization that does not incur operating costs related to rent, mortgage, utilities, or supplies. One way we keep our costs down is by offering only digital programs for our concerts, which can be accessed via a QR code at our performances. We also distribute digital copies of sheet music to our performers, who read from iPads.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Wyoming Baroque (WYB) seeks project support for a regional tour across Wyoming featuring formal concerts, educational programs, and community outreach in Sheridan, Buffalo, Gillette, Laramie, Banner, Casper, and Cheyenne. Performances and events will take place in K-12 public schools, higher education institutions, community centers, museums, libraries, and a soup kitchen, strengthening WYB's longstanding partnerships with cultural institutions throughout the state.

As Wyoming's only professional early music ensemble, WYB is a lean organization with a strong regional presence.

All requested funding will directly support artist compensation and travel expenses, ensuring the successful presentation of concerts and outreach events. WYB specializes in historically informed performance (HIP), which is part of an international movement dedicated to authentic performance practices. The ensemble focuses on Baroque-era repertoire (1600–1750), performing on period instruments (or modern replicas) using baroque bows, gut strings, and historical tuning systems.

Planned Tour Events:

- Mon., 5/11/26 – Education & Outreach at Campbell County HS & Thunder Basin HS (Gillette, WY)
- Tue., 5/12/26 – Afternoon Concert at Lunch Together Soup Kitchen, Evening Concert at Johnson Co. Library (Sheridan, WY and Buffalo, WY) \*
- Wed., 5/13/26 – Neltje Center residency and workshop; Evening Concert at Neltje Center (Banner, WY) \*
- Thu., 5/14/26 – Education & Outreach at Kelly Walsh HS & Natrona HS (Casper, WY)
- Fri., 5/15/26 – Education & Outreach at Laramie HS (Laramie, WY)
- Sat., 5/16/26 – Concert at the University of Wyoming (Laramie, WY)
- Sun., 5/17/26 – Concert with Casper Chamber Music Society (Casper, WY)
- Mon., 5/18/26 – Education & Outreach at Central HS & East HS (Cheyenne, WY)

\* Part of a proposed mini-residency at the Neltje Center in Banner, WY

#### Project Personnel:

Dr. Mark Elliot Bergman; Director, Baroque Double Bass and American Bass Viol

- + Professor & Artist in Residence, Augsburg University
- + Instructor of Double Bass, University of Wyoming
- + Music Degrees: Eastman School of Music, Yale University, Manhattan School of Music
- + Will perform on the double bass and American Bass Viol

Dr. Beth Vanderborgh; Baroque Cello and Viola da Gamba

- + Professor of Cello, University of Wyoming
- + Principal Cellist, Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra
- + Music Degrees: Manhattan School of Music, Eastman School of Music, University of Maryland
- + Will perform on the cello and viola da gamba

Dr. Alice M. Chuaqui Baldwin; Harpsichord

- + Professor of Music History & Keyboard, University of Wyoming
- + Doctorate in Harpsichord, Indiana University
- + Founder & Director, La Forza delle Stelle
- + Will perform on the harpsichord

This tour will broaden access to live early music performances, engage students and communities in historically informed performance practices, and strengthen WYB's leadership role in arts education and outreach across Wyoming.

This tour's repertoire includes music by Italian composers Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier (also known as Giovaninno del Violone), Antonio Vivaldi, and Giovanni Battista Cirri. The program explores the role of bass instruments in the baroque era and includes performances on the double bass, cello, American bass viol, and viola da gamba.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Wyoming Baroque (WYB) seeks Arts Learning support to fund a series of educational and outreach events across Wyoming as part of its regional tour in the spring of 2026. These events aim to deepen audiences' understanding of Baroque music and provide students with hands-on coaching in historically informed performance (HIP) practices, with a special emphasis on the role of rhetoric in music.

WYB's outreach programs engage audiences by illustrating how 18th-century composers used musical techniques to convey ideas and emotions. Members of WYB explain and demonstrate key compositional elements, such as word painting, storytelling, and rhetorical emphasis, alongside historical performance techniques. These include the distinct playing styles and expressive tools used by Baroque musicians, many of which differ significantly from modern approaches.

For example, string instruments of the 18th century—such as the violin, viola, cello, and double bass—feature different construction elements compared to their modern counterparts. They are strung with natural gut strings and played with period-specific bows while omitting modern additions like endpins, chin rests, shoulder rests, and tuning gears. These historical design choices allowed musicians to achieve a level of expressivity that was integral to the music of their time. WYB's educational programs illuminate how these elements combine to bring a composer's intent to life.

In addition to performances and demonstrations, WYB provides hands-on coaching to student ensembles, helping them apply HIP techniques to modern instruments. Planned Arts Learning events include:

Mon., 5/11/26 – Education & Outreach at Campbell County HS & Thunder Basin HS (Gillette, WY)

Wed., 5/13/26 – Neltje Center residency and workshop to include student from Sheridan HS (Banner, WY)

Thu., 5/14/26 – Education & Outreach at Kelly Walsh HS & Natrona HS (Casper, WY)

Fri., 5/15/26 – Education & Outreach at Laramie HS (Laramie, WY)

Mon., 5/18/26 – Education & Outreach at Central HS & East HS (Cheyenne, WY)

For 2026, WYB's program, "All About the Baroque Bass," will highlight the crucial role of bass instruments in Baroque music. The program will showcase the expressive possibilities of historical bass instruments featuring works by Italian composers Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier (also known as Giovaninno del Violone), Antonio Vivaldi, and Giovanni Battista Cirri. Performances will include solo works for double bass, cello, American bass viol, and viola da gamba, accompanied by harpsichord and continuo.

WYB's educational outreach not only enriches students' understanding of Baroque music but also fosters an appreciation for the historical context and artistry behind HIP practices. Through these initiatives, WYB seeks to inspire the next generation of musicians and audiences with the enduring beauty and relevance of Baroque performance traditions.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Wyoming Baroque (WYB) integrates the most recent National Association for Music Education (NAfME) music literacy standards into educational and outreach programs. These standards emphasize "conceptual understanding in areas that reflect the actual processes in which musicians engage" and cultivate students' abilities in the three Artistic Processes: Creating, Performing, and Responding.

#### **Creating: Expressing Rhetorical Intent**

WYB helps student ensembles identify and articulate the rhetorical intent of their music. Understanding a piece's expressive purpose is central to historical performance practice. WYB guides students in developing conceptual and technical strategies, experimenting with phrasing, articulation, and bowing techniques that enhance musical storytelling. By emphasizing Baroque music's rhetorical elements—where every phrase carries meaning—WYB encourages students to move beyond technical execution to compelling interpretation.

#### **Performing: Bridging Technique and Historical Context**

WYB refines student performance techniques through technical adjustments and conceptual paradigms. For instance, when coaching 18th-century repertoire, WYB encourages string players to adjust their bow grip—holding the bow on the stick rather than at the frog—to replicate an 18th-century bow's balance and articulation. This simple shift expands expressive possibilities and fosters stylistic authenticity. By introducing historical techniques, WYB helps students bridge traditions with modern interpretations.

#### Responding: Enhancing Audience Engagement

WYB enriches audience engagement by providing listening guides that deepen appreciation of performed works. In a recent performance of Telemann's *Burlesque de Quixotte*, WYB highlighted key musical moments—Don Quixote's windmill battle, his sighs for Dulcinea, and Sancho Panza's braying donkey—before performing the full piece. These auditory "guideposts" help audiences follow the music's narrative, making historical compositions more accessible.

WYB also fosters responsiveness among student performers, particularly in high school orchestras. Young musicians learn to actively listen and react through their instruments, using expressive bowing, eye contact, and body movement to enhance ensemble cohesion. By responding to both music and fellow musicians, students develop greater sensitivity and musicality.

For details on NAFME standards, visit: <https://nafme.org/my-classroom/standards/>

#### WYB's Community Engagement: Bringing Historical Performance to Wider Audiences

WYB's mission extends beyond classrooms and concert halls, reaching diverse audiences in educational and community settings. Proposed performances at venues like the Lunch Together Soup Kitchen and Johnson County Library demonstrate WYB's commitment to historically informed performances in non-traditional spaces.

Outreach concerts include brief introductions to each piece, helping all audiences—regardless of musical background—connect with the music. Audience members are encouraged to ask questions, fostering an interactive dialogue. Period instruments, with their gut strings, baroque bows, and lower tunings, often spark curiosity and discussion, offering insight into the evolution of string playing and historical performance practices.

By combining historical education with live performance, WYB bridges past and present, offering students and communities a richer, more immersive musical experience.

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Wyoming Baroque (WYB) brings together artist-educators renowned for their expertise as performers, instructors, and advocates of historically informed performance. Each member boasts extensive regional, national, and international experience as a performing artist.

The following WYB members will be featured in the 2025/26 tour:

Dr. Mark Elliot Bergman

- + Founder and Director, Wyoming Baroque
- + Professor and Artist-in-Residence, Augsburg University
- + Instructor of Double Bass, University of Wyoming
- + Published scholar of early music, with peer-reviewed academic articles
- + Accomplished historically informed double bassist, with extensive performance credits including the Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado, Washington Bach Consort, and North Carolina Baroque Orchestra
- + Wyoming Arts Council Performing Arts Fellowship Recipient
- + Recognized for excellence in performance and innovative programming

Dr. Beth Vanderborgh

- + Professor of Cello, University of Wyoming
- + Principal Cellist, Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra
- + Degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, Eastman School of Music, and the University of Maryland
- + Extensive chamber music experience, including performances with the Helios Trio and the Stanislas Sextet
- + In-depth knowledge of Wyoming's performing arts landscape
- + Wyoming Arts Council Performing Arts Fellowship Recipient
- + Recognized for excellence in performance and contributions to the Wyoming arts community

Dr. Alice M. Chuaqui Baldwin

- + Professor of Music History & Keyboard, University of Wyoming
- + Doctorate in Harpsichord, Indiana University

- + Founder & Director, La Forza delle Stelle
- + Featured as a young artist in Early Music America (January 2019)
- + Continuo artist with the Oregon Bach Festival
- + Recognized for excellence in performance and expertise in 18th-century repertoire

Key Partners: WYB collaborates with regional partners to tailor programming that meets the specific needs of each organization.

Sheridan High School – Ryan Walker (Orchestra Teacher)

Thunder Basin High School – Kelleen Edwards (Orchestra Teacher)

Campbell County High School – Maclin Wiley (Orchestra Teacher)

Laramie High School – Jennifer Lyford

Johnson County Public Library – Lyndsey Belliveau (Director)

Lunch Together – Elizabeth Wigren (First Congregational Church, UCC)

WYB remains committed to fostering educational outreach, community engagement, and exceptional performances that bring the beauty of historically informed music to audiences across Wyoming.

### **Budget Narrative**

Wyoming Baroque (WYB) receives funding from partner organizations, presenters, and grants. In 2025, WYB received financial support for presentations in Sheridan, Casper, and Buffalo.

In 2023, Early Music America awarded WYB a grant to support education and outreach activities, and the Wyoming Arts Council assisted financially with purchasing a digital harpsichord. WYB's relationships with partner organizations are key to its success, and we plan to apply for funding from Early Music American during the 2025/26 grant year cycle. As an ensemble-in-residence at Sheridan College, WYB has a special connection to the Sheridan community.

For 2026, Wyoming Baroque is collaborating with presenters in Sheridan, Buffalo, Banner, Gillette, Casper, Cheyenne, and Laramie to present concerts and education/outreach events.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING FIDDLERS' ASSOCIATION DISTRICT #4

WYOMINGFIDDLERS.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Championships & Music Festival

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Wyoming Fiddlers' Association District #4's mission and primary goal for the past 48 years is to perpetuate the art of old-time fiddling and traditional music. We engage in a variety of activities to attain that goal.

Our overall strategic goal is to provide quality, affordable, educational, family-friendly acoustic entertainment in our community with emphasis on accessibility & inclusion for individuals with disabilities, diverse backgrounds & differing needs.

We hold monthly jam sessions which generally include musicians ages 8 to 85. The jam sessions provide a venue where musicians play individual and group tunes, learn new tunes and provide accompaniment for each other. We have members who teach fiddling to students of all ages and levels.

We entertain at local assisted living and nursing facilities on a regular basis and for other community and social events. Examples are entertaining the children at the Child Development Center and entertainment for a large fundraiser for the Central Wyoming Rescue Mission. We cherish our opportunities to reach out to underserved populations in our area.

For the past 35 years (minus 2 during COVID), WFA #4 has presented the Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Championships & Music Festival.

We enlist top-notch special artists to entertain, judge music competition and emcee. We draw extremely talented musicians from Wyoming and other states who compete for awards and titles. In 2024 musicians from 8 states participated in this event. Additional goals specific to the Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Championships & Music Festival are to present a quality event that is affordable, accessible and so enjoyable that those participating and attending leave saying they can't wait to come back next year. We partner with the Central Wyoming Fair & PRCA



Rodeo to provide a great venue that is fully accessible, including the stage, and musicians and spectators who arrive before 11:00 a.m. receive free parking and free admission.

## **Community**

Casper, the 2nd largest city in Wyoming with about 58,700 people, is centrally located in the state. In addition to locals, the Central Wyoming Fair & Rodeo and our event attract people from around the region, drawing about 15,000 attendees daily. The source of the following information numbers for Casper is the U.S. Census Bureau. Non-dominant communities identified are: 9750 residents over age 65; 6635 persons under 65 with a disability; 3560 veterans; and 6580 persons living in poverty. We have identified 8 nursing and/or assisted living facilities; 7 larger-scale organizations providing services to people with disabilities, several organizations providing services to people in poverty (food pantries, thrift stores, rescue mission, & self-help organizations), a large number of low-income and senior housing units and 2 veteran's organizations.

We have provided, and continue to provide, entertainment for a number of these entities. For the Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Championships & Music Festival, we will hand-deliver special written invitations to as many of these facilities and organizations as possible, encouraging their members, clients, residents and staff to attend.

Free admission & parking for those arriving prior to 11 a.m. will make our event affordable for everyone who wants to attend. The venue is completely handicap accessible. The seating for spectators is movable chairs which will accommodate requests from people in wheelchairs to sit wherever they wish. Restrooms and food service areas are also 100% accessible and designated handicap parking is provided. We will be able to accommodate musicians who have physical limitations to participate in the music competitions and entertainment as the stage is also handicap accessible.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluating the impact of our programs at nursing homes & assisted living facilities is based on discussions with the staff & residents, strongly indicating that we fill a void in their access to live music, especially the acoustic traditional music they truly enjoy. They clap and sing along with the music - indications that it is sparking memories.

We are often selected as background music for performances at other venues, where people can listen and visit at the same time. Amplified music often does not allow that. Evaluation is based on feedback from members of the groups for whom we perform and the fact that we are invited back.

The impact of the Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Championships & Music Festival on the community is based on the addition of a special event on the free stage at the Central Wyoming Fair, the people we bring to town who play, sleep and eat. Our event impacts our community by providing an opportunity for exposure to the arts in a family-friendly environment at a venue that is fully accessible to non-dominant communities especially for seniors, low-income individuals and people with disabilities.

Winners in each fiddle competition category are certified for the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest in Weiser, ID. Each time they appear on stage at the National competition, Casper is mentioned, their photos are displayed at the National Oldtime Fiddle Contest the year following their participation and then placed in the National Fiddlers Hall of Fame. This all encourages musicians and spectators to come to Casper to attend the next Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Championships & Music Festival, attend the Central Wyoming Fair & Rodeo, and to spend some vacation time in Casper. They often tell us they first heard of our event at National.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

AVERY HARTZLER grew up in a musical family. Her parents and sisters all sang and played at least one instrument. At age 6, Avery fell in love with classical music and the blues. She loved singing opera and music by artists like Nina Simone and Whitney Houston. At 10, she had her first public performance at Horizon Instructional Systems Gathering of Gifted Learners and at 11 she purchased her own violin and acoustic guitar. She still plays that same guitar to this day. In her teens, Avery began writing her own music and lyrics. She has performed with the Astoria Opry Company, the Company Master of Ceremonies and was hired by the Port of Call to host and coordinate their weekly open mic night. As a Karaoke host in a local bar, Avery found great pleasure in hearing the growth of budding vocalists in a casual environment. She loves helping others find their own voices and the confidence to share it. We are very excited to have Avery emcee and entertain as a special artist/emcee at the Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Championships & Music Festival.

GARY SHUH began playing his grandmother's violin in his school orchestra when he was 9. He developed a passion for fiddle music a couple of years later and began fiddle lessons at 11. Gary has won many state, regional and national championship fiddling titles including Washington State Junior and Young Adult; Northwest Regional Young Adult; 1993 National Young Adult, 2014 and 2023 National Adult, as well as many other titles at the Oregon State and other regional contests. His judging experience includes the National Oldtime Fiddle Contest, Northwest Regional, Montana State, Washington State, Oregon State, Rocky Mountain Regional, Western Open and many smaller events. Gary has taught fiddling over the past 30 years and currently performs with a variety of groups in the Northwest. He was fiddler for the Riders of the Rockin' B Ranch for 3 years and instructed at the Ludiker Fiddle Camp and other music camps. He performs in bluegrass and country genres and contributes to studio projects. He is currently president of the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest & Festival in Weiser, Idaho, promoting the tradition of old-time music. Gary is an Instructional Technology Specialist at Reynolds School District in Oregon. We are honored to have Gary as a great special artist/judge.

