



**Written Panel Guide**  
**2023 Project Support Panel Review**  
Fall 2022

**Welcome!**

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) welcomes you to the 2023 Project Support panel review. The purpose of the Project Support (PS) grant program is to provide annual grants of up to \$20,000 for arts and culture projects in Cuyahoga County. During the panel review, arts and cultural experts from across the country (who are educated in CAC’s funding criteria) score applications through an interactive or written review.

The written panel review is for PS applications requesting up to \$5,000 in funding. 2023 applications requesting more than \$5,000 are reviewed via an interactive panel process. All scores and comments are posted publicly at the conclusion of the panel and are scored using the same framework listed here.

**Applicants**

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| Abrepaso Flamenco                            | Cesear's Forum                                |
| Achievement Centers for Children             | Choral Arts Cleveland                         |
| America Asian Pacific Islander Organization  | City Ballet of Cleveland                      |
| American Slovenian Polka Foundation          | Cleveland Chamber Collective                  |
| Aradhana Committee                           | Cleveland Chamber Symphony                    |
| Art of Me                                    | Cleveland Composers Guild                     |
| Artful                                       | Cleveland Dance Project Company               |
| Arts in Strongsville                         | Cleveland Grays Armory Museum                 |
| Arts Renaissance Tremont (ART)               | Cleveland Inner City Ballet                   |
| Barton Center, Inc.                          | Cleveland Leadership Center                   |
| Baseball Heritage Museum                     | Cleveland Opera Theater                       |
| Bay Village Community Band                   | Cleveland Philharmonic Orchestra              |
| Beachwood Arts Council                       | Cleveland Photo Fest                          |
| Bellaire Puritas Development Corporation     | Cleveland Rape Crisis Center                  |
| Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging             | Cleveland Repertory Orchestra                 |
| BigHearted Blooms                            | Cleveland Seed Bank                           |
| Blazing River Freedom Band                   | Cleveland Shakespeare Festival                |
| BlueWater Chamber Orchestra                  | Cleveland Silent Film Festival and Colloquium |
| Brooklyn Heights Service Clubs               | Cleveland TOPS Swingband                      |
| Building Bridges Murals                      | Cleveland Uncommon Sound Project              |
| Canalway Partners                            | Cleveland Wind Symphony                       |
| Case Western Reserve University              | Cleveland Women's Orchestra                   |
| Catholic Charities Diocese of Cleveland      | CollectivExpress                              |
| Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District | Colors+Youth Center                           |
| Celebrate the Arts Performance Academy       | Comité Mexicano                               |



Community Cup Classic Foundation  
Connecting for Kids of Westlake OH  
Coventry PEACE Campus  
Coventry Village Special Improvement District  
DANCEVERT  
Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio  
East Cleveland Farmers' Market Preservation Society  
Edward E. Parker Museum of Art  
Empowering Epilepsy  
Euclid Beach Park Now  
Famicos Foundation  
Far West Center  
Food Strong  
Fostering Hope Ohio  
Friends of the East Cleveland Public Library  
From Me 2 U  
Front Steps Housing and Services  
FrontLine Service  
FutureHeights  
Gardening in the District  
German Music Society  
Greater Cleveland Film Commission  
Group Plan Commission  
Harvard Community Services Center  
Hasani Management Inc  
Henry Johnson Center  
Hispanic Business Center  
Hispanic Police Officers Association  
Historic Warehouse District Development Corporation  
India Fest USA  
International Women's Air & Space Museum  
Italian Cultural Garden  
Jewish Family Service Association of Cleveland Ohio  
Kaboom Collective  
Lake Erie Institute  
Lakewood Young Filmmakers Academy  
LakewoodAlive  
Larchmere PorchFest  
LGBT Community Center Greater Cleveland  
Little Italy Redevelopment Corporation  
LYLESART  
Malachi Center  
May Dugan Center  
Men of Independence  
MidTown Cleveland  
MorrisonDance  
Museum of Creative Human Art  
Naach Di Cleveland  
NAMI Greater Cleveland  
New Avenues to Independence  
No Exit  
North East Ohio Musical Heritage Association  
North Union Farmers Market  
OCA Cleveland  
Oh Sew Powerful, Inc.  
One South Euclid  
Pakistani Cultural Garden  
Parma Area Fine Arts Council  
Poise Entertainment Education Inc  
Polish Village Parma  
Praxis Fiber Workshop  
Providence House  
Quire Cleveland  
Reaching Heights  
Refugee Response  
Roberto Ocasio Foundation  
Rollin' Buckeyez  
Schmooze Ohio  
Shaker Arts Council  
Slavic Village Development  
SOS: Strengthening Our Students  
StandUP! For Change  
Stellar Acrobatic Dance Academy  
STV Bavaria  
Suburban Symphony Orchestra  
Tender Hearts Crusades  
The Association of African American Cultural Garden  
The Gathering Place  
The German Central  
The Harvard Square Center  
The Land  
The Makers Alliance  
Thea Bowman Center  
Trobár Medieval



