

Program: FY27 Southern Artist Spotlight
Applicant: Georgia College & State University



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Please note: This PDF includes only those application questions and responses relevant for reviewer consideration.

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION		
Legal Name: Georgia College & State University	Public Name (if different from legal name):	
DBA (Doing Business As, if different from legal name):		
City/State: Milledgeville, Georgia County/Parish/Township: Baldwin	Year Founded: 1889	Annual Budget: \$2,192,178.00
Organization Mission: Georgia College & State University's distinctive liberal arts model provides innovative undergraduate and graduate programs that challenge future leaders to do more, learn more and seize more opportunities to make a positive difference in the world. mentors. Please a full outline here: https://www.gcsu.edu/about/vision-mission		
Program History: GCSU's Dance Minor Program offers an accessible, non-audition-based curriculum integrating technique, choreography, performance, pedagogy, theory, and community engagement within a liberal arts framework. Movers develop as performers, creators, educators, and interdisciplinary artists through coursework and applied practice. The program produces a robust performance season, including 4 annual Mainstage Dance Concerts along with a Blackbox Series, featuring student choreography and works-in-progress with faculty, minors, and guest artists. Over the past 3 years, programming has extended beyond the stage through community engagement. "Convergence: Dance and the Camera" presents dancefilm screenings with kNOwBOX Film Festival. "Fall Into Motion" offers recurring noncredit, open classes in hip hop, contemporary, jazz, ballet, and more. Outreach events such as "Artober", "Intersect: High School Dance Day", and visits to assisted living homes provide free classes and performances led by dance minors. As a built-in campus school, the GCSU Community Dance Program serves over 150 children and adults annually while providing dance minors professional teaching experience. GCSU's Community Program's annual "Nutcracker" Matinee brings school audiences from across the region into live concert dance for free. Chi Tau Epsilon, the dance honor society, supports engagement through its Give Back Initiative of classes, outreach, and service projects, connecting diverse communities through dance.		
Social Media (if applicable) Website: https://www.gcsu.edu/artsandsciences/theatre Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/GCTheatreDept Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/georgiacollegedance/ LinkedIn:		

Twitter/X:

Other:

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Title: FY27 Southern Artist Spotlight

Project Summary: staibdance will provide an arts movement residency at Georgia College & State University, which includes: 10 workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and/or discussions for students, faculty, and community members; the setting of 1 choreographic work on undergraduate dance students, approximately 10-15 minutes in length; collaboration with production and creative services; participation in a technical and a dress rehearsals; and 2, evening length, public performances at Russell Auditorium on campus.

Project Description: Project Overview & Vision: This project is a performance and creative residency at Georgia College & State University featuring staibdance during the Spring 2027 semester as part of the Luminous Spring Dance Concert on April 30 and May 1. The goal is simple: to bring professional dance company into real, hands-on contact with GCSU students across disciplines and campus community members while also sharing that work with the wider Milledgeville community. Through workshops, rehearsals, and performances, the residency creates space for both learning and connection. We're not only focused on the campus. Most importantly, we want the experience to reach beyond students and into the broader community by including our GCSU Community Dance Program and local school partnerships in the workshops, as well as, hosting two public performances.

Residency Activities & Structure: The residency begins with ten workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and discussions open to students, faculty, and community members. These sessions are meant to be interactive and approachable, giving people a chance to move, ask questions, and see how the company creates its work. They also help connect Theatre and Dance (both undergraduates and community) students in a shared creative space. These will be scheduled based on the availability of the company members. They will be held in our Miller Gym and Chappell Hall Dance Spaces on the GCSU Campus.

Additionally, staibdance will set one choreographic work on 10 to 17 GCSU undergraduate dance students of their choice. Students will rehearse with Artistic Director George Staib and Executive Director Sarah Hilmer, learning directly from the guest artists while building both technical skills and performance confidence. Throughout the process, the company will also work with university production staff so students witness a full picture of what goes into a professional production from lighting and sound to costumes and staging. The rehearsals will take place with a company member at a time and day that best suits their availability from during the months of February, March, and April for the Spring Semester 2027 in GCSU's Miller Gym and Chappell Hall Dance Studios.

