

H8098

RHODE ISLAND CREATIVE FUTURES FUND

The RI Coalition For the Arts and Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) are advocating for H8098, which would create an \$18 Million RI Creative Futures Fund (RICFF). Modelled after Vermont's \$9 Million Creative Futures Fundⁱ and Tennessee's \$80 Million Nonprofit Arts and Culture Recovery Fundⁱⁱ, RICFF would make grants to arts and culture organizations with ongoing impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic that threaten their programmatic and fiscal sustainability. Thirteen organizations have pre-qualified. RI Commerce Corp./RISCA would distribute grants to additional organizations that demonstrate similar, ongoing impacts.ⁱⁱⁱ

The State of Rhode Island received \$1.2 Billion in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in part to assist impacted industries, including nonprofit arts organizations.^{iv} Unlike Vermont, Tennessee and many other States, Rhode Island has not used ARPA to create a recovery fund for the creative sector. As a result, the sustainability of the sector is at risk.

Need

- Post-pandemic audience return is slow nationwide, reducing revenue for arts and culture organizations.^v
- Pandemic-fueled inflation has simultaneously increased the cost of doing business.
- Resulting operating losses and debt puts programs and organizations at risk across the United States.^{vi}
- Losses make it difficult for arts organizations to maintain access to credit critical for facilities and operations.
- The thirteen RICFF pre-qualified grantees show the following average impacts:
 - 32% program revenue loss vs pre-pandemic earnings in FY 22
 - 20% program revenue loss vs pre-pandemic earnings in FY 23
 - 38% increase in program expenses due to pandemic fueled inflation in FY 23

What's At Stake

RICFF is designed to maintain the substantial economic, cultural and educational contributions of the arts and culture sector to the civic health of our state. Performances, exhibits, and educational offerings are vital to Rhode Island's identity and quality of life, are a critical component of in-school and after-school educational offerings, and a reason that businesses, individuals and families choose to move or remain here.

If created, the RICFF will help preserve:

- 16,876 jobs, or 2.5% of RI's workforce
- \$2.2 Billion in annual economic impact, or 3.4% of Rhode Island's GDP^{vii}

The thirteen RICFF pre-qualified grantees alone provide the following benefits to the state:

Economic^{viii}

- \$240.3 Million in annual economic impact
- \$23 Million in annual state and local tax revenue

Education

- Education and Job Training Programs that reach 52,000 + students
- 44,000 + annual paid job training hours
- partnerships with 380 + K-12 schools

Audiences

- Combined attendance of 1.8 Million patrons annually

How To Fund It

RICFF can be funded with re-allocated, unspent ARPA monies, state budget surpluses that ARPA helped generate, or general revenue funds. Its cost pales in comparison to the tax revenue generation it will preserve for the State, and to the economic, educational and cultural benefits it will preserve for its citizens.

Endnotes

ⁱ Vermont Arts Council Creative Futures Grant Fund: <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/creative-futures-grant-program/>

ⁱⁱ Tennessee Nonprofit Arts & Culture Recovery Fund: <https://tnartscommission.org/grants/tennessee-nonprofit-arts-culture-recovery-fund-grant/>

ⁱⁱⁱ See distributions below.

RHODE ISLAND CREATIVE FUTURES FUND			
NAMED ORGANIZATIONS		FUND DISTRIBUTIONS	
A5220	Providence	\$	1,000,000.00
FirstWorks	Providence	\$	510,000.00
The Gamm Theatre	Warwick	\$	1,000,000.00
Mixed Magic Theatre	Pawtucket	\$	140,000.00
Newport Contemporary Ballet	Newport	\$	575,000.00
Providence Public Library	Providence	\$	2,650,000.00
RI Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School	East Providence, Providence, Westerly	\$	2,650,000.00
Riverzedge Arts	Woonsocket	\$	340,000.00
The Steel Yard	Providence	\$	570,000.00
Trinity Rep	Providence	\$	2,650,000.00
United Theatre/UTEC	Westerly	\$	500,000.00
WaterFire Providence	Providence	\$	1,600,000.00
Wilbury Theatre Group	Providence	\$	275,000.00
NAMED TOTALS			\$14,460,000.00
RI Commerce/RISCA POOL GRANTS			\$3,240,000.00
RI Commerce/RISCA Administrative Fee			\$300,000.00
TOTALS			\$18,000,000.00

^{iv} The American Rescue Plan Act, Final Rule (pp. 4338-9): <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text>

^v National Endowment for the Arts 2023 *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*: <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2022-SPPA-final.pdf>

^{vi} 2023, *A Crisis in America's Theatres Leaves Prestigious Stages Dark*, NY Times, 7/23,2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/23/theater/regional-theater-crisis.html>

^{vii} US Bureau of Economic Analysis & National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2023.

