



“An Exercise in Ritual” by Bobby LeFebre¹

Blessed be the creatives!

The ones predisposed to questioning

The ones with an immoderate hunger for understanding

Come and meet us at a new juncture where expression devoid of

consciousness is merely decoration

Where art is an insistent incubator for justice

Where equity and access are an altar we decorate with the flowers of

promise and purpose

HEArts 2020 Request for Proposal

Nonprofit organizations in partnership with artists can apply

Opens: January 14, 2020 12:00 AM (EST)

Deadline: March 18, 2020 11:59 PM (EST)

DESCRIPTION

In early November 2019, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation (RMHF) announced its updated [Strategic Framework](#) for 2020 through 2022. The framework affirms RMHF’s aim to advance health equity and reduce health disparities by bringing together diverse partners across neighborhoods, institutions, and sectors. RMHF’s Health Equity and Arts (HEArts) program will add groundwork to these efforts by supporting nonprofit organizations that partner with and [equitably compensate](#) artists to engage [underserved communities](#) in participatory sessions around issues affecting health and/or housing equity². Participatory sessions hosted by the organization and artist(s) will invite community members to identify the barriers to health and/or housing needs and propose creative ways to remove the named barriers. These creative solutions will bring awareness to the greater public and give agency to the community in advocating to

¹ To read the full poem, “An Exercise in Ritual” by Bobby LeFebre visit <https://www.qiarts.org/exercise-ritual-poem>.

² RMHF’s intention to require equitable pay for artists is due to the recommendations from the 2nd class of Equity & Health Fellows. Refer to page 11 in the [Equity & Health Fellows Report - Class Two](#).

change minds, hearts and the policies that lead to the disparities faced, either in organizations or the community. Supported projects will be funded up to \$60,000 over a two-year period.

Why Arts and Culture?

RMHF's definition for health equity states that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy and well as possible. This requires engaging communities and partners to reduce health disparities by removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination and their consequences³. In order to advance health equity, creative methods are necessary. The social determinants of health, the conditions of where people live, work and age shaped by money, power and resources according to the [World Health Organization](#), require a cross-sector and an interdisciplinary approach to truly create the greatest impact on moving the needle towards health equity for all. The cross-sector connection between arts and health is the perfect example of a creative, collaborative approach with a proven and measurable impact on an individual's health, a community's health, and recommendations for policy change, advocating for overall population health.

Over the past two years, RMHF has funded cross-sector collaboration that included arts and culture to advance health and housing equity and unleashed the imagination of the community.

In 2017-2018, RMHF intentionally set forth to build new relationships and hear from different voices in the community to inform and strengthen efforts to foster an equitable and healthy Richmond Region. Realizing the extraordinary value that artists bring to the region, RMHF expanded its traditional grantmaking activities in access to healthcare to include an investment in a pilot Health Equity and Arts program. Through HEArts, RMHF ventured into new territory by awarding artists and artist collectives' funds for projects that helped fill in the blank canvas of what health equity looked like to the community. Read about the projects from the first year here: [HEArts 2017-18](#).

In the fall of 2018, the second cohort of HEArts launched called Equity In Action!. Equity in Action! launched with the idea of integrating the arts into RMHF's core work by funding cross-sector, nontraditional partnerships of nonprofit organizations working with paid artists to lead participatory sessions with the communities they served to identify barriers to health and/or housing needs and foster creative ways to remove the barriers. By partnering with artists, nonprofit organizations were able to hear directly from the communities they serve about the issues that prevent equitable access to health and housing. Through creative exercises, trust was built and anxiety was decreased, which allowed the groups to hold difficult conversations. While the communities were able to name the problems and issues they faced, they were also able to collaborate on

³ For more information, see Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's, [What is Health Equity?](#) report.

envisioning creative solutions to them. Read all about the creative solutions here: [HEArts 2018-19](#).

