

# ADVANCING BLACK ARTS IN PITTSBURGH

*a shared program of The Pittsburgh Foundation & The Heinz Endowments*

**Black creatives.**

**Black culture.**

**Black resources.**

**Black abundance.**

**Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh.**

**A**dvancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh is a joint grant-making program managed through a partnership between The Heinz Endowments and The Pittsburgh Foundation. Since its inception in 2010, Advancing Black Arts has awarded 356 grants totaling \$6.1 million to support excellence in artwork rooted in the Black experience.

Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh is committed to helping create a vibrant cultural life in Pittsburgh and the region. The program was intentionally designed to enhance the support made available to artists and arts organizations that have historically been under-resourced, with preference given to Black artists and Black-led organizations. Its grantees are artists, programs and organizations that advance the art of the African diaspora.

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## PROGRAM VISION

Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh envisions a greater Pittsburgh region where Black creatives and organizations advancing Black culture have access to opportunities to thrive.

## PROGRAM PURPOSE

The purpose of Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh is to support the acknowledgment, celebration, preservation and perpetuation of Black culture. We center Black people, Black communities, and Black culture because Pittsburgh - despite its rich history as the home of internationally renowned Black artists - is among the most oppressive places in the U.S. for Black residents to live and create. Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh acknowledges, uplifts and celebrates Black culture and its contributions to this country and the world. It is critical to preserve and perpetuate Black culture and its value because white supremacist systems are set up to co-opt and erase Black voices and Black creation.

When We Say Black culture, we mean music, dance, fashion and all other arts, sports, history, values, traditions, games, crafts, literature, languages, faiths, cuisine and social habits.

We also hold that Black culture means identity, legacy, revolution, ritual, ceremony, spirituality, creation, innovation, joy, diasporic perspectives, freedom, community, Sankofa, resilience, resistance, revival/inspiration, empowerment and Black space outside of the white gaze.

### **Why do we need an Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh program?**

When Foundations commit to reconciling the disparity gaps in Pittsburgh for artists and creatives, we are investing in a better Pittsburgh.

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## PROGRAM GOALS

Creating an equitable arts ecology within the region is a core value of Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh and its funders. The program goals are to:

- Help build the careers and support the lives of individual artists.
- Increase the sustainability of cultural organizations that focus on Black arts.
- Build community awareness of the Black arts sector.
- Support efforts toward greater collaboration and the elimination of racial disparities within the larger arts sector.
- Prioritize the documentation and discussion of Black artists' work and well-being as part of the region's cultural health.
- Support work that directly addresses and calls for the eradication of systemic and structural racism that allows for disparities to exist.

## PROGRAM VALUES

- **Equity.** Racial equity is central to Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh. All competitive applications will elevate race and ethnicity through the art of African Americans, Africa and the larger African diaspora. The program also values equity in the areas of gender, age, economic diversity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, physical ability and intersectionality. Creating a just and equitable arts ecology for 100% of Pittsburgh's residents is complex, and we welcome applications that reflect the many ways in which identity is expressed.
- **Behavioral readiness.** We value behavioral readiness for change. To effectuate cultural shifts and system change, we cannot be siloed, nor can we afford to use our resources for incremental change. We are in the service of building abundance and effectuating change for the social good.
- **Building generational wealth.** As is evidenced by the practice of philanthropy, the program will encourage the practice of building wealth for artists and art organizations for the purpose of effectuating change for social good in perpetuity.

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## Program Values (continued)

- **Ecosystem.** In order to support cultural shifts and sustained system change, design thinking will be used to develop human-centered programs and practices that center empathy, interdependence and authentic collaborations for the purpose of advancing artists, organizations and culture bearers. In addition to supporting the eradication of historic underfunding to Black artists and organizations, a primary focus is the successful navigation of a broad array of both local and national resources.
- **Interdependence.** The program is predicated upon an interconnected arts ecosystem that promotes the fundamental belief of lifting as we climb, thereby multiplying the overall impact of Black arts and its production and eliminating a competitive deficit approach to this grantmaking program. This “economies of scale” approach seeks to amplify impact within and beyond Pittsburgh’s creative community.
- **Building pathways.** The program embraces grantmaking as a tool for lasting and long-term change. We believe that the cultural shifts needed must be executed in a manner that is transformational, and not solely transactional, in order to deeply engage creatives over time and build pathways for creative advancement.
- **Documentation.** Reflection, learning and evaluation are essential to charting an appropriate and effective pathway forward and are necessary for overcoming historic obstacles to advancement.

