Seeding Cultural Treasures Request for Proposals (RFP)

KEY DATES

RFP announced:	Friday, April 8, 2022
Application open:	Monday, April 18, 2022
General informational webinars (optional):	Friday, April 22, 1-2pm Thursday, May 12, 1-2pm
Technical assistance sessions with applicants (optional):	Tuesday, April 26 9am-5pm & Tuesday, May 10 9am-5pm
Proposals due:	Friday, May 20, 2022, 5pm CST As you get closer to the deadline, if you need an extension due to extenuating circumstances, email SCT@propelnonprofits.org.
Follow-up calls with applicants, if needed:	May 24-27, 2022
Finalists contacted to schedule interview:	Thursday, June 23, 2022
Interviews held:	June 27-July 8, 2022
Awards announced:	Thursday, July 21, 2022
Grant agreements signed:	Monday, August 1, 2022
Grant period begins:	August 2022

WEBSITE
https://www.propelnonprofits.org/capacity-building/seeding-cultural-treasures/

A glossary of terms used throughout the RFP is available at the SCT website

KEY CONTACTS

Anniessa Antar
Seeding Cultural Treasures Program Manager
612-249-6644
SCT@propelnonprofits.org

Glyn Northington
Senior Program Director
612-249-6672
SCT@propelnonprofits.org

GUIDELINES

Purpose of Grant

Seeding Cultural Treasures (SCT) is an initiative to nourish the landscape of arts and culture organizations run by and for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota and the 23 Tribal Nations within that geographic area. The SCT team at Propel Nonprofits hopes to take a step toward reimagined ways of investing and capacity building in these organizations by:

- Strengthening networks intentionally for BIPOC artists and arts and culture organizations.
- Partnering with funders for more abundant, restorative, and transformative opportunities.
- Centering relationship building and trust in grantmaking.

- Providing unrestricted general operating funds.
- Creating multiple pathways for optional and ongoing support through technical assistance support and peer-learning opportunities.

An initial round of unrestricted general operating grants are available to 501(c)(3) and fiscally sponsored organizations, and/or units of the 11 tribal governments in Minnesota. Additional funding rounds within the next year will include organizations in North and South Dakota.

Benefits for Organizations Selected

- General operating grant between $40,000 and $100,000 over three-and-a-half years. Recipients will work with Propel to determine the distribution of the grant.
- Technical assistance to grantees in financial administration and other nonprofit finance, strategy, and governance areas.
- Optional workshops and peer-learning opportunities in other focus areas as determined by recipients. To strengthen and nourish the BIPOC arts and culture landscape, many of these workshops, peer learnings, and networking opportunities will be available to all applicants and the wider BIPOC arts and culture community, regardless of being a grantee.

Expectations of Organizations Selected

- Annual grantee convenings
- Interim and final grant reports to share stories and lessons learned
- Ongoing developmental evaluation check-ins with grantee's leadership team and program staff through interviews and surveys
- We estimate an average of 15 hours of commitment a year for developmental evaluation, reports and convenings, plus incremental time for the optional workshops and networking opportunities.

Organization Eligibility Criteria

The primary organization eligibility criteria are:

- Organizations are registered in Minnesota or are units of one of the 11 Native Tribal Nations within its border
- Nonprofit organizations, including 501(c)(3) organizations and organizations that have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) organization
- Organization must have an arts and culture focus that is significant to their organizational programs and budget
- Organization's Executive Director/CEO is BIPOC-identified or at least 50% of board members are BIPOC-identified, AND the organization demonstrates a significant prioritization of arts and culture to serve BIPOC arts community or their specified/defined community of color
- Organizations have been providing arts and culture programming for at least two years. (They are not required to have been a 501(c)(3) or fiscally sponsored for at least two years.)
- Organizations with current annual budgets with expenses less than $500,000.

If you are interested in the program but are currently not a 501(c)(3) or fiscally sponsored organization, we will still accept your submission to participate in the program on the condition that if selected, you become fiscally sponsored within 60 days of notification of your selection. Propel and Springboard for the Arts are two organizations you could engage with for fiscal sponsorship.

Informational Webinars (Optional)

Two optional informational webinars will be held to review this RFP with interested organizations and to answer questions. Register for one of the two informational webinars here:
- **General Information Webinar:** Friday, April 22, 1-2pm. Click here to register.
- **General Information Webinar:** Thursday, May 12, 1-2pm. Click here to register.

Technical Assistance Days (Optional)

There will be two optional technical assistance days to help applicants with their application preparation. With previous grant programs, we found many applicants wanted support in thinking through and writing their narrative questions. The following two dates have been set aside for providing technical assistance during 30-minute appointments, but a session is not required to apply.
- **Technical Assistance Day:** Tuesday, April 26 9am-5pm. Click here to register.
- **Technical Assistance Day:** Tuesday, May 10 9am-5pm. Click here to register.

Applicants can also call or email the grant contacts, Anniessa Antar and Glyn Northington, if they need technical assistance but can't make an appointment on either of these dates.

