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# COUNCIL MEETING BOOK

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD MEETING  
OF  
MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD MEETING  
OF MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022: 10:00 AM TO NOON

BROADCAST MEETING

MEETING WILL BE LIVESTREAMED ON MASS CULTURAL'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL

MEETING MATERIALS WILL BE POSTED AT  
<https://massculturalcouncil.org/about/board/>  
UNDER "JANUARY 27, 2022 COUNCIL MEETING"

AGENDA

VOTE

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Call to Order, Welcomes and Open Meeting Law Notice |   |
| 2. Minutes   | X |
| a) 152 <sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting                   |   |
| b) September 21, 2021 Special Meeting                  |   |
| 3. Chair Report  |   |
| a) Vacation Accrual Clarification                      |   |
| b) Council Membership Updates                          |   |
| c) Committee Updates                                   |   |
| 4. Executive Director's Report                         |   |
| a) Introduction of new staff                           |   |
| b) Agency Updates                                      |   |

5. Advocacy & Legislative Report
  - a) FY23 State Budget
  - b) ARPA Bill
6. Cultural Equity and Access Report
  - a) Introduction and update from the Director of People and Culture
  - b) Racial Equity Update
7. Operations Report
  - a) New Grants Management System
8. FY22 Financial Update
  - a) New Format
  - b) State Audit Update
9. FY22 Artist Fellowships: Grant Recommendations X
  - a) Choreography
  - b) Poetry
  - c) Traditional Arts
10. Gaming Mitigation Program Current Round Updates X
11. Preparing for New Strategic Plan-Discussion
  - a) Task Force Appointment
  - b) Timeline
  - c) RFP for Consultant
12. Adjourn



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## MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022

### RESOLUTIONS

#### Section 2

RESOLVED: that the Council approves the minutes of the 152<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting held August 24, 2021 and the September 21, 2021 Special Council Meeting in the form presented to the Council at its January 27, 2022 Meeting.

#### Section 9

RESOLVED: To approve the FY22 Artist Fellowship grant awards in the disciplines of Poetry, Choreography and Traditional Arts as presented to the Council at its January 27, 2022 meeting.

#### Section 10

RESOLVED: To approve the allocation of an additional \$675,000 in monies to the next round of the Gaming Mitigation Program and approve grants under the Gaming Mitigation Program to the 39 organizations described in the memorandum presented to this meeting.

**OPEN MEETING LAW STATEMENT  
UPDATED JANUARY 2022**

Please note that this meeting is an open meeting of a public body subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. A notice of this meeting together with the agenda was posted on Mass Cultural Council's website 48 or more hours ago (excluding weekends and holidays).

This meeting shall be open and accessible to all members of the public except at such times when this body has voted to go into closed executive session under the Open Meeting Law.

This meeting is a virtual meeting held under the Open Meeting Law as modified under current law to permit online open meetings. This meeting is being broadcast to the public on a publicly available youtube or other channel as described in the publicly posted meeting notice. Only Council members, staff and invited participants and guests will be provided access to the Zoom or other videoconferencing platform actually hosting the meeting. As a safety measure, in order to prevent disruption of the meeting or non-public communications among the participants, the Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Committee of Mass Cultural Council has asked staff to implement the following protocols for participants in on-line meetings of Mass Cultural Council or its committees:

- Any "chat" or similar function on the Zoom platform hosting the meeting shall be disabled.
- Other than Council members or participants specifically recognized by the Chair of the meeting, all Zoom platform participants will be muted and have no ability to share media or documents or project or type images or text.

- All participants in the Zoom platform must enter a waiting room and digitally sign-in before being admitted.
- Any attendee in the Zoom platform who nonetheless causes a disruption will be summarily removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

This meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony will not be taken. Individuals may not address the meeting without permission of the Chair.

Any member of the public may record this meeting provided that they do not not interfere with the meeting. The Chair will then inform the members of the meeting that they are being recorded.

Draft minutes of the open session of this meeting shall be kept and shall be posted on Mass Cultural Council's website no later than 30 days after the meeting provided that such minutes shall not be considered official until they have been approved by this body in open session. Individuals asserting a violation of the Open Meeting Law may file a complaint with this body within 30 days or with the Attorney General's office thereafter.

**TIPS FOR PARTICIPATING IN A VIRTUAL OPEN MEETING USING ZOOM OR OTHER  
VIDEOCONFERENCING PLATFORMS WHEN THERE ARE SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS**

**(adapted from several sources)**

- In order to minimize background noise, please mute microphone when not speaking.
- Please raise hand in order to be recognized by the chair.
- In order for all members to have an opportunity to speak and be heard, please wait to speak until specifically recognized by the chair.
- If there are questions, please direct them to the chair and the chair will then recognize the appropriate person to respond.
- Please limit statements to three minutes.
- The chair will reserve the right to limit discussion in order to allow sufficient time for every member to be heard who wishes to speak.
- Modify Video Settings to “Hide all non-video participants”- this will make it easier to follow who is speaking and participating
- In the event of a service interruption during a Zoom call due to hackers, so-called “zoom bombing” or other technical difficulties, staff will indicate the call is to be terminated. Please exit the call and staff will circulate instructions by email for a new Zoom call to continue the meeting.





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UNOFFICIAL DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING

MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED-FIFTY SECOND MEETING  
OF  
MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2021

ONLINE MEETING

Council Members Present were

Nina Fialkow, Chair  
Marc Carroll, Vice Chair  
Che Anderson  
Barbara Schaffer Bacon  
Karen Barry (joined after vote on minutes)  
Kathleen Castro  
Jo-Ann Davis  
Simone Early  
Karen Hurvitz  
Matthew Keator  
Susan Leff  
Ann Murphy  
Allyce Najimy  
Rob Price

Also Present were Mass Cultural Council Staff Members Michael J. Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jen Lawless, Bethann Steiner, Ann Petruccelli Moon, Charles Baldwin, Dan Blask, Luis Cotto, Erik Holmgren, Sara Glidden, Michael Ibrahim, Lisa Simmons, Käthe Swaback, Beth Mullins, Carmen Plazas, and Cheyenne Cohn-Postell; and guests Kristyn Anderson, Brian Boyles, Emily Ruddock, Kara Elliott-Ortega, Tyler Cotta, Derek Dunlea, Rachael Katz, Maureen Hennessey, and Erin Williams.

Chair Nina Fialkow called the meeting to order at 10:07am and extended a welcome to her fellow Council Members, staff and guests. She then asked Deputy Director David Slatery to read the Open Meeting Law notice. David read the Open Meeting Law notice contained in the meeting materials (available online) into record.

Administrative Matters. Nina then let Council Members know that later in the meeting there would be a pause to take a "zoom photograph" as one had not yet been taken

Prepared on 9/21/21

of the current group of Council Members. Nina then called for a vote on the minutes from the Council's 151<sup>st</sup> meeting which was held on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Kathleen Castro moved to approve the minutes. Karen Hurvitz seconded the motion. David did a roll call and, noting that Council Members Troy Siebels, Sherry Dong, Cecil Barron Jensen, Karen Barry, and Susan Leff were not present, it was unanimously

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the One Hundred Fifty-First Meeting of the Mass Cultural Council

Nina let Council Members know that in their meeting materials they would find a list of upcoming meeting dates and times along with updated Council Committee membership lists. She then asked Michael Bobbitt for his Executive Director's report.

Executive Director Report. Before giving his report Michael extended a welcome to Mass Humanities Executive Director Brian Boyles and City of Boston Chief of Arts & Culture Kara Elliott-Ortega. Michael told Council Members that the last few months have been very busy with building the Racial Equity Plan and Recruitment Plan, working on FY22 budget advocacy, and crafting the Agency's FY22 spending plan. Michael has enjoyed visiting many regions in the Commonwealth and is learning that many organizations are undertaking capital projects. It has been wonderful to visit organizations across the state and see what the Agency can do to elevate the cultural sector. That concluded Michael's Executive Director's report.

Racial Equity Plan. Nina then introduced the Agency's draft Racial Equity Plan. Nina explained that the Plan was created by the Racial Equity Task force, which is comprised of Council Members and staff, and in consultation with agency racial equity consultant, Multicultural BRIDGE and a number of other advisors.

Michael provided Council Members with details about the process through which the Plan was developed:

- The Racial Equity Task Force was formed and had its first meetings in May to discuss why creating a Plan is important and what the obstacles might be.
- All members of the Task Force submitted action items and those items were analyzed and refined and turned into measurables with timelines.
- A clean copy of the Plan was sent to the full Council and staff for feedback.
- Michael received feedback from two Council Members relating to unintended discrimination. He and Deputy Director David Slatery met with each Member to discuss their concerns further.
- The Plan was then shared with state regulatory agencies as well as the Agency's legal counsel and clarifying language was added.
- Three discussion groups were formed: racial equity experts, BIPOC cultural workers, and white leaders. All feedback from the discussion groups was compiled and several edits were made to the Plan.
- A revised version of the Plan was shared with the full Council during a non-deliberative education session offered to Council members by Agency consultant Multicultural BRIDGE on August 12<sup>th</sup> and further feedback was considered.
- A final draft of the Plan was sent to the full Council yesterday and today staff is hoping for a vote to approve the Plan.

Nina thanked Michael and asked noted the Council Members who served on the Task Force – Vice Chair Marc Carroll, Barbara Schaffer Bacon, and Simone Early – and asked Council members if they would like to make any comments.

Council Member Karen Hurvitz stated that she was one of Council Members who responded to original plan with feedback based on work she does legally, and she is happy to see that the Plan has been edited so that problems can be avoided. Karen thanked Michael and the Task Force for taking her concerns into consideration.

Nina then recognized Council Member Rob Price. Rob thanked Michael and everyone else who worked on the draft Plan. Rob stated that he wants to see the Plan receive a unanimous vote but has qualifications. Rob added that in, the non-deliberative educational session with Multicultural BRIDGE that Council Members attended on August 12<sup>th</sup>, there was no opportunity to the full Plan. To ensure the integrity of the Plan, Rob referred to comments which he had forwarded by email previously (a copy of which is available upon request), and he looks forward to a discussion. Rob then referred to his comments which were related to the term “decolonization,” the Plan section on intersectionality and certain links to definitions.

Rob stated *decolonization* has a literal meaning and referred to the definition of from Encyclopedia Britannica specifically referring to a “*process by which colonies become independent of the colonizing country*” and citing several historical examples. The term has been used progressive activism as a metaphor for cultural appropriation, imposition of ideals, and displacement of marginalized voices in the culture and was uncomfortable using this principle without being crystal clear about the meaning. He asked if the Plan was specifically advocating returning land to the indigenous peoples of the Commonwealth? Or taking positions on other issues around the globe?

He also noted the term “intersectionality” was to explain how race, gender, and other individual characteristics “intersect” and overlap and noted that the concept of intersectionality occasionally leads to strange bedfellows. He recounted an incident at Tufts involving his son where issues around the horror of George Floyd’s murder was then linked to issues surrounding Palestine and Israel and was used to motivate anti-Jewish bias, specifically involving the removal of his son as a Jewish student from a student organization for having an “inherent bias” He felt that concept of intersectionality is complicated and use of it exceeds the agency’s expertise and scope. Rob also was concerned with a link to the Wikipedia definition of “white supremacy”. He did not think it was appropriate for an agency to link to a casual definition and suggested a more reliable definition be used.

Rob then asked that the plan be amended to 1) remove all current references to decolonization, 2) remove the paragraph on intersectionality, 3) add a statement to more specifically and constructively address the authors’ intent, to wit “*We acknowledge that artists in the Commonwealth have a critical role in exploring intersectional equity objectives. Similarly, many of our stakeholders are confronting the negative consequences of the colonization of the Commonwealth’s indigenous people. We will encourage these broader efforts through grant making and programming, while ensuring that all voices are heard, and everyone’s lived experiences are respected;*” and 4) remove the link to the Wikipedia definition of White Supremacy in favor of that from a leading DEI scholar’s definition.

The Council then discussed the procedure for considering such amendment. The Chair did not put forth the suggested amendments for a motion and vote as, at this point in the meeting, as the Council was having a conversation about the Racial Equity Plan as presented. The Chair stated that if other Council Members had responses to Rob's thoughts and concerns, they be addressed in the discussion.

Nina then recognized Simone Early who said she was responding to Rob's statement, but rather to ask two unrelated questions: first, could Michael describe the changes that were made to the last draft of the Plan and then, if could there be a discussion on racial injustice and solidarity.

Michael explained that after the Council reviewed the initially circulated draft Plan, two Council Members expressed concern about unintended discrimination against whites, so staff reached out to contacts at various state agencies including the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) as well as the Attorney General's office. And while these other state agencies could not offer anything in the way of an official review or endorsement of the Plan, they did discuss it with David and made observations. Michael also noted that we consulted with our outside counsel. After all such consultation, staff developed language to be added to the Plan. Michael added that he also spoke with members of the Native American community who stated that they felt invisible in the Plan, and they had suggested the inclusion of the concept of "decolonization" be added. Michael consulted with a Racial Equity consultant and believed that decolonization was an appropriate term to use, and it was added to the Plan.

The Chair recognized Karen Hurvitz who wished to offer a clarification on her concern about the initial draft of the Plan. Karen stated that her feedback wasn't about excluding whites, it was that Massachusetts has already defined racial discrimination through housing and education laws and all sorts of statutes pertaining to protected groups. Karen thought, based on cases she has read, that if the Agency defines BIPOC or other categories it deems worthy of protecting, this might be problematic legally. Other protected groups might not see themselves in the Plan. Karen feels this may expose the Agency to litigation and she drafted a memo that included cases where other agencies have been sued and their plans struck down by the courts. Michael thanked Karen for her feedback and stated that it had prompted staff to speak with personnel at other state agencies such as MCAD and with legal counsel and based on such to change some of the Plan's action steps. (It was noted that neither MCAD nor any other state agency had opined upon or approved or suggested any specific language for the Plan).

Simone recalled that during the previously referenced presentation offered by Multicultural BRIDGE the statement that the Agency stands in solidarity with oppressed, marginalized groups was discussed but she agreed that listing very specific groups could be limiting; the Agency could potentially exclude other groups.

The Council then discussed the mechanism for considering the proposed amendments. David indicated that per the statute, the Chair has discretion to determine how to proceed.

Michael offered that staff would remove the Wikipedia link Rob mentioned, but that

since he'd heard directly from Native Americans and vetted their feedback with racial equity experts who validated it, Michael would oppose taking the word "decolonization" out of the Plan and feels the Agency would be going against the very voices it is working to include in doing so.

Karen Hurvitz reiterated and further clarified her thoughts on not naming specific groups in the Plan, she feels the paragraph in the plan that mentions specific groups should be removed.

Rob stated that he feels the word "decolonization" is too broad. He would like to find a definition of the term that makes the word understood as a concept in DEI work as opposed to foreign relations.

Vice Chair Marc Carroll stated that in the context of the Plan, each time the word "decolonization" is used it is always mentioned in the context of arts and culture. Rob expressed that he believes there is only one place in the plan where the term "decolonization" is explicitly qualified as pertaining to the arts.

Barbara Schaffer Bacon stated that she is extraordinarily pleased with the process of the Racial Equity Task Force and with this conversation. Barbara is aware of a definition of "decolonization" specific to philanthropy and grantmaking by Edgar Villanueva which talks about how philanthropic processes that assess who to give to and how to give can perpetuate problems. Barbara stated that she would not support any amendment as it has been framed today. Barbara is uncomfortable with a number of things included in Rob's statement, but she sees the discussion as a positive thing. She does not know that the Council should move forward with a vote on the Plan today, but she is in support of the work.

Karen Hurvitz asked if the discussion regarding decolonization is as it applies to Indigenous people only or more broadly and could Barbara share a link to the Villanueva definition. Karen feels it's important to be very specific within the Plan and shared an example of why she feels this way pertaining to an incident her son encountered at Brown Medical School which tied Indigenous Peoples Day to a discussion of Israel and the Palestinians and caused a big furor on campus. Karen does not want to see something similar happen with the Agency's Racial Equity Plan.

In response Michael stated that he wants to note that the focus of the Plan is on decolonization in grantmaking in the arts and culture sphere. If that is understood, we should move forward and give the Racial Equity Task Force the authority to approve new language. Michael is concerned that what he is hearing is the very thing the Agency is working against: the loudest voices in the room are not necessarily the voices we should be listening to.

She then commented that "decolonization" is mentioned in the Plan 11 times. In a 13-page document, perhaps 11 mentions are too much. Karen Barry stated that seeing the investment by the Council in the Plan is encouraging. She also mentioned that she did not want to forget Simone's concerns, and that Rob's comments regarding the BRIDGE session were another good thing to consider as the plan is edited.

Rob, in response to Michael, expressed that this is not about the loudest voices dominating. Rob does not want to be so characterized because he has a point of view

about specificity. He is making sure the product is clear, excellent, and specific. Rob neither wants the Plan to land flat, nor to have his point of view used as a cause célèbre.

As time was growing short and there were many more items on the agenda, it was the sense of the Council at this point that the Plan be sent back to staff and the Racial Equity Task Force for revisions based on discussions at the Council Meeting and that a new draft would then be brought to the Council for consideration at a Special Meeting to be scheduled in the very near future. No vote was taken.

