



Power of culture

MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023: 1:00- 2:30 PM

BROADCAST MEETING

MEETING WILL BE LIVESTREAMED ON MASS CULTURAL'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL AT
[GRANTS COMMITTEE MEETING - YOUTUBE](#)

MEETING MATERIALS WILL BE POSTED ONLINE
UNDER "JANUARY 11, 2023 GRANTS COMMITTEE MEETING"

<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
1. Call to Order, Welcomes and Open Meeting Law Notice	
2. Minutes Approval- August 5, 2022 Meeting	X
3. Conflict of Interest Reminder	
4. Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Organizations	
a. Grant Recommendations	X
5. Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Individuals-	
a. Process to bring final recommendations to Council Meeting	X
6. Updates on Grants Approved at August 2022 Meeting	
a. Gaming Mitigation Program	
b. STARS	
c. UP	
d. Cultural Districts	
e. Festivals & Projects	

7. Adjourn



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MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS COMMITTEE

(IN ADVANCE OF THE 157th MEETING OF MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL ON JANUARY 26, 2023)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023

RESOLUTIONS

Section 2

RESOLVED: that the Grants Committee approves the minutes of the August 5, 2022 Grants Committee Meeting in the form presented to the Grants Committee.

Section 4

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council the award of grants under the Cultural Sector Recovery Grants program for Organizations pursuant to the process described in the memo presented to Grants Committee on January 11, 2023.

Section 5

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council the award of grants under the Cultural Sector Recovery Grants program for Individuals pursuant to the process described in the memo presented to Grants Committee on January 11, 2023.

OPEN MEETING LAW STATEMENT

Please note that this meeting is an open meeting of a public body subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. A notice of this meeting together with the agenda was posted on Mass Cultural Council's website 48 or more hours ago (excluding weekends and holidays).

This meeting shall be open and accessible to all members of the public except at such times when this body has voted to go into closed executive session under the Open Meeting Law.

This meeting is a virtual meeting held under the Open Meeting Law as modified under current law to permit online meetings. This meeting is being broadcast to the public on a publicly available YouTube channel as described in the posted meeting notice.

Instructions on how to contact the Council with questions or problems accessing the broadcast are also included in such notice. Only Council members, staff and invited guests will be provided access to the Zoom platform hosting the meeting. As a safety measure, in order to prevent disruption of the meeting or non-public communications among the participants, the Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Committee of Mass Cultural Council has asked staff to implement the following protocols for participants in on-line meetings of Mass Cultural Council or its committees:

- Any "chat" or similar function on the Zoom platform hosting the meeting shall be disabled.
- Other than Council members or participants specifically recognized by the Chair of the meeting, all Zoom platform participants will be muted and have no ability to share media or documents or project or type images or text.
- All participants in the Zoom platform may be required to enter a waiting room and digitally sign-in before being admitted.

- Any attendee in the Zoom platform who nonetheless causes a disruption will be summarily removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

This meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony will not be taken. Individuals may not address the meeting without permission of the Chair.

Any member of the public may record this meeting provided that they do not interfere with the meeting.

Draft minutes of the open session of this meeting shall be kept and shall be posted on Mass Cultural Council's website no later than 30 days after the meeting provided that such minutes shall not be considered official until they have been approved by this body in open session. Individuals asserting a violation of the Open Meeting Law may file a complaint with this body within 30 days or with the Attorney General's office thereafter.

**TIPS FOR PARTICIPATING IN A VIRTUAL OPEN MEETING USING ZOOM OR OTHER
VIDEOCONFERENCING PLATFORMS WHEN THERE ARE SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS**

(adapted from several sources)

- In order to minimize background noise, please mute microphone when not speaking.
- Please raise hand in order to be recognized by the chair.
- In order for all members to have an opportunity to speak and be heard, please wait to speak until specifically recognized by the chair.
- If there are questions, please direct them to the chair and the chair will then recognize the appropriate person to respond.
- Please limit statements to three minutes.
- The chair will reserve the right to limit discussion in order to allow sufficient time for every member to be heard who wishes to speak.
- Modify Video Settings to “Hide all non-video participants”- this will make it easier to follow who is speaking and participating
- In the event of a service interruption during a Zoom call due to hackers, so-called “zoom bombing” or other technical difficulties, staff will indicate the call is to be terminated. Please exit the call and staff will circulate instructions by email for a new Zoom call to continue the meeting.



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UNOFFICIAL DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2022

ONLINE MEETING

Committee Members Present were

Jo-Ann Davis, Chair of the Grants Committee
Nina Fialkow, Council Chair
Marc Carroll, Vice Council Chair
Che Anderson
Barbara Schaffer Bacon
Karen Barry
Cecil Barron Jensen
Kathleen Castro
Karen Hurvitz
Barbara Schaffer Bacon

Staff Members Present were

Michael J. Bobbitt, Executive Director
David Slatery, Deputy Director
Catherine Cheng-Anderson, People & Culture Director
Jen Lawless, Operations Director
Bethann Steiner, Public Affairs Director
Dan Blask, Artist Fellowships Program Manager
Carolyn Cole, Cultural Districts and LCCs Program Officer
Sara Glidden, Cultural Investment Portfolio Program Manager
Erik Holmgren, Creative Youth Development Program Manager
Maggie Holtzberg, Folk Arts & Heritage Program Manager
Ann Petruccelli Moon, Public Relations & Events Manager
Carmen Plazas, Communications & Community Engagement Manager
Lisa Simmons, Communities Program Manager

Prepared on 9/5/22

Chair Jo-Ann Davis called the meeting to order at 2:32pm and asked Deputy Director David Slatery to read the Open Meeting Law statement:

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- All participants in the Zoom platform must enter a waiting room and digitally sign-in before being admitted.
- Any attendee in the Zoom platform who nonetheless causes a disruption will be summarily removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

This meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony will not be taken. Individuals may not address the meeting without permission of the Chair.

