



ARTS | EQUITY | REIMAGINED

The COVID-19 Arts Working Group (CAWG), a collaboration of 15 foundations and a private donor in the Pittsburgh metro area, announces the *Arts | Equity | Reimagined Fund*, in response to the unprecedented and ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the region's arts and cultural sector. The fund is intended to foster collective action and identify creative solutions to operating challenges as nonprofit arts organizations navigate these uncertain times. While the fund is open to all arts and cultural organizations, in recognition of long-standing disparities in funding, it will prioritize small to medium-sized arts organizations and those that serve or are led by historically marginalized communities in southwestern Pennsylvania, whether they be urban or rural in location.

Details about the *Arts | Equity | Reimagined Fund*, including eligibility requirements, deadlines, FAQs, the application process and guiding principles can be found at www.artsreimagined.org or by calling (412) 219-6584.

The foundation community acknowledges that it does not possess the resources to return the cultural sector to its former position, maintain the status quo or respond to the individual needs of every organization. Organizations, funders, and the sector as a whole, will have to think differently about how they function moving forward in order to be successful in a completely changed environment. By coming together, the participating foundations hope this fund will support new business models, creative collaborations and artistic approaches that will sustain, strengthen and better equip the arts sector to reimagine how it functions. This is especially important now, and in light of the persistent disparities and challenges the pandemic has revealed. The approach will model guiding principles and make grants awards that favor equity, small and mid-sized groups, action-oriented technical assistance and potentially replicable approaches that support how the cultural sector re-imagines and secures a very different future. The foundations have collectively committed more than \$3.5 million to date and continue to fundraise for the effort. Through this fund, the CAWG seeks to use this moment as an opportunity to support the transition of the arts sector from the status quo to one that is more sustainable and equitable over the long-term.

Arts | Equity | Reimagined grants will support arts and cultural organizations located in any of the following Pennsylvania counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland. All 501(c)3 arts organizations, artist-driven projects, and unincorporated arts collectives are eligible to apply. Non-501(c)3 projects and collectives may use a fiscal sponsor to apply

(assistance to find and secure a fiscal sponsor is available as part of this program). The program contains two unique opportunities:

1) Capacity Building Assistance – open to any arts organization or sponsored project with a budget of \$2.5 million or less. Managed by PACE (Program to Aid Citizen Enterprise), this program is designed to quickly respond to requests to help nonprofits gain the skills or concrete strategies needed to address COVID-19 related challenges. Examples of assistance could include, but are not limited to: short-term action plans, financial planning, fundraising or marketing capacity, human resource assistance, anti-racism training, and other tools to create a sustainable future. With its long history of increasing the organizational capacity of nonprofits serving the African American and other marginalized communities, PACE is uniquely positioned to assist this effort.

2) Collective Action for Re-Imagining – collaborations, partnerships or networks of any budget size, comprised of three or more 501(c)3 arts organizations, artist-driven projects, and/or unincorporated arts collectives, are eligible to apply. Managed by New Sun Rising (NSR), this program seeks ideas that employ new, novel, and innovative ways of working together to address the dramatic shifts that have been instigated by the COVID-19 crisis, and that also address opportunities and solutions to reposition the sector for a more sustainable and equitable future. New Sun Rising (NSR) designs and implements programs that create economic opportunity, solve social challenges and strengthen community vibrancy. NSR will bring these strengths to help facilitate the funding of this work.

The creation of the *Arts | Equity | Reimagined Fund* has been driven by guiding principles developed by the COVID-19 Arts Working Group of funders (CAWG) themselves, when the crisis first hit the region in late March 2020. A complete copy of the Guiding Principles is available at www.artsreimagined.org. In summary, CAWG members have agreed to:

- Address and prioritize change with mutual accountability.
- Be action-oriented and transparent.
- Support a sustaining and equitable arts ecology.
- Envision a strong and healthy arts community.
- Holistically support the arts community.

Additionally, CAWG undertook an extensive review of research and best practices, on how the arts sector around the country has responded to the pandemic. It also engaged in an extended analysis of critical needs in this region, with a particular eye towards identifying gaps in service to arts organizations that serve people of color, LGBTQIA+ and independent artist populations.

See below for a list of free, live information sessions that will be open to any potential applicant and will provide a space where specific questions get answered right away in real time. Potential applicants may also submit questions for a quick response by email at the fund's website: www.artsreimagined.org.

AER Live Info Sessions*

Session #1 – Thursday, Aug. 20, 9:00 a.m.**

Session #2 – Monday, Aug. 24, 3:00 p.m.

Session #3 – Tuesday, Aug. 25, 9:00 a.m.

Session #4 – TDC/Barr Foundation Webinar on Scenario Planning. Time and date TBD.

*Info sessions will be hosted virtually and made available for replay at www.artsreimagined.org.

**The Aug. 20 session is hosted by Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, Fayette County Community Foundation, and The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, and will address unique questions from potential applicants in rural and suburban counties. However, participants from any southwestern Pennsylvania location are welcome at any of the live sessions.

The current list of CAWG's collaborating foundations includes the Allegheny Regional Asset District, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, The Benter Foundation, The Buhl Foundation, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, Fayette County Community Foundation, The Fine Foundation, The Grable Foundation, The Heinz Endowments, Henry L. Hillman Foundation, The McCune Foundation, Richard King Mellon Foundation, Opportunity Fund, and The Pittsburgh Foundation. **CAWG remains open to additional public, private, and corporate foundations that wish to participate or learn more. Interested foundation representatives should email getinfo@artsreimagined.org or call (412) 219-6584.**