Strategic Plan. The Chair then asked Michael to briefly explain the next order of business: consideration of an extension of the Agency's Strategic Plan. Michael explained that the Council had in 2017 approved a plan through 2022. Because of previous Executive Director Anita Walker's departure and Michael's recent appointment as the Agency's new Executive Director as well as the effect of Covid causing the loss of a year of preparation, staff proposes extending the current Strategic Plan so that there will be sufficient time for consideration and public engagement to build a new plan. Nina called for a vote. Barbara Schaffer Bacon moved to extend the current strategic plan, and Kathleen Castro seconded the motion. David called the roll and noting that Council Members Troy Siebels, Sherry Dong, Cecil Barron Jensen and Susan Leff were not present, it was unanimously

RESOLVED: To extend Mass Cultural Council's existing FY18-22 Strategic Plan through FY23.

Nina then asked Michael to present the FY22 budget and spending plan.

FY22 Spending Plan. Michael began by reminding Council Members of the process. Staff began with a discussion of focus areas and looked at programs for the year to determine priorities. The Agency had a very successful advocacy campaign and has received a nearly \$2M increase to its allocation. Staff is proposing increasing grant allocations and prioritizing administrative needs within the Agency. Michael then walked Council Members through a brief PowerPoint presentation, a copy of that presentation is available upon request.

Michael outlined the Agency's FY22 Priorities:

- Increasing investment in a cultural sector still reeling from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Launching the Agency's Racial Equity Plan and designing a new learning cohort for the cultural sector
- Operational Improvements and Efficiencies including a new Grants Management System, increasing the capacity of the Agency's Fiscal team, and hiring a new Director of Human Resources

Michael told Committee Members that Mass Cultural Council's budget for FY22 is nearly \$29M. This is comprised of a \$21.3M allocation from the state, \$1.9M in federal dollars from the National Endowment for the Arts, \$5.1M in Gaming Mitigation funds, and \$577,285 in other funds. Michael reminded Committee Members of the legislative language that requires the Agency to align its spending with its strategic plan, to invest

a minimum of 75% of state dollars into grants, and to report on its spending plan by January 3, 2022.

Michael then presented a comparison of grantmaking dollars between FY21 and the proposed FY22 spending plan:

Total Grantmaking (including Gaming, COERG Funds, and earmarks)  
FY21: 29.6M; FY22: \$24M

State Appropriation Grantmaking (excluding Gaming, COERG Funds, and earmarks)  
FY21: \$16.3M; FY22: \$17.9M

The Agency plans to grant \$24M in FY22, this equals 112% of the FY22 state appropriation. If Gaming Mitigation funds are not included in the total, the Agency will still give 89% of its state appropriation to the cultural sector in the form of grants.

Michael briefly reviewed the four pillars of the Agency's strategic plan which act as tent poles for the proposed FY22 spending plan: Enriching Communities, Growing the Economy, Advancing Inclusion and Equity, and Empowering a Creative Generation. He then outlined the recommended grants and services within each of these four pillars as further outlined in the power point presentation (copies available upon request).

Nina thanked Michael for his presentation and asked if Council Members had any questions. She recognized Allyce Najimy who asked if the increase in grants would mean new nonprofits would be funded or if the increase would simply mean current grantees would receive more money. Michael responded that as part of the work the Agency is doing with Racial Equity and recruitment and with having more money available, new grant applicants will be sought. Allyce offered to send suggestions to Michael. Michael thanked Allyce and mentioned that the Agency's new Grants Management System will also help in recruitment efforts.

There were no further questions on the proposed spending plan. Nina asked Vice Chair Marc Carroll to speak about the Budgeting Task Force she had formed to help review the plan. Members of the Budgeting Task Force include Nina, Marc, Che Anderson, Karen Barry, and Rob Price.

Marc explained that Nina had formed the Budgeting Task Force to provide input to the Chair on the proposed \$29M spending plan. The Task Force asked several questions and offered suggestions such as adding a description of the use of casino tax revenues during the year, a statement that the Council followed procurement laws when retaining consultants and goods and services, and asked staff to look carefully at how much of the plan is spent on grants versus administrative elements. As a result of these conversations, the Task Force is supportive of the spending plan as it was presented today and appreciates the thorough and transparent vetting of the allocation of spending. Additionally, members of the Task Force voiced their appreciation of the inclusive nature of the process and of being more deeply involved in the creation of the plan. The Task Force is excited to see increases in grant allocations and investments in operational needs within the Agency.

The Chair then let Council Members know that the Executive Committee had reviewed the FY22 spending plan and recommends it for approval. She explained that she would

seek a motion and a second and then Grants Chair Jo-Ann Davis would walk Council Members through specific grant recommendations and answer any questions Council Members had. Then, there would be one vote on the spending plan and all grant recommendations. Kathleen Castro moved to approve the spending plan. Marc Carroll seconded the motion. Nina then asked Jo-Ann to begin her presentation of the grant recommendations.

Conflict Disclosures. David reminded Council Members that on page 61 of their Meeting Book they would find a Conflict-of-Interest List and asked if there were any additions. There were no additions or changes to be made and it was noted that all votes approving the FY22 grant recommendations will note the various possible conflicts and abstentions of the Council Members in attendance at this meeting.

Nina Fialkow disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to Boston Ballet and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

Susan Leff disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to the Boston Children's Museum and Mass Humanities.

Ann Murphy disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to MASSCreative.

Barbara Schaffer Bacon disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to Arts Extension Institute.

Kathleen Castro disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to Little Theater of Fall River, New Bedford Festival Theater, and The Fall River Coalition for Arts and Culture.

Marc Carroll disclosed that he would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra and The Rivers School.

Jo-Ann Davis disclosed that she would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to The Care Center.

Rob Price disclosed that he would abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the provision of a grant or other assistance to The Center for Arts in Natick.

FY 22 Grants Recommendations. Jo-Ann then proceeded with her presentation and let Council Members know that in addition to the presentation Michael gave, there are exhaustive materials in their Meeting Book. The Grants Committee met on August 10<sup>th</sup> to thoroughly review all grant recommendations. Jo-Ann acknowledged the work that Michael and the staff have done to assess the grantmaking process and thanked the Grants Committee Members for their contributions. Jo-Ann then asked for a motion to approve the FY22 grant recommendations explaining again that there would be one vote on those recommendations and the spending plan at the conclusion of her presentation. Rob Price moved to approve the grant recommendations, and Kathleen Castro seconded the motion. Jo-Ann then walked Council Members through the



recommendations pausing between each section listed below to allow Council Members to ask questions:

FY 22 Grant Recommendation: Artists Fellowships  
FY22 Program Recommendations: Traditional Arts Apprenticeships  
FY22 Grant and Program Recommendations: Cultural Investment Portfolio (CIP)  
FY 22 Media Partnerships  
FY22 Allocation and Grant Recommendations: Community  
FY22 Grant and Program Recommendations: Creative Youth Development  
FY 22 Grant and Program Recommendations: Education  
FY 22 Grant and Program Recommendations: UP  
FY 22 Grant Recommendation: Cultural Equity Learning Community  
FY 22 Grant Recommendation: Mass Humanities Partnership  
FY 22 Grant Recommendation: NEFA  
FY 22 Grant Recommendation: MASS Creative  
FY 22 Grant Recommendation: Network of Arts Admins of Color  
FY 22 Grant Recommendations - SMU Data Arts

There were no questions from Council Members.

Nina then called for a single vote on the FY22 Budget & Spending Plan and the FY22 Grant Recommendations and David called the roll. Noting that there were 11 votes in favor, three abstentions (Karen Hurvitz, Ann Murphy Che Anderson), and that four members were not present (Troy Siebels, Sherry Dong, Cecil Barron Jensen, and Susan Leff) were not present, it was held

WHEREAS, the General Court of the Massachusetts State Legislature has appropriated a budget of \$21,375,000 to the Massachusetts Cultural Council (the "Council") for FY22 and the Governor duly signed said budget;  
WHEREAS Council staff presented a draft FY22 budget and spending plan (the "Plan") to the Executive Committee at its meeting on August 10, 2021;  
WHEREAS the Executive Committee reviewed said plan and recommended that it be forwarded to the Council for approval;  
WHEREAS Council staff presented the Plan to the Mass Cultural Council at its meeting on August 24, 2021 (the "Council Meeting").  
NOW THEREFORE, it is hereby

RESOLVED: To approve the Plan as reviewed by the Executive Committee and as presented at the Council Meeting and attached hereto, subject to the further approvals of the individual grant and program recommendations to be considered and voted upon the Council later in this meeting; and

RESOLVED: To make available funds from the Massachusetts Cultural and Performing Arts Mitigation Trust Fund (the "Fund") to be spent in FY22 in the manner set forth in the Plan.

And

WHEREAS Council staff presented the grants portion of the Plan to the Grants Committee at its meeting on August 10, 2021 ("Grants Committee Meeting"), in connection with recommended grant allocations;

WHEREAS the Grants Committee recommended to the full Council the allocation of the grants presented at the Grants Committee Meeting;  
WHEREAS the Grants Committee reviewed procedures of grant allocations and recommended that the Council approve the same;  
NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby

RESOLVED: To approve the Traditional Arts Apprenticeships grant recommendation in the total amount of \$100,000 as recommended by the Grants Committee;

RESOLVED: To approve the recommended Artist Fellowship program grant allocations totaling \$652,500 as recommended by the Grants Committee;

RESOLVED: To approve grant allocations to the Cultural Investment Portfolio, CIP Gateway and CIP Projects, for a total of \$6,203,000 as recommended by the Grants Committee;

RESOLVED: To approve the funding of the Apprentice Grants program in the amount of \$100,000 and Artist Fellowship program allocations totaling \$1,300,000, all as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve the allocations to the Cultural Investment Portfolio, CIP Gateway and CIP Projects (collectively, the "CIP Programs") as recommended by the Grants Committee for an aggregate total of \$6,797,500.

RESOLVED: To approve allocations to the Media Partnerships program of \$130,000 as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve an allocation to the Local Cultural Councils totaling \$4,785,000, up to \$412,500 in Cultural District grants, and \$300,000 to the Festivals Program all as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve grant allocations to YouthReach program, continued funding of the Instrument Library in the combined amount of \$1,636,000 plus expenditure of any remaining CARES Act funds, participation in the META and CYP Teaching Artist Fellowships program with outside foundations and funding up to \$120,000 in grants/stipends/reimbursements to participating organizations in the CultureRx program all as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve the following Arts Education grant allocations, \$1,265,000 to the STARS program, \$20,000 in support of Massachusetts History Day, \$20,000 in support of the NEA-funded Poetry Out Loud program and \$8,000 to Arts| Learning for its School Arts Leader Program, all as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve the continuation of the UP Program with grants of up to \$155,000 as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve a \$50,000 partnership grant to Arts Connect International for development of its Cultural Equity Learning Community (CELC) 2.0 teaching course as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve a grant to Mass Humanities totaling \$754,886 as recommended by the Grants Committee. Section 20 RESOLVED: To approve a grant to NEFA of \$60,000 as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve a grant to Mass Creative for \$15,000 to improve their website as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: To approve an allocation of \$35,000 to ArtsBoston acting on behalf of the Network Arts Administrators of Color as recommended by the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED: to approve to contract with SMU Data Arts to provide the Cultural Data Profile tool as recommended by the Grants Committee.

The motions passed and the Chair thanked her fellow Council Members remarking that FY22 would be a big year for the Agency. She then asked Public Affairs Director Bethann Steiner for her Advocacy Report.

Advocacy Report. Bethann acknowledged MASSCreative Executive Director Emily Ruddock, Mass Humanities Executive Director Brian Boyles, and City of Boston Chief of Arts & Culture Kara Elliott-Ortega and thanked them for their help throughout the budget process which began in January and ends now as the plan is adopted. Bethann also acknowledged Tyler Cotta and Derek Dunlea from Chair Carole Fiola's office who were present for today's meeting. It is Bethann's expectation that soon after Labor Day the legislature will return and focus on regular public hearings and that meetings of the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts, and Cultural Development will resume as well. Bethann will keep Council Members informed of any meetings and/or hearings that call for public comment and will share any testimony submitted by the Agency. The Agency's current advocacy focus is on ARPA funds - \$5B is slated to be invested in Covid relief; this is one pillar of the Agency's Power of Culture advocacy campaign. The statewide Covid Cultural Impact Commission Chaired by Senator Ed Kennedy and Representative Carole Fiola announced a bold set of recommendations at the end of June calling for \$575M in ARPA funds for the cultural sector to be distributed through Mass Cultural Council. There will be a sustained and targeted advocacy push starting with a series of hearings. Staff will be asking Council Members to engage in this advocacy process.

Nina thanked Bethann for her report and thanked Michael, staff, and Council Members for all they did to support FY22 budget advocacy efforts.

David at this point asked to be recognized by the Chair and noted that he had received an inquiry about abstentions and clarified that if a member had noted a potential conflict on the conflict list, it was not necessary for a Council Member to abstain from the entire vote as the Conflict list would indicate that the member has abstained with respect to a particular organization as to which a conflict was noted. Ann Murphy indicated she had misunderstood the instructions and meant to vote in favor of proposed resolutions only noting the specific conflicts. Che Anderson indicated he had done the same. David said that while the vote had already been taken and passed, he would make sure the minutes reflected these comments.

Cultural Districts. Nina then asked Luis Cotto for his presentation on Cultural District redesignations. Luis let Council Members know that nine Cultural Districts were being presented today for redesignation. He noted that the Boston Literary Cultural District was also eligible for redesignation however, prior to the pandemic the District was considering whether or not to continue, and the impacts of Covid solidified their decision not to. Luis referred Council Members to the memo included in their meeting materials and briefly spoke about each District:

- The City of Worcester grew by 14% according to the census, and some are attributing that to art offerings. In 2019, Worcester hosted the Agency's annual Cultural Districts Initiatives.
- The Aquinnah Circle Cultural & Historic District and the West Concord Junction Cultural District are doing incredible work with small staffs. West Concord personifies the small nonprofit spirit and makes money go far.
- The Crossroads Cultural District (Greenfield) and the Nantucket Cultural District have changed their management model to be smaller and stakeholder driven. Luis acknowledged Council Member Cecil Barron Jensen who is part of that effort in Nantucket.
- Luis also noted that the Nantucket Cultural District is the only District to extend its borders. The District will now extend a 7-minute walk to include the Nantucket campus of the Museum of African American History.
- The Plymouth Bay Cultural District and Amherst Center Cultural District as both have major renovation projects recently completed: the Plymouth Center for the Arts and the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst.
- Luis visited the Scituate Harbor Cultural District last year during Small Business Saturday. Main Street was closed to traffic for the event; the District is one of the only ones to report an increase in visitation.

Nina thanked Luis for his report and called for a vote to approve the redesignation of the nine Cultural Districts. Jo-Ann Davis moved to approve the recommendations, Allyce Najimy seconded the motion. David called the roll and noting that Council Members Troy Siebels, Sherry Dong, Cecil Barron Jensen, Karen Barry and Susan Leff were not present, it was unanimously

RESOLVED: to approve the re-designation of the following nine previously approved Cultural Districts: Amherst, Aquinnah, Beverly, Crossroads [Greenfield], Nantucket, Plymouth Bay, Salisbury [Worcester], Scituate Harbor and West Concord

That concluded the business of the meeting. Nina thanked her fellow Council Members for their time today and for the robust discussion. The Racial Equity Task Force will reconvene to analyze feedback on the Racial Equity Plan and a Special Council Meeting will be scheduled very soon. As Chair, Nina adjourned the meeting at 11:51am, Council Members remained online for a few moments to have the aforementioned photo taken.



*Power of culture*

**UNOFFICIAL DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING**

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

ONLINE MEETING

Council Members Present were

Nina Fialkow, Chair  
Marc Carroll, Vice Chair  
Che Anderson  
Barbara Schaffer Bacon  
Cecil Barron Jensen  
Karen Barry  
Kathleen Castro  
Jo-Ann Davis  
Sherry Dong  
Simone Early  
Karen Hurvitz  
Matthew Keator  
Susan Leff  
Ann Murphy  
Rob Price  
Troy Siebels

Absent Council Members were

Lillian Do  
Allyce Najimy

Also Present were Mass Cultural Council Staff Members Michael J. Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jen Lawless, Bethann Steiner, Ann Petruccelli Moon, Charles Baldwin, Luis Cotto, Erik Holmgren, Maggie Holtzberg, Carina Ruiz-Esparza, Scott Hufford, Evelyn Nelligan, Sara Glidden, Michael Ibrahim, Mina Kim, Lisa Simmons, Kelly Bennett, Käthe Swaback, Carmen Plazas, and Cheyenne Cohn-Postell; and guests Quita Sullivan, Marian Taylor-Brown, Stacy Klein, Rhonda Anderson, and Deidra Montgomery.

Chair Nina Fialkow called the meeting to order at 3:12pm and extended a welcome to her fellow Council Members, Agency staff, and guests. She then asked Deputy Director

Prepared on 10/6/21

David Slatery to take a roll call and read the Open Meeting Law into record. David took the roll the attendance of Council Members present at such time is listed above. David then read the following statement into the record.

