

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 419**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?

West Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

New Britain

Will this activity occur after November 1, 2024?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

489453-Roberts2022

Organization Name

Women Composers Festival of Hartford

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

471095892

Principal Contact Name

Colette Hall

Title

President

Emailwomencomposersfestivalhartford@gmail.com**Phone**

(845) 235-5980

Address

P.O. Box 370362
West Hartford, Connecticut 06137
United States
[Map It](#)

Website<http://womencomposersfestivalhartford.com>

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Amount requested this application

\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The mission of the Women Composers Festival of Hartford is to promote the music of contemporary and historical women composers.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

The Women's Composers Festival of Hartford (WCFH) was founded in 2001 by Heather Seaton, a student of the Hartt School of Music, and became a 501 (c) 3 organization in 2014 to better advocate for the ongoing recognition of work by women composers. These inspiring women are celebrated with an annual two-day public festival, held each spring and includes a Scholarly Symposium, a Music Marathon, a Composers Workshop, and culminates with a Feature Concert performed by a selected Ensemble-in-Residence.

The Scholarly Symposium is a forum including multimedia presentations by academic scholars and artists which addresses a range of topics about contemporary and historic women composers.

The Music Marathon is a full day of concerts devoted to women's music performed by musicians from throughout the United States.

The Composers Workshop is a public reading session by a professional ensemble of works by students and early career composers, offering the opportunity for them to receive valuable feedback.

The Feature Concert premieres a newly commissioned work by a selected Composer-in-Residence along with works selected from an international "Call for Scores". Past Composers-in-Residence have included North American composers, Kristen Volness, Andrea Clearfield, Tawnie Olson, Melika Fitzhugh and Hanna Kim. Past Ensembles-in-Residence included Nouveau Classical Project, Balance Campaign, Craft Ensemble and the Hartford Independent Chamber Orchestra.

Our Festivals have been held in universities, churches and art museums in the greater Hartford area. We have evolved from student leadership to a community-based Board of professionals in relevant fields who reflect the diversity of the greater Hartford community. The Board is a proactive and committed group of individuals focused on finding innovative ways to advance the mission of the WCFH, and new in 2025 is community outreach to schools and non-profits in advance of the Festival by our composer and ensemble.

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

As content varies from year to year, so do audiences. The demographics, as reported from our 2024 Festival are that each of the four events had 40-60 attendees and 37 participants (musicians, composers, etc.).

The virtual/livestream presentation was accessed by 58 devices with viewers were from Albania, Alaska, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

Ages range from 18 through 55 and older.

Describe your organization's governance.

In 2024, we had a planned change in leadership with the stepping down of Deborah Szajnberg as President, and Dr. Colette Hall taking on that role. The Board meets monthly and then more frequently as they get closer to the Festival. All members attend either in person or on Zoom. We are passionate about diversity and reflect that in our Board profile. Our ages range from 30s to early 70s. Board attendance and personal contributions to the financial needs of the organization are at 100%.

Describe the diversity of your board.

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The WCFH Board has eight members; three Caucasian cisgender females, a black non-binary, a Caucasian cisgender male, a mixed race non-binary gender fluid, a Caucasian gay cisgender female, and an Asian cisgender female, ages 30 to 70. (Given the size and very specific descriptions of the Board, percentages were difficult to calculate.)

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

The WCFH Board has 100% participation in supporting the financial needs of the organization.

Project Name

2025 Women Composers Festival

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

The 2025 Women Composers Festival will take place on the campus of Central Connecticut State University in Founders Hall on February 28 and March 1. The Festival will feature four events; a Scholarly Symposium, a Music Marathon, a Composers Workshop, culminating in a Feature Concert. The Festival will feature a world premiere of a work by the selected Composer-in-Residence, Leah Reid, which has been written for the selected Ensemble-in-Residence, Excelsis, a percussion quartet. All events are open to the public, and we are excited that the CCSU staff and faculty are actively engaged in promoting our Festival. As we have in the last two years, all events are professionally broadcast through various platforms and viewed around the world and placed on our website for future reference. Prior to the Festival, as part of expanded collaborations, our Composer and Ensemble will serve as teaching artists at various local schools and non-profit organizations such as the Artists Collective.

