



Power of culture

COUNCIL MEETING BOOK

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIFTH MEETING

OF

MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

MONDAY, MAY 23, 2022

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**MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL MEETING BOOK
MONDAY, MAY 23, 2022**

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIFTH MEETING OF MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

MONDAY, MAY 23, 2022: 10:00 AM TO NOON

BROADCAST MEETING

MEETING WILL BE LIVESTREAMED AT
[MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL MEETING - YOUTUBE](#)

MEETING MATERIALS WILL BE POSTED AT
<https://massculturalcouncil.org/about/board/>
UNDER "MAY 23, 2022 COUNCIL MEETING"

AGENDA

VOTE

1. Call to Order, Welcomes and Open Meeting Law Notice
 - *Nina Fialkow, Chair*
 - *David Slatery, Deputy Director (Open Meeting Law Notice)*
2. Mission Moment
 - *Michael Bobbitt, Executive Director (Introduction)*
 - *[ARTIST]*
3. Minutes of 154th Council Meeting
 - *Nina Fialkow, Chair*
 - *David Slatery, Deputy Director (reads the roll))*
4. Chair Report
 - *Nina Fialkow, Chair*
5. Executive Director's Report
 - *Michael Bobbitt, Executive Director*
 - a) Agency Updates

X

6. Advocacy & Legislative Report
 - *Bethann Steiner, Public Affairs Director*
7. Cultural Equity and Access Report
 - *Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Director of People & Culture*
 - a) Racial Equity Report
 - *Cheyenne Cohn-Postell, Program Officer, Equity and Inclusion*
 - b) Anti Racism Harassment Policy
 - *Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Director of People & Culture*
 - *David Slatery, Deputy Director*
8. Operations Report
 - *Jen Lawless, Operations Director*
9. FY22 Financial Report
 - *David Slatery, Deputy Director*
 - a) Travel Request X
- Grants Committee Report as to items 10-12 below**
 - *Jo-Ann Davis, Council member and Chair of Grants Committee*
10. FY22 Artist Fellowships: Grant Recommendations X
 - *Dan Blask, Program Manager, Artists*
 - *Kelly Bennett, Program Officer, Artists*
 - a) Drawing & Printmaking
 - b) Fiction/Creative Nonfiction
 - c) Painting
11. FY23 Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Selections X
 - *Maggie Holtzberg, Program Manager, Folk Arts & Heritage*
12. Pandemic Recovery Programs X
 - *Michael Bobbitt, Executive Director*
 - *Jen Lawless, Operations Director*
13. Adjourn



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MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

MONDAY, MAY 23, 2022

RESOLUTIONS

Section 2

RESOLVED: that the Council approves the minutes of the March 22, 2022 Council Meeting in the form presented to the Council at its May 23, 2022 Meeting.

Section 9

RESOLVED: To approve the staff-recommended out-of-state travel requests presented to the May 23, 2022 Meeting.

Section 10

RESOLVED: To approve the FY22 Artist Fellowship grant awards in the disciplines of Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction and Painting as presented to the Council at the May 23, 2022 meeting.

Section 11

RESOLVED: To approve the selection of the participants in the FY23 Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program as presented to the Council at the May 23, 2022 meeting.

Section 12

RESOLVED: To instruct staff to proceed with developing, submitting and posting guidelines for and proceeding to implement the Pandemic Recovery Program for Organizations and Pandemic Recovery Program for Individuals as described in the memorandum presented to this meeting.

OPEN MEETING LAW STATEMENT

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 meetings. This meeting is being broadcast to the public on a publicly available YouTube channel as described in the posted meeting notice.

Instructions on how to contact the Council with questions or problems accessing the broadcast are also included in such notice. Only Council members, staff and invited guests will be provided access to the Zoom platform 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 may be required to 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 interfere with the meeting.

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 FOURTH MEETING
OF
MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL**

TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2022

ONLINE MEETING

Council Members Present were

Nina Fialkow, Chair
Marc Carroll, Vice Chair
Che Anderson
Barbara Schaffer Bacon
Karen Barry
Kathleen Castro
Simone Early
Matthew Keator
Ann Murphy
Allyce Najimy
Troy Siebels

Also Present were Mass Cultural Council Staff Members Michael J. Bobbitt, David Slatery, Catherine Cheng-Anderson, Jen Lawless, Bethann Steiner, Cheyenne Cohn-Postell, Sara Glidden, Kalyn King, Lillian Lee, Jay Paget, Ann Petruccelli Moon, Carmen Plazas, and Greg Torrales; and musician Precious Perez.

Chair Nina Fialkow called the meeting to order at 10:04am and asked Deputy Director David Slatery to read the Open Meeting Law statement:

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.

Prepared on 4/25/22

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 hosting the meeting. As a safety measure, 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:

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Any member of the public may record this meeting provided they do 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.

Executive Director Michael Bobbitt then introduced Greg Torrales, the newest member of the Mass Cultural Council staff who joined the Cultural Investment Portfolio team earlier in March. Greg briefly introduced himself to the Council.

Michael then reminded Council Members that there would be a Mission Moment at the beginning of all Council Meetings to spotlight a Massachusetts artist. Today, musician Precious Perez joined the Council to perform her song *Campeona*. Michael introduced Precious and she performed – vocals and ukulele. After her performance, Michael asked Precious if she would tell Council Members more about the piece. She explained that the song talks about the fact that she sometimes feels the world is on her shoulders, **but she doesn't talk about because she needs to be there for other people. She knows that "even the strongest tree can fall"** and that she is never alone because her loved ones are also always there for her; she is a champion, and we are all champions.

Michael thanked Precious, then took a moment to introduce Lillian Lee, another new member of the Agency's staff who joined the Cultural Investment Portfolio

team last month.

Nina then asked Council Members if they'd had a chance to review the Minutes from their last meeting on January 27th and, if so, she would look for a motion to approve them. Karen Barry moved to approve the minutes, and Barbara Schaffer Bacon seconded the motion. By roll call vote and noting that Jo-Ann Davis, Cecil Barron Jensen, Karen Hurvitz, and Lillian Do were absent it was

RESOLVED: that the Council approves the minutes of the January 27, 2022 Council Meeting in the form presented to the Council.

Nina then gave her Chair's report stating that the Strategic Plan Task Force has been established and will have its first meeting on April 12th. Matthew Keator, Ann Murphy, Cecil Barron Jensen, and Kathy Castro have agreed to serve. Nina noted that when she and Vice Chair Marc Carroll established the Task Force, they considered which Council Members had recently served on other task forces so that as many voices as possible could be heard from. Nina noted that the Agency is required to undergo a strategic planning process by the National Endowment for the Arts. She then asked Michael Bobbitt for his Executive Director's report.

Michael hopes Council members are enjoying his monthly memos and finding them informative. He noted that today Council Members would hear updates on FY23 advocacy efforts, the Agency's racial equity plan, plans for COVID relief grant programs, and a summary of proposed changes to the Agency's Cultural Investment Portfolio grant program. Staff is in the early stages of planning for next fiscal year and a draft of the RFP for the strategic planning consultant will be sent to the Task Force soon.

Nina then asked Public Affairs Director Bethann Steiner for her Advocacy update.

Bethann let Council Members know that budget advocacy meetings were taking place now. The Agency started in a strong position with the Governor's budget in January which included a slight increase to Mass Cultural Council's line item. Bethann reported that Michael had testified before the Joint Committee on Ways & Means last month and proposed an increase to \$27.4M. This represents an ambitious goal, but the Agency's advocacy partners are firm in their encouragement and Michael is meeting with House members to build support – there are 43 meetings on the calendar and so far, staff has received no negative feedback. Nina had asked Bethann to remind Council Members of the calendar for the budget process which Bethann summarized as follows: The House Ways & Means Chair will meet with all members to talk about priorities in March. The House Ways & Means Committee will most likely release their budget sometime during the week of April 11th. If an amendment is needed, staff will work with partners and Chair Carole Fiola to gather support and secure co-

sponsors. The House will likely spend the week of April 25th debating and reading through amendments. This is a key point where Council Members can place calls to their state representatives and ask for their support of this important investment in the cultural sector. Bethann is happy to provide Council Members with talking points. The Senate will follow in May with their budget, most likely the week of May 9th. Amendments will be due that week, then there will be a week for the Senate to go through the amendments, there will be a debate the week before Memorial Day, followed by Conference Committee. The new fiscal year begins on July 1st. Bethann then gave Council Members a quick policy update on our bill to expand Local Cultural Council eligibility so that certain municipal elected officials can serve on their local cultural council. This bill has been steadily moving through the process, has been processed by the House clerk, and is with the House Steering & Policy Committee Chaired by Kevin Honan. The Committee feels this is a positive piece of policy. Bethann concluded her **update by asking for Council Members' assistance in amplifying the Agency's new COVID-19 impact survey for artists and organizations which will remain open until April 15th.**

Nina thanked Bethann and echoed her request for Council Members to reach out to their legislators. She then asked Michael and People & Culture Director Catherine Cheng-Anderson for their Cultural Equity & Access Report.

Equity & Inclusion Program Officer Cheyenne Cohn-Postell shared a PowerPoint presentation, and a copy of that presentation is available upon request. Michael began by sharing some of the ongoing work the staff is undertaking including promoting and upgrading translation and interpretation services. A recent information session for the AAPI Arts & Culture Program was available in Cantonese. Requests for translation and interpretation services are being collected via a Google form. Staff is working to re-prioritize action steps from the racial equity plan and update timelines, and to amplify BIPOC work. This is reflected in the content on the **Agency's Instagram page**. Michael then asked Cheyenne to play a new video teaser introducing the Agency that Communications & Community Engagement Manager Carmen Plazas had worked to create. Cheyenne then let Council Members know that she is currently meeting with all program staff to review programs with an equitable grantmaking lens. Anti-racist learning conversations have also been added to the agenda at each bi-weekly All-Staff meeting. Cheyenne is continuing to take suggestions from staff as to the topics for each of these conversations.

Catherine then gave Council Members an update on some of the ongoing internal equity and access work:

Staff has deployed an online acknowledgement receipt of the Agency's Racial Equity Plan. The purpose of a signed acknowledgment is to demonstrate that the person not only has received the plan but also is responsible for knowing the information contained within the plan and has a point of contact if they have

questions. To date we have received confirmation from each contractor and consultant working for Mass Cultural Council and will continue to deploy the acknowledgement as we onboard additional staff. Next, in partnership with the Public Affairs team, Catherine has developed the first-ever Mass Cultural Council Careers page as a tool to recruit, hire, and promote diverse talent. The page is laid out beautifully, and Catherine thanked the Public Affairs team for their hard work developing it. The content on the reaffirms **the Agency's** commitment to access and equity. The goal of the page is to ensure candidates have a point of contact for any requests or needs regarding accessibility, accommodations, modifications, or specific preferences we should be aware of during the hiring process.

In February, Catherine implemented an additional step in **the Agency's** standardized hiring practices. She has **incorporated an "Interview Outline"** intended to inform candidates on the topics they should expect to speak about when interviewing with Mass Cultural Council. The additional step is intended to increase access, transparency, fairness and ensure an equitable candidate experience. Catherine believes being candid about our interview process helps to foster more meaningful discussions and it helps the candidate understand what skillsets and values they'll need to succeed in the role they are applying for.

Over the next few months, Catherine will be working on updating the Employee Handbook to ensure the language included therein is inclusive. Also, she plans **to update the Agency's policies and introduce policies to bring Mass Cultural Council into alignment with other state agencies.** She is developing an online internal complaint form for employees and contractors to file a complaint of Racism, Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault/Stalking, Workplace Violence or Retaliation. Currently this complaint form and process exists only for Executive branch employees. So, while this is a goal of the racial equity plan this will also bring our agency in alignment with the Commonwealth. Additionally, over the next couple of months she will be busy working with teams as the Agency is actively hiring and recruiting several open positions. She will continue to lead hiring teams through best practices regarding diversity, access, and inclusion and ensure our standard hiring processes is being followed to ensure equitable hiring process and candidate experience. That concluded the progress report. Catherine noted that she is proud of the work of **the Agency's teams.** She then asked if Council Members had any questions or comments.

Karen Barry complimented Catherine for the work she has done. Karen likes what Catherine has built in terms of people having access to a safe space to have a conversation or ask a question. She sees a lot of thoughtfulness in the work.

There were no further comments, so Nina asked David for his Financial Report.

David stated that the Agency is eight months into the fiscal year and is at or below the projected target in most accounts. There is always some catch-up in the final quarter of the year given how the Agency operates and processes contracts. David has been working closely with Tom Luongo, the Agency's Fiscal Information and Compliance Officer, to reclassify some expenses. Council Members may note some differences in the report included in their meeting materials as items are being moved into the correct sub-account. David noted that Council Members may have seen the annual report to the legislature on Gaming revenues which have been robust. Last year the Agency received \$3.1M, this year the Agency has already received \$3.5M. It has been three months since the exit interview with the state auditor. Staff was promised a report by late January but are still receiving questions and hoping to have a report soon.

There were no questions for David, so Nina moved to the next item on the agenda: a discussion regarding state pandemic relief funds.

Michael began by summarizing the public input process. The Agency held a virtual public input forum in January and took written comments – receiving more than 350 responses. Staff analyzed this input and is proposing establishing two unrestricted Covid relief grant programs: one for organizations and one for individuals. Several members of the staff have formed a task force charged with developing draft guidelines and parameters for the programs. This will eventually be part of the FY23 spending plan. The Agency has received a request from Mass Humanities; possibly they could help the Agency in dispersing funds. Michael then asked Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF) Program Director Jay Paget to explain a proposed contribution of pandemic relief funds to the 2022 CFF funding round.

Jay began with a brief CFF overview. The fund was established in and this is the 14th round of funding. CFF grants are for planning and implementation of repairs, renovations, construction, HVAC, plumbing – anything to do with fixed assets. About 150 applications are received per year and approximately 90 receive funding. To date, 1,162 grants totaling \$138M have been made over 13 rounds. Of the projects that receive funding, 30% are from community arts centers, 30% are from museums, 20% are within performing arts centers, and 20% are historic home and sites and science and environmental centers. Staff works to ensure funds are distributed equitably. Per the CFF statute, CFF grants are required to be matched 1:1 and every award must be certified as having achieved its match before being funded. Jay reported that every grant given before 2019 has been so certified and met its match requirement. Seventy percent (70%) of the awards approved since 2020 have met their match requirement and the rest are expected to do so in time. Jay noted that over the 13 rounds (covering roughly 13 years), CFF has helped to employ 13,000 architects, engineers, and contractors. Staff is currently wrapping up the 14th round of funding and has \$8 million in "regular" CFF funds (i.e., made available by the Governor in the Commonwealth's annual capital plan) to disperse. Staff is today seeking

approval from the Council to apply an additional \$7.1M in “**Pandemic Relief Funds**” to this CFF round which will enable all eligible projects to receive funding in this round. Typically, about 60% of eligible applicants are able to be funded in a CFF Round and these additional funds will raise to 100%, a unique opportunity for the Agency and the program.

Michael reminded members that CFF funds come from a capital bond bill and staff works in partnership with MassDevelopment to manage the program.

David provided some legal context: Massachusetts passed the COVID-19 Impact Act (Chapter 102 of 2021) last year and therein allocated \$60.1M in “**Pandemic Relief Funds**” to Mass Cultural Council. Under the act, it is expressly permissible for Mass Cultural Council to contribute some of these funds to CFF. David further noted that per the CFF statute, CFF grants are not approved by the Council but rather by a separate Advisory Committee existing under the statute and MassDevelopment, **so that the Council's involvement in CFF would be the vote to contribute funds to the program (not as noted, the approval of the specific CFF grants).**

Barbara Schaffer Bacon asked if fully funding all applications will be in alignment and **support Mass Cultural Council's equity goals**. Michael said yes as it would fund all applicants and further explained that last year in partnership with MassDevelopment a new rule was created: once an organization receives funding it then needs to wait one year before applying again thus also freeing up funds for more applicants. Jen added that if organizations accept a CFF grant funded from Pandemic Relief Funds, it will impact their eligibility for future Pandemic Relief Fund grant programs administered by the Agency.