Ukrainian Cultural Arts Association of Greater  
Cleveland  
Union Miles Development Corporation  
Upcycle Parts Shop  
UpStage Players  
Ursuline College  
VIVA Bavaria  
West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development  
West Shore Chorale  
West Side Catholic Center  
Western Reserve Chorale  
Western Reserve Fire Museum & Education  
Center  
Western Reserve Land Conservancy  
Westown Community Development Corporation  
Windsong, Cleveland's Feminist Chorus  
Woodland Cemetery Foundation of Cleveland  
Writers in Residence  
Youth Challenge

## **Panel Review Process**

To ensure an impartial and transparent application review process, CAC convenes a panel of arts and cultural professionals from outside the region who read, evaluate, and score applications. Panelists are chosen to represent a cross-section of professionals qualified to provide expert knowledge of specific arts or cultural disciplines, as well as for their management experience, professional knowledge of the sector and prior panel experience. CAC staff take every effort to ensure that the panel is diverse in all respects. All panelists receive an honorarium for their service.

Unlike other CAC grant programs, there is not a live panel review for Project Support requests of \$5,000 or less.

CAC staff monitors the online panel review but does not score or provide opinions on applications. Staff manages all administrative and logistical actions necessary to conduct a successful panel review: provide panelists all documentation necessary to evaluate applications effectively; inform the panel in matters of CAC policy and procedures; provide timely, objective responses to any panelist questions.



## Scoring

Panelists score each application on a point scale from 0 to 100 based on the following funding criteria:

- **PUBLIC BENEFIT:** An organization’s ability to meaningfully and authentically engage its community through its project.
- **ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL VIBRANCY:** An organization’s ability to create a quality project that inspires and challenges its community.
- **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY:** An organization’s ability to successfully plan for and manage its project.

Panelists will use the following scoring framework to score each application on the funding criteria:

<b>PUBLIC BENEFIT</b> (45 points):  Weak: 1 – 25 Fair: 26 – 38 Strong: 39 – 45	<b>ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL VIBRANCY</b> (35 points):  Weak: 1 – 15 Fair: 16 – 28 Strong: 29 – 35	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY</b> (20 points):  Weak: 1 – 10 Fair: 11 – 16 Strong: 17 – 20
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### Scoring Descriptions

Strong: The applicant has provided overwhelming evidence throughout the application that demonstrates that this funding criterion is fully met. Responses are clear and directly address this funding criterion. The support materials are clear, highly relevant and lead to a deeper understanding of how the criterion is met.

Fair: The applicant has provided sufficient evidence throughout the application that demonstrates that this funding criterion is met. Responses are generally clear, but do not consistently address this funding criterion. The support materials are relevant but provide only some understanding of how the criterion is met.

Weak: The applicant has provided insufficient evidence throughout the application that demonstrates that this funding criterion is met. Responses are unclear and/or do not address this funding criterion. The support materials may not be relevant and may not provide additional understanding of how the criterion is met.

### Final Score and Funding Recommendations

Scores are calculated by combining and averaging the score of all three panelists. Applications that receive a score of 75 or higher are recommended for funding. CAC will calculate final scores and notify all applicants via email the week of October 17. Grant amounts will be confirmed at CAC’s Board of Trustees meeting on Wednesday, November 9, 2022, at 4:00pm.



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**Meet the Written Project Support Panelists**



**Diana Agostini (she/her)**  
San Diego, CA

Originally from Italy, Diana began her work in the arts and in education in Europe. Her background in international cooperation had her travel the world working on national and international projects for NGOs and smaller nonprofits focusing on education and the arts as a means for social change. She moved to San Diego in 2012 and held leadership positions in education while continuing her work in the arts serving as the Executive Director of the San Diego Italian Film Festival (SDIFF). Her passion for education, cultural studies, and the arts is her driving force. She is committed to help youth in finding their path as champions of inclusivity, empathy, and entrepreneurship. Diana is on the Board of ImpACT on Stage, a youth-led org that uses live performance in school, and Alumni Europae. She holds a BA in Linguistic and Cultural Mediation, a MA in International Development, and an EMBA.



**Marisa Arellano (she/her)**  
New York, NY

Marisa Arellano is an arts administrator based in New York City. She recently joined Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors as a Senior Associate, Grants Management and Advisory Services. She has previously worked with The Juilliard School and New York City Center in various capacities.