Total estimated project budget

\$37,730.00

Project start/opening

02/28/2025

Project end/closing

03/01/2025

Project venue

Founders Hall, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

Project town

New Britain

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Participants: \$75/faculty, \$50/senior-student (higher because they receive a video of their performance)
 Festival pass: \$50/\$40 gen/stu
 Music Marathon: \$30/\$20 gen/stu
 Feature Concert: \$30/\$20 gen/stu

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Free Events: Scholarly Symposium and Composers Workshop

Note: no one is turned away if they cannot pay. Donations are requested from virtual participants. Attendance for 2025 is difficult to estimate given the new community outreach and a social media consultant for greater promotion.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

The Festival is widely promoted through emails to subscribers, and public service announcements aired on WWUH and NEPR. Industry-wide publications are provided with feature and print articles about all of the WCFH activities and to note the names of the organizations, foundations and businesses that support the Festival. Flyers are widely posted along with marketing support through CCSU divisions. A social media consultant has been hired to strengthen our promotion on multiple platforms.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Funding from the Roberts Foundation will provide general support of the Festival itself, along with the pre-Festival engagement of our Composer and Ensemble-in-Residence as they reach out to local schools and non-profits as teaching artists. This kind of engagement with students is just the kind of opportunity we need to grow the Festival's prominence, which would not be possible without continued, strong support from the Roberts Foundation.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation logo, along with appropriate text, will be on signate at all Festival events, on the website, social media platforms, in all programs and will be verbally acknowledged in welcoming remarks before each event, as well as through public service announcements and media releases, flyers, etc. Representatives of the Foundation are more than welcome to attend the Festival as our guests and make remarks at the Reception.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

WCFH's high standards of artistic excellence has brought innovative performances to Connecticut since its inception. A diverse and established panel of judges, ensures that participating artists are of exceptionally high caliber. By including talented emerging composers, we also highlight those in the early stages of their careers. We seek, and are proud to have included, performers whose skill, sensitivity and nuance most effectively communicate the works they present. The scholars we select pursue relevant and timely research that enhances our understanding of current issues in women's music, both contemporary and historical. Artists are carefully selected to ensure their professional and scholarly focus and that they, in turn, reflect ours. They are the next generation and exemplify creativity, collaboration, and community. WCFH supports and elevates talented artists whose voices might otherwise never be heard.

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

The Festival provides an important WCFH goal which is to enrich the lives of greater Hartford's diverse community, through unique performances and engagement of women composers. Each segment of the Festival, open to the public of all ages, backgrounds and interests, opens the door to understanding and appreciating the work of women composers, both current and historic. An example of this would be seen at the Scholarly Symposium where women jazz composers from the 1930's and 40's were discussed and learning about the largely unknown history of the Ladies Military Brass Band opened the eyes of many attendees. Beyond the immediate benefits to the attendees and participants, this Festival enhances the cultural prominence of greater Hartford and focuses attention on its status as a destination for arts and culture. The Festival is streamed on various platforms, again, offering an opportunity for so many to enjoy the benefits of this unique event

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

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As noted above, members of the community are enlightened about the works of women composers and the significance of their music, especially as it reflects current concerns, challenges and issues felt by many and expressed through music. Participants and attendees, alike, benefit from the interchange of ideas and feedback that supports and encourages young musicians and composers. Beyond the immediate benefits to the attendees and participants, this Festival enhances the cultural prominence of greater Hartford and focuses attention on its status as a destination for arts and culture. This Festival is truly unique as there are very few events like this, even in the United States. The addition of live-streaming the Festival provides a global opportunity unlike any other.

How will this project be evaluated?

All participants and attendees will be provided with a survey to complete and return. This information helps us to develop programming for future Festivals and is a valuable tool in understanding our engagement with them. Virtual attendees are provided with this source as well.

Festival attendance and approximate demographic information helps to inform us of our attendees and participants, which in turn helps to devise promotional direction in the future.

Outreach to non-profit arts organizations and public and private schools, prior to the Festival by our composer and ensemble, will set a whole new opportunity for engaging the next generation of composers and musicians, and receiving their feedback in various ways, again, to support programming and promotion for the future.

Cover letter

- [CHSigned.CoverLetter.Roberts.11.1.24.FY25.pdf](#)

Board list

- [WCFH-Board-and-Staff-Contact-Info-October-2024.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [WCFH-IRS-Det-Letter.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [WCFH-IRS-Form-990.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [WCFHBudgetandtwoyearcomparison.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [WCFH-2025-Organization-Budget.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [FY25Budget.with-Actuals-to-Sept-2024.pdf](#)

Project budget

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- [WCFH-2025-Organization-Budget1.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

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

Grant Report

- [Women-Composers-Festival-2024-Grantee-Reporting-.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [WCFH-2024-Complete-Festival-Program.pdf](#)
- [Roberts.FY25WCFH-Program-Summary.pdf](#)

PDF's of the following documentation are available for your review, as we could not attach them to this application. They are reflected in the Roberts.FY25WCFH-Program-Summary PDF that is attached.

Live Music Marathon Participants bios

Panelists bios

Scholarly Symposium Participants bios

Virtual Music Marathon Participants bios

Finalists for the International Call for Scores bios

Composer-in Residence Statement (Leah Reid)

They will be sent to Lisa Curran by email. Thank you for understanding.

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