

Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism
RECOVERY ACT NARRATIVE
October 10, 2009

In April 2009, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism received \$306,100 from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the federal arts agency, to establish the Arts Jobs Preservation Program in Connecticut for FY2010.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) recognizes that the non profit arts industry is an important sector of the economy. In accordance with this Act, the NEA received \$50 million to help preserve jobs in the nonprofit arts sector that are threatened by declines in philanthropic and other support during these difficult economic times.

Program Description

CCT developed the Arts Jobs Preservation Grant Program (AJPP) consistent with NEA's ARRA program. AJPP provides one-time grants to fund salaries, wages, fringe benefits and fees for administrative and artistic personnel whose jobs (1) have recently been eliminated or reduced in hours since July 2008, or (2) are threatened to be eliminated or reduced in hours in the near future due to the current economic downturn.

Applicants could request
\$10,000 or \$20,000 for salary support, wages and fringe benefits
\$5,000 or \$10,000 for fees for previously engaged artists and/or contractual personnel

Application and Review Process

The Commission received 95 applications out of a pool of 155 eligible organizations. One organization withdrew its application and one applicant was ineligible for review. Applicants represented all arts disciplines and fields, organizations of all sizes and wide geographic reach. The total dollar requested was \$1,580,000.

On June 30, 2009, CCT convened an all-day advisory panel to review the applications based on the three criteria listed in the AJPP guidelines:

1. Significance of the position (staff or contractual) to the mission or core work of the organization
2. Potential that the grant will have a significant and immediate impact on the organization and its ability to continue to serve the public
3. Organization's ability to implement the ARRA funds

The panelists were: Barbara Schaffer Bacon, co-director of the Animating Democracy Initiative, a program of Americans for the Arts; Dorcas Blue, program director at the Fairfield County Community Foundation; and Randall Rosenbaum, executive director of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts.

The scoring system was modeled after the one used by the NEA's fast track grant program. In addition to the above criteria, the panel also considered other factors such as prior CCT panel assessments, geographic location, disciplines represented, and outreach to underserved audiences when making final recommendations.

Award Recommendations and Approval

18 applications totaling \$300,000 were recommended for funding.

- 6 applications @ \$10,000
- 12 applications @ \$20,000
- 16 for salaried positions
- 2 for contractual fees

In terms of jobs preserved:

- 18 positions with salaries/fees totaling \$746,000
- 19,920 person-hours
- 10.375 (full-time equivalent) jobs

Congressional Districts covered:

- 5 grants awarded in District 1
- 3 grants awarded in District 2
- 4 grants awarded in District 3
- 3 grants awarded in District 4
- 3 grants awarded in District 5

The CCT board approved the panel's recommendations at its July 22nd meeting.

Subgrantee Reporting Responsibilities

With the AJPP award letter and grant contract, CCT spelled out grantee ARRA quarterly federal reporting requirements. Grantees were instructed to submit their data on a specific CCT report form no later than October 1, 2009; January 4, 2010; April 1, 2010; and July 1, 2010.

First quarterly Subgrantee Report due October 1

All grantees submitted their information on time.

Combined, the 18 ARRA subgrants accounted for:

- Total hours worked: 7643
- Hours paid by grants: 3363 = 6.47 FTE
- Amounts spent: \$68,184

The positions preserved represented:

- 7 administrative
- 4 artistic
- 5 educational
- 2 technical

Reporting Status to OMB

Since August, CCT has received from the National Endowment for the Arts regular *Recovery Act Grantee Updates* in preparation for our first federal submission due October 10.

CCT registered with federalreporting.gov in September without any trouble. We did experience some technical difficulties with the FRPIN but, with persistence, received it in good time.

NEA issued a “Step by Step Quarterly Reporting Guidance for Recipients” which was also posted on the NEA website <http://www.arts.gov/manageaward/Recovery/index.html>

CCT closely followed the NEA “Clarifying Guidance” and specific “NEA Examples” in preparing our information which was shared with DAS. DAS submitted the federal quarterly report to OMB on October 8.

Forecast of Activities

We expect full compliance by CCT grantees on the next three quarterly reports.

Only one organization (which received \$10,000) has spent all grant funds in the 1st quarter as the total salary for the position recovered was \$60,747. All other organizations are spreading their grant funds through June 30, 2010.

As part of the CCT quarterly report, we are collecting specific information regarding activities organizations were able to undertake because positions were reinstated, retained or fully restored.