Any member of the public may record this meeting provided that they do not interfere with the meeting. The Chair will then inform the members of the meeting that they are being recorded.

Draft minutes of the open session of this meeting shall be kept and shall be posted on Mass Cultural Council's website no later than 30 days after the meeting provided that such minutes shall not be considered official until they have been approved by this body in open session. Individuals asserting a violation of the Open Meeting Law may file a complaint with this body within 30 days or with the Attorney General's office thereafter.

Jo-Ann then asked Committee Members to approve the minutes of their last business meeting held on June 14, 2022. Barbara Schaffer Bacon moved to approve the minutes and Nina Fialkow seconded the motion. There were no questions or discussion. By roll call vote with Karen Barry abstaining because she had not attended the meeting on June 14th, all other Committee Members were in favor, and it was

RESOLVED: that the Grants Committee approves the minutes of the June 14, 2022 Grants Committee Meeting in the form presented to the Grants Committee at its August 5, 2022 Meeting.

Jo-Ann then asked Executive Director Michael Bobbitt to deliver his presentation on the Agency's FY23 grants and program plan. A complete copy of the presentation Michael delivered is available upon request.

After Michael shared the presentation to the Committee, Jo-Ann thanked him for creating a very comprehensive and thoughtful plan and thanked the staff team as well. She reminded Committee Members they had had a very thorough preview of the plan at their June 14th meeting and in the meeting materials they received last week there is a full outline of the amounts being proposed for each program. Jo-Ann asked if there were any questions from the Committee and there were none. She then asked David to review the Conflict-of-Interest list.

David explained that the conflicts list had been shared with the Committee in their meeting packets and asked if any Committee Members needed to add anything to it. Jo-Ann added MASSCreative and Springfield Museums. Che Anderson added Mechanics Hall, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester Historical Museum and the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA).

David then explained that, unless there was any objection, the Committee would take one vote on sections 5 through 18 together in one omnibus motion. There was no objection. Jo-Ann called for a vote to approve the recommended program allocations and bring them to the full Council for a vote on August 25th.

It was noted that the votes recommending the FY23 grant recommendations will note the following conflicts and abstentions of the Committee Members in attendance at this meeting.

Nina Fialkow disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to Boston Ballet and Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

Marc Carroll disclosed that he would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra or The Rivers School.

Barbara Schaffer Bacon disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to the Arts Extension Service.

Jo-Ann Davis disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to MASSCreative, Springfield Museums, and The Care Center.

Kathleen Castro disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to the Little Theater of Fall River or the New Bedford Festival Theater and the Fall River Coalition for Arts & Culture.

Cecil Barron Jensen disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to the Artists Association of Nantucket, The Nantucket Historical Association, or Nantucket Cultural District.

Che Anderson disclosed that he would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to Mechanics Hall, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester Historical Museum, and the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA).

Nina moved to approve the recommendations and Che seconded the motion. There was no discussion. By roll call vote with Karen Hurvitz voting NO on section 6 only, all members voted in favor of the following resolutions.

WHEREAS the General Court of the Massachusetts State Legislature has appropriated a budget of \$22,377,000 to the Mass Cultural Council for FY23; and

WHEREAS Mass Cultural Council staff has presented a recommended FY23 grants budget to the Grants Committee at its meeting on August 5, 2022 ("Grants Committee Meeting"), including recommended grant allocations for a variety of Mass Cultural Council programs;

NOW THEREFORE, it is hereby

RESOLVED: that the Grants Committee further recommends that the Council approve the allocation of grants and processes and procedures presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 5

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council the funding of the Apprentice Grants program in the amount of \$180,000 as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 6

RESOLVED: To recommend allocations to the Cultural Investment Portfolio and CIP Gateway programs as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting in for an aggregate total of \$6,996,300.

Section 7

RESOLVED: To recommend approval of the third cycle of the Gaming Mitigation Program as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 8

RESOLVED: To recommend an allocation to the Local Cultural Councils totaling \$5,500,000 and up to \$825,000 in Cultural District grants as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 9

RESOLVED: To recommend approval of the new Projects/Festivals program totaling \$1,375,000 as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 10

RESOLVED: To recommend grant allocations to YouthReach program in the

amount of \$1,892,000, continued funding of the Instrument Library in the amount of \$30,000 and participation in the META and CYP Teaching Artist Fellowships program with outside foundations and provision of up to \$120,000 in grants/stipends/reimbursements to participating organizations in the CultureRX Social Prescription program and \$30,416 to the Youth Arts Impact Network with EdVestors, all as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council the following Arts Education grant allocations, \$1,401,250 to the STARS program, \$20,000 in support of Massachusetts History Day and \$20,000 in support of the NEA-funded Poetry Out Loud program, all as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 11

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council the continuation of the UP Program with grants of up to \$55,000 in ILN stipends and \$41,000 in Innovation Fund Grants, all as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 12

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council a \$125,000 grant to Arts Connect International for underwriting 500 Massachusetts cultural sector participants in its Cultural Equity Learning Community (CELC) 2.0 teaching course as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 13

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council a grant to Mass Humanities totaling \$849,247 and allocation of \$2.5 in Pandemic Recovery Funds, all as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 14

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council a grant to NEFA of \$70,000 as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 15

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council a grant to Mass Creative for \$100,000 to commission a cultural data impact report and to continue improve their online community engagement portal, all as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 16

RESOLVED: To recommend to Mass Cultural Council an allocation of \$70,000 to ArtsBoston acting on behalf of the Network Arts Administrators of Color as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 17

RESOLVED: To recommend \$100,000 in Media Transition Grants to- 5 public media companies, all as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

Section 18

RESOLVED: to recommend to contract with SMU Data Arts to provide the Cultural Data Profile tool as presented at the Grants Committee Meeting.

