



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LORI E. LIGHTFOOT AWARDS \$6.5M IN DCASE GRANTS TO CHICAGO  
NONPROFIT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS**

*2022 CityArts Program provides increased support to local arts organizations of all sizes and types including project grants aligned with the #YearofChicagoDance*

**CHICAGO** — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) today announced 280 financial grants awarded to Chicago nonprofit arts organizations as part of the City of Chicago's **2022 CityArts Program**. Owing to the City's significant new investments in arts and culture, funding for this program has increased by 280%, climbing from \$1.7 million in 2021 to \$6.5 million. The longstanding CityArts Program provides general operating support and project grants to local arts organizations of all sizes and across all artistic disciplines. In 2022, grant amounts have also increased for greater impact — from one-time grants of \$2,000 to \$25,000 previously to roughly \$10,000 to \$50,000 grants renewable for one year. The number of grants also jumped from 200 in 2021 to 280 this year, including over a dozen project grants aligned with the #YearofChicagoDance. For the list of grantees and to learn about upcoming grant opportunities, arts nonprofits and individual artists should please visit [ChicagoCulturalGrants.org](https://chicagoculturalgrants.org).

“The continued, equitable revitalization of our arts and culture scene remains essential to our ability to recover from this pandemic on a socioeconomic level,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “I’m proud to increase our grant funding in support of local artists and arts organizations to advance our recovery and bring beauty and life back to our neighborhoods.”

As previously announced, the 2022 City budget provided \$26 million in new arts and culture investments — including \$10 million for a dedicated revenue stream



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from the City’s corporate budget to guarantee a baseline of funding for Cultural Grants, which will no longer be subject to the vagaries of the hotel tax.

“In 2022, with additional funds — including a transformational increase in our Cultural Grants budget from \$2.7 million to \$20.7 million — and our operating budget being largely restored to pre-pandemic levels, DCASE is now poised to serve the needs of Chicago’s vital arts community this year and well into the future,” said DCASE Commissioner Erin Harkey.

The goal of DCASE’s annual CityArts Program is to encourage the attainment of artistic excellence and financial stability, and to incentivize innovation related to citywide priorities. The program continually strives toward an equitable distribution of funds across the city. In 2021, Cultural Grants were awarded to artists and arts organizations in 50 wards as compared to 35 in 2016. This year, CityArts grants awarded to organizations located on the South and West sides jumped to 45% from just 35% in 2021.

“We’re excited to be recognized by Mayor Lightfoot and DCASE, and grateful for their support,” said new grantee Karla Galvan, Artistic Director of Teatro Tariakuri, a theater and cultural center on the Southwest Side of Chicago. “This CityArts grant will allow us to continue staging productions in Spanish — and providing the community with arts education and programming rooted in our Latino culture.”

Earlier this year, DCASE partnered with Arts Alliance Illinois and the Chicago Cultural Alliance on a series of input sessions to gather perspectives on the challenges and opportunities faced by Chicago creatives. The series included two DCASE informational sessions, four deep-dive focus groups and a digital survey. These sessions and survey results alongside recent research conducted by SMU DataArts, supported by Bloomberg Associates, have informed DCASE’s increased investment in general operating support and will inform additional updates and new strategies to be implemented as part of the Cultural Grants Program over the next two years. Changes made to the 2022 program are in direct response to needs raised by the local community for larger, more flexible grants.

The arts and culture sector continues to face hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as summarized by [Arts Alliance Illinois](#). Annual, unrestricted support of nonprofit organizations is necessary to provide our local arts sector with the stability it needs to thrive. Additional relief grants will be made available later in 2022 as part of the [Chicago Recovery Plan](#), focusing on organizations not able to access other forms of federal economic supports, including program support for artist and organizations working in neighborhoods through the [Together We Heal Creative Place Program](#).



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### **Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events**

The City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) supports artists and cultural organizations, invests in the creative economy, and expands access and participation in the arts throughout Chicago's 77 neighborhoods. As a collaborative cultural presenter, arts funder, and advocate for creative workers, our programs and events serve Chicagoans and visitors of all ages and backgrounds, downtown and in diverse communities across our city — to strengthen and celebrate Chicago. DCASE produces some of the city's most iconic festivals, markets, events, and exhibitions at the Chicago Cultural Center, Millennium Park, and in communities across the city — serving a local and global audience of 25 million people. The Department offers cultural grants and resources, manages public art, supports TV and film production and other creative industries, and permits special events throughout Chicago. For details, visit [Chicago.gov/DCASE](https://chicago.gov/DCASE) and [stay connected via our newsletters and social media](#).