

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 28

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Manchester

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

West Hartford

Will this activity occur after February 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Organization Name

Connecticut Summerfest, Inc.

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

475031850

Principal Contact Name

Maria Paterno

Title

Development Manager

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Manchester, Connecticut 06042
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[Map It](#)

Website

<http://www.ctsummerfest.org>

Amount requested this application

\$5,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

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Connecticut Summerfest brings together talented emerging composers with some of the country's most inventive chamber music ensembles for a week-long festival of artistic exchange culminating in nine world premieres. The festival provides the Greater Hartford community with contemporary music concerts of the highest caliber through a nightly concert series featuring three ensembles-in-residence and brand-new pieces written by festival composition students.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Our board is made of three members, one of whom identifies as female (33%), one member identifies as LGBTQ (33%), and one member has made personal financial contributions to the organization (33%). None of our current board members identify as African American or Latino/Hispanic (0%).

Detail any changes since your last application.

We have had no significant changes to our board, leadership, organizational structure, strategic direction, financial condition or mission.

Project Name

International Contemporary Ensemble at Connecticut Summerfest 2020

Project Description

Connecticut Summerfest brings together emerging composers with some of the country's most inventive professional chamber ensembles for a weeklong festival of artistic exchange. Throughout the week, composition students attend presentations by guest lecturers, one-on-one lessons with resident composition faculty, a recording session, and composition seminars. Our 2020 festival will occur from June 11–17.

Festival composers write new works for our ensembles-in-residence, as well as attending daily rehearsals that culminate in a live concert premiere of their piece. Our ensembles-in-residence are each invited to give a recital of their own repertoire, bringing audiences in direct dialogue with these artists. This year, we are requesting \$5,000 to help fund the residency of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). Described as "the new gold standard for new-music" (*The New Yorker*), ICE is an innovative and dynamic ensemble at the forefront of the contemporary classical scene.

Project start/opening

06/11/2020

Project end/closing

06/17/2020

Project venue

The Hartt School

Project town

West Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Connecticut Summerfest's concert series is free to attend, with a suggested donation of \$10 for those interested in supporting our organization. The first three concerts, featuring programs curated by our Ensemble-in-Residence, will occur at 8PM on

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June 12th and 13th, and at 4PM on June 14th in the Berkman Recital Hall at The Hartt School. The final concert at 8PM on June 16th is our Evening of Premieres, during which brand-new works by festival composers are brought to life.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

Promotion begins during the fall, focusing on our annual giving campaign and application season, continuing in the spring with a focus on our yearly fundraiser gala and promotion of the concert series in June. Our social media marketing campaigns include photos and videos from last year's season, promotional media featuring our ensemble-in-residence, and media highlighting festival composers, giving audiences a way to connect with our artists before seeing them in concert.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Support from the Roberts Foundation will be recognized in our promotional materials, including our concert series poster, which we post around the Greater Hartford area to advertise the concert series, as well as in our program booklet, which is available online and at every concert.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

At Connecticut Summerfest, we believe that artistic excellence is achieved through powerful experiences for audiences, and collaboration between composers and performers. In order to ensure that the composers selected for our festival are being judged solely on the quality of their art, we have a blind adjudication panel, where professionals in the field judge musical scores and recordings that have been anonymized, in order to remove superficial biases from the judging process,

In choosing our ensembles, Connecticut Summerfest invites groups who have a history of creating engaging experiences for audiences, tour actively, and show a passion for new music. We are thrilled to be featuring the International Contemporary Ensemble this year, who are known for their diverse projects, astounding musicianship, and dedication to collaboration both with communities and composers.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

Connecticut Summerfest's mission is to bring together talented emerging composers with some of the country's most inventive chamber music ensembles to promote artistic exchange, while also providing the Greater Hartford community with contemporary music concerts of the highest caliber through our concert series. Ensuring that both our the composers selected for our festival and our ensembles-in-residence are of the highest quality is critical to the success of our festival; without excellent composers and engaging performers, we would not be able to present the Greater Hartford area with the contemporary classical music experience that we seek to provide. Our blind adjudication process also helps us uphold our core values of diversity and accessibility, by creating an opportunity for composers to be judged only by their music.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

Connecticut Summerfest was founded to address the lack of affordable summer programs for emerging composers. Many larger summer festivals come at a premium price, and young composers in attendance often only receive a reading or a single rehearsal with their performers, or 15–30 minute group lessons with composition faculty. There is a need for festivals that foster closer composer-performer relationships and promote enduring collaborations.

In an effort to serve a broader audience, Connecticut Summerfest also provides a concert series that is free and open to the public, in addition to being live-streamed so that they may be enjoyed from anywhere in the world. Our concerts serve an in-person audience of the Greater Hartford area, providing the community with a way to hear live contemporary classical music they otherwise may not experience due to financial constraints or distance.

How will this project be evaluated?

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Our primary indicators of success during the festival are audience, composer, and ensemble-in-residence feedback. We provide audience feedback forms during all of our concerts in order to gather information on how audience members enjoyed our concerts and where they heard about our concert series. We also track audience data of both in-person attendees and live-stream viewers to see how our audiences have grown. Throughout the festival we are also regularly in communication with both festival composers and ensembles-in-residence to ensure that everyone's needs are met during rehearsals, lectures, recording sessions, lessons, and performances. After the festival has concluded, we send surveys to the composers, ensembles-in-residence, and the composition faculty to see what their experiences were like, and if they have any recommendations for improvements in future seasons.

Cover letter

- [CTSF-Cover-Letter-2020-Signed.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [CTSF-19-20-Budget.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [CTSF-Balance-Sheet.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [CTSF-19-20-Budget1.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Other materials?

- [2019-Program-Final.pdf](#)
- [Artistic-Personnel.pdf](#)

Please note that the balance sheet does not reflect donations from our annual fundraising campaign that concluded in January, nor does it include the \$1,000 grant from the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University in support of general operating costs for which we just received an award notice. All other grant requests are pending.

In addition, Connecticut Summerfest's only project is the festival in June, so our organization and project budgets are the same.

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

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Yes