

American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Fund Recommendation Cover Sheet

Please submit this document with any recommendations for funding from Rhode Island's allocation of federal fiscal recovery funds available through the American Rescue Plan Act. This information will be made available to the public along with any detailed documents submitted that describe the proposal. It is encouraged that such documents identify clear goals and objectives and quantifiable metrics.

This is not a formal request for funds, and submission of recommendations does not guarantee a response, public hearing, or appropriation from the General Assembly.

Name of Lead Agency: Community MusicWorks

Additional agencies making recommendation (if applicable): _____

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Brief Project Description (attachments should contain details)
CMW seeks support to provide daily music education to a new group of 25 6-8 year olds in our Daily Orchestra Program.

Total request: \$ \$40,000

One-time or Recurring Expense? One-time

ARPA Eligibility Category (check all that apply) – See link for further information
<https://www.rilegislature.gov/commissions/arpa/commdocs/Treasury%20-%20Quick-Reference-Guide.pdf>

- Respond to the public health emergency and its economic impacts X
- Premium pay to eligible workers _____
- Government services/state revenue replacement _____
- Water/sewer/broadband infrastructure _____

**Community MusicWorks
Recommendation to the American Rescue Plan
State Fiscal Recovery Fund**



Introduction

Community MusicWorks seeks \$40,000 in support to launch the third of three student cohorts in our Daily Orchestra Program. This intensive, daily chamber music instruction program will serve 65 predominantly Black and Latinx students from Community MusicWorks' target neighborhoods, which have been subject to the long-term impacts of systemic racism. With the requested support, we will launch a new Lower Elementary cohort in September 2022, adding a new full-time resident musician/teaching artist to instruct 25 new beginning string musicians aged 6-8. This third cohort will complete the program's cycle, offering a series of three sequential groups through which students can progress: Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Youth Alliance for pre-teen and teen students.

About Community MusicWorks

Founded in 1997, the mission of Community MusicWorks (CMW) is to create a cohesive urban community through music education and performance that transforms the lives of children, families, and musicians. Our model is centered around the teaching, mentoring, programs, and performance activities of CMW's Resident Musicians.

CMW's programs include a free, robust youth music education program, through which 125-150 students engage in 110-220 hours of activity per year, including

lessons and coaching, daily orchestra, workshops, students, concerts and community dinners that involve parents, families, and the wider community. Additionally, CMW presents over 30 professional performances annually, which feature CMW resident musicians, alongside students and visiting artists. CMW also offers short- and long-term training programs for emerging professional musicians from across the country.

CMW serves students in seven profoundly under-resourced and underserved South Side/West End neighborhoods, defined geographically. As a result of institutionalized racism, these neighborhoods struggle with complex challenges: poverty, limited educational opportunities (the Providence School District has a 66% graduation rate, and the most recent neighborhood-based survey in 2002 documented West End



Daily Orchestra Program students at a January 2020 Performance Party

graduation rates at 45%); low educational attainment (30-50% of adults have not completed high school); unemployment (pockets above 40%); disinvestment; and high rates of foreclosure (www.policymap.com). Based on a FY21 survey, our students are 70% Black and Latinx, 20% White, 7% Asian, and 4% multiracial. 64% qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. COVID-19 and its amplification of existing inequity has presented additional barriers for our students, who have experienced pandemic-related economic and health challenges. CMW has proven the effectiveness of our hybrid model of music, public service, and education in creating opportunities for diverse young people from historically marginalized communities.

Accomplishments include:

- Participation: CMW has enrolled hundreds of students, with a retention rate of over 80%. The average student participates for 4.5 years, some as long as 12 years.
- Outcomes: All CMW graduates complete high school, and over 95% go to college, in a community with high-school graduation rates of 45%.
- Alumni: Alumni are pursuing college, and many who study and work in Providence have returned to CMW as teachers, mentors, administrative staff and board members, including our Board's current vice-president.
- National Recognition: CMW was awarded the Lewis Prize for Music's inaugural Accelerator Award in 2020; and received the prestigious National Arts and Humanities Youth Program in 2010, awarded by First Lady Michelle Obama. CMW's founder, Sebastian Ruth, received a MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Fellowship.

COVID Impact and Recovery

The COVID pandemic and the introduction of remote learning required us to completely restructure our education program to operate virtually. This was, as it was for everyone, an enormous challenge, and we and our students struggled to stay



Daily Orchestra Program students perform in the student-designed "Animal Songs" online concert, April 2021

connected, while missing the immediate connection of in-person lessons and classes, as well as the all-important ability to play together in ensembles. COVID has been a period of tremendous stress for families and children and has compounded all pre-existing challenges. Job losses and financial hardships have added to the stress of isolation and remote schooling for students and have further pressured families. As we shift out of the acute phase of the pandemic, we have offered a

combination of remote and in-person instruction to follow public health guidelines and address families' risk tolerance. This has included the rebuilding of programs that were curtailed due to COVID, especially the Daily Orchestra Program. At the beginning of COVID, we graduated our upper elementary cohort of the Daily Orchestra Program,

and because of virtual learning, were not able to onboard a new lower elementary cohort. As we begin to shift back into in-person programs, we seek support to add a new elementary cohort of 25 students in our Daily Orchestra Program, restoring students to the program post-COVID.

Project Request: Daily Orchestra Program

Community MusicWorks launched the first Daily Orchestra Program in 2012, to provide beginning students with an option for a more intensive music learning experience and more sustained and regular mentoring. The program built on CMW's then 15-year-old program providing weekly music lessons and weekly group instruction for a population of predominantly Black and Latinx children from some of Providence's most under-resourced neighborhoods. This effort has been a significant success, as Daily Orchestra Program students have advanced rapidly as musicians and through our artist-citizenship curriculum.

Music education is the central focus of the Daily Orchestra Program. Students will participate in one hour of daily chamber orchestra activities, a 1/2 hour weekly individualized lesson, and a 1/2 hour weekly mentoring session, for a total of 240 annual contact hours per student. The daily group instruction encompasses a range of activities designed to build technical skills, musicianship, and individual voice. In addition to their weekly one-on-one music lessons and mentoring sessions, each day of the daily instruction addresses a different aspect of music learning: singing, ear training, sectional rehearsals, studio class, special guest workshops, composer study, and improvisation.



Daily Orchestra students rehearse pre-pandemic

The group of students who join the new Lower Elementary cohort in 2022 will continue for 6-10 years, transitioning into the Upper Elementary Cohort and then the Youth Alliance. The Daily Orchestra Program will thus provide ongoing music education for students who persist in the program throughout their elementary, middle school, and high school years. Funding will support the full-time salary of a resident musician to work with the new cohort.

We deeply appreciate the consideration of the General Assembly of this request, which promises to enable our organization to expand service to Providence children at a critical moment.