HEArts 2020

HEArts 2020 will build on the success of the previous HEArts cohorts by continuing to fund nonprofit organizations in partnership with equitably compensated artists engaging underserved communities in participatory sessions to identify barriers to health and/or housing equity and foster creative ways to remove the barriers faced. Based on past investments, we are anticipating grants of \$30,000 per year for a total of \$60,000 over a two-year period. RMHF decided on a two-year funding opportunity based on feedback from the evaluation of the HEArts program and the realization that it takes more than one year to effect lasting change and build relationships of trust.

Over the two-year period, RMHF anticipates the following **HEArts 2020 goals** will be realized:

- The unique role that art plays in authentically honoring the voice and integrity of the people, places, stories and ideas that emerge from participatory sessions with underserved communities will be highlighted.
- Communities will have agency to name barriers impacting health/housing equity, to co-create potential solutions, and to advocate for changes to the inequitable policies or practices they face, either in communities or in organizations.
- Leadership development opportunities will be provided for artists funded through the HEArts program that include grant writing workshops, determining your fee, understanding tax implications, marketing, etc.
- The table will be set to create healthy communities through cross-sector collaboration that includes arts and culture⁴.

HEArts 2020 EXPECTATIONS

- RMHF strongly encourages all grantees to attend racial equity trainings when they are offered by the Foundation.
- Artists will participate in a leadership development program with one of RMHF's partners as noted above.
- RMHF encourages the nonprofit organization's project lead and artist(s) to attend co-learning sessions organized by RMHF. See proposed timeline on page six⁵.
- An interim status report, as well as a final report within 30 days of the project's completion, will be submitted to RMHF.

⁴ Examples of cross-sector collaborations that engage arts and culture to improve health can be found in the White paper, Creating Healthy Communities Through Cross-Sector Collaboration, https://arts.ufl.edu/site/assets/files/174533/uf_chc_whitepaper_2019.pdf

⁵ These dates are a tentative hold. As a cohort, we will work together and decide what is best. This lines up with #6 under RMHF's changes to practices in the RMHF Updated [Strategic Framework: 2020-2022](#).

APPLICATION PROCESS

RMHF invites 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations in partnership with an individual artist or a collaboration of artists to apply through an electronic application process ([application](#)). Nonprofit organizations must be located in the counties of Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, Powhatan and the city of Richmond to be eligible. The Foundation encourages creative projects that are interactive and participatory with underserved communities experiencing health and/or housing inequities as a part of two year funding opportunity. Any type of art, including, but not limited to music, theater, visual art, dance (including hip hop), expressive writing, public art (statues and murals), videography and filmmaking, poetry and spoken work is eligible.

Application questions will include:

1. Please describe your project.
 - What known barriers to health and/or housing equity exist within the community the project will serve?
 - Detail how the project will address the barriers or inequities.
 - List the project goals and the value added in the community.
 - Clearly explain how the project will be managed and how the artist and organization will divide major logistical duties.
2. Describe how the community will be engaged in the project.
 - Have you worked with this community before?
 - Was the community consulted about this project or helped to conceive of it?
 - Describe the participatory sessions involved with the project.
3. Describe the selection of the artist involved in the project and the art form that will be used.
 - Please detail the artist(s) history in community engagement.
 - Share any past experience you may have had with the artist(s).
 - Has the artist(s) worked with this community before?
4. In what ways will your project deepen the community's understanding of health/housing inequities in our region?
 - How will you share the community's creative proposed ways to remove barriers to increase equitable access?
 - How will your project call for a change to inequitable policies or practices as identified by the community?
5. How will you measure the success of the proposed project?
 - What is the desired impact?
 - Explain how you will evaluate the project outcomes.
 - Describe any strategies or tools you will use to track attendance, engagement, reviews, etc.