Please note that this meeting is an open meeting of a public body subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. A notice of this meeting together with the agenda was posted on Mass Cultural Council's website 48 or more hours ago (excluding weekends and holidays).

This meeting shall be open and accessible to all members of the public except at such times when this body has voted to go into closed executive session under the Open Meeting Law.

This meeting is a virtual meeting held under the Open Meeting Law as modified under current law to permit online open meetings. As a safety measure, in order to prevent disruption of Mass Cultural Council's on-line open public meetings, the Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Committee of Mass Cultural Council has asked staff to implement the following protocols for on-line meetings of Mass Cultural Council or its committees:

Any "chat" or similar function will be disabled.

Other than Council members, invited guests or individuals specifically recognized by the Chair of the meeting, attendees will be muted and have no ability to share media or documents or project or type images or text.

All attendees must enter a waiting room and digitally sign-in before being admitted.

Any attendee who nonetheless causes a disruption will be summarily removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

While Mass Cultural Council welcomes the public to attend its on-line meetings under the Open Meeting Law, any attempts to disrupt a meeting will result in immediate expulsion of the responsible party.

This meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony will not be taken. Individuals may not address the meeting without permission of the Chair.

Any member of the public may record this meeting provided that they first notify the Chair and must not interfere with the meeting. The Chair will then inform the members of the meeting that they are being recorded.

Draft minutes of the open session of this meeting shall be kept and shall be posted on Mass Cultural Council's website no later than 30 days after the meeting provided that such minutes shall not be considered official until they have been approved by this body in open session. Individuals asserting a violation of the Open Meeting Law may file a complaint with this body within 30 days or with the Attorney General's office thereafter.

During the roll call Sherry Dong let the Chair know that she would need to leave the meeting at 3:40pm. Nina then asked Vice Chair Marc Carroll to explain the Council's new Zoom protocols. Marc explained that due to a disruption during a recent Special Meeting of the Executive Committee during which racist comments were entered into the chat, staff had implemented an extra step before admitting guests from the waiting room into today's meeting in that each guest was contacted via chat to determine their interest in attending the meeting. Also, the chat feature for the meeting was disabled along with participants' ability to change their names onscreen.

Nina then welcomed guests Rhonda Anderson from Okheteau Cultural Center, Quita Sullivan from the New England Foundation for the Arts, Marian Taylor Brown and Deidra Montgomery from the Cultural Equity Learning Community, and Stacy Klein from Double Edge Theater who were invited by Executive Director Michael Bobbitt to give brief remarks during the meeting. Each guest briefly introduced themselves.

The Chair then asked Michael to give a brief update and introduction to the Agency's draft Racial Equity Plan which the Council would vote on today.

Michael explained that the Plan being presented to the Council today is the culmination of five months of work by the Racial Equity Task Force, which is comprised of Council Members and staff, and input from colleagues around the nation. More than 60 individuals have provided input on the Plan at this point. This has been a tremendous lift with an incredible amount of vetting. It has been an inclusive process which follows in the spirit of the Plan. Michael is most excited to see the state's investment in arts and culture align with the Governor's order around race equity and the Agency's strategic plan. This plan is outlining a roadmap that will push us beyond talking the talk. Michael noted that there were concerns from Council Members at their meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup> around the use of the word "decolonization" in the Plan. Many suggestions made during the meeting were agreed upon. To further understanding of the term, staff sent reading material in advance of today's meeting and held a non-deliberative session last Friday as an opportunity for Council Members and staff to learn more about decolonization as it applies to grantmaking within arts and culture. Today Council Members will review this revised version of the plan and hear from invited guests, some of whom are Native American, about the importance of including the term "decolonization" in the Plan. Michael then asked Marian Taylor Brown and Deidra Montgomery to give their presentation.

Marian and Deidra focused their comments on the concepts of colonization and decolonization as terms to be used internally and externally, and what both terms mean with regards to Agency policies. The presentation was grounded in the recognition that words and representation matter and when people are not represented, harm can be done. A copy of the presentation Marian and Deidra shared with Council Members is available upon request.

Michael thanked Marian and Deidra for their comments and told Council Members that they are experts in their field. At this point, Sherry Dong let the Chair know that she had to leave the meeting but wanted to make sure that when a vote was taken that her position was heard – Sherry supported the Plan and the efforts Michael is leading and encourages her fellow Council Members to be supportive of them, too. Sherry then departed the meeting.

Michael then let Council Members know that in addition to the previous presentation on decolonization as a term, he also wanted them to hear on a more personal level why including the term in the Plan is important. He then invited Quita Sullivan from the New England Foundation for the Arts to speak.

Quita explained that she is speaking to Council Members as both a funder and a Native person. Quita moved to Massachusetts in 2000 from the Midwest and stated that she felt more erased in the Commonwealth than she ever did in her previous home. Therefore, decolonization is a very real and very present thing in her life and a significant part of who she is and all the things she hopes to be. Quita stated that philanthropy exists because of the genocide and disposition of land for black and indigenous people, because of the exploited labor of Asian and Latinx people; that the government and many private foundations have benefitted from those extractions and by those extractions are able to engage in philanthropic work. Every dollar earned, spent, or given is, at a minimum, generated on stolen land. She added that philanthropy becomes necessary because those systems based in genocide continue to determine the well-being of those whom we are helping. Quita stated that she is conscious of the fact that her participation in philanthropy as an indigenous person is not the norm, and may be problematic, but she believes she can change the way grantmaking is accomplished. She tries to not let “perfect” get in the way of action. Decolonization of grantmaking within arts and culture isn’t going to happen in one day, but it also isn’t going to happen at all if we are afraid to take steps and to move forward on Racial Equity work and include the concept of decolonization in it.

Michael thanked Quita and then asked Rhonda Anderson from the Ohketeau Cultural Center and Stacy Klein from Double Edge Theater to speak briefly about their partnership and how decolonization appears in their work.

Rhonda began by stating the decolonization is not a metaphor, that when it is seen as a metaphor it kills the possibility of what it can accomplish and recenters whiteness, resettles theory, and extends innocence to the settler. She added that the term cannot easily be grafted onto preexisting discourse. Stacy shared that decolonization is a daily practice and effort for Double Edge Theatre and that the leadership of Rhonda and her colleague Larry Spotted Crow Man has been extremely valuable in her learning. The partnership between Ohketeau and Double Edge began in 2017 when Stacy contacted



Rhonda and offered her the use of space on Double Edge's site. Stacy, at that point, had been told that there were no tribes in the area and there never had been. Rhonda set about introducing Stacy to other indigenous people and tribes in the region and a partnership was established. The use of space at Double Edge Theatre is important to Rhonda because a good deal of it is outdoors unlike the majority of the spaces in the region, many of which are part of the five colleges. Ohketeau was able to make a fire pit for a recent ceremony. The two organizations now have an incredibly strong relationship where they are both learning how deeply decolonization needs to be broken down. Building relationships with reciprocity and understanding that decolonization is an ongoing process, not a historical one. Both organizations are working together to decolonize, lift, and center indigenous people.

Nina thanked Rhonda, Stacy, Quita, Marian, and Deidra for their presentations and for adding to her personal understanding of decolonization. Nina noted that the Executive Committee had reviewed the draft Racial Equity Plan at its Special Meeting on September 13 and voted to recommend it for full approval by the Council today. Nina then asked Vice Chair Marc Carroll to summarize the changes to the Plan that were reviewed at the Executive Committee meeting.

Marc stated that the Committee confirmed that the Racial Equity Plan is an extension of the work started in 2017 which aligns with the Agency's strategic plan and the Governor's executive order. A statement of purpose was added to the beginning of the document. Links that led to Wikipedia were deleted. The term "decolonization" was clarified and tied to the cultural sector and the Agency's grantmaking and services. Finally, links relating to social justice movements the Agency has no formal agreement with were deleted. After reviewing these changes, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to approve and recommend the Plan. Marc thanked all members of the Racial Equity Task Force for working hard to improve the Plan based on Council Member feedback.

Nina then asked Council Member Barbara Schaffer Bacon who served on the Racial Equity Task Force, to present the plan to the Council.

Barbara stated that the Task Force followed a very open process. Michael didn't come into the first meeting with a plan already drafted, but rather there was a gathering of ideas about what the Agency could do. Barbara highlighted what Quita Sullivan had mentioned about not letting perfection hinder progress. Barbara feels the Racial Equity Plan is solid and that the final round of vetting between the Council's last meeting on August 24 and today was very important. Barbara is very pleased and proud that the Task Force dug in to be sure what the Council is signing onto is clearly understood. The Plan is a living document that will be revisited in an evaluative form as we move forward.

Barbara then moved for a vote to approve Mass Cultural Council's Racial Equity Plan as it was approved and recommended by the Executive Committee. Simone Early seconded the motion. The Chair asked if there was any discussion and recognized Council Member Rob Price.

Rob thanked the Task Force for their work assembling the document and the guest speakers for giving important substance to the dialogue but stated that he has concerns that persist:

First, the reference to intersectionality which excludes religious and national identity. Rob feels these dimensions could have easily been included and often are in DEI statements he is familiar with. He feels that the inclusion of intersectionality invites some into the conversation but excludes others. He is apprehensive about this given that the Agency serves many different voices in the Commonwealth.

Second, while decolonization has been qualified in most cases throughout the document - all except for one - its centrality persists. Rob understands in the context of the voices in today's meeting why the feeling is that it should, however the workshop on decolonization last Friday and the content presented in today's meeting raised as many questions as answers for him. Rob reviewed all the source materials referenced and he feels a fundamental problem emerges. Marian and Deidra shared a definition of colonization today from the Lexico Dictionary but did not share a definition of decolonization from the same source, instead they offered three other definitions of decolonization. Rob then read for Council Members the definition of decolonization he found in the Lexico Dictionary: *the action or process of a state withdrawing from a former colony leaving it independent.*

Rob added that while Michael and others have insisted that the term is meant metaphorically in the Plan, the materials that were shared with the Council and one article in particular Rob has read called "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor" he feels indicate that decolonization ties directly to the word colonization.

Rob stated that he raises this as an issue because he does not feel the Council should vote on something it isn't ready to follow through on. Rob then gave an example of what decolonization would mean to an organizations like Boston Ballet. Rob stated that Boston Ballet is a product of western civilization and an import by colonizers with an upcoming season highlighting mostly western culture. The Artistic Director is an older, white European male. On its website the Ballet acknowledges that it sits on the lands of the Pawtucket. Rob continued stating that most of the Ballet's patrons are white and affluent and its audiences are mostly white. Rob stated that decolonization of Boston Ballet would call for dramatic action. It would mean repatriation of the Opera House to the descendants of the Pawtucket, programming would need to change, the

revenue model would need to change, staffing would need to change, and it would be hard for the Agency to not look at Boston Ballet and many other organizations it currently supports as prototypical examples of colonized institutions. Rob feels that if we are using the term colonization as its defined by many academics, it requires the Council to understand what it is voting on. He feels the Racial Equity Plan could have achieved almost everything it intends to achieve without the inclusion of this term.

Nina asked if there were other Council Members who wished to discuss the plan. There were not and she recognized Michael Bobbitt who stated that the Council is not meeting to debate the validity of a concept but rather to vote on a set of actions. Michael reminded the Council that as a grantmaker the Agency has no jurisdiction over how organizations program. The goal of the plan is to ensure the Agency's funding decisions are equitable

There was no further discussion and Nina asked David Slatery to do a roll call vote for the approval of the Racial Equity Plan. Noting that 3 Council Members were absent (Sherry Dong, Lillian Do and Allyce Najimy) and 1 abstention (Rob Price) and 14 yes votes (all other present members) and it was

RESOLVED: To approve Mass Cultural Council's Racial Equity Plan as recommended by the Executive Committee in the form provided to the Council for this Meeting.

As the request of Council Member Barbara Schaffer Bacon, David noted for the record that Sherry Dong had indicated before she left the meeting early that she had indicated her support for the Plan.

Nina thanked Council Members for attending the Special Meeting and for their service and congratulated all for passing the Racial Equity Plan. As Chair, Nina adjourned the meeting at 4:05pm.

**Mass Cultural Council  
Committee Membership as of January 27, 2022  
(Based on current information)**

Historically, committees of the Mass Cultural Council, consisting of Council Members, have been constituted and designated by the Chair of the Council and chairs of each committee have been appointed by the Chair of the Council. The Committees are best described as an informal grouping of Council Members designed to provide advice, discuss or review certain specific tasks or issues and, although subject to the open meeting law, are not in and of themselves, official governmental decision-making bodies. Only the full Council has such authority although the Council may, under the Council's Enabling Act, delegate certain duties to committees.

There are currently three permanent Council committees and their functions and current membership and are described and listed below. Ad hoc and event committees are also occasionally formed as needed. At the meeting each year to approve the Spending Plan, the Chair selects the Committee chairs and then solicits interest from the members in serving on the Grants, Advocacy and Events or ad hoc Committees and makes committee assignments based on interest. It is hoped that each Council member serves on at least one of these committees.

**Executive Committee.**

This committee consists of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council as well as the Chairs of the Advocacy & Grants Committee and such other members as the Chair may select. It reviews the agenda for the full Council Meetings, preliminarily reviews the annual budget and spending plan and reviews other matters at the request of the Chair.

*(NOTE- the dates below are for a "typical" fiscal year- all the dates in FY21 were different due to the pandemic and late state budget)* Proposed Meeting Schedule- four to five times per year (sometimes due to the lateness of the state budget being finalized, the July and August meetings are combined):

1. July (Preliminary Budget review- shortly after state budget finalized)
2. August (Detailed Spending Plan-At least two weeks prior to August Council Meeting)
3. Early January (two weeks prior to January Council Meeting)
4. Early March (two weeks prior to March Council Meeting)
5. Early May (two weeks prior to May Council Meeting).

Additional meetings can be scheduled as and when deemed necessary by the Chair.

**Current Executive Committee Members**

Nina Fialkow (Chair)

Marc Carroll (Vice Chair)

Jo-Ann Davis (Chair Grants)

Troy Siebels (Co-Chair Advocacy)

Sherry Dong (Co-Chair Advocacy)

### **Grants Committee.**

The Grants Committee meets to preliminarily review staff grant recommendations and to recommend them to the full Council Meeting.

Proposed Meeting Schedule- four times per year:

1. Mid-August (depending on finalization of state budget, approximately two weeks prior to August Council Meeting for the bulk of the grant programs)
2. Early January (two weeks prior to January Council Meeting for Round One of the Artist Fellowship Grants)
3. Early May (two weeks prior to May Council Meeting for Round Two of the Artist Fellowship Grants).
4. June (to review the grant programs generally)

Additional meetings can be scheduled as and when deemed necessary by the Grants Committee Chair.

### **Current Grants Committee Members**

Jo-Ann Davis (Chair)  
Barbara Schaffer Bacon  
Karen Barry  
Kathleen Castro  
Cecil Barron Jensen  
Karen Hurvitz  
Che Anderson

### **Advocacy Committee.**

The Advocacy Committee meets to coordinate the Agency's advocacy strategy and efforts around the state budget request for the upcoming fiscal year and, when applicable, other legislative initiatives.

Meetings are scheduled as and when deemed necessary by the Committee Chairs, usually around the time the legislature begins considering the annual budget.

### **Advocacy Committee Members**

Troy Siebels (co-chair)  
Matthew Keator  
Ann Murphy  
Sherry Dong (co-chair)  
Allyce Najimy  
Simone Early

**Events and Ad Hoc Committees/Task Forces.**

These committees exist to assist the Mass Cultural Council in terms of either planning, assembling resources and fundraising for events such as the Commonwealth Awards, the UP Awards, or new awards ceremonies, events like the Creative Youth Development Summit (and related events) and other Mass Cultural Council events which may arise or to address a specific need identified by the Council (such as the Task Forces established in FY20-21). We anticipate that Council members on these committee would “opt in” to serve to assist with specific events as they occur and would meet and confer as and when needed.

Committee Members

Appointed as needed

Please also note as per past practice, that whether or not named as members, the Chair and the Vice Chair may attend any committee or task force meeting.



*Power of culture*

To: Mass Cultural Council  
Fr: Michael J. Bobbitt, Executive Director  
Dt: January 27, 2022

## ED Report (January 2022)

NOTES: The focus has been on next FY year's planning, spending plan and calendaring. Putting together the Race Equity Plan and starting to visit regions/districts this summer.