viii See chart below

Total Economic Impact (Direct, Indirect and Induced) ^{ix}					
Organizations	Location(s)	Local Spending	FTE	Local Tax	State Tax
AS220	Providence	\$5,356,104.60	91	\$237,864.61	\$274,178.99
FirstWorks	Providence	\$2,679,316.50	46	\$118,988.45	\$137,154.21
The Gamm Theatre	Warwick	\$5,262,312.30	89	\$232,300.93	\$267,765.93
Mixed Magic Theatre	Pawtucket	\$484,260.00	8	\$21,505.99	\$24,789.27
Newport Contemporary Ballet	Newport	\$3,011,400.00	51	\$133,736.27	\$154,153.57
Providence Public Library	Providence	\$18,057,841.20	307	\$801,948.73	\$924,380.89
RI Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School	East Providence, Providence, Westerly	\$15,482,649.00	263	\$687,584.44	\$792,556.80
Riverzedge Arts	Woonsocket	\$1,803,217.50	31	\$80,080.89	\$92,306.70
The Steel Yard	Providence	\$2,980,353.60	51	\$132,357.50	\$152,564.30
Trinity Rep	Providence	\$21,489,999.30	365	\$954,370.87	\$1,100,073.06
United Theatre	Westerly	\$2,633,908.20	45	\$116,971.86	\$134,829.76
WaterFire Providence	Providence	\$159,636,910.00	1329	\$7,089,475.17	\$8,171,813.42
Wilbury Theatre Group	Providence	\$1,447,322.10	25	\$64,275.57	\$74,088.42
TOTALS		\$240,325,594.30	2701	\$10,671,461.29	\$12,300,655.33

^{ix} Economic impact taken from organizational operating budgets and estimates derived from the Arts & Economic Prosperity IV 2012 Calculator for Providence, RI; NEFA Arts Impact Study, 2011; and a 2012 Army Corps of Engineers study on WaterFire. Excludes Capital Expenditures.

The Rhode Island Coalition for the Arts

Since 2012 the RI Coalition for the Arts has worked with elected officials to pass legislation that achieves shared goals. We helped author the State's first Creative and Cultural Bond for construction and renovation of art and culture facilities and historic properties. It passed in 2013 and totaled \$32.26 Million. We helped pass a smaller \$5 Million bond in 2021. During the pandemic, we worked with public health officials to keep our audiences and the public safe, and worked with Rhode Island Senator Jack Reed to modify COVID legislation that brought \$44 Million in federal Shuttered Venues Operating Grants to Rhode Island, including more than \$2 Million for the state-owned Veterans Memorial Auditorium.

The arts sector employs a large number of union workers as artists, stage-hands and teachers, and many construction workers in building, renovating and maintaining arts facilities. Coalition arts organizations serve patrons and students statewide. Political and voter support for previous Coalition efforts has been, broad, bi-partisan and overwhelmingly positive.

House Sponsor: Representative Scott Slater

Senate Sponsor: Senator Jacob Bissaillon

RI Coalition for the Arts Contact

David Beauchesne
 Executive Director, RI Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School
dbeauchesne@riphil.org
 404 798-3294 (call or text)

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts Contact

Lynne McCormack
 Executive Director
Lynne.McCormack@arts.ri.gov
 401 649-2180 (call or text)

2024 -- H 8098

LC005725

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

Introduced By: Representatives Slater, Voas, O'Brien, and Diaz

Date Introduced: March 22, 2024

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 42-75 of the General Laws entitled "Council on the Arts" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **42-75-14. Rhode Island creative futures fund.**

4 (a) A fund shall be established within the state treasury to be known and maintained as the
5 "Rhode Island Creative Futures Fund." The fund shall be in the amount of eighteen million dollars
6 (\$18,000,000) and shall be funded by:

7 (1) Monies currently held by the state pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA);

8 (2) Appropriations from the general assembly; and/or

9 (3) A general obligation bond approved by Rhode Island voters.

10 (b) The principal purpose of the fund is to assist nonprofit arts and cultural organizations
11 that have sustained economic harm due to the COVID-19 pandemic and need financial support to
12 build back to pre-pandemic levels. The funds shall be awarded and dispersed as rapidly as possible,
13 with the entirety of funds directed from ARPA being allocated no later than December 30, 2024
14 and spent no later than December 30, 2026.

15 (c) Monies appropriated to, or designated for the fund shall be distributed by the Rhode
16 Island State council on the arts (RISCA) and/or Rhode Island commerce corporation (commerce
17 corp.) as follows:

18 (1) \$14.46 million dollars to thirteen (13) pre-qualified, named nonprofit arts and cultural
19 organizations.

1 (i) AS220, Providence – one million dollars (\$1,000,000);
2 (ii) FirstWorks, Providence – five hundred ten thousand dollars (\$510,000);
3 (iii) The Gamm Theatre, Warwick – one million dollars (\$1,000,000);
4 (iv) Mixed Magic Theatre, Pawtucket – one hundred forty thousand dollars (\$140,000);
5 (v) Newport Contemporary Ballet – five hundred seventy-five thousand dollars
6 (\$575,000);
7 (vi) Providence Public Library – two million six hundred fifty thousand dollars
8 (\$2,650,000);
9 (vii) R.I. Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School, East Providence – two million six
10 hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$2,650,000);
11 (viii) Riverzedge Arts, Woonsocket – three hundred forty thousand dollars (\$340,000);
12 (ix) The Steel Yard, Providence – five hundred seventy thousand dollars (\$570,000);
13 (x) Trinity Repertory Company, Providence – two million six hundred fifty thousand
14 dollars (\$2,650,000);
15 (xi) United Theatre, Westerly – five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000);
16 (xii) WaterFire Providence – one million six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000);
17 (xiii) Wilbury Theatre Group, Providence – two hundred seventy-five thousand dollars
18 (\$275,000); and
19 (2) Three million five hundred forty dollars (\$3,540,000) to Rhode Island commerce corp.
20 and/or RISCA for distribution to other nonprofit arts and cultural organizations economically
21 harmed by the COVID-19 pandemic in accordance with regulations to be promulgated by RISCA
22 and/or commerce corp., less an administrative fee of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000).
23 Nonprofit arts and cultural organizations not named above shall be eligible to apply for creative
24 futures fund grants.
25 (d) Any ARPA funds not granted by December 1, 2024 shall be distributed proportionally
26 among the named organizations. Award eligibility and amount for pre-qualified, named
27 organizations and grant applicants shall be determined by measurable pandemic losses, budget size,
28 economic impact and number of jobs retained. Organizations that are minority led and primarily
29 serve or represent a minority community shall receive additional support, consistent with ARPA's
30 emphasis on rectifying the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on communities of color.
31 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

