

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 480**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 November 1, 2025?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

116544-Roberts2022

Organization Name

Justice Dance Performance Project, Inc.

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

223064328

Principal Contact Name

Jennifer Eifrig

Title

Development and Communications Director

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United States
[Map It](#)

Website<https://www.jdpp.org>

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\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

Justice Dance Performance Project bridges the boundaries of art and social justice through dance theater performance and multi-arts programming as a catalyst for positive change. Our mission is to educate, inspire, and ignite awareness, to create a more equitable society in ways that spark individual growth and collective action.

Our work welcomes all people and communities. Through it we seek to build connection that transcends background, abilities, language, and culture.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

JDPP began as a collective of professional artists in Hartford and New York who shared a love of art and story and a desire to make a difference. From these roots a Hartford-based nonprofit was born -- an organization committed to advancing justice, mutual empathy, and human possibility in individuals, communities, and systems. JDPP continues to be based in Hartford, Connecticut, under the artistic direction of founder Judy Dworin.

JDPP enriches public dialogue and awareness of historic and contemporary social issues through dance theater performances. Known for its innovative fusion of movement, spoken word, music, and visual design, the JDPP repertory plumbs the darkness to discover the light, drawing audiences into stories that build understanding and inspire reflection. JDPP's award-winning work has been performed throughout New England in theaters, at colleges and universities, prisons, and inner-city schools, and in major cities across the United States and Europe.

JDPP engages high-need students in schools through creative expression that supports literacy, expands awareness, and builds lifelong skills for resilient living. Recognized as a national model, the Moving Matters! program brings trained teaching artists into the classroom to lead multi-arts residencies in which kids help create a performance from dance, visual art, and story inspired by a theme text.

JDPP supports individuals and families impacted by incarceration through residencies in carceral settings and schools and performances in the community. Participants in Bridging Boundaries programs build interpersonal connection, process trauma, recover voice, and reimagine self through dance and movement, autobiographical writing, visual arts, and song-making led by JDPP teaching artists often in tandem with social workers. Audiences experience the human story of prison and its impact through individual and group performance by returned citizens alongside professional artists.

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

JDPP's performances and programs amplify voice, presence, and social justice for youth and adults. In FY 2025, JDPP served a total of 2371 people. We estimate that 46% of that population are people of color and 60% female-identifying. 68% come from greater Hartford. The remaining 32% are from other regions in Connecticut, out-of-state, or abroad. Performance audiences are 86% female-identifying, 1% non-binary, 22% POC, and 52% 65+.

Describe your organization's governance.

JDPP's board consists of 13 voting members and two ex officio members, who meet five times each year (83% average attendance in FY 2025). They represent the financial, K-12 educational, legal, social service, higher education, arts, and criminal justice sectors, and reside mostly in greater Hartford.

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

JDPP's board self-identifies as 23% Black/African American; 15% Latino/Hispanic/LatinX, 8% multiracial/other race, 8% Native, and 59% white; 77% female-identifying. The IDEA Justice task force was established in 2022 and works closely with

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the ED and ArtsReach Supervisor created in October 2020 to amplify voice, presence, and inclusion in JDPP's overall operations. A current focus is to bring performances to places where people already gather to encourage a wider awareness of the work.

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

100% of the board has made a financial contribution of record to JDPP in the past year. Most members serve on one or more committees and task forces, such as Finance, Fund Development, Governance, IDEA Justice, and Special Events. Board members also attend performance, events, trainings, and JDPP-sponsored activities in the community.

Project Name

Book Dances

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

Yes

Will the artists associated with this project be financially compensated?

Yes

Project Description

From site-specific performances during and since the pandemic, JDPP returns to the theater with 'Book Dances,' premiering December 2025 at Hartford Stage. Against a backdrop of increasing challenges to intellectual freedom, the piece celebrates the power of books to widen vision, open possibility, and create connection through choreography accompanied by a sound collage of spoken word with music composed by Robert Een. The story follows four dancers through a kaleidoscopic series of vignettes that shift from innocence, joy, and wonder to fire and destruction, and finally to renewal. The visual journey is framed by three book towers that, moved by and with the dancers, suggest joy and sanctuary, threat and destruction, and finally resiliency and hope. This project will take the piece from experimentation to a fully realized theater production. The piece will then tour as a site-specific performance to venues TBD along with a pop up dance inviting community engagement.