Barbara asked how this might impact smaller communities and organizations. Michael explained they would be eligible to apply for CFF in the fall, they just would only be able to access Pandemic Relief Funds through one program (either the portion of CFF funded through Pandemic Relief Funds or a future Agency program). David clarified that if the Council approves this contribution to CFF, applicants who otherwise would not have received CFF awards will now receive awards and such applicants will only be receiving a CFF grant funding because of these contributed Pandemic Relief Funds.

Karen Barry noted that when people are considering applying for CFF it sometimes can take them a year of preparation given the matching requirement and other requirements. The application is a good deal of work. Is she correct in assuming this?

Jay acknowledged that the application is a good deal of work but clarified that applicants do not need to have 100% of the matching funds in hand when they apply. For example, if an applicant has a \$100K project, they need to have \$50K of matching funds in-hand when they apply. Jay added that sometimes the application is more complicated if the project itself is more complicated. He

also noted that the program offers SRP grants that enable organizations to get a 20-year capital needs assessment.

Michael suggested that perhaps Cheyenne could work with Jay and CFF Program Officer Miranda Cook on simplifying the application. He also asked if the match was part of the law and David confirmed that it is specifically required under the CFF statute.

Nina thanked Jay for his presentation and noted that he had been managing CFF since it began in 2007. She then asked David to read the proposal that staff is recommending the Council approve the contribution of \$7.16 million of State Pandemic Relief Funds to the current CFF round. Troy Siebels moved to approve the recommendation, and Karen Barry seconded the motion. By roll call vote and noting that Jo-Ann, Cecil, Karen Hurvitz, and Lillian Do were absent it was

RESOLVED: that the Council approve the contribution of \$7.16 million of so-called **"State Pandemic Relief Funds"** made available under Massachusetts Immediate COVID Recovery Needs Act (Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021, Section 2, Line item 1599-20430 to the current round of funding under Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund program (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 23G, Secs 42-43).

Nina then asked Vice Chair Marc Carroll to lead the final item for discussion on the agenda as Grants Committee Chair Jo-Ann Davis was ill and unable to attend the meeting.

Marc let Council Members know that the Grants Committee had met last week **to discuss changes to the Agency's Cultural Investment Portfolio (CIP)**. CIP is an operating support program and the largest annual program in terms of dollars. Staff has done a great job looking at ways to improve the program to make it more inclusive and provided the Grants Committee with an in-depth briefing summarizing the changes. The Committee had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the changes with staff. There was no need for a vote then and there **won't be a vote today as any new program** will come before the Council for approval as part of the FY23 spending plan. The Grants Committee was impressed with the presentation and supportive of the direction staff shared. Marc asked if any Committee Members would like to comment. Barbara confirmed she felt the staff had done great work and that the program is headed in the right direction and addressing past harms. Marc stated that the Committee felt the full Council should hear about the changes and invited Program Manager Sara Glidden to give her presentation.

A copy of Sara's presentation is available upon request. Sara outlined the **current state of the program and the CIP team's approach to program redesign** – maintaining values, centering equity, and considering staff capacity – along with the goals of the redesign and the process the team used. She then outlined the concerns with the current iteration of the program and provided a timeline

and summary of the major proposed changes: the Portfolio will become a 5-year grant program; the Gateway program will be discontinued; grant amounts are formula-based; Equity Impact points are incorporated into the formula which will increase grant amounts for BIPOC, Gateway City, and under-resourced rural communities; and grant amounts will be finalized with the FY23 spending plan. Sara concluded by letting Council Members know they would find a document identifying where all organizations are in the CIP process within their meeting materials.

Kathleen Castro asked Sara to clarify how many organizations currently in the Gateway program was staff proposing be brought into the Portfolio now – was it all of them or just the nine organizations that have had two successful years in the Gateway program? Sara responded that it would be just the nine organizations who have already had two successful years in Gateway. Kathleen asked how much funding those nine organizations would receive and Jen clarified this would be part of the FY23 spending plan the Council would see in August.

Michael noted that it is important for the Agency to be conscious of the fact that an increase in funding each year can make room for new organizations to join the Portfolio and Kathleen agreed it is important to be judicious as funding grows.

There were no further questions. Nina thanked Sara and commended her and the CIP team for their hard work and great ideas.

Michael reminded Council Members that a full list of meeting dates was included on page 22 of their materials and that they'd receive calendar invitations soon and David reminded everyone that the May Council Meeting would be on a Monday.

Nina noted that she wanted to recognize members of the staff who would serve on the Strategic Plan Task Force: Erik Holmgren, Ann Petruccelli Moon, Carmen Plazas, and Lisa Simmons. She then thanked her fellow Council Members for their time and thanked Agency staff for their hard work and for keeping the Council informed. That concluded the agenda and Nina as Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:29am.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council
Fr: Staff
Dt: May 23, 2022
Re: Agency Updates

EXECUTIVE

Executive Director Report. All Council members should have received Michael's report which was circulated by email on May 11.

Committees. The Executive Committee met on May 3 to review and approve the agenda for today's Council meeting. The Grants Committee also met on May 3 to the recommend the proposed grants and grant and grant programs which will be considered at today's meeting.

Upcoming Meetings. Due to number of additional scheduling conflicts, we have needed again to update several the upcoming Committee and Council Meetings for the rest of 2022. The current schedule of upcoming Council Meetings is set forth below. If any further changes are needed, Ann Moon will contact the members with updated information and zoom links.

JUNE

Grants Committee, Tuesday, June 14, 10AM

JULY

Executive Committee, Monday, July 25, 10AM

AUGUST

Executive Committee, Friday, August 5, 1PM
Grants Committee, Friday, August 5, 2:30PM
Council Meeting, Thursday, August 25, 10AM

New Staff. It will be noticed in the following updates, that new staff have joined the Agency since the last Council meeting. Staff will provide a fuller update on new staff at the Council Meeting on May 23.

LEGISLATIVE, ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Advocacy Report:

FY23 State Budget Update: Mass Cultural Council requested \$27.4 million in FY23 from the House and Senate, this represents a \$7 million increase for programs and operations from the Agency's current FY22 appropriation, and if secured, would match the previous high-water mark for state budget funding for arts and culture. That level of funding was last achieved in 1988, when arts and culture agencies received a total of \$27.4 million in the budget. Accounting for inflation, that amount would equal more than \$65 million in 2022 dollars.

The House of Representatives budget debate took place during the last week of April. Prior to the debate Executive Director Michael Bobbitt and Public Affairs Director Bethann Steiner met with dozens of House members and staff, trying to secure support for the Agency's funding request. The House Committee on Ways & Means proposed funding Mass Cultural Council at \$22.5 million (\$2.5 million more for programming than in FY22). Rep. Dylan Fernandes (D- Falmouth) filed an amendment to increase the line item to \$27.4 million. This amendment enjoyed the support of 47.4% of the House membership – 74 Representative added their names as cosponsors.

The FY23 House Budget funds the Agency account with a total of \$23.1 million -- \$22.5 million for programming and \$607,000 to fund eleven local earmarks.

The Senate Committee on Ways & Means released its FY23 budget on May 10, and recommended funding the Agency account at \$22 million (\$2 million more than our FY22 budget, but slightly lower than the FY23 final House Budget). Mass Cultural Council is still seeking \$27.4 million and is working with Joint Committee of Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development Chair Sen. Ed Kennedy to file an amendment to increase the appropriation. Michael and Bethann have met and spoken to 40% of the Senate Membership and secured the support of 16 Senators for our request. Updates will be provided to the Council during the Senate budget process. The Senate debate will take place the week of May 23.

H. 3378 An Act relative to expanding membership opportunities for local cultural councils – this technical correction to the LCC statute was engrossed by the House of Representatives on May 5, which means it has been passed by one of the two Chambers. On May 9th, the bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Rules. Mass Cultural Council submitted testimony to the Committee urging them to release the bill to the full Senate for consideration. Further, we connected with Senator Hinds, the lead Senate sponsor of the bill, who is also reaching out to the Committee. This legislation has been filed for a number of sessions but has never advanced this far through the process. We are optimistic that we may be able to secure its final passage this session.

Sports Betting, Gov's General Government Bond Bill, and Gov's FUTURE Act – The formal legislative session will end on July 31, meaning all bills that require a roll call to send to the Governor must be acted on by the Legislature in the next three months. A few other bills of interest that are expected to advance include:

- **Sports Betting** – the Senate debated online sports betting last week. This was important because the House has passed it three times, but the Senate has never taken the issue up. MASSCreative proposed an amendment, which was filed by Sen. Crighton and cosponsored by Senators Comerford, Kennedy, O'Connor, Gomez, Eldridge, Montigny, and Tarr, to direct 2% of online sports betting tax revenues to the cultural sector. The funds would be used by Mass Cultural Council to administer capacity building grant program for artists and cultural organizations, with priority given to historically underfunded recipients. A similar amendment was filed in the House during their debate but withdrawn from consideration. The Senate amendment was withdrawn from consideration, so it did not advance. It is possible that MASSCreative will continue to propose this as a stand-alone bill in the 2023-2024 legislative session.
- **General Government Spending Bond Bill** – The Governor's bond bill proposes to recapitalize the Cultural Facilities Fund with \$50M. This bill is currently under review by the Committee on Bonding, and we are watching it carefully.
- **Governor's FUTURE Act** – The Governor's economic development package, the FUTURE Act, proposes to use the remaining \$2.3B in ARPA funding and new bond authorizations to stimulate the state economy. The Economic Development Committee held a hearing on the bill on May 9. MASSCreative is preparing to submit testimony, seeking further investments to support the cultural sector to this spending plan. Mass Cultural Council is watching this legislation carefully.

Legislative Site Visits – Since the March Council Meeting Executive Director Michael Bobbitt has met with dozens of legislators regarding the budget, and has traveled to various communities to meet with sector stakeholders, at the invitation of various local officials – here is a list of invitations he was able to accept from late March to mid-May:

- State Theatre, Stoughton with Sen. Walter Timilty, Rep. Ted, Philips, local Friends Group, and town officials.
- NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson in Boston
- King Boston Groundbreaking Ceremony for The Embrace Memorial in the Boston Common
- Site visit to AAPI organizations in Malden, hosted by Congresswoman Clark – at a recent AAPI Arts & Culture COVID-19 Recovery Grant program recipient site.
- Site visit to Easthampton cultural assets hosted by Easthampton City Arts
- Walking tour of cultural assets in Rep. Nika Elugardo's District, hosted by the Rep., in Boston.
- Meetings in downtown Pittsfield with cultural sector constituents, hosted by Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier
- Touring the Whistler House Art Museum in Lowell with Sen. Ed Kennedy

Public Affairs Report: Mass Cultural Council released the findings from its 6th COVID economic impact survey of the cultural sector on April 25. The data was reported on by several key media outlets, including the Boston Globe, Boston.com, WBUR Radio, Bloomberg Baystate Business News, and NEPR. Most exciting was the Boston Globe headline alert that was sent to Boston Globe subscribers via the iPhone ap, the night before the House of Representatives was due to vote on our budget amendment. The [resulting story](#) topped BostonGlobe.com for the remainder of the evening.

The Public Affairs Team continues to explore new ways to engage with our stakeholders, including [video](#) clips for social media.

CULTURAL INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO (CIP)

Changes. In early April, we announced the [upcoming changes](#) to the Portfolio grant program (which were presented to the Council at its March meeting). The CIP team hosted eight "office hours" sessions to answer questions about the changes, and over 50 organizations registered. Many of the responses were positive, although there were organizations who voiced concerns. The CIP team is taking their notes from the office hours and turning them into an FAQ to help organizations understand the upcoming changes.

Pandemic Recovery Grants. The CIP team has been heavily involved in the development of the Pandemic Recovery grant program to distribute funds from the Commonwealth Covid-19 Recovery Act, including guidelines, criteria, and outreach planning. Details of the proposed guidelines were presented to the Grants Committee and are being presented to the Council today (see Section 12 of these meeting materials).

Engagement 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.

The CIP team worked with the education team at SMU DataArts to present two educational sessions on ways to use the information that grantees add to the DataArts survey: Data At Work: An Introduction to DataArts Analytic Tools and Assessing Organizational Performance with the Key Intangible Performance Indicators (KIPs). Over 50 organizations signed up for each session, and recordings were made available after the events.

CIP Staff. We are happy to welcome our new Program Officer, Greg Torrales. Greg joins us from his position at Masacote, an Afro-Latin music and dance company based in Cambridge. Previously, he worked in Emerson College's Office of Diversity & Inclusion before transitioning into MIT's Office of Minority Education. He will be working with the small-budget CIP organizations and taking over the Card to Culture program.

Both new CIP Program Officers, Greg Torrales and Lillian Lee, have been meeting one-on-one with their grantee organizations (approximately 100 grantees each) to learn about the organizations, and collect information about current challenges facing small to mid-sized organizations. We are transitioning the Card to Culture program from Kalyn King to Greg and are introducing him to our agency partners and organizations participating in the program.

UPDATE-The Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) Arts & Culture COVID-19 Recovery Program.

This one-year program was established and funded through a legislative earmark in the FY22 state budget. It is intended to uplift and provide financial assistance to AAPI arts and culture organizations that have been economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The CIP team administered this program along with a contractor, Jessica (Jay) Wong, who was brought on to help with the program. Awards have just recently been announced

We received 60 applications and 52 of them meet the eligibility requirements. As we were able to fund all eligible applicants, scoring was not necessary, however, we used a key component of the scoring, change in earned revenue between 2019 and 2020 to determine award amounts. Those organizations that saw the greatest decrease in earned revenue are recommended to get larger grants. We set 5 award amounts based on the reported change in revenue: \$45,000, \$35,000, \$25,000, \$15,000, and \$5,000.

Summary:

- Eligible organizations included non-profits, for-profits, and fiscally sponsored organizations that specifically reflect and serve one or more communities that self-identify as Asian or Pacific Islander.
 - o We received 60 applications, 38 of them are new applicants (including the for-profits): 63%
 - o We propose funding the 52 eligible applicants. 32 of the funded organizations are new applicants: 63%

A list of the grants made under program are available at [Funding List – Mass Cultural Council](#).

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

The Community Initiative includes the Local Cultural Council (LCC) program, Festivals Program and the Cultural Districts.

New Staff. We have recently welcomed new members to our team! This is very exciting for the team, and we are excited to bring them up to speed and have them start their work in engaging and supporting communities.

Carolyn Cole- Cultural Districts Program Officer. Carolyn comes to us from Lynn where she was the Development Director at Creative Collective, LLC in Salem and Director of the Downtown Lynn Cultural District among many other things. She brings to Mass Cultural Council experience in multi-sector, local and regional collaborations as well as program development and place keeping approaches to communities. Not to mention some great non-profit organization experience.

Jessica (Jay) Wong – Communities Program Officer. Jay is currently working at Mass Cultural Council supporting the AAPI grant program she has 10+ years in the non-profit sector, working in a state agency, program development, building

community partnerships, community outreach, public speaking, event planning, and digital marketing.

Guelmi Espinal – Communities Program Officer. Guelmi is well versed in data management as well as grant systems and Jay has worked in and has a working knowledge and understanding of the grants management system and has an institutional knowledge of working with communities. Guelmi currently is a program manager at Raw Art Works where he works with youth and volunteers around arts and culture projects and programs.

Local Cultural Councils. The Community team is working with the 329 cultural councils across the state to finalize the annual reports for the FY22 Local Cultural Council grant cycle. There remains a few who need to submit their reports and Program Officers are working with outstanding councils to complete the reports. Most contracts have been returned from the municipalities and allocations have been sent. We have begun our focus on the FY23 grant year and will be messaging the councils around their mandatory community service outreach and updating their priorities for the grant year. In addition, we will be working to streamline our new application process (developed with contractor SmartSimple) with information we have gathered through a survey to councils. Leading up to a September 1st launch date for the LCC Grant the team will be creating webinars and holding workshops during July and August about navigating the grant cycle and working with municipalities.

