



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

South Arts Seeks Firm to Assess and Evaluate the Jazz Road Program

Purpose:

South Arts is seeking a qualified full-service evaluation consultant or firm (Contractor) to develop and implement an evaluation to address/assess the impact and outcomes of the Jazz Road Program. South Arts will partner with the Contractor to facilitate a collaborative, participatory, and human-centered evaluation design and implementation that will utilize innovative and inclusive methods of qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis, and reporting.

About South Arts: Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, South Arts is a nonprofit regional arts organization empowering artists, organizations, and communities and increasing access to arts and culture.

In partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the State Arts Agencies of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee — with additional funding from other public and private donors such as the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation — South Arts supports artists and organizations through a rich and responsive portfolio of grants, fellowships, and programs.

About Jazz Road: Jazz Road is a program centered around artists, offering touring and residency grants with the aim of promoting jazz across the country. The program's goals include enhancing work opportunities and compensation for jazz artists and fostering stronger connections between jazz musicians, presenters, and communities. Eligibility for support is open to U.S.-based jazz artists, whether they consider themselves emerging or established at various points along their career journey. The program's main objective is to help jazz artists whose careers would experience a substantial and transformative impact from receiving this grant.

South Arts values the insight of evaluation which strengthens our work and community impact. We believe review and reflection of quantitative and qualitative information will benefit our continued work throughout the nation.

Scope of Work: The contractor will design a methodology for collecting, analyzing, and assessing four years (FY22-26) of resource investment in existing, expanded, and new programs and opportunities. The evaluation should address/assess the impact and outcomes of all program components including 1) partnerships, 2) individual artist awards (Jazz Road Tours & Creative Residencies) and the artistic products produced and 3) our efforts at capacity building and technical assistance. The evaluation should address effectiveness and impact with recommendations for component improvements, expansion, contraction, or elimination. The evaluation should be conducted remotely/virtually; no travel is expected.

Partnerships: South Arts delivers Jazz Road in partnership with our five fellow Regional Arts Organizations (RAOs): Arts Midwest, New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA), Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA), Mid Atlantic Arts, and Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF). Together, the six RAOs create a national fabric to complement our individual regional work. In this partnership, each RAO assists with ensuring constituents in their region are aware of Jazz Road programming/opportunities, offering technical support to applicants from within their region, providing assistance for the development of listening session/focus groups, and other administrative/programmatic needs of this initiative. In addition, we have developed partnerships with Jazz Education Network (JEN), Jazz at Lincoln Center, and Jazz Philadelphia.

Jazz Road Tours & Creative Residencies: Rooted in the belief that artists deserve equitable pay for their work and the reality that many venues cannot afford equitable fees, Jazz Road Tours makes it possible for artists to initiate and self-promote their engagements, while taking their work to audiences that would otherwise be inaccessible. The Jazz Road Creative Residencies pilot awards grants of up to \$40,000 to artists from around the country to develop a residency design of their choosing. From deep collaborations with other musicians or organizations, to vital research and documentation, or the creation of significant new works, Jazz Road Creative Residency grants serve to amplify musicians' livelihoods and careers by supporting immersive experiences for artists and communities.

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance South Arts will also provide additional tools and knowledge building activities to increase artists personal and professional capacity. These offerings would support skills directly related to Jazz Road (such as grant writing best practices) as well as additional knowledge (potentially including items such as workshops on, booking shows, career growth, IRS taxation rules, financial management and planning, tips on gaining access to healthcare resources for artists, etc).

South Arts will provide access to data, including final reports and contact information, for all grant recipients, and data and contact information for our partners.

Deliverables: A written report will include qualitative and quantitative review of all Jazz Road components. In addition, we seek recommendations for a framework and tools to support future program assessment and evaluation. The evaluator will meet with South Arts staff to review the report.

Timeline:

- Proposals will be accepted through **5:00 PM ET, Friday, April 12, 2024.**
- Contract award will be made no later than May 1, 2024.
- Written report due June 30, 2024.
- Report review with South Arts staff anticipated the first week of July 2024.

- **Proposals:**
- Respondents are asked to submit a proposal that provides:
- Relevant education and/or experience in conducting programmatic assessment and evaluation pertaining to arts and cultural organizations, and artists.
- Proposed workplan, including approach to assessment, evaluation, and anticipated deliverables.
- Unique strengths and perspectives you bring to the work.
- Proposed fee/budget (inclusive of all expenses)

- **Required support materials:**
- Biography/Resume.

- References – Submit three references (at least two must be from organizations) who can speak to your experience.
- Work samples - Submit two work samples of similar projects.

- **Selection Criteria:**
- Relevant experience in conducting arts and/or cultural organizational programs assessment and evaluation.
- Feasibility of proposed work plan.
- Reference responses.
- Fee.

Contact:

Please send questions or submissions to Drew Tucker, Director, Jazz at dtucker@southarts.org. Proposal along with fee, bio/resume, support materials, and references must be RECEIVED by 5:00pm ET on April 12 2024.

South Arts encourages applicants to contact us with questions more than 48 hours before the RFP deadline; due to the volume of requests, South Arts team members may not be able to respond to inquiries submitted after that time.

South Arts is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Alternate formats of this document may be obtained by contacting South Arts at 404-874-7244.