JULIE LIABRAATEN MILLER grew up in western Washington in the small town of Kelso. She started playing the fiddle at 8 years old. Among her teachers were fiddle greats Carol Ann Wheeler and Tony Ludiker. Julie now lives in Caldwell, Idaho with her husband Kenyon and 3 boys, Korbin, Weston and Jaxon. Julie graduated from Eastern Oregon University with a bachelor's degree in music. She is pursuing her master's degree in elementary education and middle school math and currently teaches kindergarten at Purple Sage Elementary. Julie loves playing music and basketball, working in the yard, and spending time with her family. Her boys keep her busy with soccer, basketball, golf and life! Among the events she has judged are the Western Open Fiddle Championships (Redding,

California) and the Western Idaho Fiddle Contest (Meridian, ID). She is the 2024 National Adult Fiddle Champion. Julie will be a great asset to our event as special artist/judge.

Our fourth special artist/judge will be chosen in June after the National Oldtime Fiddlers' competition when we plan to enlist a current national champion.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Our budget aligns well with the programs and services we provide. General operating costs: post office box rent, corporate filing fee & supplies are covered by income from donations & membership dues. In-kind donations include newsletter production, website cost, performance time & sound equipment care. Our scholarship is sponsored by Hornbuckle family.

Project costs: We partner with business & individual sponsors for competition awards. WAC grant money will be used for expenses for special artists, supplies & insurance. Non-member office staff & additional supplies are funded by contestant entry fees & cash reserves. In-kind donations include: partnering with the Fair for the venue, sound system, stage & gate fees; partnering with the hotel for discounted rates; donation of a camper to sequester judges; & setup & teardown labor. Special artists donate their time. We are able to retain funds equal to our operating costs & our share of project expenses adequate for 7 years.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

WYOMEA.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: WMEA All-State Music Festival

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

The MISSION of WMEA is to advance music education in Wyoming by advocating for the musical interests of all students and providing quality programs, professional development, and services. Our VISION is to be the voice for music as an essential part of education in Wyoming schools, where all students receive a comprehensive, sequential music education that prepares them for lifelong involvement in music. Our strategic goals center around 1. Serving the Profession 2. Advocacy. 3. Communication 4. Organizational Vitality.

1. Serving the Profession includes engaging music educators in association programs, projects, events, and professional development opportunities that serve their needs and the needs of their students and the profession. Through this strategy, we hope to strengthen partnerships with national, state, and local music, arts and other affiliate organizations. We strive to provide effective and dynamic resources, materials, publications, and professional development opportunities.

2. Our advocacy plan centers around relationship-driven advocacy at the state and local levels to promote equal access to a sequential, comprehensive music education as part of the core curriculum. We work to develop and maintain coalitions, alliances, and partnerships to advance music education. We strive to explore and expand ways to engage people outside the current scope.

3. Communication focuses on clearly articulated, accurate, and timely communication with Wyoming's music educators and stakeholders.

4. Creating Organizational Vitality includes providing service to the membership through sound fiscal practices and effective organizational management. We hope to exemplify our mission, vision, and values in all programs, projects, and communications. We continue to practice responsible stewardship of our financial and human resources.

### **Community**

Our biggest community impact is during our honor ensemble auditions, which involves around 1,600 students from across Wyoming auditioning for the all-state band, choir, or orchestra. The most diverse part of the audition process is the fact that it continues to be an anonymous audition. Students are recorded as an audio track only and they are assigned a student number to their audition. This means we do not know the age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, or even location of the student who is auditioning. We know that the only determining factor is how well they prepared the audition and we observe that we have a very diversified demographic of students making these groups.

Both during the audition and performance process accommodations are often granted by request. Disability requests based on vision would be the most common. In these instances, students are provided with enlarged or braille copies of music. We have also had exemptions from certain music pieces based on religious beliefs. Students in certain faiths are not allowed to sing from some specific texts. We have always worked with students on alternate parts, but students are never disqualified from participating due to these accommodations. In order to request an accommodation, either students or teachers can simply put the request on their registration sheet on the day of the audition.

WMEA has worked to provide opportunities for students and educators in financial need. We offer a scholarship to music education students for housing during their student teaching and we offer two annual professional development mini-grants for teachers looking for growth opportunities. We also have a teacher mentorship program to help mentor young teachers in the profession.

## **Evaluation**

One of the main points of our mission and vision statements includes a focus on communication and engaging with our stakeholders. We engage with the teachers & students immediately after the audition process. Students are required to move to a "listening station" immediately following the audition where they review the audition process and their audition after logging back into their audition account. We can glean a great amount of information through this process including audition numbers, how high and low our cut scores for acceptance are, and where we are seeing strong and weak numbers of auditions. This includes by genre (band, choir, orchestra) sub-sections of musicians (bassoon, tenor, violin, etc.), and by location (Gillette compared to Wright). Through this information we can focus our professional development for educators with specific sessions to support the programs in the weakest areas.

We also hold special interest sessions at our conference to gather information from stakeholders on audition process, audition material, and where we are seeing success and failure. Another method is through surveys sent out at different times throughout the year. These satisfaction surveys cover many diverse topics but offer very focused data on the successes and failures of the programming for students and teachers alike.

The review of data from sessions and surveys are often addressed as part of the annual audit meeting as well as during the executive director annual evaluation meeting. Major changes to our board manual can only happen

through proposals made during our annual general session. Major organization changes would take place as part of our strategic plan design which happens once every four years as part of our May board meeting.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

WMEA has a great responsibility to support both the music teachers of Wyoming while simultaneously supporting the music students in Wyoming. We achieve this by providing an avenue of support and structure for the state, by providing programs & events for both teachers & students, and providing professional development opportunities for our educators.

Below is a brief overview of our operational budget and includes how allocated grant funds would be put to use in the new budget. The annual budget is very tight with very little room for adjustment. We would be very interested in expanding offerings for student scholarships, professional development grants, and expand our conference offerings. Freeing up our existing income by financially supporting our organizational operations would allow us to use that existing money for those targeted programs. At this point, we are doing what we believe is the "bare minimum" for our organization. Working with organizations to secure annual grant funds is how we hope to help stabilize our financial future and expand our support for the music education community.

#### **Proposed 2025-2026 Operations Budget**

##### **General Operations - \$7,000**

Operation expenses includes insurance, postage, printing, telecommunications, supplies, technology, subscriptions, and web hosting.

##### **Travel Expenses - \$6,500**

Officer travel includes funds for required meetings by our executive leadership at regional and national organizational meetings. There are also funds available for board members travel expenses for in-person meetings.

##### **Finance Fees - \$2,500**

There are funds budgeted for credit card processing fees, state taxes, and bank fees. Fees are also budgeted for our accountant fees for filing taxes.

##### **Stipend Budget - \$11,000**

Funds secured to pay an \$8,000 stipend to the Executive Director and \$3,000 stipend for the publication editor.

#### Student & Educator Programs - \$6,000

These programs include a scholarship program for pre-service teachers at the University of Wyoming, student award and recognition, professional development grants, and professional development programs.

Allocated grant funds would be used to expand our professional development conference budget, increase our executive director pay, and add funds to the office and board travel budget.

#### Increase WMEA Profession Development Grant - \$2,000

WMEA offers two mini professional development grants to Wyoming educators. Teachers have the opportunity to apply for a grant for funds used for professional development twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Currently each grant is \$500. Allocated grant funds would allow us to increase each mini-grant by \$1,000 each, making each grant \$1,500.

#### Increase executive and board travel budget - \$2,000

Currently we offer only mileage reimbursement for board officer travel for in person meetings and are forced to ask board members traveling to national meetings to support part of their trip out of pocket. These allocated grant funds would allow us to cover more of the travel costs for these important meetings.

#### Increase executive director stipend - \$3,000

Allocated grant funds would allow us to pay the executive director an additional \$2,000. This is a full time paid position, currently only being paid \$8,000 a year.

#### Increase Conference Session Clinician Budget - \$3,000

Allocated grant funds would allow us to fund more session headliners and offer more money to more prestigious clinicians.

## **Project Support Narrative**

The WMEA Professional Development Conference is directly effected by two groups of artists. The first, the Executive Board of the Wyoming Music Educators Association. The second group, are the wonderful clinicians we bring in to teach, conduct, and present at the conference professional development conference. Currently our WMEA Executive Board is made up of 30 elected and appointed members. The conference itself provides over 20 different clinicians and presenters for conference attendees. Below are some examples of the groups of artists.

The WMEA Conference is the only true music education professional development available in Wyoming. This conference is very important to the climate, culture, and success of music education in Wyoming allowing educators to network, collaborate, learn from each other, and expand their knowledge base by working with the best music educators in the country. Annually, over 300 music teachers from across Wyoming take part in over 70 professional development sessions. These educators come from any and all classroom settings in Wyoming K-12 and post-secondary educators as well. These sessions fall into 6 distinct strand categories including band, vocal, strings, IN-ovations, technology, and jazz. Presenters and session headliners come together to offer a wide range of topics and trainings to help prepare our educators better direct ensembles and teach their craft of music.

Requested grant funds would be put to use supporting the WMEA Staff & Executive fund travel and conference operations while the bulk of the funding would toward continuing to expand the conference budget to bring in more session clinicians as well as paying for higher-level nationally recognized headliner clinicians.

### **WMEA Executive Board Examples.**

#### **President - Michael Jaycox**

Currently the president of the Wyoming Music Educators Association and teaches K-5 general music in Powell, WY and Clark, WY. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in music education and a Master's in Music Education from the University of Wyoming.

#### **Katrina Rooney - President-Elect**

Katrina Rooney is the Director of Choirs at Kelly Walsh High School. Prior to teaching in Wyoming, she directed choirs, vocal jazz and taught music education and voice courses as an Associate Professor and Graduate Assistant at Central Washington University.

#### **Brent Rose - Executive Director**

Brent Rose is in his 24th year as a public school music director. Currently, he is the instrumental music instructor at Kelly Walsh High School. Outside of his duties at KW, Brent is also the Executive Director of the Wyoming All-State Marching Band & on the NFHS Arts Board.



## WMEA Conference Clinicians Examples

### Christopher M. Baumgartner - Collegiate Clinician

Associate Professor of Music Education at the University of Oklahoma where he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in music education, supervises music student teachers and graduate music education research, and directs the OU New Horizons Band. Dr. Baumgartner also serves as Associate Director and Graduate Coordinator for the School of Music.

### Meg Tietz - Elementary Clinician

Meg Tietz teaches K-5 movement and music at Saint Paul Academy in Saint Paul, Minnesota. She is an active presenter for local and national workshops and conferences and also teaches summer Orff Levels. Meg has served the American Orff Schulwerk association as a member of various subcommittees and also as a Trustee on the National Board.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The Arts Learning Grant would center around the All-State Student Honor Ensembles for band, choir, and orchestra including the audition process, selection process, and the performance event.

The student honor ensemble known as the all-state band, choir, and orchestra involves a performance rehearsed and conducted by world-renowned educators. This event takes place on a rotational bases annually, and will take place in Cody, Wyoming in January of 2026. This event includes 450 of the most skilled high school musicians in Wyoming. These 450 students are the musicians who were selected from the over 1,600 auditions recorded and submitted in early November. The audition process is one of the most educational in the process, providing key feedback to both selected and non-selected musicians. This feedback helps students grow and narrow their focus in particular and specified areas of improvement. The audition process takes place in over 10 locations state-wide, involves over 1,600 students, and over 40 educators.

Student learn a great deal from the audition process. They get valuable feedback on which specific areas they need improvement and see the ares in which they excel. They can see how they compare to other students on their instrument in both overall and individually identified rubric categories. Students selected for the groups are treated to what is most often the most advanced and educational music ensemble rehearsal and performance of

their lifetime. Working in one ensemble with the best musicians from across the state is such an invaluable experience. Students begin to learn new levels of what they are capable of, they get inspired by working with people that challenge them, and they have profound and life changing musical moments.

Allocated grant funds would be put to use supporting the audition process as well as the All-State Music Event itself. The printing and supplies include student event credentials and information packet printing for the students selected to the groups. The biggest technology expense includes the online audition platform BandWorld. This program helps us register, record, and proctor the auditions from the start to the finish. Having a good software package for this is very important considering we are controlling over 1,600 recordings. Getting our board, executive, and recording proctors to planning meetings and reimbursing them for expenses and time is also part of the event budget.

#### All-State Music Conference Budget:

All-State Printing & Supplies - \$2,000

Signage, pamphlets, session handouts, name badges, and credentials

Technology Subscriptions - \$3,000

Subscription to Guidebook and BandWorld for student auditions Fees for student audition recording software and subscription.

Meeting Travel Expenses - \$3,000

Travel reimbursement, lodging costs, and meal costs for event planning and onsite event walkthrough.

Recording Proctor Stipends - \$2,000

Audition recording proctor pay, travel expenses, and travel reimbursement.

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The following Arts Learning Goals take a focused look at what, specifically, we hope to achieve with these All-State Honor Ensembles. These goals line-up well with the State and National Core Arts Standards making the goals supportive of our educators in the public high schools across Wyoming.

#### 1. Musical Proficiency & Technical Skills

- Students will refine tone quality, intonation, articulation, phrasing, and technical accuracy through individual and ensemble practice.
- Students will gain experience performing in an advanced ensemble, expanding their repertoire and exposure to various musical styles.

#### 2. Ensemble Collaboration & Leadership Development

- Students will enhance ensemble awareness, focusing on blend, balance, and dynamic control in group settings.
- Section leaders will be trained in peer mentorship, communication, and rehearsal techniques, fostering student leadership within their sections.
- Students will learn to interpret and execute a conductor's artistic vision, improving their responsiveness and musicianship in large ensemble settings.

#### 3. Expressive Performance & Artistic Interpretation

- Participants will explore expressive phrasing, dynamics, and storytelling through music, developing their emotional connection to performance.
- Students will engage in discussions on historical and cultural contexts of selected pieces to deepen their artistic interpretation.
- Choir members will refine diction, vowel shaping, and breath control to enhance choral blend and expressiveness.

#### 4. Music Theory & Aural Skills Development

- Students will strengthen music theory knowledge by analyzing their repertoire's structure, key changes, and harmonic progressions.
- Participants will improve aural recognition of melodic and rhythmic patterns, enhancing their ability to learn and perform music accurately.

## 5. Community Engagement & Public Performance Experience

- Students will prepare and present a culminating performance for the community, showcasing their growth and development.
- Students will gain experience in audition preparation, performance etiquette, and stage presence, equipping them for future musical opportunities.

## 6. Collaboration with Guest Artists & Professional Development

- Students will work with guest conductors, clinicians, and professional musicians, gaining insight into advanced musical concepts and career pathways.
- Participants will take part in masterclasses, sectional coaching, and Q&A sessions with industry professionals.
- Students will be introduced to collegiate and professional music opportunities, helping them explore potential careers in music.

## 7. Inclusivity & Accessibility in Music Education

- The program will be designed to accommodate students of all backgrounds, including those with financial or geographic barriers to high-level musical training.
- Students will engage in discussions about diversity in music, including repertoire from underrepresented composers and cultures.
- Adaptive techniques will be used to ensure that students with physical or learning disabilities can fully participate and excel.

## 8. Personal Growth & Lifelong Engagement in the Arts

- Students will develop self-discipline, perseverance, and critical thinking skills through structured rehearsals and performances.
- Participants will reflect on their growth through journals, peer discussions, and self-assessments to foster a deeper connection to their musical journey.
- The program will encourage lifelong participation in music, whether as professional musicians, educators, or community arts supporters.

These Arts Learning Goals emphasize skill-building, personal development, and community engagement—key components that align well with community arts grants. Let me know if you'd like them tailored further for your specific application!

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Dr. Kristina MacMullen - All-State Honor Choir Conductor

Currently, MacMullen serves as the Mary Gibbs Jones Chair of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Baylor University. She conducts the Baylor A Cappella Choir, Chamber Singers, and leads the graduate program in choral conducting. Prior to her appointment at BU, MacMullen served on the faculties of the University of North Texas and The Ohio State University. WMEA MacMullen earned both the Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music degrees from Michigan State University. She completed the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Texas Tech University. MacMullen has enjoyed a diverse career as a public-school teacher, interacting with students in rural, suburban, and urban settings, elementary through high school. She also sings with the professional ensemble Mirabai. Dr. MacMullen was chosen based on recommendations from colleagues from around the country based on her conducting prowess, skill in vocal pedagogy, and high energy rehearsals.

Dr. Peter Boonshaft - All-State Honor Band Conductor

Dr. Boonshaft is Director of Education for Jupiter Band Instruments. Dr. Boonshaft is the author of the critically acclaimed best-selling books *Teaching Music with Passion*, *Teaching Music with Purpose*, and *Teaching Music with Promise*. He is also co-author of Alfred Music Publishing's method book series *Sound Innovations*. As well, his weekly "Boonshaft's Blog" for music educators continues to inspire teachers everywhere. He has received official proclamations from the Governors of five states and a Certificate of Appreciation from former President Ronald Reagan, as well as performing for former President and Mrs. George H. W. Bush, former President Bill Clinton, and for Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. His honors include being selected three times as a National Endowment for the Arts "Artist in Residence," three times awarded Honorary Life Membership in the Tri-M Music Honor Society, receiving the Al G. Wright Award of Distinction from the Women Band Directors International, membership in Pi Kappa Lambda and Alpha Chi, twice receiving the University of Hartford Regent's Award and that University's Outstanding Music Educator Award, as well as being selected for the Center for Scholarly Research and Academic Excellence at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY, where he is Professor Emeritus of Music. Dr. Boonshaft was an easy choice based on reputation and published work in the field of band.

