



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SOUTH ARTS SEEKS A FIRM TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT EVALUATION FOR EQUITY BASED PROGRAM

Program Overview:

The Southern Cultural Treasures initiative is modeled on the Ford Foundation’s “America’s Cultural Treasures” initiative. This national initiative aims to support arts and culture groups “that have been historically marginalized, underfunded and underrepresented in the narrative of American culture.”

Purpose

South Arts’ purpose in developing the Southern Cultural Treasures Program (SCT) is to acknowledge and honor the diversity of artistic expression and excellence of arts and cultural organizations led by and serving people of color in the South Arts region.

Through this initiative, South Arts will provide critical funding and resources that lead BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) organizations to stability and success, and enhance their ability to expand their impact on the regional cultural landscape. South Arts has, through a generous matching gift from the Ford Foundation, a unique opportunity to leverage funding to catalyze increased funding support for arts and cultural organizations led by and serving people of color in the South Arts region.

In “Not Just Money: Equity Issues in Philanthropy,” published by the Helicon Collaborative in 2017, Helicon identified that the existing systems and structures have constant traits. On the one hand, they promulgate financial sustainability of White and European arts and cultural organizations while, on the other hand, they prevent the same benefits to arts and cultural groups serving communities of color. In 2021, the same systemic inequities hold true as the effects of the pandemic bring this disparity in sharp relief. It will require meaningful investments over sustained periods to help BIPOC led and serving arts and cultural organizations grow their capacity and financial reserves to overcome these historic challenges.

Goal

The program goal is to provide financial capital and other resources to BIPOC led and serving arts and cultural organizations, such that these organizations are positioned to achieve self-determined success.

This initiative aims to (1) build the skills of organizational leaders so that they create the conditions necessary for their organization to achieve self-defined success, (2) provide general operating and project support grants, and (3) create awareness/recognition of BIPOC led and serving arts and cultural organizations to attract new or increased funding. Twelve to fifteen organizations will receive each:

- General operating grants of up to \$300,000 distributed over three years
- Project grants of up to \$7,500

- Support to achieve stabilization and growth, and
- Networking, cohort building, and knowledge sharing

Program Timeframe (Tentative):

2022-2023

- Spring/Summer 2022 – Organization onboarding, agreement on approach to assessment, evaluation
- Summer/Fall 2022 – Hold one-on-one conversations with each organization for organizational assessment. Convene virtually to discuss expectations and aspirations,
- Winter/Spring 2023 – Convene virtually for first learning experience
- Summer 2023 - Convene virtually for second learning experience. Engage one-on-one consulting
- Fall/Winter 2023 - Convene *in-person* for third learning experience. Engage one-on-one consulting. Conduct assessment/evaluation/check-in

2023-2024

- Fall/Winter 2023 – Convene virtually for fourth learning experience. Engage one-on-one consulting
- Winter/Spring 2024 – Convene virtually for fifth learning experience. Conduct assessment/evaluation/check-in
- Summer 2024 - Convene virtually for sixth learning experience. Engage one-on-one consulting
- Fall/Winter 2024 - Convene *in-person* for seventh learning experience. Engage one-on-one consulting. Conduct assessment/evaluation/check-in

2024-2025

- Fall/Winter 2024 – Convene virtually for eighth learning experience. Engage one-on-one consulting
- Winter/Spring 2025 – Convene virtually for final learning experience. Conduct assessment/evaluation/check-in

Program Outcomes:

South Arts anticipates that after three years, the sixteen participating organizations will be better resourced for long term stability and self-defined success. as well as enhance their ability to expand their impact on the regional cultural landscape.

Consultant Scope of Work:

In our effort to assist sixteen organizations achieve **self-determined success**, we are seeking a qualified consultant/firm to **design** and **provide program evaluation** based on the program’s goals and outcomes. The evaluation will need to address/assess the program’s effectiveness and allow for South Arts to adjust the program design and professional development curriculum based on the initial findings. As part of the evaluation process, we are seeking a consultant/firm that will:

- Attend up to three in-person/virtual meetings,

- Develop program evaluation design, methodology and evaluation facilitation, and conduct follow-up work (as needed),
- Work in collaboration with the Southern Cultural Treasures team to facilitate evaluation design with grantees,
- Submit an interim written report and final written report, each with findings and an analysis/themes within the findings.

All work products shall require the approval of South Arts. **Evaluation will be carried out August/September 2022 – March 2025, with a written report due by April 30, 2025.**

Proposals:

No specific format is required for a proposal. Proposals should include the following:

- Your proposed approach to assessment, evaluation, and anticipated deliverables
- Your relevant experience with BIPOC led and serving arts and cultural organizations
- Examples of experience that clearly respond to the program needs and goals
- Any further information that would help South Arts understand your perspective/philosophy on diversity and equity of funding of BIPOC led and serving arts and cultural organizations, work with BIPOC led and serving arts and cultural organizations, and/or experience with the arts.
- Your proposed fee/budget (inclusive of all expenses such as the travel expenses for three one-day, in-person meetings in the South Arts region), up to \$15,000.
- Your proposed timeline, either agreement to the above-described timeline or an alternative proposal
- Resume' /CV
- Three references

Please send any questions or submissions to Jessyca Holland, Director, Organization and Community Initiatives, at jholland@southarts.org by **11:59 p.m. ET on June 30, 2022**. *Please note: an earlier version of this RFP had an incorrect email address, and we apologize for any confusion or difficulties that may have caused. South Arts has extended the deadline to June 30, 2022, to accommodate this error.*

South Arts is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

About South Arts:

South Arts is a nonprofit regional arts organization. Our mission: advancing Southern vitality through the arts. South Arts was founded in 1975 to build on the South's unique heritage and enhance the public value of the arts. Our work responds to the arts environment and cultural trends with a regional perspective. South Arts offers an annual portfolio of activities designed to support the success of artists and arts providers in the South, address the needs of Southern communities through impactful arts-based programs, and celebrate the excellence, innovation, value, and power of the arts of the South. For more information about our grantmaking, conferences/convenings, and other programs supporting artists, arts organizations, and communities, visit www.southarts.org.