

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 219

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?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

200828-Roberts2020

Organization Name

Ballet Theatre Company

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

Principal Contact Name

Brianna Dunlap

Title

Development Director

Email

giving@dancebtc.org

Phone

(860) 570-0440

Address

20 Jefferson Ave #7
West Hartford, Connecticut 06110
United States
[Map It](#)

Website

<http://www.dancebtc.org>

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Amount requested this application

\$15,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The three-part mission of BTC is to enrich the Greater Hartford area by producing professional dance productions, partnering with child advocacy organizations to offer dance-related workshops free of charge to children through Ballet Theatre Company's Community Youth Outreach Program, and to teach dance education for ages three through adult at The School of Ballet Theatre Company.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

In the past 24 years, BTC has trained thousands of aspiring dancers, provided hundreds of jobs to local dance professionals, produced over seventy-five incredible live-action ballets, and has enriched the community through its four youth outreach programs by making dance accessible to over 11,000 children in the Greater Hartford metro area.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

Community Youth Outreach Program demographics.

Everybody Dance Now: 100% physically or developmentally challenged

Raising the Barre: 100% low income; 55% African American, 35% Hispanic, 5% Asian, 5% White

A Children's Nutcracker audiences: 45% African American, 40% Hispanic, 15% other

Public audience demographic estimates:

70% White, 20% Black, 5% East Asian, 5% Asian

School of Ballet Theatre Company (tuition):

90% White, 5% Asian, 3% East Asian 2% Black students

Describe your organization's governance.

The Board Directors meet quarterly, with committee meetings in between board meetings. BTC has room at the table for experienced professionals to fill our open Board Director positions. BTC is growing as an organization and we need to match that energy with Board growth.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Currently, all Board Directors are white. 45% male, 55% female.

We are committed to cultivating an equitable organization in artistic expression and organizational behavior, policy, and practice. We at BTC embrace multicultural diversity both on and off stage and strive to be an organization where all communities feel a sense of belonging. We wish to have a more diverse Board.

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

100%

Project Name

The Nutcracker 2023

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Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

The Nutcracker, will be returning to The Belding Theater at The Bushnell for Season 24.

This Season, in an effort to address cultural appropriation in the ballet, the AD reimagined the Second Act of *The Nutcracker*. It features over 70 new, hand-sewn costumes brought to life by new characters and fresh, original choreography.

The vibrant, cheeky act will be a fantastical expression of magical treat-foods that would wow a 19th-Century young lady in a dreamscape AND will delight modern audiences

For this reason, BTC is asking The Roberts Foundation to fund:

***The Nutcracker* production's new costumes for the Second Act, the materials for which are estimated at \$5,000 or more, excluding the labor of the Lead Costumer, and hire two guest dancers, Roman Mejia from the prestigious New York City Ballet and Lauren Lovette, formerly of New York City Ballet, to perform the starring roles of Sugar Plum and Cavalier in the Grande Pas de Deux scene.**

Total estimated project budget

\$214,380.00

Project start/opening

11/26/2022

Project end/closing

11/27/2022

Project venue

The Bushnell

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Price Level 1: \$65.00

Price Level 2: \$55.00

Price Level 2 - Discount: \$50.00

Price Level 3: \$45.00

Group: \$41.00

Price Level 4; \$35.00

Price Level 4 - Discount: \$32.00

For every show, 50 free tickets are made available to families who want them through BTC's community partners. In total, BTC has the potential to sell-out three full shows in the 908-seat Belding Theater.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

Digital: BTC will market *The Nutcracker* on all digital platforms. Bushnell's marketing platform

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Printed: BTC will mail a paper newsletter this September. The mailing will reach an estimated 2,000 homes in the greater Hartford area. BTC will also be mailing a Nutcracker postcard the week before Halloween.

Additional: Print posters and flyers, a banner on the We a town green, & press releases to The Courant, We-ha.com, and Hearst Media.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

BTC will use the Roberts Foundation to dismantle racism in The Nutcracker's Second Act, and wow audiences. Specifically, to purchase \$5,000 worth of new costuming materials and bring two world-renowned ballet dancers to the stage in Hartford. Please read more in BTC's attached cover letter.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation's logo will be on the BTC website, social media platforms, and the footer of all mass emails. The name of the foundation will be on all newsletters and press releases.