Dr. Julie Sorensen - All-State Honor Orchestra Conductor

Dr. Sorensen is a conductor as well as an orchestra and chamber musician. Julie served as the assistant conductor for the Lubbock Symphony Orchestra in Lubbock Texas before taking the helm of Artistic Director and Conductor of the Idaho State- Civic Symphony. An avid educator, Dr. Sorensen, believes in the importance of symphonic music and writes, produces, and conducts educational concerts specifically geared towards youth. Julie also served as the Artistic Director and Conductor for the Idaho State – Civic Symphony Youth Orchestra. Julie is an active clinician for flute, orchestra, and band, in and around Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and Texas. In 2020 Julie was awarded the Southeast Idaho, Woman of the Year award for her outstanding service to the arts. Julie was selected based on her connection to Wyoming orchestras and her outstanding work guest conducting in the region.

## **Budget Narrative**

WMEA is funded by state association dues & program registration fees. The two events that fund the organization are the fees for the high school all-state honor ensemble auditions & the fees for the PD conference. The association has financial holdings in interest bearing CD's at two different banks and an emergency fund to support the association in savings accounts at the same banks. In-Kind donations come from public schools and educators donating their time, facility, and equipment to help facilitate all of these events.

WMEA is applying for multiple annual grants in an attempt to secure long-term financial partnerships moving forward. Those potential partners including the Wyoming Community Foundation and the Wyoming Cultural Trust. We also work with the Wyoming HS Activities Association & the UW Dept. of Music as program & event partners.

The association approves a very accurate annual budget and conference budget & goes through an annual budget review & financial audit.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING PBS FOUNDATION

WYOMINGPBS.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Chris Navarro - Turbine Monuments (Working Title)

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Wyoming PBS: Telling Wyoming's Stories

Mission: To connect and enrich the lives of Wyoming residents through innovative media.

Vision: To bring the world to Wyoming and showcase Wyoming to the world through excellence and innovation in media.

Wyoming PBS, originally KCWC-TV, is a public television station licensed to Central Wyoming College and based in Riverton. Since our establishment in 1983, we've expanded from serving Fremont County to reaching approximately 97% of Wyoming's population through a network of full-power transmitters, low-power translators, cable systems, and digital platforms like the Wyoming PBS website, the PBS app, and YouTubeTV.

As a non-profit and member of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), Wyoming PBS is dedicated to providing quality television programming to all residents of Wyoming.

Wyoming PBS plays a crucial role in the state's arts and culture landscape, driven by our mission and vision:

1. Showcasing Local Talent: We highlight the diverse artistic voices in Wyoming, including local artists, musicians, writers, and cultural events, preserving our rich heritage while celebrating contemporary creativity.

2. Accessibility: We strive to make arts and culture accessible to all, delivering programming that reaches homes, schools, and communities statewide, regardless of location.

3. Education and Inspiration: Our educational programming aims to inform viewers about various art forms and cultural traditions, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

4. Community Collaboration: We partner with local arts organizations and community groups to create documentaries, livestream events, and facilitate productions that promote arts education and cultural involvement.

In essence, Wyoming PBS harnesses the power of media to celebrate, preserve, and promote Wyoming's arts and culture.

## **Community**

Wyoming PBS serves the entire state, a geographically vast and diverse area with a small population. Wyoming's population is predominantly White, with significant Native American communities, notably on the Wind River Reservation. The economy is rooted in mineral extraction, agriculture, and tourism, with varying economic conditions across the state.

Wyoming PBS gathers community needs through various channels: personal and online audience feedback, event surveys, community partnerships, data analysis, outreach initiatives, and legislative input. We supplement website and online contact form (<https://www.wyomingpbs.org/contact-us/>) with direct mail member surveys, compiling and analyzing results annually. Our statewide 14-director board meets quarterly to offer feedback on current and future projects.

Wyoming PBS engages underserved communities in several ways:

**Rural Communities:** Broadcast infrastructure and relevant programming address the needs of Wyoming's large rural population.

**Native American Communities:** Programming features Native American culture, history, and contemporary issues, with collaboration on content and outreach.



Economically Disadvantaged: Free broadcasting and online access ensure accessibility, with educational programming provided.

Older Adults: Programming caters to their interests, with accessible television and online platforms.

Individuals with Disabilities: Wyoming PBS provides closed captioning, audio description, website accessibility, and contact information for accommodation requests at the following link <https://www.wyomingpbs.org/contact-us/>.

Multifaceted Identities & Cultural Backgrounds: Programming aims to reflect Wyoming's diverse cultures and perspectives.

## **Evaluation**

Wyoming PBS employs both quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate the impact of its programs on the community.

Quantitative Evaluation:

- Nielsen Ratings: As a PBS member, Wyoming PBS uses Nielsen ratings to gauge viewership, providing data on audience size, demographics, and viewing habits to understand its viewers.

- Website and Digital Analytics: Metrics from the Wyoming PBS website, PBS app, and platforms like YouTube track traffic, page views, video interactions, and engagement, offering insights into online content effectiveness.

- Social Media Metrics: The station monitors its social media presence, tracking followers, likes, shares, comments, and mentions to assess audience connection.

- Membership and Donations: Trends in membership and donations serve as indicators of community support, with increases suggesting that the audience values its programs.

#### Qualitative Evaluation:

- Surveys and Feedback: Wyoming PBS collects qualitative data through surveys and online feedback, providing insights into audience satisfaction and preferences.
- Community Screenings and Events: Engaging directly with residents at screenings and events allows staff to gather feedback and assess program impact personally.
- Content Analysis: Analyzing viewer comments and social media feedback provides insights on program reception and impact.

Measuring Impact: Wyoming PBS assesses impact through increased awareness of local issues, community engagement, educational outcomes, cultural preservation, and potential economic benefits from supporting the arts and tourism.

#### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

#### **Project Support Narrative**

Chris Navarro: Turbine Monuments" is a compelling 30-minute documentary that delves into the transformative art of renowned bronze sculptor Chris Navarro. Known for his monumental sculptures celebrating the spirit of the American West, Navarro has embarked on an innovative project: repurposing discarded wind turbine blades into awe-inspiring public art.

The film's central focus is "Wind Cathedral," a groundbreaking public art installation designed by Navarro for Casper, Wyoming, home to one of the few facilities accepting these non-recyclable fiberglass blades. This ambitious project aims to transform waste into a symbol of beauty and sustainability. The "Wind Cathedral" will stand 35 feet tall and 84 feet long, featuring twelve wind turbine blades arranged to create an interactive space for the community.

Chris Navarro is a celebrated sculptor renowned for his monumental bronze works depicting themes of the American West. His artistic journey takes a new direction as he confronts the challenge of sculpting with fiberglass,

a material foreign to his repertoire. The film will capture Navarro's creative process, his technical innovations, and his determination to overcome logistical and environmental obstacles.

Directing this project is Anthony Stengel, a Wyoming-based filmmaker and cinematographer with a passion for character-driven storytelling. As the founder of Stengel Media, a production company based in Casper, Wyoming, Stengel specializes in crafting visually compelling narratives with a strong emphasis on visual storytelling and human connection. His work is often rooted in the Western United States, where he captures authentic stories with a focus on visual artistry and human connection. Stengel's notable work includes feature documentaries such as "Someone's Daughter," "Say Her Name," and "The Doctrine of Recovery," as well as short documentaries like "Dying Light," "Fire Spinner," and "The Steel Sculptress" for Wyoming PBS. He is a three-time Heartland Regional Emmy Award winner.

The documentary will feature interviews with Navarro, experts, local officials, community members, and environmental advocates, providing context and depth to the narrative. Key scenes will include filming at the blade processing facility in Windsor, CO, the delivery of turbine blades to Navarro's workshop, the construction of a prototype, the installation of "Wind Cathedral" on the Platte River Trails, and community engagement with the artwork. Additional scenes will capture Navarro's personal reflections, his interactions with his family, and the broader context of turbine blade disposal.

The film's cinematography will employ vintage Leica lenses and Rembrandt lighting techniques to create a visually stunning and cinematic aesthetic. Drone footage will be used to capture the scale of the project and the beauty of the Wyoming landscape. The editing and pacing will emphasize a documentary style, weaving together interviews and scenes to create an engaging narrative.

Phase 1(Pre-Production/Production) of this project will be funded by Wyoming PBS and is happening in now in the spring of 2025 - \$10,000

Our \$10,000 request will go toward funding Phase 2 (Production) - With a final cut delivered in May of 2026. Phase 2 budget is \$30,000 and remaining funds will come from WY PBS members, individual donations, and Wyoming PBS production budget.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Wyoming PBS is supported by a diverse range of funding sources. The organization receives funding through state and federal appropriations, grants, underwriting, and foundation support. Additionally, Wyoming PBS has a membership program that also serves as a vital source of funding.

Key organizations that provide support to Wyoming PBS include Wyoming Humanities, the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, and the Wyoming Community Foundation.

These funding sources directly support Wyoming PBS's programs and services, including the production of local programming such as "Wyoming Chronicle" and "Our Wyoming," educational initiatives such as the PBS Learning Media platform and the Early Literacy Tour, and community engagement activities like screenings and events.

The organization's budget also supports the necessary expenses related to engineering, management and general operations, programming, marketing and outreach, production, salaries and benefits, and education.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING SECONDARY ART EDUCATOR'S ASSOCIATION, INC.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: WSAEA State Art and Fall Conference Support Grant

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Wyoming Secondary Art Educators Association's mission is to promote quality education in art for all Wyoming students through the advancement of the secondary state art symposium, teacher in-service, communication and professional development.

Wyoming students are provided the opportunity to take a variety of art courses including Digital Photography, Computer Graphics, 2D design, Ceramics, as well as other foundations classes: each of which have both beginning level and advanced courses that students can work their way through during their years at high schools across the state.

Wyoming art departments participate in multiple community art showings of student work. Some locations include the local public libraries, restaurants in the area, community storefronts and at the elementary schools in their buildings. Our most prominent showing is the annual State Art Symposium.

### Community

Our community is made up of Wyoming's secondary art educators and high school art students. WSAEA strives to create an environment that is inclusive to all walks of life. Our teachers involved in the organization have varying beliefs, backgrounds, abilities, and experiences that allow us to be a well-rounded community of artists and educators. We include all Wyoming secondary schools to participate in our State Art Symposium, this includes communities that are wealthy as well as those that are in poverty. We include all nationalities and backgrounds and their work that is inspired by those roots into our showcases of work, visiting artists, workshops and more.

The WSAEA creates inclusion opportunities not only through participation in professional development experiences and participation in State Art but also by encouraging and promoting a rotating leadership system that allows educators to enhance leadership skills and to create strong connections to a network of peers. As a component of this leadership role, the president position is responsible for hosting the fall arts conference. These conferences are hosted in the region of the president allowing for educators to visit various communities across the state. This promotes a better understanding of Wyoming at large and creates a stronger support system as well as empathy for different challenges and assets that reside in our diverse communities, and in turn teachers are better prepared to address discussions of diverse communities in our state. Students participating in the symposium can observe their teachers working to create this rich event and watch their teachers work together to form connections and build richer programming.

## **Evaluation**

We, as educators, are always measuring and evaluating the impact of the work that is being done by our student artists, as well as our Art Educator peers. These evaluations come in the form of state standards in schools as well as juried art exhibitions and such. We annually collect data on the event including the number of schools that participate in symposium which exceeds any other WHSAA sports participation in terms of number of schools. We collect data on all aspects of the event and conclude the symposium events and fall conference with feedback surveys. This always serves as an opportunity to document feedback. In addition, we have bi-annual meetings where members are able to present ideas and be agents of change within the organization.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Currently, our expenses for the annual Art Symposium are as follows: supplies for setting up the show, supplies for 2 nights of art activities for all students attending, meals & DJ for awards banquet, judging for each artwork category, framing and transportation of Congressional pieces, \$10,000 in scholarships and approximately 2,000 ribbons and awards.

At the symposium, we would use grant money to provide workshop opportunities for students and to hire guest artists. We would also be able to replenish supplies that we use yearly, such as supplies for the workshops we already provide, and purchase new supplies, such as peg boards, hooks, etc, that would aid in the success of the art show. With the cost of ribbons and awards always increasing it would also be very beneficial to have extra support in purchasing these.

The other event that we host is the Fall conference, which is a professional development opportunity for secondary art educators in Wyoming. The WSAEA provides lodging, meals and artist-led workshops, which are partially paid for by attendees. At this event the communication and learning that takes place is highly beneficial and directly impacts the quality of education our art teachers are able to provide. It is imperative that art educators continue their education and participate in meaningful art-making activities to help their program to be as relevant as possible for their students. A portion of the operating funds would be used to pay for this event and the artists that attend.

## **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

In the fall of 2025 the president elect will host the annual Fall Conference. They will choose a location within their local community for all attending secondary art educators to stay for a few days to create art, attend workshops, communicate and collaborate on teaching strategies, and hold the fall business meeting. There are 2-3 local artists hired to host the workshops each year, which allows art educators to experience first hand how art differs between different regions of Wyoming. We will also have a workshop on current art pedagogy and discuss what is/is not currently working in our own classrooms.

In the spring of 2026 we will host the annual art symposium, during which student artists will have the opportunity to showcase their work, observe artwork from around the state, and participate in a variety of art workshops. Students are also given the opportunity to apply for scholarships by attending interviews and submitting a portfolio of their work. There are university representatives from several schools who attend the event to present to and meet with students who wish to pursue an art program, some of which award scholarships to students who enroll during that time. The State Art Symposium introduces students to what pursuing a career in the visual arts could look like, and helps better prepare them for doing so. Even those who do not choose to pursue art are given the opportunity to learn new art skills, be exposed to the work of students from different backgrounds, and collaborate with their peers.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our specific arts learning goals are rooted in engaging high school students and community members in a meaningful art experience that leaves a lasting impact. Specifically, we hope to provide students with an opportunity to acknowledge their potential to reach their future goals, and the impact that sharing and viewing art in a public space can have. This aligns directly with the state standard of students selecting, preparing, and exhibiting their artwork. We also strive to promote and express the importance of the arts in public schools by hosting a public art show where the community can see the impact it has on Wyoming's youth. With our students our goal aligns with the standard of analyzing the contributions that art and visual artists make to their local community and contemporary society. With scholarship opportunities we aim to give students the opportunity to succeed in their futures in the arts, with students who interview having to meet a majority of the state standards.

As for the fall conference, our goals are rooted in professional development and bringing art teachers together to provide the most meaningful educational experiences for our students. Specifically, we provide workshops where teachers learn new skills that they will use with their students in their own classroom. We provide resources and new learning tools for teachers to use as well.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

The artists we will have at our fall conference and at the 2026 State Art Symposium have not been selected yet. Every year the president of the WSAEA chooses a location for the fall conference, typically closer to their home in Wyoming, and then selects artists that are local to that area to host workshops. As for State Art, every secondary art educator in Wyoming and their students participate. The most important artists we have involved in our events are the students. We currently have about 25 art teachers who attend the fall conference, and with scholarship opportunities provided by this grant we are hoping that number continues to grow. Some key partners involved in our events include the Wyoming Arts Council and Compete Casper, both of which make funding possible.

### **Budget Narrative**

The funding for the WSAEA comes from the annual art show and from the fall conference. At the annual symposium we raise funds through artwork entry fees, raffling and auctioning of donated teacher artwork and t-shirt sales. At the fall conference teachers each pay for a portion of the cost of the event. We align our budget with our programs and services by using specific funding sources for specific needs and making adjustments accordingly. Our raffle and silent auction goes towards scholarships and our entry fees cover basic supplies and

awards. We charge enough to cover the costs of our t-shirts and the majority of the meals we provide, however we do rely on grants to be able to allow for a small profit to carry us into the next year. The grants provided by the Wyoming Arts Council and Compete Casper are imperative to the existence of State Art. As for fall conference, we charge art educators who attend to cover the costs and use grant funding to provide scholarships as we can.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING SINGER-SONGWRITERS

[HTTPS://WWW.WYOMINGSINGER-SONGWRITERS.COM/](https://www.wyomingsinger-songwriters.com/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Wyoming Singer-Songwriter General Operating Funds

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Wyoming Singer-Songwriters' mission is to:

- 1) Build supportive communities of songwriters grounded in a shared love of music, song writing, and the exploration of human experiences both common and unique, especially those specific to the people and land of Wyoming.
- 2) Cultivate and promote excellence in songwriting by facilitating workshops, hosting songwriting challenges, and giving artists the opportunity to refine their craft in professional recording studios.
- 3) Host an annual Singer-Songwriter festival and competition. Over the course of a weekend, this festival brings together artists from across the state to compete for a singer-songwriter grand prize, provides networking and community building opportunities between artists, judges, and audience members, and hosts a number of family-friendly events including songwriting workshops and the final competition concert.