RFP Review Process

Propel Nonprofits will engage an external Selection Committee to review and select the grant recipients.

Save the Date: Interviews

If your organization is selected to move to the second round, you will be invited to a 30-minute interview with members of the Selection Committee. You will be contacted by June 24 if you're selected for the next round. We ask you to hold at least three of these dates and times on your calendars for a potential interview:
- Morning or afternoon of June 27, 28, 29, 30
- Morning of afternoon of July 1, 5, 6, 7, 8

APPLICATION

Submitting Your Application
- Access the application form: Seeding Cultural Treasures Application
- The application questions are available for download here by clicking this link: Seeding Cultural Treasures Application Questions
  - All applicants must apply through our online form; a Word document of the questions is provided as a resource to applicants.
- The form will close on **Friday, May 20, 2022, at 5 pm**.

Application Submission Tips
- Text boxes include maximum character counts which are inclusive of letters, numbers, spaces, and paragraph breaks. There is no formatting (bold or italics).
- You may find that you do not need all the characters allotted.
- Do not include hyperlinks in text boxes, as the panel review will be limited to the content of your application. If you include a hyperlink, they will be removed.

Accessibility

Propel requests all applicants apply online or via video unless a disability prevents you from doing so. Propel works to ensure that grant guidelines, workshop presentations, and any other written materials are created with accessibility principles in mind. Additionally, we are happy to provide materials in Large Print or other formats with advanced notice of at least one week. (Even if the notice timeline has elapsed, we will do our best to accommodate the request.) Documents linked in this text are formatted in a text format that is friendly to screen readers and text resizing.

Translation

If you would like to request a translation of these questions, please contact Anniessa Antar at SCT@propelnonprofits.org. At this time, questions must be answered in English because our reviewers primarily speak English.

Video or Written Response Options

You have a choice of answering the 5 narrative questions either in writing or with a video submission. The remainder of the application needs to be completed in writing.

Video Upload

If you choose to answer the narrative questions with a video submission, you will have an option to select that on the application. You will be emailed a link to upload your videos. The maximum video length we will view is listed beside each narrative question. Please upload a video in any of these formats: .avi, .mov, .mpeg, .mp4, .wmv. There is a file size limit of 200 megabytes per video.

Narrative Questions

Below are only the narrative questions for the application. A Word document of the entire application can be found here: Seeding Cultural Treasures Application Questions
PLEASE NOTE: Our review process does not prioritize proper phrasing, language, or exact details. The priority is to provide organizations with the support they need in a timely manner. Please tell us about your work. Character limits are to keep proposals simple and concise.

History of Community Impact: Demonstrates history of amplifying, connecting with, building with and/or bringing value to BIPOC communities
- Share about the ways that your organization has amplified, connected with, built with and/or added value to BIPOC communities in your region.

(350-word maximum or 3-minute video)

BIPOC Focus: Strategic focus on stewarding and sustaining artistic and/or cultural traditions rooted in a specific/defined community or communities of color; these communities can be multiracial. Community served can be defined as staff, volunteers, participating artists, and/or participants
- Which cultural communities does your organization focus on and serve in its programs?
- In what ways do the people working in or with your organization authentically reflect and are positioned to serve this cultural community?

(350-word maximum or 3-minute video)

Dedication to arts and culture: Organization is dedicated to arts and culture

- How much of your organization's budget is dedicated to arts and cultural staffing and activities?
- What areas or intersections of art and culture does your organization focus on?

(250-word maximum or 2-minute video)

Understanding of today: An understanding of the challenges and opportunities available for their organization and their support of their communities
- What are the big priorities for your organization at this point in time?
- What challenges are you facing?
- What opportunities are available to you as you think about your work in the communities you serve?

(500-word maximum or 4-minute video)

Future vision and approach: The priorities for the organization and what will it take to accomplish those goals
- What do you hope to accomplish by being a part of this initiative?
- If capacity or money wasn't an issue, what would your organization want to prioritize?
- What types of support would help you accomplish your priorities?

(500-word maximum or 4-minute video)

Additional Documentation

For 501(c)(3) Organizations:

In addition to the narrative questions, the following documentation (attached as pdfs) will be requested in the application for 501(c)(3) organizations:
- Most recent 990 (If your organization does not file a 990, please attach your most recent 990-EZ or 990-N.) (upload pdf file)
- 501(c)(3) Determination Letter (upload pdf file)
- Current year, board-approved organizational budget (upload pdf file)
- List of board members and affiliations (upload pdf file)
- List of staff and their titles/roles (upload pdf file)

For Fiscally Sponsored Organizations:

In addition to the narrative questions, the following documentation (attached as pdfs) will be requested in the application for fiscally sponsored organizations:
- Fiscal Sponsor Agreement (upload pdf file)
- Your organization's current year, board-approved organizational budget (upload pdf file)
- List of your organization's board members and affiliations (upload pdf file)
- List of your organization's staff and their titles/roles (upload pdf file)

———