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## THEORY OF CHANGE

We believe that the state of a society is measured by assessing the conditions and livability of its most disenfranchised residents.

To achieve an equitable society, we must realize, acknowledge, and then commit to mitigating and eliminating the gaps that have been created by oppressive systems

Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh will effectuate this theory of change through the following strategic pathways:

- **Financial capital.**
- **Collective accountability.**
- **Evaluation and learning.**
- **Tools and resources.**
- **Thought leadership.**
- **Broader support for the arts ecosystem.**

## PROGRAM DEADLINES

All applications are due on April 16 at 11:59pm, unless otherwise noted. Prospective applicants may apply to any one (1) of the following funding streams per year:

### PROJECT STREAM FUNDING

- Individual artist support (up to \$15,000).
- Culturally relevant residency support (up to \$20,000).
- Advancing the field support (up to \$25,000).
- Project support (up to \$20,000).
- The Aboveground Railroad grant (up to \$10,000).
- Planning grants (up to \$5,000).\*

*\*Applications are accepted twice a year, by 11:59pm on April 16 and Oct. 15*

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## Program Deadlines (continued)

### ONGOING CYCLE

- Special opportunity (up to \$10,000)\*

### BY INVITATION ONLY

- General operating support (up to \$50,000)\*\*

**Applicants are NO LONGER required to submit a letter of intent (LOI) before submitting an application.** All applications (unless otherwise noted) are due via SlideRoom **by 11:59 p.m. on April 16**. *Applications for planning grants are accepted twice a year. Special opportunity grants are accepted at any time. General operating support is provided by invitation only and has a separate deadline for submission. Please see the guidelines for eligibility and instructions.*

For guidance on approaching funding requests, please [download the Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh Toolkit](#), which provides examples of a successful grant application, budgets, curricula vitae (cv) and artist statements. Although not required, we highly recommend that interested applicants complete a profile on [The Pittsburgh Artists Registry](#).

For more information, please RSVP to attend one of our virtual ABAP Community Q+A Application Review sessions scheduled for Feb. 24 and March 24 at 1:00 p.m.

- [Sign up to attend the Feb. 24, 2021 Review Session at 1 p.m.](#)
- [Sign up to attend the March 24, 2021 Review Session at 1 p.m.](#)

For further inquiries please contact: [fundingarts@pghfdn.org](mailto:fundingarts@pghfdn.org).

[CREATE A PITTSBURGH ARTISTS REGISTRY PROFILE](#)

[APPLY THROUGH SLIDEROOM](#)

\*Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

\*\*Applications are by invitation only. The deadline is 11:59 p.m. on May 15.

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## FUNDING STREAMS

- **Individual artist support (up to \$15,000)**

*Application proposals are due via SlideRoom by 11:59 p.m. on April 16.*

Individual artists who identify as Black, African American, African, Caribbean, Afro-LatinX or of the African diaspora, and whose work, of any discipline, focuses on the art of Black people, African Americans, Africa and the larger African diaspora – may apply for grants of up to \$15,000 to support creative and career development, self-organized artistic professional development, creation of new works and self-productions. Presentation of a fully realized work is not required.

- **Culturally relevant residency support (up to \$20,000)**

*Application proposals are due via SlideRoom by 11:59 p.m. on April 16.*

Residencies should last a minimum of three months to a maximum of 18 months. Arts administrators, arts workers and/or curators may apply for amounts of up to \$10,000. Organizations seeking residencies may apply for amounts of up to \$20,000.

### **Artist residency**

Artist residency support is available to any arts or culturally relevant Black-led organizations interested in hosting artists whose work focuses on the art of Black people, African Americans, Africa and the larger African diaspora.

### **Arts administration**

Arts administration support is available to any administrator, arts worker, curator or culturally relevant organization interested in producing an exhibition, an art series of programs or hosting an artists residency that focuses on the art of Black people, African Americans, Africa and the larger African diaspora.

### PLEASE NOTE:

- Competitive residency proposals will demonstrate significant artist or arts administrator involvement in the development of the residency.
- Two-thirds of project costs should be directly related to artist fees or production expenses.
- Residencies should last a minimum of three months and maximum of 18 months.

