

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 443**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?

West Hartford

Will this activity occur after April 1, 2025?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

Roberts2022

Organization Name

Elizabeth Park Conservancy

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

060983352

Principal Contact Name

Ann Drinan

Title

Director of Office Operations

Emaildevelopment@elizabethparkct.org**Phone**

(203) 488-8403

Address

1561 Asylum Ave
West Hartford, Connecticut 06117
United States
[Map It](#)

Website<http://elizabethparkct.org>

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 443**Amount requested this application**

\$6,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The mission of the Elizabeth Park Conservancy is to steward and sustain Elizabeth Park as a unique horticultural urban oasis for all, with America's oldest public rose garden as its centerpiece, for the enjoyment and wellbeing of current and future generations. By connecting diverse communities, Elizabeth Park makes our individual lives healthier, our neighborhoods more vibrant, and our region more competitive. Elizabeth Park Conservancy is the steward of this legacy.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

The Elizabeth Park Conservancy was formed in 1977, as the Friends of Elizabeth Park, by a small group of dedicated neighbors, both urban and suburban, to save the historic Rose Garden from almost certain demolition. In 2012, following 35 years of preserving and maintaining, restoring and protecting, not only the Rose Garden, but also all the gardens, grounds and buildings of Elizabeth Park, the organization changed its name to the Elizabeth Park Conservancy. This name change reflects the organization's mission of stewardship of this great Park.

Elizabeth Park, owned by the City of Hartford, is on the National Register of Historic Places, and was accredited as an Arboretum in May 2019 by Arbnet. The Elizabeth Park Conservancy partners with the City of Hartford to ensure the continuing maintenance of the gardens and grounds, restoration of buildings and structures, and public events. This collaboration is a model of how a municipality and a nonprofit organization can work together for a common purpose.

Beyond Park care and maintenance, the Elizabeth Park Conservancy offers a combination of programs and events. The Conservancy hosts garden tours, garden workshops, heritage tours, Rose Weekend, a winter Garden Lecture Series, a spring Greenhouse Show, and the Summer Concert Series. All events except the Garden Lecture Series are free to the public.

The Conservancy relies on donations from the public, as well as the support of various business sponsors and foundations, to finance its activities.

An estimated 500,000 people visit Elizabeth Park annually from greater Hartford, the State of Connecticut, and beyond to tour the Park and the historic Rose Garden and to attend events. Elizabeth Park is well regarded in the community and broadly recognized for its beauty and horticultural significance—nationally and internationally.

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

Elizabeth Park is a public park, owned by the city of Hartford. The Park is open dawn to dusk; we estimate that we have 500,000 visitors each year.

The concert series is equally open to the public. The demographic is extremely mixed! People from all races, ethnicities, and "walks of life" come to our concerts. We have no way of collecting demographics, as the concerts are free and the Park is accessible from all sides. Demographics change with the genre of music being performed.

Describe your organization's governance.

The EPC Board meets every other month, although the Executive and Finance Committees meet monthly. Attendance at all meetings is recorded, and board meeting attendance is about 90%.

Marian Kellner stepped down as Board Chair and was succeeded by Edward Samorajczyk; Bradley Harper is the new Secretary, and Nancy Porter and Avery Buell are now Vice Chairs.

Please describe the diversity of your board by gender and ethnicity/race. Use percentages.

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The terms of our License Agreement with the City of Hartford requires us to have 51% of our board be residents of Hartford. The Governance Comm. strives to propose candidates who are both Hartford residents and members of Greater Hartford's minority communities. We value board diversity for its own sake and because, as a public park, we serve all people. Board members are selected for their professional experience or community credentials.

Women: 61%

African-American: 17%

Latino: 17%

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

100%

Project Name

Elizabeth Park 2025 Concert Series

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

EPC will present five concerts this summer. Concerts are on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 (with a Thursday raindate) - most likely the five Wednesdays in July. We are in the process of confirming dates with the five ensembles.

Jazz & Strings - Gene Bozzi and Walt Gwardyak's recreation of classic jazz albums that used a string section. This summer they present a Billie Holiday tribute, with 5 strings, 4 horns, jazz trio and vocalist.