(David noted that Section 18 – the SMU Data Arts Cultural Data project contract was to be treated as a service contract and not a grant)

There was no further business. Jo-Ann thanked Committee Members and staff and, as Chair, adjourned the meeting at 2:52pm.

Last created January 4, 2023

UPDATED Conflicts of Interest Notifications- Mass Cultural Council Members

As of August 15, 2022

1. Nina Fialkow
 - a. Boston Ballet
 - b. Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
2. Matthew Keator
3. Allyce Najimy
4. Barbara Schaffer Bacon
 - a. Arts Extension Institute
5. Troy Siebels
 - a. Hanover Theater/Worcester Center for the Performing Arts
 - b. Worcester Cultural Coalition
 - c. Discover Central Massachusetts
 - d. Indian Hill Music
 - e. MASS Creative
6. Ann Murphy
 - a. MASS Creative
7. Sherry Dong
 - a. The Chinese Historical Society of New England
8. Lillian Do
9. Kathleen Castro
 - a. Little Theater of Fall River
 - b. New Bedford Festival Theater
 - c. The Fall River Coalition for Arts and Culture
10. Karen Barry
11. Karen Hurvitz
12. Marc Carroll
 - a. Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra
 - b. The Rivers School
13. Jo-Ann Davis
 - a. The Care Center

Last created January 4, 2023

- b. Springfield Museums
- c. MASS Creative

14. Cecil Barron Jensen

- a. Artists Association of Nantucket
- b. The Nantucket Historical Association
- c. Nantucket Cultural District

15. Simone Early

16. Che Anderson

- a. Worcester County Mechanics Association (Mechanics Hall)
- b. Worcester Historical Museum
- c. Worcester Art Museum
- d. Institute of Contemporary Art

Procedure for dealing with conflicts of interest on Mass Cultural Council grant votes.

Prior to any Council or Grants Committee meeting, staff will compile a list of conflicts of interest by identifying any potential recipient of council funds to be voted on at that meeting to which any Council member has an identified connection. Unless a Council member indicates otherwise, it is assumed that the Council member will abstain from all discussion and any vote regarding such grantee.

A document listing these possible conflicts of interest (the "conflicts list") will be distributed to the board at the beginning of the meeting.

After presentation of grant recommendations for a particular program, before a motion for vote, the chair should refer to the list and 1) ask the members present if the conflicts list is accurate and if the members identified will abstain from votes and discussion for the relevant organizations as identified on the conflicts list and 2) ask if any other conflicts exist which should be added to the conflicts list.

After dealing with any necessary corrections or additions, the chair will then ask for a motion approving the grant/allocation recommendations noting that the Council members noted on the conflict list will abstain from discussion and votes for certain organizations in accordance with the conflicts list. It will not be necessary for any member with a conflict to leave the room as long as such member does not participate in any decision regarding the affected organization and it is specifically noted in the minutes that such member abstained from all discussion and votes regarding the specified organization.

Sample script for a meeting vote:

CHAIR: We will now consider votes approving the [...] grant recommendations. Please note the conflicts list that has been distributed. Staff members have compiled these lists to identify members that have a real or potential conflict of interest in connection with this vote. Please indicate 1) if there are any inaccuracies on the list or 2) if any additional conflicts need to be disclosed.

[If any corrections or additions are noted by board members, the conflicts list will be amended at this time]

Noting the abstentions disclosed on the *[corrected]* conflicts list, the chair now calls for a motion to approve the grants recommendations for this program.

Then, upon motion duly and made and seconded, with the abstentions noted above, it was VOTED: ...]"

In the minutes recording this vote, the following will be included

[Council Member X] disclosed that s/he would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to {list affiliated organizations}



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council Grants Committee
Fr: Michael Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jenifer Lawless, Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Bethann Steiner, Sara Glidden, Kalyn King, Lillian Lee, Greg Torrales
Dt: January 11, 2023
Re: FY23 Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Organizations Process

Background on The Cultural Sector Recovery Grant Program for Organizations. In May 2022, The Council reviewed and approved the development of the pandemic relief programs for organizations and individuals in the cultural sector, to be supported with the funds appropriated through Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021. The Cultural Sector Recovery Grant (CSR) Program for Organizations launched in August 2022, with the application deadline of September 29, 2022. The Cultural Investment Portfolio (CIP) team took the lead on constituent support, leading information sessions, office hours, and one-on-one support for applicants.

The Grants Committee is being asked to recommend to the full Council that it approve the process by which Council staff implemented the program which resulted in the funding of approved applicants. Draft documents listing all the applicants and the grantees and grant amounts determined by staff using the process described herein is included in the meeting materials but is still remains subject to change prior to the Council meeting on January 26.

This memo details the outreach process, provides details about the applicant pool, and describes the process for review of the applications and how grant amounts were determined.

Program Launch and Outreach. The grant application became available on August 8, and CIP staff conducted 2 webinars for potential applicants, followed by posting a recording of the webinar in Spanish, and multiple opportunities for applicants to meet with staff in 'office hours' and one on one consulting sessions. Outreach efforts included the Council's core strategies for promoting grant programs (e.g., social

media, e-newsletter, blog, etc.), in addition to messaging to organizations in the grants management system that had not received a grant from the Council in the last three years. Staff also targeted cultural organizations in under-resourced communities (as defined in the program guidelines) through state and federal data sources and Google's geocentric searching capabilities. Social media outreach was expanded to include live online events in Spanish.