### Community

Wyoming Singer-Songwriters (WYSS) seeks to address the sparse resources and opportunities in Wyoming that aspiring singer-songwriters need to develop their talent, share their stories and contribute to Wyoming's unique culture. WYSS aims to ameliorate this problem for singer-songwriters of all demographics, but especially those who face additional barriers, so they can develop their craft and share their diverse stories with live and dispersed audiences, as well as build community and social capital through the annual summer competition and festival, and workshops and performance opportunities throughout the calendar year. Last year, Marlee Holdeman, the first non-binary person to win the competition, was struggling to find support for their music in Gillette. According to Marlee, there were only two venues in town that offered an open mic for artists. One was so busy it was hard to participate, the other did not welcome Marlee because of their identity. So Marlee traveled to Sheridan to

participate in an open mic there. That's where April Bretzman, a WYSS board member, heard Marlee's talent, and personally insisted that Marlee participate in the WYSS competition. Marlee won the competition, and not gained immense musical support (Marlee will perform at four festivals through WY this summer), but has found a robust community. This is a specific example of how WYSS reaches out to underserved communities: by personally investing and actively bringing people into the WYSS community. To connect with underserved populations, WYSS also holds events in ADA-compliant, family-friendly venues, and has a low cost for entry. WYSS is responsive to requests (as stated on the website and Facebook) and actively seeks to improve outreach and accessibility.

## **Evaluation**

The metric WYSS uses to measure our success is growth: accessibility to all communities throughout the state, and focus efforts on outreach to underserved communities and partnering with new organizations to diversify the WYSS community. Last year, WYSS developed a partnership with the Douglas State Fair that included a WYSS stage featuring WYSS singer-songwriters for a week's worth of music. There was also a new qualifying round in Lyman. This year WYSS hopes to renew connections in Jackson and expand to the northeast corner of the state around Gillette. By holding events in new parts of the state, WYSS can more effectively grow community and connections, and makes its resources more accessible to all Wyomingites.

WYSS also strives to collect meaningful feedback through surveys for musicians and audience members that include the following metrics: number of Wyoming artists who we've helped get their first paying gig; the number of Wyoming artists who we've given the first studio recording experience; the number of Wyoming songs we've directly recorded; the number of artists who have started playing their music out in public as a direct result of our events and recording efforts; and the number of Wyoming artists that will get their music onto the radio including online and streaming. The other important evaluation of success for WYSS is a satisfactory experience from those who compete in the competition. WYSS uses a survey of contestants to understand their experience of the contest and to continually improve methods to ensure a sense of fairness, accessibility, and collegiality for everyone involved. Going forward WYSS will do more to incentivize participants to provide feedback (though raffles and prizes) in order to get as much of this helpful data as possible.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

Operating support will provide funds for basic, monthly expenses required to keep the organization running (such as Quickbooks and subscriptions for music streaming platforms and data storage), but will mostly be allotted for the annual, state-wide Wyoming Singer-Songwriter Competition & Festival. This event includes at least 8 qualifying rounds that take place around the state in July and August and the final competition and festival in Ten Sleep over Labor Day weekend. WYSS has a board of nine dedicated individuals who participate in every aspect of this program and serve as judges at the qualifying rounds and the finals. WYSS also invites notable regional singer-songwriters to judge and conduct workshops. (For example, the award-winning Susan Gibson most notable for writing for the Dixie Chicks). Board members receive a small stipend for their time and travel expenses (the rest of their time is considered to be an in-kind donation to the program and part of their responsibilities as board

members). Guest and featured judges receive between \$500-\$2000 for their time and are compensated for travel/lodging. WYSS believes that part of providing resources for aspiring singer-songwriters is connecting them with successful artists and facilitating a space of learning, mentoring, and networking. Therefore, one of WYSS's goals is to increase funding in this area so they can invite more successful artists to connect with the WYSS community.

In addition, a large part of the budget also goes to sound engineers who will provide studio time for participating musicians. Anyone (not just winners) who participates in a WYSS event has the opportunity to record in a studio. These sound engineers offer part of their services in-kind at a discounted rate, but to offer this opportunity to as many people as possible still requires at least \$10,000. Marketing also requires significant funding in order to pay a graphic designer (also partly an in-kind service) for printed flyers and someone who manages the WYSS social media, as well as radio ads that run on Wyoming Public Media from Memorial Day to Labor Day (around \$2000). There are also significant printing costs. Part of what makes WYSS programming special, is that the lyrics of every song performed are printed and distributed to the judges and the audience so they can be carefully considered and appreciated. The final competition program is a thick booklet that is one of the event's more significant costs (around \$1500).

Finally, WYSS believes in compensating artists for their time and talent. So when they play at a WYSS event they are compensated to the best of the organization's ability. The final competition and festival will feature local bands every evening and WYSS sponsors performances throughout the year (these stipends can range from \$200-\$1000). WYSS believes in putting the vast majority of its funding directly into the pockets' of singer-songwriters by valuing their work and providing new resources and opportunities. This year, WYSS is expanding opportunities for singer-songwriters to perform by collaborating with Feeding Laramie Valley to co-sponsor the Higher Ground Fair. The details of this event are in progress, but WYSS seeks to compensate all artists at least \$200/performance.

The majority of funding for WYSS directly supports aspiring singer-songwriters by compensating them for their art and providing new opportunities and resources for growth and development.

### **Project Support Narrative**

n/a

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

#### **Arts Learning: Goals**

#### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

Wyoming Singer-Songwriter has built many partnerships and seeks funding from a variety of sources. Sponsorships like Wyoming Whiskey and Metro Coffee provide monetary prizes for the competition every year and consist of just under one-quarter of WYSS income. Grant funding consists of about one-third of WYSS income and ticket sales

and fundraising provide another third. WYSS also collaborates with local businesses and venues throughout the state where regional qualifying rounds are held, including the Douglas State Fair. In 2025, WYSS is sharing resources with Feeding Laramie Valley to organize the Higher Ground Fair (this is new and in-progress, so concrete details are not yet available). In-kind donations are received from sound engineers and the graphic designer and social media coordinator, and WYSS has a devoted community of volunteers who run the ticket booth and aid logistics during the final competition.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

[HTTPS://WYOSHPO.WYO.GOV/](https://wyoshpo.wyo.gov/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025 Wyoming Archaeology Fair: Artisan Support

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office documents, preserves, and promotes Wyoming's cultural heritage with our preservation partners. This grant will support expanding our Wyoming Archaeology Awareness Month program. Celebrated annually in September, Wyoming Archaeology Awareness Month (WAAM) consists of a series of statewide activities and programs devoted to discussing archaeological issues and to educating the public about the importance of preserving and protecting Wyoming's archaeological and cultural heritage. WAAM directly supports the promotion of Wyoming's cultural heritage through public engagement by celebrating and showcasing Wyoming's unique cultural heritage through free public events and free educational resources such as our award-winning Archaeology Month posters and brochures. The posters and brochures highlight an archaeological theme or site and include information written by a subject matter expert for the purposes of educating the public. The Archaeology Fair is the crowning event of our WAAM celebrations. The Fair generally features 25 - 30 educational booths run by volunteers where patrons can learn a variety of skills such as making arrowheads, pottery, atlatl throwing, yucca processing, and food grinding. In 2024, 675 adults attended and 442 children under 18 attended (1,117 total); this is within the typical attendance range of 1,000 to 1,200 for the event. Our goal for 2025 is to expand the Archaeology Fair, to include more Wyoming and Native American artisans at the event to teach a larger variety of skills. Other events held during WAAM include the Governor's Proclamation and public lectures and presentations around the state including the Annual George C. Frison Institute lecture held at the University of Wyoming. Wyoming Archaeological Society (WAS) chapters often hold local events around the state with the support from the SHPO as needed.

### Community

The SHPO serves the entire state and the purpose of WAAM is to provide opportunities statewide, however, the Fair itself is located in Laramie. The community that benefits the most from the Fair is Albany County, which has a population of just under 40,000. Outreach is conducted by flyer, radio, newspaper, social media, community event calendars, and word of mouth.

This free Fair provides hands-on educational opportunities that may not otherwise be accessible to the public such as flint-knapping (arrowhead making), atlatl throwing, iron forging, hide painting, cordage making, pottery firing, and food processing techniques like grinding. We take verbal or written feedback from attendees and subject matter experts on where we may be missing the mark. The Fair is free and there are no vendors selling wares at

the event and many of the booths have a take-home craft. The Fair is meant to be accessible to all members of the public regardless of socio-economic status. We want to draw attention to the myriad of worldviews and backgrounds by including experts from around the state on topics ranging from Native American sign language to blacksmithing. Educational booths and performances at the Fair focus on archaeology, cultural heritage, folk and traditional arts, science, history, ceremony (Native American), and ancient lifeways.

The infrastructure at the site meets ADA requirements and allows service animals on the grounds. Each visitor receives a map indicating accessible locations such as bathrooms and elevators. In 2025, we will include contact information on all advertising and our website that any requests for accommodation can be made to the event coordinator up to two weeks in advance of the event to ensure full participation by all members of the public.

### **Evaluation**

Our primary objective is to reach more and new Wyomingites with our message each year. We evaluate the number of people attending by having at least 3 volunteers serve as greeters at the Fair; they keep track of attendance at the event with a clicker. We keep track of adult visitors and under 18 visitors in a separate count. We also track our metrics via social media. This tracking has been done since the Fair's inception and we therefore have a record of attendance over the years. Outcomes, such as increased awareness and critical thinking about cultural heritage, are difficult to measure quantitatively, however, in 2025, we plan to include a survey on the map handed out to visitors to get their feedback - this can be taken at the time of the event or visitors can use a QR code to access the survey after the event. Visitors will be asked about their general satisfaction and avenues for improvement. Visitors will be encouraged to take the survey, but not required. The coordinator communicates often with volunteers and consistently asks for their feedback. This occurs verbally and is subjective, however, the coordinator takes notes and works to make effective change. A longer term goal of the program is to inspire people to pursue careers in archaeology, history, or preservation. The metrics for this are also difficult to track, however, our program does work closely with the UWyo Anthropology department. Impacts of the Fair are often measured anecdotally. For example, last year, we had a high school student inform us that each year they look forward to the flintknapping booth, and they brought arrowheads with them that they had created years prior. They had been coming to the Fair many years, and it has inspired them to pursue Anthropology as their degree in college.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

We are seeking to continue the financial support of one artisan (David Osmundsen, Blacksmith) who has participated in the Fair in the past, as well as expand the artisans present to increase the knowledge and understanding of Native American folk and traditional arts for our visitors. Artist fees are detailed below - these often include costs of materials for take-home crafts. Lodging and per diem rates are compliant with the General Services Administration (GSA) standards (lunch is provided the day of the Fair).

We are requesting project support funding to pay five artists/artisans to demonstrate their craft at the Fair. The grant will go towards paying half of each artisan's fee, lodging, and per diem. Fundraised monies will pay the other half. Each artisan will host an educational booth from 10 am until 3 pm. The SHPO will provide tents, tables, chairs for each booth and will provide each individual with lunch day of the Fair.

- David Osmundsen is a well-known Wyoming blacksmith. Mr. Osmundsen has participated in the Fair several times over the years, and his booth is incredibly popular and we have received verbal feedback of the community's continued desire to learn from him. He is a recognized folk artist with the Wyoming Arts Council (\$850 artisan fee, \$220 lodging, \$151 per diem).

- Keith Hipol, of Evanston, Wyoming is a Native Hawaiian who is an expert Mountain Man re-enactor and participates in numerous rendezvous around the state for many years. Mr. Hipol is an expert in "Plains Indian Sign Language" and will be demonstrating and teaching this at the Fair as a Mountain Man (\$100 fee, \$220 lodging, \$151 per diem).

- The third new booth for 2025 would revolve around Native American clothing production and adornment. We have invited Jenn Runs Close to Lodge and Gloria Runs Close to Lodge of Ethete, WY, who are expert artisans in Native American dress making. They plan to present not only on dress-making, but the use of elk teeth as adornment and how this relates to oral traditions and the archaeological record. This booth will include a take-home craft for participants utilizing elk teeth (\$1,000 artisan fee, \$440 lodging, \$302 per diem).

- Robert Martinez, a Riverton artist who has previously won the Governor's arts awards, would run a new booth on ledger art. Mr. Martinez, who has experience running ledger art workshops with school-aged children and young adults, will be running a hands-on booth where patrons can learn about the history of ledger art as well as create something for themselves (\$2,000 artist fee, \$220 lodging, \$151 per diem).

- The final newly proposed booth would be run by Lapita and Dan Frewin. They have been working for over twenty years with the Museum of the Mountain Man in Pinedale running children's programs that teach about Native American crafts and cultures. Lapita is Navajo, originally from Arizona, but has been working as an educator in the Rocky Mountain region for decades. Dan has spent his entire adult life in the study and practice of the crafts and cultures of Native Americans in the Plains and has a long career as an educator. At the 2025 Fair, the Frewin's will be educating our patrons about rock art (petroglyphs and pictographs) and visitors will have the chance to learn how to make their own rock art by pecking designs into sandstone that they can take home with them (\$2,000 artisan fee, \$220 lodging, \$302 per diem).

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

WAAM is supported with in-kind volunteer donations, donated use of the Territorial Prison, existing State salaries, private donations, grants, and sponsorships. The State doesn't allocate funding beyond staff salaries. Key partnerships for 2025 include Wyoming Humanities, Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, the Wyoming Association

of Professional Archaeologists, and the Frison Institute for Anthropology and Archaeology. Additionally, each year we have between 80 and 100 volunteers running booths: each volunteer spends between 4 and 7 hours working and therefore a low estimate of in-kind time donated by volunteers is 320 hours. Primary costs for the event are related to supplies and artisan fees. Supplies include things like 3D hunting targets, atlatls, obsidian for arrowhead making, clay, face paint, and rabbit hides. Marketing costs may increase due an increase in print materials and costs of more paid advertising for Wyoming Public Radio and newspapers ads to help grow the event.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, INC.

[WWW.WYOMINGSYMPHONY.ORG](http://WWW.WYOMINGSYMPHONY.ORG)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Wyoming Symphony Orchestra

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

#### MISSION

The mission of the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra is to enrich the cultural lives of adults, expand the musical horizons of children and provide an outlet for the creative talents of musicians living in Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain West by performing classical and "pops" music to an expanding audience.

#### GOALS

Strategic goals outlined by WSO's Board of Directors include increasing artistic and administrative pay through increased earned and contributed income; increasing performance opportunities for regional musicians, presenting guest artists, and increasing the number of Wyomingites that we serve with our programs. Other goals by new ED, Melissa MacDonald include creating a chamber music concert series of three performances to take place at intimate Central Wyoming venues and establishing a Composer-In-Residence.

### **Community**

Music has the power to bring people together, creating shared experiences that resonate deeply. At the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra, we don't just present concerts—we craft events that feel personal and inclusive, ensuring everyone feels welcome.

#### ENGAGING WITH DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

The Wyoming Symphony Orchestra (WSO) serves Natrona County, Wyoming, home to 85.1% White and 9.3% Hispanic residents, with a median household income of \$73,110—below the national average. Recognizing the economic challenges in our area, WSO actively works to make live symphonic music accessible to all. Our Music on the Move program brings music education to K-college students, with 28% attending Title 1 schools.

#### ACCOMMODATIONS

To engage older adults and people with disabilities, we partner with Reveille Rotary and AARP WY to provide free transportation for concertgoers aged 65+. We also strive to connect with AAPI, BIPOC, and non-English-speaking communities, ensuring our programming reflects diverse voices. WSO actively engages the LGBTQ+ community through annual performances at Casper Pride and incorporates multicultural music like Mambo into our repertoire.

WSO is committed to accessibility. Our primary venue is ADA-compliant with gender-neutral restrooms. For those needing companion or wheelchair-accessible seating, our Office Administrator, Jenny Miller, handles requests via phone or online. By prioritizing inclusivity, we ensure that everyone—regardless of background or ability—can experience the power of live symphonic music.

### **Evaluation**

Feedback from Wyoming Symphony Orchestra patrons, sponsors, and vendors is invaluable in shaping future programming and ensuring an enriching concert experience.

#### QUALITATIVE

WSO collects audience insights through post-performance surveys sent to patrons, sponsors, and vendors. These surveys assess accessibility, enjoyment, and areas for improvement, offering a platform for direct feedback that helps refine our concerts, events, and outreach programs.

#### QUANTITATIVE

Key performance metrics include audience attendance, sponsorship engagement, and vendor partnerships. External factors, such as severe winter storms in Wyoming, have historically impacted attendance, influencing data trends. Despite these challenges, WSO continues to adapt and find innovative ways to grow its audience and community support.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Wyoming Symphony Orchestra, in its 76th year, requests Operating Support for its 2025-26 Season.

#### KEY DATES AND ARTISTS

8/23/25: Park Concert – "Pops in the Park: Once Upon Symphony" Disney (Headlined by a still-to-be-determined artist)

10/18/25: Masterworks Concert 1

Prokofiev: Selections from Romeo and Juliet (In collaboration with local high school theatre students)

Bernstein: Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

12/6/25: Holiday Celebration

1/24/26: Chamber Concert

Possibilities:

Ravel: Tombeau de Couperin

Stravinsky: Pulcinella Suite

Jessie Montgomery: Banner (featuring string quartet made up of WSO principals)

Concerto - Baroque

3/28/26: Masterworks Concert 2

Beethoven: Fidelio Overture

Joan Tower: 1920/2019 (About the passage of the 19th Amendment)

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 1

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2

5/2/26: Masterworks Concert 3

Valerie Coleman: Seven O'Clock Shout/Umoja

Copland: Lincoln Portrait

Howard Hanson: Song of Democracy (Collaboration with local high school choir)

Respighi: Pines of Rome (Collaboration with local high school orchestra students)

Note: All concerts will be live-streamed for free to increase access for individuals facing geographic, financial, or mobility barriers. Pre-concert talks, providing insights into the music, will be recorded and shared on social media and through newsletters.