Festivals. 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 closed on March 1, 2022, and we received a total of 244 festival applications the highest number in a grant cycle to date. After a deep review and additional funding, we were able to fund 181 of the eligible festivals for a total of \$271,500. This is the highest number of festivals received, funded and the largest grant amount in the history of the Festivals program. Of the 244 applications received, 55% (134) of the applicants are new applicants to the festival program. Of the 181 grantees, 57% (104) of the applicants are first-time Festival grantees.

The Festivals program is a door in for organizations new to the agency as well. For 82 of the applicants, this was the first time they have ever applied to a Mass Cultural Council program* and 77 of them were successful in getting a grant which is a 93% success rate for brand new applicants to the Mass Cultural Council.

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

**The data in our new SmartSimple system goes back to FY04, so when we say "ever" we mean since FY04*

Cultural Districts. Currently 51 Districts have been approved for grants of up to \$7500 for a total of \$382,500. Programs being administered throughout the Commonwealth with our support include everything from creative community, placekeeping initiatives, and public art, to strategic planning discussions around climate resiliency and rapid development, creative solutions to combat food insecurity, support for social justice and public health efforts and programming focusing on environmental sustainability and

space activation. These offerings will lend to strengthen our sector by encouraging creative and inclusive community and economic development in participating cities and towns.

New Cultural Districts. Currently we have 4 districts that are on track for a designation Lexington Cummington and Harwich (2). With the new change in staffing for the Cultural Districts Program this year we have decided to pause designating cultural districts until March of 2023. We will be scheduling formal site visits and conversations this fall with stakeholders in these communities with a goal of bringing districts forward for designation at the March 2023 Council meeting.

Re-designation Process. Twenty-two (22) Districts are up for 5-year renewals in 2022.

First-time renewals include districts in eight (8) cities and towns. They are:

Arlington Cultural District	Roxbury Cultural District
Maynard Cultural District	Shovel Town Cultural District
North Adams Cultural District	Turner Falls Cultural District
Provincetown Cultural District	Wellfleet Cultural District

Second-time renewals include districts in fourteen (14) cities and towns. They are:

Central Square Cultural District	Essex River Cultural District
Rockport Cultural District	Glass Town Cultural District
Concord Center Cultural District	Lowell's Canalway District
Shelburne Falls Cultural District	HyArts Cultural District
Fenway Cultural District	Rocky Neck Cultural District
Downtown Lynn Cultural District	Natick Center Cultural District
Upstreet Cultural District	Downtown Village Cultural District Marlborough

We are in the process of working with these communities to complete the necessary paperwork and review to redesignate them at the January 2023 meeting (rather than the August meetings as happened previously). With the turn-over in staff for the program, the designations will now happen in 2023 after an application period and review that will take place over the fall and winter months. By prolonging this, and staggering our first-time designee procedures, we are assisting organizations in not having to overly exceed their bandwidth to apply for the multiple upcoming funding opportunities we will be making available to them.

We are also exploring ways in which to celebrate our inaugural cultural districts, as well as our Cultural Districts Initiative program, reaching the milestone of 10 years in operation.

ARTISTS

FY22 Artist Fellowships: In Section 10 of the Council Meeting materials, the Artist Department has shared a report on the agency's recommendations for Fellows (\$15,000) and Finalists (\$5,000) in Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting. Those categories had a January 24, 2022 application deadline and review panels in April.

There are two deadlines per year in the Artist Fellowships. The first deadline, for the categories of Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts, was October 25, 2021, with grant recommendations finalized at the January Grants Committee and full Council meetings.

Assets for Artists Collaboration: We are pleased to report that our partnership with MASS MoCA's Assets for Artists Program is in its second year. Our funding support has contributed to a series of free online workshops to support artists' careers.

The workshops are focused on topics like negotiating pay, 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, take place online this Spring and Summer. 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: We received 23 applications in the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program. The pool of applicants is an inspiring mix of traditions, representing the racial and ethnic diversity of communities across the Commonwealth (Chinese papercutting, Wampanoag wampum and brain tanned leather, African American quilting, Uyghur calligraphy, lutherie and restoration, Brazilian samba, Dominican carnival traditions, Irish fiddling and piping, neon bending, Puerto Rican Bomba & Plena, Yiddish song and dance, Japanese Taiko, and more.) The panel met April 27. Their recommendations are contained in Section 11 of the Council Meeting materials.

Twelve FY22 apprenticeships are wrapping up at the end of June. During a two-year apprenticeship, a unique bond between mentor and apprentice forms, fostering the transfer of embodied skills and knowledge. We are in the final editing stages of three short films featuring three of the FY22 Apprenticeships. The shorts capture how North Indian tabla playing, bespoke boot making, and bird taxidermy are being successfully passed on through dedicated, one-on-one mentoring. Bootmakers Sarah Guerin and Diana Wagner will share [insights from their apprenticeship](#) at the Lynn Museum June 8.

Public Programming Partnerships: The Lowell Folk Festival will return this summer after a two-year hiatus. Since 2007, Maggie has curated the Folk Craft area of the festival. This year the theme is "Crafting Sound: Making and Restoring Musical Instruments." Maggie is interviewing craftspeople and drafting content for web and tent signage. Although our collaboration with the BSO to present a concert featuring traditional musicians at the Linde Center was cancelled in 2020, we are pleased that one of the musicians, 2010 Artist Fellow Balla Kouyate, will be a featured soloist in the [Duke Ellington Reimagined](#) Pops concert June 9-10 in Symphony Hall.

Our work with Revels, Inc. continued this spring. Maggie recorded four interviews with traditional singers and musicians as part of the companion podcast to Revels' [Musical Connects Series](#).

EDUCATION & CREATIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (CYD)

The second quarter of 2022 has seen the CYD/E team moving toward the end of the year events of the school year in addition to important data collection for our social prescription program.

- Masconomet Regional High School junior Ava Beringer was named the 2022 Poetry Out Loud Massachusetts State Champion
- Site Visits as part of the YouthReach grant cycle are concluding ahead of public panels on June 8 and June 10
- The Music Educator/Teaching Artist (META) and CYD Fellowships successfully concluded the first year of the two-year programs focused on supporting more than 70 Teaching Artists across our CYD portfolio (Note these programs are supported by grants from the Klarman Family Foundation and Linde Foundation, respectively)
- Members of the Social Prescription team joined Michael Bobbitt in conversation with Dr. Maria Rosario Jackson, Chair of the NEA, in Boston on April 22nd to discuss the arts, health, and equity
- The CYD/E team has also been deeply involved in the development of the Pandemic Relief grant programs

STARS Residencies. Despite the enormous pressure and change teachers and students continue to face, almost all the 244 STARS grantee schools are following through or have finished with their residencies, including their culminating events. As we know, teachers report statewide that the trauma that students -- and teachers -- have experienced during the past two years is still having a significant impact on student engagement. The STARS residencies have brought new ways of engaging the students, easing the toll on them and their teachers. As teachers put it in two Final Reports: "Students were... constantly engaged and drawn to science specific content which they hadn't been prior" (Reeves School, Change is Simple) and "Any hands-on activities that the students get to participate in is far more beneficial to their learning than reading about it in a book" (Monomoy Regional Middle School with Mass Audubon Cape Cod.) The final two months of the school year will bring more culminating events as residencies finish. Now that restrictions have been lifted, we will be attending them as schedules permit.

Poetry Out Loud – Massachusetts. [Poetry Out Loud](#) is the national poetry recitation contest for high school students sponsored by the NEA and the Poetry Foundation. Once again, the MA regional semi-finals and the state finals in early March were held through zoom video broadcast so that our state competition mirrored the upcoming national competition in April. Three regional semi-finals were broadcast via Zoom on March 12; the state finals with the 9 regional finalists were broadcast on March 13. We are proud to announce that Masconomet Regional High School junior Ava Beringer was named the 2022 Poetry Out Loud Massachusetts State Champion with Lauren Lima, a junior from Dartmouth High School in Dartmouth in second place, followed by Irianny Solorin, a senior at Methuen High School, in third. Ava went on to compete in the virtual National Regional Semi-Finals shared digitally on May 1. Her performance was wonderful; however, she was not chosen by the judges to continue to the National Finals. Those Finals will be shared on June 5, streamed at the National Endowment for the Arts website [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov).

National History Day – Massachusetts. [National History Day – Massachusetts](#) This statewide competition for middle and high school students also had a successful March and April. NHD-MA is an affiliate of National History Day, sponsored by the National History Day organization and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The program is implemented in Massachusetts by the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS). The regional competitions took place virtually because of the stage of the pandemic in March, but the statewide finals in April were in-person for the first time in 2 years (the national finals are going to be in-person in June in Maryland.) About 3,000 students participated statewide with almost 300 students attending the statewide finals. While the total participating statewide was about half the number pre-pandemic, the number participating at the state finals was about the same as previously. This year's theme is timely: "Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences." Mass Cultural Council provides a grant to MHS to increase access to the program for students and teachers statewide.

CYD BIPOC Alumni Council. Last month, the CYD BIPOC Alumni Council published a zine, titled "Healing: Helping Others, Creating Change, and Breaking Cycles." The zine was a colorful and vibrant document of the first phase's work, research, and advocacy for more equitable spaces in CYD. The blog and link to the Zine can be found [HERE](#).

The zine was shared at a CYD national call, featuring seven CYD organizations and their alumni, who came to share their strategies for building stronger relationships with alumni and supporting them after graduation in their professional and creative pursuits. CBAC is now gearing up for their final culminating project, a short film which will feature the three members, Rajaiah, Bendu, and Wize, in the style of *Red Table Talk*. In this film, they will discuss how representation and mentorship (or lack thereof) has affected their experience of their CYD organization and beyond, in a casual, unscripted, though honest conversation. Furthermore, Rajaiah plans to take on two film assistants from RAW to assist with this project.

YouthReach. March and April were full of virtual site visits with panelists for the 60 of the 62 organizations who have applied for the YouthReach FY23 grant cycle. The final two organizations will be visited in mid-May.

A full training for panelists was also held in April to prepare for the YouthReach panels that will take place June 8 and June 10 over Zoom. These panels continue to be public, meaning applicants can call in and listen to the deliberation. This openness is a crucial step in creating transparent and collaborative relationships with the organizations who are funded and those who are unsuccessful in the process this year. We will continue to work with these unfunded organizations in the coming years to help them further develop their work and return as applicants.

In March and April, we continued our monthly conversations with the national Creative Youth Development field in partnership with the Clare Rose Foundation and with the Heinz Endowments in Pittsburgh.

Our CYD meeting in April focused on addressing one of the most acute challenges for the field right now: Creating Wellness in CYD organizations. Hosted by The Clare Rose Foundation, we explored how organizations are approaching mental health issues in a holistic way by addressing individual, organizational, and systems wellness. They shared

their approach in investing in both self-care and collective care to create healthy values and cultures within the CYD ecosystem and organizations were able to share barriers and best practices to achieve balance and wellness. We were also able to share results from a YAIN survey conducted in April.

In partnership with the Youth Arts Impact Task Force, 39 organizations completed a health and wellness survey to understand better the needs of our organizations.

- The top three mental and behavioral health concerns or issues being seen in young people were 87% anxiety, 82% depression, and 72% isolation/social withdrawal.
- For staff, the biggest health concerns were burnout at 90% and anxiety at 80%.
- If more funds were available to address these concerns, survey participants identified the top two priorities were hiring an on-site mental health worker (therapist for youth and staff) and to provide more training for staff on trauma-informed care and behavior management.

The META Fellowship and the CYD Fellowship. The META and Creative Youth Development Fellowships successfully completed the first year of the two-year program. Based on our evaluation of year one the content focusing on racial equity and asset-based youth worker trainings were very well received and, despite the limited opportunities to engage with colleagues, Fellows reported on the value of the community and the program. In addition, Fellows were able to do site visits, another required component of the program. One Fellow reported, "Having the opportunity to visit other sites and learn about other practices has really expanded my network and opened up my experience to other educators' practices." Another commented, "Thoughtful presentations, great speakers, always good take aways and great organizations that do amazing work that inspires me to be always mindful."

There were challenges as well, specifically with the virtual nature of the program, with one Fellow commenting, "If there is an opportunity for in-person programming, I think it could be valuable. The reason is that we need more discussion and fewer "presentations." There's so much we can learn from each other!"

CultureRx update. *"An extraordinary opportunity is at hand. By fully integrating the arts into health-building activities that are accessible to all, we can foster individual health and wellbeing, strengthen our communities, and fulfill a human birthright."*

- Dr. Maria Rosario Jackson, NEA

This spring, we are focused on collecting the reports and outcomes from a year of social prescription work alongside work with our evaluator and our Social Prescription Task Force. April was a productive month of six focus groups and three 1:1 interviews (one of which was conducted via email) between our evaluator, Dr. Tasha Golden, Task Force members, and health care providers who have partnered with our 12 organizations in the Social Prescription pilot. This cohort of organizations also completed two surveys with Dr. Tasha Golden to report both on their experience this year in fulfilling prescriptions and providing Dr. Golden with their evaluation data from participants. Dr. Golden will be writing a final report based on interviews, surveys, evaluation data and the individual reports on content areas from three members of the [Social Prescription Task Force](#). The final report will be available at the beginning of June 2022.

We also participated in several important meetings to directly connect the work of Social Prescription with wider initiatives and research.

- On April 22, the National Endowment for the Arts, convened Chair Maria Rosario Jackson with Michael Bobbitt, CultureRx staff, and [Boston's health and arts leaders](#) to discuss successes and challenges of cross-sector work with the goal of strengthening local ecosystems through the arts, especially the intersection of health and wellness. A [two-page summary](#) of CultureRx was created for the event and distributed.
- On April 14, The Office of Cultural Programs of the National Academy of Sciences (CPNAS), in collaboration with the CDC Foundation, hosted a webinar on [Boosting Vaccine Confidence with the Arts](#) (via Zoom). This 2.5-hour meeting focused on engaging the arts to increase confidence in vaccines. Käthe Swaback presented in a discussant role. In addition, the CDC Foundation, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, has [provided grant support totaling \\$2.5 million to 30 organizations that are engaging the arts to build vaccine confidence throughout the US](#). The [Trust Transfer Project](#) in Springfield (CultureRx partner, Community School of Springfield), won one of the 30 grants awarded and participated on the call, discussing how to create and sustain collaborations with healthcare communities while building partnerships with stakeholders in the community.

CULTURAL FACILITIES FUND (CFF)

In early March, Mass Cultural Council convened six panels to review 141 CFF applications. Twenty-four panelists were selected who had expertise in a variety of fields including: non-profit business planning, real estate development, capital fundraising, community development, finance, architecture, and historic preservation. The materials were sent to the panelists four weeks in advance of the Zoom meetings. In addition, the panelists were introduced to the concept of unintended bias to improve the review process.

As part of Mass Cultural Council's Racial Equity Goals staff worked with the Council's Black Indigenous People of Color Outreach Coordinators and the result was 58% of the panelists were people of color.

The panelists numerically score each section of the application. Cultural Facilities Fund Program Director, Jay Paget and CFF Program Officer Miranda Cook facilitated each panel discussion to ensure that all applications received a thorough review based on the criteria in the published guidelines.

The total dollar request to the Fund in FY22 was \$22.1 million and the combined total development costs of all projects was \$260 million.

On April 27, staff recommended 115 grants to the CFF Advisory Committee. The grant recommendations for this round include Capital Grants; Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants; and Systems Replacement Plan Grants. The recommendations in these categories were as follows:

- 94 Capital Grants: \$12,758,000
- 12 Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants: \$322,500
- 9 Systems Replacement Plan Grants: \$71,000
- 115 Grants Total: \$13,151,500

In March, the Council voted to allocate a portion of its State Pandemic Relief Funds to CFF.

Below are the sources of CFF Grants (Administrative Allocations not included)

Bond Allocation (remaining funds)	\$7,971,500
State Pandemic Relief Funds	\$5,180,000
Total	\$13,151,500

MassDevelopment will vote on finalizing the grant recommendations on May 14.

