The arts community continued to struggle due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. Art lovers joyfully, yet cautiously, returned to museums, theaters and other performance venues only to retreat due to the Delta and Omicron variants.

Nationally, the resulting economic crisis was concerning for both artists and arts organizations. According to Americans for the Arts, financial losses to the nation’s nonprofit arts and culture organizations were an estimated $17.97 billion.

BIPOC arts organizations were hardest hit with 55% reporting they lacked the financial resources needed to return to live programming vs. 38% of non-BIPOC arts organizations. Overall, job losses at nonprofit arts organizations were three times worse than the average for all nonprofits. Artists and creatives were among the most severely affected – 63% were unemployed and 95% lost creative income. Again, the rates were higher for BIPOC artists.

But the picture is not entirely bleak. Although arts organizations are recovering at a slower rate than other sectors, conditions are improving and there were many lessons learned. Arts organizations doubled down on communication efforts and strengthened ties with their audiences and donors. They embraced digital programming and many found global audiences as a result of streaming online. Long term partnerships were forged and created many cross-marketing opportunities. But perhaps the best outcome was that arts organizations learned to pivot – and quickly.

And by confronting these pandemic-induced challenges, arts organizations are better positioned to confidently face any obstacle in the future.
2021 Grants

Excellence in the Arts Program Grants

The Artists Collective
Funding to support the 2021 Jackie McLean Memorial Celebration
$10,000

Ballet Theatre Company
Funding to support The Nutcracker
$10,000

The Bushnell Center for Performing Arts
Funding to support Jazzicians
$ 7,500

Capital Classics, Inc.
Funding to support the 2021 Greater Hartford Shakespeare Festival
$ 8,000

Connecticut Chopin Competition
Funding to support the 13th Annual Chopin International Piano Competition
$ 8,000

Connecticut Choral Artists Inc.
Funding to support The Hebrew Prayer in B Minor
$10,000

Connecticut Historical Society
Funding to support the Día de los Muertos performances
$ 3,100

Connecticut Summerfest
Funding to support the Kinsmen Sound Studio Production Services
$ 5,000

Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra
Funding to support the 2021/2022 Performance Season
$12,000

Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz, Inc.
Funding to support the 2021 Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz
$20,000

Harriet Beecher Stowe Center
Funding to support Emergence by Judy Dworin Performance Project
$ 7,500
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Funding Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartford Jazz Society</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>Funding of The 2021 Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford Performs</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Funding to support Hartford Public School 2021/2022 Education Programs/Artists of Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford Stage Company</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>Funding to support Angry, Raucous and Shamelessly Gorgeous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hartford Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>Funding to support the 2021/2022 Masterworks Concert Season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music at the Red Door</td>
<td>$3,500</td>
<td>Funding to support the 2021/2022 Concert Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Britain Museum of American Art</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>Funding to support 30 Americans exhibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Fall</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Funding to support the 2021 Night Fall production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out Film Festival</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Funding to support the 2021 CT LGBTQ Film Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playhouse Theatre Group</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Funding to support the 2021 Connecticut Shakespeare Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Art Ways</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>Funding to support The Real Awards and Exhibitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisionist Content Fund</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
<td>Funding to support Surround Space art installation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise Up Group</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>Funding to support the Asylum Avenue Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverfront Recapture</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>Funding to support the 2021 Hartbeat Festival</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TheaterWorks
Funding to support the production of Zoey’s Perfect Wedding
$ 25,000

Times Fool Company
Funding to support Romeo and Juliet
$ 2,500

University of Hartford
Funding to support an African American Art History Course
$ 10,000

Women Composers Festival of Hartford
Funding to support the 2022 Women Composers Festival
$ 8,000

Capital Grants

Hill-Stead Museum
Funding to support the Bringing Art to Life Campaign
$ 40,000

Creation of New Work

Hartford Public Library $20,000
Funding to commission the sculpture, Suffrage,
by Marilyn Parkinson Thrall

Real Art Ways
Funding to commission an immersive performance installation
by dancer/choreographer, Peter Kyle
$ 20,000

Joyce C. Willis Fund for Excellence and Equity in the Arts

The Amistad Center for Arts and Culture
Funding to support the residency of photographer, Merik Goma
$ 90,000

Total Awarded in 2021
$475,100
Creation of New Work

Established in 2003, the foundation’s Creation of New Work Initiative seeks to foster creativity in Greater Hartford by supporting the collaboration of local artists and arts organizations.