Applicant Eligibility. The Council received 1359 applications (plus a few duplicate submissions) which currently are reflected as follows in the proposed funding list:

- 1218 applications are from eligible organizations that would be awarded a grant from the CSR program, if approved.
- 29 organizations were eligible but would not be awarded a grant through this program, as they had received a statutory grant from funds appropriated through Line Item 1599-2043 of Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021, and such statutory grant exceeded the amount that such organization would have received through the CSR grant formula.
- 112 applications are from organizations that did not meet the eligibility requirements for the CSR program as published in the guidelines. Most eligibility issues are organizations that 1) do not meet the definition of "fully cultural", 2) are sole proprietors or single member LLCs, 3) did not conduct public programming prior to June 30, 2022, 4) do not have any evidence of public programming, or do not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria. Staff identified potentially ineligible organizations and reviewed those organizations with senior staff to make final determinations.

Information about the grants and the grantee organizations:

- 189 self-identified as BIPOC
- 427 are located in priority communities
- 614 received prioritization for funding history as not recently funded, and 352 of these were first time applicants
- The grantee pool is highly skewed towards smaller organizations. Of the 1218 proposed to be funded, 465 had FY19 expenses below

\$50,000, and another 170 had expenses between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Only 191 such organizations had FY19 expenses over \$1 million.

Grant Award Calculation. Per the approval of the CSR program back in May 2022 and the published guidelines, grants from this program range from \$5,000 to \$75,000. Specific grant amounts are calculated with a formula that scales according to an organization's pre-pandemic expenses, and the prioritization categories stated in the guidelines- i.e. organizations that had more expenses or had more prioritization points could receive higher grant amounts.

- For the purpose of determining grant amounts, all organizations were treated as if their FY19 expenses ranged from \$50,000 to a maximum of \$10,000,000. The smallest organizations were treated as if they had minimum expenses of \$50,000, which benefits the smallest organizations in the applicant pool.
- 31 eligible organizations received a direct statutory grant from the funds appropriated through Line Item 1599-2043 of Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021. These statutory grants ranged from \$25,000 - \$1.3 million. Organizations which received such a grant were included in the review and grant formula. If an organization's statutory grant was less than the grant calculated in this program, it received the difference between the two amounts. Two organizations would receive a grant under this program based on this difference.

Process:

- Staff reviewed applications to determine eligibility. This included reviewing information provided by the applicants, as well as website and social media. In some cases, staff also reviewed the searchable databases of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, the Attorney General's Division of Public Charities, and the Internal Revenue Service.
- Staff and temporary employees reviewed budget forms and financial documents provided by the applicants. Applicants were given the opportunity to make corrections to the budget forms as needed.

- Applicants that were determined to be ineligible because they were sole proprietorships or single-member Limited Liability Companies were referred to the Cultural Sector Recovery Grant Program for Individuals and ultimately added to the applicant pool for that program.
- Approximately 10% of eligible applicants were cross-checked against public records of federal pandemic relief funding. The overwhelming majority accurately reported Paycheck Protection Program funding, an issue which impacted their score for 'access to pandemic relief.

Prioritization and grant calculations. Scores and grant amounts were calculated by reference to Prioritization categories. Set forth below is the points range for each category and how each category was calculated. Applicant's inclusion in particular datasets for prioritization point analysis was based on availability/applicability of data.

BIPOC Centered organization – 0 or 20 points

- To qualify, an organization had to complete the BIPOC Centered Self Identification form, which is reviewed/approved by staff
- The guidelines and the application explained the Self-Identification process and provided links.
- Applicants were sent several reminders to complete the form if applicable, with the final reminder sent in early December, prior to finalization of the grant calculations.

Priority Community – 0 or 10 points

- Based on the organization's address, and using the list of Under Resourced Communities which is posted on [MassCulturalCouncil.org](https://www.massculturalcouncil.org)

Funding History – 0, 5, or 15 points

- Data is from SmartSimple and based on funding amounts from FY19, FY20, and FY21.
 - Organizations that would have been eligible for previous funding – 15 points

- Organizations not previously eligible (newly-established, and most for profits) – 5 points
- Organizations whose only FY19–21 funding was a \$500 Festivals grant – 5 points

Tourism Impact – 0 or 5 points

- Score based on the organization's answer on the application. Tourism impact defined: 50% of audience/participants from 50 miles away or out of state

Job Creation – 2, 3, or 5 points.

- Score based on the organization's answer on the application.
 - Over 500 employees – 5 points
 - 101 – 499 employees – 3 points
 - 1 – 100 employees – 2 points

Access to Pandemic Relief – 0 to 20 points

- Scoring was based on reported state or federal pandemic relief as a percentage of FY19 expenses. Organizations with no relief funds received the maximum of 20 points, and the remainder were scaled to 0 points for organizations that received more than 50% of their FY19 expenses in state or federal pandemic assistance
- Organizations that received ARPA sourced grants from the Cultural Facilities Fund received zero points

Negative Financial Impact of the pandemic – 0 to 25 points

- Staff worked with an independent consultant to develop common measures and calculations that would assess the impact of Covid on an organization's finances. Impact was evaluated:
 - In three categories: (1.) Percentage change in revenue, (2.) change in operating expenses, (3.) change in months of cash. Scoring was weighted in order of an organization's ability to control the outcome (revenue, expenses, cash).
 - Across two timespans: (1) impact in the short term (FY19 to FY20) and (2.) impact over the duration of the period

measured (FY19 to FY21). Long term impact was weighted more heavily than immediate (80%/20%).

- Organizations were divided into 5 brackets, based on pre-pandemic expenses. In each budget category, impact was compared to other similarly sized organizations, and was based the median – the midpoint of change from FY19 to a pandemic-impacted year. Scores were assigned based on how much the organization varied from the midpoint of their budget group. This means that organizations were scored based on the experience of similar sized organizations and that organizations in every budget size will show highest (or lowest) impact.