The residency wraps up with two production rehearsals (a technical rehearsal and a dress rehearsal on April 28, 2027), followed by two public performances at Russell Auditorium on April 30 and May 1, 2027. The repertory may include an evening length presentation of "hopedust" or optional works still

being confirmed with the company.

Artistic Rationale & Institutional Context: staibdance is a strong fit for GCSU because their work is both physically demanding and deeply thoughtful. They bring a level of rigor and clarity that challenges students to work at a professional standard while still in training. We value that Director Staib and Executive Director Hilmer are experienced in working with younger dancers in a university setting. This partnership also pushes back against the idea that ballet and concert dance are fading or no longer relevant. Instead, it shows how alive and necessary this art form still is, especially in communities like ours. For students, working with staibdance offers something very real: a clear example of how dance training can lead to a sustainable, working career in the field, even outside of major metropolitan centers. Just as importantly, students aren't just watching professionals; they're working with them. That hands-on experience fits directly with GCSU's mission as a public liberal arts university focused on learning by doing. It also helps open doors for students who may not otherwise have access to this kind of professional repertory experience. That kind of experience is especially important at a smaller public university like ours, where dance exists without its own major, where Theatre often receives more institutional focus, and funding for dance programming is limited.

Community Engagement & Outcomes: At its heart, this project is about shared experience. The workshops bring together Theatre major and minor students, dance minors, Community Dance Program members, and community participants, creating a space where people can learn from each other through movement and conversation. Across the Theatre program, Dance Minor Program, and Community Dance Program, along with performances and workshops, we expect to engage around 120 participants and reach about 350-400 audience members.

Project Discipline: 01 Dance

Subdiscipline (if applicable): 01C Dance - Modern

Dates: February 1, 2027 through May 1, 2027

Amount Requested: \$8,000.00

PROJECT PROPOSAL DETAILS

1. What is the primary goal or focus of the proposed activity?

The main goal of this project is to give GCSU students meaningful, hands-on experience working directly with professional contemporary dancers while also opening that experience to the wider Milledgeville community.

Firstly, at the center of the project is learning through doing. Students will engage in workshops, rehearsals, and performances that guide them through the full process of creating and staging contemporary work. They will see how choreography develops in rehearsal, how collaboration shapes artistic choices, and how technical elements like lighting, sound, and staging come together in performance. Moreover, it also responds to and helps address the real limitations of the program's current structure. The dance program serves over 50 dance minors and more than 120 community students with only two full-time dance faculty members. Bringing in staibdance as guest artists expands the instructional and artistic capacity of the program in a meaningful way, offering students

access to additional professional expertise that goes beyond what the core faculty can provide alone. In this way, the residency doesn't just supplement the curriculum; it strengthens it. Students benefit from learning multiple perspectives, while faculty are supported in offering a broader and more sustained level of training. It creates a richer learning environment where students are exposed to a wider range of artistic voices and professional practices.

Another key focus of the project is shared experience on multiple levels: between Theatre and Dance, between the university and the surrounding community, and between learning and live performance. By intentionally bringing together students from different disciplines, the residency encourages collaboration that reflects how the performing arts actually function in professional settings. Theatre and Dance students are able to learn from one another, share space, and approach performance from different perspectives, strengthening both programs in the process. The project also extends beyond campus in a very intentional way. By inviting Community Dance Program members, local participants, and audiences into workshops and performances, the residency helps break down the barrier between "student work" and "community art." It creates opportunities for people of different ages and backgrounds to come together in the same space, not just as spectators, but as participants in the creative process. This helps make contemporary dance more visible, approachable, and relevant to the broader region.

Overall, the goal of this project is to support student growth in a deep and lasting way, strengthen collaboration across programs that don't always overlap, and build shared experiences that connect people through movement. It is about creating a space where professional artists, students, and community members can come together, learn from each other, and experience dance as something living, collaborative, and accessible.

2. Who is the intended audience or beneficiary, and how will they be engaged or impacted?

The intended audience of this project includes GCSU dance minors, Theatre students, members of the GCSU Community Dance Program, and the broader Milledgeville and surrounding regional community. Together, these groups engage with the project in different but connected ways: as participants in 10 workshops; as collaborators in the creative process through both rehearsal and performance; and as audience members for two public performances.

