

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 164**

**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**

702766-Roberts2020

**Organization Name**

Out Film CT, Inc.

**Organization's IRS Tax ID #**

222990670

**Principal Contact Name**

Jennifer Kaplan

**Title**

Director of Marketing

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[Map It](#)

**Website**

<http://www.outfilmct.org>

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**Amount requested this application**

\$5,000.00

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

**Out Film CT's mission is to entertain, educate and promote community through the exhibition of LGBTQ+ film.**

Out Film CT strives to provide an essential forum for original, creative voices, opinions and viewpoints, which are often not available in the mainstream media. We provide the film festival as a community service and program to provide films and discussion opportunities for the LGBTQ community by bringing in visiting artists who highlight issues reflected in their films.

**Describe the diversity of your board.**

The board is comprised of 3 men (60%) and 2 women (40%), all of whom are part of the LGBTQ+ community. One man (the co-director) is Latino and the Vice President, although caucasian, is an immigrant from Russia.

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

100%

**Detail any changes since your last application.**

We have had to make structural changes to the programs offered due to COVID-19, making it a fully "hybrid" in-person/virtual event.

In 2021, we were able to host 12 film programs in person, with capacity limitations in place as a precaution, but the majority of programming remained online. We had to cancel all of our opening/closing/centerpiece receptions due to the pandemic, but this did help to limit our expenses.

We subscribed to a streaming platform entitled *Eventive*, which allowed the festival to upload films for people to view online. In line with this, we were also able to increase our audience, in terms of geography, since people from out of state could view the films. People all over Connecticut and other New England states were able to watch films, and the festival pre-recorded 10+ Q & A sessions with filmmakers and actors to allow the audience to learn more about the films and the art of filmmaking.

**Project Name**

Connecticut LGBTQ Film Festival

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

Yes

**Will the artists associated with this project be financially compensated?**

Yes

**Project Description**

The purpose of the film festival is to screen LGBTQ films from all over the world that are not typically shown in mainstream theaters or available through sources like Netflix. We bring in visiting artists (filmmakers) who highlight issues that are reflected in their films.

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The film festival was founded 35 years ago in 1987. Throughout its history, the festival has increased in number of days, films shown, and improved processes for screening films and enhancing the festival with visiting artists.

As the presenter of Connecticut's longest-running film festival, the organizers are committed to bringing outstanding gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer film to our New England community.

Our 10 day festival includes feature-length fiction, documentary and short films from all over the world. Our festival draws over 1,700 people from all over Connecticut, Western MA and NY State (and beyond with virtual screenings).

### **Project start/opening**

06/03/2022

### **Project end/closing**

06/12/2022

### **Project venue**

Cinestudio on the campus of Trinity College

### **Project town**

Hartford, CT

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

If we are allowed to have the opening and closing night parties, admission is as follows:

Opening/Closing: \$25 general / \$20 seniors and students

Regular shows: \$12 general / \$10 seniors and students

Full festival pass: \$100

Attendance is estimated at 1,800, with 13 in-person programs and around 25 virtual programs over the 10-day festival.

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

Our marketing plan includes traditional print and broadcast forms of communication, as well as a robust social media program to increase visibility, disseminate information about and increase attendance at the festival. We will be hiring a contract media expert to increase our media outreach through free press, social media, radio, television and other outlets.

Additionally, we will have posters, flyers, web presence, email blasts and social media postings (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).

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

The majority of the funding we receive from the Roberts Foundation will go towards the screening fees associated with obtaining the films for our festival. Additional funds will go toward honoring artists of distinction voted on by audience members and the jury.

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

At the \$5,000 level, these are the benefits:

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\*2 full page color ads in program book, 30 complimentary tickets, your logo on all marketing materials, 30 second trailer from the Roberts Foundation before six screenings, recognition as opening, closing or centerpiece sponsor, your foundation promoted as year-round sponsor of Queer Thursdays screenings, three feature films presented by the Roberts Foundation, listing in program book and website and more (listed on attached sheet).

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

Out Film CT's purpose is to bring the best in LGBTQ film from around the world to the state of Connecticut. For the festival producers and committee, artistic excellence consists of the ability of the filmmaker to tell the most compelling story possible using strong cinematography, robust characters (both actors and real life people), and creative and solid editing techniques.

Each film submission goes through extensive review, assessment and rating of films by a volunteer committee. We typically receive over 600 submissions for about 85-100 slots. Films are prescreened and rated by the committee on a number of factors including personal impact, target audience appeal and artistic quality. We also strive for geographic range, film country of origin assortment, LGBTQ (subject matter) diversity as well as type of film (documentary, short, narrative).

Additionally, we have been very fortunate to have quite a few premieres, from Connecticut to World Premieres at our festival.

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

The Connecticut LGBTQ Film Festival aims to bring the best of LGBTQ cinema from around the world to the audiences in Connecticut. With digital filmmaking lowering the cost of the ability to make a film, the market is saturated with a huge range of films. Our efforts wade through all of the various levels of filmmaking to select the most innovative, humorous, moving, informative and interesting films. We provide an essential forum for original, creative voices, opinions and viewpoints. We accomplish this by screening films that have not yet been released on mainstream viewing platforms. Audience members see films, most of which, they will never be able to view elsewhere (particularly the short films and many of the full-length as well).

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

The audience and community benefit by learning more about the issues and challenges facing the LGBTQ community worldwide. With live or pre-recorded Q & A sessions following some of the films, the community can learn more about why a filmmaker chose to make certain choices, why he/she/they were attracted to the specific subject matter, why they chose to make the film and what the impact is that the film is having on audiences around the world. With increased understanding, more empathy can be brought forth, which benefits all people.

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

Throughout the festival, audience members are able to vote for each film, giving us immediate feedback on the level of impact that the film had on them. The highest-rated films are then awarded the Audience Award in several categories based on these ratings.

After the festival concludes, we send out a survey to help us evaluate how the festival performed, on a number of levels including:

- number and type of films
- films screened
- subject matter appeal
- visiting artists
- timing of the films
- demographic information

After the festival concludes, the committee meets to review what worked well and what could be improved upon for the following festival.

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### **Cover letter**

- [Roberts-Foundation.pdf](#)

### **Current year operational budget**

- [2022-Operational-Budget-Out-Film-CT.pdf](#)

### **Balance sheet**

- [Balance-Sheet-Out-Film-CT-as-of-1.31.2022.pdf](#)

### **Project budget**

- [2022\\_Project-Budget-Out-Film-CT.pdf](#)

### **Does your organization produce an annual report?**

No

### **Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?**

No

### **Does your organization have a formal policy or organizational commitment to ensure that visual artists are financially compensated?**

No

### **Grant Report**

- [Out-Film-CT-Inc.-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

### **Other materials?**

- [Detailed-Event-Description.2022.pdf](#)

We just wanted to make a specific note about the fact that we are submitting this grant a bit earlier in our fundraising process than we did last year. We have developed long standing relationships with many of our funders and anticipate that many of the pending submissions will come through. At this time, we have raised close to 30% of our goal. Typically most of the responses come in during March and early April.

### **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

## Notes



### **Admin Notification (ID: 5e0a490a5c999)**

added January 31, 2022 at 2:50 am

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.



### **Submission Confirmation (ID: 5e0f7526b33d3)**

added January 31, 2022 at 2:50 am

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.