At its December, 2021 meeting, the board approved a grant to Real Art Ways to commission dancer/choreographer, Peter Kyle, to create an immersive performance installation titled And All Things Hushed to celebrate the 100th anniversary of poet Rainer Maria Rilke’s The Sonnets of Orpheus.

For 2022, The Roberts Foundation will consider Visual Arts submissions. Applications are due September 2, 2022.

Grants Outlook

At its December 2021 meeting, the board set a 2022 grants budget of $400,000 which reflects the projected performance of the foundation’s assets during 2022.

In addition to its traditional grants budget, the foundation approved a budget of $200,000 to support the Joyce C. Willis Fund for Excellence and Equity in the Arts.
Joyce C. Willis Fund for Excellence and Equity in the Arts

In 2020, the Edward C. & Ann T. Roberts Foundation announced a major initiative to support excellence and equity in the arts with gifts to The Amistad Center for Art & Culture, Hartford Stage, and Hartford Symphony Orchestra. The initiative is named in honor of Joyce C. Willis, a former Roberts Foundation board member, founding member and past board president of The Amistad Center, Hartford Symphony Orchestra board member and ardent supporter of Hartford Stage. Willis, who retired from The Hartford Financial Services Group as Vice President of Corporate Communications in 2005, died of COVID-19 in June of 2020.

Each organization will receive $150,000 payable over two years and may apply for additional funding to implement ancillary programming. The Amistad Center named Merik Goma as its Willis resident in early 2021. Goma is a New Haven-based photographer whose residency will culminate in a major exhibition in 2023. Hartford Stage selected director Christopher Betts in early 2022 as its artist-in-residence and Hartford Symphony recently announced that composer/conductor Quinn Mason has received a commission for the 2022/23 season.

It is our hope that The Joyce C. Willis Fund will not only serve as a catalyst to help Black artists excel in their careers, but also will encourage other organizations to examine their efforts to promote racial equity in the arts and increase their investment in artists of color.
Financial Statements

Statements of Support, Revenue, Expenses, and Other Changes in Net Assets, Modified Cash Basis

For the years ended December 31, 2020 and 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes in operating net assets:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenues:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest &amp; dividends</td>
<td>$229,146</td>
<td>$216,832</td>
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<td>Net realized &amp; unrealized gains/ (loss) on securities</td>
<td>1,112,555</td>
<td>818,494</td>
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<td>Less investment and custodial fees</td>
<td>(52,224)</td>
<td>(46,597)</td>
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<td>Net revenues and (losses)</td>
<td>$1,341,701</td>
<td>$1,035,326</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>475,100</td>
<td>390,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and General</td>
<td>74,820</td>
<td>61,073</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenses</td>
<td>$549,920</td>
<td>$451,471</td>
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<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>791,781</td>
<td>583,853</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets, beginning of the year</td>
<td>8,405,514</td>
<td>7,821,661</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets, end of the year</td>
<td>$9,197,295</td>
<td>$8,405,514</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Riverfront Recapture

Women Composers Festival

Times Fool Company
About the Foundation

The Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation is a private, special purpose foundation founded in 1964 by Ned and Sunny Roberts. In accordance with its founders’ wishes, the foundation is dedicated to supporting and encouraging excellence in the arts throughout the Capital Region. Since its establishment, the foundation has awarded more than $10 million to nearly 200 area non-profit organizations. More information is available at www.therobertsfoundation.org

Guidelines and information about the application process are available on our website at therobertsfoundation.org. Please see our website for a history of the foundation and listings of past grants.