BTC will feature the foundation's logo in its digital and paper Playbill on the funder recognition page, and create a FULL-page program ad. The Roberts Foundation will also be mentioned during the curtain speech before each performance.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

BTC defines artistic excellence as the integration of exceptional artistic skill and creativity in a professional setting. And integrating world-renowned professionals in productions to inspire our professionals. BTC also aims to create works that connect and resonate with artists and audiences. It is achieved when individual talent, dedication, and love for the arts are infused into collaborative classes and performances that awe audiences.

For organizational excellence, we are making DEI strides within productions by removing and reimaging the racism and caricature within ballets like *The Nutcracker* and *Aladdin*.

For dancer excellence, the paid Professional Company Dancers in Residence has been renewed for a second year, signifying a maintained high level of dance professionalism at BTC.

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

One-third of BTC's three-part mission is enriching the greater Hartford area by offering professional-caliber dance productions. *The Nutcracker* is the quintessential performance that provides arts and cultural experiences to the community.

The Nutcracker ballet portrays the talents of its training school students (ages 6-18), includes a cast diverse in culture and gender, and features guest artists who work with the BTC Company Dancers in Residence (professional dancers contracted for 32-34 weeks with a biweekly stipend and shoe allowance). Additionally, *The Nutcracker* provides jobs for artists such as costume designers, set designers, and production crew.

We also do not want to contribute to perceived elitism in ballet. Instead, Artistic leadership makes the main stage productions entertaining and approachable while maintaining high technical standards in all aspects of a production. In sum, a stronger production benefits the audience, artists, and various communities.

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

BTC's performance of The Nutcracker is appealing to community members of all ages and walks of life.

Even with a more expensive venue (The Bushnell), BTC opts to offer tickets at a reasonable price, making art accessible to all. BTC also offers free tickets to its outreach partners as part of our mission to expose underserved communities to the arts.

Other offerings:

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BTC will continue its A Children's Ballet outreach performance; free tickets for those who need them; advertised through many outreach partners.

BTC will continue its beloved school performance in partnership with Hartford Performs, and invite other schools in Greater Hartford to participate.

BTC will offer its excerpt performance to serve those who cannot travel to local Senior Centers

BTC will perform excerpts at local libraries leading up to the performance.

How will this project be evaluated?

BTC evaluates program performance through various platforms: audience and critic reviews, post-performance discussions with dancers, a post-event audience survey via email, and ticket sales.

Post-performance surveys are sent out to audience members and performers immediately following performances seeking information including; demographic, age, gender, performance rating and quality, overall experience, etc. This data is used to understand audience trends from year to year and ensure BTC is utilizing optimal strategies for marketing and advertising. BTC carefully considers each response in a continued effort to deliver efficient, organized, and high-caliber productions.

Now, with the new Bushnell partnership, the Artistic team meets with Bushnell representatives to discuss strengths and weaknesses feedback from their platforms.

Cover letter

- [BTC-Cover-Letter-The-Roberts-Foundation-Aug-2-2022.pdf](#)

Board list

- [BTC-Board-Directors-2022-2023-with-Details-2.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [501C-3.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [BTC-2021-Short-File-990.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [BTC-Budget-for-Season-24.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [BTC-Budget-for-Season-241.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [BTC-Balance-Sheet-8.2.22.pdf](#)

Project budget

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- [BTC-Budget-for-Season-24-Roberts-Foundation.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Grant Report

- [Ballet-Theatre-Company-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [BTC-VISUALS-2022-Roberts-Foundation.pdf](#)

Fiscal Year Change: Ballet Theatre Company is reporting to all funders that BTC began the process of changing its fiscal year to match the performance and school year in 2021. As of late August 2021, BTC's Board approved a budget to begin on September 1, 2021.

At this time, BTC just filed a short-year and is actively making the IRS financial moves to now have a fiscal year from September 1 to August 31. Therefore, the most recently completed fiscal year (a short file) was for August 31, 2021. The current budget is a September 1 - August 31 model, and all future budgets will move forward as such. We acknowledge that this shift in the Fiscal Year is temporarily inconvenient for grant requests and reporting, but it greatly benefits the organization.

The BTC staff and Board are currently refining the Season 24 (Sept 1, 2022-August 31, 2023) budget, so we are not able to provide the most up-to-date budget.

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