Using the above prioritization and scoring protocols, staff developed a funding list, drafts of which, sorted by both by grant amount and name, are being provided along with the meeting materials. Staff is requesting the Grants Committee recommend to the Council approval of the process outlined above.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council Grants Committee
Fr: Michael Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jenifer Lawless, Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Bethann Steiner, Dan Blask, Kelly Bennett, Maggie Holtzberg, Lani Asuncion
Dt: January 11, 2023
Re: FY23 Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Individuals Process

The Artist Team is finalizing a list of 4,000 artists, culture bearers, and cultural workers to receive unrestricted, \$5,000 grants as part of the one-time Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Individuals program under the process recommended below. Mass Cultural Council previously approved the guidelines and funding for this program at its meetings in May and August of 2022.

Once approved and awarded, the grants will represent the Commonwealth's largest-ever investment in artists and creatives in the cultural sector.

With this memo, Mass Cultural Council staff will explain and submit for your recommendation of approval to the full Council the overall grant review process for selecting the program's 4,000 grantees. The full list of the 4000 grants determined by staff to be awarded under this process will be presented to the full Council at its meeting on January 26.

BACKGROUND. Under the Commonwealth's Act Relative to Immediate COVID-19 Recovery Needs (Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021) enacted last December 2021, Mass Cultural Council in Line item 1599-2043 was provided \$60,147,000 (referred to as "Pandemic Relief Funds") to:

"... administer a grant program for the purposes of assisting cultural organizations and artists recover from the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic and operate more efficiently..."

In Spring/Summer '22, Mass Cultural Council staff developed two pandemic relief programs, one for Organizations and one for Individuals.

We kept three key points in mind when designing the Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Individuals:

- Unlike other pandemic relief funding that focused on loss, this program focuses on recovery.
- The program assumes that all working artists, teaching artists, and cultural workers, in every creative discipline, experienced loss during the pandemic.
- The funding is not intended to compensate for that loss. Rather it provides broad funding help eligible individuals, and therefore the sector, recover by providing unrestricted support.

The program has a broad and inclusive eligibility, accepting applications from artists/cultural bearers, teaching artists/scientists/humanists, and independent cultural workers. It was designed to benefit a wide swath of the cultural sector, making special efforts to reach new grantees or those that have, historically, been underserved by grant programs.

To address the legislative mandate that the Council “shall consider racial, geographic and programmatic diversity and equity within the cultural sector,” the program guidelines include Funding Priorities. The program prioritizes applications to: 1. people who identify as BIPOC; 2. people who identify as Deaf or as having a disability; 3. people who live in communities that are under the state’s median income and educational attainment levels; and 4. new/non-recent grantees. To ensure geographic fairness, the program distributes grants to six regions of the Commonwealth (as set forth in the published guidelines) in proportion with that region’s percentage of applications. By keeping the eligibility broad and committing an intensive, Agency-wide recruitment effort, the range of applicants and their creative disciplines is far-reaching and diverse.

The initial plan was to commit \$15 million, or 3,000 individual \$5,000 grants, to the Cultural Sector Recovery for Individuals program. A revised plan commits an additional \$5 million to the Individuals grants, for a total of 4,000 grants of \$5,000.

APPLICATIONS

We began accepting Cultural Sector Recovery for Individuals applications on August 15, 2023. To recruit the widest range of applications possible, we promoted the opportunity through social media (including Instagram Live events in English and Spanish), two live webinars and informational YouTube videos in English and Spanish, in-person events in East Boston and Holyoke, media placements, guest events with organizational partners including the Small Business Administration and the Springfield Trust Transfer Project, and countless email, in-person, phone, and other interpersonal communications. Both the Individuals and Organizations program were promoted actively by Michael J. Bobbitt through a range of meetings, speaking engagements, and appearances.

The application process was designed to be simple. Some applicants reported needing less than 10 minutes to apply.

The application deadline was November 1, 2022. Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Individuals received **7,593** applications. Preliminary data indicated the following about the applicant pool:

- 16% self-identify as a person who is Deaf or who has a disability
- 33% self-identify as People of the Global Majority*/BIPOC
- 36% live in priority, under-resourced communities (as defined by the program guidelines)
- 72% are first-time applicants to a Mass Cultural Council grant program
- 92% have not been funded by a Mass Cultural Council grant program in the past 6 years

**People of the global majority — Black, Indigenous, People of Color, Latinx, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, and all other ethnicities of color.*

REVIEW PROCESS

To select the grantees, the program uses geographic distribution, Funding Priorities, and a randomized, lottery-style process.

Geographic Distribution: First, grants are distributed to six geographic regions (Central, Greater Boston, MetroWest, Northeast, Southeast, Western) in the same proportion we received applications from each region.

Funding Prioritization: Within those regions, each applicant is assigned “points” based on whether they meet the program's four Funding Priorities (each Priority counts for 25 points, 100 max).

Randomized Score: Once Geographic Distribution and Funding Prioritization are applied, applications are assigned a randomized score to resolve any tied scores among potential grantees.

Applicants in each region will receive a grant if they: 1. Are determined to be eligible, and 2. Receive a Funding Prioritization/randomized score that ranks above the grant “cut-off” line in each region (determined by the availability of funding for the region as described above).

Since the geographic distribution, Funding Priorities, and randomized score creates the application “rankings,” the main role of the Artist Team is to ensure potential grantees are eligible. Consequently, the Artist Team has spent most of November, December, and the early part of January checking applications for eligibility. Key questions in determining eligibility include: Does the applicant live in Massachusetts? Is the applicant's work in the cultural sector (rather than a related sector, such as health or beauty)? Is the applicant's work independent? Did the applicant follow published guidelines/submit required materials?

The Artist Team will finalize a list of 4,000 eligible applications to receive grants under the recommended process described in this memo for the Council meeting on January 26, 2023.

