

William Penn Foundation

Request for Proposals

Arts Education School Partnership Programs

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Introduction

The William Penn Foundation (WPF) has a long history of investing in efforts to create a vibrant, dynamic, and accessible arts and culture sector that positively impacts the residents of the Philadelphia region. The Foundation’s Arts and Culture program was created to expand access to diverse, inclusive, and high-quality arts and culture experiences. A full description of the Arts and Culture program, its goals, and all its objectives can be found on the Foundation’s website. This specific Request for Proposals (RFP) was created to help organizations to advance the following objective:

Provide access to high-quality, hands-on arts education programs (in-school and community settings, during the school day and out-of-school time) that are designed to actively engage and benefit school-aged young people.

The Foundation recognizes that there are many ways organizations can contribute to advancing this objective. With that understanding, there are few limitations on the program design and/or applicants' approach to arts education. A program may focus on any or multiple arts disciplines as long as it is designed to advance opportunities for youth across the Philadelphia region to have access to equitable, inclusive and high-quality, hands-on arts learning led by skilled teaching artists and arts educators.

Regardless of the approach, all applicants should describe a compelling explanation for how their proposed work will advance the objective above. This RFP seeks project proposals that will advance this objective and make tangible improvements in the quality of life for residents of Philadelphia. The specific criteria that will be used to assess all proposals can be found on page 7-8 of this document.

Please note: The Arts Education objective provides support through two RFP opportunities and will shape two different Learning Communities (see page 8 for more information). This RFP is for programs only offered during the school year through in-school partnerships. The RFP deadline for out-of-school programs in community settings has closed and will not be able to accept additional applications at this time. See the table on page 12 for a description of the differences between these two models.

Why is the Foundation using a Request for Proposals to advance this objective?

The Foundation has chosen to advance this objective using a Request for Proposals for several reasons. First, we believe that stakeholders across the region have a great deal of expertise and experience that can be supported to make progress on an objective that we heard was important to communities in our region. We want to hear about the impactful projects that are underway or could get underway and need funding. Second, we want to be as transparent as possible about the opportunity for non-profit organizations in the region to secure funding for work to advance this objective. Third, we heard from applicants and grantees in the past that our grant application process was overly burdensome, had unpredictable timelines, and did not provide sufficient information about the funding availability or the criteria used in selecting grantees. Fourth, we heard that applicants wanted an opportunity to show Foundation staff their work, not just tell them about it. The RFP process, including site visits as described below, is part of our effort to address this important feedback and to align with the Foundation's grantmaking values (as detailed on our website).

This RFP seeks project proposals that will advance this objective and support in-school partnership programs for youth across the Philadelphia region to participate in equitable, inclusive, and high-quality arts education programs happening during the school year.

Background

Studies have demonstrated that arts education allows young people of all ages to connect to their own creativity, stretch their imaginations, and express their personalities. It also develops social-emotional and critical thinking skills¹ and helps youth build empathy and connections to others and the world around them.² Thoughtfully designed and delivered arts education can act as a safe space, allowing young people to share personal stories, process conflict and trauma, and develop interpersonal and cultural awareness. Additionally, in-school arts education partnership programs can support students in their overall school experiences, having been shown to deepen students' engagement with school and decrease disciplinary infractions.³

5x Lower Dropout Rate

Students with high arts participation and low socioeconomic status have a 4% dropout rate—five times lower than their low socioeconomic status peers.⁴

Families Want Arts Education in Schools

91% of Americans believe that the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education and 94% believe the arts should be taught in schools.⁵



¹ Daniel H. Bowen, Jay P. Greene, and Brian Kisida. (January 2014). “Learning to Think Critically: A Visual Art Experiment,” *Educational Researcher* 43 (1). pp. 37–44.

² Jay P. Greene, Brian Kisida, and Daniel H. Bowen. (Winter 2021). “The Educational Value of Field Trips,” *Education Next* 14 (1)

³ Daniel H. Bowen and Brian Kisida. (Summer 2023). “The Fine Art of School Engagement,” *Educational Next Vol 23, No. 3*.