#### KEY WSO PERSONNEL TITLES & QUALIFICATIONS

Jerry Hou – Incoming Music Director (2025–2026 Season)

Associate Conductor of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University

Former Assistant Conductor for the New York Philharmonic

Known for his innovative programming and dynamic conducting style

Melissa MacDonald – Executive Director

Holds a Bachelor's degree in Theatre with minors in Music and Folklore

Azure Gunter – Program and Event Manager

Oversees concert logistics and community engagement

PROJECTED OPERATING COSTS 7/1/2025 – 6/30/2026

Office and Venue Rental: \$21,000

Production Personnel: \$16,000

Musician Pay: \$190,744

Musician Housing: \$28,500

Salaries and Wages: \$190,000

Guest Artist Fees: \$17,000

Music Rental: \$5,500

Office Supplies and Software: \$8,000

Insurance: \$1,800

Marketing: \$31,000

Miscellaneous Operating Expenses: \$8,500

## **Project Support Narrative**

Wyoming Symphony Orchestra Operating Support Request (2025–2026 Season)

### KEY DATES AND EVENTS

August 23, 2025 Park Concert

Disney

October 18, 2025

Prokofiev - Selections from Romeo and Juliet

-Collaboration with HS theatre students

Bernstein - Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

December 6, 2025

Holiday Celebration

January 24, 2026

Chamber

Possibilities:

Ravel: Tombeau de Couperin

Stravinsky: Pulcinella Suite

Jessie Montgomery: Banner (featuring string quartet made up of principals)

Concerto - Baroque

March 28, 2026

Possibilities:

Beethoven: Fidelio Overture

Joan Tower: 1920/2019 (About the passage of the 19th Amendment)

Rachmaninoff: Symphony 1

Sibelius: Symphony 2

May 2, 2026

Possibilities:

Valerie Coleman: Seven O'Clock Shout/Umoja

Copland: Lincoln Portrait

Howard Hanson: Song of Democracy - (collaboration with HS Choir)

Respighi: Pines of Rome - (collaboration with HS orchestra students)

All concerts are live-streamed for free to provide access to individuals facing geographic, financial, or mobility barriers. Pre-concert talks offer deeper insight into the music and are shared on social media and through newsletters.

WSO also engages in community outreach and special performances, including:

June 3, 2026 – UCross Founders Day Performance

June 7, 2026 – Casper Pride Performance

September 30 - October 4th - Casper College Humanities Festival

All concerts are live-streamed for free to provide access to individuals facing geographic, financial, or mobility barriers. Pre-concert talks offer deeper insight into the music and are shared on social media and through newsletters.

Music on the Move & Music for Health – Wyoming Symphony Orchestra

The Wyoming Symphony Orchestra is committed to making music accessible and impactful. Through Music on the Move, we bring live performances into Natrona County elementary schools, reaching over 1,000 students annually and inspiring a love for music. We also host two high school masterclasses each year, giving students the chance to learn from professional musicians. Our Music for Health initiative extends this impact beyond the classroom, bringing live music to hospitals, assisted living facilities, and community spaces where it provides comfort and healing. These programs ensure that music remains a vibrant and meaningful part of our community.

## KEY WSO PERSONNEL

Melissa MacDonald – Executive Director: Holds a Bachelor’s degree in Theatre with minors in Music and Folklore.

Azure Gunter – Program and Event Manager: Oversees concert logistics and community engagement.

Jerry Hou – Incoming Music Director (2025–2026 Season) Currently Associate Conductor of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and Former Assistant Conductor for the New York Philharmonic. Recognized for his innovative programming and dynamic conducting style.

## PROJECTED OPERATING COSTS (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)

Office and Venue Rental: \$21,000

Production Personnel: \$16,000

Musician Pay: \$190,744

Musician Housing: \$28,500

Salaries and Wages: \$190,000

Guest Artist Fees: \$17,000

Music Rental: \$5,500

Office Supplies and Software: \$8,000

Insurance: \$1,800

Marketing: \$31,000

Miscellaneous Operating Expenses: \$8,500

This funding is essential for sustaining WSO’s mission of enriching Wyoming’s cultural landscape through high-quality symphonic performances and educational programs.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Music on the Move (MOM) is the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra’s community-driven education and outreach initiative, engaging youth, adults, and seniors through meaningful musical experiences. For the 2025/26 season, MOM will feature the following programs:

Conductor in Residence



Maestro Jerry Hou will visit middle and high schools to lead interactive workshops, offering students direct access to a professional conductor. These sessions provide a unique opportunity to learn conducting techniques, deepen musical connections, and understand orchestral leadership.

#### Performance Demonstrations

Live presentations showcasing orchestral instruments and music will be held at schools, libraries, and community centers. WSO musicians will demonstrate their instruments and share insights into orchestral performance, allowing students to experience live music firsthand.

#### Educational Lectures

We will offer lectures on music history, theory, and appreciation to help students develop critical listening and analytical skills. Topics will explore the evolution of music, its cultural impact, and its role in shaping society throughout history.

#### Seniors to the Symphony

This initiative offers volunteer-supported transportation for seniors (65+) to attend WSO concerts. By removing transportation barriers, we help reduce isolation and ensure senior community members have access to enriching cultural experiences.

#### Children's Program

MOM introduces young learners to early music education with interactive lessons focusing on rhythm, melody, and harmony. These programs aim to inspire creativity and build a foundation for lifelong musical involvement.

#### Guest Artist Workshops & Masterclasses

Renowned guest artists will visit Central Wyoming for workshops and masterclasses, providing local musicians with hands-on learning opportunities. In 2025/26, we will host an ensemble from Classical Blast (Chicago), blending classical and contemporary music to enrich local artists' skills.

#### Collaborations with Local Schools

MOM collaborates with the Natrona County School District, aligning with their music education standards. These partnerships focus on fostering creative expression, critical listening, and cultural and historical connections. Many of our educators are local teachers, musicians, and university instructors, ensuring high-quality, familiar instruction.

## Access to Live Music

MOM offers free admission to WSO rehearsals and concerts for all K-12 and college students. This program ensures equitable access to live symphonic music, allowing students to engage with and learn from professional musicians in a live setting.

## Outreach Beyond the Classroom

Beyond school programs, small WSO ensembles perform at hospitals, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and senior centers. These performances bring live music to individuals with limited access to cultural events, offering joy and connection to the community.

Through Music on the Move, the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra is committed to making symphonic music accessible to all, fostering artistic development, cultural appreciation, and lifelong learning across Central Wyoming. MOM serves as a vital resource for schools, families, and individuals who may not otherwise have access to the arts, enriching lives through the transformative power of music.

## **Arts Learning: Goals**

### WSO 2025/26 Education and Community Outreach

The Wyoming Symphony Orchestra is committed to:

Bringing live symphonic music to students across Wyoming with programs designed to support state and local arts education goals.

Expanding access to orchestral music by overcoming geographical and physical barriers.

Fostering a lifelong appreciation for music through engaging education and outreach for all ages.

## How We Do It

Through Music on the Move (MOM), the WSO enhances classroom learning by aligning with Wyoming music content and performance standards. MOM offers interactive programs that help educators meet their curriculum needs. To ensure effectiveness, we conduct annual evaluations by gathering educator feedback on student

engagement, curriculum alignment, and overall impact. We also seek input on how we can better support music educators and adapt our programs to serve their classrooms more effectively.

One of the ways WSO nurtures young talent is through our Young Artist Competition, which gives emerging musicians the chance to perform alongside the Symphony.

After each program, we collect feedback through surveys and direct conversations with educators and musicians. This ongoing evaluation helps us refine our programs to better support Wyoming's Fine and Performing Arts standards while creating meaningful, inspiring musical experiences for students.

WSO's annual educational offerings include:

Interactive Performances & Guest Artist Visits – Students experience live music, explore music history and theory, and engage in Q&A sessions with professional musicians.

Solo Musician & Conductor-in-Residency Programs – Young musicians learn from professional performers and conductors, gaining insight into orchestral music and performance techniques.

Children's Program – Introduces students and community members to diverse musical genres, connecting them with professional musicians outside of a traditional orchestra setting.

Pre-Concert Talks – Engaging discussions that enhance audience understanding and appreciation of orchestral music.

Live-Streaming – A growing initiative to bring our programs to a wider audience, ensuring access to music education across the region.

Through these efforts, WSO remains dedicated to making music education accessible, interactive, and inspiring for the next generation.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Music on the Move: 2025/26 Season

All Music on the Move programs are led by professional musicians, many of whom are educators in school districts, community colleges, universities, or private music studios. This dynamic network of professionals allows the WSO to offer a diverse and engaging range of programs that cater to students of all experience levels. Through their expertise, students gain valuable insight into music theory, technique, composition, and history.

Some of the distinguished musicians involved in these programs include:

Jerry Hou, Music Director, WSO & Associate Conductor New York Philharmonic & Shepherd School of Music at Rice University

Megan Karls, Concertmaster, WSO

Norman Menzales, Principal Flute, WSO

Richard Turner, Bassoon, Private Instructor

Jennifer DePaolo, Strings Instructor, Casper College

Dr. Scott Meredith, former Professor of Trumpet, University of Wyoming

Dan Watt, Lecturer, Trombone, University of Wyoming

Don Williams, Trumpet, Private Instructor and Clinician, Denver & Boulder, CO

Alan Harvey, Tuba, University of Wyoming

Sarah McCoy, Laramie School District Music Educator, Orchestral Rep, WMEA

Leslie Fox, Laramie School District Music Educator

Timothy Jones, Instructor, String Academy of Wyoming

Amy Cowell, Music Educator, Snowy Range Academy

WSO maintains a strong collaboration with K-12 and college educators, ensuring that Music on the Move programs reinforce classroom learning while offering students hands-on experiences with professional musicians. Ongoing communication with these educators helps shape and refine the program each year. Some key educators include:

Dr. Joshua Mietz, Reeds Instructor, Casper College

Shawn Weis, Director of Bands, Natrona County High School

Brent Rose, Director of Bands, Kelly Walsh High School

Sarah Hanson, Director of Bands and Tri-M, Kelly Walsh High School

Krista Reinsbach, Music Teacher, Park Elementary School

#### Conductor-in-Residence Programs & Pre-Concert Talks

Under the leadership of WSO Music Director Jerry Hou, the Conductor-in-Residence Program and Pre-Concert Talks provide students and audiences with deeper insight into the world of orchestral music. Maestro Hou brings a wealth of experience as the Associate Conductor at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music and has worked with leading ensembles, including the Houston Symphony, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and the Rochester Philharmonic. His work in music education and outreach extends from conducting at top conservatories to mentoring young musicians.

Jerry Hou's passion for education and community engagement ensures that WSO's outreach programs remain innovative, accessible, and inspiring for students of all ages. Megan Karls also actively participates in Music on the Move, working alongside WSO musicians and guest artists to connect students with the transformative power of live orchestral music.

## **Budget Narrative**

The Wyoming Symphony Orchestra (WSO) thrives on a diverse funding model, supported by grants, sponsorships, individual donations, ticket sales, and in-kind contributions. These resources fuel our mission to enrich lives through orchestral music and community engagement. Grants and sponsorships fund key programs like our concert season and Music on the Move outreach, while individual donors provide crucial unrestricted support. Ticket sales and in-kind contributions help sustain performances and education initiatives, ensuring broad access to symphonic music. Partnerships with local organizations enhance our impact, fostering a deeper appreciation for the arts across Wyoming. With over three months of cash reserves, the WSO remains financially stable and committed to delivering exceptional performances, dynamic education programs, and meaningful community initiatives for the 2025/26 season and beyond.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER, INC.

WYOMINGWOMEN.ORG

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Providing Business Development Support for Entrepreneurial Artists

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Wyoming Women's Business Center (WWBC) empowers entrepreneurs, especially women, through our counseling, training, and micro-finance programs to start, expand, and sustain microbusinesses in the state of Wyoming. We strive to foster economic self-sufficiency. WWBC's Artist Development Program empowers Wyoming artists by providing comprehensive business education, personalized counseling, and exclusive access to the WWBC Works of Wyoming (WoW) retail gallery. Our mission is to support artists in expanding their businesses, increasing their visibility, and achieving long-term success in the creative industry.

### Program Development & Differentiation:

We're committed to expanding educational opportunities for Wyoming artists, equipping them with the essential business skills needed to thrive. Through strategic program growth and partnerships, we aim to enhance artist education, business support, and overall professional development.

Strengthen and expand our partnership with the Wind River Art Collective to support Indigenous and rural artists.

Provide targeted education on the intersection of art and entrepreneurship, emphasizing the importance of business acumen in sustaining a successful creative career.

Increase accessibility to business education through our on-demand, self-paced artist development course, Work of Art: Business Skills for Artists. This program covers essential topics such as career development, time management, portfolio building, marketing, and financial management.

Utilize a structured intake process to ensure artists are actively engaged in business counseling while assessing their needs for tailored training, access to capital, and mental health resources.

### Public Awareness & Community Engagement:

Raising public awareness is integral to our mission, ensuring that Wyoming artists have visibility and access to the resources available to them. We are committed to increasing engagement through strategic outreach efforts.

## **Community**

As the only economic development organization in the state providing dedicated business development opportunities for artists, WWBC plays a critical role in ensuring that socially and economically disadvantaged individuals have access to our services. We recognize that many artists face systemic barriers due to economic hardship, rural isolation, gender disparity, cultural bias, or lack of access to business development resources.

We currently serve an 80+ artist membership base state wide.

The majority (85%) of WWBC clients are women.

We are collaborating with the Wind River Development Fund/Wind River Community Alliance to continue education for the Wind River Art Collective that supports indigenous artists.

Our educational services are always free.

A fully virtual learning environment ensuring that even artists in the most remote areas can access resources, training, and mentorship. Recorded webinars and on-demand courses, allowing for flexible participation.

By offering comprehensive business training, one-on-one counseling, and networking opportunities, WWBC helps artists develop long-term business strategies that support economic independence and sustainability.

To accommodate diverse needs, we provide:

A wheelchair-accessible retail gallery at Works of Wyoming (WoW), ensuring physical accessibility at the street level.

Customizable accommodations for speaker sessions and workshops upon request, with a standard two-week notice to allow for proper preparation.

Closed captioning for online webinars and training, available upon request to support individuals with hearing impairments

A fully virtual and recorded educational platform, enabling individuals with varying schedules, mobility limitations, or rural residency to access resources at their convenience.

## **Evaluation**

By combining data-driven insights, client engagement, and continuous follow-up, WWBC ensures that our programs deliver measurable results, empower Wyoming artists, and contribute to a thriving creative economy. We do this by employing a multi-faceted approach to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of our programs. We conduct post-training surveys to assess participant satisfaction, learning outcomes, and the perceived value of our educational programs. Artists and small business owners provide direct feedback on program effectiveness, course content, and instructor engagement to ensure continuous improvement.



WoW utilizes the Shopify platform for analytics to track artist sales, product performance, and revenue growth over time for artists to track.

We maintain detailed records of all one-on-one counseling sessions and educational workshops, tracking participation rates and engagement levels.

After completing any of the WWBC programs, artists are placed on a two-year follow-up schedule where we keep a detailed record of any client contact we have.

Our Outreach Coordinator conducts quarterly check-ins to gather impact data, assess business growth, and offer continued support.

Our Outreach Coordinator and Client Coordinator work collaboratively to onboard new artists, match them with the best WWBC programs, and ensure they receive the guidance and resources needed to sustain and grow their businesses. This hands-on approach strengthens the entrepreneurial ecosystem and ensures that artists have ongoing support as they navigate business ownership.

By combining data-driven insights, client engagement, and continuous follow-up, WWBC ensures that our programs deliver measurable results, empower Wyoming artists, and contribute to a thriving creative economy.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

The Wyoming Women's Business Center (WWBC) is requesting operating support to assist with covering the rent expenses for our Works of Wyoming (WoW) retail gallery, a vital resource for emerging artists in Wyoming.

#### **Operating Costs**

The total annual cost to operate the WoW retail gallery includes:

Rent: \$21,060 per year

Utilities: Approximately \$630 per year

Supply costs: Approximately \$2,000 per year

The funds will be allocated towards helping keep the retail gallery operating to the best of its ability. The WWBC's Works of Wyoming (WoW) retail gallery is currently located in the rich downtown Laramie community that allows for more exposure and helps the business thrive with both foot traffic and regular customer base. This space also allows for our artists to sell their work in a downtown retail space and through our e-commerce platform. Currently, 80+ artists from around Wyoming showcase their work in the WoW retail gallery, many of whom volunteer their time to support jury committees, exhibitions, and inventory management.

The WoW rental space is an essential tool in providing a comprehensive Professional Artist Development Program targeting artists in business. WoW allows artists to display and experience selling in a gallery

setting. Artists work closely with WWBC staff to display, price, track their inventory, and be more involved in interacting with the community and consumers through receptions, speaking, and teaching in workshops about their art. Additionally, the WoW format provides professional business development for artists, which is one of our core principles. The WWBC believes self-employment is always an option to be self-sufficient and empowered.

Wyoming is a profoundly rural state with limited access to formal gallery spaces. Unlike urban areas where artists have multiple exhibition opportunities, Wyoming artists often face barriers to entering the professional art market due to geographic isolation, limited funding, and a lack of commercial galleries. WWBC's Works of Wyoming (WoW) retail gallery fills this gap, providing a nonprofit gallery space where artists can showcase and sell their work while learning the business side of art.

Maintaining this gallery space is essential not only for the growth of individual artists but also for strengthening Wyoming's creative economy. By supporting this operating request, funders will help sustain a critical platform for emerging artists, ensuring they have a space to exhibit, sell, and develop their art careers in a supportive and educational environment.