Students are the primary beneficiaries, gaining direct, hands-on experience working with professional contemporary artists through workshops, rehearsals, and performances. Theatre and Dance students will also benefit from cross-disciplinary collaboration, learning alongside one another in shared creative spaces that reflect real-world performance environments. Community Dance Program participants, including children and adults, will engage through open workshops and classes, offering them access to professional dance experiences they may not otherwise have as this facet of the program, which is primarily jazz, ballet, and tap.

The broader community is engaged through 2 public performances at Russell Auditorium, as well as select workshops and outreach events, helping make the movement arts more visible and accessible beyond the university. These events are designed to welcome audiences of all ages and backgrounds and encourage participation in the arts as a shared cultural experience.

Accessibility is a core part of the project design. All public performances are held in ADA-compliant

venues with accessible seating, entrances, and restrooms. Workshops are structured to accommodate a range of physical abilities and experience levels, with modifications provided as needed to ensure inclusive participation. The project is designed so that individuals with disabilities can fully participate as both audience members and workshop participants, with support available upon request to ensure an equitable and welcoming experience for all. Moreover, we also provide participants the opportunity to witness workshops and observe creative capacities.

3. *What is the timeline and the key milestones for the proposed activity?*

The project will take place over the Spring 2027 semester and is structured in clear phases leading up to public performances.

Pre-Residency (Fall 2026–Early Spring 2027): Planning and coordination with staibdance, including confirming repertory, scheduling, and production needs. Recruitment and preparation of student performers, along with outreach and promotion for workshops and performances. All dates and activities will be finalized based on the company’s availability.

Residency Period (February–April 2027): staibdance engages with campus through a series of workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and discussions for students, faculty, and community participants. During this period, the company begins setting one choreographic work on GCSU students and leads initial rehearsals and creative development. Specific scheduling within this window will be determined in alignment with the company’s availability. We are fortunate to be close enough for the company to commute to the campus in under two hours, which means we can arrange for them to stay on campus for two separate visits, one of which include the performance week.

Rehearsal & Development Phase (April 2027): GCSU Faculty will continue rehearsals with students to refine repertory, deepen performance quality, and prepare for production. Ongoing coordination with university production staff for technical elements, with scheduling adjusted as needed.

Production Phase (Late April 2027): Technical integration and final preparations will occur with staibdance, including a technical rehearsal and a dress rehearsal on April 28.

Performance Phase (April 30–May 1, 2027): Two public performances at Russell Auditorium as part of the Luminous Spring Dance Concert featuring the repertory of the company in performance and repertory works on the students.

Post-Project (May 2027 and beyond): Evaluation through surveys and faculty/artist feedback, documentation of performances, and preparation of selected works for potential (not guaranteed) presentation at American College Dance Association (ACDA) Conferences for Spring 2028.

4. *What are the anticipated outcomes or impacts and how will success be measured?*

Success of shared experience, community building, and artistic growth will be measured through several key indicators. These include tracking the number of students involved across Theatre, Dance Minor, and Community Dance Program; the number of community participants engaged in workshops and classes; and overall attendance at public performances and outreach events. Additional assessment will come from faculty and guest artist observations of student engagement and progress throughout the residency, as well as post-event surveys completed by students, faculty, and audiences

to gather feedback on experience and impact. Students are expected to demonstrate growth in technical skill, performance quality, and professional readiness through direct work with guest artists in workshops, rehearsals, and performances. Further evidence of success will include the selection and presentation the new work generated through this residency at American College Dance Association (ACDA) Conferences in both formal and informal settings, along with documentation of student work through performance materials and archival records.

5. How does this proposal reflect artistic excellence, innovation, or cultural significance?

The cultural significance of the project lies in its role within a small public university where there is no standalone Dance Major and where performing arts resources are limited. In this context, the residency becomes a critical mechanism for sustaining and elevating dance practice. It strengthens the visibility of dance within the institution, supports its relevance alongside other disciplines, and ensures continued access to professional-level training for students who may not otherwise encounter it. At the same time, by opening workshops and performances to the broader community, the project positions dance as a shared cultural resource rather than an insular academic activity. Ultimately, the proposal demonstrates artistic excellence through its rigorous creative process, innovation through its integrated and community-engaged structure, and cultural significance through its commitment to sustaining meaningful dance practice within both a university and regional context. The company's movement and artistic style will also be culturally relevant for GCSU students and movers in the community, whose training backgrounds are often tied to classical ballet, modern dance, or competition studio traditions.