We are seeking approval by the Grants Committee and the full Council of the above-described process. Pending approval by the Grants Committee and Council, we expect to announce the grant results by the end of January 2023 and begin the process of sending state contracts and grant payments to the 4,000 grantees.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council Grants Committee
Fr: Michael Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jen Lawless, Sara Glidden, Lillian Lee
Dt: January 11, 2023
Re: Update-Gaming Mitigation Program for FY23

Background:

The Gaming Mitigation Program aims to mitigate a direct threat to the sustainability of non-profit and municipal performing arts centers in Massachusetts through one-year grants (provided by the Gaming Mitigation funds). Funding decisions are determined by a formula based on the percentage of performances that included an eligible touring artist, and the amount of fees paid to those eligible artists.

The Commonwealth's Casino Gaming Law provides that a portion of the Commonwealth's gaming tax revenues be transferred to the Council to administer and implement the Gaming Mitigation Program. Mass Cultural Council approved the FY23 Cycle of the Gaming Mitigation program at its meeting in August 2022.

Summary of FY23 Cycle to Date:

A total of 44 applications were successfully submitted to the FY23 Gaming Mitigation Program cycle, which is an increase over the previous cycle (39 submitted in FY22). Of the 44 applicants, 5 are new to the program, and there was a 95% retention rate of FY22 Gaming Mitigation grantees.

Under the terms of the Council's approval, there is now available \$3,737,445 for funding this cycle (more than the estimate of \$3.5 million). At this time, the application review is complete and program staff is working with senior staff and the grants team to finalize eligibility determinations and award amounts.

We are on track to meet the original timeline approved at the August Council Meeting:

- **January 2023:** Review complete and award amounts determined
- **Late January/Early February:** Contracts mailed to grantees.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council Grants Committee
Fr: Michael Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jen Lawless, Erik Holmgren, Diane Daily,
Dt: January 11, 2023
Re: FY23 STARS Program Update

STARS Residencies

Mass Cultural Council approved the STARS Residencies program at its meeting in August 2022 in the amount of \$1,401,250. Staff implemented the program in the fall and is poised now to award \$1,428,100 to 274 applicants. Staff was able to add \$26,850 to the program from other savings which enabled us to fund all applicants which scored above a certain (without adding the funds we would have to address tie scores through a randomized lottery process). A list of the awardees will be provided at or prior to the Committee meeting.

STARS Residencies provide grants of \$2500-\$6100 to Massachusetts K-12 schools to support residencies of 3 days or more with a teaching artist, scientist, or scholar. This year, we raised the minimum grant available from \$700 to \$2500 in recognition of the work that applicants do design a residency and complete an application.

We made several changes to the program to advance the agency's equity and inclusion initiative. We developed priority criteria (described below) for the application review process. We also opened the program to allow individuals and organizations to be applicants as well as schools. In addition, for the second year, the panel of outside reviewers was 50% BIPOC.

We received 372 applications, of which 32 were withdrawn (per the guidelines limiting residencies to 1 per school) and 5 were ineligible. A total of 335 went forward for review requesting a total of \$1,742,000. This is the largest number of applications the program has received. The review itself was defined by the three priority criteria listed below. These priority criteria represented 75% of the total score, with outside reviews making up the remaining 25%. The priority criteria elevated:

- First-time applicants or applicants that have not received funding from Mass Cultural Council in the last three fiscal years.
- Residencies serving schools with student populations that are 50% or more Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC) as reported by DESE.
- Residencies for schools that are located in cities and towns that are below the state's median household income and below statewide educational attainment (the percentage of adults who have attained at least a bachelor's degree). This includes but is not limited to places designated as Gateway Cities.
- Combined, 256 out of the 335 applications, or 75%, addressed one or more priority areas. All 256 are in the cohort recommended for funding.

The review conducted by the outside reviewers used the following two criteria:

- The strength of the learning objectives.
- The appropriateness of the residency activities to achieve those objectives.

As a point of comparison, in FY22 we were able to fund all eligible applications which was 233 applications totaling \$1,107,200. This year we had a 43% increase in applications from FY22.

This is the priority profile of recommended applications:

- 35% of funded applications have not received funding from Mass Cultural Council in the last three fiscal years. (95 applicants)
- 54% of funded residencies are at schools with student populations that are 50% or more Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC) as reported by DESE. (148 applicants)
- 57% of funded residencies are at schools that are located in cities and towns identified as under resourced (156 applicants)

The 335 applications were submitted by 304 unique applicants. Of the applicants, 54% (164) were first time applicants to STARS, and 16% (48) were first time applicants to the agency.

Of the grantees, 63% are getting their first STARS grant (150), and 20% are getting their first grant from the agency (48). First time applicants to the agency were 100% successful in this program.

The 274 grants will reach 274 different schools and represent 241 unique grantees. Seven cultural partners (3% of grantees) are being funded to do more than one residency, however, in each case all the schools they are working with are high priority schools. Most important, the residencies will serve more than 30,000 students.

We will continue outreach to new applicants over the course of the program year to increase all of these percentages in the next cycle.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council
Fr: Michael Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jen Lawless, Catherine Cheng-Anderson, Charles G. Baldwin
Dt: January 11, 2023
Re: FY23 Universal Participation (UP) Initiative Update

Mass Cultural Council's Universal Participation (UP) Initiative again adapts to the needs of the changing cultural landscape in the Commonwealth and country. In addition to prioritizing disability representation, universal design for learning and ADA compliance in the UP program, the team has also focused on creating learning materials, and auditing the Agency's internal, access related practices.

UP Designation and the Innovation & Learning Network:

In FY23 the UP Designation and Innovation & Learning Network programs were paused to measure efficacy, plan for growth, and to create time and space to work with consultants tasked with guiding the Agency's internal practices to increase opportunities within the cultural sector for people who are Deaf or Disabled.