*This is the final time you will receive a report that looks like this. A new one for future meetings is being devised.*

### Final Transition Plan

- Scheduled Staff Meetings
  - a. Daily Senior Staff Check In (Mon- Thu)
  - b. Invited Weekly Department Check Ins
  - c. Weekly Supervisors Meeting
  - d. Bi-weekly 411 All-Staff Meeting
  - e. **NEW!** Biweekly check-ins with the Director of People and Culture
- Scheduled Monthly Meetings
  - a. Nina
- As Needed/As Available – Regular Meetings
  - a. Mass Creative
  - b. Emily Ruddock/Brian Boyles
  - c. Barr Foundation/San San Wong
  - d. Mentor – Torrie Allen
  - e. NASAA BIPOC Affinity Group (as Available)
  - f. Philanthropy MA monthly meetings and monthly BIPOC Affinity Space Meetings
  - g. Monthly Check-in with Dan Rivera from MassDevelopment
  - h. MA LGBTQ+ ED Group

### February

- ~~Meet with Each Department Pt. 1 Feb~~ **Done**
  - a. ~~Priority Group #1 – EDIA, Race Equity, Demographic Data~~
- Drop-ins to Constituent Gatherings - **As Available**
- ~~Listening Tour (5 days)~~ **Done**

Prepared on 1/20/22

- ~~Governor Baker, also Senior Advisor Mindy d'Arbeloff~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Lieutenant Governor Polito~~ — ~~Scheduled (same as with Gov)~~
- ~~State Government Crash Course with Bethann~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~POC Team meeting~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Legislative/Budgeting Meet and Greet~~
  - a. ~~reached out in week 1 by email to all 199 legislators, introduced yourself and offered meet and greets at their convenience~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Keiko Orrall, MOTT~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Barr Foundation Meet and Greet~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~The Boston Foundation — Paul Grogan, Eva Rosenberg, Lee Pelton~~ — ~~done~~
- ~~Philanthropy MA Meet and Greet~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Secretary Mary Lou Sudders, Health & Human Services~~
- ~~Commissioner of the Department of Public Health, Monica Bharel~~

#### March

- ~~30 Mins Meet with each staff member~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Attend Orientation for new Council Members Simone Early and Rob Price~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Meet with Each Department Pt. 2~~ — ~~Done~~
  - a. ~~End of first year check-in~~
- ~~Major Partner Meetings~~
  - a. ~~Mass Development, NEFA, MassCreative, Mass Humanities, MAPC, NASAA~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Drop-ins to Constituent Gatherings~~ — ~~As Available~~
- ~~Arts Consulting Group — Wyona Lynch McWhite~~ — ~~Done~~

#### April

- ~~30 minutes meet with each Council Member~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Meet with Major Funders~~
  - b. ~~NEA~~ — ~~In Process~~, ~~Klarman~~ (Done), ~~Lindy~~
- ~~Chat with Anita~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Key Mayors~~ — ~~In Process~~
- ~~Union Briefing~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Joann Horgan, Consultant HR~~ — ~~She is away recovering from surgery, will reach out early April~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Gaming Mitigation Briefing~~ — ~~Done~~
- ~~Speaking Engagements/Press~~ — ~~As Available~~

#### May/June

- ~~Organization Constituent Meetings~~ (~~need to consider Equity~~) — ~~As Available/In Process (Moved from April)~~
  - a. ~~Would like to prioritize small, BIPOC and Rural orgs and then Bigs~~
  - b. ~~The Big Ones: Museum of Science~~ — ~~scheduled~~, ~~New England Aquarium~~ — ~~scheduled~~, ~~Museum of Fine Arts~~, ~~Children's Museum~~ — ~~scheduled~~, ~~Boston Symphony Orchestra~~; ~~Worcester Art Museum~~, ~~Fitchburg Art Museum~~, ~~Springfield Symphony Orchestra~~, ~~New Bedford Whaling Museum~~, ~~Plimoth Patuxet Museums~~, ~~Cape Ann Museum~~

#### DELIVERABLES – First 6 Months

— ~~Meet with Working Groups~~



- ~~Priority Group #2 - Remote Programming/Tech, Trauma, Covid Safety, HR Working Group~~ ~~we sunset all the groups. The HR Working Group (task force) is being revised~~
- ~~Draft Agency Race Equity Plan - Done~~
- ~~Agency Budget - Done~~
- ~~Advocacy - Budget, Bond Bill, Federal Covid Relief - Done~~
- ~~Support Statewide Commission on the Impacts of COVID on the Creative and Cultural Sectors - Done~~
- ~~Children and Youth (Maybe Grantees) - Done.~~
- Mayors and City Council Presidents - Kim Driscoll of Salem, Nicole LaChapelle of Easthampton & Steve DiNatalie of Fitchburg, etc.
- ~~Support Commission to review state seal and motto - designated Kelly to sit on this commission~~
- Support Operations Efficiency - In Process
  - Support New Grants Software and 365 Consolidation - in process
  - Revisit the Employee Handbook to look at policies to reflect modern handbook - in process
  - Consolidation of Programs - In Process
- Support HR Audit - Pay Equity, Classifications (before EOY)- In process
- Relaunch Culture Chat - Suspended
- Artist Constituent Meetings - ongoing
- Support Agency Audit - Done
- Diversifying our Board - In Process

DELIVERABLES - 6 month to 1 year and beyond

- ~~Relook at Strategic Plan in response to current times~~
- ~~Draft Michael's list of Priorities with staff input~~
- Local Cultural Council Meeting by Staff Region Assignments
- CANE: Cultural Access New England
- Jim Rooney, from Greater Boston Chamber and other chambers like Berkshires, Cape Cod, North Shore
- Discussions about Statewide event - Governor's Ball? - during FY22
- Start the strategic Plan Process - FY 23
- Start Implementation of Race Equity Plan - FY 22
- Discussions on:
  - Culture RX - FY22
  - Visioning of LCC - FY22
  - CIP Equitable Retooling - FY22
  - Expansion of UP into Social Justice Department - FY22
  - Recruitment of BIPOC Orgs - FY22
  - Elimination of Silo-ing - HR Director
  - Site Visits Discussion - FY 22
  - Rethink of Project Grants - FY22
  - Addition of Capacity Building Grants - FY22 Design process
  - Implementation of Covid 19 related grants - FY22
  - Service Agenda Conversation - FY22
  - Rural Equity Plan - FY23
  - Disability Equity Plan - FY23

OTHER (to be scheduled as available)

TSNE MissionWorks

Other Non-profit Services Orgs - NEMA, ~~ArtsBoston~~, Boston Dance Alliance, and ~~Arts & Business Council~~

~~Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA) — Done~~

Aquinnah Cultural Arts Center

DMH, United Way

Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association

[Interpretive Science Org](#)

[History Org](#)

[Humanities Org](#)

Black Ministerial Association of Boston

Cable Access

~~Legislative Tourism Council~~

Housing and Economic Development

Department of Education

Interpretive Science Orgs

Meetings with heads of other State Agencies

DTA, Health Connector, ~~MOTT~~, Conservation and Recreation, National Parks of MA

NAAC, Arts Administration of New England, YNPN

Creative Minds Out Loud

Lisa Donovan at Mass College of Liberal Arts

Arts for All Collaborative

CJP – BlackAFinStem

Other Non-Transition Plan Activites/Meetings (completed)

Feb 1 – March 16

~~Attended a meeting with regional state arts agencies~~

~~Met with Kara Elliott Ortega — Boston Arts and Culture Department~~

~~Chatted with Joyce Linehan~~

~~Met with Nasaa POC Affinity Group~~

~~Spoke at American University Arts Management Class~~

~~Attended a Philanthropy MA Arts Funders Meeting~~

~~Met with Erin Williams from Worcester~~

~~Joined NEFA's board (starting in June)~~

~~Filmed a welcome speech for Cambridge Community Foundation~~

~~Met with Bridge Gwendolyn Van Sant (Race Equity Consultant)~~

~~Attended Cambridge Arts Forum Meeting~~

~~Met with Dana Hanseon, Office of Congressman Auchencloss~~

~~Attended NEA USDA Rural Placemaking Webinar~~

~~Met with Jordan Maynard — Baker's Chief Secretary~~

~~Moderated Panel discussion at Worcester Legislative Breakfast~~

~~Attended Advisory Committee on Travel and Tourism Quarterly Meeting~~

March 17 – July 14

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

Submittable – Antiracism in grantmaking webinar

Senator Lesser's Lunchtime Live Stream

NEA – meet Biden Appointees

Forum for youth art, power and peace

Project Q

ART Lunchroom Chat

Kelly Barsdale NASAA

DEI Townhall with Northeastern  
Social Prescription Happy Hour – welcome  
NBC appearance  
American Heart Association  
Podcast Recording – Conner/Smith Show  
Trauma informed workshop  
Newton Cultural Council and Mayor – meet and greet  
Wyona from ACG  
TACD Meet and Greet  
Boston Arts Academy Foundation  
Bright Spots Big Questions Webinar  
Emerson Workshop for Scenic design students  
NASAA Messaging Strategies  
NEFA State Arts Agency Committee Meeting  
Teacakes and Tarot  
Guerilla Opera  
Lisa McNulty  
Michael Orlove and Andi Mathis – NEA  
Erica Schwartz – Emerson Colonial Theatre  
Boston Public Radio  
MAPC Metro Common Culture Policy Agenda  
CMBC – panel on disrupting White supremacy in the arts  
Mass MOCA  
Boston Globe Interview  
WS Development  
MassPort  
UConn Art and Poverty Panel  
Site Visit to Stevens Center in North Andover  
Anita Walker  
Sam Houston U – musical theatre panel  
NAGE Briefing  
TheatreWashington  
NEA Federal Audit Training  
EMACT Webinar on Building Anti-racism plans  
MassCreative Board Meet & Greet  
ARTNY Board Workshop  
Mass Audubon Meet and Greet  
Edvestors  
Meeting with Boston Cultural EDs  
Newport Music Festival Town Hall  
PUAM Team – Salem  
Brockton Easton Cultural Sector Zoom  
Municipal Convening of Arts Councils  
Seen and Heard  
Ben Perkins – Produce Prescription  
Staff Retreat  
Center for Nonprofit Advancement – Change Makers Panel  
TBF Eva and Orlando  
Speaking Engagement – Harvard Institute for Learning  
CMSS Gala – honoring Erik holmgren  
METG Panel to Students

Consulate General of Israel  
Imari Jeffries King Boston  
Leading Edge – meeting  
Black Boston  
Mass Latino – appearance  
Fall River Site Visit  
Planned Giving Group of New England  
Mass Inc – Guest Speaker  
Kara Elliott-Ortega – Boston City Arts and Culture  
Starlight – guest speaker  
Suffolk County/Nashua Jail – Panelist for arts program  
John Lewis – Berkshires Black Economic Council  
Little Saigon – Coffee and Culture Conversation  
Boston Arts Academy  
The Greylock Glass – Interview  
David Kong – Board Propsect (MIT)  
Rebecca Pereira – Dorchester News  
MAPC  
New Bedford Whaling Museum – Keynote  
Worcester Arts Council Grantee Reception  
Leading Edge – Speaking Engagement  
Israeli Consulate  
Advisory Commission on Travel and Tourism  
Commonwealth Magazine – Lily Robinson  
Department of Mental Health  
Gaming Commission  
Segun Idowa – Black Economic Council of Massachusetts  
Newton/Needham Chamber  
Steve Koczela – Podcast Interview  
Methuen Youth Community Center  
Medicine Wheel – Speaking Engagement  
GBH – Interview  
Fenway HEalth – CEO Ellen Lapointe  
Senator Lessor – Thrive After 55 – appearance  
Boston Gay Men’s Chorus  
Indiana State Arts Agency  
Harvard ERC – speaking engagement  
Patrick Mahoney – Worcester Community Foundation  
Rep Chan  
Woman’s Fund CEO  
In.live Meeting  
Mass DI – RRP Program  
Liz Solar – Podcast Interview  
Goddard House

July 15 – Nov. 1  
The EcoTarium, Community Curator featured participant  
Keiko Orrall, Mass Office of Travel & Tourism  
Representative Fiola, Fall River  
Multicultural BRIDGE, Inclusive Leadership Cohort, speaker  
The Flavor Continues

Nantucket, cultural tour with Rep. Fernandes  
Plymouth, MA – cultural roundtable and tour with Rep. Muratore  
Imari Paris Jeffries, King Boston  
Bristol & Norfolk Senate Visit with Senator Feeney  
Berkshire Arts Ed. Initiative  
Good Trouble Podcast, interview  
Zach Combs, Crocodile River Music  
Vanessa Calixto, El Salon  
Riverside Theatre Works  
Central Square Theater  
Underground Railway Theater  
Jewish Arts Collaborative  
Dorrance Dance  
The Mount  
Cultural Tour of Berkshire County with Berkshire Delegation (Tanglewood, Mahaiwe, Great Barrington Public Theater, Chesterwood, Norman Rockwell Museum)  
Berkshire Theatre Group  
Jacob's Pillow  
Community Music Center of Boston  
The Plymouth Foundation  
Fine Arts Work Center, Provincetown  
Provincetown Art Association & Museum  
Representative Xiarhos  
Senator Cyr  
Representative Peake  
Beth Israel Leahy Health  
Cultural Tour of Western MA (David Ruggles Center, Academy of Music, APE Gallery, 33 Hawley, Historic Northampton, Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Yiddish Book Center, UMass Fine Arts Center, Jones Library, Shea Theater, Double Edge Theater)  
Fierce Urgency of Now Festival, speaking engagement  
Cultural tour of Lynn with Sen. Brendan Crighton  
artEquity BIPOC Leadership Circle  
House Speaker Ron Mariano  
Western MA Funders Network  
Montserrat College of Art, commencement speaker  
Klarman Family Foundation  
Jim Canales and San San Wong, Barr Foundation  
Representative Roy, Franklin, visit to Black Box Theater  
MA First Lady Lauren Baker and Wonderfund Team  
Harvey Young  
Tourism, Arts, and Cultural Development Committee tour of Western MA – Hancock  
Shaker Village, Mike's Maze  
MA LGBT Chamber of Commerce  
WBUR, The ARTery, interview  
MassDevelopment, community development team  
New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) Board of Directors Mtg.  
New England Aquarium  
MassPort

See monthly Updates for additional meet and greets.





*Power of culture*

To: Mass Cultural Council  
From: Staff  
Date: January 27, 2022  
Re: Agency Updates

### EXECUTIVE

Executive Director. Michael's Executive Director Report is included as a separate document in the Meeting Book.

Committees. The Executive Committee met on August 10 to review a draft of staff's recommended FY22 Spending Plan and approve the agenda for today's Council meeting. The Grants Committee also met on August 10 to review staff's grant and program recommendations based upon the plan in advance of today's Council meeting and voted 7-1 to recommend them for approval by the full Council.

Audit. As reported previously, the State Auditor conducted a general audit of the Council for basically the "pandemic period" of March 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. As will be further discussed in the Financial Report contained in the Meeting Book, the Chair, Vice Chair and staff met with the State Auditor's team for an exit conference in mid-December and a final report is expected sometime in the late January to mid-February timeframe.

### LEGISLATIVE, ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ARPA Spending Plan/COVID Relief – Since the August 2021 Meeting Mass Cultural Council continued to focus its advocacy efforts on securing pandemic relief for the cultural sector in the Commonwealth's ARPA spending plan. This effort, which began in March 2020, culminated in December 2021 when the Governor signed a [\\$4 billion bill into law](#). The law contains \$60 million for Mass Cultural Council to administer grant programs that will aid artists and cultural organizations with pandemic relief and to operate more efficiently.

This \$60,147,000 is in line-item 1599-2043. This account also includes 119 legislative earmarks. Senior leadership is now in communication with ANF to understand how to access the \$60.1 million as well as any associated timelines,

rules, etc. To date, we have been advised by the Executive Office of Administration and Finance (ANF) that the earmarks will be managed by the Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development (HED), and we believe the \$60.1 million must be spent by June 30, 2027 (the last day of FY27).

In December Mass Cultural Council publicly committed ([via a blog post](#)) to prioritizing internal and external conversations in the new year on how to best design and administer pandemic recovery grant programs to assist artists and cultural organizations with these funds. Mass Cultural Council will host a virtual Public Input Session on Monday, January 24, 2022, at 4:00pm for cultural sector stakeholders to share their thoughts about how to best employ these funds, and written comments will be accepted through February 7, 2022. Council members are invited to attend this session, which will be jointly chaired by Executive Director Michael J. Bobbitt and Grants Committee Chair Jo-Ann Davis. More information and registration: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/blog/mass-cultural-council-seeks-public-input-on-covid-relief-programs/>

FY23 State Budget – The Baker-Polito Administration is expected to release its final budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year, FY23, on January 26, 2022. As 2022 is the second year of the 2-year legislative session, the Governor’s budget will be referred to as “H. 2.” Mass Cultural Council will respond to the Governor’s budget recommendations and launch its annual advocacy campaign after H. 2 is released. We have not yet finalized our FY23 funding request, but expect to have more information available after the Council’s Advocacy Committee meets on February 15, 2022. Our advocacy partners, MASSCreative and Mass Humanities are invited to attend that meeting. It is our expectation that the House and Senate Committees on Ways & Means will jointly hold hearings on the Governor’s FY23 budget in the coming weeks, and that Mass Cultural Council will be invited to testify. As is our usual practice, we plan to work hard to build support in the House of Representatives and Senate for our FY23 funding request.

Pending Legislation – Under the Joint Rules, which govern how the House and Senate operate, timely filed bills must be acted upon by Committees by February 2, 2022, known in the State House as Joint Rule 10 Day. Mass Cultural Council’s [Power of Culture Advocacy Campaign](#) for the 2021-2022 legislative session identified two priority bills:

- [S. 2246](#) An Act to rebuild the Commonwealth’s cultural future – Sponsored by Sen. Ed Kennedy. Directs a minimum of \$200M in federal COVID mitigation funding the state receives to the cultural sector for one-time relief grants, administered by Mass Cultural Council, to nonprofit and for-profit cultural organizations and individual artists, teaching artists, humanists, and scientists. [Learn more](#). This legislation is pending review by the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development.