Total estimated project budget

\$24,567.00

Project start/opening

11/02/2025

Project end/closing

10/31/2026

Project venue

Hartford Stage

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

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Hartford Stage's capacity is 489. General admission tickets will be \$36 and reserved seating will be \$100. Guests will be encouraged to donate to cover those who cannot otherwise attend. JDPP is working with Oak Hill and Gilead Services as potential underwriting sponsors to bring a significant number of their clients to the performance for the first time. We expect approximately 2/3 of ticket holders to be paid, and the remainder as complimentary.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

We will send branded emails to our subscribers (1500+) twice/month from Aug-Sep and weekly from Oct-Dec 8. We will post regular updates throughout fall 2025 on social media (Facebook, Instagram, BlueSky), and pitch targeted reporters and editors in Hartford and CT media. We plan to do a focused outreach to book stores, book clubs, and libraries. We will also do some pop up book dance events and in-progress showings to encourage interest pre- and post-premiere.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

The project will involve 4 Ensemble dancers, visual designer, sound engineer, videographer, and photographer. JDPP will contribute \$4,500 in reserve funds and \$5,000 in donations and seek additional grants and sponsorships. Ticket revenue is estimated to be \$3,000. Roberts funding will be used for expenses including rehearsal and performer fees, visual design, theater rental, sound, stage assistance, videography and photography, and marketing.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

Roberts Foundation funding will be the focus of publicity in advance of the premiere and will continue as the piece tours. JDPP is pleased to recognize the Foundation on our web site (www.jdpp.org); in email and print invitations to the Dec 8 premiere; on Facebook, Instagram, and BlueSky and in our monthly email newsletters; in publications and press releases relating to the performances; in performance playbills and flyers; and as requested.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

JDPP defines artistic excellence as collaborative creation in the fulfillment of an artistic vision. The strongest performance works result from trained and confident artists bringing their skills and experience together under a clear directorial eye and vision in the metaphoric telling of a story whose meaning is greater than the sum of its parts. We seek to produce works in which several arts disciplines grounded in dance accrete to provide multi-sensory immersive experiences that connect performers with audience through authentic voice and presence. The work acknowledges our common humanity and our shared responsibility for the well-being of ourselves and our communities. It is based on a firm belief in the power of performance to activate new perspectives and encourage audiences on a visceral level to move forward and activate an enlarged vision of what is possible.

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

Books Dances is led by Judy Dworin's conceptual and artistic vision developed further through the collective explorations of the ensemble of performers. Dworin has been working with individual dancers since April 2024 to spur independent exploration into movement language that builds the foundation for solo and group dances. She is again collaborating with visual designer Marcela Oteiza to develop the design vocabulary of the piece. Research and improvisational exploration with the Ensemble is shaped and carefully structured compositionally into the final performance. The addition of visuals, sound, text and costume ultimately brings the work into a seamless whole.

This project advances JDPP's mission by allying the arts with the humanities and social justice advocacy to call attention to the need to protect basic freedoms and community safe spaces for communication, connection, and exchange of ideas.

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

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Books and literacy are among humankind's greatest achievements, allowing the preservation of story, the transmission of knowledge, and the creation of community built on shared ideas. For the same reasons, challenging access to books by those in power has been a harbinger of broader efforts to marginalize certain populations and assert control. Book bans, restricting the right to read, denigrating libraries, and curtailing intellectual freedom are sentinel signs of authoritarianism. This project will highlight the power and vulnerability of the right to read and advocate for action to protect it as a keystone for the totality of our democratic values. The inclusion of a participatory pop up dance provides the vehicle for a much-needed expression of community and purpose at this precarious moment in our history.

How will this project be evaluated?

JDPP will again work with Dr. Anita Baker of Evaluation Consultants to develop an audience self-assessment instrument to measure the project's success in achieving the outcomes outlined above.

As a result of this project, we expect

- Approximately 400 attendees
- Increased public awareness of the broader significance of literary freedom as sentinel to basic freedoms of choice in a democracy, as measured through audience self-reporting
- Audience appreciation for the role of the arts as a means of communication, as measured through audience self-reporting
- Increased interest in taking action to protect literary freedom, civil rights, and/or marginalized populations, as measured through audience self-reporting
- Increased appreciation of dance and JDPP's innovative approach to the creation of multi-arts performance
- Increased interest in seeking arts and performance to stimulate awareness of social justice issues

Cover letter

- [JDPP-FY26-Roberts-Cover-Letter.pdf](#)

Board list

- [JDPP-Board-members-FY-26.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [JDPP-IRS-determination-letter-2022.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [JDPP-6-30-24-FS-final.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [BudgetvsActualsBudget_FY25_PL_2-FY25PLClasses.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [BudgetvsActualsBudget_FY26_PL-FY26PLClasses.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

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- [BalanceSheet.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [JDPP-PROJECT-BUDGET-Book-Dances.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- [JDPPFY25-Accomplishments-Report.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

- [JDPP-Strategic-Plan- 2025 28-3-3-25-Final.pdf](#)

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

No

Grant Report

- [Justice-Dance-Performance-Project-Inc.-Grantee-Reporting-Form-.pdf](#)

JDPP recently updated its strategic plan that will guide activities and programs over the next three years. In so doing, the strategic planning team paid particular attention to the operating environment, which has changed substantially since 2020. Post-pandemic crisis, programs and performances can operate without health restrictions, but the pandemic relief funds that sustained many organizations and allowed JDPP to maintain 18+ months of cash reserves are gone, while expenses have increased. The new strategic plan calls for maintaining program outcomes while maximizing efficiency. JDPP's FY 2026 (Jul 2025-Jun 2026) budget includes income projections that are realistic and achievable given the fundraising climate and JDPP's capacity.

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