UP: UNIVERSAL PARTICIPATION INITIATIVE

ONGOING

- UP Innovation and Learning Network, weekly peer learning sessions with the 2022 cohort
- UP office hours, weekly Access conversations open to the public
- Partners for Youth with Disabilities self-paced learning platform open to staff from UP Designated organizations

EXTERNAL

- Amherst Cultural Council session with grantees on methods of Accessibility
- Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) session with grantees on UP program and methods of Accessibility for grantees
- LEAD session on upcoming conference with cultural workers across the country
- National Endowment for the Arts session with ADA coordinators across the country

INTERNAL

- Continued development of policies for communication access in digital meetings
- Continued work with Culture Rx and the Communities department

WHAT'S NEXT? - LEAD CONFERENCE AUGUST 1-5, 2022

Cultural Equity & Access team members, Cheyenne Cohn-Postell and Charles Baldwin have been asked to present training sessions. Final presentations of the 2022 ILN cohort on steps towards building accessible infrastructure at their institutions will occur May 17, 19, 23, and 25. These are open to all members of the UP Initiative and the Mass Cultural Council.

Racial Equity Progress Report

April – May 2022

ONGOING HIGHLIGHTS

- Updating the Racial Equity Action Plan with timelines that reflect FY23 planning and the many steps we have already set in motion.
- Continuing the Equity Audit of all grant programs with an emphasis on customer service and simplification.

EXTERNAL

- The Public Affairs team has produced a **promotional clip** about Mass Cultural Council to increase awareness of our programs and services in support of recruitment and visibility efforts.
- Our Radio Partnerships are underway with spots currently running on WCRB, WBUR, WICN, WERS, and New England Public Radio.

INTERNAL

- Erin Genia, the BIPOC Outreach Coordinator working with the Indigenous community, is working with Public Affairs, the Commission on Indian Affairs, and the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe to plan an event to connect the Agency with the Native American community.
- The Director of People and Culture has developed an **Anti-Racism Policy** intended to create organizational accountability around racism, racial discrimination, and retaliation; and to foster an anti-racist workplace that improves our workplace culture, makes it safer for people of color, and ensures the dignity of each member of our staff. To ensure alignment with like policies; the complaint process, and procedures mirror the Commonwealth's Sexual Harassment Policy.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- The **Cultural Equity Learning Community**, run out of Arts Connect International, is developing a base-level anti-racism training that Mass Cultural Council will make available to the field for free in the coming months.
- The Cultural Equity & Access team will be working on a nomination packet for **NASAA's Agency Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award**. The award and monetary prize recognize an agency that demonstrates a robust commitment to supporting and advancing the work and values of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in their state.

ANTI-RACISM POLICY

Mass Cultural Council does not tolerate any forms of racism, racial discrimination and/or retaliation. This policy applies to all work-related settings and activities, whether inside or outside the workplace and includes teleworking, business meetings, business travel and business-related social events.

Racism and racial discrimination can present in different and varied ways, including direct and indirect discrimination, racial vilification, race-based harassment, hostile work environment, lateral violence, and casual or unintentional comments (e.g., microaggressions or “jokes”). Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Racism is the unequal treatment or vilification, passive or active, intentional, or not, based on the color of someone’s skin or perceived racial origin.
2. It may be verbal, non-verbal, written, or physical, and it may overlap with Protected Class harassment or discrimination.
3. Racism can include victimizing, rudely embarrassing, intimidating or threatening a person, regardless of intent or the seniority of the people involved.
4. Racist behavior includes epithets, slurs, microaggressions (defined as comments or actions that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally express a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group), jokes, pranks or other forms of negative stereotyping, as well as threatening, intimidating or hostile acts directed at or concerning any individual or group of people, present or not, or that of the individual’s relatives, friends or associates, based on that individual’s or group’s race. It also includes display or circulation of written, graphic, or recorded material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion based on someone’s actual or assumed race, such as derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings, e-mail, computer screen backgrounds, audio recordings, videos, graffiti, or photographs.

Mass Cultural Council is responsible for supporting and encouraging staff to develop cross-cultural competence through appropriate professional development opportunities, self-learning and resources provided. It is the shared responsibility of all employees to uphold a culturally and racially inclusive workplace, including identifying and bringing attention to acts of racism, racial discrimination and/or retaliation.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that staff conduct themselves in accordance with this policy. Additionally, supervisors have an obligation and affirmative duty to promptly report any racism, racial discrimination, discrimination, unlawful harassment, and retaliation that they are experiencing, observe, learn about from others, or reasonably suspect has occurred with respect to an employee.

Employees who have experienced or witnessed racism, racial discrimination and/or retaliation in any form at the workplace are encouraged to report the incident(s). Mass Cultural Council shall be responsible for prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation complaint/s. To file a complaint, discuss a concern, or get additional information about Mass Cultural Council’s discrimination or harassment prevention policies and/or

complaint process, you may contact the following individual either in person, by phone or in writing:

**Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Director of People and Culture
Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Officer**
Catherine.cheng-anderson@massmail.state.ma.us

Employee may also use this confidential intake form:

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6819862/Mass-Cultural-Council-Complaint-Request-Form-for-Employees>

If as a result of the investigation it is determined that an individual engaged in conduct that either constitutes racism, discrimination or harassment, or otherwise violates Mass Cultural Council's policies or rules of conduct, appropriate corrective or remedial action will be taken. Such actions could include (among others) eliminating contact between the employees or other individuals involved in the incident, mandated training and/or counseling, demotion, termination, or other form of disciplinary action that Mass Cultural Council deems appropriate under the circumstances. Following this, Mass Cultural Council will monitor the situation to ensure that any improper conduct has stopped, and that there has been no discrimination or retaliatory action against the complaining employee.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council
Fr: David Slatery, Deputy Director
Date: May 23, 2022
Re: FY22 May Financial Update

We are now almost ten months through the fiscal year. Spending is on target or below in most accounts. We have made progress and are moving with to get all the approved grants paid out to the grantees. Any leftover funds which are unspent in this fiscal year will be paid toward the annual allocation we pay to Mass Humanities (per our Memorandum of Agreement).

Attached please find a spreadsheet the Council's performance through April 30, 2022. Please let us know if there are any questions.

Other matters.

State Audit. As has been reported and discussed at previous meetings, the State Auditor in May 2021 undertook a performance audit of Mass Cultural Council looking at the period from March 2020 through March 2021. We had a preliminary exit conference with the audit team in December (which was attended by the Chair and Vice Chair as well) and we have been awaiting a draft audit report since then. Late on Friday, May 6, we received a draft of the report and have been requested to submit any written comments within 10 business days (by May 20) so that the Auditor's Office may finalize the report. Once it has been finalized, copies will be provided to all the Council members. (If any member would like to see a copy of the draft report, please let us know).

The report addresses four specific items that were raised in the exit conference and which were reported to the Council at the January meeting. The four concerns identified, and staff's responses are summarized below:

1. The Auditor's Office believes that Mass Cultural Council staff did not appropriately verify the eligibility requirements of the recipients of grants from its 2020-2021 Covid-19 relief programs and has stated that there was a "higher-than-acceptable risk" that ineligible applicants received grants. Staff respectfully disagrees, believes its procedures were appropriate and notes the audit relies on some incorrect data regarding mailing addresses in making its assertion. Staff is structuring the Pandemic Recovery programs (see Section 12 of this book) so as to avoid this issue.

2. The Auditor's Office states that Mass Cultural Council inappropriately applied \$39,400 from the \$10 million federal CARES Act allocation made by the Governor to the agency in late 2020. As the members may recall, such CARES Act funds were used to fund \$9,960,600 in grants under the Cultural Organization Economic Recovery Grant (COERG) program. There were leftover funds once all of the grantees had been approved by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) and Mass Cultural Council used the remaining \$39,400 to make 26 grants under its FY21 Individual Artist Relief program (and pay \$400 of expenses-rent). Staff agrees that while it disclosed the usage of such extra funds to both EOHED and Council, it did not obtain a written amendment to the Interdepartmental Service Agreement governing the CARES Act allocation to permit such usage.
3. The Auditor's Office found that the Mass Cultural Council had not updated its Internal Control Plan to cover the circumstances of the pandemic as directed by the Comptrollers Office. Staff agrees that it had not updated the plan since 2019 and will update it appropriately and establish policies and procedures to ensure that it is regularly updated.
4. The Auditor's Office noted that Mass Cultural Council staff had not undergone annual cybersecurity awareness training as required by the Commonwealth. As we have noted previously and mentioned in our discussions with the audit team, the commonwealth's training program was not made available to Mass Cultural Council in 2021. In fact, employees who tried to access the training, were not able to do so as it was not made available to independent agencies. Through the efforts of our new Director of People and Culture, we were able to obtain access to such training earlier this year and all staff completed the training this past February.

We anticipate the final audit report will be released sometime in late May or June.

Travel. The Executive Committee on May 3 approved out of state travel for two staff members to attend the the LEAD (Leadership Exchange in Art and Disability) conference in Raleigh, NC in August and each of the staff members attending (Cheyenne Cohn-Postell and Charles Baldwin) have been asked to present at the conference. The cost is approximately \$3800 (in FY 23 funds). LEAD is the premier annual conference addressing arts and accessibility. The agency and Charles in particular are well-known in the field and prior to the pandemic, we typically sent 2-4 staff attend each year. Some of the UP FY22 cohort organizations will also be attending with Council-provided grant funds.

The team plans to use all knowledge gained at LEAD to inform Council accessibility practices as well as those of the field.

Additionally, the Executive Committee approved Michael's attendance at the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) board meeting in Washington D.C. Michael was elected to the NASAA board earlier this year and NASAA covered the costs of this trip.

Since the May 3d, two further travel opportunities for Michael have presented themselves and, due to timing, we are seeking the full Council's approval of both. Both trips are at no cost to the Agency but under our policies require an approval as out-of-state travel. Please note that all required disclosure forms will be submitted.

1. AMS Planning & Research is holding a 2 day "advance" (as opposed to a "retreat") in Fairfield, Connecticut in June and have invited Michael to speak as a well-known arts leader on changes to the corporate governance model for arts & culture organizations and to discuss the sector generally. There is no fee and Mass Cultural Council does no business with AMS. Michael and Mass Cultural Council will directly benefit from the interaction with this agency who does work with many arts & culture organizations.
2. Theatre Communications Group (TCG) has invited Michael to its national conference in Pittsburgh in June to speak a session about reimagining governance in theatre. There is no fee and Mass Cultural Council does no business with TCG. Michael and Mass Cultural Council will directly benefit from the interaction with national theatre professionals and with TCG who does work with many theatres on issues related to the cultural sector.

Staff requests request that the Council approve the two travel requests above in accordance with the resolution found in the meeting materials.

	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
	BOARD APPROVED	PROJECTED	EXPENDED	Budgeted	expenses compared to the	expenses compared to the
Category	Tuesday, August 24, 2021	as of 04/30/2022	as of 04/30/2022	as of 04/30/2022	Council Approved Budget	Council Approved Budget
AA-SALARIES, etc.	3,334,290.00	3,464,359.00	2,422,221.86	2,778,575.00	(356,353.14)	72.65%
BB_ TRAVEL / DPA STAFF DEVELOPMENT	21,000.00	21,551.45	8,014.55	17,500.00	(9,485.45)	38.16%
CC-INTERNS	99,540.00	34,618.00	26,496.00	82,950.00	(56,454.00)	26.62%
DD-MEDICARE / UNEMPLOYMENT	50,000.00	50,000.00	49,756.88	41,666.67	8,090.21	99.51%
EE-ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	179,950.00	165,700.00	29,374.45	149,958.33	(120,583.88)	16.32%
GG-RENT/UTILITIES	354,010.00	354,010.00	281,140.00	295,008.33	(13,868.33)	79.42%
HH-ADMIN & PROGRAM CONSULTANTS	619,930.00	452,000.00	191,757.50	516,608.33	(324,850.83)	30.93%
JJ-AUXILIARY CONSULTANTS	269,820.00	323,601.33	148,457.94	224,850.00	(76,392.06)	55.02%
KK-OFFICE EQUIPMENT (Non-IT)	1,860.00	920.00	920.00	1,550.00	(630.00)	49.46%
LL-EQUIPMENT LEASES / MAINTENANCE	25,500.00	11,500.00	3,769.43	21,250.00	(17,480.57)	14.78%
UU-IT/ TELECOMMUNICATIONS	146,580.00	201,627.61	69,523.50	122,150.00	(52,626.50)	47.43%
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION	2,002,970.00	1,509,330.94	724,942.82	1,669,141.67	(944,198.85)	36.19%
PP-GRANT PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES	21,631,612.00	22,249,661.56	16,766,330.69	14,421,074.67	2,345,256.02	77.51%
PP-PARTNERSHIPS AND RE-GRANT PROGRAMS	834,886.00	695,636.00	-	556,590.67	(278,295.33)	0.00%
PP-SERVICE PROJECTS	130,000.00	130,000.00	-	86,666.67	(43,333.33)	0.00%
SP-LEGISLATIVE EARMARKS	1,375,000.00	1,375,000.00	9,405.00	916,666.67	(458,333.33)	0.68%
TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS PER SOURCE	23,971,498.00	24,910,998.89	16,775,735.69	15,980,998.67		67.34%
+ TOTAL ADMINISTRATION COSTS PER SOURCE	4,988,708.00	4,619,158.06	3,231,432.11	4,735,235.33		69.96%
= TOTAL OBLIGATIONS AMOUNT PER SOURCE	28,960,206.00	29,530,156.95	20,007,167.80	20,716,234.00		67.75%
AVAILABLE FUNDS PER SOURCE	28,960,206.00	29,973,449.00	29,973,449.00	29,973,449.00		



Power of culture

ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS - MAY 2022

To: Mass Cultural Council

From: Michael J. Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jenifer Lawless, Bethann Steiner, Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Dan Blask, Kelly Bennett, Maggie Holtzberg

Date: May 23, 2022

Re: FY22 Artist Fellowships (second deadline)

Enclosed for your review and approval are recommendations for 34 fellowship awards (\$15,000) and 59 finalist awards (\$5,000, including one honorary finalist award with no funding attached), from a total of 1,414 eligible applications for the FY22 Artist Fellowships in Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting.

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

In most fiscal years, we offer Artist Fellowships in six disciplines, with disciplines divided over two deadlines. The deadline for applications in Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting was January 24, 2022.

Previously, the deadline for applications in Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts was October 25, 2021. Those awards were presented and approved at the January 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 are on track to award double the monetary grants - 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/readers for Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting, 32 of 52 reviewers identified as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color), or about 61%.

Awardees. Among the recommended Fellows and Finalists for Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting, 25 of 92 identified as BIPOC, or about 27%. For both grant cycles of FY22, 52 artists among 150 awardees identified as BIPOC, or about 35%. 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 demographic information for applicants to the Artist Fellowships in Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting.

BIPOC	196	13.86%
White	633	44.77%
No Info	585	41.37%
	1,414	100.00%

New Applicants/New Grantees. In FY22 (both grant cycles), a total of 603 applicants from 1801 (or about 34%) were new applicants to the program. There were 386 applicants for Choreography, Poetry, and Traditional Arts, out of which 152 (39%) had not applied for Fellowships during FY04-FY22. There were 1,414 applicants for Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting, out of which 451 (32%) had not applied for Fellowships during FY04-FY22.

Among the Fellows/Finalists in Drawing & Printmaking, Fiction/Creative Nonfiction, and Painting, 76 of 92, or about 83%, were first-time grantees.

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 **Public Affairs** 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.