LC005725

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT – COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

1 This act would establish a Rhode Island creative futures fund in the amount of eighteen
2 million dollars (\$18,000,000) to be awarded to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations that are
3 experiencing continued economic harm due to the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute to the
4 cultural, economic and educational vitality of the state. The fund would be established with
5 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, through an appropriation by the general assembly,
6 and/or proceeds from a general obligation bond approved by voters.

7 This act would take effect upon passage.

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AS220 is an artist-run organization committed to providing an unjuried and uncensored forum for the arts for nearly 40 years. AS220 offers artists opportunities to live, work, exhibit and/or perform in its facilities, which include several rotating gallery spaces, a performance stage, a black-box theater, a print shop, a darkroom and media arts lab, a fabrication lab, a fashion and visual arts studio, a dance studio, a youth program focusing on youth under state care and in juvenile detention facilities, four dozen affordable live/work studios for artists, and more. AS220's programming is available to any artist who needs a place to exhibit, perform, or create original work and its classes and community studios are among the most affordable in the nation.

Pandemic Impacts: Revenue Down: FY2023 earned revenue down 15% from pre-pandemic.

Expenses Up: Costs for program operations up nearly 30%.

Uneven Audience Return: Post-pandemic paid audiences remain unpredictable; requests for subsidized or free programming increased.

CFF Grant: The **\$1,000,000** grant will help us retain employees and core programs, reduce debt service burden from pandemic deficits, and raise funds from donors. This will position us to strengthen and expand programs, preserving the jobs and community impacts below.

Employees: **91 FTEs:** 40-45 full and part-time employees; 50+ contracted teaching artists; 70+ youth jobs & apprentices; 12 emerging artist fellows; 2,000+ other artists paid annually.

Economic Impact: **\$5.4 Million** in Local Direct and Induced Spending annually.
\$512,000 + in Annual State and Local Tax.

Audience: **400+** unique live events annually with **25,000+** attendees; **2,000+** artists performing on our stages; **200+** artists showing work in our galleries; **50+** artists sharing their skills through classes and workshops in our studios; and **50+** artists living in our affordable downtown housing.

Education: **Over 300** youth members aged 14-21 at AS220 Youth, a nationally recognized creative workforce development program that centers youth leadership and the elevation of youth of color, combining arts and social justice education, mentorship, peer-to-peer learning, and civically engaged creative projects.
3,000+ tuition-based adult learners in dance classes; printmaking, media and fabrication workshops; professional development; and other community teaching and learning opportunities.

Equity and Access: AS220 recognizes different people need different forms of access to participate: we work to make full participation possible for our artists and audiences. This includes **safe, secure and affordable housing**; **extremely affordable programming**; continually investing in **physical accessibility**; **Intergenerational** program design; **centering youth**, especially youth of color and those transitioning out of incarceration and in the custody or care of the state; **deep community partnerships**; and the work of our **Racial Justice Initiative**, with the goal of co-create an antiracist and liberatory culture at the organization.

Key Facilities: **100,000 sf** in **3 mixed-use buildings**, a **\$25 Million+** investment in Downtown Providence:
Empire Street Complex: 11 affordable apartments; AS220 galleries, dance studio, darkroom, performance spaces; artist work studios; 2 storefront business tenants; 3 non-profit tenants
Dreyfus Hotel: 14 affordable apartments; AS220 offices and galleries; artist work studios; storefront restaurant tenant
Mercantile Block: 22 affordable apartments; AS220 Youth and Community Studios educational studios; 3 storefront business tenants; 1 non-profit tenant



FirstWorks is marking its 20th anniversary as a nonprofit arts organization based in Providence, dedicated to enriching the cultural, educational, and economic vitality of Rhode Island by engaging diverse audiences with world-class performing arts and education programs. FirstWorks strengthens the cultural fabric of RI by presenting work by iconic US and international artists. FirstWorks core programs create access to the arts through free programs and gifted tickets across a winter and summer series, the City's signature PVDfest, Three Nights of Lights winter festival, and a year-round arts education for youth. FirstWorks has collaborated with over 90 organizations, including social services, schools, tourism, and government.