Le'Mixx Band - a Motown band specializing in classic R&B, funk and reggae - they have performed at the Governor's and Hartford Mayor's Ball.

Mass-Conn-Fusion - they were rained out twice last year. They perform a mix of rock & roll, blues, jazz, and Motown - a perennial favorite.

Moto - a Caribbean band specializing in Reggae and Soca.

Number 9 - Beatles Tribute Band. They attracted almost 2,000 people when they performed a few years ago.

Total estimated project budget

\$18,500.00

Project start/opening

07/02/2025

Project end/closing

07/30/2025

Project venue

Martin Foundation Stage on the Rose Garden Lawn at Elizabeth Park

Project town

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West Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

All our summer concerts are free and open to the public.

We anticipate at least 500 for each concert, but many of our concerts have over 1,000 to 1,500 people in attendance. The Beatles tribute band attracted almost 2,000 people in 2023.

We are planning five Wednesday night concerts at 6:30.

The size of the audience is primarily dependent upon the weather, but also the genre of music being performed. July has been extremely hot the past few years, with temperatures in the 90s.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

We don't really need to promote these concerts. Our concern is actually having too many people attend!

We include the concerts in our annual Events brochure, which is mailed out to over 1500 households, on our website, and we send out several e-blasts about each concert.

WECA (West End Civic Association) also includes the concerts in their newsletters.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

We will use funds from the Roberts Foundation to pay our musician ensembles. We are asking for \$6,000 this summer because we will be presenting Gene Bozzi's Jazz & Strings, performing the music of Billie Holiday. This show includes four horns, in addition to five string players, which increases the cost of the concert.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation will be recognized in our Events brochure, on our website, in all our concert-related e-blasts, and from the stage at each concert, in the introductory announcement by President and CEO Christine Doty.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

Artistic excellence, in terms of outdoor summer concerts, means ensembles that perform a specific genre (or multiple genres) with musical taste and excellent technique & ensemble playing, as well as ensembles that are able to captivate a very diverse audience.

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

EPC only hires ensembles that excel at their particular musical genre, and who are capable of engaging the audience, whether it be by encouraging the audience to get up and dance, clap along, sway to the music, or listen intensely. EPC also likes to present ensembles that might expand the musical experience of the audience, such as Gene Bozzi's exploration of the life and work of Billie Holiday.

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

The audience, which is our community, will benefit by experiencing a great concert in a beautiful setting with hundreds of other music lovers.

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Families bring picnics and meet with friends. Kids run wild on the far side of the lawn. Groups often bring flags so members/friends can find them. It's an incredibly festive evening at every concert - family, friends, kids, dogs, love, food, laughter, music, dancing, etc.

Outdoor concerts remind us all of the importance of sharing experiences, of listening to new sounds, of celebrating friendships, and of experiencing community.

How will this project be evaluated?

We will evaluate the concert series by observing the audiences, considering the opinion of EPC board members and staff, attendees with credentials in the music world, and emails and phone calls we receive from audience members. We have not re-engaged certain ensembles that received less than rave reviews by attendees.

Cover letter

- [EPC-Cover-Letter-2025-Proposal.pdf](#)

Board list

- [EPC-Board-Members-January-2025.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [EPC-IRS-Determination-Letter.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [Elizabeth-Park-FINAL-Financial-Statement-12-31-23.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [EPC-2025-Board-Approved-Budget.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [EPC-2025-Board-Approved-Budget1.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [12-31-24-EPC-Summary-Treasurer-Report-v5.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [EPC-2025-Summer-Concerts-Budget.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 443**Annual report**

- [EPC-Annual-Report-2024.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

- [EPC-Strategic-Plan-2022-2026.pdf](#)

Grant Report

- [Elizabeth-Park-Conservancy-Grantee-Reporting-Form-.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [Elizabeth-Park-Conservancy-2025-Band-Bios.pdf](#)

Elizabeth Park Conservancy has started an endowment, which we're calling our Sustainability Fund. The campaign started last spring, and we already have over \$100,000 in donations.

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