**Conrhonda Baker (she/her)**  
Elberton, GA

Conrhonda E. Baker, Founder of The Bese Saka, believes in holistic trust-based, regenerative, and restorative approaches to grantmaking. Her philanthropic, fundraising, government affairs, and program development experience developed through work with South Arts, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, Alabama Dance Council, Vulcan Park and Museum, Birmingham Museum of Art, Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, and the Howard Gilman Foundation. She has sat on grant panels for Dance/NYC, the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts. She holds a Master of Arts Management from Carnegie Mellon University and a Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies with a minor in Dance Education from The University of Georgia.



**Brad Carlin (he/him)**  
Beaverton, OR

Brad Carlin is a Senior Consultant for TRG Arts and works with organizations of all sizes and disciplines in the US, Canada, and the UK. Prior to joining TRG, Brad was the Managing Director of Fusebox Festival in Austin, TX and has 15 years of experience in general management and fundraising for arts organizations in NYC, Austin, and San Antonio, TX.



**Karla Centeno (she/her)**  
San Diego, CA

Karla Centeno was born and raised in San Diego, CA. Throughout her career, she has sought experiences that allow people to see the world as it is while imagining what it could be. Karla is the Director of Education & Engagement at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD). In this role, she provides external and internal strategic leadership to develop the Museum's educational initiatives, public programs, and community engagement.



**Melissa Cirone (she/her)**  
Sacramento, CA

As Program Manager for Sacramento's Office of Arts & Culture, Melissa develops goals, policies, and priorities for grantmaking, education, and training programs. She currently manages a portfolio of grants for the City, including American Rescue Plan funding, to creative businesses and individuals, and operation support and cultural equity investment grants to nonprofit organizations. In 2020, Melissa co-created with the Sacramento County Office of Education, Sacramento Healthy HeARTS & Minds Initiative, a program serving students suffering from the mental health impacts of COVID-19, that has brought together more than 60 artists, community mentors, and mental health professionals to counter the isolation and stress of distance learning. She also serves as a partner in Any Given Child, Sacramento and is a member of the Sacramento County Arts Education Consortium, working with community partners to evaluate programs and identify areas of need and potential resources for countywide arts education.



**S.A. Corrin (she/her)**  
Raleigh, NC

S.A. Corrin serves as the arts grant director for the City of Raleigh's Raleigh Arts office, a local arts agency committed to a vision of the city as a community connected through arts and culture, where every person is empowered to lead the creative life they envision. With over 30 years' experience working for and with North Carolina nonprofit arts organizations, Corrin manages a funding program that distributes program and operating support to nonprofit organizations throughout the city.



**LaShawnda Crowe Storm (she/her)**  
Indianapolis, IN

LaShawnda Crowe Storm is an artist, activist, community builder and occasionally an urban farmer. Whether she is making artwork or sowing seeds, Crowe Storm uses her creative power as a vehicle for dialogue, social change and healing. At the core of Crowe Storm's creative practice is a desire to create community-based processes where the process of making art becomes the opportunity to create the necessary space and place for necessary conversations around a variety of topics including, lynching, sites of memory and community trauma and healing.



**Carrie Elvey (she/her)**  
Wilmot, OH

Carrie Elvey has worked as a naturalist at The Wilderness Center for 22 years. Prior to TWC, she worked as a field instructor and assistant director at the Manice Education Center, and as a field researcher in Suriname, Trinidad, and Alaska. She is passionate about connecting people to the amazing natural history stories happening in their own backyards.



**Rhonda Iverly (she/her)**  
**Dallas, TX**

Rhonda Iverly is currently the Community Arts Manager for the Office of Arts and Culture in the City of Dallas. The Office of Arts and Culture provides funding for artists and non-profit organizations through various funding programs; executing multiple calls for artists and open calls throughout the year.



**Maria Jenkins (she/her)**  
**Cincinnati, OH**

Maria Jenkins is Digital Learning Manager at Cincinnati Nature Center, having joined the nature center in 2019 as a Fellow in Public Programs Management. She previously worked as Learning and Public Programs Coordinator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and holds a BFA in Painting from Kent State University and a Masters in Gender Studies from Roosevelt University. She is a Certified Interpretive Guide through the National Association for Interpretation and specializes in digital interpretive media and online programming.



**Patrice Johnson (she/her)**  
**Huntsville, AL**

Patrice Johnson serves as the Arts Equity and Marketing Manager for Arts Huntsville — an umbrella nonprofit arts council — in Huntsville, AL., and is experienced in arts advocacy, public relations, integrated marketing communications, branding, strategy, project/event management, and design. She was recently selected to be a part of South Arts 2022 Emerging Leaders of Color Cohort.