- Pandemic Impacts:** **Revenue Down:** 85% decrease in earned revenues from 2020 to 2023
Expenses Up: 20% expense increase from pandemic fueled inflation
Slow Audience Return: Post-pandemic audience behavior remains unpredictable
- CFF Grant:** **The \$510K grant** will help us to retain employees, stabilize operations and offer cultural programs which enrich Rhode Island. FirstWorks harnesses the power of the arts by creating opportunities for residents of all ages to engage with world-class arts in public spaces and historic venues; opportunities for local artists to teach, perform, and create new work; opportunities for students to access quality in-school arts education; and life-long learning.
- Employees:** FirstWorks is made up of **7 FT + 1 PT staff** and 2 long-standing contractors. We employ 200+ artists/educators annually.
- Economic Impact:** **\$3,193,050 in total expenditures** PVDfest 2022 – FirstWorks is Founding Partner, Co-Producer
- Audience:** Across FirstWorks' 20-year History: **925,000+ attendees**
19,000 Youth Reached
32 Festivals Produced
100,000+ Virtual Program Views
- Education:** **2,000+ Students Reached Annually**
~45 Teaching Artists Employed Annually
Youth Board Program pays stipend and builds interest in vibrant careers in the arts
- Equity and Access** FirstWorks works with artists of color (nearly ~80%) and has demonstrated our commitment to building artist partnerships through equitable contracting and employment opportunities. Arts Education (which reaches over 2,000 annually) prioritizes serving RI core urban districts that have great economic needs and diverse populations. Our commitment to accessible ticketing (free/pay-what-you-choose) furthers community reach; 20% of tickets are gifted.
- Key Facilities:** **FirstWorks 235 Promenade Street Suite 130 Providence, RI 02908**
- Key Partners and Venues:** City of Providence, Arts Culture Tourism Dept.
Roger Williams Parks Conservancy
The Veterans Memorial Auditorium
Rhode Island Dept of Education: Mount Pleasant High School, D'Abate Elementary, Central Falls High School, Narragansett School District, Pawtucket School District
The Strand
Tomaquag Indigenous Museum
Providence Public Library
Brown Arts Institute



Since 1984, The Gamm has become one of Rhode Island's premier professional theaters and a regional cultural asset. As a destination for critically acclaimed productions, the theater has produced both world and regional premieres, bringing world-class theater to audiences across Rhode Island, Connecticut, Greater Boston, and beyond. The Gamm's education department has worked to promote life-long literacy for thousands of students in grades K-12 each year. Humanities forums and post-show talkbacks further enhance the intellectual and cultural life of the community.

- Pandemic Impacts:** **FY23 Revenue Down & Expenses Up:** Performance revenue down by 11%, and operating expenses up 10% from pre-pandemic norms.
Slow Audience Return: As of FY23, 80% of pre-pandemic audiences had returned, with 29% of season subscribers still yet to return.
Covid-19 Operating Deficits: Cumulative deficits 3/2020 – 6/2023: \$734,834
- CFF Grant:** This \$1M grant will enable us to reduce or eliminate current operating deficits, allowing for investment in staff retention and growth to support the sustainability and future expansion of artistic and educational programming. Additionally, it will play a critical role in cultivating a culture of philanthropy that will help safeguard the theater's future operations.
- Employees:** 89 FTE. 106 full and part-time employees, including: 23 staff; 64 actors, designers, and production crew members; 17 teaching artists; and 3 post-graduate Fellows.
- Economic Impact:** \$5.3M in Local Direct and Induced Spending; \$503,077 in Annual State and Local Tax
- Audience:** Approximately 20,000 audience members attend the 145 scheduled performances, including 10 student matinees, each season. In recent years, Gamm's patrons represent all 39 Rhode Island municipalities. The largest group is from Providence (20.13%), followed by Warwick (10.25%), Cranston (6.71%), and Pawtucket (4.59%). Out-of-state patrons make up approximately 15% of the audience.
- Students:** Over 4,300 students served in 32 schools across 12 school districts annually through Gamm's in-school or after-school residencies and other educational programming.
- Equity and Access:** **Fellowship Program** fosters diversity by offering hands-on training, mentorship, and job prospects for BIPOC graduates from RI's public universities.
P.L.A.Y. Program provides free literacy-based arts education to students in Title I schools across the state, including Warwick, Pawtucket, Providence, Central Falls, Newport, and more.
Accessibility measures include free/discounted tickets, assisted listening devices, ASL interpreted performances, and scholarships for studio classes.
- Key Facilities:** The Gamm Theatre, 1245 Jefferson Blvd, Warwick, RI. 02886



Organization: Mixed Magic Theatre
Federal ID/Registration Number 51-0456328
Address: 560 Mineral Spring Ave. Pawtucket, RI 02860
Phone: 401-587-1400
Primary Contact: Ricardo Pitts-Wiley

The mission of Mixed Magic Theatre has always been to “Present a diversity of ideas and images on stage and to tell great stories from America and around the world.” We are also committed to providing high quality and affordable arts programming to underserved communities in Pawtucket and throughout the region.

Mixed Magic Theatre over the past year worked to balance several issues that will have a long-term impact on the company. We had to look at how we could build a new post-Covid audience as well as explore ways that the company could transition from a company that presented plays and cultural events to one that was focused on institution building.

The past four Covid years have been a test of Mixed Magic’s ability to adjust to demographic shifts, the nature of giving and our desire to work at a higher level while keeping our commitment to offer development and performance opportunities to BIPOC artists and communities. The pandemic in many ways exacerbated long-term problems in respect to engagement with the arts in underserved communities. In the past year Mixed Magic has had to shift many of its priorities.

ABOUT MIXED MAGIC THEATRE

For the past 25 years Mixed Magic has developed programs that gave a voice to the works of great and emerging poets, with programs such as Poets on Fire!, An Unexpected Poetry Affair and the RISE To Black Showcase series. Our We, They and the People series done in collaboration with the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, was designed to respond to contemporary issues such as voting rights, women’s issues and police brutality while giving them historical context.