### **Project Support Narrative**

NA

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

The foundational skills required to successfully manage an arts-based business—such as time management, marketing, pricing, and recordkeeping—closely mirror those of traditional business ownership. Recognizing this intersection, WWBC provides interdisciplinary education through live webinars, offering artists practical strategies to navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship while maintaining their artistic vision.

The Work of Art Program is an education program containing 40+ hours of content for those interested in developing a business for their art making. Launched in 2023, this program is now offered on demand year-round, with supplemental access to one-on-one business counseling. All WoW artists can also access WWBC's microloan program offerings and mental health counseling services. The Work of Art Program provides training in the following areas:

1. Career Planning & Time Management: Transition from ideation to implementation, set objectives, and learn time management.
2. Portfolio Development: Create artist statements, bio, CVs, and showcase artwork effectively.
3. Pricing Your Work: Learn analytical and practical approaches to setting prices for artwork.
4. Recordkeeping: Track revenues and expenses, maintain balance sheets, and keep records for tax purposes.
5. Marketing & Branding: Identify target audience, principles of marketing, and creating a brand.
6. Promotions & Sales: Learn strategies for marketing and branding efforts and turning them into financial success.

7. Funding & Grant Writing: Explore diversifying revenue streams and applying for grants.
8. Legal Considerations: Overview of intellectual property rights, creating contracts, and business structure.
9. Business Plan Essentials: Translate dreams, projections, and goals into the initial framework of a business plan.

In addition to the Work Of Art Program, we have several other on demand webinars available as individual sessions in the following areas:

Collector Education for Collectors and Artists- This session will be hosted by the Artist Development Director and guests as they discuss collecting artwork from both sides of the coin.

Telling Your Artist Story- Reflect on the accomplishments we've had in our creative practices and how to leverage those accomplishments into thoughtful, intentional storytelling that helps us better connect with our artists and our work.

Prepping for Taxes as an artist -Join Artist Development Director and guest accountant, Shantel Anderson as they discuss some ways to prepare for tax season as a creator.

Simple Steps: Starting an Art Business in Wyoming- This webinar will discuss some of the do's and don'ts for starting a creative-based business while also presenting options and opportunities for making a plan to help participants get off the ground.

It's Vendor Season! How to Make Your Art Business Vendor-ready -We'll discuss the basics of becoming an art vendor in our Wyoming communities. From how to apply to what to prep to the things that are the most helpful the day of, we'll hear from several vendor veterans on what they've learned over the years.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Our ongoing goal is to provide business coaching to artists and craftspeople who make a partial or full-time living from their art. We assist them through business counseling, workshops on various business topics, microloans, matched savings accounts, and an opportunity to display and sell their art through the WWBC's WOW retail gallery. The WOW gallery provides them access to the retail side of the business, including displaying, marketing collaterals, pricing, inventory tracking, customer service, and social media marketing. This innovative model ensures that artists not only develop their craft but also build sustainable careers.

Recognizing that artistic talent alone is not enough to thrive in today's competitive market, we have identified key learning objectives that address both the practical and strategic aspects of arts entrepreneurship. Through the initial welcome meeting with our Client Coordinator, and our one on one sessions with our Artist Development Director, we are better able to target the areas that artists struggle and need assistance with when it comes to managing their business.

Our educational approach balances essential business skills—such as market research, business planning, and negotiation techniques—with a deeper focus on fostering entrepreneurial mindset and behavior. This holistic approach ensures that artists can transition from creators to business owners, strengthening their professional sustainability and expanding their portfolios.

To define our Arts Learning goals, WWBC has actively assessed the professional development needs of artists and craftspeople, evaluated existing training gaps, and developed a structured learning framework that includes:

Tailored training that directly addresses the specific business and professional development challenges identified by artists.

Collaborative partnerships with nonprofits, industry professionals, and experienced artists to enhance and expand WWBC's WoW Retail Gallery learning tracks.

Targeted growth strategies that help artists achieve long-term sustainability, financial resilience, and career advancement.

Inclusive education that meets the needs of both craftspeople and fine artists, ensuring relevance across artistic disciplines.

Strategic relationship-building guidance to help fine artists navigate the complexities of working with art collectors, galleries, and buyers, fostering meaningful and profitable connections.

WWBC understands the nuanced economic ecosystem of creative professionals, offering targeted strategies for artists and craftspeople seeking to monetize their distinctive talents. Through personalized business counseling, topic-specific workshops and webinars, microloans, and retail opportunities at WWBC's WoW Retail Gallery, we empower artists with hands-on experience in retail operations, marketing, customer engagement, and brand development. By integrating business education with direct market access, we ensure that artists have the tools they need to build thriving, sustainable careers in the arts.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

Kim Lockhart, WWBC Artist Development Director -As the Artist Development Director, Kim Lockhart serves as the primary strategic leader and operational catalyst for the Women of Wyoming (WoW) artist program. She will provide comprehensive oversight of artist onboarding, gallery management, and sales infrastructure. Her role encompasses full-spectrum coordination of artist engagement, including developing and executing targeted educational programming, managing artist communications, and ensuring seamless access to critical professional resources. With a background in both artist management, retail management and being an artist herself, Kim is able to understand the unique needs of artists, as well as an understanding of how retail spaces run and the visual aspects that help a business thrive.

Erin Stewart, WWBC Client Coordinator -As the Client Coordinator, Erin manages the entire artist onboarding process, conducting initial assessments, curating personalized program recommendations, and maintaining strategic communication channels that guide artists through their preliminary engagement with WWBC services. With over 15 years of extensive experience in client services and communications, underpinned by her academic training as an English major with a specialized focus in communications. Her professional qualifications are distinguished by her diverse expertise as an artist, entrepreneur, and naturalist, including co-ownership of Sage Hill Artisans pottery collective, and teaching and assisting college-level ceramics courses.

Christine Langley, WWBC Business Education Director -Christine plays a critical role in the Artist Development program, serving as the Senior Business Counselor who provides comprehensive business support to artists at every stage of their entrepreneurial journey. With 25 years of hands on experience launching and scaling two startup family ventures and over 15 years of direct engagement with Wyoming entrepreneurs, Christine brings a unique blend of strategic planning expertise, leadership development skills, and practical business growth strategies

Alexandria Smith, WWBC Microloan Director -Alex demonstrates deep and multifaceted involvement in the Artist Development program through two critical interventions. First, as the microloan director, and by teaching the "Financing Your Dream" course, which equips artists with essential financial management skills. Her professional qualifications are distinguished by years of experience in the financial industry, including critical work with the Small Business Administration during COVID-19 financial relief efforts, where she demonstrated exceptional skill in developing tailored lending solutions and supporting business owners through complex economic challenges.

Rachel Truett, WWBC Mental Health Director -Rachel plays a pivotal role in the Artist Development program through her dedicated Mental Health Services initiative, providing comprehensive clinical counseling to WoW artists at no cost. Rachel's clinical expertise not only addresses mental health challenges but also serves as a strategic resource that empowers artists to navigate the complex emotional landscapes of creative entrepreneurship. She has a Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the University of the Cumberlands, holding National Counselor Certification (NCC) and Wyoming Provisional Professional Counselor (PPC) credentials.

### **Budget Narrative**

WWBC maintains a sophisticated, multi-dimensional funding strategy that strategically leverages diverse revenue streams and collaborative partnerships.

Our primary institutional partnerships include the Office of Women's Business Ownership (OWBO) operated as a division of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). We also receive a technical assistance grant from the SBA for our Microloan program. Our state funding partner is the State of Wyoming via the Wyoming Business Council (WBC). The WBC has been a partner since the organization's inception in 2000. The professional Artist Development Program includes the WWBC's WoW retail gallery is funded through a combination of 30% sales revenue and annual membership fees and receives supplemental support from the OWBO grant and donations. Our in-kind contributions derive from our volunteers, who average fifteen volunteer hours per month.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING SHEEP FOUNDATION

[HTTPS://WWW.WYOMINGSHEEPANDWOOLFESTIVAL.COM](https://www.wyomingsheepandwoolfestival.com)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: 2025 Wyoming Sheep & Wool Festival

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

The Festival's mission is to "produce a fund and inclusive annual event to showcase and celebrate Wyoming's sheep and wool heritage. This gathering will unite historic, artistic, cultural, and educational offerings through its programming in a host community."

The 2025 festival is a free public event with components selected to entice members of various demographic to engage in a singular event: from the hands-on art corner to juried art contests, a free concert for all ages along with musical entertainment during the day, a stock dog trial and shearing demonstrations, fiber arts demonstrations, displays of sheep camps used by herders, and horse-drawn wagon tours that deliver participants to a tour of the wool mill. We've also teamed up with the University of Wyoming to record storytelling interviews with sheep producers from across Wyoming, helping to capture the culture and history of our community.

Content Goals: Provide three offerings of each of the following elements at the annual festival: Arts, Culture & Education.

Arts: juried art show and sale; showcase musical talents of Wyoming band; and provide for an additional historic and/or contemporary photography or art exhibit.

Culture: facilitate discussion of panel of sheep producers; offer storytelling opportunity with recording of stories told by sheep producers; display of sheep camps used by herders; and tours. These cultural offerings will include links between historic and contemporary topics.

Education: offer three educational sessions, demonstrations or lectures.

Fiber Goal: Include fiber components in festival offerings, including hands-on wool and fleece assessments, fiber arts demonstration, and woolcraft show.

### Community

The festival is designed as an event that benefits its host community of Buffalo, population 4,300. The festival draws rural residents from across the state, as well as the general public.

We invite participation by local organizations, including contacting community organizations such as asking local library and museum to feature festival themes in their displays; and recruit volunteer organizations to offer free craft projects for children at vendor fair, or other free activities.

We ask federal and state agencies to host booths with historic and contemporary information.

We involve local leaders by having the welcome and introduction by city and county officials at various events during the festival, and legislators and state elected officials at other festival events.

We include a Trip Planning link on festival website, with links to community, things to do, places to go, where to stay, camping locations, etc.

Our accessibility goal is to make the festival free and inclusive to the public:

- Using a combination of partnerships, grants, donations, and sponsorships to cover festival costs.
- Offering varied programs for all ages with no prior knowledge of agriculture required for participation.
- Setting low entrance fees for vendor fair and art contest to offer opportunities for artists, local crafters and food sales to showcase and sell items, while increasing participation by people not typically associated with agriculture.
- The host venue is a wheelchair accessible facility. We provide accessible parking, accessible seating and companion seating and admission of service dogs upon request. The festival has an appointed accommodations coordinator and provides reasonable accommodations as requested, with details on the festival website.

## **Evaluation**

We've struggled with evaluations and came away from the recent evaluations webinar with great ideas. This year we will use mixed methods for evaluation, using teams to record observations, record attendance, online metrics and media mentions, and provide opportunities for participants to provide written, online and oral feedback about their experiences. The festival team will host a post-event evaluation session and will consider all the feedback and metrics in future planning. We'll also note media mentions and coverage of the festival.

- On-site volunteers will note or estimate the number of people at individual sessions.
- Reflection boards will be provided for attendees to provide one-word reflections on their experiences at various locations during the festival.
- Pop interviews: Volunteers will record short verbal responses from attendees.
- On-site volunteers will distribute a written survey, providing free festival stickers as an incentive for those who participate.
- Encourage feedback about the overall event experience via a QR code to website survey.

The survey will ask questions such as:

What was your favorite speaking session/performer/demonstration?

How likely are you to attend next year?

What factors influence your decision to attend?

How likely are you to use the information presented?

How likely are you to recommend this event to friends?

What activities did you participate in?

How satisfied were you with the festival experience?

What did you like most?

What can we do to improve?

### **Operating Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Support Narrative**

The 3rd annual Wyoming Sheep & Wool Festival will be held July 11-13 in Buffalo, allowing this free cultural heritage celebration to focus not just on traditional migratory sheep operations and small flocks in the area, but to also feature the food and traditions of the local Basque community that has strong ties to Wyoming's sheep production.

Featuring expanded arts, educational, and cultural programming that celebrates Wyoming's sheep and wool heritage, the festival will provide the public with opportunities to meet sheep and sheep producers, learn about our tools, history and products, feast on lamb grown in Wyoming, browse through vendor booths, watch demonstrations involving woolcrafts, attend art and woolcraft shows, and dance to live music featuring Wyoming rangeland stories and Wyoming artists. Programming will be varied, from demonstrations and hands-on learning opportunities to local tours, a stock dog trial and a panel discussion among producers. We have also arranged to have a horse-drawn wagon provide transportation to Mountain Meadow Wool Mill for tours, as well as a guided historical tour of the town.

While the festival is a big undertaking (with a total cost of about \$35,000 per year), our request to the Wyoming Arts Council is narrow and focuses only on the live musical performances that will take place on Saturday, July 12.

We seek \$3,500 in grant support to cover half the cost of the live music components. Tris Munsick and The Innocents is our headliner band that will perform a free concert for the public on July 12. This band's fee is \$6,000 so we would like to use \$3,000 in grant funding to help cover this fee. In addition, we seek \$500 to cover the costs of nine Basque dancers from the Big Horn Basque Club who will perform on Saturday, as well as \$500 to offer incentives to two other local musicians to perform on Saturday. We are currently accepting applications from musicians for these two remaining performance opportunities.

It's important to the festival committee that we promote Wyoming artists and it's our pleasure to feature Tris Munsick and his band. Tris is a Wyoming cowboy and musician, hailing from the Bighorns and providing a unique voice to modern cowboy music and storytelling. Likewise, the Basque Club are also local to the Bighorns, and promote music, dance and traditions tied to the Old World Basque country that is closely linked to the history of Wyoming's domestic sheep industry.



Our arts and woolcraft shows draw entrees from 15-30 artists from throughout Wyoming and the region. Art juror Chessney Sevier is a well respected and exhibited Wyoming printmaker and painter. While Chessney will select the overall winners for the art and woolcraft shows, attendees will vote to select the People's Choice and Children's Choice awards.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

The Wyoming Wool Growers Association, the University of Wyoming Wool Initiative, and UW Extension Service bring substantial in-kind contributions as well as a volunteer base for the festival itself. Our Festival Committee actively seeks sponsorships and donations from private organizations and businesses, as well as grant assistance to cover all the costs associated with the festival. Our fundraising efforts began earlier this year.

While most of the festival offerings will be free to the public (with the exception of the festival awards dinner), the festival also generates some revenue from small fees for the vendor fair and contest entries. The festival is an annual event but travels around the state to a new location each year to a community located along a historic Wyoming sheep trail. This movement allows us to approach companies and businesses in different areas of the state for support any given year, although we do expect to generate continued support from some entities.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOMING WRITERS, INC.

[HTTPS://WYOMINGWRITERSINC.WILDAPRICOT.ORG/](https://wyomingwritersinc.wildapricot.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Strengthening Wyoming's Writing Community: 2026 Conference & Arts Learning Expansion

## Application:

### **Mission/Goals**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. is the state's only all-inclusive writing organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and connecting writers across Wyoming regardless of experience level, genre, or background. For more than five decades, we have been the foundation of Wyoming's literary community, providing professional development and creative growth opportunities. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we are committed to advancing the literary arts through education, collaboration, and advocacy. We strive to make the literary arts more accessible to ensure writers in rural and underserved areas have the same opportunities as those in larger communities.

Our strategic goals and key initiatives include but are not limited to:

#### Hosting an Annual Conference

The Wyoming Writers Conference is our cornerstone event, offering workshops, industry panels, and networking opportunities for writers of all genres. By centralizing the conference in Casper (2025 and 2026), we are reducing financial barriers and increasing accessibility statewide.

#### Expanding Year-Round Arts Learning

Beyond the conference, we are expanding digital and in-person education to include quarterly virtual workshops & critique groups for skill development and are actively developing a statewide Literary Map for connecting writers throughout Wyoming.

#### Statewide Collaboration & Advocacy

We partner with Jackson Hole Writers, the Bookmarked Literary Arts Festival, Wyoming Humanities, the Cabin Fever Writers Festival, Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers, and others to build a more robust literary landscape. Our

League of Utah Writers collaboration also expands regional engagement through a reciprocal writing contest judging program.

Through these efforts and more, Wyoming Writers, Inc. is strengthening Wyoming's entire literary ecosystem. With continued support from the Wyoming Arts Council, we will expand opportunities, increase accessibility, and help sustain the literary arts for future generations.

## **Community**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. serves writers across Wyoming. As the state's only all-inclusive writing organization, we welcome writers of all backgrounds from urban and rural, economically disadvantaged, and historically underserved communities, including students, veterans, retirees, and individuals from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds.

Wyoming's rural nature presents limited access to professional literary resources but also unique connection opportunities for passionate organizations. We address these opportunities by expanding access through centralizing our annual conference to reduce travel burdens and offer virtual workshops and mentorships for those unable to attend in person. Our in-development statewide Literary Map will connect writers to local events, critique groups, and resources in collaboration with Jackson Hole Writers, the Bookmarked Literary Arts Festival, and Wyoming Humanities.

We're committed to ensuring diverse voices are represented in our programming. Outreach includes virtual learning, scholarships, and partnerships to expand access. We provide ADA-compliant venues, always, as well as digital learning options in an effort to encourage diverse storytelling and seek to amplify traditionally underrepresented voices in Wyoming's literary scene.