**Mass Cultural Council
Artist Fellowships 2022
Drawing & Printmaking
Recommended Fellows and Finalists**

DRAWING & PRINTMAKING

Total Applications: 326

Fellows: \$15,000

Alexis Callender	Easthampton
Patrick Casey	Arlington
Damian Cote	Holyoke
James Dye	Worcester
Randy Garber	Somerville
Keith Maddy	Boston
Joan M. Ryan	Boston
Evelyn Rydz	Arlington
Brooke Stewart	Boston
Naoe Suzuki	Waltham

Finalists: \$5,000

Stephanie Anderson	Great Barrington
Cameron Barker	Waltham
Lisa Barthelson	Rutland
Caleb Cole	Maynard
Audrey Goldstein	Newton
Barbara Grad	Wayland
Anna Hepler	Greenfield
Boriana Kantcheva	Medford
Liza Lynch	Boston
Robert Maloney	Boston
Stephen Mishol	Lowell
Elizabeth Mooney*	Boston
Alyssa Sakina Mumtaz	Williamstown
Debra Olin	Somerville
Adrian Rodriguez	Swampscott
Leslie A Schomp	Rutland
Ellen Shattuck Pierce	Boston

*Honorary

**Mass Cultural Council
Artist Fellowships 2022
Drawing & Printmaking Panel
April 22, 2022**

Panelists

Roeya Amigh

Catherine Kernan

Simonette Quamina

MiYoung Sohn

Mass Cultural Council Fellow

Mass Cultural Council Fellow

Printmaker

Visual Artist

FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Drawing & Printmaking

RECIPIENTS

Alexis Callender

Easthampton, MA

www.alexcallender.com



All the Light Begins and Is Borrowed, acrylic, ink, and graphite on paper, 30 x 22 in, 2021

Patrick Casey

<https://patrickcasey.net/>



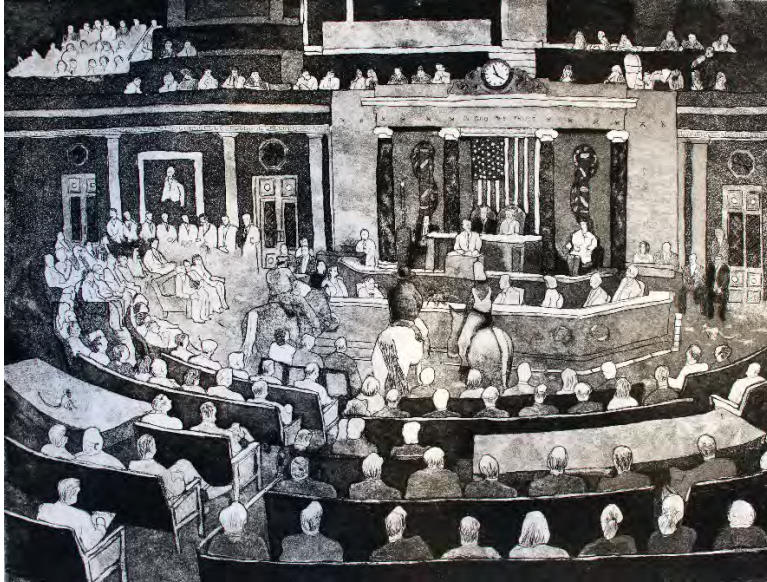
Fear Itself, reductive woodcut, 26.5" x 22.5", 2020

RECIPIENTS

Damian Cote

Holyoke, MA

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

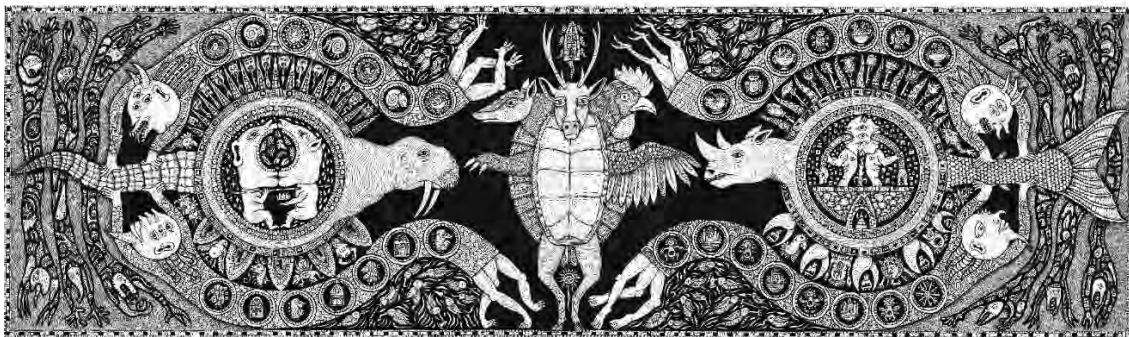


Untitled plate #18 from "Letters to Dr. Ehrlich" series, 2022, intaglio , plate: 9"x12", paper: 17 1/8x 19 7/8, 2022. Most recent addition to an expansive print series started in 2010. Methods used include etching, dry-point, mezzotint, aquatint, and engraving.

James Dye

Worcester, MA

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



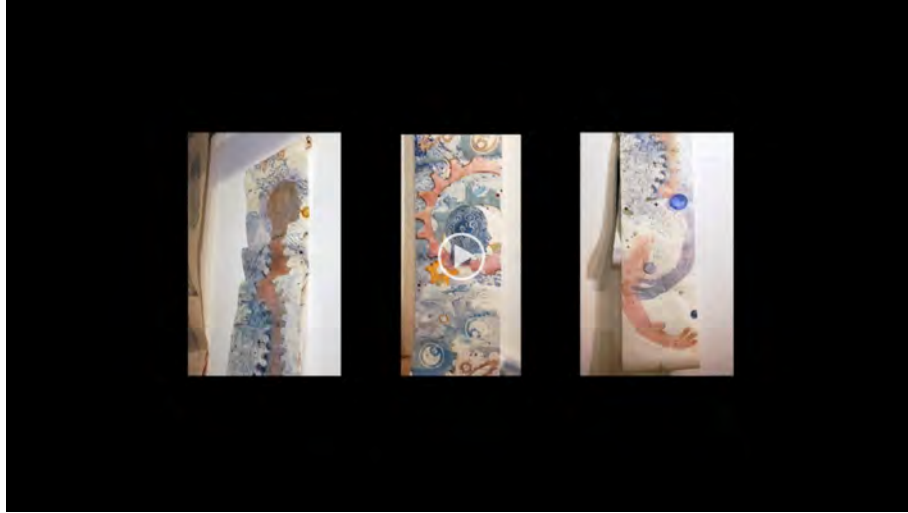
And So Was Bedlam Brought to Order, dip pen and India ink, 40" x 12", 2019

RECIPIENTS

Randy Garber

Somerville, MA

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



Whisper Loudly, artist book; etching, woodcut relief, drawing on original player piano scroll w/ artist original label on artist-made copper lined box, 13 inches long x 3.5 wide (boxes); scroll: 11.5 high x 5 feet long, 2021

Keith Maddy

Boston, MA

<https://fenwayartstudios.org/artists/keith-maddy/>



Crow, collage, 14" x 17", 2019

RECIPIENTS

Joan M. Ryan

Boston, MA

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



Jump, charcoal/pastel, 60x42, 2021 (detail of the "Shifting Paradigm" wall installation)

Evelyn Rydz

Arlington, MA

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



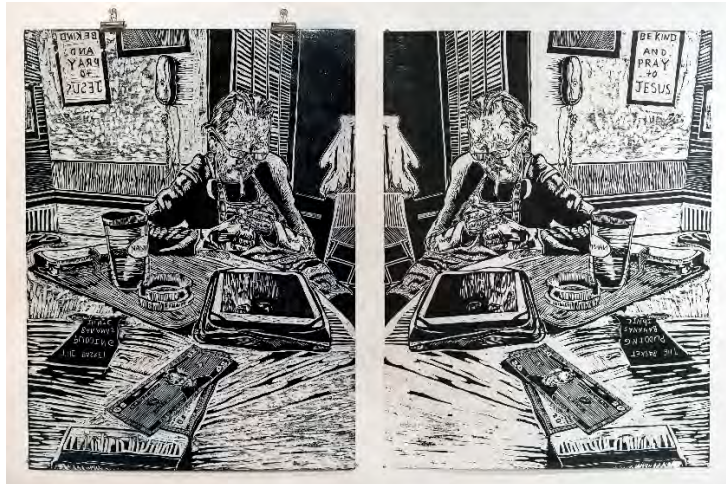
Folded Waters (Surface Tension), oil pigment color pencils on Duralar, 14" x 17", 2021

RECIPIENTS

Brooke Stewart

Boston, MA

BrookeStewartart.com

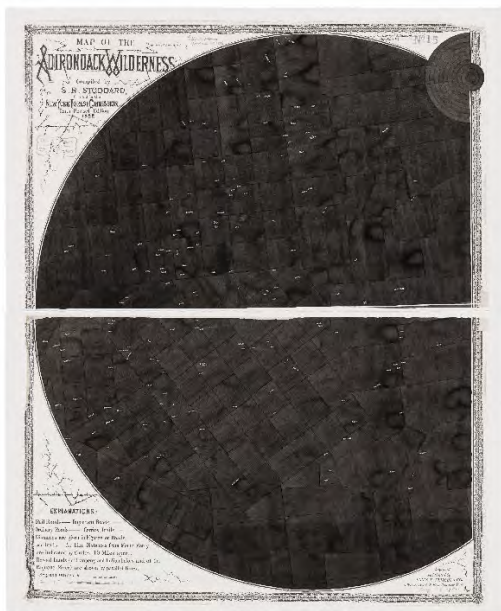


A Visit with Nana, woodblock: 1/4 inch cherry plywood, spray paint and oil based ink, print: oil based ink on masa paper, 96 x 72 inches, 2022

Naoe Suzuki

Waltham, MA

www.naoesuzuki.com



Map of the Adirondack Wilderness, 1888, India ink, walnut ink, and ink on paper, 86"x 70", (diptych), 2019

FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Drawing & Printmaking

FINALISTS

Stephanie Anderson

Great Barrington, MA

www.stephanieandersonart.com



Arms, graphite on clayboard, 24" x 24", 2019

Cameron Barker

Waltham, MA

www.cameron-barker.com



Glorious, 2020, graphite and tinted marble dust ground on stretched canvas, 14"x14"

FINALISTS

Lisa Barthelson

Rutland, MA

<https://www.lisabarthelson.com/home>



Round Up Remix 1, Art in Isolation. Family debris, monoprint with mixed media: printed collage and thread on Rives BFK paper, with grommets, 32.50" x 32.50", 2020

Caleb Cole

Maynard, MA

<http://www.calebxcollection.com>



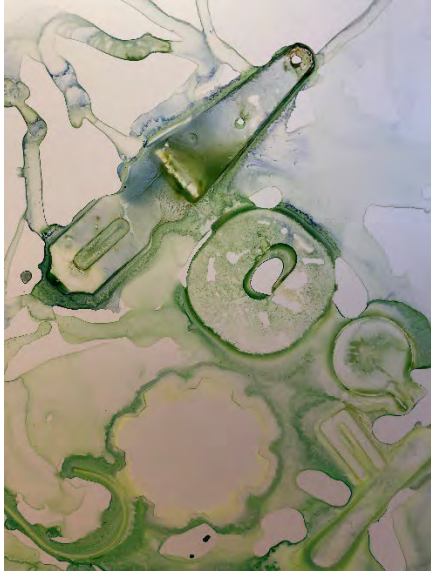
Draya McCarty, anotype from rose petals, 4 x 5 inches, 2020

FINALISTS

Audrey Goldstein

Newton, MA

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



Shadowtime: Object-print, 10am detail, found objects, fluid acrylic, Duralar, 3" x 8" (36 x 96 inches), 2021

Barbara Grad

Wayland, MA

www.barbaragrad.com



SW20-052, gouache, watercolor, crayon on toned paper, 14x11", 2020

FINALISTS

Anna Hepler

Greenfield, MA
annahepler.com



Carapace, plywood, gesso, ink, 9 x 8 x 4 feet, 2020

Boriana Kantcheva

Medford, MA
borianakantcheva.com



Owl_Garden, 2 plate etching, aquatint, monotype, 14x13.5 inches (plate size), 2018

FINALISTS

Liza Lynch

Boston, MA

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

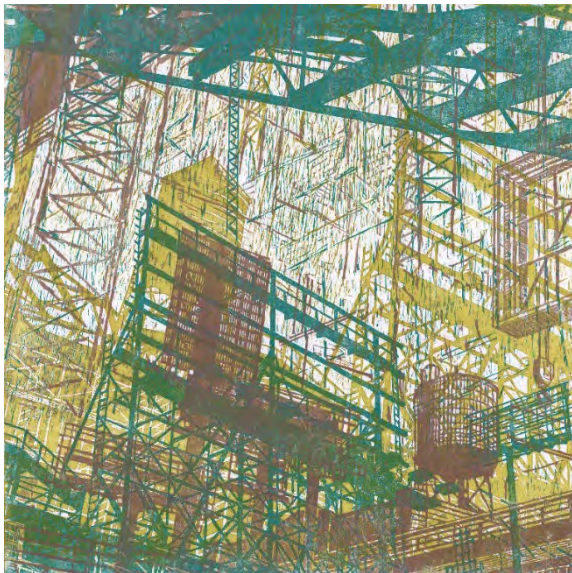


Cactus I, graphite on paper, 22" x 30", 2019

Robert Maloney

Boston, MA

https://www.robert-maloney.com/Robert_Maloney/Home.html



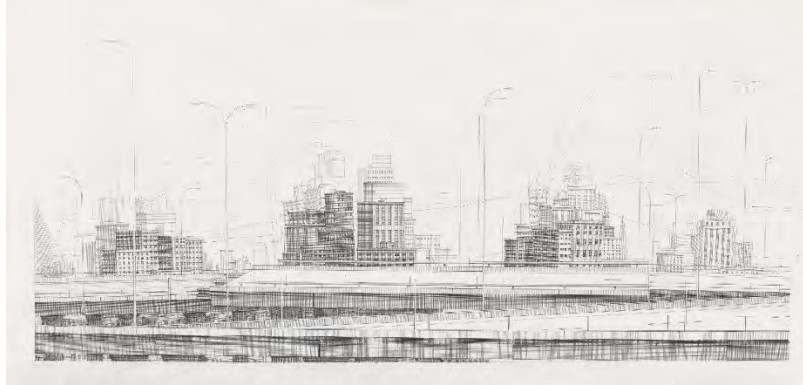
Innerstate Testprint, woodcut on paper, 24" x 24", 2021

FINALISTS

Stephen Mishol

Lowell, MA

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



Mitigated Landscape, graphite on paper, 21 x 44 in., 2021

Elizabeth Mooney

Boston, MA

<https://elizabethmooney.com/>



Untitled, cut paper, graphite, and acrylic, 19 x 23 inches, 2021

FINALISTS

Debra Olin

Somerville, MA

www.debraolin.com



Planting with Trees 1, monoprint collage with woodcut, 64x39", 2020

Adrian Rodriguez

Swamscott, MA

<https://www.scaarstudios.com/adrian-rodriguez>



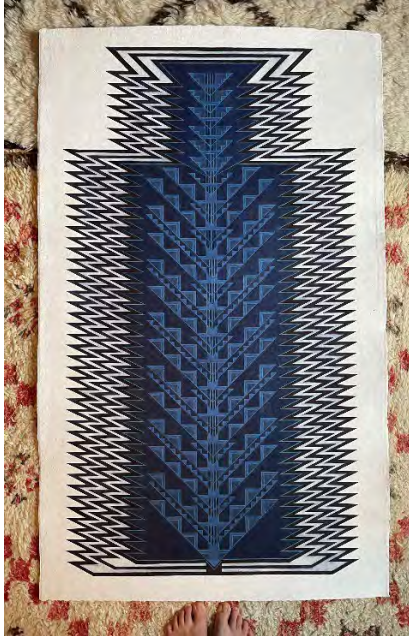
Frankie in the Garden, linoleum print, 24" x 36", 2021

FINALISTS

Alyssa Sakina Mumtaz

Williamstown, MA

www.alyssasakinamumtaz.com



Portal, Colored pencil, opaque watercolor and collage on handmade cotton rag paper, 52 x 32 inches, 2021

Leslie A. Schomp

Rutland, MA

www.leslieschomp.com



Daily View of Mt. Monadnock, hair stitched on cloth in found frame, 4" X 3 1/2 ", 2021