560 Mineral Spring Ave. Box 100A Pawtucket, RI 02860
401.587-1400

Email: mixedmagictheatre@gmail.com Web. www.MMTRI.ORG



Newport Contemporary Ballet (NCB) is a contemporary ballet company that engages bodies, hearts, and minds through dynamic and thought-provoking performance, transformative dance education, and deep community connection. NCB annually serves more than 10,000 individuals, including 3,600 school children. Founded as the Island Moving Company in 1982, the company has served as a cultural attraction, creative catalyst, and educational resource for residents of Newport County and beyond for over 42 years. In 2023, as part of an ambitious multi-year strategic plan that includes the creation of a new Center for Arts, Dance & Education, the company rebranded as Newport Contemporary Ballet.

- Pandemic Impacts:** **FY23 Revenue Down:** While ticket sales continue to recover, our Academy and in-school education programs are still down 21%. NCB's fundraising events remain 25% below pre-pandemic levels, the support from these events is greatly missed.
FY23 Expenses Up: Total operating expenses are up 33% over 2020, with the largest increases in labor costs, production tech and rental costs for performance venues.
- CFF Grant:** **The \$575k grant** will help us restore eliminated staff positions, specifically in the area of donor cultivation and development ensuring the sustainability of our programs and operations. These funds will allow us to enhance our New Dancer Program; expand our scholarship programming capacity and cover ever increasing production costs.
- Employees:** NCB employs 14-16 full and part-time employees, 16+ resident dancers, 15+ contracted teaching artists, 6+ costumers, musicians etc
- Economic Impact:** **\$1.4 million** in direct & local spending annually
\$144k in state and local tax
- Audience:** **41+ Performances**, including 6 Arts First Matinee school-day performances, reaching audiences of 10,000+
- Students:** **The Academy:** provides classes for students of all ages, offering generous tuition support to the extent possible; **School-based Programs:** Arts-integrated education in math, literacy, social emotional learning for students in grades 1-6, including after school programs
- Equity and Access:** **Education:** NCB's New Dancer Program providing scholarships (tuition, uniforms, transportation) for underprivileged children; the Dancing through Boundaries works in the public school system. **Professional Company:** includes dancers, choreographers, designers that reflect the diversity of our community, while bringing programming to underserved communities.
- Key Facilities:** The WaterFire Theater, Providence
The Preservation Society of Newport, Rosecliff Mansion
St. Andrews School, Barrington
The Historical Society of Newport, Great Friends Meeting House
Public Schools across RI with our Dancing Through Boundaries program
*The pandemic stalled our capital campaign, pushing out the timeline for having a permanent residence.



**Providence
Public
Library**

For nearly 150 years, Providence Public Library (PPL) has served the City of Providence and State of Rhode Island, innovating and evolving in response to emerging community needs. PPL is a critical resource and cultural institution, working with a broad network of community organizations and schools to provide vital services and gathering spaces, as well as essential educational programs and opportunities to learners of all ages and particularly those underserved. Since our transformative building renovation in 2021, which opened a wealth of modernized public spaces for programs, performances, and other events for community use, PPL has greatly expanded our role as a local center of access, connection, and support.

Pandemic Impacts:

- **FY19 to FY23 Revenue Down & Expenses Up:** Program revenue down 41%. Expenses up 16%.
- **More than 50% increase in library users over pre-pandemic usage.** Also, our role as a critical support in our state's social services landscape has grown, as housing insecurity, mental health challenges, and other complex social issues worsened during the pandemic persist at unprecedented levels.
- **Operational Cost Increases:** \$221,872 in operational cost increases from FY19 to FY23
- **Circulation/resource usage** up over 400% from FY19 - FY23

CFF Grant: The **\$2.65 million grant** will support key operations, retain employees, restore frozen positions, and allow PPL to rebuild to meet soaring library usage.

Employees: **75 - 67 FTEs** (59 full time and 16 part time). In FY23, 29 contractors totaling \$112,376.

Economic Impact: **\$8.5 million** annually in local direct and induced spending

Audience: **246,000+ patrons** annually served in-person and virtually (residents of Providence and all RI)

Education (FY23):

Adult & Youth Services: 5,134 students; 5,565 teaching hours; 3,256 job training hours (bolstering adult workforce development and statewide adult education system)

Lifelong Learning:

- Usage of resources and materials topped 2,048,362 + 43,077 who received information assistance
- 17,100 children, youth and adults attended learning and enrichment programs, exhibitions and events

Equity and Access:

PPL patrons reflect the high level of diversity in Providence and its surrounding areas. Typically, around 50% of PPL's workforce education participants are unemployed and 75% are low to moderate income.

- Of participants who utilized our digital navigation and career services in FY23
 - ⇒ 62% were Hispanic/Latino and 18% were Black/African American
 - ⇒ 53% reported receiving public assistance
 - ⇒ 94% were categorized at a low-income level, with 69% earning less than \$20,000
- Of the 87% of participants in our credit-bearing teen programs in FY23 who chose to disclose information, 78% were youth of color

Facility: **Three-building facility**, including historic 1900 Washington Street building and recently restored 1950 Empire Street addition and Fountain Street stack building. (Total 138,808 square feet.)

**RHODE ISLAND
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA &
MUSIC SCHOOL**
ROBERT SPANO, PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR

The Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School (RIPO&MS) is the oldest performing arts organization in RI, and the largest combined professional orchestra and community music school in the US. RIPO&MS enriches and transforms our region through exceptional performances by its professional Orchestra and world-renowned guest artists, through instruction at its Music School, and through Community Partnerships that bring educational opportunities to P-12 schools and community locations.