We actively remove barriers to participation by ensuring we only use ADA-compliant venues with accessible seating and accommodations options. We also provide digital alternatives (Zoom workshops, recordings upon request, online critique groups) as well as scholarships and reduced fees for those in need. We respond to individual accommodation requests on a case-by-case basis to guarantee all participants can fully engage with our organization and our broader writing community.

## **Evaluation**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. is committed to measuring the effectiveness of our programs to continue to meet the needs of Wyoming's writing community. We use participant feedback, direct board engagement, and attendance tracking to guide program improvements and long-term planning.

Each year, we collect conference feedback forms assessing session quality, faculty, engagement, accommodations, diversity of programming, accessibility and all conference in-betweens. This data informs decisions on future programming, speaker selection, and accommodations and accessibility improvements. Additionally, we maintain ongoing dialogue between our Board of Directors and members through e-mail and newsletter engagement, ensuring writers can voice concerns, request programming, and help shape the organization's future.

Beyond the conference, we track participation in year-round arts learning initiatives, including virtual workshops, mentorship programs, and partnerships. Attendance data and participant feedback help identify high-impact programs and areas for improvement.

We also evaluate writing contests and mentorship programs by loosely tracking participant outcomes like contest winners who go on to publish or mentees who develop lasting professional connections. Our most recent League of Utah Writers collaboration provides external assessment that guarantees more robust, high-quality feedback for contest participants.

Through these evaluation methods, Wyoming Writers, Inc. ensures that our programs remain responsive, impactful, and sustainable. With continued support, we'll continue to refine our approach to strengthen engagement and expand opportunities that empower writers across the state.

### **Operating Support Narrative**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. is committed to supporting, educating, and connecting writers across Wyoming year-round. As a volunteer-driven 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we rely on operating funds to sustain daily administration, communication, and outreach efforts that make our programs possible. These funds ensure that we can continue serving Wyoming's diverse writing community beyond the conference and also continue to provide ongoing resources, engagement opportunities, and professional development avenues.

Our organization is led by an all-volunteer, working board (and several volunteer committees) whose members dedicate significant time and effort to planning, outreach, and program development. While the board plays an active role in advancing Wyoming Writers, Inc.'s mission, day-to-day operations require dedicated administrative support to manage communications, financial records, membership engagement, and event logistics. A significant portion of our operating expense is allocated to personnel support, specifically for our part-time administrative assistant. This role is critical in keeping the organization running efficiently and ensuring seamless coordination across all initiatives. We allocate \$8,500.00 annually/\$700.00 monthly (for the 2025/2026 season) to support this position.

Additionally, we incur technology and administrative costs essential for maintaining our website, digital infrastructure, and communication platforms. Our website serves as a hub for information, membership management and engagement, e-mail communication campaigns, our annual writing contest, scholarship application, event registrations, and more, requiring regular updates and hosting fees of approximately \$2,500.00 per year. Digital tools like ZOOM for virtual meetings cost approximately \$300.00 annually, allowing us to stay connected with members across the state and ensure accessibility for those in rural areas.

Operational funding also supports marketing and outreach initiatives, including social media promotion, print materials, and public relations and advertising to expand awareness of our programs and membership opportunities. This also includes having an organization table/on-the-ground presence at collaborative partnership events and conferences throughout the year put on by organizations like Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers, Bookmarked, and Jackson Hole Writers. To ensure continued growth, we invest approximately \$1,500.00 to \$3,000.00 annually in outreach efforts. As Wyoming's only all-inclusive statewide writing organization, we prioritize making our services accessible to rural and underserved communities, requiring ongoing-yet-limited (given our budget) outreach efforts to strengthen engagement.

These funds further assist with general administrative expenses, including office supplies, liability insurance, and professional development opportunities for board members. Our general administrative costs are expected to be approximately \$3,500.00 for the 2025/2026 season, ensuring the sustainability and efficiency of our operations. As we continue to expand our impact, operating support remains the foundation that allows us to grow, adapt, and sustain Wyoming's literary community.

With support from the Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Writers, Inc. can continue providing essential administrative and organizational stability, ensuring that writers across the state have year-round access to resources, education, and professional development.

### **Project Support Narrative**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. is requesting Project Support to fund key initiatives that sustain and expand our programming between August 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026. Our flagship event, the annual Wyoming Writers Conference, remains central to our mission, but we also engage in broader outreach efforts that extend beyond the conference to serve writers across Wyoming year-round. These initiatives provide education, networking, and professional development opportunities to continue to ensure Wyoming writers have access to industry professionals, mentorship, and a supportive and growing literary community.

The Wyoming Writers Conference is the state's most comprehensive gathering of literary talent, offering workshops, industry panels, manuscript critiques, and networking opportunities with agents, editors, and published authors. The 2025 and 2026 conferences will be held in Casper, Wyoming, ensuring greater accessibility and reduced travel barriers for writers across the state. At the conference, faculty and guest speakers include

experienced authors, editors, agents, and publishing professionals who bring decades of industry experience to attendees. The conference provides a mix of craft-focused workshops, business and career development sessions, and direct access to publishing professionals, allowing writers to refine their work and navigate the industry effectively.

In addition to the conference, we are expanding our broader outreach efforts to engage writers throughout the year. These efforts include regional networking events, professional development workshops, and increased digital programming. Our collaborations with Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers, Jackson Hole Writers, Wyoming Humanities, Dragonsteel Nexus, and the League of Utah Writers have strengthened our ability to provide Wyoming writers with new professional connections and regional networking opportunities, further broadening their access to industry experts and literary communities beyond state lines.

Wyoming Writers, Inc. is also investing in expanded marketing and outreach during our 2025/2026 season to connect with new and underserved communities. Scholarships and financial assistance are available to ensure that writers from economically disadvantaged backgrounds can attend the conference and other programs. Digital outreach and social media campaigns will increase visibility and accessibility, ensuring that more Wyoming writers are aware of the resources available to them.

The requested Project Support funds will be allocated to help with expenses as follows:

- Conference speaker and faculty costs: \$15,000.00 for travel stipends, honorariums, and accommodations for industry professionals.
- Venue and equipment rentals: \$5,000.00 for conference space, AV rentals, event insurance, and necessary materials.
- Marketing and outreach: \$5,000.00 to promote the conference and regional networking events.
- Scholarship and financial assistance: \$2,000.00 to support attendance for underserved writers.
- Year-round programming & professional development: \$5,000.00 for workshops, critique groups, and networking initiatives outside the conference.

With support from the Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Writers, Inc. will continue to grow its programming, increase access to professional development, and strengthen Wyoming's literary community through both our annual conference and ongoing outreach efforts.

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. is dedicated to expanding arts learning opportunities for writers across Wyoming through our annual conference, year-round educational initiatives, and ongoing connection opportunities. We recognize that meaningful arts learning extends beyond a single event, which is why we are committed to developing structured, accessible, and ongoing opportunities that support writers at every stage of their creative journey.

### Arts Learning at the Wyoming Writers Conference

The Wyoming Writers Conference serves as a premier arts learning event, bringing together published authors, educators, literary agents, and industry professionals to provide in-depth instruction, feedback, and networking opportunities.

Participants engage in:

- Faculty-led workshops on craft development, revision techniques, pitch dos and do nots, marketing and advertising, career-building strategies and more.
- Live pitch sessions with publishers and agents that allow writers to refine their submission process while overcoming the barriers of industry access.
- Critique groups and peer review sessions that give attendees the opportunity to receive direct, constructive feedback.
- Open mic readings where writers develop public reading skills and gain confidence in sharing their work.

These sessions and more equip writers with the tools and confidence to pursue publication, literary excellence, and professional growth while guaranteeing that they leave the conference with both practical skills and long-term connections.

### Extending Arts Learning Beyond the Conference

While the conference remains a cornerstone of our arts learning programming, Wyoming Writers, Inc. is committed to sustaining education and engagement year-round.

Key initiatives during the 2025/2026 season that extend our impact include:

- A Wyoming Literary Map initiative: A statewide collaboration with Jackson Hole Writers, the Bookmarked Literary Arts Festival, Wyoming Humanities, and the Jackson Hole Book Festival. This initiative is developing a digital and physical resource hub that will help connect writers with local workshops, critique groups, and literary events.
- Cross-regional arts learning collaborations: Wyoming Writers, Inc. continues to develop partnerships with RMFW and the League of Utah Writers to provide expanded professional development and critique opportunities.
- Virtual education and digital accessibility: Wyoming Writers, Inc. is expanding our quarterly virtual workshop and critique group offerings, allowing writers across the state to access faculty-led learning experiences, professional development workshops, and industry Q&As from any location. This initiative ensures that arts learning remains accessible to those who cannot attend in-person events due to geography or financial constraints.

### Impact and Future Growth

Through these initiatives, Wyoming Writers, Inc. is creating a lasting framework for arts learning that supports writers year-round. By providing both in-person and virtual access to high-quality instruction, as well as building statewide literary infrastructure through partnerships and resource development, we are ensuring that Wyoming writers—regardless of location or background—have the opportunity to learn, grow, and connect.

With continued support from the Wyoming Arts Council, we will expand these efforts to strengthen collaborative partnerships and build sustainable arts learning pathways for writers throughout Wyoming.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. is passionate about expanding and sustaining arts learning opportunities for writers across Wyoming to create a foundation for and a pathway through which education, professional development, and literary engagement remain accessible year-round. Our commitment to arts learning is rooted in the belief that literary education should be available to all writers, regardless of location, background, or financial barriers.

Our arts learning goals are shaped by ongoing dialogue with our membership, participant feedback from past conferences, and an assessment of Wyoming's literary landscape, particularly the barriers faced by rural and underserved writers. Through these efforts, we continue to refine and expand opportunities that foster creativity, confidence, and professional growth.

One of our primary goals is to provide high-quality, professional-level instruction to writers at all stages of their creative journeys. The annual Wyoming Writers Conference is central to this effort, offering faculty-led workshops, critique sessions, and industry panels that equip writers with technical skills, business knowledge, and networking opportunities. We aim to create a learning environment that balances craft development with career-building insights so that attendees leave with practical tools to refine their work and navigate the publishing industry.



Beyond the conference, we seek to expand year-round access to literary education through both in-person and virtual initiatives. A key goal is to develop structured mentorship programs that connect emerging writers with experienced professionals to offer one-on-one guidance tailored to individual artistic growth. Additionally, through regional partnerships with organizations like Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers and the League of Utah Writers, we aim to broaden the learning experiences available to Wyoming writers by fostering cross-state critique and professional development opportunities.

Another central objective is to increase accessibility to arts learning for writers in rural and economically disadvantaged areas. To address this, we are actively developing a Wyoming Literary Map, a long-term project that will serve as a statewide resource hub, connecting writers with local workshops, critique groups, and literary events. This collaborative initiative will create lasting infrastructure to support arts learning beyond individual programs or funding cycles.

Additionally, we recognize that literary arts education must evolve alongside the industry. As the publishing landscape changes, it's crucial to provide writers with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate digital platforms, self-publishing, hybrid publishing, and traditional publishing avenues. Expanding access to career-development workshops, panel discussions with publishing professionals, and training on digital storytelling and author branding is a growing priority for Wyoming Writers, Inc.

Finally, we recognize that arts learning is not just about technical mastery but also confidence-building and community engagement. Through open mic opportunities, peer critique groups, and live pitch sessions with industry professionals, we encourage writers to overcome creative barriers, share their work, and develop their voices in supportive environments. These activities not only refine skills but also foster a sense of community to reinforce the idea that writing is both an individual pursuit and a collective art form.

With support from the Wyoming Arts Council, we will continue strengthening these efforts, expanding arts learning initiatives, and fostering a literary community that empowers writers to develop their craft and connect with broader creative networks. By maintaining a commitment to education, accessibility, and innovation, Wyoming Writers, Inc. will ensure that arts learning remains a cornerstone of Wyoming's literary landscape for years to come.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

As Wyoming Writers, Inc. plans for its 2026 programming, our faculty will continue to include a diverse lineup of published authors, literary agents, editors, and publishing professionals, laying the groundwork for a robust and multifaceted arts learning experience.

While faculty for 2026 is still being developed, we have already begun outreach and have received tentative commitments from bestselling speculative fiction author Fonda Lee and renowned horror and sci-fi author Dan Wells. Additionally, we expect to welcome back faculty and industry professionals from publishing organizations Five Prince Publishing, Corvisiero Literary Agency, Amaranth Publications, and Nelson Literary Agency, all of whom have played a role in recent Wyoming Writers programming.

Our 2025 conference faculty includes a broad spectrum of talent across genres and publishing backgrounds, providing a strong indicator of the type of industry professionals and educators we will continue to attract in 2026.

These individuals include:

- Mark Stevens: A multi-award-winning mystery and literary fiction author and longtime member of Mystery Writers of America. His expertise in writing craft, style, and publishing industry insights makes him a valuable instructor.
- Amanda Cabot: A bestselling and multi-genre author of over 40 novels, recognized for her historical fiction and romance. She brings deep insight into genre expectations, publishing strategies, and public speaking for authors.
- Linda Rae Sande: A former technical writer in 3D graphics and animation, now a historical fiction and nonfiction author with a strong background in self-publishing, book marketing, and royalty maximization.
- Lindsay Schopfer: An award-winning fantasy and science fiction author with a background in creative writing instruction and mentorship for emerging writers. His expertise includes world-building and career investment for authors. He'll also be offering editing consultations.
- Nick Thacker: A USA Today bestselling author and founder of multiple author-focused businesses. As VP of Author Success for Draft2Digital, he brings expertise in marketing, career planning, and indie publishing strategies.
- Alexandra Grana: A literary agent with Corvisiero Literary Agency, specializing in genre fusion, speculative fiction, and diverse narratives. She offers direct industry insights into querying, manuscript development, and market trends.
- Bernadette Soehner: Founder and CEO of 5 Prince Publishing, an experienced publisher and multi-business entrepreneur. She brings expertise in traditional and hybrid publishing models, manuscript acquisitions, and career coaching.
- Hallie Guidry: CEO of Amaranth Publications and a professional editor with over a decade of experience in freelance editing, ghostwriting, and publishing consulting.

Based on current faculty trends and ongoing outreach, our 2026 arts learning faculty will continue to encompass a mix of bestselling authors, award-winning educators, literary agents, and publishing professionals from various genres and industry sectors. We anticipate continued participation from representatives of independent and traditional publishing houses as well as professionals who specialize in editing, marketing, business development, and author mentorship. As we continue to develop our 2026 programming, we focus on securing high-caliber, diverse voices who can provide meaningful arts learning experiences for writers across Wyoming.

### **Budget Narrative**

Wyoming Writers, Inc. maintains a diverse funding model to sustain operations and expand arts learning opportunities. Our budget is supported by a combination of grant funding, conference registration fees, sponsorships, and in-kind contributions. A significant portion of our budget comes from conference attendance fees and membership dues, which help offset event costs while keeping the conference accessible.

Each year, we conduct a statewide sponsorship campaign, securing financial and in-kind support from businesses, community organizations, and literary partners. We have also received support from Wyoming Humanities and continue to explore additional funding partnerships.

Our budget is carefully structured to align with our mission, ensuring that funds support year-round operations, professional development opportunities, and expanded arts learning initiatives. By leveraging multiple funding sources, we maximize impact while maintaining long-term financial sustainability.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

WYOPOETS

[HTTP://WWW.WYOPOETS.ORG/](http://www.wyopoets.org/)

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: WyoPoets 2026 Spring Poetry Workshop

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

WyoPoets is a nonprofit organization rooted in the rugged beauty and open skies of Wyoming—a gathering place for those who turn to poetry as both vocation and sanctuary. Our members span from seasoned authors to quiet hobbyists, from the high plains of our home state to neighboring states and far-flung corners of the country. What binds us is a shared devotion to the written word and its power to shape hearts, minds, and communities.

Our mission is to foster a vibrant, inclusive culture of poetry across Wyoming by offering inspiration, connection, and creative growth. We believe in poetry as a living force—something to be written, studied, published, and, most importantly, shared. Whether read aloud in small-town libraries, scribbled in a journal under cottonwood trees, or printed in literary journals, we honor poetry in all its forms.

### Strategic Goals (2025–2030)

Over the next five years, WyoPoets is committed to deepening our impact and widening our embrace. Our goals are as follows:

#### Diversify Our Presenters

We will seek out a wide range of voices to lead our workshops—poets of different backgrounds, styles, and experiences—so our members encounter new rhythms, fresh perspectives, and bold approaches to the craft.

#### Diversify Our Membership

We aim to expand our membership to reflect the full chorus of poetic voices across Wyoming and beyond. We believe that true artistic growth happens when we are lovingly challenged, when we listen to each other, and

when we make room for difference. This will help us resist sameness and ensure that Wyoming's poetry continues to surprise, expand, and thrive.

#### Grow Local Poetry Communities

We envision poetry blooming in every corner of our state. To this end, we will empower our members to create community-based events—readings, workshops, open mics, school visits—that awaken a love of poetry in new audiences and nurture the next generation of poets.

### Community

WyoPoets is a grassroots literary organization rooted in the vast and varied landscapes of Wyoming, and so too are our members—most of whom are in the later seasons of life, bringing with them the depth, wisdom, and quiet resilience that comes with age. With a large portion of our membership retired and many over the age of 70, we are proud to be an intergenerational gathering of poets who still believe in the power of words to shape communities and stir the human spirit.

Understanding the economic realities of our state—where the median income hovers around \$33,000—we work hard to keep our offerings accessible. Our annual membership fee remains just \$20, and our Spring Workshop registration is kept to a modest \$70, allowing poets of all income levels to take part in high-quality literary experiences without financial burden.