FINALISTS

Ellen Shattuck Pierce

Boston, MA

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



4/13/20-5/1/20, relief print, 18x24", 2020

**Mass Cultural Council
Artist Fellowships 2022
Fiction/Creative Nonfiction
Recommended Fellows and Finalists**

FICTION/CREATIVE NONFICTION

Total Applications: 606

Fellows: \$15,000

Christine H. Chen	Waltham
Carin Clevidence	Northampton
Jennani Durai	Boston
Emily Everett	Northampton
Melenie Freedom Flynn	Easthampton
Amanda L. Giracca	Great Barrington
William Giraldi	Cambridge
Rani J. Neutill	Cambridge
Molly Rideout	North Adams
Asako Serizawa	Brookline
Mandeliene L. Smith	Lexington
Jerald Walker	Hingham

Finalists: \$5,000

Alysia Abbott	Cambridge
Aliza Ali Khan	Dartmouth
Hillary Casavant	Somerville
Beth Castrodale	Boston
Linda Dittmar	Cambridge
Sara Fraser	Belmont
Catherine Goldhammer	Hull
Kit Haggard	Boston
Min Han	Cambridge
Mathew Lebowitz	Amherst
Maria Marchinkoski	Cambridge
Kathryn J. McQuade	Andover
Pedro Noé Morales	Boston
Carla Panciera	Rowley
Cheryl Pappas	Newton
Laura Porter	Worcester
Diana C. Renn	Concord
Kenneth R. Rosen	Great Barrington
Shelley Senai	Framingham
Victor Yang	Cambridge
Jeffrey Yee	Easthampton
Yara Zgheib	Boston

**Mass Cultural Council
Artist Fellowships 2022
Fiction/Creative Nonfiction Panel
April 25, 2022**

Panelists

Jane De León Griffin	Director, <i>Inspired Masses</i>
Edie Meidav	Writer
Metta Sáma	Writer and Editor
Ricardo A. Wilson III	Writer
Jung Yun	Mass Cultural Council Fellow

Readers

Heather Abel	Toni Jensen
Gbolahan Adeola	Marjan Kamali
Autumn Allen	Chandreyee Lahiri
Tatiana Johnson-Boris	Ying-Ju Lai
Carla Bruce-Eddings	E.K. Ota
Gabriel Bump	Brenda Sparks Prescott
Sarah M. Cedeño	Maurice Carlos Ruffin
Margaret Cezair-Thompson	Whitney Scharer
Morris Collins	Rone Shavers
Robert Croll	Emily Shelton
Jarita Davis	Katie Sticca
Ellen Duffer	Shilpi Suneja
Jonathan Escoffery	Laura Szaro Kopinski
Christopher Gonzalez	Morgan Talty
Kelle Groom	Lysley Tenorio
Cynthia Gunadi	Christine Vines
Sergio Gutiérrez Negrón	Val Wang
Simon Han	Ann Ward
Sara Hendren	Laura Willwerth

FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Fiction/Creative Nonfiction

RECIPIENTS

Christine H. Chen

Waltham, MA



Christine Chen's flash fiction, featured by Boston in 100 words

Carin Clevidence

Northampton, MA



RECIPIENTS

Jennani Durai

Roslindale, MA



Emily Everett

Northampton, MA

www.emily-everett.com



RECIPIENTS

Melenie Freedom Flynn

Easthampton, MA



Amanda L. Giracca

Housatonic, MA

<https://amandagiracca.com/>

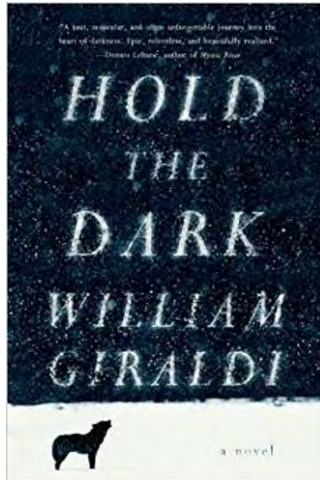


RECIPIENTS

William Giraldi

Cambridge, MA

<http://www.wgiraldi.com>



Cover art for *Hold the Dark* (Liveright Press) by William Giraldi

Rani J. Neutill

Cambridge, MA

<https://ranineutill.com/>



Photo by Steve Bennett

RECIPIENTS

Molly Rideout

North Adams, MA

www.mollyrideout.com



Photo by Calista Lyon

Asako Serizawa

Brookline, MA

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



RECIPIENTS

Mandeliene L. Smith

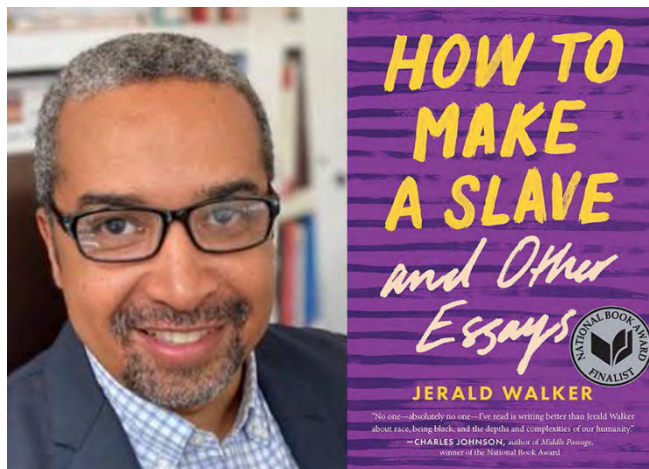
Lexington, MA



Cover art for *Rutting Season* by Mandeliene H. Smith

Jerald Walker

Hingham, MA



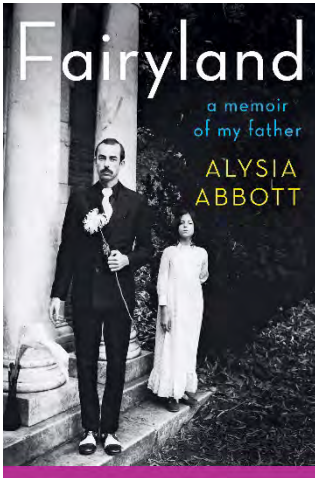
Jerald Walker/Cover art for *How to Make a Slave* (Ohio State University Press)

FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Fiction/Creative Nonfiction

FINALISTS

Alysia Abbott

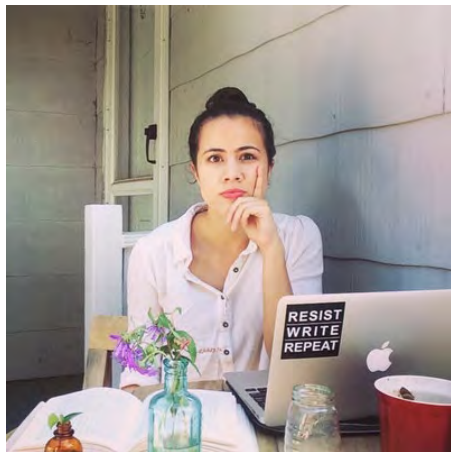
Cambridge, MA
alysiaabbott.com



Cover art for *Fairyland* (W. W. Norton & Company) by Alysia Abbott

Aliza Ali Khan

South Dartmouth, MA



FINALISTS

Hillary Casavant

Somerville, MA



Beth Castrodale

Jamaica Plain, MA

<https://www.bethcastrodale.com>



Beth Castrodale with her novel *In This Ground* (Garland Books)

FINALISTS

Linda Dittmar

Cambridge, MA

<https://lindadittmar.com>



Sara Fraser

Belmont, MA

sarabfraser.com

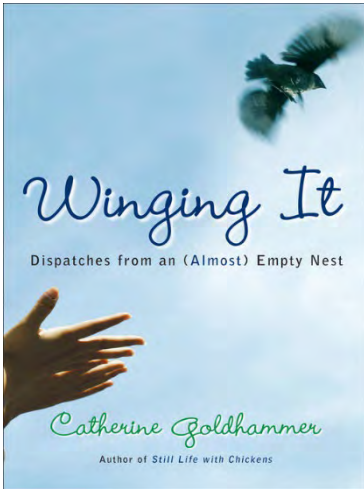


Cover art for *Just River* (Black Rose Writing) by Sara Fraser

FINALISTS

Catherine Goldhammer

Hull, MA



Cover art from *Winging It* (Plume Books) by Catherine Goldhammer

Kit Haggard

Allston, MA

kithaggard.work



FINALISTS

Min Han

Cambridge, MA



Mathew Lebowitz

Amherst, MA

mathewlebowitz.com



FINALISTS

Maria Marchinkoski

Cambridge, MA



Kathryn J. McQuade

Andover, MA

www.katemcquade.com



Photo by Sarah Jordan McCaffery

FINALISTS

Pedro Noé Morales

East Boston, MA



Carla Panciera

Rowley, MA



Cover art for *Bewildered* (Univ. of Massachusetts Press) by Carla Panciera

FINALISTS

Cheryl Pappas

Newton Highlands, MA

www.cherylpappas.net



Laura Porter

Worcester, MA

**Worcester Women's Oral History Project**
Building community by sharing experiences through women's stories.

Interview List
Laura Porter

Interviews
News Articles
Higher Education
Collaborative
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 WWOHP

Laura Porter
Freelance Writer and Editor

I have a lot to say about women and education, I think there is such pushback to—I don't even know how to put this. I think that my biggest challenge from kindergarten to defending my PhD thesis. Why don't you talk more? Why don't you smile more? Right, I think there's such—it's hard to crack past that. It's hard to yell over the guy who's saying nothing, but saying a lot of it and getting all the attention. I think that's really tough. And I found that and some of it is personality and some of it is gender. There's plenty of women who are falling off their chairs answering questions, but I found that the professors I worked with, it wasn't really male culture it was either patronizing or it was diminishing. I could not wait till when I came here. And Mark got his job and he was teaching, and I was finishing up, I couldn't wait to get out of Princeton. Smith was fine [laughs]. Smith should have prepared me for the rest of it.

E-mail: 

Current Employer:

Abstract:
Laura Smith Porter was born in 1958 and raised in Illinois. After pursuing her undergraduate degree at Smith College, she continued her education at Princeton University. At Princeton, she met her husband Mark Richmond. After living in various areas, Mark was offered a job at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. In 1985, they settled down in Worcester, near Indian Lake. In this interview, Laura discusses the obstacles that she faced throughout her education and her career. Growing up as an only child, the early deaths of her parents inspired her to become a writer. After obtaining a master's degree from the University of Illinois, she taught at the college level and then decided to pursue the career path of a freelance writer and editor. Laura is motivated daily by



Laura Porter, featured in the Worcester Women's Oral History Project

FINALISTS

Diana C. Renn

Concord, MA

www.dianarennbooks.com

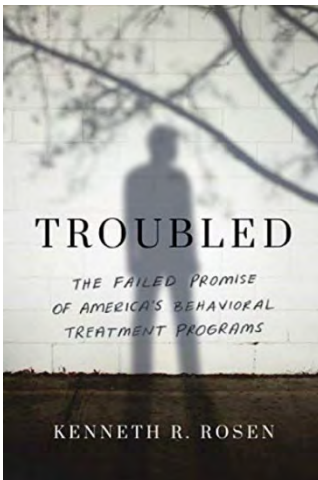


Cover art for *Blue Voyage* (Viking Books) by Diana Renn

Kenneth R. Rosen

Housatonic, MA

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



Cover art for *Troubled* (Little A Books) by Kenneth R. Rosen

FINALISTS

Shelley Senai

Framingham, MA

www.shelleysenai.com



Victor Yang

Cambridge, MA



FINALISTS

Jeffrey Yee

Easthampton, MA



Yara Zgheib

Boston, MA

www.yarazgheib.com



**Mass Cultural Council
Artist Fellowships 2022
Painting
Recommended Fellows and Finalists**

PAINTING

Total Applications: 482

Fellows: \$15,000

David Antonio Cruz	Somerville
Julia Dixon	North Adams
Nicole Duennebier	Malden
Conny Goelz Schmitt	Beverly
Liang Guo	Boston
Imo Imeh	Holyoke
Dinorá Justice	Newton
Maria E. Molteni	Boston
Elizabeth Mooney	Boston
Richard Raiselis	Wayland
Michael Ryczek	Dedham
Elaine Spatz-Rabinowitz	Cambridge

Finalists: \$5,000

Pouya Afshar	Cambridge
Angela Ales	Lowell
Linda Allen	Cohasset
Stephanie Anderson	Great Barrington
Marc Bohne	Harwich
Maya Brodsky	Cambridge
Kathline Carr	North Adams
Jason Cheeseman-Meyer	Natick
Andrae Green	Holyoke
Andrew Haines	Boston
Jai Hart	Concord
Stephen Elliott Hawley	Newburyport
Constance Jacobson	Boston
Joshua Meyer	Cambridge
Wilhelm Neusser	Somerville
Andrew Nixon	Attleboro
Daisy Patton	Easthampton
Jeff Stauder	Northampton
Christopher Sullivan	Easthampton
Ashley Williams	South Hadley

**Mass Cultural Council
Artist Fellowships 2022
Painting Panel
April 26, 2022**

Panelists

David Brewster
Leslie Condon
Erica Licea-Kane
Ilana Manolson
James Stanley

Mass Cultural Council Fellow
Program Manager, Pao Arts Center
Mass Cultural Council Fellow
Mass Cultural Council Fellow
Painter

FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Painting

RECIPIENTS

David Antonio Cruz

Somerville, MA

cruzantoniodavid.com



canyoustaywithmetonight_causeyouarehere_youarehere_andweareherewithyou, oil, acrylic, ink, and wax pencil on wood panel, 60" x 96", 2021

Julia Dixon

North Adams, MA

<https://juliakimdixon.art/>



Michael, oil on canvas, 72" x 54", 2020

RECIPIENTS

Nicole Duennebier

Malden, MA

www.nicoleduennebier.com

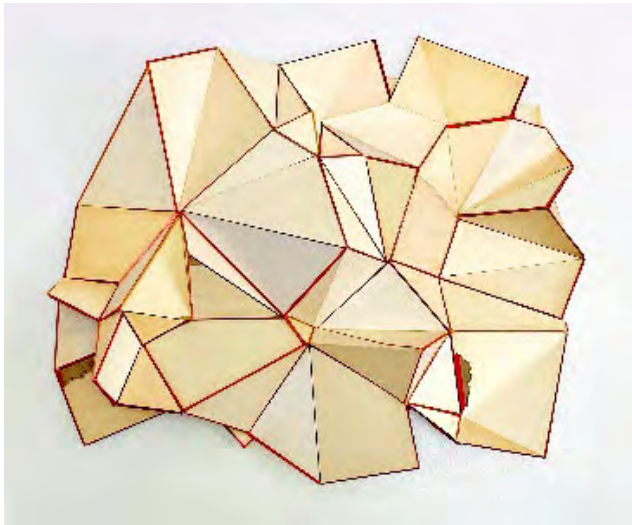


Sleeping While Eating, acrylic on panel, 24 x 30 inches, 2019

Conny Goelz Schmitt

Beverly, MA

www.connygoelzschmitt.com



Hocus Pocus Cumulus, vintage book parts, 35 x 41 x 6", 2021

RECIPIENTS

Liang Guo

Boston, MA



Long River, oil on canvas, 60" x 48" x 2", 2018

Imo Imeh

Holyoke, MA

www.imoimeh.com



Angel Landing, oil paint, India ink, and charcoal on unstretched canvas, 100 x 84 inches, 2020

RECIPIENTS

Dinorá Justice

Newton, MA

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

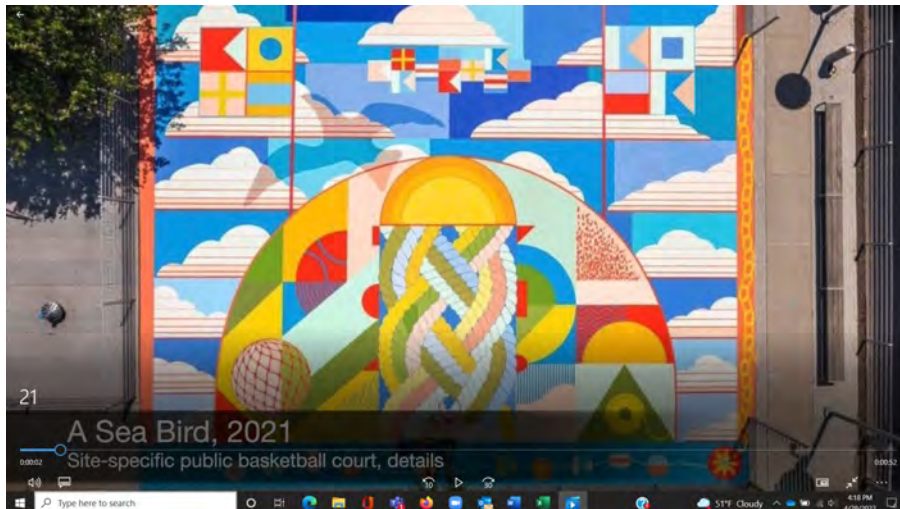


Portrait 36, after Manet's Olympia, oil on hand-marbled acrylic, 52 x 58", 2021

Maria E. Molteni

Boston, MA

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



A Sea Bird, industrial concrete/floor paint, hand mixed colors, hand painted with a brush, 2,000 sq ft, 2021

RECIPIENTS

Elizabeth Mooney

Boston, MA

<https://elizabethmooney.com/>



Down the Pike, acrylic on wood panel, 36 x 36 inches, 2020

Richard Raiselis

Wayland, MA

<https://www.gallerynaga.com/artists-list/richard-raiselis/>



Cloudy Pine, oil on linen, 68 x 36", 2022. Painted from life.

