

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 189**

**Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?**

Yes

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

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**

173378-Roberts2020

**Organization Name**

Riverfront Recapture Inc

**Organization's IRS Tax ID #**

061045653

**Principal Contact Name**

Deborah Baker

**Title**

Director of Development

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[Map It](#)

**Website**

<https://riverfront.org>

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 189**

### **Amount requested this application**

\$10,000.00

### **What is the organization's mission/vision statement?**

Riverfront Recapture's (Riverfront) mission is straightforward: Connect people with the Connecticut River. We envision a beautiful and expanded riverfront park system that is highly utilized and widely recognized as a unique regional asset. A guardian of the river, its parks and cultural, recreational, and educational programming engages our community. Last year 627,329 Greater Hartford residents, employees, and visitors entered our park system.

### **Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.**

Riverfront Recapture was formed as a private-public effort in 1981 to reconnect Hartford and East Hartford to the Connecticut River in ways that would make the region a better place to live, work, and play. Our four-park system encompasses 148 acres of public riverfront land connected by roughly 3.5-miles of paved walkway with an additional 4.5-miles of wooded trails. Our oversight expands to 304 acres, with significant 2.5-mile Riverwalk extension plans underway and a future fifth park on 80 acres of riverfront land in northeast Hartford and southeast Windsor; 20 acres is state-owned property.

Riverfront Recapture's parks serve as a back yard for our community, offering green space for apartment and condo dwellers, serving as an asset to the local outdoor recreation community, and offering local employees respite from their bustling work environments. The benefits of an attractive, accessible Riverfront are multifold: each year, hundreds of thousands of people visit our parks for recreation and relaxation. Visitors use our parks to walk, run, hike, cycle, picnic, launch boats, take in one of our many free public events, or engage in one of Riverfront's recreational programs, open to adults and youth of all abilities. We encourage a connection to nature and access to the river, recognizing that water's powerful appeal can bring together people from different backgrounds.

Unlike many other waterfront development organizations, Riverfront is committed to bringing our community together in our parks through cultural events and activities and recreational programs. Riverfront has introduced free, regular weekday programming, like health & fitness activities, concerts, cultural festivals, and the Hartbeat Music Festival. Our Rowing and Adventure programs are fee-based.

Above all, Riverfront Recapture is dedicated to serving everyone in the city and the region, engaging more than 15-million park visitors since 2001.

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

Our parks welcomed 627,329 visitors in 2021. Our event demographics according to survey responses indicated:

16% Hispanic/Latino, 21% African American; 7% Asian; 1% Native American; 56% Caucasian

34% Male, 64% Female, 2% Other

Ages-18-24-4%; 25-34-30%; 35-44-28%; 45-54-18%; 44-64-15%; over 65-5%; survey respondents must be 18 or over, limiting our ability to count younger youth.

50% were from MetroHartford (23%-Hartford, 10%-EHartford), 48% from other areas in CT; 2% out of state

### **Describe your organization's governance.**

Riverfront's Board of Directors meets in quarterly. In 2021, 100% of elected Board members made personal financial contributions to Riverfront; meeting attendance average of elected Board members-81%.

The executive committee, the chair, vicechairs, secretary, treasurer, committee chairs, up to five at-large and ex officio members meets eight times.

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 189**

A new board chair was elected in April 2022; leadership training is underway including vicechairs thru Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

**Describe the diversity of your board.**

Our elected Board is 57.5% male and 42.5% female. The Board is 25% minority. 75% are Caucasian, 17.5% African American, 2.5% Latinx, and 5% Asian.

Minority Board members are at a premium in the community; we will continue to seek additional minority Board members in the immediate future and long-term including Board member candidates identified by their businesses as corporate representatives. Age diversity is also important and we work to achieve balance.

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

100%

**Project Name**

Hartbeat Music Festival & Hartbeat Sessions, Riverfront Food Truck Festival performances

**Is this project related to the Visual Arts?**

No

**Project Description**

A free, all-day festival, the Hartbeat Music Festival (HMF celebrates local music. Riverfront Recapture and the Professors of Sweet Sweet Music (POSSM) continue to grow our shared interest in utilizing Riverfront’s unique waterfront performance venue to elevate the voices of many local artists. HMF has become very popular; more than 200 bands applied to participate; artists forego charging their full performance rates in order to support this ongoing celebration of Hartford music. HMF engagement expands to:

Friday, September 9, 5-9 pm and Saturday, September 10, 10 am to 10 pm at Mortensen Riverfront Plaza in downtown Hartford.

Hartbeat Sessions, Friday evenings, July 8 and 29, 5-9 pm. Three bands perform each event in a crowd-engaging opportunity to vote for two of the six bands to play at HMF.

The Riverfront Food Truck Festival will feature four bands and local neighborhood groups on Thursday, July 14; seven bands Friday, July 15; ten bands Saturday, July 16, on two stages.

