

PRESS RELEASE

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UNITED ARTS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA HAS OPENED THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR THE 2020 OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS

ORLANDO – July 2, 2019 – United Arts of Central Florida has opened the application process for the 2020 Operating Support Grants. Operating support is essential funding for nonprofits, which helps “keep the lights on” by funding a portion of their entire season of operations and programming, allowing them to offer free and low-cost arts and cultural experiences for the public. These grants are supported by gifts to United Arts’ *Arts for ALL* Fund. The Operating Support Grant deadline is 5 pm Thursday, August 15, 2019, for 2020 funding. The complete list of application guidelines and requirements are located on the United Arts website (UnitedArts.cc).

Operating Support Grants fund programming by cultural nonprofit organizations, increasing the variety of cultural experiences available to residents and visitors in Central Florida. This comprehensive grant program recognizes the high value of arts and culture for our region and the established institutions that provide cultural programming for the public year-round.

“Since its inception in 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$155 million in the growth and development of Central Florida nonprofit cultural groups,” said President & CEO Flora Maria Garcia. “This highly competitive grant process ensures that Central Florida residents are receiving intriguing, inclusive, and creative programming from cultural institutions.”

The value of these grants is clear: In 2019, United Arts’ Operating Support Grants helped 35 arts organizations mount 2,904 exhibitions and productions, provide arts access and arts education to 1,082,185 students, offer 1,657,510 free tickets, and attract 2,841,538 visits. These grants support 375 full-time and 580 part-time staff positions, as well as 10,973 artists. Last year United Arts of Central Florida awarded \$1,495,000 in Operating Support Grants.

The grant review process is based on a 100-point evaluation system covering Artistic or Historic/Scientific Merit (40%), Management & Fiscal Responsibility (35%), and Outreach & Education (25%). In recent years, a particular focus of the grant review is diversity. United Arts has provided extensive education for cultural groups in how to engage the diverse community of Central Florida through programming, target marketing and inclusion in decision-making. Many grantee organizations have made significant outreach to diverse audiences in the past few years and are expanding the diversity of their boards of directors and advisory councils.

Operating Support Grants are divided into three categories based on operating revenues of the organizations. For repeat applicants, eligibility for budget category is determined by United Arts staff as of the prior year application. The maximum request for this cycle is 8% or 9%, as a percentage of the organization’s three-year average operating cash revenue; this percentage will be recalibrated each year based on fundraising forecasts. New applicants must first send three years of financial statements and

programming history to Grants & Arts Education Manager Rafael Torres, Rafael@UnitedArts.cc, for eligibility.

Awards are determined at formal meetings of each grant panel in late October and November and approved by the United Arts Board in December 2019. Grants cover cultural programs from January 1 through December 31, 2020. The Operating Support Grant program is one of more than six United Arts funding programs, including designated giving secured through the *Collaborative Campaign for the Arts*; match dollars provided by United Arts' Trustees and corporate donors; and contracts for services supporting educational programming.

Please visit UnitedArts.cc for more information and the complete list of application guidelines and requirements.

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About United Arts of Central Florida

United Arts is a collaboration of individuals, businesses, governments and school districts, foundations, arts and cultural organizations, and artists. Its mission is to enrich communities by investing in arts, science and history. United Arts serves residents and visitors in Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties through more than 60 local arts, science and history organizations. It raises and distributes funds for these cultural groups and provides management, administrative and advisory services. Since 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$155 million in Central Florida's arts and culture.

For more information, visit <http://www.UnitedArts.cc> or call 407.628.0333. Please email FloraMaria@UnitedArts.cc for comments or inquiries.