- Pandemic Impacts:** **FY 23 Revenue Down & Expenses Up:** Program revenue down 23%. Expenses up 22%.
Slow Audience Return: 64% of pre-Pandemic audience had returned by FY 23.
Downgraded Credit: Lower revenue = difficulty renewing letters and lines of credit.
Budget Cuts: 9% cuts = staff layoffs and reduced capacity to further mission.
Covid-19 Operating Deficits: Cumulative deficits 3/2020 – present: \$1.2 M.
- CFF Grant:** The \$2.65 M grant will help us retain employees and programs, restore credit rating with banks and raise funds from donors. This will position us to rebuild Orchestra attendance and Music School enrollments to sustainable levels, preserving the jobs and impacts below.
- Employees:** 263 FTE. 439 full and part-time employees, including: 27 staff; 114 Faculty/Teaching Artists; 73 permanent Orchestra members and 225 extra and apprentice members.
- Economic Impact:** \$15.5 Million in Local Direct and Induced Spending
\$1.48 Million in Annual State and Local Tax.
\$160,000 + in rent and fees paid annually to the State-Owned VETS Auditorium.
- Audience:** RIPO – 31 professional performances at The VETS, PPAC, the Carter Center and outdoor locations with 155,000 concert attendees annually. Music School – 80 + student and faculty performances given annually for more than 8,000 attendees.
- Students:** Over 1,500 tuition-based Music School students.
Over 13,000 Community Partnership students at more than 87 P-12 schools.
Over 25,000 hours of instruction annually.
1 graduate fellow at Boston University (will expand to 4).
- Equity and Access** **Education:** Music School Financial Aid, Community Partnerships in 77 P-12 Schools, and The Boston University fellowship are among programs that tackle opportunity gaps and promote equity and access. **Orchestra:** Programming and commissioning music and hiring guest artists that reflect the diversity of our community, as well as bringing programming to underserved communities are core artistic commitments.
- Key Facilities:** Carter Center for Music Education & Performance, East Providence
The VETS Auditorium, Providence (State Owned)
Providence Performing Arts Center, Providence
United Theatre Education Center, Westerly
- CC Tenants:** Carter Center tenant partners (Providence Singers, RI Children’s Chorus and others) engage an additional 1,500 children and adults in community music making and learning each week.



Riverzedge Arts Project is a Woonsocket, RI-based non-profit that was founded in 2002 to provide work-based arts training to traditionally underserved and at-risk youth between the ages of 14 and 21. We operate art studios as micro-businesses in which youth work side-by-side with professional artists to learn industry-standard skills and technology to complete client commissions—all while earning a wage.

Pandemic Impacts:	FY23 Revenue Down from FY22:	\$-96,786	(-12%)
	FY23 Revenue Down from Pre-Pandemic Peak:	\$-97,620	(-60%)
	FY23 Expenses Up from FY22:	\$47,000	(+6.25%)
	FY23 Expenses Up from Pre-Pandemic Peak:	\$350,000	(+78%)

CFF Grant: The **\$340,000 grant** will make it possible to maintain our staff and our nationally-recognized youth programming.

Employees: **43 total employees:** 37 PTE (traditionally underserved youth under 18); 5 FTE adult staff; 1 PTE adult staff.

Economic Impact: Without this support, the youth in our community will lose **\$215,000 in annual wages and the city will lose between 80 and 100 jobs**. Without our programming, youth will perform worse academically, attend school less, and take unskilled labor jobs that do not prepare them adequately to join the state's workforce.

Audience: Riverzedge Arts produces **public art for the city's 42,000 residents** in collaboration with local and state partners, particularly the City of Woonsocket, the Woonsocket Health Equity Zone, and health-related institutions like the RI DEM and the RI DOH. Since Woonsocket RI is considered a Justice 40 community due to health, environmental, and economic indicators, our work is needed to promote community wellness.

Students: Youth participants are between the ages of 14 and 19, and 96% of our youth participants come from the high-need, traditionally-underserved city of Woonsocket. The youth we serve reflect the demographics of our community, with **the highest percentage self-identifying as Black or Latin(x)**.

Equity and Access: We serve a **high need community that has been traditionally underserved**. 20% of our schools received Title 1 funding, we have the highest rates of chronic absenteeism and the lowest graduation rate in the state. Youth in our city need the jobs we create and the support services we offer (tutoring, FAFSA completion, health referrals, meals and a food pantry, and safe transportation).

Key Facilities: 196 Second Avenue, a historic property in Woonsocket that previously sat empty for more than a decade. **We pay city property taxes for this site.**



The Steel Yard's historic campus is a platform for professional artists, makers, and the community to practice and learn the industrial arts. The organization fosters creative and economic opportunities, by providing workspace, tools, training, and education while forging lasting links to a local tradition of craftsmanship.

Pandemic Operations: Throughout the pandemic The Steel Yard continued to meet the expanding education, cultural and basic needs of the community by adjusting our programs to: create new **paid apprenticeships**, support **free outdoor events**, subsidize all students and provide **300% more educational scholarship support**.

Pandemic Impacts: **CY 23 Revenue Down:** 2023 Program revenue down 15% from pre-covid.
CY Expenses Up: Cost increases for programs and operations up nearly 30%
Covid-19 Operating Deficits: Cumulative deficits 3/2020 – present \$475,000.

CFF Grant: The **\$570,000** grant will help us retain employees, restore eliminated staff positions and rebuild community programs.

