

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 454**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?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2025?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

No

Organization Name

Connecticut Ballet

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

061039302

Principal Contact Name

Brett Raphael

Title

Artistic Director & CEO

Emailctballet@ix.netcom.com**Phone**

(860) 293-1039

Address

750 Main Street, Suite 100
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
United States
[Map It](#)

Website<http://www.connecticutballet.org>**Amount requested this application**

\$10,000.00

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What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The primary mission of Connecticut Ballet is to enrich the cultural life of the greater Connecticut community, by providing the art of dance to its audiences, dancers, and students. In pursuit of this mission, Connecticut Ballet will maintain the highest standards of professional ballet performance and training while continuing to stimulate an appreciation of the dance medium and respond to Connecticut's developing interest in dance.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

Connecticut Ballet was founded in 1981 by choreographers Brett Raphael and Luk de Layress. The company made its debut at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and was hailed by The New York Times as 'a very promising troupe.' Since then, it has continued to present classical and contemporary repertoire in annual seasons at Stamford Center for the Arts and The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts. It now has over 125 ballets in its repertoire, including eight full-lengths. In 1990, the company launched its Center for Dance Education comprising statewide educational assembly programs, in-school residencies, and a scholarship program for talented youth, Dance Exposure Project. Travelers Companies has been the corporate sponsor for the Center for Dance Education for the past decade. In addition to annual seasons at The Bushnell and The Palace/Stamford, the company presents a popular free summer series around the state entitled 'Ballet Under the Stars,' providing access to live dance performances to the entire community.

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

Our annual audience is approximately 20,000, 60% of which is in the greater Hartford region... Our audience is ethnically diverse, largely female and includes families with children drawn from very different socio-economic strata. Thru our Ballet Ambassadors program, we provide underwritten tickets to marginalized constituencies who have traditionally not felt welcome to attend ballet performances at The Bushnell or faced significant financial or cultural barriers to attendance.

Describe your organization's governance.

Our Board of Directors governs our organizational direction and provides invaluable oversight. Board meetings occur monthly in order to facilitate strong communication and guidance re. the programing and fiduciary side. Artistic Director & CEO Brett Raphael is Board President and continues to manage the company's day-to-day, month-to-month operations and development activities. There has not been any substantial change in leadership since our last application to Roberts Foundation.

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

Our current board is comprised of entirely Caucasian individuals...Post-pandemic, our board was more diverse, including a long-serving African-American Board Chair, Archie Elam, and Board Secretary Jackie Fuller. Particularly in light of the departure of board members Elam and Fuller, our goal on behalf of the current board and Advisory Board is to develop a fresh and diverse roster of board candidates, representative of the the geographic and socio-economic diversity in our state.

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

100%.

Project Name

Bring Back Live Music for 'The Nutcracker' with Hartford Symphony Orchestra at The Bushnell

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

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No

Project Description

Connecticut Ballet's annual production of 'The Nutcracker' has become a fixture of the holiday season in downtown Hartford. The production attracts the general population and, long-term, represents a huge opportunity to widen the pool of ballet-goers for the remainder of the ballet season including more contemporary repertoire. We seek to engage Hartford Symphony Orchestra under Music Director Carolyn Kuan, to accompany our annual performances at The Bushnell, including four shows on December 20-21, 2025 and one 'Share the Magic' student performance on December 19th for Hartford Public Schools. A successful Bring Back Live Music for 'The Nutcracker' campaign will require the support of many community partners (including, we hope, The Roberts Foundation). Adding back this element represents a huge investment in the quality of the overall cultural experience for our Hartford audience, restoring a facet of the 'golden age' of the Hartford Ballet at The Bushnell during the 1970's and 80's

Total estimated project budget

\$93,250.00

Project start/opening

06/15/2025

Project end/closing

12/22/2025

Project venue

Belding Theatre at The Bushnell

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

We project an audience of 3100 with an average ticket price of \$86.20. We will present four public performances (December 20 & 21, 2025) and one SHARE THE MAGIC student performance (also with HSO in the pit) for Hartford Public Schools on Dec. 19, 2025.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

'Nutcracker' marketing encompasses a large regional effort, including the services of the BuzzEngine agency. Launched with a major announcement in June 2025, we will have a booth presence at HSO's Talcott Mountain series and at all 'Ballet Under the Stars' performances. Marketing includes a direct mail campaign, poster, cross-marketing with other arts orgs, eblasts to Constant Contact key lists, radio and television appearances, and continued social media posts throughout the Fall of 2025.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Specifically, we seek funding to help pay for the entirely new budget item of \$93,250 for the live music component of our 2025 'Nutcracker.' This is a major budgetary expansion which we plan to fund via a combination of contributed revenue and increased ticket sales. We feel that over a period of two-three years, this investment should provide a major boost in overall 'Nutcracker' revenues for The Bushnell performances.

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 454**How will Roberts support be recognized?**

We will recognize all 'Bring Back Live Music' sponsors in all press materials distributed beginning in the summer of 2025, in the season program book distributed to all audience members, on our sponsors & Nutcracker pages on the Connecticut Ballet website, on theater lobby 'thank you' signage, and in the traditional curtain speech by Artistic Director Brett Raphael.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

Adhering to the highest ideals for public performance and presentation in keeping with the classical tradition and encompassing the broad new world of movement vocabulary available to today's professional practitioners.

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

We feel this project exemplifies our longstanding commitment to that ideal and will further broaden the appeal across the region. It will significantly advance our mission by providing even higher quality public performances to greater Hartford audiences.

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

We have presented the annual 'Nutcracker' without live music for several years running. We feel that additional 'add-back' of live music will greatly enhance the listening experience of Tchaikovsky's 500-page score for the Connecticut Ballet audience and contribute to a greater appreciation for downtown Hartford as the cultural capital of the region.

How will this project be evaluated?

We annually evaluate all our programs and compare them to our previously established budgetary parameters and artistic goals for each season. Sometimes this is a formal process involving audience surveys and sometimes relying strictly on feedback from staff, board members, vendors, consultants, Friends of Connecticut Ballet donors, and anecdotal reports from the general public. We look forward to a robust analysis and evaluation of the success of the 'Bring Back Live Music for The Nutcracker' campaign during the 2025-2026 season.

Cover letter

- [Scan.pdf](#)

Board list

- [BoardList.ConnecticutBallet2025.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [IRS-Determination-Ltr-Hartford.2012.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [4831-CT-BALLET-990-6.30.24.PDF](#)

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 454**Last year operational budget**

- [CTB-Consolidated-Budget-2024-2025rev.4.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [CTB-Consolidated-Budget-2025-2026.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [Balance-Sheet-as-of-4-01-25.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [NutcrackerBudget.2025-rev.-1.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Other materials?

- [CB_Enews_Jan2024_3.pdf](#)
- [2024_CB_Nut_6x9SelfMailer_V6.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