**Channie Jones (she/her)**  
**Indianapolis, IN**

Channie Jones, Director of Equity Partnerships at the Indianapolis Arts Council, leads sector wide advancements in diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) internally within the arts council and across the Indianapolis arts and culture sector.



**Lindsay Keast (she/her)**  
**Des Moines, IA**

Lindsay Keast is the Program Manager of Arts & Creativity at the Iowa Arts Council where she works to strengthen the state's creative economy and workforce. She is also a composer and textile artist.



**Nikki Kirk (she/her)**  
**Indianapolis, IN**

Nikki Kirk (she/her) is a leadership development and cultural equity practitioner. She currently serves as the Director of Community Investment with the Indy Arts Council, and as a Project Consultant with the Aspen Institute Artist-Endowed Foundations Initiative. Nikki holds a Masters in Arts, Festival, and Cultural Management from Queen Margaret University.



**Lisa Leiberling (she/her)**  
Allison Park, PA

Lisa Leiberling is a freelance theatrical designer/builder, an active member of IATSE Local 787 Wardrobe Union, and an Assistant Professor of Costume Design and Technology at Seton Hill University. Lisa is currently an MFA candidate in Costume Design at the University of Idaho in their distance graduate program. She holds a BFA in Puppetry/Children’s Theatre from West Virginia University, an MA in Theatre for Youth from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and an MA in Theatre from the University of Pittsburgh.



**Dana Manyothane (she/her)**  
Denver, CO

A Native of Denver, Colorado, Dana is the former Executive Director of The Colorado Black Arts Festival prior to joining the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District team as a program officer in 2017. Dana is a passionate advocate for visual and performing arts and racial equity initiatives. She currently serves as vice-chair on the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts' Equity, Inclusivity, Diversity, and Accessibility subcommittee.



**Santiago Martinez (he/him)**  
Bronx, NY

Santiago Martinez is a musician with a master’s in arts management. He has been working as a fundraiser for different organizations for the past four years.



**Mitch Menchaca (he/him)**  
Phoenix, AZ

Mitch Menchaca (he/him) was appointed as the arts and culture director for the City of Phoenix in 2018. An Arizona native, he relocated from Phoenix to Washington, D.C. in 2009 to lead the Local Arts Advancement Department at Americans for the Arts. Before 2009, he served as the senior director of grants and programs at the Arizona Commission on the Arts, where he administered an extensive portfolio of grants from all artistic disciplines, budget sizes, and regions of the state. Mitch earned a Bachelor of Liberal Studies and a Masters of Nonprofit Leadership and Management at Arizona State University.



**Ami Scherson (she/her)**  
Elmhurst, NY

Ami (ah-mee) Scherson (she/her/hers) is an arts administrator, facilitator, and writer based in Queens, New York. She is currently the Audience and Donor Data Manager at National Sawdust. She was born and raised in Cleveland and is thrilled to be a panelist for the Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.



**Katelyn Simone (she/her)**  
New York, NY

Katelyn brings ten years of experience working with nonprofit organizations across fundraising, marketing, and executive roles. With a background in the performing arts and institutional development, Katelyn has galvanized funding for artistic, education, and community engagement programs at the New York Philharmonic, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and the Baltimore Symphony.



**Michael Smith (he/him)**  
Wexford, PA

Michael A. Smith is the Assistant Director of Institutional Giving at the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, an arts and economic development nonprofit with a mission to curate and revitalize Pittsburgh's 14 block Cultural District. He received his Ph.D. in English at Duquesne University, where his dissertation focused on geocriticism and literature and culture that delimits the American railroad. He actively engages in public humanities work and sits on the board of PA Humanities and the Committee on Honors and Awards for the Modern Language Association. He also serves on the finance committee of the Franciscan Volunteer Ministry. His academic work on the poetry of Muriel Rukeyser will be published in "Humanities" in mid-2022.



**Catherine Teixeira (she/her)**  
Hudson, NY

Catherine "Cathy" Teixeira is an arts administrator whose career has spanned roles in various facets of arts management including development, operations, finance, programming, and producing. Currently, she serves as the Grants Director of the Maryland State Arts Council and was most recently the General Manager of the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College. She holds an MA in Arts Management from American University and a BM in Vocal Performance from the University of Maryland, College Park.



**Melanie Wang (she/her)**  
Chicago, IL

Melanie Wang is Director of Development & Partnerships at 3Arts, a Chicago nonprofit that supports individual artists with a focus on gender, racial, and disability justice. Melanie's cross-sector experience spans nonprofit, public, and business administration in philanthropy and engagement. Prior to 3Arts, Melanie was Director of Cultural Planning at the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.