In 2025, our Spring Workshop will be held in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

We remain committed to accessibility and inclusivity. Our chosen venues always provide handicapped access, and we've established multiple scholarship funds to reduce barriers to participation:

The Underrepresented Poets Scholarship, designed to amplify voices that have historically been left out of mainstream poetry spaces—whether due to race, ethnicity, orientation, subject matter, or stylistic approach.

The General Scholarship Fund, which provides financial support for any poet in need.

The Student Scholarship, meant to uplift and encourage the next generation of Wyoming poets.

In recent years, we've become increasingly intentional about bringing in presenters whose work reflects a wide range of identities and experiences. By doing so, we hope to draw a more diverse community into our fold, nurturing an environment where every poet feels they belong.

## **Evaluation**

Each year, WyoPoets approaches its Spring Workshop not just as an event, but as a living, evolving experience—one shaped by the voices of those who attend. To that end, we provide every participant with a comprehensive evaluation form upon arrival, which is collected at the conclusion of the workshop. These evaluations serve as a vital feedback loop, allowing us to refine and reimagine the event year after year.

The evaluation form invites participants to reflect on all aspects of the workshop experience, including the quality and effectiveness of the presenter, the accessibility and suitability of the venue, hotel accommodations, and the overall workshop structure. We gather input on new elements added to the program, the quality of meals provided, suggestions for future presenters, and whether participant expectations were met. It includes both scaled ratings and open-ended questions to allow for thoughtful, in-depth responses.

Once collected, the responses are reviewed first by the Workshop Committee, then shared with the WyoPoets Board. Together, we examine recurring themes—celebrations and critiques alike—and give special attention to accessibility concerns, individual requests, and suggestions for future growth. This process ensures that each voice is heard, and that improvements are grounded in the lived experience of our community.

The most common suggestions and areas for enhancement are prioritized and passed along to the incoming Workshop Committee. In this way, each workshop becomes a continuation of the last—an ongoing conversation between our members and our leadership, all in service of creating more meaningful, inclusive, and inspiring gatherings.

## **Operating Support Narrative**

n/a

## **Project Support Narrative**

Operating Support: Our operating expenses are minimized as a result of being a volunteer-run organization, but there are a few expenses we incur each year other than our Spring Workshop, which is the project outlined below. We have a quarterly newsletter where we contract out the editor position and printing, we hold two contests a year where we pay the judges an honorarium, we have a Zoom subscription to host monthly poetry events, we have fees as part of our organization's enrollment with the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, website, and PayPal fees. The requested operating funds would be divided between these areas.

For the project support WyoPoets is requesting, we have a poetry workshop planned for April 25th-26th, 2025. Each year, we recruit a poet to present two, two-hour sessions teaching about the art and craft of poetry. The specific theme and topics covered are determined by agreement between the artist, workshop committee, and WyoPoets' President. The presenter for the 2024 workshop has yet to be determined but it will be a respected poet of high standing.

We are especially delighted to announce that Kristin Abraham will serve as the featured presenter for our 2025 Spring Workshop, to be held April 25–26 at Little America Resort in Cheyenne. A gifted poet and dedicated educator, Kristin brings both poetic artistry and teaching excellence to our gathering. She is the author of *The Disappearing Cowboy Trick* (Horse Less Press, 2013), as well as two chapbooks—*Little Red Riding Hood Missed the Bus* and *Orange Reminds You of Listening*. Her work has appeared in *Best New Poets*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, *LIT*, and *American Letters & Commentary*.

Kristin holds an M.F.A. in Poetry from West Virginia University and a B.A. in English from Central Michigan University. From 2006 to 2023, she taught composition and creative writing at colleges and universities across Michigan, Iowa, and Wyoming—also serving as a student newspaper advisor, literary journal editor, and writing center coordinator. Now living and teaching in Colorado, Kristin brings with her not only decades of experience but a deep reverence for poetry's power to connect and transform.

Her presence ensures that this year's workshop will be both enriching and unforgettable.

## **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

### **Budget Narrative**

WyoPoets is a fully volunteer-run organization, powered by the dedication and generosity of its members. At any given time, between 15 and 20 individuals contribute their time, creativity, and energy to ensure our programs and workshops continue to thrive. Their commitment is the quiet heartbeat behind everything we do.

We believe that poets deserve to be compensated for their work, and we honor that belief by offering our featured workshop presenters an honorarium. While our budget is modest, we work closely and respectfully with

each poet to determine a fee that acknowledges the value of their time and talent. In support of this commitment, WyoPoets actively pursues grant funding to help offset workshop expenses.

Each year, a newly formed Workshop Committee takes the reins, collaborating with local businesses in the host community to form key partnerships.



# APPLICATION SUMMARY

YOUNG MUSICIANS, INC

WWW.THEARTSINC.COM

FISCAL YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

Proposal Name: Evanston Arts Alive and Growing!

## Application:

### Mission/Goals

Our mission is to enhance individuals, families, and communities through the arts. Fiscal year 2024 has been a much better year for us, including an excellent Celtic Festival and Bowen Young Musicians Festival (BYMF), Music Arts & Theater (MAT) Camp that included a new, highly successful mentorship component, and a start on rebuilding Specialists in the Schools that was very popular..

Our current goals include:

--continue to rebuild the Bowen Young Musicians Festival, Ceili at the Roundhouse Celtic Festival and the Music Arts & Theater Camp.

--revive Specialists in the Schools

--engage strong event managers to manage these programs, and build back up to having a part or full time executive director

--rebuilding sponsorship relationships and developing new fundraisers

--engage with new community members and draw them into our programming

### Community

Evanston is in Uinta County in Southwest Wyoming and is considered an under-served area due to its sparse population. With roughly 20,000 people in the county the census reports the county is 95% white with a strong Latter Day Saint population. Evanston (pop. 12,359) is the largest town, any other town of size is 100+ miles away. The local business entities embrace our events because historically they draw 1000+ people to Evanston, many of whom visit businesses in the downtown area.

Our most well-developed non-dominant community outreach is to the low-income bracket. We have several options to help people in this group attend/participate in our events which include scholarships, a multitude of volunteer opportunities, and substantial pricing discounts on Admission. Use of these options also serve as the foundation of our "no person turned away" policy, a track record which we are proud to have maintained since 1995.

We are renewing efforts to reach out to the more rural communities in our county and include their students in our programs.

All activities are open to people with a wide range of disabilities, and nearly all events take place in accessible spaces. When needed, we assign a volunteer to go with them and ensure they can access all areas. We regularly have volunteers with disabilities from adult group-homes and they do great work for us! Last year, we began sharing event info directly with our non profit disability organization, Disability:IN Uinta County, which has led to having more disabled people attend programs and serve as volunteers.

We continue our efforts to reach out to seniors and military/veterans. This is an ongoing process as we work to learn how we can better accommodate these citizens.

## **Evaluation**

Our primary method of evaluation is through attendance, although we consistently do surveys of attendees as well. We offer both paper and online surveys for all our events and any comments and trends are carefully reviewed by staff and board. Our March 2024 Celtic Festival generated over 150 written comments from participants that came from Wyoming, Utah, Idaho and Colorado. Whenever possible, we incorporate that information into our planning for future events. We always request feedback from performers and artists in residence about how we could improve our programming. At in-person events, Board and Staff are always on hand to talk to participants personally about their experience and ideas. We work with other local interest groups such as the Evanston Civic Orchestra, the Evanston Irish Session and the school district music staff to help us find performers who meet the interests and needs of the community. Some recent feedback includes the need for more accessible parking at the Celtic Festival, and to make the accessible entrance more visible. This year, the City fenced off part of the property to drive people into a specific entrance, but inadvertently made the accessible entrance less obvious and welcoming. We will work with them to address this for next year. We will also see if we can create more accessible parking spaces, maybe using some temporary signage

## **Operating Support Narrative**

We intend to use the operating support funds primarily to support our contracted Event Managers. Our operating support expenses include contract staff, insurance, marketing, storage space, and event supplies, among others. Storage is a critical need in order to maintain our sound equipment and other supplies. We utilize a variety of

marketing strategies, including mailers, the newspaper (which is very generous with articles), radio, and online, as well as an email list and posters around the area. This year, we have hired excellent contractors to work with us to put on each of our three main events: the Bowen Young Musicians Festival, the Ceili at the Roundhouse Celtic Festival and the Music Arts & Theater (MAT) Camp. These three individuals are long time supporters and volunteers with TAI who understand the caliber of event we wish to present.

--Dr. Elizabeth Rennick is an oboe and bassoon professor at the University of Louisiana Monroe and has taught internationally. She has been a beloved member of the MAT Camp staff for more than 15 years and tells us it is her favorite of all the camps she has taught at. This year, she brings her organizational skills and background with MAT Camp to the table as the event manager.

--Laura Huggard started managing the Bowen Young Musicians Festival last year. Her deep experience as a horn performer, professor, licensed adjudicator and organizer of music recitals made for an excellent event in FY2024 and we are excited to see what she does next year. Laura is currently playing with the Orchestra at Temple Square with the Tabernacle Choir and is active as a recording artist in Salt Lake City and has recently worked with Disney, Paul Cardall, Jenny Oaks Baker, Shane Mickelson, many video game and other television and audio book composers.

--We are searching for a new event manager for the Celtic Festival. Shasta Hopkin, who has been deeply involved in TAI for over 20 years, is stepping back. We are looking for someone who is passionate about Celtic Music and has experience organizing large festivals. Ideally this person will be in Evanston, or nearby, but we are open to considering others. Shasta has for years donated much of her time to TAI, and we will need to pay the new person appropriately to attract the experience we are looking for.

### **Project Support Narrative**

N/A

### **Project Narrative – Arts Learning**

Our beloved annual Music Arts & Theater (MAT) Camp this summer will include around 120 class options to select from, including instrumental and vocal music classes and ensembles, visual arts, folk arts, theater, culinary arts, and design. Participants can register for up to 7 classes per day over a 5 day period, which culminates in a series of performances featuring both teachers and students. Last year, we added a mentorship component and had 10 students who piloted it. Each student was paired with an instructor. In return for assisting the instructor, they received one on one time where they could learn about the realities of working in the arts, teaching and performing. This was very successful, with all participants enjoying it and many requests to continue the program and grow it next year, which we plan to do.

While our population is primarily school aged children, we often have retired adults and sometimes even working adults take classes as well. Camp is very affordable beginning at \$35 for one class (for the week) and on our sliding scale becoming more and more affordable per class the more you add to the shopping cart. This method encourages large families to register and attend, providing access for them to something which normally would be cost prohibitive. No student is ever turned away for inability to pay - We offer work exchange and scholarship opportunities on a case by case basis for everyone who is interested.

The Bowen Young Musicians Festival is an intense one day experience that takes place during the school year in collaboration with Uinta County school District #1. Students and adults have the opportunity to take master classes, and perform solo or ensemble pieces before professional clinicians to receive written and oral feedback, and ranking for 1st-2nd-3rd place within age brackets and Divisions. Select students play at an evening Honors Concert recital free to the public. This offers one of the only opportunities in the region for anyone to receive professional critique about their musical technique and performance skills. Music teachers tell us that students are far more willing to listen to outside judges, and they find this to be very helpful in moving students to the next level. In 2025, this camp grew 57% from 104 to 180 participants!

Celtic Festival - Workshops, Activities, Lectures, Discussions - more than 50 sessions offered to Festival attendees included in their regular admission covering Instrumental technique (fiddle, banjo, highland pipes, Uilleann pipes, flute, whistle, etc.) specific to celtic music styles, technicalities of arranging tunes, the science of musicality of Celtic tunes, Celtic singing styles, Gaelic languages, digital music and Celtic music, folk arts (spinning, weaving, decorative wood burning, herbal uses, traditional mead/winemaking). The unusual amount of workshops offered at our festival is a product of the interest/need expressed by attendees and our mission to provide exceptional opportunities for personalized education that would never otherwise be experienced by many people here. In 2025, we revived the Specialists in the Schools, where our headline performers spent a few extra days in Evanston offering workshops and assembly concerts in schools around the area. Teachers, administrators and students welcomed the program back with open arms and are excited to work with us next year! We will be consulting with them about the artists we select.

### **Arts Learning: Goals**

The primary goal of MAT Camp, the Bowen Young Musicians Festival, and the Celtic Festival Workshops is that each event allow amateur and emerging artists and musicians the opportunity to interact and work with high quality instructors, focused on the art form of their choice, so that they can make major leaps forward in their comprehension and skill at whatever they are studying. We strive to provide a once-in-a-lifetime quality experience every time. Based on our past track record with these events, we know it is possible for students to do this; their parents and teachers have told us how impressed they were by the growth of students. Adults who have taken classes have had the same experience. Because of this, we offer a really wide variety of classes to make sure there is something for everyone to grow. We also encourage students to take a class in something they may not have previously considered to expand their horizons in the arts.

We brought back the Specialists in the Schools project this year, which brings artists into the local schools. Programming in the schools varies, but it all addresses the Fine and Performing Arts Standards. For example, an assembly gives students the opportunity to Respond and Connect. Working with their teachers, they experience artistic works, interpret and analyze them, and apply criteria to evaluate. We always encourage artists to address connections, as well, to encourage students to relate personal experiences to art and to understand historical, cultural and societal impacts. At MAT Camp, most classes fall into the Create and Present/Perform area as well, as students learn and create new artistic works, develop and refine artistic skills, and prepare to perform. Part of any performance is the ability to convey meaning. Teachers tell us that students who participate in MAT Camp make gains in their artistic skills that are evident in class the following year.

Arts learning goals for the Celtic Festival is to provide opportunities for enthusiasts to learn more about a very specific aspect of Celtic music from a practicing musician. These workshops are usually quite small and allow for one on one time, or small group time. They are open to anyone regardless of experience. These workshops spark interest, and, in fact, sparked a local Evanston Irish Session which is all amateur musicians who get together and play Celtic music.

The Bowen Festival focuses on presenting and performing artwork, using their skills to convey meaning. They also have the opportunity to Respond to others performances, and to learn from artists and other students.

### **Arts Learning: Artists Involved**

We have too many artists to list all of them, so we have provided biographies of a few. Our two major criteria in selecting teacher is excellence in their chosen artistic medium and a demonstrated passion for teaching all ages. Our artists consistently perform around the country and teach at the University level. Artists who come to teach at MAT Camp tend to love it and want to return because they love the one on one relationships they develop with students, and watching students grow over the years. See operating support for information about Elizabeth Rennick, who manages and teaches at MAT Camp.

ABIGAIL LARSON studied Musical Theater and Dance at both Central Wyoming College and recently graduated from Casper College Theater and Dance program. An instant favorite with MAT Campers in 2022, she is returning again to infuse her contagious energy and fresh take on Musical Theater and Dance into our MAT Camp program.

LORRIE MORGAN graduated from Bethel University with a B.A. in Music, piano emphasis. She is an active collaborative pianist for voice and instrumental students at Casper College and middle and high school choirs in Southeast Wyoming. She has been a piano teacher since her college days and enjoys working with students of all ages. Lorrie is inspired by witnessing the successes of young musicians and encouraging them further in their musical studies.

CHELSEA TINSLER JONES is a Utah-based percussionist with a unique portfolio career as a freelance performer, arts administrator, and music educator.

She is the Artistic Administrator of the award-winning Moab Music Festival and Percussionist/Director of Operations of Khemia Ensemble, a chamber music group

dedicated to promoting contemporary classical music. Khemia has performed at nationally recognized venues and commissioned and premiered over 60 works by professional, collegiate, and high school composers. Chelsea performs regularly around the US with different symphonies and groups. She has served as faculty for multiple summer programs and held teaching positions in percussion. She received her MM in Percussion Performance and Chamber Music from the University of Michigan, her BM in Percussion Performance and Music Education from the Hartt School, University of Hartford, and a Core Certificate in Arts Management from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

DR. AMY LEE GABBITAS, clarinet, is one of the founders of Aspen Winds. She freelances all over the Wasatch Front, including large ensembles such as the Timpanogos Symphony Orchestra and Orchestra at Temple Square. Her teaching activities encompass a private studio, summer clarinet professor at MAT (Music, Art, Theatre) camp, frequent clinics in Utah schools and woodwind coach at Springville High School. Amy also manages the BYU Instrument Office. In 2017 so won the

Russell Harlow clarinet competition. She holds a DMA in clarinet performance from the University of Utah along with Master's and Bachelor's degrees from BYU.

Randy Lee, Trumpet/Brass

Formerly the Associate Professor of trumpet at the University of Florida, he is a soloist, recording artist, collaborator, a member Naples Brass, and a founding member of the Brazilian guitar/voice & trumpet duo – Tremura & Lee. Randy has premiered and recorded new solo literature for the trumpet and presented guest artist recitals at various universities around the globe. He has performed with a wide variety of orchestras and groups internationally.

### **Budget Narrative**

TAI applies for multiple grants each year and is constantly seeking new sources of funding. We receive consistent support from the City and also from local businesses and individuals, who sponsor us as they are able to. We have a working board which contributes significant time to the organization and an active volunteer base who spend many hours making our events go smoothly. We partner with Uinta County School Districts, and the City of Evanston, who work with us on spaces for our events, and other small music organizations in the community who help us determine the best performers to bring inspiration and education. Much of our publicity is reduced-cost, with both the newspaper and radio being very generous with articles and support. Our entire budget is focused on the programs we present, and our board looks carefully at every aspect to keep us as lean as possible.