- [H. 3378](#) / [S. 2243](#) An Act to expand membership opportunities in local cultural councils – Sponsored by Rep. Ken Gordon and Sen. Adam Hinds. A technical correction to state law to allow interested, supportive, and engaging community leaders who are elected to non-appointing or appropriating local or regional positions to also serve as Local Cultural Council members in their communities. [Learn more](#). This legislation is pending review by the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development.

Legislative Visits -- Executive Director Michael Bobbitt continues to field invitations from legislators and cultural sector stakeholders to visit different regions of the Commonwealth. Since the August Council Meeting, he has traveled to:

- Provincetown to meet with grantees, Sen. Julian Cyr, Rep. Sarah Peake, and Rep. Steven Xiarhos (August 25-26-27)
- Northampton, Amherst, Turners Falls and Ashfield cultural sector tour with Senator Jo Comerford, Senator Adam Hinds, Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa, Rep. Mindy Domb and Rep. Natalie Blais (September 10)
- Hyannis to join the Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development Committee members & Cape Cod legislative delegation members for a cultural sector roundtable with Cape Cod arts leaders (September 14)
- State House Meeting with House Speaker Ron Mariano and TACD Chair Carole Fiola (September 29)
- Franklin to visit the Black Box Theater with Rep. Jeff Roy (October 8)
- Virtual Cape Cod Art Leaders Power Hour with Rep. Steve Xiarhos and the Cape Cod Arts Foundation (October 18)
- Hancock to join the Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development Committee members & Berkshire County legislative delegation members for a cultural sector roundtable with arts leaders (October 19)
- Sunderland to join the Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development Committee members & Franklin County legislative delegation members for a cultural sector roundtable with arts leaders (October 19)
- Virtual Legislative Briefing for the Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development Committee on Arts Education presented by EdVestors and MASSCreative (October 28)

- Fitchburg with Senator John Cronin and Rep. Michael Kushmerek to learn how the city plans to use the cultural sector to revitalize downtown (November 8)
- Beverly to attend a Legislative Breakfast for regional legislators, hosted by The Cabot (November 16)
- Northern Berkshire County cultural sector tour, hosted by Rep. John Barrett III (December 17)

Legislative Constituent Services – The Public Affairs Director serves as the legislative liaison for Mass Cultural Council, the point of contact for legislators and legislative staff when they have a question about Agency programs and services. A quick review of 2021 files indicates that, throughout the last calendar year, Mass Cultural Council directly engaged with 75 State Representatives (46.88% of the 160 member House) and 38 State Senators (95% of the 40-member Senate). These interactions vary from short phone calls seeking program information, emails, meetings, data requests, events, letters, and testimony.

Public Affairs Traditional Media Report: With a new Executive Director joining the Agency early in calendar year 2021 Mass Cultural Council enjoyed an uptick in media inquiries. A quick review of 2021 files indicate that throughout the last calendar year Mass Cultural Council responded to 90 media inquiries from media outlets of all sizes and mediums (print, radio, online) throughout the Commonwealth.

Also, through the efforts of Communications Manager Carmen Plazas, we have built a new relationship with Spanish-language outlet El Planeta. They are currently working on a piece about Artist Fellows and have started amplifying our news and opportunities on their Twitter page:

<https://twitter.com/elplanetaboston/status/1480932390239416323> We are thrilled to expand our reach to Spanish-speaking residents and cultural sector stakeholders with this new relationship.

Public Affairs Digital Media Report: Mass Cultural Council is interacting with thousands of cultural sector stakeholders daily through various digital platforms, including MassCulturalCouncil.org, various E-newsletters, social media channels, blogs (ArtSake and Power of Culture), and HireCulture.org.

#### E-Newsletters:

- Power of Culture: 9,060 contacts
- Artists News: 11,101 contacts
- Community News: 5,436 contacts

*Plus, our targeted lists which include legislators, press, and partners.*

#### Social Media Platforms:

- Twitter: 15.1K Followers
- Facebook: 13.2K Followers
  - Community Initiative page: 1,815 Followers
- Instagram: 5,607 Followers
- LinkedIn: 1,888 Followers

#### CULTURAL INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO (CIP)

Projects Grant Program. CIP Project grants are one-year grants of \$2,500 for specific cultural public programming. The Projects category includes organizations whose missions are not fully cultural, and organizations that do not receive Gateway or Portfolio grants. In the process approved at the August Council meeting, the Projects program opened on September 21, with an application deadline of November 16, 2021. CIP staff hosted a webinar in addition to five “office hours” sessions for counseling applicants. 220 organizations submitted applications. CIP staff is finalizing recommendations for grant funding, and a list of grantees will be available for the March Council meeting.

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Arts & Culture COVID Recovery Grant. The FY22 Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) COVID Recovery Program was established through a legislative earmark sponsored by the Members of the House Asian Caucus, funded in the Mass Cultural Council’s FY22 line-item of the annual state operating budget. AAPI Program Coordinator Jay Wong was contracted to support the development and implementation of the AAPI program. The goal of the program is to provide pandemic recovery funds to entities that focus on one or more Asian ethnicity and conduct cultural events, cultural education, or cultural performances, with these funds being prioritized to entities who have been adversely affected by the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic. CIP staff has been working with our Cultural Equity colleagues to explore options for the use of multiple languages to provide widest access. Mass Cultural Council will award a total of \$970,000 in grant funds to this purpose. The number of grants and the size of grants will be determined as part of the application review. The application will open on February 7, 2022.

Other Activities. Although the CIP team has not been conducting site visits, we continue to provide consultations with CIP organizations and potential applicants through online platforms. This has included supporting current grantees and applicants in the use of our new grants management system.

Grantee FY21 Year-End Reporting & Compliance. At the end of FY21, twelve Portfolio or Gateway grantees had 'holds' on their FY22 grant contracts, due to delays in fulfilling annual requirements, or other concerns. All but four of the organizations have cleared the hold, and CIP staff is working with grantees to address the remaining concerns.

CIP Staff. At the end of November, we said goodbye to Program Manager Michael Ibrahim, who moved on to a new position outside of Mass Cultural Council. CIP staff is in the process of interviewing candidates for the two Program Officer positions.

Organizational Support program review.

The Portfolio grant program is now over 10 years old, and the CIP team has been conducting an analysis of the Portfolio and Gateway programs with a focus on equity and how it is reflected in our current processes. The team has been researching various models and testing options to improve the Portfolio program.

#### COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

The Community Initiative includes the LCC program, Festivals Program and the Cultural Districts.

Local Cultural Councils. The Community team is currently working with the 329 cultural councils across the state to complete the FY22 Local Cultural Council grant cycle. The councils are now in the process of reviewing grant applications and making decisions on funding. Annual Reports with decisions on granting are due too the Council on February 1, 2022. In another challenging year, the team has been working with councils to support this year's grant cycle with a series of webinars, office hours and community check ins.

Festivals. The Festival Program successfully completed the fall/winter grant cycle in November and awarded 99 festivals for a total of \$148,000. The Festivals Grant Program is now in its' 13th grant round and has supported close to 1,000 festival producers in the Commonwealth. The spring/summer grant cycle opened on January 10<sup>th</sup> with a deadline of March 1, 2022. The spring/summer grant cycle funds festivals taking place between March 1, 2022 and August 31, 2022. This fiscal year we have continued to allow for recovery and rebuilding grants for festivals in addition to producing festivals, working off of the information we gathered through the Festival Lab that was conducted in FY20. That unique cohort program focused on helping festivals understand how to better marketing their festivals and how to further engage audiences beyond their festival program.

Festival applications are reviewed through an in-house review process, based on the eligibility requirements of the program. Regional diversity is taken into consideration.

Cultural Districts. Currently 44 Districts have been approved for FY22 Culture District grants of up to \$7500 for a total of \$330,000. Seven have had grant deadlines extended until midnight, January 16th. Staff will have a blog post and press release on these grant announcements by early next week.

New Cultural Districts. Currently we have two districts that are on track for a designation vote in March: Lexington and Cummington. Luis will work with staff to structure a formal site visit for those stakeholders based on our approved COVID protocols. East Somerville's application has stalled. The Executive Director of their proposed management entity has moved to a new job and the proverbial ball has not been picked up. We hope to have one of Harwich's two proposals moved forward before the end of the fiscal year.

Preliminary Discussions. Brookline has picked up their momentum on a District designation. The community remained stuck with "which" area to propose, Coolidge Corner or their Town Center. They've finally decided on the Town Center and have moved their focus to that.

We have also been approached recently by the town of Adams. They have scheduled their community meeting and plan on meeting with staff soon after that to get a better picture of what's next.

Re-designation Process. Eight Districts are up for renewal in 2022: Arlington, Maynard, North Adams, Provincetown, Roxbury, Shovel Town (Easton), Turners Falls, and Wellfleet. We're in the process of getting letters of interest from the chief elected / appointed officials and Luis meets with representatives from those municipalities on January 20th. As has been our practice in these past three years, our process has us working with stakeholders into the summer with a vote for renewal as part of the August Council meeting.

A message from Program Manager Luis Cotto (Luis announced he would be leaving Mass Cultural Council at the end of January to become the Executive Director for the Cambridge Central Square Business Improvement District): *It's been an honor and a privilege to work for such an outstanding state arts agency. As an inner-city boy from immigrant parents who grew up with a passion for the arts, but never achieved any sort of official accreditation in it, I truly appreciate the faith put into me by Anita Walker and leadership. I'm similarly excited for the direction Michael Bobbitt is moving the Commonwealth and look forward to offering my assistance in any way possible. Pa'lante!*

## ARTISTS

FY22 Artist Fellowships: Elsewhere in the Council materials, the Artist Department has shared a report on the Agency's recommendations for Fellows (\$15,000) and Finalists (\$5,000) in Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts. Those categories had an October 25<sup>th</sup> application deadline and review panels in January.

Generally, there are two deadlines per year in the Artist Fellowships. The second deadline, for the categories of Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting, is January 24<sup>th</sup>. Review panels in those categories will be in April, with recommendations going to the May Grants Committee and full Council meetings.

Assets for Artists Collaboration: We are pleased to share that in FY22, we are once again partnering with MASS MoCA's Assets for Artists Program to offer a series of free online workshops to support artists' careers.

The workshops are focused on topics like publicity, optimizing your portfolio, submission to festivals, Instagram, gig work, and financial literacy. There is also a set of meetings/workshops for a BIPOC-only affinity group centered around collective action.

The workshops, which are free to Massachusetts artists, will take place online, March-August. Starting this year, Assets for Artists will record each session and offer a video of each one for registered participants for up to 60 days after the live event.

Folk Arts & Heritage: In the Traditional Arts Apprenticeships Program, 12 pairs of mentors and their apprentices are currently in year-two of their apprenticeships. Maggie and Daniel Jacobs are documenting three of these and producing short films highlighting the power of apprenticeships to safeguard artistic knowledge, skills, and expressive culture. FY23-24 Apprenticeship guidelines and application forms are currently being updated for the next cycle, which will open in early February.

Partnering on Public Programs: Maggie is once again collaborating with Revels, Inc. on a podcast series. To date we have recorded three new episodes featuring a traditional singer, an Indigenous composer and flute maker, and a Bharatanatyam dancer who founded the Triveni School of Dance 50 years ago, the first school of Indian dance in Massachusetts. The next Musical Connections podcast drops in January, with one more interview left to record.

Word is that the Lowell Folk Festival will return in late July 2022. We are gearing back up to program the Folk Craft area, which will feature musical instrument makers.

International programming: Traditional artist Balla Kouyaté was featured on the BBC's World Service In the Studio in late December. Maggie helped facilitate logistics and sources for the segment.

Service-related activities include chairing the Benjamin Botkin Prize Committee of the American Folklore Society and serving on the panel for the Southern New England Apprenticeship Program, a tri-state program between CT, RI, and MA. Maggie was elected as a Fellow of the American Folklore Society.

### CREATIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (CYD) & EDUCATION

The fall of 2021 has seen the re-launch of the core programming of the CYD/Education team including a new grant cycle for YouthReach, the META and CYD Fellowships, the STARS residency program. In addition, we are in the midst of a planning year for the future of the CYD BIPOC alumni council and the expansion of the CultureRx program.

YouthReach. After extending the current grant cycle by one year due to COVID-19 the Mass Cultural Council accepted applications for the next three-year cycle during the Fall of 2021. Throughout the Fall the CYD team was active in supporting applicants in developing applications and in recruiting new applicants including:

- Hosting two information sessions
- Offering a Logic Model webinar with Evaluation Consultant Julia Gittleman in partnership with EdVestors
- Offering individual one-one one logic model and evaluation tool consultations with 26 programs
- Offering preliminary grant reviews by Mass Cultural Council staff
- Working with Outreach coordinators

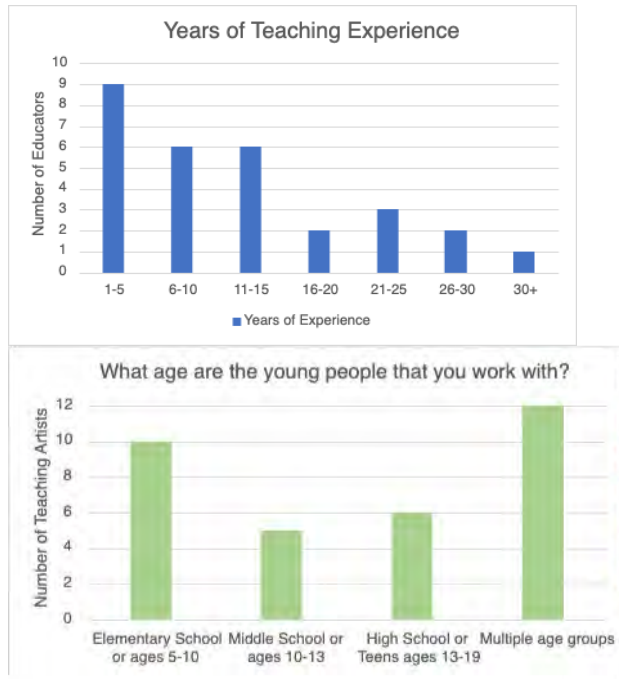
The result of this work was 30 new eligible applications, which is the second highest total in the 27-year history of the program. In addition, the new applicants represent considerable geographic diversity including:

- 6 from the North Shore/North of Boston
- 4 from the Berkshires
- 2 from Worcester
- 1 each from the Cape and South Shore (Brockton)

When paired with an existing cohort that has nearly doubled in size during the last two cycles, we see the new applicant pool as a strong sign of effective outreach and continued unmet need for our support in this area.

In addition to those 30 eligible new applications, we also received 32 applications for continued funding. That number does not include four organizations who will no longer be seeking further YouthReach support for their work.

The META Fellowship and the CYD Fellowship. In October 2021 we launched the third cohort of the Music Educator and Teaching Artist Fellowship, in collaboration with The Klarman Family Foundation, as well as the first full cohort of the Creative Youth Development Fellowship, in collaboration with the Linde Family Foundation. Both programs enrolled approximately 35 Fellows. As with previous cohorts, the Fellows represent a broad range of experience and teaching styles, which forms the foundation for collaborative learning.



In recruiting for the program, it became very evident that organizations were struggling to hire staff for open positions and that those Teaching Artists who were at organizations were being stretched to the point of not having capacity for professional development. The overall enrollment for both programs was lower than we expected, however, both cohorts are serving as essential communities for educators and teaching artists who are struggling with changing classroom guidance, youth who are experiencing increased levels of trauma, and mental health and burnout challenges amongst both youth and teaching staff.

Fellows have all participated in two sessions thus far, all virtual, including an orientation session with Eric Booth and a session on Racial Equity in Arts Learning with EA Strategic Partners. In the META Fellowship 95% of the respondents to our mid-year survey identified the first session as 'Valuable' or 'Very Valuable'. The second session, focused on Racial Equity in Arts Learning, 95% of Fellows identified the session as 'Relevant' or 'Very Relevant'. The CYD Fellowship, in its



inaugural year, had data that tracked consistently with META. One important note is how these teaching artists have responded to prompts at the beginning of sessions asking them to identify how they are entering the room. An overwhelming number of them are struggling and exhausted. Our sessions have been designed to give them space to find the supports they need to endure the current environment as part of a community while at the same time introducing new content. It's hard in these classrooms and these folks deserve every bit of support we can give them to sustain themselves and their practice.

CYD BIPOC Alumni Council. In 2021-22, the second planning year of CBAC will be focusing its efforts towards building stronger relationships within the field of CYD, between its youth, practitioners, and funders. Acknowledging that 80% of over 8000 young people served in CYD are disproportionately represented by white leaders and funders, it is essential that the three unique positions of CBAC investigate the issues that directly affect alumni and youth, report these findings to the field and Mass Cultural Council, and work as thought partners towards planning the structure and priorities of CBAC's future. Important changes this year streamline the responsibilities of Council members, therefore deepening their engagement in their special interests. This includes the creation of three special roles, individual projects goals, and BIPOC mentorship within Mass Cultural Council.

