

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 346**Are you a 501(c)3 organization in good standing with the IRS?**

Yes

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

Windsor

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Windsor

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

682109-Roberts2022

Organization Name

Windsor Art Center

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

261422815

Principal Contact Name

Sarah McKay

Title

Development

Emailsmckay@windsorartcenter.org**Phone**

(860) 938-4980

Address

40 Mechanic St.
Windsor, Connecticut 06095
United States
[Map It](#)

Website<https://windsorartcenter.org/>

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 346**Amount requested this application**

\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

Mission: The Windsor Art Center celebrates creativity and inspires an appreciation for diverse artistic cultures by showcasing the visual and performing arts.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

Windsor Art Center, a non-profit 501(c)3, is a place for the visual and performing arts located in Windsor, Connecticut. Founded in 2007, the Center is housed in a former freight house adjacent to the Amtrak line in downtown Windsor. Windsor Art Center offers educational programs and cultural events, visual art exhibitions, and performances showcasing artists from throughout New England and beyond year round.

In 2013, Windsor Art Center acquired the use of the neighboring Windsor Train Station building expanding its ability to serve as a resource and support for teaching of the arts. The Art Center renovated the train station to accommodate six artist studios, a classroom and community meeting space.

Actively involved in the community, the Windsor Art Center received the Windsor Human Relations Commission's Bridge-Builder Award in 2009 in recognition of its efforts to use art as a bridge for cross-cultural exchange and communication.

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

With nearly 30,000 residents, WAC prioritizes programming for underrepresented groups, including LGBTQIA+ exhibits, Weusi: The Beauty of Blackness, Women's Artist Collective, and FREEDOM exhibition.

Demographics:

- White alone: 47.4%
- Black or African American alone: 36.9%
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone: 0.0%
- Asian alone: 4.2%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone: 0.1%
- Two or More Races: 7.3%
- Hispanic or Latino: 10.9%
- White alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 43.8%

Describe your organization's governance.

Our Board meets monthly, ensuring attendance records and approved minutes. Engaging in "Leaders across the Board" with Greater Hartford Arts Council enhanced our governance knowledge. With substantial growth, we're proud of 3 BIPOC members leading the Executive Committee and 2 first-generation American individuals on the board. Advocating for equitable access, our diverse board, including neurodivergent members, understands barriers faced by underserved communities.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Windsor Art Center prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion. As of 2023, 60% of our Board comprises BIPOC members, including artists, educators, and a Trinity College Art Professor. Our bylaws ensure non-discrimination in all activities. Board leadership consistently fosters an inclusive arts environment, cultivating programs that reflect our diverse region. Panels, workshops, and exhibits focus on BIPOC, LGBTQ+, Veteran, Senior, neurodivergent, and immigrant communities.

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 346**What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?**

90% of our board members make personal financial contributions, while all members donate time and professional services. Some donate 5-10 hours per week for curatorial work, volunteer coordination, financial oversight, and marketing. We intentionally created an inclusive board that allows for the "give or get" model, allowing for diversity in financial backgrounds. All board members help fundraise to support our mission, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and community.

Project Name

CT River and Roots Festival

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

CT River and Roots Festival presents internationally recognized musicians that speak to the roots of our shared cultures leaning into the deep history of the Connecticut River and Roots music. This first annual CT River and Roots Festival will showcase the internationally recognized and award-winning musician Jake Blount who merges centuries-old traditional songs with the trappings and techniques of modern Black genres. This “genrequeer” approach to the traditions has earned his music a place in the very same archives from which he extracts his repertoire. Blount fashions an “Afrofuturist folklore” that disintegrates the boundaries between acoustic and electric, artist and medium, and progeny. Headliner, Jake Blount, is an award-winning interpreter of Black folk music ranked among the best of 2020 by outlets including Bandcamp and The New Yorker. NPR, The Guardian, Rolling Stone and more. The planning committee has secured back up headliners and performers for 2024.

Total estimated project budget

\$26,350.00

Project start/opening

09/01/2024

Project end/closing

09/01/2024

Project venue

Event on Windsor Town Green, rain plan at 25 Central St. (*Both spaces donated).