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**Funding Streams (Continued)****•Advancing the field support (up to \$25,000)**

*Application proposals are due via SlideRoom by 11:59 p.m. on April 16.*

In addition to creating and presenting artwork, special efforts are needed to improve the overall arts ecosystem for Black cultural workers in the region. As a result, funds are available to support projects aimed at shared challenges, barriers or opportunities. Arts administrators, arts workers, curators, critics, nonprofit organizations, researchers and arts advocates may apply for grants of up to \$25,000 for collaborative projects, research or marketing and advocacy efforts that increase the health and visibility of the Black arts sector beyond a single artistic engagement. Broad-scale, sector-wide advocacy aimed at the Pittsburgh community as a whole is encouraged.

All proposals must provide evidence that the project is rooted in a collective effort (such as a memo of understanding signed by partners, establishment of a project advisory committee or a collaborative project structure). Historic challenges that have plagued Pittsburgh's Black arts community and may ignite innovative project proposals include:

- Cultural criticism.
- Audience engagement and marketing.
- Board development.
- Access to affordable cultural spaces for presentations and productions.
- Professional development and retention of cultural workers.
- Social media strategies and implementation.
- Mentorship.
- Succession planning.



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## Funding Streams (Continued)

- **Project support (up to \$20,000)**

*Application proposals are due via SlideRoom by 11:59 p.m. on April 16.*

Nonprofit organizations and collectives may apply for grants of up to \$20,000 to present and/or produce work. Individual artists are not eligible and should apply through the Individual Artists funding stream. Preference will be given to arts organizations; however, other nonprofits may apply if they can demonstrate ability to present or produce creative work. Preference will also be given to those organizations that emphasize significant community engagement in the project. Projects in the areas of Black media and journalism, as well as projects that specifically address issues of social justice and equity, are welcome.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Individual artists are NOT eligible and should apply through the individual artists funding stream.
- Preference will be given to arts organizations. However, other nonprofits may apply if they can demonstrate ability to present or produce creative work.
- Preference will also be given to those organizations that emphasize significant community engagement in the project.

- **The Aboveground Railroad grant (up to \$10,000)**

*Application proposals are due via SlideRoom by 11:59 p.m. on April 16.*

The Aboveground Railroad grant (up to \$10,000) is unrestricted and will be awarded annually to three Black students between the ages of 18 to 25 who are pursuing higher education in pursuit of a career in arts administration. Consider racial and gender equity explicitly, with a strong preference towards Black women, motivated by the City of Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission's report on "[Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race.](#)" Applicants may be enrolled in out of state programs, but their primary residence must be within the greater Pittsburgh region. Applicants in the following counties are eligible to apply for funding: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Mercer, Lawrence, Somerset, Venango, Washington and Westmoreland. Awardees may only receive this grant once.

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## Funding Streams (Continued)

- **Planning Grants (up to \$5,000)**

*We accept applications from Individuals and 501(c)(3)s, twice a year by 11:59 p.m. on April 16 and Oct. 15.*

Planning grants of up to \$5,000 are available to help cover expenses related to developing a full project proposal, including data gathering and research, convening partners, consensus building and problem definition. After successful completion of planning grant activities as evidenced in a final report, applicants are encouraged to apply for project support the next calendar year. Applicants may submit a request on SlideRoom.

- **Special opportunity (up to \$10,000)**

*We accept applications from Individuals and 501(c)(3)s on an ongoing basis.*

Support for unique opportunities is available to any artist or culturally relevant organization that has an unexpected artistic opportunity that arises during the year, is time sensitive and cannot wait until the next scheduled grant cycle. The opportunity must be clearly centered on the art of Black people, African Americans, Africa and the larger African diaspora, and applicants must have clear goals and strategies outlined in their request. Applicants seeking support may apply for amounts up to \$10,000. If awarded, the applicant will receive a grant agreement within four weeks of the submission. Applicants may submit a request with the following information, anytime on SlideRoom.

- **General operating support (up to \$50,000)**

*Final reports and renewal applications are due by 11:59 p.m on May 15.*

A select group of nonprofit cultural organizations will be invited to apply for two years of general operating support. Grantees must have a history of consistent annual programming. In addition, participants must have clear goals and strategies and meet annual measures of success developed in consultation with Foundation staff. After the second year, applicants will no longer be eligible to receive general operating support through this funding stream and a new cohort of organizations will be invited to apply.