These roles include,

- Rajaiah Jones as Alumni Ambassador, will be a heavily front-facing position that works to create connections among practitioners and funders. Rajaiah will represent CBAC in CYD collective calls, meet with CYD organizations regarding their alumni networks, and facilitate a panel discussion on resources supporting young people's professional development as artists and creating pathways to CYD leadership. The Alumni Ambassador is mentored by Timothea Pham and Mina Kim on the Communities Team.
- Wize Angelique as Alumni Researcher, will be conducting a research study on the question, "How can CYD better address mental health?" The rising need for mental health services and resources for young people has led to CYD's growing purpose as a social work and social service space. However, the CYD field lacks the training and resources of formal services, and this question aims to address the strengths and weaknesses of different forms of practice. The alumni Researcher is mentored by many CYD researchers.

- Bendu David as Alumni Communications, will be generating social media content for and by alumni. In addition to sharing last year's CBAC's culminating zine through existing Mass Cultural Council communication channels, Bendu will also be gathering a network of contacts, including connecting with alumni, organizations, and other youth councils. The Alumni Communications role is mentored by Carmen Plazas on the Communications team.

CultureRx. The overall goal of this year is to help to build an ecosystem of cross-sector partnerships to assess and support the prescribing of social/cultural experiences as a health initiative. To best evaluate and support the ecosystem, we have created the following to help frame the initiative, to help identify best practices, and to assess the feasibility for replicating/scaling the program across Massachusetts.

This quarter we have:

- Hired an external evaluator, [Dr. Tasha Golden](#), who is the Senior Arts in Health Research Scientist at the [International Arts + Mind Lab](#) at the Johns Hopkins Brain Science Institute. She brings a wealth of expertise and support to the initiative.
- Selected our Task Force – a four-member advisory team for Social Prescription (Dr. Tasha Golden as lead) Full Member Bios are [here](#).
- Created the Social Prescription Research page. Click [here](#).
- Met with cross-sector partners such as:
  - Dr. Jill Sonke and her team at the University of Florida [Center for Arts in Medicine](#)
  - Dr. Susan Magsamen, Co-Director of The [NeuroArts Blueprint: Advancing the Science of Arts, Health, and Wellbeing](#)
  - London's [Culture Health and Wellbeing Alliance](#)
  - Adrienne Hundley, from Sewn Arts, in Georgia who is beginning the program of "Arts Pharmacy"
  - Lia Spiliotes, CEO, Community Health Programs, Inc., Berkshire County who has an interest in further partnering and marketing the work
  - "Arts in Health NE regional network meetings"
- Interviewed: Rachel Chen, from Harvard, interviewed us about Social Prescription. Emily Harris, Science & Health Journalist interviewed us for an article.
- Published: [Mass Cultural Council Social Prescription Blog Post](#)
- Attended: National Organization on Arts and Health Conference – October 19-21
- Presented: Arts & Government Happy Hour - national presentation - August 3, 2021, and Presented to the doctors and health providers at the Community Health Programs in the Berkshires – Dec. 15, 2021
- Offered: We were able to offer two trainings in DEIA (in collaboration with the UP Initiative) [Anti-Bias Trainings](#) (Focusing on Dignity and Whiteness)

with UBUNTU Research and Evaluation for the learning cohorts of UP, Card to Culture and CultureRx.

The Work of Dr. Golden and Task Force Members:

- Each Task Force member worked with three cultural organizations to review findings and complete interviews with each of their three organizations. After meeting, they created measurable outcomes and logistical solutions for each cultural organization.
- Dr. Golden then created individual plans, received additional feedback from the Task Force, and connected with all 12 organizations with the task of beginning evaluation strategies by Jan. 4, 2022. Goals include: 1. Learn how, when, whether, for whom programs are affecting health outcomes. 2. Learn how the program is working internally. 3. Learn how to grow, sustain, scale and replicate.

The following are the next steps for Social Prescription to meet these goals:

- Complete phone interviews with cultural organizations, to assess how the process is going and adapt as needed.
- Review partnerships, health care practices, and the CultureRx ecosystem to inform best practices, sustainability, and scaling
- FOCUS GROUPS: Meet with Social Prescription organizations and stakeholders to assess strengths, limitations, and next steps for the report.
- Arrange first convening with insurance/health care group
- Social Prescription Evaluation Consultant will draft, revise, and complete a final report - May 15, 2022.
- Design presentations and implement dissemination strategies.
- Provide recommendations to the Council for the future of social prescription.
- Second convening with insurance/health care group.

## EDUCATION

STARS Residencies. [STARS Residencies](#) provides grants to K-12 schools to fund creative learning residencies in the arts, sciences and humanities with a cultural partner. Any K-12 school in Massachusetts is eligible to apply. In this time of unprecedented challenges faced by schools, teachers, students and families, these residencies can provide important experiences of creativity, curiosity, and even joy for students, many of whom are experiencing emotional and social trauma at the two-year mark of the pandemic. In addition, the program provides much needed work for professional teaching artists, scientists and scholars across the state.

This year, we were able to run a full grant cycle (last year was half a year due to the state budget.) On December 3, grant award notices went out to 244 schools to let them know they would receive a STARS Residencies grant this

school year. These funds will support 160 cultural partners (a number of them work in more than one school.) For the first time in the history of the program, ALL eligible applications received a grant as our budget was able to fund them all because of a budget increase and fewer applications due to the very challenging year schools are having. This means that more than 23,000 students across the state will be working with a teaching artist, scientist, or scholar in creative learning anywhere from three days to all year. Schools and their cultural partners are always very appreciative of STARS funding, but in this difficult time for schools, students, and families, this funding is more important than ever.

Creative Minds Out of School. Creative Minds Out of School (CMOST) develops creativity, curiosity, and connection for young children through quality visual art making. The program provides free curriculum, training, and follow-up support in visual art teaching and learning to afterschool and out-of-school educators who work with children grades K-5. The training and curriculum are designed to help educators who may or may not have any experience themselves in making visual art. In the training, trainees participate in CMOST lessons so they can have the same experience that the children will have exploring materials and making their own art. The program is run for us by our partner, Innovation Learning Center, Inc. (ILC), who co-created the program with us.

Because schools and community programs have been operating in-person this school year, CMOST is back providing in-person trainings. To date, there have been 2 trainings with 35 educators trained:

- (Lynn, MA) Camp Fire North Shore <http://www.campfirenorthshore.org/>
- (Littleton, MA) Concord Area Special Education (CASE) Collaborative <https://www.casecollaborative.org/>

The CASE training was for educators working with special education students. ILC worked with educators to adapt the lessons to meet the varying needs of their students who have a wide range of abilities. Here is a quote from one attendee: *"This was a great training! I have so many ideas now on how to engage my non-verbal students using the Start with The Art approach. I also like how you reinforce that the student art can AND SHOULD be different. It will allow my kiddos to express themselves in a way that is as unique as they are and feel good about their creations. Thank you for the wonderful resource books too!"*

Trainings will continue throughout the next six months. The annual goal is to train 200 educators, who in-turn will bring visual art experiences to 3,000 children.

Poetry Out Loud. [Poetry Out Loud](#) is the national recitation competition for high school students created by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Poetry Foundation. The Huntington Theatre Education Department runs the program in Massachusetts for Mass Cultural Council. The program brings the power of culture into the lives of more than 20,000 young people across Massachusetts each year. By digging deep into poetry, the young people come

to understand the meaning of the poems they choose, and then bring that meaning to life through their own voices. They learn about their rich literary heritage, develop important skills in critical thinking and public speaking, and build self-confidence. And they share their love of poetry with their families and their friends.

The Huntington team has been working very hard this fall to reach out to schools who participated before as well as new schools. As you may expect, schools are working so hard just to keep up with normal operations that many don't have the time or staff resources to take on a school competition. Schools that are competing are getting extra consulting from Huntington as they take on a virtual contest. However, for the second year, the NEA is allowing cultural organizations to host competitions for students whose schools are not participating in the program. And, the program will continue to allow individual students to compete (those for whom their school isn't participating, or homeschool students.)

Last year, the program ran completely remotely –for regional, our state, and the national competitions. It worked remarkably well. The student performances were just as powerful on video as in-person, most likely because many of these young people are comfortable with the technology. This year, again, the NEA is running the national finals remotely, so our regional and finals competitions will also be by video (we replicate the national approach so that students have the same experience on the state and national levels.) The Huntington team has been working hard since August to recruit schools and provide any support teachers may need to run a program at their school. They report that 44 schools have registered for this year, approximately half of the number of schools in a normal year. In addition, 1 cultural organization and 9 individuals have registered.

This year, the Massachusetts Regional Semi-Finals Virtual Broadcast via Zoom will be Saturday, March 12 (time TBA); the Massachusetts State Finals Broadcast will be Sunday, March 13 (time TBA.) To watch the broadcast, go to the MA POL website: <https://www.huntingtontheatre.org/education/student-programs/poetry-out-loud/>

National History Day – Massachusetts. [National History Day - Massachusetts](#) is an affiliate of [National History Day](#), the competition for middle and high school students sponsored by the National History Day organization and supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Students choose a topic related to an annual theme, conduct research with primary and secondary sources, analyze and interpret their findings and then present their research by creating a documentary, performance, research paper, exhibit, or web site. Our state program is run by Mass Historical Society (MHS) with support funding from Mass Cultural Council. Last year, the program had to switch to a virtual

platform for the regional, state and national competitions due to the pandemic. This year's national contest will be virtual, and it looks like regionals will be, too; but, MHS is working with its state team of teacher coordinators and are hopeful that they can hold the state contest in person in May this year. This year's theme is "Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences." While MHS doesn't have participation numbers yet from this year, teachers in their fall survey estimated that about 2270 of students would be participating and about half of the schools of a typical year—assuming things don't change because of Omicron. MHS expects to see even more participation after registration closes in February. Last year a total of 2500 students participated, so this is very promising.

MHS reports that, thanks to support from Mass Cultural Council, they are able to:

- o Support students: They are offering again this year a virtual chat opportunity where students (and their teachers) can work one-on-one with MHS education staff to brainstorm solutions to research challenges and other pressing NHD questions.
- o Increase access: MHS can now offer fee waivers to students for whom the registration fee would pose a financial hardship
- o Support teachers: MHS is developing virtual workshops for teachers that make the process of student research accessible and rewarding for all learners. Workshops will be offered this spring with the goal of building back participation for NHD in the coming year.

Funds also pay important stipends to the teachers who dedicate countless hours as Student Workshop Volunteers and Regional Leaders to make this statewide competition successful.

Regional competitions will be held in late March and the statewide final will be held in April. Eighteen students from MA will compete in the National finals in June.

#### CULTURAL FACILITIES FUND (CFF)

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, 141 organizations had submitted an Intent to Apply the Cultural Facilities Fund for the FY22 grant round.

So far, the request to the Cultural Facilities Fund is \$22.8 million.

We have approximately \$9 million to grant in FY22.

Staff is holding office hours, having one-on-one meetings with applicants, and recruiting panelists.

The application deadline was January 14<sup>th</sup>, and announcements will be made in May.

#### UP: UNIVERSAL PARTICIPATION INITIATIVE.

Innovation and Learning Network 2022: 11 organizations were accepted into the Innovation and Learning Network (ILN) for this round. Arlington Center for the Arts (Arlington), Artist Book Foundation (North Adams), Beverly Main Streets (Beverly), Company One (Boston), Celebrity Series (Boston), Clark Institute (Williamstown), Danforth Art Museum (Framingham), Luminarium Dance (Boston), On With Living and Learning (Boston), SpeakEasy Stage (Boston), and Spark Kindness (Natick).

Running February 1<sup>st</sup> through May 24<sup>th</sup>, the ILN will be hosting weekly peer learning sessions, weekly office hours, and provide supplemental materials via the Partners for Youth with Disabilities online module. Founding partners, the Institute for Human Centered Design and Open Door Arts (formerly VSA Mass) will be reviewing the 2022 curriculum and measuring impact for fine tuning and redirection strategies for 2023 and beyond.

UP Designation 2022: Four organizations were redesignated at the five year reapplication requirement: Community Access to the Arts (Great Barrington), The Mount (Lenox), Tower Hill Botanic Garden (Boylston), and the Cape Cod Theatre Project (Falmouth). With staff and facility changes the Danforth Art Museum opted to go through the Learning Network again to achieve UP Designation and the Outside the Box Festival closed after the death of its major funder, Ted Cutler. Three new organizations applied for Designation and were accepted: Empowerment through the Arts (Shutesbury), Jacob's Pillow (Beckett), and Sea the World, Martha's Vineyard Film Festival (Chilmark).

Innovation Fund 2022: Twenty-seven applications were received for the 3K Innovation Fund. Project range from DEIA staff training and web advancements to language inclusion and decolonizing education programs.

UP Office Hours: these monthly 9am conversations have proved to be popular and informative. Sessions have been designed around recipients of last year's Innovation Fund with topics ranging from tech advancements to support audiences and artists to production planning embodying access principles.

#### Cultural Equity and Access Initiative

UBUNTU: The 3 Learning Networks of the Mass Cultural Council (UP, RX, and Card to Culture) came together for a 3 part anti-bias training led by UBUNTU Research and Evaluation out of Milwaukee WI. Part 3, sessions designed for staff roles within cultural institutions, will occur in February.

Card to Culture: As organizations reopened, and the economy reacted, the Card to Culture program was actively in use at the close of the calendar year. There are some delays getting 2022 started with a new sign up, changing health

indicators, and a return to virtual offerings for many programs.

Local: the UP Initiative continues to provide one on one consultations. Working with local leaders, the Art Access Hub is in development with Open Door Arts, facilitating a central hub for institutional knowledge and sustainability.

Regional: to strengthen the network, the UP Initiative has taken the lead to connect with Access Coordinators from the New England states cultural agencies for quarterly meetings with Cultural Access New England (CANE).

National: monthly strategy meetings/temperature checks with a National cohort; includes the Smithsonian Institute, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the NEA Office on Accessibility.



# Racial Equity Progress Report

October 2021 – January 2022

## ONGOING HIGHLIGHTS

- Cultural Equity & Access team created - [blog post available online](#).
- Michael presented the Racial Equity Plan for members of the Joint Committee on Racial Equity, Civil Rights and Inclusion and Philanthropy MA. [Recording of the Philanthropy MA presentation is available online](#).

## OPERATIONALIZING INTERNAL EQUITY

- Updated job postings to include inclusive language, Equal Employer Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action statements and focused job descriptions to only include necessary requirements.
- Prioritized finding candidates that are a “values fit” rather than a “culture fit” by creating objective interview assessments that evaluate the candidate’s ability to do the job in an impartial manner.
- Operationalized anti-racism values in hiring process intended to train and guide hiring selection teams in applying and ensuring an equitable hiring process and candidate experience.
- Created training materials and diversity-related questions to help hiring teams identify unconscious biases and analyze how biases can impact decision-making when recruiting and hiring qualified candidates.

## WORKING WITH BIPOC OUTREACH COORDINATORS

Four BIPOC Outreach Coordinators were selected to work toward two main objectives:

- Spread awareness about the Agency’s current programs and services
- Gather feedback about unmet needs of various BIPOC communities in the Commonwealth

These are our BIPOC Outreach Coordinators and their self-identified engagement goals. Read more about them on the [Power of Culture Blog](#).



Tran Vu

- Flyer various AAPI communities and meeting spaces with Mass Cultural materials to promote awareness.
- Support the Agency's AAPI Program Coordinator in engaging with possibly eligible entities for the upcoming program established through a legislative earmark sponsored by Members of the House Asian Caucus.

Erika Slocumb

- Expand cultural connections to artists in Central and Eastern MA and cultural organizations in general.
- Collaborate with fellow Outreach Coordinators on events to increase reach and accessibility and accommodate intersectionality.

Erin Genia

- Focus on how Mass Cultural can support cultural revitalization in Indigenous communities.
- Develop relationships between the Agency and the MA Office of Indian Affairs and other tribal and heritage leaders.

Ana Masacote

- Source potential panelists for the Cultural Facilities Fund program.
- Design a resource guide of key information and support available to artists and LCCs.

### CREATING SYSTEMS TO COLLECT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The individual demographics survey is voluntary, and was completed by 3,652 individuals representing applicants, organization contacts and vendors. All the questions in the survey can be skipped, so we do not (and most likely will not) have every data point on every person. The racial data collected so far is represented below in a table, comparing our percentages to those of the Commonwealth.

Racial Identity	Mass Cultural Data (% of respondents)	MA census Information (% of population)
White	62%	71%
Black	5%	9%
Latina/o	4%	12%
Asian	3%	7%
Native American	0.4%	0.5%
Pacific Islander	0.02%	0.1%
Multi-racial	3%	2%
Middle Eastern	0.5%	no data
"Jewish"	0.3%	n/a
"human"	0.2%	100%
no response	22%	n/a

#### DEVELOPING IDENTIFICATION OF BIPOC-CENTERED ORGANIZATIONS

- BIPOC-centered organizations:
  - Can demonstrate that the organization's primary Mission, Programming and/or Practices explicitly and specifically reflect and serve one or more communities that self-identify as BIPOC.

