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Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

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

West Hartford

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

Enter your Report Code

789125-Roberts2020

Organization Name

Elizabeth Park Conservancy

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

060983352

Principal Contact Name

Ann Drinan

Title

Development Manager

Email

development@elizabethparkct.org

Phone

(203) 488-8403

Address

1561 Asylum Ave
West Hartford, Connecticut 06117
United States
Map It

Website

http://elizabethparkct.org

Amount requested this application

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$5,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The mission of Elizabeth Park Conservancy is to maintain, preserve, restore, and promote the Rose Garden and other gardens of Elizabeth Park as a regional horticultural park for the education, enjoyment, and appreciation of the Park's current and future generations.

The vision of the Conservancy is to sustain and elevate the Park's status as a significant national landmark with the oldest public rose garden.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Elizabeth Park Conservancy strives to create a board that represents our community. The City of Hartford requires that at least 51% of our board members be residents of the city of Hartford.

Our board currently has 16 members.

62% are female
25% are people of color
12.5 % are of Latino heritage
1 member identifies with the LGBTQ community.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

100%

Detail any changes since your last application.

The Conservancy commissioned a Master Plan of Elizabeth Park, which was completed in early 2017; most of the planned projects in the plan have already been accomplished. The Conservancy is beginning the process of creating a new Master Plan.

The Garmany Visitor Center, which opened in September 2020, is a huge success, with people coming both for the gift shop, which has many items by local crafts people, and the informational offerings (kiosks, Welcome Video, and brochures).

The Conservancy continues to beautify the Park - a new walkway/entrance has been created from Bainbridge Rd to the Heritage Rose Garden, in memory of Sally Kennedy. (Thanks to the Robert Foundation for your support.)

A major capital campaign has been completed: a 75-car parking lot near the Visitor Center. Final landscaping, including street lights, was completed in late 2022.

A major fundraising effort has enabled us to restore the greenhouses, which were badly in need of repair. A $600,000 major gift, plus funding from the state, will bring this project to completion by spring 2023.

We ended 2022 with a small surplus, and look forward to continuing our stewardship of this beautiful park. Marian Kellner is the new Board President, replacing Ben Flynn, who stepped down after serving multiple terms.

Project Name

2023 Elizabeth Park Summer Concerts

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

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Project Description

The Conservancy is requesting support from the Roberts Foundation for our five concerts scheduled for the summer of 2023. These concerts attract hundreds, if not thousands, of people, and are always free to any and all.

All our concerts are held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8, with a Thursday raindate. If both days are called because of the weather, the band is paid in full.

The John G. Martin Foundation stage with its roof now enables us to present ensembles that would not have been able to perform on the old stage under direct sunlight. We request support for the following concerts - dates are tentative:

- June 28: Hot Cat Jazz Band - Ross Tucker - big band and swing music
- July 5: Debora Watts - Brazilian jazz
- July 12: Bales/Gitlin Band - "A Musical Tribute to Multi-Cultural Hartford" - celebrating Italian, Polish, Irish, Jewish, Latinx, and Afro-American music
- July 19: Mass-Conn-Fusion - James Healey - rock favorites
- August 2: Number 9 - a Beatles tribute band

Project start/opening

06/28/2023

Project end/closing

08/03/2023

Project venue

John G. Martin Foundation stage at Elizabeth Park

Project town

West Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

All summer concerts are free and open to the general public. Depending upon the ensemble, these concerts attract between 750 and 2000+ attendees. People come with a picnic dinner, and many bring their "dancing shoes." The concerts are extremely popular, and attract people from throughout greater Hartford and beyond.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

We typically do not market these concerts, as we are usually at full capacity. We used to put a sandwich board sign on Asylum Avenue on concert weeks; it is unclear whether this practice will continue.

We send out a press release in early June. We list the concerts on our website, send out an e-blast for each concert, and include the concerts in our annual Events brochure. WECA (West End Civic Association) includes the concerts in their newsletters. This is sufficient to get the word out!

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Roberts funding will be used to help pay the band fees, which total $10,000.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

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The Conservancy will list the Roberts Foundation on our website, in all e-blasts pertaining to these concerts, in hand-outs available at the Garmany Visitor Center, and in a speech by President and CEO Christine Doty from the stage before each of these concerts.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

Artistic excellence, in terms of outdoor summer concerts, means ensembles that perform a specific genre (or multiple genres) with musical taste and excellent technique & ensemble playing, as well as ensembles that are able to captivate a very diverse audience.

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

EPC only hires ensembles that excel at the particular musical genre they present, and who are capable of engaging the audience, whether it be by encouraging folks to get up and dance, clap along, sway to the music, etc. EPC also likes to present ensembles that might expand the musical experience of our audiences, such as Debora Watts' concert of Brazilian jazz.

Our mission is to enable people from throughout Connecticut to come to Elizabeth Park and enjoy what we have to offer, plus our beautiful gardens. These concerts offer an extra incentive for individuals, families, and groups of friends to come to the Park to enjoy an evening together and hopefully appreciate the beauty of our gardens.

The Conservancy is pleased to be able to offer free concerts to any and all, as part of our mission to welcome everyone to our beautiful Park, and to help build community among the people who do visit us.

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

The audience, which is the community, will benefit by experiencing a great concert in a beautiful setting with hundreds of other music lovers.

Families bring picnics and meet with friends. Kids run wild on the far side of the lawn. Groups often bring flags so members can find them. It's an incredibly festive evening at every concert - family, friends, kids, love, food, laughter, music, dancing, etc.

Outdoor concerts remind us all of the importance of sharing experiences, of listening to new sounds, to celebrating friendships, and experiencing the beauty of nature. All this and more happens at Elizabeth Park concerts.

How will this project be evaluated?

We evaluate the concerts by considering the opinion of board members and staff, attendees with credentials in the music world, and emails and phone calls we receive from audience members.

One factor that we must take into account is the number of people different groups attract. The Rose Garden lawn is a finite space -- too many people can start to negatively impact the Rose Garden itself.

This concern has, in part, driven our intent to bring in jazz, classical, and more sophisticated groups, which may draw a smaller (though still quite substantial) crowd.

Cover letter

- EPC-Cover-Letter-2023-Proposal.pdf

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Current year operational budget

- EPC-2023-Board-Approved-Budget.pdf

Balance sheet

- EPC-Balance-Sheet-Feb-1-2023.pdf

Project budget

- EPC-2023-Summer-Concerts-Budget.pdf

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- Elizabeth-Park-Annual-Report-2022.pdf

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

EPC is in the process of creating a new strategic plan, as well as a new master plan.

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?

Yes