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## Funding Streams (Continued)

### PLEASE NOTE:

- Arts organizations seeking support must have a history of producing or presenting Black, African American, African or diasporic art.
- Grantees must demonstrate reasonable attendance by, as well as accessibility to, a broad and diverse public audience.
- Operating support recipients are not eligible for other funding streams.
- If you are affiliated with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that is competitive but has not been formally invited to apply by foundation staff, we would still like to hear from you. Please contact Celeste Smith at [fundingarts@pghfdn.org](mailto:fundingarts@pghfdn.org) with information about your organization. There may be opportunities to form authentic partnerships within the qualifying Pittsburgh region.

## Definition of TERMS

**ART:** Art is generally understood as any activity or product done by people with a communicative or aesthetic purpose—something that expresses a culture, an idea, an emotion or, more generally, a world view.

**ARTS ADMINISTRATOR:** An arts administrator merges an interest in the arts with business acumen and fundraising skills to manage the operations of an arts organization. This involves interacting with artists, teaching artists, performers, supporters and organizational staff. Finance, grant research/application, accounting, marketing and personnel management are key parts of an arts administrator's skills.

**ARTS ORGANIZATION:** An arts organization is defined as an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation or organization working with a fiscal sponsor and with a mission to produce or present work in dance, film/video, digital applications, literature, music, theatre, traditional/folk arts, visual arts or interdisciplinary work. For the purpose of this application, a culturally relevant organization is one that works at a local level to improve life for residents and has a mission-focus other than in the arts. Eligible organizations may be of any budget size and must demonstrate the capacity to implement proposed activities. University arts departments, history museums or other nonprofit cultural entities are also eligible if a strong track record and/or effective support system for working with creative artists can be demonstrated.

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**Definition of Terms (continued)**

**BLACK:** A racialized classification of people who may identify as Black, African American, African, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx or of the African diaspora.

**BLACK-LED:** We define an organization as Black-led if the current executive director, CEO, resident or leader of the collective) self-identifies as Black, African American, African, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx or of the African diaspora.

**CULTURAL RELEVANCE:** Cultural relevance celebrates the unique cultural strengths of people of the African diaspora. The lens of cultural relevance gives first-person voice to the people of the African diaspora, so that the artists may share and celebrate their lived experiences and build on the artistic traditions of the diaspora. Cultural relevance is rooted in historical context, and considers contemporary issues, such as social climate and intersectionality in the artistic work and in the creative approach. Host organizations applying to this program will reflect the African diaspora in their overall approach to their everyday work. Competitive projects will be designed by artists who bring their culture and experience to the development and execution of the plan. This will result in work that matters to a broad array of Pittsburgh residents and deepens understanding of the current social context in which the work is created.

**DISABILITY:** A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. This includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability.

**FISCAL SPONSOR:** The practice of nonprofit organizations offering their legal and tax-exempt status to groups—typically projects—engaged in activities related to the sponsoring organization’s mission.

**IMMIGRANT:** A person who migrates to another country, usually for permanent residence.

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## Definition of Terms (continued)

**INDIVIDUAL ARTIST:** A professional artist is defined as an individual who has devoted significant time and training to building a career creating or interpreting works of art. Our definition includes playwrights and choreographers, as well as those who bring works of art to life for audiences, such as stage directors, actors, dancers or designers. Interpreters of art, including, but not limited to journalists, art critics and curators, may also apply. Professional artists may be emerging, mid-career or established. In assessing an artist's qualifications, we will take the following into consideration as appropriate to the art form and stage of career: quality of creative work; evidence of formal or informal training; history of exhibitions, performances, screenings, or other public sharing of work; and critical reviews or letters of recommendation from professionals in the field.

**LGBTQ+:** An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

**NONTRADITIONAL:** Anything that's different from the usual customs or traditions is nontraditional. Tradition is the passing on of beliefs and rules through the generations. People or things that don't follow these traditions, instead inventing new ways of doing things, are nontraditional.

**PITTSBURGH REGION:** The Pittsburgh region is defined as the following counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Mercer, Somerset, Venango, Washington and Westmoreland.

*Please Note: If you reside outside of these 13 counties and have a project that is competitive though not eligible, we would still like to hear from you. Please contact Celeste Smith at [fundingarts@pgbfdn.org](mailto:fundingarts@pgbfdn.org). There may be opportunities to form authentic partnerships with artists and organizations within the qualifying Pittsburgh region.*

**REFUGEE:** A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution or natural disaster.

**RESIDENCY:** A residency is defined as an immersive period during which an artist or arts administrator has access to the resources of a host arts organization for the expressed purpose of developing or supporting artistic work. The individual does not need to reside continuously in the region, but both the individual and organization must engage each other in an active exchange that adds value to both the artistic work and the host organization. Residencies should last a minimum of three months to a maximum of 18 months.