*(Community can be defined as any group that your organization is intentionally working to serve. E.g. Members, students, artists, participants, audience, geographic community, ethnic heritage or cultural tradition)*

- Are also led and run by members of BIPOC communities.

For the purposes of this criteria, we use the term **BIPOC** (Black, Indigenous and People of Color). BIPOC is intended to include, but not limit to:

- People of Color
- ALAANA - African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.
- AAPI – Asian American and Pacific Islander
- Latinx - Latina, Latino, and Hispanic
- Native Americans - (Tribal and Urban), First Americans, Indigenous Peoples)

- MENA – Middle East and North African
- People of the Global Majority

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

- Pay Equity Assessment - Pay is being reviewed, and plans are being formulated to address manager and NAGE salaries, if needed.
- Full review of all grantmaking practices.
- Translation services – Exploring a service that would provide real time language interpretation of meetings and webinars to supplement the translation services available for our website and grant applications.
- Rollout of BIPOC-centered Organization Self-identification.
- Base-level anti-racism training for the field is being developed by Cultural Equity Learning Community (CELC).



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To: Mass Cultural Council  
Fr: David Slatery  
Date: January 27, 2022  
Re: FY22 Mid-Year Financial Update

Following this memo are budget spreadsheets for FY22.

We are now just over halfway through the fiscal year, and our spending is on target or below in most accounts. Typically, non-grant spending lags in the first half of the year.

As Council members can see, we have adopted a new format for presenting financial information which is hopefully more in line with what other organizations present. Earlier in the fall, we hired a new Fiscal Information and Compliance Officer, Tom Luongo. Tom's charge, among other items related to helping us with audits and compliance matters, is to help us present our financial information in a clear manner to the Council and others. The attached spreadsheet is a first shot at a new format, so if there are any questions or comments, Council members are welcome and encouraged to provide feedback.

Some things to note generally about the FY22 Spending Plan approved last August and which are reflected in the attached spreadsheet.

- After we had developed the FY22 Spending Plan, the Commonwealth announced that it had reached an agreement with the union representing about half of the employees at Mass Cultural Council to increase wages retroactively and provide other one-time payments. Additionally, the Commonwealth implemented a similar plan for managers in the Commonwealth. These adjustments were not known to us when developing our spending plan and were not provided for. But the Commonwealth's Executive Office for Administration has since made available sufficient funds through a collective bargaining reserve (approximately \$228,000) which allowed for the implementation of the salary adjustments. Both the adjustments and the additional funds are reflected in the in or spreadsheet.
- Due to ongoing effects of the pandemic, not all of the amounts made available for the STARS grant program were able to be granted (approximately \$1.158 million was awarded out of \$1.265 million allocated for the program).

Such funds have been re-allocated to other program services and those amounts are reflected in the spreadsheet.

- -Since the spending plan was approved, we have finalized agreements with the Klarman Family Foundation and the Linde Foundation around fund the META and CYD Fellowship Programs. The attached spreadsheet reflects receipt and expenditures of and additional \$50,000 and \$60,000, respectively (and are described in the Agency Updates memo contained in this Meeting Book).

*Gaming Funds:* As will be noted elsewhere in the Meeting Book in the memo seeking approval of adding \$675,000 to the upcoming round of the Gaming Mitigation Program, casino tax revenues in the second half of 2021 received by the agency have been higher than originally estimated- approximately \$2.44 million has been received from July1 through December 2021 casino operations. As the Council is aware, casino tax revenues go in to one of three buckets-operating expenses (up to 7%), Gaming Mitigation Program (75% after expenses) and for support of cultural organizations generally (25% after expenses). Putting aside the casino tax revenues which were approved as part of the FY22 spending plan, we are using the additional revenues to build a reserve for future years for expenses (\$246,000) and for future rounds of the Gaming Mitigation Fund (\$572,000) in FY 23. Additionally, of the \$1 million in "organizational support" funds the Council voted to use in support of the FY22 Spending Plan, we have received over \$680,000 of such amount in the first half of the year.

*State Audit.* As previously reported, we were notified by the State Auditor in May 2021 that they would be undertaking an audit of Mass Cultural Council. The State Auditor reviewed the 16-month period from March 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. While it was a general performance audit, it especially focused on procedures related to our handling of Covid-19 Relief Funds including the \$10 million in federal CARES Act funds made available by Governor Baker through the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) which provided for the Cultural Organization Economic Recovery Grants (COERG) Program in late 2020 and our Individual Artist Relief Programs which ran in each of FY20 and FY21.

Staff spoke and met (via virtual platform) extensively with State Auditor staff over the latter half of 2021. An Exit Conference was held in mid -December. Chair Nina Fialkow and Vice Chair, Marc Carroll along with Michael Bobbitt, Dave Slatery and Tom Luongo attended on behalf of the agency. In the conference, the state auditor staff expressed appreciation for the cooperation they had received from agency staff during the process. We believe we had a fairly positive audit but the audit staff did not the following four items:

1. The Auditor felt Council staff could have done more to verify residence and losses suffered by applicants to the Individual Artist Relief Programs. This represents a differing view about program design. We had deliberately made a decision to rely upon the assertion of losses and residency by applicants when

determining eligibility (subject of course to potential future verification) when evaluating applicants. If we had done the more extensive checking suggested by the Auditor, we likely would have had insufficient staff and time to run the program as designed.

2. The audit staff noted used \$39,400 leftover from the COERG program (there was a large tie in the funding list for the next eligible organizations so that dividing up this amount would have resulted in minimal grants) to make an additional 26 \$1500 grants under the Individual Artist Relief Program in FY21. While we had oral permission to make use of these leftover funds from EOHED as we saw fit, the auditor noted there was no written authority to so use such funds in such manner.
3. The Auditor noted that the agency's internal controls plan was out of date and needed to be updated. As noted above, we hired a Fiscal Information and Compliance Officer, Tom Luongo, to focus on that task and he is working on it now awaiting the final Audit Report.
4. The Auditor noted that all Council staff should undertake cybersecurity awareness training offered by the Commonwealth. Such training was not available to the Council as an independent agency (In fact an agency staff member had tried to take such training prior to the Audit and were not permitted to). We have recently obtained access to such training and the entire staff is in the process of completing it within the next two weeks.
5. There may be other smaller issues but these were the four that were highlighted in the Exit Conference

We had originally thought an audit report was going to be issued around the time of the Exit Conference referenced above but we were informed then that it would be issued sometime in the late January-February timeframe.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are any further questions.

	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET
FY22 MCC BUDGET by LINE ITEM	FY22	FY22	FY22	FY22	FY22	FY22
						%
					VARIANCE- Actual	VARIANCE- Actual
Category	BOARD APPROVED	PROJECTED	EXPENDED	Budgeted	expenses compared to the	expenses compared to the
	Tuesday, August 24, 2021	as of 12/31/2021	as of 12/31/2021	as of 12/31/2021	Council Approved Budget	Council Approved Budget
AA-SALARIES, etc.	\$3,334,290	\$3,562,533	\$1,611,517	\$1,667,145	-\$55,628	48%
BB-TRAVEL / DPA STAFF DEVELOPMENT	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$4,726	\$10,500	-\$5,774	23%
CC-INTERNS	\$99,540	\$99,540	\$12,111	\$49,770	-\$37,659	12%
DD-MEDICARE / UNEMPLOYMENT	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$21,381	\$25,000	-\$3,619	43%
EE-ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	\$179,950	\$227,850	\$23,777	\$89,975	-\$66,198	13%
GG-RENT/UTILITIES	\$354,010	\$354,010	\$193,673	\$177,005	\$16,668	55%
HH-ADMIN CONSULTANTS	\$214,610	\$214,610	\$91,661	\$107,305	-\$15,645	43%
HH-PROGRAM CONSULTANTS	\$88,000	\$101,550	\$0	\$44,000	-\$44,000	0%
JJ-AUXILIARY CONSULTANTS	\$269,820	\$314,820	\$32,098	\$134,910	-\$102,813	12%
KK-OFFICE EQUIPMENT (Non-IT)	\$1,860	\$1,860	\$920	\$930	-\$10	49%
LL-EQUIPMENT LEASES / MAINTENANCE	\$25,500	\$25,500	\$2,570	\$12,750	-\$10,180	10%
UU-IT/ TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$146,580	\$146,580	\$35,999	\$73,290	-\$37,291	25%
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>\$1,280,330</b>	<b>\$1,386,780</b>	<b>\$380,696</b>	<b>\$640,165</b>	<b>-\$259,469</b>	<b>30%</b>
PP-GRANT PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES	\$21,689,758	\$21,693,308	\$4,236,220	\$10,844,879	-\$6,608,659	20%
PP-PARTNERSHIPS AND RE-GRANT PROGRAMS	\$834,886	\$834,886	\$0	\$417,443	-\$278,295	0%
PP-SERVICE PROJECTS	\$130,000	\$130,000	\$0	\$65,000	-\$43,333	0%
SP-LEGISLATIVE EARMARKS	\$1,375,000	\$1,375,000	\$0	\$687,500	-\$458,333	0%
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS PER SOURCE</b>	<b>\$24,029,644</b>	<b>\$24,033,194</b>	<b>\$4,236,220</b>	<b>\$12,014,822</b>	<b>-\$7,388,621</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>+ TOTAL ADMINISTRATION COSTS PER SOURCE</b>	<b>\$4,930,562</b>	<b>\$5,265,255</b>	<b>\$2,175,833</b>	<b>\$2,537,982</b>	<b>-\$216,747</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>= TOTAL OBLIGATIONS AMOUNT PER SOURCE</b>	<b>\$28,960,206</b>	<b>\$29,298,449</b>	<b>\$6,412,053</b>	<b>\$14,552,804</b>	<b>-\$7,605,368</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>AVAILABLE FUNDS PER SOURCE</b>	<b>\$28,960,206</b>	<b>\$29,298,449</b>	<b>\$28,960,206</b>	<b>\$28,960,206</b>	<b>\$28,960,206</b>	
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>-\$22,548,153</b>	<b>-\$14,407,402</b>	<b>\$21,354,838</b>	
<b>Program Cost Percentage</b>						<b>83%</b>
<b>Administrative Cost Percentage</b>						<b>17%</b>





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## ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS - JANUARY 2022

To: Mass Cultural Council  
From: Michael J. Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jenifer Lawless, Kelly Bennett, Dan Blask, Maggie Holtzberg  
Date: January 27, 2022  
Re: FY22 Artist Fellowships (first deadline)

Enclosed for your review and approval are recommendations for 21 fellowship awards (\$15,000) and 38 finalist awards (\$5,000, including one honorary finalist award with no funding attached) from a total of 383 eligible applications for the FY22 Artist Fellowships panels in Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts.

Following this memo are award recommendations from our recent grant panels, including lists of panelists.

In most fiscal years, we offer Artist Fellowships in six disciplines, with disciplines divided over two deadlines. The deadline for applications in Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts was October 25, 2021.

Currently, we are accepting applications in three other categories: Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting. The deadline to apply in those categories is January 24, 2022. We will hold review panels in April, and recommendations from those panels will be presented at the May Grants Committee and Council meetings.

Due to an increased investment in the Artist Fellowships this fiscal year (as a result of the increase in the annual state budget appropriation), we plan to award double the monetary grants this fiscal year- from 75 grants in FY21 to 150 in FY22.

Diversity. In keeping with the Agency's three-year Racial Equity Plan to evaluate each program through an equity lens and based upon new

information that is available to us for this round, we wanted to report on the diversity of the recent Artist Fellowships review.

#### Review Panels:

Among the panelists and readers for Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts, 17 of 24 reviewers identified as BIPOC, or about 71%.

#### Awardees:

Among the recommended Fellows and Finalists for Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts, 27 of 59 identified as BIPOC, or about 46%. Looking only at the recommended Fellows (\$15,000), the number of BIPOC awardees is 14 out of 21, or about 67%. As a reminder, the review of applicants' submissions is done on an anonymous basis. Neither the artist's identity, nor their demographic characteristics, are introduced into the review.

#### Pool of Applicants:

As you may know, we moved to a new grants management system this year, with the capability to track applicants' demographic data. The following chart reflects applicants to the Artist Fellowships in Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts, including those who did not complete the demographic questions (39%), as well as data on the 61% that did. (Please note that the total below includes some ineligible applications; the total eligible applications in these three categories was 383.)

152	No info	39%
158	White	41%
76	BIPOC	20%
386		100%

Artist Fellowships Overview. The Artist Fellowships provide direct, unrestricted support to artists in recognition of creative work by Massachusetts artists. Mass Cultural Council has awarded Artist

Fellowships almost continuously since FY75. The award level has ranged from \$3,000 to its current level of \$15,000 (the highest in the program's history).

There are twelve artistic disciplines in the Artist Fellowships, with six reviewed each year so that every category recurs every other year. Even year categories are Choreography, Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, Painting, Poetry, and Traditional Arts. Odd year categories are Crafts, Dramatic Writing, Film & Video, Music Composition, Photography, and Sculpture/Installation/New Genres.

Outreach. To encourage a broad applicant pool, we promote the availability of the awards in multiple ways. We announce the grants in the Artist News e-newsletter (10,000+ subscribers), as well as in the Community Initiative (almost 6,000 subscribers) and Power of Culture (12,000+ subscribers) e-newsletters. The Communications Department does media outreach and extensive social media communication to promote the grants.

In FY22, the grants were also broadly promoted by Mass Cultural Council's BIPOC Community Outreach Coordinators.

Review Process and Criteria. The review criteria for Artist Fellowships (except Traditional Arts) are *artistic quality* and *creative ability*, based solely on the work submitted. Except in Traditional Arts, grant panels review the applications anonymously. No aspect of the applicants' biography, career, geography, or other identifying information is introduced into the review. The applications' work samples are scored by each panelist on a five-point scale.

(Please note: Traditional Arts is not anonymously-judged and has slightly different criteria: artistic quality as culturally defined by the living tradition; significance to members of the community in which the art is valued and practiced; and artist's role in safeguarding the tradition.)

After applications are scored by the panels, a ranked list is given to the panel to make its final funding recommendations. In the case of a tie, panelists determine which of the tied applicants receive the award through a discussion and vote. The funding lists that follow this memo reflect the award recommendations that emerged from each panel.

## Choreography

### Recommended Fellows and Finalists

Total Applications: 61

Fellows: \$15,000

Jean Appolon	Malden
Chavi Bansal Vimoksha	Boston
Allison Kenner Brodsky	Dartmouth
Jun Kuribayashi	Boston
Rebecca McGowan & Jackie O'Riley	Arlington
Ana Masacote	Lynn
Lori Schouela & Junichi Fukuda	Cambridge
Michael Sakamoto	Amherst

Finalists: \$5,000

Tyler Rai Abramson	Holyoke
Diane Arvanites	Framingham
Adriane Anne Brayton & Fernadina Chan	Boston
Kelley S. Donovan	Cambridge
Avery Gerhardt	Cambridge
Anna S. Myer	Chelsea
Aaron Myers	Boston
Sunanda Narayanan	Newton
Ellice Patterson	Brookline
Jennifer Polins	Northampton
Laura Sanchez	Everett
Tom James Truss III	Great Barrington
Sarah Zehnder	Springfield

## Choreography Panel January 6, 2022

### Panelists

Angie Hauser

Orlando Hernández

Adriana Suarez

Lester Tomé

Ilya Vidrin

Mass Cultural Council Fellow

Tap Dancer

Assoc. Prof. of Dance, Boston Conservatory

Assoc. Prof., Dance, Latino/a Studies, Smith College

Mass Cultural Council Fellow

## FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Choreography

### RECIPIENTS

Jean Appolon

Malden, MA

<https://jeanappolonexpressions.org/>



*From TRAKA by Jean Appolon Expressions/Photo credit: Wayne Lake*

Chavi Bansal Vimoksha

Boston, MA

<https://www.chavibansal.org/>



Dartmouth, MA

<http://www.alikennerbrodsky.com/>



*From EDIT by Ali Kenner Brodsky/Photo credit: Glenn Pokraka*

Jun Kuribayashi

Boston, MA

<https://www.hybridmotion.us/>





Lynn, MA

<https://www.anamasacote.com>



*Ana Masacote*

Rebecca McGowan and Jackie O'Riley

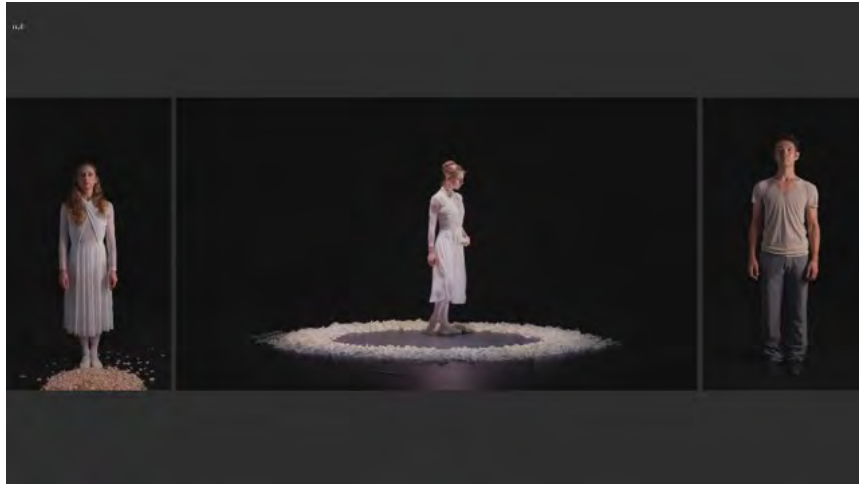
Arlington, MA

<https://www.fromthefloordance.com/>



Cambridge, MA

<https://lorischouela.com/home.html>



*From HEAVEN AND EARTH: A DIALOGUE BETWEEN WORLDS by Lori Schouela & Junichi Fukuda*