RECIPIENTS

Michael Ryczek

Dedham, MA

mryczek.com



CORDOBA, SPAIN / 1.27.21 / 3:07 PM, oil on wood panel, 12 x 16 in., 2021

Part of a series that uses footage from online surveillance cameras taken throughout the pandemic as inspiration for semi-narrative paintings. Each title includes the approximate location, date, and time the source footage was taken.

Elaine Spatz-Rabinowitz

Cambridge, MA

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



Grey Glacier, oil and archival photographic emulsion ink on pigmented Hydrocal plaster, 16 x 16 x 2", 2020

FY22 Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Recipients and Finalists Painting

FINALISTS

Pouya Afshar

Cambridge, MA

www.pouyaafshar.com



Self Portrait aka Abduction in the Time of Corona – Tryptich, oil on canvas, 45" x 75", 2020

Angela Ales

Lowell, MA

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



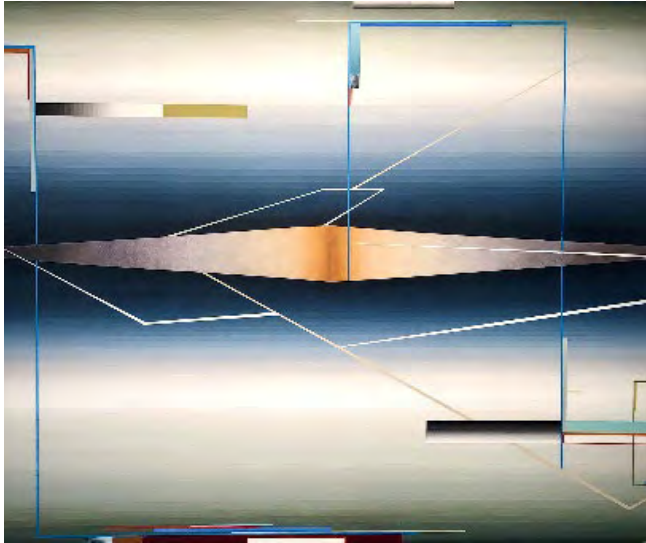
"2020", oil on canvas, 30" x 40", 2020

FINALISTS

Linda Allen

Cohasset, MA

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



Thin Air III, acrylic, photo transfer on aluminum panel, 22.5"x 27", 2021

Stephanie Anderson

Great Barrington, MA

www.stephanieandersonart.com



Catwalk, watercolor, collaged watercolor, marbled paper, 32" x 36", 2018

FINALISTS

Marc Bohne

Harwich, MA
marcbohne.com



Late in the Day, oil and alkyd on panel, 30 x 60 inches, 2021

Maya Brodsky

Cambridge, MA
mayabrodsky.com



Mirror, oil on mylar mounted on panel, 12¼" x 16 ¼", 2018

FINALISTS

Kathline Carr

North Adams, MA

<http://www.kathlinecarr.com>



Ley Line, oil on canvas, 22" x 28", 2018

Jason Cheeseman-Meyer

Natick, MA

www.cheeseman-meyer.com



Ethan, oil on aluminum panel, 16"x20", 2019

FINALISTS

Andrae Green

Holyoke, MA

www.andraegreen.com



Divers II, oil and acrylic on canvas, 36" x 48", 2021

Andrew Haines

Boston, MA

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



24 Tower Street, acrylic on paper, 11 x 14 inches, 2022

FINALISTS

Jai Hart

Concord, MA

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



Iambic Pentameter in Pink, Aqua & Chocolate, acrylic on canvas, 72 x 50 x 22", 2021

Stephen Elliot Hawley

Newburyport, MA

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



Another Place Another Time, oil, wax, Alkyd on panel, 23"x35", 2020

FINALISTS

Constance Jacobson

Boston, MA

constancejacobson.com

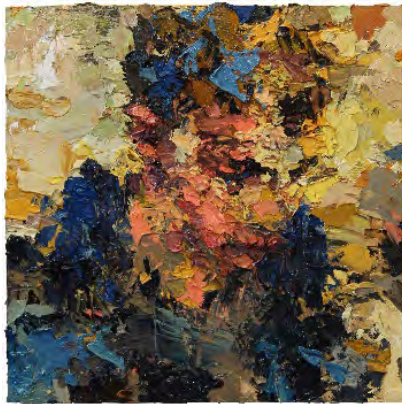


Eye to Eye, acrylic on paper, 45.5x31.5 inches, 2021

Joshua Meyer

Cambridge, MA

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



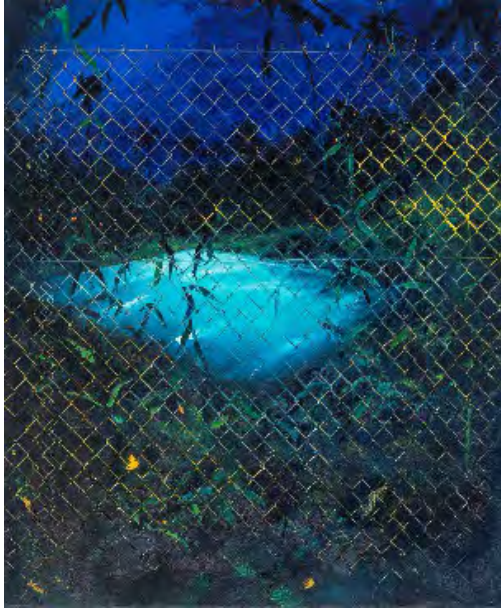
By the By, oil on canvas, 10x10 inches, 2018

FINALISTS

Wilhelm Neusser

Somerville, MA

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



Fence/Pool (#2151), oil on linen, 47.2 x 39.4", 2021

Andrew Nixon

Attleboro, MA

<https://www.andrewnixon.net/>



Divers, oil on linen, 31" x 44", 2021

FINALISTS

Daisy Patton

Easthampton, MA

<https://www.daisypatton.com>



*Untitled (Dear half 5-4-1927) *translated, oil on archival print mounted to panel, 80"x60", 2021*

Jeff Stauder

Northampton, MA

jeffstauder.com



Deluge, oil and gold leaf on panel, 30" x 50", 2021

FINALISTS

Christopher Sullivan

Easthampton, MA

<https://sf.massart.edu/chris-sullivan/>



Diamond Smiles, oil on canvas, 40x30, 2021

Ashley Williams

South Hadley, MA

ashleyelizawilliams.com



Sentient / Restless Object, oil painting on cut primed paper installed in the wild, 22" x 30", 2021



Power of culture

TRADITIONAL ARTS APPRENTICESHIPS - MAY 2022

To: Mass Cultural Council
From: Michael J. Bobbitt, David Slatery, Jenifer Lawless, Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Bethann Steiner, Maggie Holtzberg, Kelly Bennett, Dan Blask
Date: May 23, 2022
Re: FY23 Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program Selections

We are pleased to present preliminary recommendations of grantees for Mass Cultural Council's FY23 Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program. These preliminary recommendations have been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Grants Committee at its meeting on May 3. The purpose of these preliminary grants is to let the selected mentors and apprentices know they have been recommended for a grant that will be awarded in FY23. The grants will be made with FY23 funds and the actual grant amounts to be awarded will be determined and presented to the August Grants Committee and Council as part of the approval of the FY 23 spending plan.

Background: The Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program is an important part of Mass Cultural Council's strategy to help the many diverse communities in Massachusetts preserve their cultural heritage. Folk and traditional artists are among the most vulnerable members of the creative community, often coming from new immigrant and under resourced communities. The program funds mentorships in which an individual learns skills, techniques, and artistry under the guidance of a recognized practitioner. Apprenticeships are designed to strengthen traditional arts lacking a strong infrastructure for cultural transmission, especially those that may be endangered.

Review Criteria:

- Artistic quality of mentor artist's work according to the culturally defined standards of the tradition (20 points)
- Mentor artist teaching ability (15 points)

- Skill and commitment of the apprentice (20 points)
- Feasibility of the work plan (15 points)
- Limited availability of mentor teachers in this art form or skill in MA (15 points)
- Potential impact of apprenticeship on continued vitality of the tradition (15 points)

In FY21, we switched from a 10-month to a two-year Apprenticeship Program. Awards have historically been up to \$10,000 per apprenticeship per year and grant funds are meant to compensate the mentor artist for time spent planning, preparing, and teaching. Beginning in FY23, the hourly rate is set at \$125 with a minimum of 80 hours per year. Mentor artists must also compensate their apprentices over 18 years of age or older in order to encourage participation of apprenticeships from all income levels.

Source of Funding: Funding for this program comes both from the National Endowments for the Arts Folk Arts Award and Mass Cultural Council's annual state appropriation. Award amounts will be set at the August meeting pending development of the Agency's FY23 spending plan. To give grantees the option of working together over the summer months, notifications to grantees of their selection to this program will be sent in out in early June. Final funding amounts will be determined, reviewed and approved as part of the FY23 spending plan process and will be announced **after the Council's August meeting**.

RECOMMENDED GRANTEES

Following is a table of the 18 apprenticeships that panelists agreed should be considered for funding. Panelists further determined that five other proposed apprenticeship applications (not listed) did not meet the review criteria well enough to merit funding. As stated above, final grant amounts will be determined based on the FY23 spending plan.

Mentor Artist	Traditional art	Town
Beth Bahia Cohen	Violin in traditional Greek music	Watertown
Isaura Oliveira	Samba Traditional do Recôncavo movement/dance	Boston
Andre R. Gaines	Traditional brain-tanning, paddle making, wampum, & other Wampanoag crafts	Grafton
Zhonghe Elena Li	Chinese papercutting with scissor	Cambridge
Aimaiti Abulikemu	Uyghur calligraphy	Lexington
Laurel Martin	Traditional Irish fiddling: regional styles	Westford
Sharon Correnty	African American quilt making	Pepperell
Karen Young	Taiko kumi-daiko style	Roslindale
Jorge Santiago-Arce	Bomba & Plena	Boston
Stelvyn Mirabal	Dominican carnival traditions	Lawrence
John Abarta	Uilleann pipes	Stoughton
Vincent Crotty	Traditional sign painting	Boston
Sunanda Sahay	North Indian Mithila painting	Acton
Judy Bressler	Yiddish song & dance tradition and	Sharon
Urmi Samadar	North Indian Kathak dance	Belmont
Paul Rishell	Country blues and guitar	Newton

Chris Pantazelos	Lutherie and Restoration	Lowell
Ling Chu	Chinese long ribbon dance	Boston

History of funding:

Since the program's founding in FY02, Mass Cultural Council has awarded 89 apprenticeships (\$499,782).

Year / number of applications	# Funded	Amount
FY23 23	18	TBD
FY22 (2 ^d year)	12	\$100,000
FY21 (1 st year) 27	13	\$100,000
FY19 20	10	\$70,000
FY17 17	7	\$50,000
FY15 20	6	\$28,800
FY13 10	6	\$28,437
FY11 18	6	\$25,000
FY10 10	5	\$15,000
FY07 18	8	\$20,000
FY05 19	6	\$20,000
FY03 12	5	\$24,000
FY02 27	6	\$21,545



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council
From: Staff
Date: May 10, 2022
Re: Pandemic Recovery Programs

Grants Committee

Mass Cultural Council's Grants Committee reviewed a version of the following memo at its meeting on May 3 and voted to recommend the Council authorize the staff to develop and post guidelines and report to the legislature on the following two programs related to pandemic recovery for individuals and organizations in the cultural sector funded by up to \$60 million from the Commonwealth's 2021 Covid Recovery Act referred to below. Please note, as further discussed below, today's vote will only concern the approval of program terms and not the allocations of any specific funding which will be done as part of the FY23 Spending Plan approval in August.

The Committee asked clarifying questions during its review and asked staff to prepare a "Question & Answer" document outlining the answers to these questions to aid the Council in its review of the proposed programs. Given the size and nature of the programs (funded with resources up to 3x larger than the Council's most recent annual state allocation), the Committee and staff are requesting that the Council members read the attached documents closely, understand the proposed programs and submit questions to David Slatery, prior to the Council meeting on the 23rd (preferably by early next week).

BACKGROUND

Under the Commonwealth's Act Relative to Immediate COVID-19 Recovery Needs (Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021) enacted last December, Mass Cultural Council in Line item 1599-2043 was provided \$60,147,000 (referred to as "**Pandemic Recovery Funds**") to

"... administer a grant program for the purposes of assisting cultural organizations and artists recover from the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic and operate more efficiently; provided further, that grants shall be made available for, but not be limited to:

- (i) facility upgrades, including costs associated with programmatic adaptation due to the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic;
- (ii) technology and infrastructure costs for safe reopening of facilities; and
- (iii) direct financial support to assist with staffing and other operational needs”

The law also contained the following conditional provisos (emphasis and bullets added):

- “ ... grants **may** support staffing, consultants, plans, software and hardware for organizational business development for facilities owned by municipalities or non-profit entities experiencing negative economic impacts from the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic;
- ... the council **shall** consider racial, geographic and programmatic diversity and equity within the cultural sector when establishing grant criteria;
- ... that funds **may** be expended for entities that focus on 1 or more minority populations or conduct cultural events and have cultural education or cultural performances related to minority populations; [and]
- ... the council **shall** consider and prioritize those applicants with the largest demonstrated economic need as a result of the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic, and the applicant’s demonstrated economic impact in terms of job creation and tourism generated...”

In addition, as was discussed at the March Council Meeting, the law further provides that “funds **may** be transferred to the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund [CFF] established in section 42 of chapter 23G of the General Laws for the purposes of this item”.¹

Also, in connection with these programs, the Council is required to submit reports to the administration and the legislature -once on March 1, 2022, identifying grant criteria and thereafter annually starting June 1, 2022, a listing of grants, grantees and applicants together with a description of geographic distribution, outreach and diversity efforts and any adjustments to the grant criteria.

The Council voted in March to contribute up to \$7.16 million of Pandemic Recovery Funds to the current CFF round of funding (of which about \$5.57 million will be approved for grants). Also, as has been previously reported to the Council, staff made a preliminary report to the administration and legislature on March 1 as to our ongoing efforts to develop the Pandemic Recovery Funds

¹ The law also later provides “that the council **may** include a match requirement for recipient organizations”

programs mandated by the law and our plan to deploy them in the 2023 Fiscal Year and the report also indicated that more definitive information would be delivered in connection with the required June 1, 2022 report. Notwithstanding the fact that the Pandemic Recovery Funds are available to be spent through June 30, 2027, we have heard from legislators that they are particularly interested in having the Pandemic Recovery Funds disbursed into the Commonwealth quickly and as soon as can be reasonably and responsibly accomplished.