**VETERAN:** Former member of the armed forces of the United States (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard) who served on active duty.

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## TAX IMPLICATIONS

Funds awarded to individuals through this grants program are not excludable from gross income and must be reported to the IRS. Please consult a tax professional to review the impact of this grant on your personal tax liability. Grantees will be required to submit an individual IRS Form W-9.

## Review Process

### SlideRoom portal

Applicants must establish an accurate personal account on SlideRoom. Once you have an account, you may start and complete your application in the same session, or save your work and finish the submission at a later date. Past applicants should be sure that the contact info in their profile is currently up to date. All applications (unless otherwise noted) are due via SlideRoom **by 11:59 p.m. on April 16.** (*Applications for planning grants are accepted twice a year. Special opportunity grants are accepted at any time. General operating support is provided by invitation only and has a separate deadline for submission. Please see the guidelines for eligibility and instructions.*)

### Application review process

Applications are not reviewed by Foundation staff members, but instead are reviewed by a panel of local and national experts and cultural influencers from a variety of artistic disciplines. The panelists make recommendations to the Foundation staff members about which proposals to fund. The Foundations reserve the right to accept or decline the panel's recommendations.

### Notifications

Applicants who are approved for a grant will be notified by June 11. Activities to be funded by this grant request should not begin sooner than Aug. 1. Grantees will be required to submit a final report on the project one year from the date of the grant award.

### Feedback

For each grant cycle, the Foundations invite a panel of external arts professionals to evaluate proposals, and the make-up of the panel changes every cycle. We value the expertise of all of those who agree to serve, and also recognize that feedback can at times include subjective opinion that is not easily quantifiable. A proposal may receive poor feedback from one panelist and enthusiastic support from another during the same cycle. Additionally, panelists are asked to review many proposals during a limited time, and often provide no feedback beyond numerical scores. Foundation staff can only relay scoring and minimal summarized comments where available.

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**Review Process (continued)**

However, we do encourage applicants to seek feedback on their proposals. The window for feedback requests opens on June 11 and closes on June 25. If an applicant is interested in receiving feedback, please send an email directly to [fundingarts@pghfdn.org](mailto:fundingarts@pghfdn.org) BEFORE June 25, requesting feedback on your application. All applicants who've expressed interest in receiving feedback from the panelists will receive it by July 2.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Although it is not required, we encourage all applicants to create an artist profile on the [Pittsburgh Artists Registry](#) before submitting an Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh grant application.

All individual applicants and organizations may only apply to one (1) stream of funding per year. If the applicant applies to more than one funding stream, the Foundations reserve the right to select which application will move forward.

**All applicants must:**

- Be at least 18 years of age by the time of submission.
- Identify as Black, African American, African, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx or of the African diaspora, or be a Black-led 501(c)(3) organization (you may work with a non-Black fiscal sponsor).
- Be in the Pittsburgh region. Applicants in the following counties are eligible to apply for funding: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Mercer, Lawrence, Somerset, Venango, Washington and Westmoreland.
- Previous grantees are eligible to apply one year after the close of their grant. Grantees funded in 2019 are eligible to apply again in 2021.
- Previous grantee organizations are eligible to apply one year after the close of their grant. Grantees funded in 2019 are eligible to apply again in 2021.



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## Eligibility (continued)

### Arts Organizations Seeking Support

- Applicant organizations must be 501(c)(3) organizations (or work with a fiscal sponsor) and must be in the Pittsburgh region.
- Have a history of producing or presenting art.
- Demonstrate reasonable attendance by, as well as accessibility to a broad and diverse public audience.
- Previous grantees are eligible to apply one year after the close of their grant. Grantees funded in 2019 are eligible to apply again in 2021.
- Operating support recipients are not eligible for other funding streams.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge those who came before us.

In 1989, The Multicultural Arts Initiative was created to advance culturally diverse arts programming, with an emphasis on Black and African American programs, and to celebrate the diverse cultures of western Pennsylvania by supporting and strengthening arts programming through funding, advocacy and technical assistance. In 2010, the board of directors voluntarily dissolved the organization and disbanded the board. Later that year, Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh was launched as a shared initiative of The Pittsburgh Foundation and The Heinz Endowments.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the artists, ancestors, individual donors, research and evaluation efforts, and foundations and program officers whose vision, hard work and dedication to Black art has made today's Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh program possible.

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