Michael Sakamoto

Amherst, MA

<http://michaelsakamoto.org>



## FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Choreography

### FINALISTS

Tyler Rai Abramson

Holyoke, MA

<https://www.tylerrai.com>



*Tyler Rai Abramson*

Diane Arvanites

Framingham, MA



*From ECHO by Diane Arvanites*

Boston, MA



*From CROSSING: STORIES OF IMMIGRATION by Adriane Anne Brayton and Fernandina Chan*

Kelley S. Donovan

Cambridge, MA

<https://kddcompany.wordpress.com/>



*From TRANSITIONAL STATES by Kelley S. Donovan*

Cambridge, MA



*From 1134: A STUDY ON LOADBEARING by Avery Gerhardt*

Anna S. Myer

Chelsea, MA

<https://www.beheard.world>



*From WATERMARK by Anna S. Myer*



Boston, MA

<https://beantownlockers.biz>



*From FUNKY FRIDAY FINALE by Aaron Myers*

Sunanda Narayanan  
Newton, MA

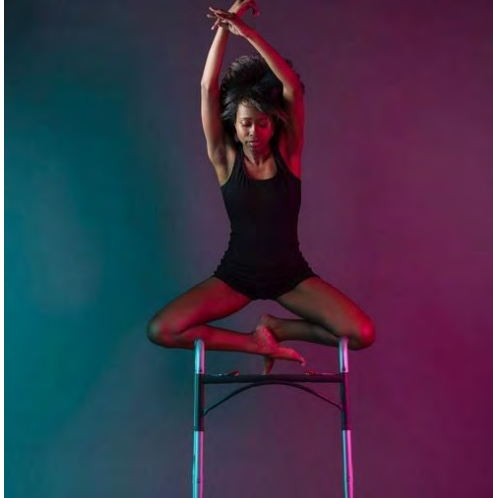


*Sunanda Narayanan*

Ellice Patterson

Brookline, MA

<https://www.abilitiesdanceboston.org>



*Ellice Patterson of Abilities Dance*

Jennifer Polins

Northampton, MA



Laura Sanchez  
Everett, MA  
<http://www.lsflamenco.com/>



*From LA PALOMA (THE DOVE) by Laura Sanchez*

Tom James Truss III  
Great Barrington, MA





Sarah Zehnder  
Springfield, MA



*From PERMEATING VOICES THAT LINGER by Sarah Zehnder*

## Poetry Recommended Fellows and Finalists

Total Applications: 295

Fellows: \$15,000

Levi Cain	Boston
Wendy Drexler	Belmont
Fay Ferency	Hull
Tatiana Johnson-Boria	Framingham
Danielle Legros Georges	Boston
JR Mahung	Boston
Rajiv Mohabir	Malden
Jessica Rizkallah	Boston
Claudia Wilson	Northampton

Finalists: \$5,000

Shauna Barbosa	Boston
Karina Borowicz	Belchertown
Elizabeth Bradfield	Truro
Margot Douaihy	Northampton
Regie F. Gibson	Lexington
Jennifer Jean	Peabody
Daniel Johnson	Boston
Danielle Jones	Salem
Joy Ladin	Hadley
Xiaoly Li	Wilmington
Janet MacFadyen	Amherst
L.S. McKee	Cambridge
Kevin McLellan	Cambridge
David Parkison	Lynn
Julia Story	Somerville

Poetry Panel  
January 5, 2022

Panelists

José Angel Araguz	Editor-in-Chief, <i>Salamander</i>
Lillian-Yvonne Bertram	Director, Chautauqua Institution Writers' Festival
Anna Maria Hong	Poet and Editor
Marwa Helal	Whiting Writers Awardee, Poet and Journalist

Readers

Yasmine Ameli	Poet
Teresa Cader	Poet
Erica Charis-Molling	Mass Cultural Council Fellow
CMarie Fuhrman	Editor, <i>Native Voices Anthology</i>
Octavio González	Poet and Scholar
Krysten Hill	Mass Cultural Council Fellow
Simone John	Mass Cultural Council Fellow
Leslie Sainz	National Endowment for the Arts Fellow
Aaron Smith	Mass Cultural Council Fellow
Jessica Q. Stark	Poetry Editor, AGNI
Jennifer Tseng	Mass Cultural Council Fellow

## FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Poetry

### RECIPIENTS

Levi Cain

Boston, MA

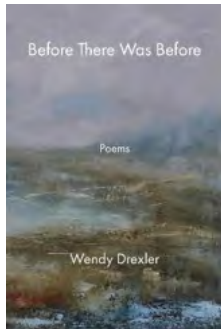
<https://levicain.wordpress.com/>



Wendy Drexler

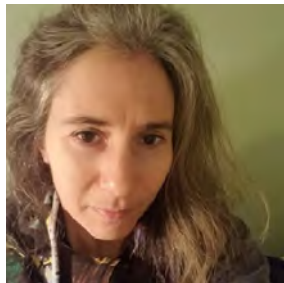
Belmont, MA

<https://wendydrexlerpoetry.com/>



Fay Ferency

Hull, MA



Tatiana Johnson-Boria

Framingham, MA

<http://johnsonboriacreative.com/>



Danielle Legros Georges

Boston, MA

<https://www.daniellelegrosgeorges.com>

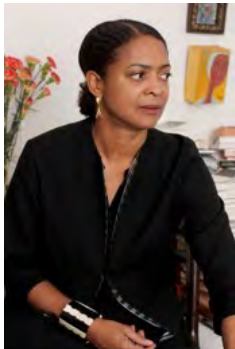


Photo by Jennifer Waddel

JR Mahung

Boston, MA

<https://www.jrmahung.com/>



Rajiv Mohabir

Malden, MA

<http://www.rajivmohabir.com>



Jessica Rizkallah

Boston, MA

<https://www.jessrizkallah.com/>



Claudia Wilson

Northampton, MA



## FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Poetry

### FINALISTS

Shauna Barbosa

Boston, MA

<https://www.shaunabarbosa.com/>



Karina Borowicz

Belcherown, MA

<https://karinaborowicz.com/>



Elizabeth Bradfield

Truro, MA

<https://ebradfield.com/bio>



Margot Douaihy

Northampton, MA

<http://www.margotdouaihy.com/>



Regie F. Gibson

Lexington, MA

<http://www.regiegibson.com/>



Jennifer Jean

Peabody, MA

<https://jenniferjeanwriter.weebly.com/>





Daniel Johnson

Boston, MA

<https://masspoetry.org/team/johnson-daniel/>



Danielle Jones

Salem, MA

<https://masspoetry.org/team/danielle-jones/>



Joy Ladin

Hadley, MA

<https://joyladin.wordpress.com/>



Xiaoly Li  
Wilmington, MA



Janet MacFadyen  
Amherst, MA



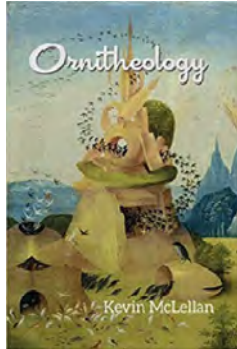
L.S. McKee  
Cambridge, MA  
<https://lsmckee.com/index.html>



Kevin McLellan

Cambridge, MA

<https://kevmcclellan.com/>



David Parkison (aka D. Eric Parkison)

Lynn, MA



Julia Story

Somerville, MA

<https://www.julia-story.com/>



## Traditional Arts Recommended Fellows and Finalists

Total Applications: 27

Fellows: \$15,000

John J. Abarta	Stoughton
Beth Bahia Cohen	Watertown
Sandeep Das	Chestnut Hill
Eirini Tornesaki	Westwood

Finalists: \$5,000

Hartman Deetz	Mashpee
Stephen Earp	Shelburne
Sarah M. Guerin	Wakefield
DoYeon Kim	Boston
Geoffrey Kostecki	Montague
Zhonghe Li	Cambridge
Ivelisse Pabon	Ashland
Rebecca McGowan *	Arlington
Jun Qin	Weston
Soumya Rajaram	Lexington

\*Because this artist is recommended to receive a \$15,000 Fellowship in Choreography, the recommended Finalist designation in Traditional Arts is honorary, with no funding attached.

Traditional Arts Panel  
January 4, 2022

Panelists

Ju-Yong Ha

Asst. Prof. of Music, Hillyer College

Neena Dhanda Gulati

Mass Cultural Council Fellow

Rebecca Miller

Prof. of Music, Humanities, Arts, Cultural Studies, Hampshire College

Mildred L. Rahn

Folklorist

## FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Traditional Arts

### RECIPIENTS

John J. Abarta  
Stoughton, MA

<https://www.facebook.com/joeyabarta>

*Irish Uilleann piper and teacher*



Sandeep Das  
Chestnut Hill, MA

[www.Sandeepdas.com](http://www.Sandeepdas.com)

*Tabla: North Indian Classical Percussion*



RECIPIENTS

Beth Bahia Cohen

Watertown, MA

[www.bethbahiacohen.com](http://www.bethbahiacohen.com)

*Greek Traditional Music on Violin*



Eirini Tornesaki

Westwood, MA

<https://www.erinimusic.com>

*Greek Traditional Songs from Asia Minor*



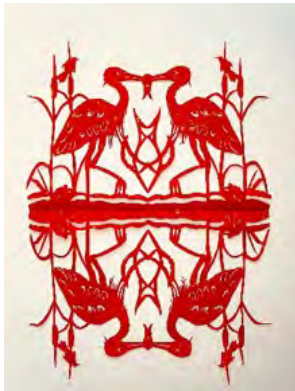
## FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Traditional Arts

### FINALISTS

Zhonghe Li  
Cambridge, MA

[www.wildcraneblog.wordpress.com](http://www.wildcraneblog.wordpress.com).

*Chinese papercutting*



Hartman Deetz  
Mashpee, MA

[www.ockwaybaywampum.com](http://www.ockwaybaywampum.com)

*Wampanoag wampum, wood, stone, copper, feathers bone & leather work*





Jun Qin  
Weston, MA

*Chinese gu zheng playing*



Soumya Rajaram  
Lexington, MA

*Bharatanatyam -Classical dance from Southern India*



Stephen Earp  
Shelburne, MA

[www.stephenearp.com](http://www.stephenearp.com)

*Redware pottery*



DoYeon Kim  
Boston, MA

<https://www.facebook.com/doyeon.musician/>

*Korean Traditional Music on the Gayageum (zither)*



Sarah M. Guerin  
Wakefield, MA

<http://www.saboteuse.com/>

Western Bootmaking



Ivelisse Pabon  
Ashland, MA

[www.freewebs.com/soy-negra-production/](http://www.freewebs.com/soy-negra-production/)

*Puerto Rican Dollmaking*



Rebecca McGowan  
Arlington, MA

[www.rebeccamcgowandance.com](http://www.rebeccamcgowandance.com)

*Irish Dance*



Geoffrey Kostecki  
Montague, MA

[www.masterliturgicaldesign.com](http://www.masterliturgicaldesign.com)

*Liturgical Art Restoration*





*Power of culture*

To: Mass Cultural Council  
From: Michael Bobbitt, Dave Slatery, Jen Lawless, Cheyenne Cohn-Postell, Sara Glidden  
Date: January 27, 2022  
Re: FY22 Gaming Mitigation Program

The Commonwealth's Casino Gaming Law (MGL Chapter 23K) provides that 2% of the gross gaming tax revenues be transferred to the Massachusetts Cultural and Performing Arts Mitigation Trust Fund for, among other things, the administration of the Gaming Mitigation Program. In May 2021, staff sought approval from the Council for the FY22 round of funding for the Gaming Mitigation. Due to lengthy analysis of the application data and more robust than expected collection of casino tax revenues in 2021, these grants will now be funded in February 2022. Staff is requesting the allocation of an additional \$675,000 to the total amount to be awarded in this round of funding and to approve the 39 individual grants listed below.

#### Background

At the Council meeting in May 2021, the updated Gaming Mitigation Program guidelines and award total were approved. This proposal included the following modifications to the program from the first round of funding in 2020:

- Clarifying definition of touring artist to include more measurable and inclusive criteria.
- Creating a template for organizations to use to report performance/artist information to standardize information and consolidate two application questions into one document.
- Moving the performance and fee reporting to calendar year 2019 to avoid the impact of COVID-19.
- Allocating \$3,000,000 to the second (FY22) cycle of the program.

### Summary of FY22 cycle

A total of 39 applications were successfully submitted to the FY22 Gaming Mitigation Program cycle. All submitted applications were reviewed by staff and deemed eligible for funding.

Of the 39 applicants, three (3) are new to the program, and one (1) of those three (3) had never previously received Mass Cultural funding. Of the 52 applications from the first cycle, 12 applicants did not return to complete another application. We are working to understand why these 12 organizations did not reapply.

As the applicant pool is smaller this round of the program, we have maintained the maximum grant amount of \$250,000 but have increased the minimum grant amount from \$1,000 to \$2,500 to fund a larger percentage of the fees paid to eligible touring artists for smaller organizations, vastly increasing their buying power.

### Approval request

To provide this vital funding in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, staff is seeking approval for an additional \$675,000 to be added to the \$3,000,000 approved at the May Council meeting. These additional funds, which are available to a more robust than anticipated collection of Casino tax revenues in the past months, will help fund a larger percentage of the fees these performing arts centers have already paid to touring artists for performances that took place, as well as those that have been cancelled due to breakthrough covid cases. These additional funds are available because of the robust business of the two Massachusetts casinos in the second half of 2021 and the resulting greater-than-expected amount of available revenues for the program.

With the additional funds, staff recommends grants to the organizations and in the amount listed on Exhibit A for the FY22 Gaming Mitigation Program.

The Executive Committee and Grants Committee reviewed these requests at their meetings on January 13 and recommended, respectively, approval by the Council of an additional allocation of \$675,000 to this round of funding and the 39 grants listed on Exhibit A.

EXHIBIT A			
#	Organization	City	Grant Amount
1	47 Palmer, Inc.	Cambridge	\$ 51,300
2	ArtsEmerson: The World On Stage	Boston	\$ 183,300
3	Ashmont Hill Chamber Music, Inc.	Dorchester	\$ 2,500
4	BAMS Fest, Inc.	Boston	\$ 2,500
5	Barrington Stage Company, Inc.	Pittsfield	\$ 4,800
6	Berkshire Theatre Group, Inc.	Pittsfield	\$ 7,400
7	Blues to Green, Inc.	Huntington	\$ 7,500
8	Boston Baroque, Inc.	Boston	\$ 23,100
9	Boston Early Music Festival, Inc.	Cambridge	\$ 68,300
10	Boston Lyric Opera Company, Inc.	Boston	\$ 103,500
11	Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc.	Boston	\$ 250,000
12	Cabot Performing Arts Center, Inc.	Beverly	\$ 250,000
13	Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival	Eastham	\$ 10,000
14	Cary Memorial Hall	Lexington	\$ 60,200
15	Greater Boston Stage Company	Stoneham	\$ 5,500
16	Greater Plymouth Performing Arts Center, Inc.	Plymouth	\$ 49,800
17	Huntington Theatre Company, Inc.	Boston	\$ 159,000
18	Lowell Memorial Auditorium	Lowell	\$ 120,400
19	Music Worcester, Inc.	Worcester	\$ 115,200
20	Narrows Center for the Arts, Inc.	Fall River	\$ 119,700
21	Payomet, Inc.	Truro	\$ 94,000
22	Rockport Music, Inc.	Rockport	\$ 173,900
23	South Shore Playhouse Associates, Inc.	Cohasset	\$ 250,000
24	The Boston Landmarks Orchestra, Inc.	Boston	\$ 2,500
25	The Celebrity Series of Boston, Inc.	Boston	\$ 250,000
26	The Center for Arts in Natick, Inc.	Natick	\$ 57,500
27	The District Center for the Arts, Inc.	Taunton	\$ 19,300
28	The Lowell Festival Foundation	Lowell	\$ 73,300
29	The Lynn Auditorium	Lynn	\$ 250,000
30	The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Inc.	Great Barrington	\$ 71,700
31	The Theater Project, Inc.	West Springfield	\$ 5,000
32	The Wang Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.	Boston	\$ 250,000
33	The Yard, Inc.	Chilmark	\$ 27,900
34	Theater Offensive, Inc.	Boston	\$ 2,500
35	University of Massachusetts Amherst Fine Arts Center	Amherst	\$ 59,000
36	Williamstown Theatre Foundation, Inc.	Williamstown	\$ 2,900
37	Worcester Center for Performing Arts, Inc.	Worcester	\$ 250,000
38	World Music, Inc.	Cambridge	\$ 129,700
39	Zeiterion Theatre, Inc.	New Bedford	\$ 111,800

Total \$3,675,000