Employees: **22 FTE's** 14-17 full and part-time employees, 8+ Resident Artists, 32+ Contracted Teaching Artists, 24+ contracted fabrication artists.

Economic Impact: **\$1.3 Million** in Local Direct Spending Annually.
+\$300,000 in amenities produced and commissioned annual for local governments and organizations with 95% local spending. Clients include: RIPTA, RIDOT, RIDEM, RIDOH, RI Commerce, RISCA, State House Library, Providence Parks Dept, Town of Bristol, City of Warwick, City of Newport, City of Providence...

Audience: **800 Studio Users supported** annually through education, small business/training programs
+15,000 people attend free or low-cost cultural events each year
Priority commitment to central Providence residents, with some participants traveling from across New England and beyond.

Education: **Life-long Learning:** Courses for people 15 and up, average student/trainee age of 32
600+ tuition-based Industrial Arts Students and 1,600 hours of instruction annually

Equity and Access: **1/3** of students have household income below \$34,999
Education: Partnerships with public and private schools enable increased access for young artists. North Providence High School, The Lincoln School, Princes 2 Kings, Youth Build Academy, RISD Project Open-Door, the MET School
Community Partnerships: Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths, RAMP Real Access Motivates Progress, Providence Cultural Equity Initiative, Binch Press

Key Facilities: The Steel Yard Studio: 12,000 sf ADA-accessible industrial arts studios
Community Art Building: 4,500 sf small business incubator with three arts tenants
The Steel Yard Campus: 3.8 acre remediated brownfield open to the public
55 Sims Ave: 6,500 sf industrial building currently under development



Trinity Rep is the State Theater of Rhode Island. Since 1963, we have consistently garnered widespread popular and critical acclaim for our provocative, audience-engaging style and our renowned company of artists and educators. Guided by **core values of company, community, education, and anti-racism**, our mission is to reinvent the public square with dramatic art that stimulates, educates, and engages our diverse community in a continuing dialogue. We do this through nationally recognized stage productions, a professional resident acting company, a graduate training MFA program offered in partnership with Brown University, lifelong learning and community engagement opportunities, and arts education programs for students in grades K-12.

- Pandemic Impacts:** **21-month pause** of in-person performances (March 2020 to November 2021).
FY19 (last full season before pandemic) vs FY23:
- Overall revenue **down 23%**. Attendance-related revenue down 40%.
 - Overall expenses **up 33.8%**. Weekly labor costs are more than double.
 - Slow audience return: FY23 attendance was half what it was in FY19.
- CFF Grant:** The **\$2.65 million grant** will support key operations and sustain programs as we rebuild audiences and revenue streams.
- Employees:** **Nearly 250 each year:** 61 full-time staff; 7 full-time apprentices; 34 part-time staff; and 150 actors, designers, technicians, and teachers.
- Economic Impact:** **\$21.5 million** in Local Direct and Induced Spending Annually
\$2.05 million in Annual State and Local Tax
- Audience:** In FY23, Trinity Rep served **54,000 people** through **237 performances** of six professional productions, educational and community engagement programs. *(This is down from 107,000 people served pre-pandemic in FY19.)*
- Students:** **8,700 K-12 students from 84 schools** through Project Discovery matinees, Trinity Rep Active Imagination Network programs for young people with autism and cognitive and psychiatric disabilities; in-school workshops and residencies; and after-school and summer classes for all ages. *(This is down from over 20,000 students from 201 schools in FY19.)*
- Equity and Access:** Trinity Rep's outreach, engagement, lifelong learning and accessibility programs introduce underserved audiences of all ages to a multifaceted theater experience. Thousands of Rhode Islanders who would not otherwise have access to theater directly benefit from these programs. We provide integrated arts and community-building opportunities to diverse community members: adults, students, seniors, disabled, deaf and hearing-impaired community members, and new or hesitant learners.
- Key Facilities:** The Lederer Theater Center, 201 Washington St., Providence, RI 02903
Pell Chafee Performance Center, 87 Empire St., Providence, RI 02903
- Collaborators:** Trinity Rep works with dozens of community organizations and schools each year. Key partners include Brown University, Rhode Island Latino Arts, Providence Clemente Veterans Initiative, Seven Hills RI, and the Providence Public Library.

the UNITED

The UNITED is a non-profit regional center for arts and arts education in Westerly, Rhode Island, showcasing world-class performing, visual, and creative work. Reincarnated from a 1926 vaudeville theatre, our 23,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility consists of three movie theaters, one large black box balconied auditorium with a 650-person capacity, an art gallery and events space, and a music school that services over 400 students a week. With a mission to “unite the community through the arts,” the UNITED draws from an expansive audience of various ages with a shared love of the arts and arts education in its many forms - including film, live music, theatre, opera, comedy, dance, visual arts, lectures, and more.