⁴ Catterall, James; *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth* (2012) National Endowment for the Arts Research Report #55

⁵ [Americans for the Arts; Americans Speak Out About the Arts \(2018\) findings from public opinion poll.](#)

Opportunity Overview

The William Penn Foundation (WPF) would like to support efforts that provide young people with hands-on arts education led by skilled teaching artists, through in-school partnership programs that are free. Programs must exclusively serve children of any ages from 5 through 18. In particular, we are most interested in prioritizing support for projects that make it possible for youth to engage as leaders and drivers of their own learning experiences.

We are requesting proposals for one- to three-year projects to connect young people in Greater Philadelphia with in-school arts education partnership programs driven by the young people's own creativity and interests to support their personal development and growth. These programs are to supplement and not replace the important arts learning being implemented by certified art teachers in Philadelphia area schools. These programs will be implemented by teaching artists in partnership with classroom teachers and specialists. This can include models ranging from arts integration and enrichment to afterschool arts clubs, to expand and broaden arts education for the region's young people. Conducted in schools, these programs will primarily connect to youth during the school day or afterschool hours at their schools. After reviewing proposals, WPF will conduct site visits and gather additional information from a limited number of organizations.

Applicants that propose projects in partnership with other applicants will be considered on their individual merits. The Foundation recognizes that making significant progress on the objective is difficult and values partnerships that leverage complementary strengths, resources, and expertise for the mutual benefit of the applicants and their communities.

Furthermore, the Foundation recognizes that there are many different tactics or approaches that could be used to advance the objective stated above. All proposals that meet the review criteria and additional considerations described below are encouraged.

WPF has a total of \$3 million available to advance this objective at this time. WPF values diverse approaches from various organizations and communities to address the objective. We aim to attract and fund a range of projects. There is no minimum or maximum amount of funding that projects may request but the most competitive proposals will likely be those with total grant requests under \$600,000 (for 3 years). The grant amount requested should be proportionate with the scope of the project and the contribution that the project will make to the overall objective.

Eligibility

Applicants must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as 501(c)3 public charities or operate under a public charity fiduciary (fiscal sponsor). Applicants must also have successfully completed *at least* two consecutive years of arts education programs in the Philadelphia region and have worked in at least two different school sites during this time.

Eligible organizations include:

- **Arts education organizations:** community art schools, community youth arts organizations, creative youth development organizations, and arts and education collaboratives that work to make high-quality arts education accessible for Philadelphia area youth.
- **Arts and culture organizations:** arts and culture organizations with dedicated high-quality arts education programs committed to advancing arts access for Philadelphia area youth.

The majority of our funding will be awarded to projects in the City of Philadelphia. However, projects in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties, and the City of Camden, NJ will also be considered.

Please note: *The Foundation **will not** fund a program/project that is currently supported through a William Penn Foundation grant.*


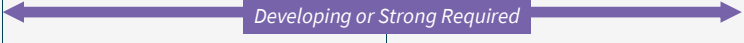
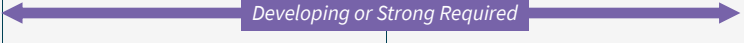
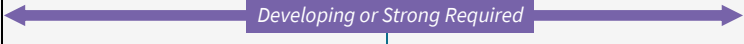
Definition of Terms

Arts integration	A model where the arts and the subject matter are taught concurrently, with learning outcomes for both holding equal importance. The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts further describes it as, “an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject and meets evolving objectives in both.” ⁶
In-school arts education partnership	This term is used to define programs that take place during the school year and offered with school partner site(s).
Socioemotional learning (also referred to as social-emotional development and abbreviated as SEL):	The process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, and establish and maintain positive relationships among other skills and capacities related to self-awareness and self-control that can positively impact both life and school outcomes.

⁶ <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/collections/arts-integration-resources/what-is-arts-integration/>

Review Criteria

Proposals will be judged on the following criteria. **Applicants should address these criteria in their narrative responses to the application questions.**

Arts Education Practice			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Instructors not teaching artists and/or no hands-on art making for youth.	Limited opportunities for youth to make art, led by novice teaching artists, and/or using untested lesson plans.	Youth producing some original work with support from teaching artists.	Program is a “community of creators” where youth make art with active, well-structured mentorship from experienced teaching artists.
			
Knowledge of How to Engage Youth Participants			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
No understanding of youth it seeks to benefit, history of working with them, or models for learning about them.	Limited to some exposure to, or history of, working with youth it seeks to benefit.	Has experience (at least two years of past programming) and a tested model for learning about the young people it seeks to engage and benefit to shape program’s relevance for them.	All aspects of program design reflect experience (at least five years of programming) and deep understanding of the young people it seeks to engage and benefit.
			
Orientation to Racial Equity and Economic Inclusion			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Lacks plan for how to actively reach students of color or economically disadvantaged students.	Has limited plans for how to engage students of color or economically disadvantaged students.	Making substantial or transformational change for how it reaches and supports students of color and economically disadvantaged students.	Embedded practices throughout the program that enable meaningful connection to, and supports for, students of color and economically disadvantaged students.
			
Youth-Centered Practice			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
No evidence of program design giving students any sense of agency.	Engages with youth for input on only a few pre-determined activities.	Youth participants are asked to give input on multiple elements and activities throughout program.	Program is youth-informed or deeply youth-centered, imparting agency to youth as active drivers of the program’s learning and outcomes.
			

Additional expectations:

Defined youth outcomes	Clearly describes how program model achieves the desired impact (e.g., skills and interest in the arts, social-emotional development) for youth.
Partnership	Proposals that describe longstanding and well-developed school partnerships (at least two years) and have clear partnership plans will be the most competitive.
Amount of programming	Preference for programs that are multi-sessions throughout the year, with classes offered at least weekly and/or build a pathway for continued engagement by youth.
Budget	The requested budget should be reasonable for the proposed activities and the stated results and allocate adequate resources for paying teaching artists and artists involved in the project.
Reach	Programs designed to serve upwards of 100 youth each year will be most competitive.
Dosage	Dosage and frequency as appropriate for stage of youth development and learning, and school requirements. Preference for programs that are a minimum of 1 hour a week.

Learning and Evaluation

Grantees will be expected to complete a brief written report each year describing how they have made progress toward the objective above and what they have learned during the year.

In addition, projects funded as a result of this RFP will be convened in a Learning Community to build networks among those advancing a common objective, to share learning and best practices, and to identify ways in which progress could be enhanced. Grantees will help to determine the frequency, content, and specific goals of the Learning Community.



Webinar

Interested projects are invited to participate in an informational webinar on **Friday, December 13, 2024, at 11 AM EST.**

Register for the webinar at <https://lu.ma/william penn foundation>.

Budget

Project budgets should cover the time needed for the project described in the request (1-3 years). While not required, applicants are encouraged to build on their existing programs, using WPF funding to supplement or strengthen those efforts. Individual scholarships are not eligible for funding through this RFP.

Project budgets should be all-inclusive, including any fees to partner organizations or consultants. This information can be provided in the proposal narrative.

Except in rare circumstances, total funding from WPF should not exceed 25% of an applicant's total operating budget.

All aspects of project development and execution, including planning, design, materials, community engagement, staffing, and implementation, are eligible for funding.

Application Process

Before you apply, please review your responses to the six questions below. If you can confidently answer “yes” to all the questions, this funding opportunity may be relevant to you. If you respond “no” to any of the questions, this opportunity is not a good match for your project, and you should not apply.

	YES	NO
Is your program serving children from the eligible cities and counties? (see pg.6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your program run successfully for at least two years in multiple schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your program free for its school partners and student participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your arts education program offered through a partnership with a school(s) that provide at least weekly offerings for at least 1 hour a week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your program request exclusively serve children between ages 5- to 18-years old?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your program predominantly (75% or more) serve children from low-income households?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please also review all the criteria on pages 7-8 and make sure that your program aligns with those.

If you answered “yes” to all the questions above and meet the stated criteria, the application process begins by completing a proposal on our online submission system at <https://wpcf.my.site.com/grantee>. Submit your application by 5:00PM EST on **January 31, 2025**. A WPF team will review all proposals and will notify applicants if they have been selected to move forward in the review process. **To download a working copy of the application to draft responses, please [click here](#).**

Timeline

December 9, 2024

Proposal submission period opens.

December 13, 2024

Informational Webinar (see page 8)

January 31, 2025

Proposals due by 5:00PM EST

February 12-14, 2025

Select applicants notified that their proposals have been chosen for further consideration and a site visit. Other applicants will be notified that their proposals are not advancing in the process.

February 17-

March 7, 2025

Site visits conducted by WPF staff with selected applicants.

April 25, 2025

WPF Board review selected proposals.

May 2025

Project implementation can begin

Applicants are **also required to provide site-specific information about their arts education school partnership program by completing a [school partnership information form](#)**—see attachment—to describe proposed project details of each school site included in the funding request. Please upload the completed form as an attachment in the online grant application portal. Requested information includes:

- Site(s) information including name and location, and if it is an existing partner or a proposed new partner.
- Program start and end dates; what month a program launches and ends.
- Number of sessions, the frequency of sessions, and typical length of a session in minutes.
- Grades served and proposed number of students to be served per grade.

Selected organizations will take part in a site visit with WPF staff so that the Foundation can learn more about applicants' work. Site visits will be approximately two hours in duration. We ask that organizations use this time to introduce key staff working on the proposed project, to show WPF staff where the work will take place, and to elevate the voices of the potential beneficiaries of the proposed project. Based on a combination of the written materials and the learning from the site visit, **a final slate of organizations** will be recommended to the WPF Board for consideration of their proposals.

*This request or any subsequent response does not commit William Penn Foundation or the responding organization to any future funding or engagement. **If you have any questions, contact Senior Program Officer Hillary Murray at hmurray@williampennfoundation.org.***

Two Arts Education Program Model RFPs

Columns	<u>Out-of-School Programs</u>	<u>In-School Partnerships</u> <u>(This RFP)</u>
RFP Schedule and Timing	<i>RFP has closed. Proposal review has concluded for 2025.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · RFP release: Dec. 9 · Applications due: Jan. 31, 2025 · Board decision: late April 2025
Artistic Discipline	Dance, Design, Folk and Traditional Arts, Creative Writing/Spoken Word, Media Arts, Music, Opera, Theater Arts, Visual Arts.	Same
Program Operation	Arts instruction and mentorship takes place in community sites during out-of-school, including afterschool, school vacations, and summers. Standalone field trips and ticketed performances are not eligible.	Arts instruction and mentorship takes place in schools in partnership with classroom teachers and specialists, including arts integration and enrichment during the school day, and extended day or afterschool. Standalone field trips and ticketed performances are not eligible.
Defined Youth Outcomes	Proposal clearly describes how program model achieves the desired impact (skills and interest in the arts, social-emotional development) for youth.	Same
Recruitment of Youth	Community-based outreach and networks, word of mouth and school/agency referrals.	School-based access.
Program timing	Out-of-school	School year, school day and/or extended day or afterschool.
Accessibility	Accessible community-based locations including youth arts centers, arts organizations, community centers and neighborhood schools and may include off-site field trips as part of program. Takes place during convenient times for youth and families.	Accessible neighborhood schools serving students from low-income households (75% or more) and may include off-site field trips as part of program. Program is integrated into the school day, and/or extended day or afterschool.
Ages served	Grades K-12, ages 5- to 18	Same
Reach	Programs designed to serve at least 50 youth each year will be most competitive.	Programs designed to serve at least 100 students each year will be most competitive.
Dosage	Dosage and frequency as appropriate for stage of youth development and learning. Range may include: afterschool 2-5 days/week, 4-8 hours/week; summer 4-5 days/week, 4-8 hours/day.	Dosage and frequency as appropriate for stage of youth development and learning, and school requirements. Range may include: in-school 2-4 days/week, 1-2 hours/week
Duration	Multi-week sessions, with year-round opportunities to participate.	Multi-week sessions, within school year.
Start Date	Grant funded work can start February 2025	Grant funded work can start May 2025, programming begins in 2025-2026 school year.
Budget	The requested budget is reasonable for the proposed activities and the stated results and allocates adequate resources for paying teaching artists and artists involved in the project.	Same