UP Office Hours have continued to retain the network's Community of Practice. These monthly public meetings cover topics relevant to all ADA coordinators at cultural institutions, as well as recipients of the UP Innovation Fund. Topics have included Commonwealth data on disability, institutional obligations under the ADA, access planning, funding trends, and additional educational opportunities.

Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD) provides an online learning platform focused on disability justice principles and universal design. The program provides resources relevant for shared vocabulary, staff/volunteer onboarding, and emerging topics from the disability rights movement. With the pause of this year's Innovation and Learning Network, the platform has been made available to staff from UP

Designated organizations to combine continued learning opportunities with funding to drive change-making momentum.

Innovation Fund:

Also, as approved by the Council at the August 2022 meeting, in FY23 the Innovation Fund and LEAD stipend grants were merged to become a single grant available to all organizations with a current UP Designation (97 organizations). This new funding opportunity was made available through a simple application form and will provide consistent funding for each year of the five-year designation. The ease of the grant along with consistent funding allows organizations within the UP Initiative to address immediate needs and develop plans, investing in access as a system of equity.

The new \$5k UP Innovation Grant was accepted by 95 organizations.

2nd Act Org, Inc.	Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art Foundation, Inc.
Abilities Dance, Inc.	Me2/Orchestra, Inc.
American Repertory Theatre Company, Inc.	Monkeyhouse, Inc.
Arisia, Inc.	Museum of Fine Arts
Arlington Center for the Arts, Inc.	Museum of Science
Arts Are Essential, Inc.	New Art Center in Newton, Inc.
ArtsEmerson	New Bedford Museum and Art Center, Inc.
BalletRox, Inc.	New Repertory Theatre, Inc.
Barrington Stage Company, Inc.	Old Sturbridge, Inc.
Berklee College of Music, Inc.	On with Living and Learning, Inc.
Berkshire Pulse, Inc.	Open Door Arts
Berkshire Theatre Group, Inc.	Open Door Theatre of Acton, Inc.
Beverly Main Streets, Inc.	Partners for Youth With Disabilities, Inc.
Boston by Foot, Inc.	Paul Revere Memorial Association
Boston Dance Alliance, Inc.	Peabody Essex Museum, Inc.
Boston Jewish Film, Inc.	Pioneer Valley Ballet Guild, Inc.
Boston Lyric Opera Company, Inc.	Puppet Showplace, Inc.
Cambridge Arts Council	Revolutionary Spaces, Inc.
Children's Museum of Boston	South Shore Conservatory of Music, Inc.
Circuit Arts, Inc.	SPARK Kindness, Inc.
Community Access Television for Malden, Inc.	SpeakEasy Stage Company, Inc.
Community Access to the Arts, Inc.	Springfield Museums Corporation
Community Music Center of Boston, Inc.	Sterling & Francine Clark Art Institute

Community Music School of Springfield, Inc.	Talking Information Center, Inc.
Company One, Inc.	The Artist Book Foundation
Danforth Art Museum at Framingham State University	The Boston Landmarks Orchestra, Inc.
deCordova and Dana Museum and Park	The Cape Cod Theatre Project, Inc.
Discovery Museum, Inc.	The Celebrity Series of Boston, Inc.
Edith Wharton Restoration, Inc.	The Center for Independent Documentary, Inc.
Emerson Umbrella, Inc.	The Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Inc.
Empowerment Through The Arts, Inc.	The Dorothy and Charles Mosesian Center for the Arts
Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Inc.	The Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery
Families Creating Together	The Institute of Contemporary Art, Inc.
Fitchburg Art Museum, Inc.	The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Inc.
Gnome, Inc.	The Nature Connection, Inc.
Gore Place Society	The New Dance Complex, Inc.
Greater Boston Stage Company	The Proprietors of the Boston Athenaeum, Inc.
Grub Street, Inc.	The Trustees of Reservations
Hancock Shaker Village, Inc.	Theatre Espresso, Inc.
Harwich Junior Theatre, Inc.	Transformative Culture Project, Inc.
Historic Deerfield, Inc.	Voices Rising, Inc.
Historic Highfield, Inc.	WAM Theatre, Inc.
Huntington Theatre Company, Inc.	Wheelock Family Theatre
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Inc.	Williamstown Theatre Foundation, Inc.
Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Inc.	Worcester Art Museum
Luminarium Dance Company, Inc.	Worcester County Horticultural Society
Lyric Stage Company of Boston, Inc.	Zeiterion Theatre, Inc.
Massachusetts Audubon Society, Inc.	

Two organizations chose not to accept their FY23 Innovation grant.

Our Space Our Place	Organization closing.
Flat Earth Theatre	Does not have institutional capacity.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council Grants Committee
Fr: Michael Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jen Lawless, Lisa Simmons, Carolyn Cole,
Re: Cultural Districts Initiative (CDI) – FY23 Grants Update
Dt: January 11, 2023

In order to encourage the development and success of our state designated Cultural Districts in accordance with Massachusetts' Cultural Districts legislative statute, the Council approved \$825,000 in August 2022 to provide 55 grants of \$15,000 each – 51 to existing districts and 4 to new districts.

Staff has since awarded FY23 CDI Grants to fifty (50) designated districts (*listed on the next page*), each to receive funding in the amount of \$15,000 for a total of **\$750,000**.

One current district has not yet responded to this funding opportunity. Program Officer Carolyn Cole is working with the community to get its application back on track for an FY23 funding approval in March. Upon the pending approval of four (4) new, incoming cultural districts, two of which will be presented at the January Council meeting and two at the March Council meeting, staff will fund the one remaining current district and these four additional approved districts, using an additional **\$75,000** bringing to total number of CDI grants to the approved amount of **\$825,000**.