- Pandemic Impacts:** The UNITED opened in the aftermath of the pandemic in 2021, at a time when the audience for the bulk of what we present had declined: down 26% (Movies) and 68% (Opera) from 2019. There is no doubt that earned revenues from movies and live events would be higher at the UNITED, were it not for the pandemic. A conservative reading of the data from the NEA Survey of Public Participation in the Arts would suggest we'd be earning at least 26% more than we are currently. Additionally, cost increases for programs and operations are up nearly 30%.
- CFF Grant:** The \$500,000 grant will make it possible to maintain our staff, grow our programming, and increase educational opportunities in the arts to enrich our community.
- Employees:** The UNITED is made up of 14 FT + 14 PT employees and an additional 30 paid teachers.
- Economic Impact:** **\$2.6 Million in Local Direct and Induced Spending Annually**
\$251,799 in Annual State and Local Tax
- Audience:** We welcomed over 55,000 people through our doors in 2023. The majority of our attendees are from the immediate geographic area, but for our larger events we attract people from over 30 states and three different countries, and are a primary driver for local tourism and community development.
- Education:** 1,200 students a year are enrolled in our educational programs, 30% of whom are awarded scholarship opportunities. Additionally, we partner with Westerly Public Schools to provide free after school arts education to 20 middle school students enrolled in eight week sessions providing a sampling of arts education.
- Equity and Access:** The UNITED prioritizes servicing our community and other non profits by opening up our spaces and hosting outside events. Additionally, we aim to provide a wide array of low cost/no cost cultural and educational events every year.
- Key Facilities:** The Ocean Community United Theatre 5 Canal Street Westerly, RI 02891
- Partners:** Ballet RI, Literacy Volunteers of Washington County, Newport Folk and Jazz Festivals, Preserve RI, Rhode Island Foundation, Rhode Island Philharmonic & Music School, Rhode Island State Council of the Arts, South County Tourism, Trinity Rep, URI, Westerly and Chariho Public School Systems, Westerly Library, Wilbury Theatre Group and more.

WATERFIRE PROVIDENCE

– CREATIVELY TRANSFORMING OUR CITY



Over the past 30 years, WaterFire Providence's mission has been to inspire Providence and its visitors by revitalizing the urban experience, fostering community engagement and creatively transforming the city by presenting WaterFire for all to enjoy. In 2017, the WaterFire Arts Center opened in the underserved Valley neighborhood as an arts and culture community anchor institution.

- Pandemic Impacts:** In 2023, WaterFire Providence incurred an operating loss of over \$600,000 due primarily to a precipitous drop in corporate sponsorship which was exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic.
- CFF Grant:** The \$1,600,000 grant will help fill the gap created by the significant drop in corporate sponsorship due to the COVID 19 pandemic and allow the organization to retain employees, continue programs and organize events downtown and at the WaterFire Arts Center that draw approximately a million visitors a year to Rhode Island.
- Employees:** 30 +/- FTE's and 70 part time employees. 200+ artists and vendors at WaterFire lightings and hundreds more for WaterFire Arts Center events.
- Economic Impact:** Creates over \$150,000,000 in economic output that generates approximately \$12,000,000 in tax revenue for the State of RI and supports more than 1,300 jobs in local businesses.
- Audience:** Approximately 1,000,000 visitors to WaterFire lightings each season. 60% come from out of state, 25% from outside the United States and 15% report WaterFire is their #1 reason for visiting Rhode Island.
- Education:** WaterFire Accelerate is a year-long professional development program for 6 artists under the age of 30. ArtLab@WaterFire is a year-long paid youth leadership and workforce development program for 5 male students of color from Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School. WaterFire Creative Labs is a series of intergenerational admission free weekend art workshops. WaterFire Re-entry is a workforce development program for the formerly incarcerated.
- Equity and Access:** WaterFire events are admission free and open to all members of the community and visitors from afar. WaterFire Accelerate, ArtLab@WaterFire, Creative Labs and WaterFire Re-Entry are programs designed to support and advance members of underrepresented and underserved communities.
- Key Facilities:** WaterFire Arts Center which, in addition to being WaterFire Providence's office, exhibition and event venue, is also the home to the Wilbury Theatre Group. 37,000 sq ft ADA accessible exhibition, event and performance spaces.



Since 2010 the Wilbury Theatre Group has been engaging our community in thought-provoking conversation through new works, reimaged classics and adventurous playmaking. Through our Main Series season, our New Work development program, Community Partnerships and Education programs, and as producers of New England's largest Fringe theatre festival FRINGEPVD: The Providence Fringe Festival®, we have continuously demonstrated a resolve to create theatre that entertains, enlightens, and inspires.

- Pandemic Impact:** **FY 23 Revenue Down & Expenses Up:** Single ticket sales recovering, but season subscriptions are down -20% post-pandemic, while artist, staffing, and production expenses have nearly doubled post-pandemic. New works development program and Education programs reduced by nearly 50% to cut costs.
- CFF Grant:** **The \$275K grant** will allow us to retain employees and programs, rebuild our subscription base, and increase our programming to pre-pandemic levels.
- Employees:** **25 FTE** includes 7 full and part-time employees and 50 actors, designers, technicians, and other artists.
- Economic Impact:** **\$1.447 Million** in Local Direct and Induced Spending
\$138,363 in Annual State and Local Tax
- Audience:** **85 Main Series performances; 27 special events**, readings, and outside performances; **93 special performances** from Providence Fringe Festival at venues incl. WaterFire Arts Center, Farm Fresh, the Steel Yard, and more; **100+ students** and **15,000+ audience members** served annually.
- Equity and Access:** Our **All Access ticketing model** offers admission for Main Series season and Classes and Education workshops available via Pay-What-You-Can basis Programming and hiring guest artists that consistently reflects diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.
- Collaborators:** Core collaborations incl. programming partnerships with The Public's Radio and Brown Arts Institute, providing performance space for Manton Avenue Project children's theatre programming, Motion State Arts, and providing space in-kind for community meetings hosted by ONE Neighborhood Builders, Olneyville Neighborhood Association, and Dorcas International, among others.