In addition to the documents required for each organization's application, HEArts 2020 also requires the following attachments:

- Project timeline
- Project budget
- Artist(s) resume
- Artist(s) project statement
- Related creative works

Non-Discrimination Statement

RMHF is committed to equal access and opportunity for all persons. Organizations applying for funding are asked to submit a statement affirming that they do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religious affiliation, national origin, immigration status, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, medical condition, or veteran status either in their employment, or their service policies and practices.

Conflict of Interest

RMHF asks that all applicants disclose any relationships with RMHF (staff or Trustees) that may be, or appear to be, a conflict of interest. While such relationships do not necessarily preclude an organization from being awarded funding, we ask for full transparency of any relationship that may represent or appear to represent a conflict of interest.

REVIEW PROCESS

RMHF will engage a panel of local and national field experts as external reviewers to evaluate all applications for the HEArts 2020 funding opportunity and make recommendations to RMHF Trustees for final approval. Evaluation criteria will focus on:

- The quality and creativeness of the proposed project.
- The quality of the proposed management of the project.
- The artist(s) skill level and history of community engagement.
- The ability of the project to creatively engage and lift the community's voice around inequities.
- The desired impact of the project and the appropriateness of the budget, including the artist's fee.

HEArts 2020 will give priority to projects that:

- Demonstrate an awareness to the barriers in achieving health and/or housing equity within the communities served.
- Call for changes to the inequitable policies and practices underserved communities face.
- Demonstrate adequate pay for artists on project budgets – See Creative Capital's [Determining Your Artist Fee](#) for more information.

- Create and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the nonprofit organization and artist(s) describing payment schedules, roles and specific responsibilities in the project – See Creative Work Fund’s [Creating an MOU](#) for more information.
- Develop a community benefit agreement between the nonprofit organization, artist(s) and the underserved community to ensure that everyone is aware of what to expect during the participatory sessions and as an anticipated outcome [Example of how to develop a Community Benefit Agreement](#) (normally used for development, but this time for community engagement).
- Remove barriers or obstacles to participation for community members e.g. transportation and childcare by providing stipends, transportation or childcare services at sessions.
- Include knowledgeable staff or a field expert on site to help with facilitated conversations around health or housing inequities with underserved communities.

HEArts 2020 Proposed Timeline :

January 14, 2020	Launch and Application Release
January 30, 2020	HEArts 2020 Webinar
March 18, 2020	Application Deadline 11:59pm
April 2020	Review of Applications
May 2020	Notice of Grants
June 2020	Payment 1 of 2 Distributed
July 15, 2020	HEArts Session 1 1pm – 3pm
Fall 2020	Racial Equity Training
November 18, 2020	HEArts Session 2 1pm – 3pm
March 17, 2021	HEArts Session 3 1pm – 3pm
June 2021	Interim Reports Due
June 2021	Payment 2 of 2 Distributed
July 14, 2021	HEArts Session 4 1pm – 3pm
October 13, 2021	HEArts Session 5 1pm – 3pm
January 12, 2022	HEArts Session 6 1pm – 3pm
June 2022	Final Reports Due

TO LEARN MORE

RMHF will host a webinar on January 30, 2020 at 10am.

For questions concerning this funding opportunity, please contact Kendra Jones, kjones@rmhfoundation.org, Director for Health Equity, Arts & Culture. For questions concerning accessing the electronic application, please contact Lisa Bender, lbender@rmhfoundation.org, Grants Manager.

TO APPLY [https://rmhf.fluxx.io/user_sessions/new]

Please see the list of sources below for examples of cross-sector collaboration engaging arts & culture to impact health equity.

[Artists, Funders, and Disruption in the Public Realm](#) – Barr Foundation and Americans for the Arts

[Watch, Act, Vote - The impact of Theatre of the Oppressed NYC](#) – Theatre of the Oppressed NYC

[Place-Based Arts and Equity Examples](#) – Research by Max Rose

[Creating Healthy Communities Through Cross-Sector Collaboration](#) – University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine/ArtPlace America

[Using Arts and Culture to Advance Equity and Inclusion](#) - Inclusive Dubuque