This year's increase in funding will have a profound impact on these districts tasked with stabilizing themselves, as well as their partners, communities, and constituents, through the ongoing and after-effects of the pandemic. These grants will support our sectoral leaders to implement long-desired initiatives in areas pivotal to their growth and sustainability such as strategic and cultural planning and development, marketing and engagement, regional and collaborative programming, and equity and access initiatives, among others. As one district leader reported, "This funding will be absolutely transformative for us."

	Fiscal Year	Application ID	Organization	City/Town	Grant Amount
1	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51459	Amherst Center Cultural District	Amherst	\$15,000
2	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51984	Aquinnah Circle Cultural & Historic District	Aquinnah	\$15,000
3	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51700	Arlington Cultural District	Arlington	\$15,000
4	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51805	Barnstable Village Cultural District	Barnstable	\$15,000
5	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51758	Bedford Cultural District	Bedford	\$15,000
6	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51873	Beverly Arts District	Beverly	\$15,000
7	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52004	Boston Little Saigon, Inc.	Boston	\$15,000
8	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51781	Boston's Latin Quarter	Boston	\$15,000
9	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51337	Canalway Cultural District	Lowell	\$15,000
10	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52304	Central Square Cultural District	Cambridge	\$15,000
11	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52087	Concord Center Cultural District	Concord	\$15,000
12	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52303	Cottage Street Cultural District	Easthampton	\$15,000
13	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51314	Crossroads Cultural District	Greenfield	\$15,000
14	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52038	Downtown Lynn Cultural District	Lynn	\$15,000
15	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51748	Essex River Cultural District	Essex	\$15,000
16	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52060	Fall River Waterfront Cultural District	Fall River	\$15,000
17	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51761	Fenway Cultural District	Boston	\$15,000
18	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51994	Framingham Centre Common Cultural District	Framingham	\$15,000
19	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51310	Franklin Cultural District	Franklin	\$15,000
20	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51339	Glass Town Cultural District	Sandwich	\$15,000
21	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51682	Great Barrington Cultural District	Great Barrington	\$15,000
22	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52022	Harbortown Cultural District	Gloucester	\$15,000
23	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51909	Hyannis HyArts Cultural District	Barnstable	\$15,000
24	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51692	Lenox Cultural District	Lenox	\$15,000
25	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51845	Marlborough Downtown Village Cultural District	Marlborough	\$15,000
26	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51707	Maynard Cultural District	Maynard	\$15,000
27	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51782	Nantucket Cultural District	Nantucket	\$15,000
28	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51734	Natick Center Cultural District	Natick	\$15,000
29	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52107	Newburyport Cultural District	Newburyport	\$15,000
30	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51766	North Adams Cultural District	North Adams	\$15,000
31	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51322	Orleans Cultural District	Orleans	\$15,000
32	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51315	Paradise City Cultural District	Northampton	\$15,000
33	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51674	Plymouth Bay Cultural District	Plymouth	\$15,000
34	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51847	Provincetown Cultural District	Provincetown	\$15,000
35	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51385	Riverfront Cultural District	Haverhill	\$15,000
36	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51460	Rocky Neck Cultural District	Gloucester	\$15,000
37	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52036	Roxbury Cultural District, Inc.	Roxbury	\$15,000
38	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51724	Salisbury Cultural District	Worcester	\$15,000
39	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52092	Scituate Harbor Cultural District	Scituate	\$15,000
40	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52025	Seaport Cultural District	New Bedford	\$15,000
41	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51919	Shelburne Falls Cultural District	Shelburne	\$15,000
42	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51992	Shovel Town Cultural District	Easton	\$15,000
43	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51296	Springfield Central Cultural District	Springfield	\$15,000
44	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51946	Turners Falls Cultural District	Montague	\$15,000
45	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51914	Upstreet Cultural District	Pittsfield	\$15,000
46	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-52056	Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District	Tisbury	\$15,000
47	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51874	Wellfleet Cultural District	Wellfleet	\$15,000
48	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51951	West Concord Junction Cultural District	Concord	\$15,000
49	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51787	Williamstown Cultural District	Williamstown	\$15,000
50	FY23	FY23-DI-CDI-51372	Winchester Cultural District	Winchester	\$15,000
					\$750,000



To: Mass Cultural Council
Fr: Michael Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jen Lawless, Kalyn King, Timothea Pham
Dt: January 11, 2023
Re: FY23 Projects & Festivals Program Update

Mass Cultural Council approved the FY23 Festivals and Projects grant program at the August 2022 meeting. The program opened in the fall and closed on December 15th. We anticipate funding 550 festivals and projects, with an allocation of \$1,375,000 as authorized in the Agency's FY23 Spending Plan.

Grants of \$2,500 will be awarded based on the number of eligible applicants and the prioritization categories listed below.

- First-time applicants or applicants that have not received funding from Mass Cultural Council in the last three fiscal years (including from the Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Organizations).
- Applicants and projects representing communities who have been historically underfunded, including:
- Applicants that self-identify as "BIPOC-Centered," according to Mass Cultural Council's definition.
- Applicants/projects located in cities and towns that Mass Cultural Council has defined as "under-resourced communities."
- Applicants participating in the agency's Card to Culture programs.
- Projects/events that are free to the public.

Of the 790 applications received:

- 460 of the organizations have not received funding from us in the last three years, including previously unsuccessful applicants and new applicants.
- At least 106 are from BIPOC centered organizations (some BIPOC-Centered self-identification forms are still in the process of being reviewed.)
- 297 would fund programs taking place in a priority community.

- 474 are from applicants for whom this Festivals & Projects grant (if received) would be their only grant from the Mass Cultural Council in FY23.
- 103 applicants are participating in the Card to Culture program.
- 604 programs are listed as free to the public.

Applications are being reviewed for eligibility now, and we are on track to make grant announcements in late February 2023 as planned.