**Total estimated project budget**

\$117,035.20

**Project start/opening**

07/08/2022

**Project end/closing**

09/10/2022

**Project venue**

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 189**

Mortensen Riverfront Plaza

### **Project town**

Hartford

### **Admission fees, attendance, and activity details**

We anticipate these free public events will engage:

1,000 people—HB Sessions-2 days

25,000 people & 20 musical performances—FTF-3 days; neighborhood & HMF-musicians

6,500 people and 25-30 performances—HMF-1.5 days. Musicians will perform on two stages Friday evening and on three stages Saturday. Confirmed artists range in genre from World music to Americana, country rock to jazz fusion, R&B to hip hop.

Hands-on art and music activities include interactive dance and drumming lessons.

### **How do you intend to promote/market this project?**

Hartbeat Music Festival , Hartbeat Sessions, and Riverfront Food Truck Festival are listed as events on our website and Facebook, as well as POSSM's Facebook page. All events will be shared via a series of e-blasts to our email list and signage will be placed in Riverfront Parks. Both groups will promote the events through Facebook posts and tweets.

We are working with WIN-TV (Windsor) to develop podcasts and livestreaming options and all events will be shared with a range of media outlets.

### **How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?**

Roberts funding will be used to support artist performance fees, sound and lighting, and to assist with some overhead costs including staffing to organize and execute the event, marketing, insurance costs, maintenance-including portalets, trash removal, etc.

### **How will Roberts support be recognized?**

Support from the Roberts Foundation will be recognized on Riverfront Recapture's website and social media pages; in Riverfront Recapture's 2022 Annual Report; on the Hartbeat Music Festival webpage and related print materials, including the event banner and other event signage; and in announcements at the Hartbeat Music Festival, Hartbeat Sessions, and Riverfront Food Truck Festival.

### **What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?**

Riverfront Recapture defines artistic excellence by the breadth of arts and cultural programming we are able to offer, as well as the diversity of those served by such programming.

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

Inclusion of local musicians in multiple performances in Riverfront parks directly aligns with our definition of artistic excellence. HMF and now related performances bring numerous musical acts from the MetroHartford area to perform at the festival, bringing music to a wide audience reflective of the region's diversity. Music performances advance Riverfront's mission to connect people with the Connecticut River, bringing them to our waterfront park in downtown Hartford to enjoy a full day of free, high-quality local music at the river's edge.

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 189**

Past lineups brought artists from several different genres and performance styles such as indie and alternative rock, soul, bluegrass, reggae, and, hip-hop and family-friendly elements, of interactive dance and music lessons engage those attending. This year's lineup also delivers an array of artists who bring original compositions from a range of musical genres including jazz, pop, blues, folk, soul, R&B, country, Americana, and hip hop.

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

Our large and diverse audience for past music festivals has been well-representative of the MetroHartford region. In 2021, our most recent live event, people of all ages attended, 25% of them with families and 44% with friends. 95% of survey respondents were satisfied with their overall experience at the event, and would attend again. At least 67% spent more than two hours, enjoying multiple performances. This free festival clearly benefits those who enjoy music, especially those who may not be able to afford performance tickets at other venues. Attendees also feel a sense of community at the event, with a diverse crowd in regard to ages, gender, and ethnicity that is not always found elsewhere.

Additionally, the event supports the local economy, from the on-site vendors to local restaurants and attractions; our 2021 survey respondents indicated that 34% ate at a local restaurant; 25% visited another local attraction; 10% used public transportation to get to and/or from the event.

### **How will this project be evaluated?**

The main goals of the Hartbeat-related performances are to expose talented local musicians to a broad audience; attract a large and diverse crowd; provide attendees with high-quality entertainment; foster a sense of community among attendees; and encourage economic activity in Hartford and East Hartford. Riverfront will measure the success of this year's events by: working with local safety officials to estimate event attendance; collecting feedback from festival attendees through post-event surveys and informal conversations at the event; and using an event evaluation template designed for Riverfront by ESPN to measure the quantitative and qualitative impact of this event and assess its ability to help us meet our mission while remaining economically prudent. Feedback is utilized for assessment and planning so that we are able to make modifications to improve future events.

### **Cover letter**

- [2022-Riverfront-Roberts-Foundation-Grant-Request-Letter.pdf](#)

### **Board list**

- [2022-2023-RRR-Board.pdf](#)

### **IRS 501(c)3 determination letter**

- [2007-Riverfront-Recapture-501c3-Letter1.pdf](#)

### **Financial statement**

- [Riverfront-Recapture-Inc.-and-Subsidiary-Financial-Statements.pdf](#)

### **Last year operational budget**

- [2021-RRR-Operating-Budget-Unaudited-Actuals.pdf](#)

### **Current year operational budget**

## Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 189

- [2022-RRI-Operating-Budget.pdf](#)

### Balance sheet

- [2022-03-RRI-FINANCIALs-BALANCE-SHEET.pdf](#)

### Project budget

- [Hartbeat-Sessions-FTF-Music-Festival-2022-Budget.pdf](#)

### Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

### Annual report

- [2021\\_RiverfrontRecapture\\_AnnualReport.pdf](#)

### Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

### Strategic plan

- [Strategic-Plan.2022-2025.pdf](#)

### Grant Report

- [Riverfront-Recapture-Inc-Grantee-Reporting-Form1.pdf](#)

### Other materials?

- [2022-Riverfront-Roberts-Foundation-DRAFT-Performer-Info.pdf](#)

### 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