Project town

Windsor, CT

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Drawing in an expected audience of 300ppl, the location requirements include all-accessibility access, a minimum capacity of three-hundred people with sufficient parking accommodations.

Paid: 150, Comp: 50, Artist Pass: 50, Sponsor Tickets: 30

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

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Marketing involves social media posts, postcards, eblasts, flyers, and posters in the community. We'll also engage local media and community calendars. Partnering with First Town Downtown, we'll connect with the local business community for sponsorship and collaboration. Our collective efforts aim to generate excitement, awareness, and attract music enthusiasts and community members to the festival. Sponsors and supporters will be acknowledged within our promotions.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Roberts Foundation funding will specifically cover performer/artist fees, audio/visual components for this event as well as aid in the associated promotional costs. This funding is crucial to securing high-quality performers who represent the diverse heritage embodied by the CT River & Roots Fest.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Robert's Foundation will be prominently featured in all marketing materials, including print, online, and on-site announcements. Their logo will appear on flyers, banners, posters, social media, and the festival website. A program guide section will recognize the foundation's support and mission. The name and logo will be included in press releases, media coverage, and interviews. We assure celebration of the foundation's contribution throughout the event and associated materials.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

Artistic excellence in the performing arts means creating an environment where everyone has the opportunity to experience and participate in the arts. This requires a commitment to programming that reflects the diversity of our community and promotes inclusivity. We believe in providing a platform for artists from diverse backgrounds that also considers the broader impact of the work, including its ability to inspire and provoke thought, challenge assumptions and norms, and contribute to cultural and social dialogue.

We strive to provide access to the arts by removing barriers, such as physical, financial, or cultural, that may prevent individuals from participating. We believe that the pursuit of excellence requires a commitment to creativity, experimentation, and continual growth. Ultimately, our goal is to create a space where artistic excellence is not defined by exclusivity, but by the richness of experiences shared by all members of our community.

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

This event aligns with our mission by showcasing quality, creative, and original musical offerings from diverse performers. The CT River and Roots Festival furthers our mission by providing an inclusive platform, ensuring accessibility for all and implementing tiered pricing for affordability. By breaking down barriers, it creates a space for the community to share rich cultural experiences. Beyond entertainment, the festival serves as a storytelling platform, weaving the history of roots music from the African continent throughout the event, enhancing cultural pride and understanding.

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

Raising the bar for musical presentations in our area, this cornerstone initiative will be key to generating awareness, excitement, and integrating the arts with the community as well as provide economic stimulation to surrounding areas of Windsor and the Greater Hartford Area.

How will this project be evaluated?

Evaluation is based on various measures, including attendance and ticket sales, audience feedback, media coverage, and engagement on social media. Additionally, the project's impact on the community and the extent to which it achieves its goals

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of promoting inclusivity and diversity can be assessed through post event surveys. Success would include increased awareness and appreciation of Black folk music, increased engagement with the cultural history of the Connecticut River, and increased opportunities for local musicians to perform alongside internationally recognized artists. Participating artist feedback is also a measure of success.

Cover letter

- [Cover-letter-2024-1.pdf](#)

Board list

- [2023-WAC-Board-of-Directors-Term-Schedule-Sheet1.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [Copy-of-WAC-IRS-Determination-Letter.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [990EZ-2022-1.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [990EZ-2022.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [BudgetOverviewBudget_FY24_PL-FY24PL.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [StatementofFinancialPosition.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [CT-River-Roots-Fest-Budget-2024-Roberts-Foundation-Sheet1-1.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- [WAC-Overview-Dec-2023-Town-1.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 346**Strategic plan**

- [5-WAC-Strategic-Plan-Updated-2017-1-1.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [Jake-Blount-bio.pdf](#)

Since our 2023 application, the event planning process has garnered interest from local artists, organizations, municipalities, and businesses. Every entity we've engaged with wants to collaborate, making this an annual anchor event for our region. We would be honored to have the Roberts Foundation's support. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

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