Program Development

With the forgoing facts in mind, staff has diligently been at work designing programs consistent with the legislative mandate. Set forth below is a detailed summary of two proposed programs- one for individual artists and cultural workers and another for cultural organizations- which are designed to be able distribute the bulk of the Pandemic Recovery Funds during FY 23. Staff is requesting that the Council review and approve the proposed terms of the programs. After such approval, staff will develop detailed program guidelines and submit them as part of the legislatively required report due on June 1. Staff will then post the guidelines and begin administration of programs in accordance with the timelines specified below. Formal approval of the programs will occur as part of the review and approval of the Council's FY23 spending plan, but the current approval will enable staff to move forward with the implementation of the programs.

Summary of Pandemic Recovery Programs

I. PANDEMIC RELIEF GRANTS FOR INDIVIDUALS: GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

The FY23 Pandemic Recovery Grants for Individuals funding was designed with three key points in mind:

- Unlike other pandemic relief funding that has focused on losses suffered during the pandemic, this program focuses on recovery.
- The program assumes that working artists, teaching artists, and cultural workers all experienced loss during the pandemic.
- The funding is not intended to compensate for past losses. Rather it is designed to provides broad funding help to eligible individuals, and therefore the sector, to recover from the effects of the pandemic by providing unrestricted support.

Eligibility

Individuals are eligible to apply if they are:

1. An independent practicing artist active in any artistic discipline.
OR
2. An independent individual teaching artist/scientist/scholar.
OR

3. An independent cultural worker directly involved in arts, humanities and sciences.

AND meet all the following requirements:

- Is 18 years or older.
- Is a legal resident of Massachusetts. We will define “legal resident” as someone who meets the definition of a “full-year resident” in the Massachusetts tax code. [Visit the Mass Department of Revenue web site to learn more.](#)
- Is not currently enrolled as a full-time undergraduate or graduate student at a college or university.

Prioritization

- First-time applicants or applicants not previously funded (directly) by Mass Cultural Council programs
- Applicants who have been historically under-funded:
 - Applicants who are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color)
 - Applicants who identify as Deaf or as having a disability
- Applicants who reside in Gateway Cities and other under-resourced communities. By “under-resourced”, we mean cities and towns whose populations fall below the state’s median economic and educational attainment.

Grant numbers and amounts

The initial goals for the Individuals’ program is to make up to three thousand grants of \$5,000. (Up to \$15 million).

Anticipated Program Timeline

August 15, 2022: Application opens

November 1, 2022: Deadline to apply

Late January 2023: Awards finalized; email notifications sent

February: Contracts sent

July 14, 2023: Final report due

II. PANDEMIC RELIEF GRANTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS: GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

The FY23 Pandemic Recovery Grants for Organizations funding is designed to respond to the staggering losses that most cultural organizations have suffered due to the pandemic and related closures and, like the program for individuals, provide broad funding help to eligible organizations recover from the effects of the pandemic by providing unrestricted support.

Eligibility

Massachusetts fully-cultural organizations that are:

- Non-profits
- Fiscally sponsored
- Municipal cultural programs
- For-profits owned and operated in Massachusetts

By “fully-cultural” we mean those organizations whose **primary** mission is to promote access, excellence, diversity, or education in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences.

Specifically, the following types of organizations will be **eligible**:

- *Non-profit organizations* whose IRS determination is currently active.
- *Fiscally-sponsored organizations*. This includes unincorporated organizations with a non-profit objective or incorporated organizations in the process of getting their non-profit status or needing an agent to provide financial infrastructure necessary to receive a grant.
- *Municipal organizations*. Local Cultural Councils or Cultural Districts are eligible only if they do their own public cultural programming
- *For-profit entities* that meet **ALL** the following requirements (NOTE- this is adapted from Mass Growth Capital’s small business program requirements):
 - a. For-profit corporations, cooperatives, partnerships or LLCs that conduct publicly available programming primarily in Massachusetts
 - b. Massachusetts-based, operating in-state with a Massachusetts address on the business’ Federal Business or Partnership Tax Return
 - c. Business must be privately owned by individuals.

Ineligible organizations are:

- Not fully cultural non-profits that offer some cultural programming
- Schools (K-12, colleges, universities, including 501c3’s attached to schools)
- Degree-granting institutions
- Religious organizations
- Organizations no longer in operation
- Sole proprietorships (who should apply as individuals and not as organizations)

Prioritization

- Organizations that are located in, or centered on, historically under-funded communities

- Organizations centered on persons or communities that are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) (*Please see definition in Q+A document*)
 - Organizations located in Gateway Cities and other under-resourced communities. By “under-resourced”, we mean cities and towns whose populations fall below the state’s median economic and educational attainment
- First-time applicants or applicants not recently funded by Mass Cultural Council programs
- Organizations that have not received federal or state aid through other pandemic relief programs (*Please note that organizations that have received earmarks from the Pandemic Recovery Funds in the Commonwealth’s Immediate Covid Recovery Needs Act or Cultural Facilities Fund grants funded by Pandemic Recovery Funds will be considered to have already received state aid*)
- Organizations that have demonstrated economic need as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Organizations that have demonstrated impact on job creation in Massachusetts
- Organizations that have demonstrated impact on tourism in Massachusetts

Approved Use of Funds

Funds for this program are considered unrestricted operating support and may but are not required to, be used for the following (

- direct financial support to assist with staffing, occupancy, program expenses, and other operational needs
- facility upgrades, including costs associated with programmatic adaptation due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- technology and infrastructure costs for safe reopening of facilities.

Non-Approved Use of Funds

Grantees must prevent the duplication of benefits, which means these grant funds may not be used to pay expenses if another source of financial aid has paid that same expense.

Grant numbers and amounts

We anticipate that this program will offer grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 grants for organizations in the cultural sector to aid in their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Mass Cultural Council reserves the right to change these ranges based on the volume of requests received. Estimated size of the program is \$30-35 million.

Anticipated Timeline

May 31, 2022: Guidelines published on Mass Cultural Council website

August 1, 2022: Application opens

September 23, 2022: Deadline for organizations to apply

Late January 2023: Awards finalized; email notifications sent

February: Contracts sent

July 14, 2023: Final report due

APPROVAL REQUEST

Staff hereby requests the Council that it authorize to proceed with developing, submitting and posting guidelines for and proceed to implement the Pandemic Recovery Program for Organizations and Pandemic Recovery Program for Individuals as described above.

PLEASE SEE QUESTION + ANSWER DOCUMENT ATTACHED TO THIS MEMO



Power of culture

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL PANDEMIC RECOVERY PROGRAMS

BACKGROUND

How were the terms of the proposed Pandemic Recovery Programs developed?

After the authorizing legislation was passed in December 2021, Mass Cultural Council staff began seeking public input. On January 24, 2022, Mass Cultural Council held a virtual public forum attended by more than 250 cultural sector stakeholders and established online survey to seek further public input which resulted in more than 320 submissions of written comments. A cross-collaborative team of more than 15 staff members from across every department in the agency was assembled and has been working on reviewing the comments and public input data and fashioning responsive programs to recommend to senior staff and ultimately the Grants Committee and the Council. As explained in the accompanying memo the need for unrestricted funding was a clear message expressed in the public input process.

Except for the inclusion of for-profit organizations, which is a somewhat new concept (see pertinent question on this topic below), the terms of the proposed programs are built largely on precedents that the Council has previously approved for other Agency programs. Staff were also able to draw on previous Covid relief funding processes from FY20 and FY21 and the existing granting processes used by the Cultural Investment Portfolio (CIP), Artists or other teams at the Agency. The only instances where terms of a proposed program deviate from prior Agency precedent is due to the express language of the authorizing statute. Staff confidently assert that these programs are based on a solid foundation of previous Agency practice.

PANDEMIC RELIEF GRANTS FOR INDIVIDUALS PROGRAM

1. Is this program only for gig workers?

No. It is for all independent practicing artists, independent individual teaching artist/scientist/humanists and independent cultural workers directly involved in arts, humanities and interpretative sciences (See definitions below). While gig workers are not named in the prioritization list, we expect the program will primarily support gig workers across our sector.

2. Will somebody working at an organization who also does side-gigs be eligible?

Yes, since many artists and cultural workers in Massachusetts do their work in addition to another day job, artists who work with independent are eligible. The key is the side gigs. Work done as an employee of a cultural organization is NOT eligible for the grant.

3. Will there be a final report required?

There will be a short, simple Final Report (which will look like a survey) at the end of the fiscal year.

4. How will the Council we know how grantees used the funds?

The Final Report Survey will ask grantees to identify categories ("technology upgrades," "supplies," "space/housing costs" etc....) for which they used the funding. This data will additionally help the agency understand needs of individuals for future support.

5. Key definitional questions

Below are a few working definitions that are being developed in an applicant FAQ. Staff will update as needed

Artist. We define "artist" as those working in crafts, dance, design, film/video, folk, world and traditional arts, literature, music, performance, digital, photography, theater, and visual arts. Examples include but are not limited to actors, street artists, drag artists, DJ's, theater designers and directors, puppeteers, comedians, choreographers, dancers, filmmakers/videographers, musicians, composers, conductors, creative writers of all genres and formats, muralists/public artists, and crafts and

visual artists of all kinds. If there are any questions about whether work is eligible for this grant, applicants will be asked to contact us.

Practicing. By “practicing,” we mean someone active in their art form. They do not necessarily need to derive significant income from their work in the arts (though it’s also fine if they do), but they should be able to demonstrate an active practice. The application form requires an applicant to upload a resume or include a URL (website or social media) that demonstrates their activity in their artistic practice.

Teaching artist. We define “teaching artist” as an independent individual who teaches art to individuals of any age in any setting. Examples include but are not limited to private music/art lessons, one-time workshops, K-12 school residencies to present art, and ongoing art classes. We define “teaching scientist/humanist” as an independent individual whose work promotes education in the interpretive sciences or humanities, to people of any age. Examples include but are not limited to: K-12 school residencies to present interpretive sciences or humanities topics; one-time presentations at libraries, elder facilities, or other community venues; and performances at science fairs or public history discussions. If there are any questions about whether work is eligible for this grant, applicants will be asked to contact us.

Cultural Worker. We define “cultural worker” as an independent individual directly involved in arts and culture but whose work could be considered non-artistic in nature. Examples include but are not limited to a freelance curator, theater lighting technician, art conservationist, producer, editor, arts critic, venue front of house worker or tour guide in cultural settings. If there are any questions about whether work is eligible for this grant, applicants will be asked to contact us.

Independent. By “independent,” we mean primarily working on a freelance, contract, or gig basis. Unfortunately, we cannot fund applicants whose work in arts and culture is part a full-time/salaried position as an employee at a cultural organization or business owned by someone other than the applicant.

6. **What about someone who is not an artist, teaching artist/scientist/humanist, or cultural worker, but brings creativity to their work in health/beauty/business/etc. Will they be eligible?**

Unfortunately, no. There are numerous fields – examples include business advertising, hair styling or make-up (when unrelated to an artistic project

like theater or film), culinary, and yoga or martial arts instruction – that benefit from creativity. We value the creative energy such persons bring to their work. However, this program's funding was approved by the Massachusetts Legislature to support the cultural sector. So while we appreciate creativity in another field, we will not award grants to individuals not working in the cultural sector.

PANDEMIC RELIEF GRANTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS PROGRAM

1. How are “for-profit” organizations treated and why are they included in this program?

For-profit organizations are subject to the same prioritization as non-profit organizations, however we do have limits on the kinds of for-profits that may apply (they must have a tax address in Massachusetts, be fully cultural and offer public programming, and have fewer than three locations to eliminate chains applying). The language in the authorizing legislation is broad enough to include for-profit organizations as well as nonprofit organizations and frankly funding for profits was always mentioned as part of the legislative intent behind pandemic relief bills for arts and culture and was a key part of the advocacy message. Please note that various legislators have specifically inquired about this issue. Also, as a matter of equity, some small and new arts organizations/groups just starting out have found it preferable for a variety of reasons to operate as for-profits (such as LLCs) rather than as formal non-profits. Many of these organizations do not see a “profit” and have struggled with losses related to the pandemic.

2. General questions as to the meanings of terms used.

The application and guidelines will be reviewed to eliminate unfamiliar terms, or to provide definitions and clarification if we think this is necessary. We will continue to update the applicant FAQ as we receive questions.

Specifically, we mention “Organizations centered on persons or communities that are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color)” in the prioritization section. Characteristics of such BIPOC-centered organizations are:

- BIPOC-centered organizations must be able to 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 an organization is intentionally working to serve. E.g., Members, students, artists, participants, audience, geographic community, ethnic heritage or cultural tradition*)
- And must also be BIPOC led and/or run.

For the purposes of this criteria, we use the term [BIPOC](#) (Black, Indigenous and People of Color). We recognize that language is fluid, and the intersectional justice movement is redefining terminology, regularly. This list is not exhaustive. We will update it as we learn more. BIPOC is intended to include, but not limited to:

- o People of Color
- o [ALAANA](#) (also AALANA and ALANA) - African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.
- o [AAPI](#) – Asian American and Pacific Islander
- o Latino/a (also Hispanic) as well as Latinx/e and Afro-Latino/a
- o Native American (Tribal and Urban) as well as Alaska Native and Indigenous Americans
- o [MENA](#) – Middle East and North African
- o [People of the Global Majority](#)

3. Will Final Reports required? When and what will they say? How do we know how grantees spent the money?

Like the Individuals program, there will be a short, simple Final Report (which will look like a survey). The Final Report will ask grantees to identify categories of that they used the funding for. This data will help the agency understand needs for future support.

4. Do grantees have to spend the grant within a year?

We are working with Administration and Finance and the Comptroller to get an understanding of the expectations for spending the money as it relates to the fiscal year and standard state contracting process and the statutory language. We note that we can permit the funds to be allocated to previous expenditures incurred prior to the award of the grant (if they have not received reimbursement from some other source for the same).

5. How do we know whether they received any other funding on the priority list

Applicants will be asked to report on any other relief funding and will have to attest to the accuracy of their reporting. Also, we will be aware of organizations that have previously received Pandemic Recovery Funds either through earmarks in the legislation or from the contribution of Pandemic Recovery Funds to the Cultural Facilities Fund authorized by the Council in March.

6. How are determining “need” and how will it be used

Staff is working with a consultant (the same one who helped with earlier pandemic relief programs) to develop a formula for measuring the financial impact of the pandemic on organizations. The applicants will be asked to provide information from their tax returns (instructions will clearly

specify what information), plus information about one time and ongoing pandemic related expenses. The goal is to identify organizations whose financial model is seriously disrupted, even if the impact has been temporarily offset by one-time pandemic relief funds.

7. Will priorities be clear enough for the applicants-There are concerns that applicants will spend too much time highlighting their impact on tourism and jobs and ignoring other stuff?

The applications are being created in such a way that the priorities will be ranked through our system. There will be no long essays required for this portion of the application. We will be collecting self-reported tourism and jobs information that will be only one component of the prioritization (and is required by the statute and was a key advocacy point in its adoption).

8. Why don't we have a separate grant program focus on encouraging collaboration in the sector – shouldn't we be leading the field in this area?

Our listening sessions and surveys from affected individuals and organizations in the sector strongly supported the creation of unrestricted operating support programs through which many different goals can be addressed at the election of the applicant without the need for imposing a new program or activity on grantees. Our outlook is deliberately intended to be applicant-centric- the grants should be easy to apply for and should provide flexibility for grantees to use as they see fit rather than as directed by the state. In addition, our program staff worked with our sector every day throughout the pandemic and heard a broad need for unrestricted support.

We intend to talk about capacity building and other potential leadership initiatives through our strategic planning process.

GENERAL

1. What will happen once the Council votes to approve the outline of the programs?

Staff will finalize the guidelines by May 31st and report on them to the legislature on June 1 as part of the statutorily-required report. The guidelines would be posted onto the website by June 3rd as well with the intention of implementing the programs in the timelines noted in the Council memo. Staff does intend to work with focus groups during that time period to help clarify language and develop further FAQ documents.

Actual allocation of funds to the programs will be part of the August budget meetings. We need to both gauge demand for the programs and determine how much of the \$60,147,000 will be deployed for other purposes such as CFF contributions, contributions to other agencies and costs of administering such programs.