6. What resources, partnerships, or collaborators will support the work or project?

This project is supported by both university resources and external collaboration. The primary partner, staibdance, will lead the residency by setting repertory, teaching workshops, and working directly with students. Within Georgia College & State University, the Department of Theatre and Dance provides faculty leadership with attention to dance, stage management, costumes, sound, scenic, and lighting, student participants from the Dance Minor and Theatre Major programs, and access to rehearsal and performance spaces. The campus school, The GCSU Community Dance Program, extends engagement to local participants, connecting campus and community.

GCSU production services support all technical elements, including lighting, sound, costumes, and staging, ensuring professional-level performances. Russell Auditorium provides a fully equipped venue for the final performances. Together, these resources make the residency possible.

Lastly, we hope Unlimited Arts on the GCSU Campus will consider sponsoring a small portion of the costs from \$1000-1500 to support the residency.

7. How does this proposal contribute to the cultural, artistic, or community landscape?

This project strengthens the cultural and artistic landscape of Milledgeville by bringing a professional dance company into a community with limited access to work at this level. Additionally, both campus and local dance experiences are often shaped by popular culture and mediated representations of dance. By hosting staibdance in residence, the project introduces new artistic perspectives and expands how dance is understood, experienced, and valued within a smaller community context.

Within the university, the project elevates the visibility and value of dance with leadership in a setting where resources are limited. It supports dance minors and Theatre minors and majors by giving them access to professional training and performance opportunities that might not otherwise be available and are limited by the small number of dance faculty. At the same time, it reinforces the importance of sustaining the arts in public higher education and demonstrates how meaningful artistic work can thrive in smaller communities.

It also deepens connections between campus and community. Workshops and performances are open to GCSU students across disciplines, GCSU Community Dance Program participants, and the public, creating shared spaces where people of different ages, backgrounds, and experience levels engage together. This intergenerational and interdisciplinary approach makes dance more accessible and positions it as a shared cultural experience rather than something limited to a single group.

Overall, the project contributes lasting value by moving GCSU students and the surrounding community beyond mediated, screen-based experiences of dance into live performance, by strengthening cross-disciplinary relationships between Theatre and Dance, and by building a more connected and engaged arts ecosystem on campus and in the community through workshops.

ARTIST INFORMATION

Artist or Company Name: staibdance

City/State: Atlanta, Georgia

BUDGET

Category	Line-Item	Description	Amount (\$)
Expenses	Personnel - Administrative		\$0.00
	Personnel - Artistic	staibdance fee	\$20,000.00
	Personnel – Technical/Production	Costumes for new works	\$1,500.00
	Outside Fees & Services - Artistic	Videographer & Photographer	\$400.00
	Outside Fees & Services - Other		\$0.00
	Marketing	Creative Services Fees: Playbill, Poster, Social Graphics	\$750.00
	Other Operating Expenses	Cleaning & Security Fees	\$200.00

Total Expenses: \$22,850.00			
Income	Earned Income	Estimated Sales for Spring Concert	\$2,400.00
	Corporate Support		\$0.00
	Foundation Support		\$0.00
	Other Private Support		\$0.00
	Government Support		\$0.00
	Applicant Cash		\$0.00
	Other Income	Unlimited Arts	\$1,000.00
	Requested Grant Amount	Amount requested for grant	\$8,000.00
Total Income: \$11,400.00			
In-Kind	In-Kind Income		\$0.00
	In-Kind Expenses		\$0.00
Total In-Kind: \$0.00			
Other Financial Details	Matching Funds Source: GCSU Theatre and Dance Department Sales Account Matching Funds Use: 8,000		

Support Materials

Title: Letter of Intent: GCSU Theatre & Dance and staibdance	Year Completed:
Description: Firstly, thank you for this opportunity. This offer letter is contingent upon receiving the full amount asked for in the proposal. Terms and Services would need to be adjusted if the grant were to be awarded for less than \$8,000.	
URL:	

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Password *(if applicable):*

Viewing Start Time: