

WilliamPennFoundation

Request for Proposals

Teaching Artist Training 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:

Support arts education providers to have the skills and knowledge they need to provide high-quality inclusive, equitable, and youth-informed programming.

Arts education programs can provide a wealth of benefits for young people. By participating in high-quality hands-on arts education programming, young people can learn art-making skills and techniques as they build creativity and develop problem solving and social-emotional skills that position them for success in and out of school. Through past

grantmaking, we have learned that the quality of arts education programs is deeply dependent on teaching artists who are skilled in an artistic practice **and** equipped to engage and support students in meaningful learning experiences.

To ensure more school-aged children in the Philadelphia region connect to high-quality arts education programs, we are supporting teaching artist training projects that seek to bolster, deepen, and expand the skills required to be successful as multi-faceted teaching artists who teach, mentor, and guide our region's young people with an artistic focus.

The Foundation recognizes there are many ways that organizations can contribute to advancing this objective. A project may focus on a range of activities as long as those activities provide support to improve professional practice and share resources that allow teaching artists to meet the creative and developmental needs of youth in school-based partnerships or in out-of-school community-based programs. This should enable more young people to have high-quality arts and culture experiences that center equity, inclusion, and young peoples' needs, interests, and experiences. Proposals may have a small geographic focus or may seek to provide programming on a regional scale.

Regardless of approach, all applicants should give a compelling explanation for how their proposed work will advance the stated objective. This RFP seeks proposals that will advance this objective and make tangible improvements in the quality of life for residents of Greater Philadelphia. The specific criteria used to assess all proposals can be found on pages 8-9 of this document.

Please note: This RFP is designated for training projects that support active teaching artists in the Philadelphia region. Participating teaching artists must be currently teaching or have plans to resume service within six months of the start of training period. Eligible programs must be designed to advance the stated objective in the service of school aged youth, ages 5-18-years old.

This RFP seeks project proposals that increase opportunities for teaching artists across the Philadelphia region to participate in high-quality training programs that deepen their skills and practice.

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).

Families Want Arts Education in Schools

91% of Americans believe that the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education. ¹



¹ [Montgomery, D., Rogovin, P., & Persaud, N. \(2013\). Something to say: success principles for afterschool arts programs from urban youth and other experts.](#)

Background

Teaching artists have an essential function in the arts education ecosystem. They hold a dynamic, dual role as artist and educator. This position allows them to teach artistic skills that help young people thrive in school and life, developing social-emotional and critical thinking skills² and building empathy and connections to others and the world around them.³ Additionally, their own skills and backgrounds as artists allows them to share their artistic practice, connecting students to the larger cultural community.

In the 2011 report on the *Teaching Artist Research Project* by Nick Rabkin of NORC at the University of Chicago, he traces the origins of the role of the teaching artist to Hull House in Chicago. Rabkin explains the settlement house movement, of which Hull House was a part, “saw the arts as essential to weaving the fabric of strong communities...that learning the arts cultivates the agency and voice required to participate in a democratic society, where everyone has the right to be heard and contribute to the culture.”⁴ Rabkin goes on to describe how this orientation informed a new approach to how the arts were taught. These early settlement house art teachers moved away from the model that arts learning was only about excellence, artistic skill, and cultivating talent, and toward an appreciation for the equally essential role arts education can play in building creativity, deepening connection to one’s community, and developing voice and civic engagement.

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. Implementing high-quality programs that can support young people in this growth and development are reliant on well-trained, well-resourced, and well-supported teaching artists who do this complex and multilayered work. As a community of practitioners who are often employed contractually and have fewer professional development resources than other types of workers, this objective and related funding seek to provide valuable network-building and skills development.

² 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.

³ Jay P. Greene, Brian Kisida, and Daniel H. Bowen. (Winter 2021). “The Educational Value of Field Trips,” *Education Next* 14 (1)

⁴ [Rabkin, N., Reynolds, M., Hedberg, E., Shelby, J., & NORC at the University of Chicago. \(2011\). *A report on the Teaching Artist Research project.*](#)

Opportunity Overview

WPF aims to support projects and programs that connect more teaching artists in the Philadelphia region to high-quality professional development, network-building, and learning experiences. In particular, we are most interested in prioritizing projects that build a community of practice around the goal of ensuring hands-on arts learning is made accessible to youth using supportive and inclusive practices. Training and skill development should be focused on behaviors that can be applied broadly to develop trauma-informed teaching practices that advance creative, social, and developmental outcomes.

Proposals **must include** activities that do the following:

- Provide free or low-cost professional development and training opportunities that support ongoing skills development that can be put into practice in existing or upcoming (next six months) teaching opportunities.
- Build networks of practitioners that allow teaching artists to be part of an ongoing learning cohort to share resources and expertise with other teaching artists.

Please note, under this RFP, the Foundation **will not** consider a proposal to support the following:

- Fully asynchronous virtual training without any individualized instruction or opportunities to engage with and ask questions of instructors.
- Training that focuses only on building skills for a specific tool or technology (e.g., a class on Adobe products or editing software).
- Training that happens during a single session.
- Training/programs for individuals other than active teaching artists with a history of employment as teaching artists.
- Training offered by an arts education program to *only* its teaching artists and/or skill building and training that is *only* applicable to a single arts education program and its model.

We are requesting proposals for one- to two-year projects that will increase opportunities for teaching artists across the region to engage with a range of high-quality network building and learning experiences. After reviewing proposals, WPF will conduct site visits and gather additional information from a limited number of applicants.

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 \$1 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 \$200,000 over two years. The grant amount requested should be proportionate to 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). Arts and culture organizations, arts education organizations, community-based organizations, schools and educational institutions, and other types of public-serving groups are eligible to apply, if they have a track record of having designed and implemented trainings that have been taken by teaching artists.

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



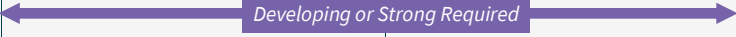

<p>Socioemotional learning (also referred to as social-emotional development and abbreviated as SEL)</p>	<p>The process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, and establish and maintain positive relationships among other skills and capacities related to self-awareness and self-control that can positively impact both life and school outcomes.</p>
<p>Teaching artist</p>	<p>A practicing artist who develops the complementary skills, curiosities, and habits of mind of an educator, who can effectively engage [...] participants in learning experiences in, through, and about the arts.⁵</p>
<p>Trauma-informed</p>	<p>An approach that understands and considers the pervasive nature of trauma and promotes environments of healing rather than practices that may inadvertently trigger feelings or reactions associated with the original.⁶</p>

⁵ Booth, Eric. "The History of Teaching Artistry, revised 2020."

⁶ [What is Trauma-Informed Care? \(2024, May 29\). University at Buffalo School of Social Work - University at Buffalo.](#)

Review Criteria

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

Alignment			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Project activities and goals are unrelated to the objective.	Project activities and goals are vaguely connected to the objective, and contribution to advancing the objective is limited.	Project will make a clear but indirect contribution to advancing the objective.	Project will make a clear and direct contribution to advancing the objective.
			
Program Design			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
The approach to the work is vague or unclear.	Outlines an approach that describes one of the following: the organizational capacity to carry out the proposed program, a feasible plan to implement the work, or a detailed plan to track the outcomes and impact on the skills and knowledge of teaching artists.	Outlines an approach that describes two of the following: the organizational capacity to carry out the proposed program, a feasible plan to implement the work, or a detailed plan to track the outcomes and impact on the skills and knowledge of teaching artists.	Outlines a clear approach that describes the organizational capacity to carry out the proposed program, a feasible plan to implement the work, and a detailed plan to track the outcomes and impact on the skills and knowledge of teaching artists.
			
Orientation to Racial Equity and Economic Inclusion			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Training/program lacks elements to improve teaching artist practices for reaching students of color or economically disadvantaged students.	Training/program has limited elements that will improve teaching artist practices for reaching students of color or economically disadvantaged students.	Training/program has substantial elements to improve teaching artist practices for reaching and supporting students of color or economically disadvantaged students.	Embedded practices throughout training/program that fully center teaching artist practices around meaningfully reaching and supporting students of color or economically disadvantaged students.
			
Youth-Centered Practice			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
No evidence of training/program design that centers the needs and/or experiences of youth in a teaching artist's practicum experience.	Limited elements of training/program design that centers the needs and/or experiences of youth in a teaching artist's practicum experience.	Training/program design contains multiple elements that support teaching artists in centering the needs and/or experiences of youth they teach.	Training/program design fully supports teaching artists employing practices that are deeply youth-centered where young people are drivers of their own learning and outcomes.
			

Additional expectations:

Demonstrated demand	Program/project can demonstrate a demand for its training based on track record of teaching artist enrollments from Greater Philadelphia region.
Training aligned with youth outcomes	Programs/projects should describe how network-building, learning goals, and proposed supports are intentionally designed to positively impact youth the teaching artist will teach.
Partnership	Proposals that seek funding for training that will reach larger groups of teaching artists, including connecting with arts educators employed by Philadelphia area public schools, and engage educators working with multiple arts organizations will be most competitive.
Amount of programming	Program has a design that is more than a single moment of exposure, with preference for programs that are multi-sessions and/or build a pathway for continued engagement for the participating teaching artists.
Budget	The requested budget is reasonable for the proposed activities and the stated results and is resourced so there are as few barriers for the teaching artists' participation as possible.
Opportunity to actively apply learning	Preference is given to programs that are working with teaching artists to provide real-time opportunities for teaching artists as they are teaching to be supported in applying their new learning and skills.

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 **Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 11 AM EST.**

Register for the webinar at <https://lu.ma/williampenfoundation>.

Budget

Project budgets should cover the time needed for the project described in the request (1-2 years). While not required, applicants are encouraged to build on their existing programs, using WPF funding to supplement or strengthen those efforts.

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 four questions below. If you can confidently answer “yes” to 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
Does your program have a track record of offering impactful training that teaching artists have successfully completed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your work engaging teaching artists who currently teach or will in the next six months be teaching hands-on arts education to school-aged children from the eligible cities/counties? (pg.7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your proposed work include multiple/sessions (including some in-person engagement) that reach teaching artists at little (\$300 or less for full training) or no cost?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your training designed to be able to support teaching artists who are teaching in multiple programs in schools or community settings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please also review all the criteria on pages 8-9 and make sure that your program aligns with those.

If you answered “yes” to all the questions just above and meet the stated criteria, the application process begins by completing a proposal on our online submission system at <https://wfp.my.site.com/grantee>. Submit your application by **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 review the application questions and to download a working copy of the application to draft responses, [please click here](#).**

Timeline

December 9, 2024

Proposal submission period opens.

December 12, 2024

Informational Webinar (see page 10)

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.

Application process continued:

Selected applicants 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 applicants use this time to introduce key staff, to show WPF staff where the work will take place, and to elevate the voices of the potential beneficiaries of the organization's activities. 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*