

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 245

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

Enter your Report Code

131866-Roberts2020

Organization Name

Connecticut Summerfest, Inc.

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

475031850

Principal Contact Name

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Title

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[Map It](#)

Website

<https://www.ctsummerfest.org/>

Amount requested this application

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\$5,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

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. [See our full mission statement here.](#)

Describe the diversity of your board.

Our board is made of three people, all of whom identify as white. One member (33%) identifies as female, and two members (66%) identifies as LGBTQ+.

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

One member (33%) of the board makes personal financial contributions to Connecticut Summerfest. The other two members volunteer significant personal time to the operations of the organization.

Detail any changes since your last application.

Connecticut Summerfest has had no major changes in board, leadership, organizational structure, strategic direction, or financial condition. While diversity has always been a core value to our organization, we added it as an explicit component of our mission. Below is our mission statement in full, with the update bolded:

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. **Connecticut Summerfest is proud to amplify voices of composers from historically underrepresented groups, specifically gender diverse composers and composers of color, through our Composition Program and concert programming.**

Project Name

Kinsmen Sound Studio at Connecticut Summerfest 2023

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

Connecticut Summerfest is an annual contemporary music festival that brings together talented emerging composers with innovative chamber music ensembles. Our 2023 festival will take place from June 8–14.

The festival offers rehearsals, private lessons, and seminars for composers, as well as a concert series that is free and open to the public. One of the most crucial takeaways for both festival participants and audience members are recordings and livestreams produced by [Kinsmen Sound Studio](#).

This year, we are thrilled to be featuring three incredible ensembles: [Hub New Music](#), [Sugar Hill Salon](#), and [arx duo](#). Our composition faculty members are [Takuma Itoh](#), [Jessica Meyer](#), [Ken Steen](#), and [Joel Thompson](#).

A grant from the Roberts Foundation in support of Kinsmen Sound Studios at Connecticut Summerfest would enable us to continue to bring high-quality performances of contemporary classical music to the Greater Hartford area and beyond. Thank

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you for your consideration.

Project start/opening

06/08/2023

Project end/closing

06/14/2023

Project venue

The Hartt School at the University of Hartford

Project town

West Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Our 2023 festival will take place from June 8–14. The first three concerts, which will occur at 8PM on June 9 and 10 and 4PM on June 11, showcase each of our ensembles-in-residence. The final concert on June 13 is an Evening of Premieres, during which the new works by festival composers are brought to life. All four concerts are not ticketed and free to attend, and we anticipate approximately 800 views between our in-person and livestream audiences (200 in person, 600 online).

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

Social media is our primary marketing vehicle, as we see the most impact through these profiles. We use targeted social media ads, regular posts to keep our audiences engaged, and e- mail newsletters that go out to donors, festival alumni, and university professors.

For the concert series, our marketing campaigns include photos and videos from the previous season, as well as materials highlighting the upcoming resident artists and composers, who can share these posts with their own circles.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

A grant from the Roberts Foundation would support Kinsmen Sound Studio. Founded by alumni from The Hartt School at the University of Hartford, [Kinsmen Sound Studios](#) will record, edit, and livestream our concert series, in addition to providing festival composers with professional video and audio recordings. Their expertise will ensure that festival composers receive polished recordings that bolster their portfolios, and that audiences get to enjoy high-quality concerts streamed online.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

Support from the Roberts Foundation will be recognized in our [concert program booklet](#), on our [website](#), and on our social media platforms as appropriate.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

At Connecticut Summerfest, we seek out performers and composers who are interested in a collaborative, in-depth, educational, and exploratory experience. We value relationships; we are interested in participants looking to form lasting, meaningful artistic relationships, who are respectful of all musical styles and backgrounds.

Our nine festival composers are selected through a blind adjudication process. Personal information is removed from the scores and recordings submitted in order to help our expert adjudicators evaluate applicants based solely on the quality of their music, rather than any perceived biases. In choosing our ensembles-in-residence, we seek out actively-touring chamber groups who are excited to collaborate with composers and perform new music at a high level.

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

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The success of Connecticut Summerfest relies heavily on enthusiastic artistic collaboration. We carefully select ensembles that not only are excellent performers, but also excited about collaborating with festival composers on new works. As composers themselves, the recording technicians at Kinsmen Sound Studio are also intimately familiar with the intense collaboration required to record and present a piece of music that truly showcases both the writing and the performance. It is only through the hard work, flexibility, and creativity of our resident artists, festival composers, and partners at Kinsmen Sound Studio, that we will be able to present our annual concert series and deliver on our mission of providing the Greater Hartford community with contemporary music concerts of the highest caliber.

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

The festival is a way for audience members to experience contemporary music free of charge. Our concerts make new music accessible to audiences of the Greater Hartford area, surrounding underserved towns, and online viewers around the world.

We also hope to benefit the new music community on a broader scale, by providing emerging composers with an opportunity to receive a well-rehearsed performance of their music and a professional recording of their new piece for their portfolio, as well as new community connections for everyone who participates. It is our goal that the collaborations started by Connecticut Summerfest continue even after the festival has ended.

How will this project be evaluated?

There are three areas we use to determine the success of our festival: audience attendance, participant experience, and future collaborations.

Audience attendance: We anticipate approximately 800 impressions total (200 in person audience members and 600 livestream views) across the four concerts in our annual series.

Participant experience: After the conclusion of the festival in June, we send surveys to the ensembles, faculty members, and festival composers who participated so we can learn from their feedback and continue improving.

Future collaborations: Our long-term goal for festival composers is that they form a lasting, collaborative relationship with their selected ensemble and that their piece receives repeat performances, or even that they continue working with their ensemble! This goal can take months or even years to come to fruition, but we have seen several previous ensembles continue to perform the pieces that were written for them at Connecticut Summerfest.

Cover letter

- [CTSF-Executive-Letter.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [CTSF-FY23-Operational-Budget.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

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

Project budget

- [CTSF-FY23-Project-Budget.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

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No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Other materials?

- [CTSF-Testimonials.pdf](#)

Please note that as Connecticut Summerfest's only project is our festival in June, our organizational 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?

Yes