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+ more

2026 Inspire Grants
October 2, 2025

welcome

Please mute your sound for the presentation.

Type your questions in the Chat.

We will be recording and posting on our website at artswave.org/apply.



meeting agenda



- Welcome & Introductions
- ArtsWave Overview
- Inspire Grant
- Background & Purpose
- Overview & Eligibility
- Resources & Support
- Application Details
- Questions



introductions



Ray Gargano

Vice President, Community Investments



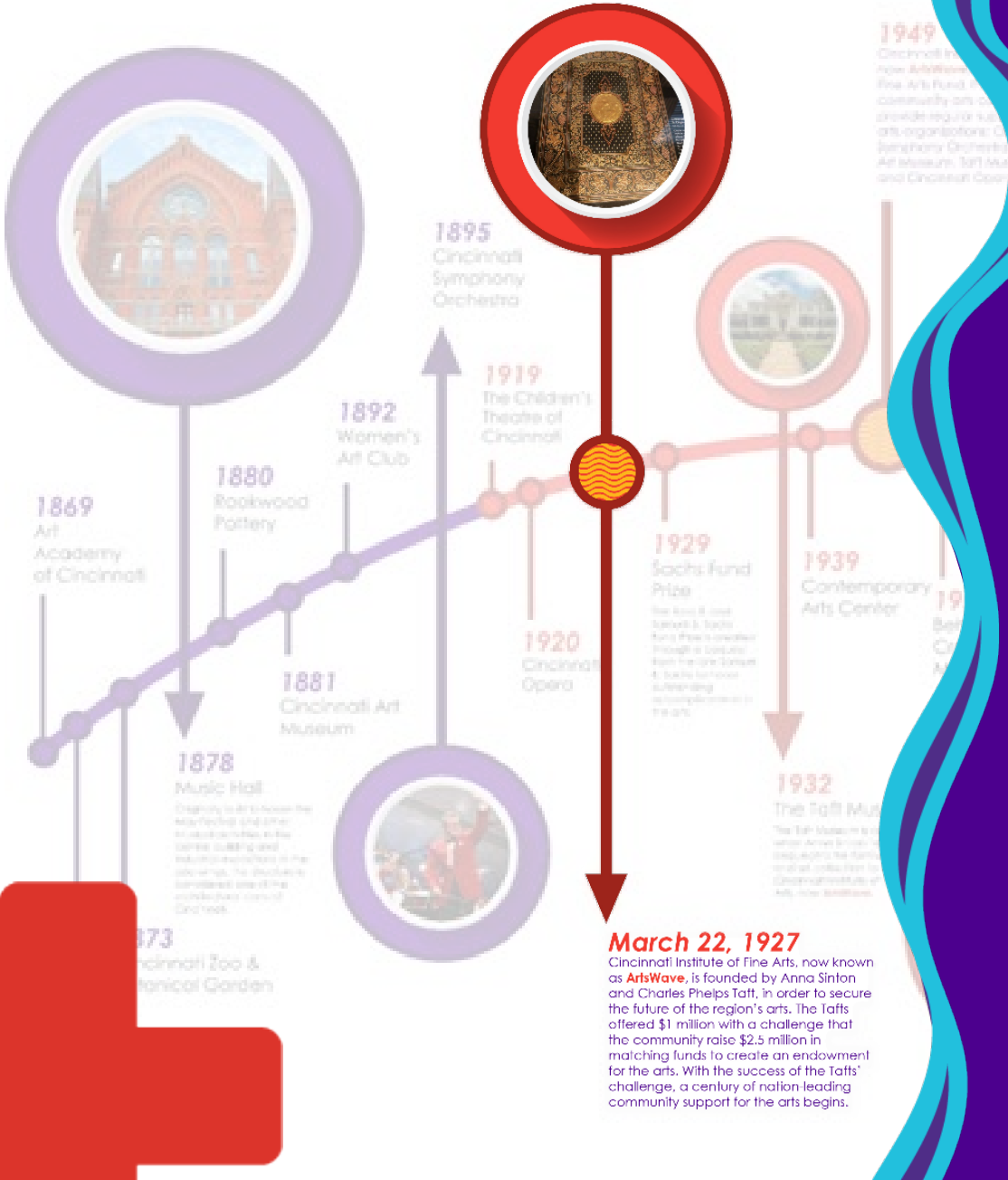
Michael Thompson

Mentor, Showcase Coordinator



Lori Burkhardt

Manager, Grant Programs



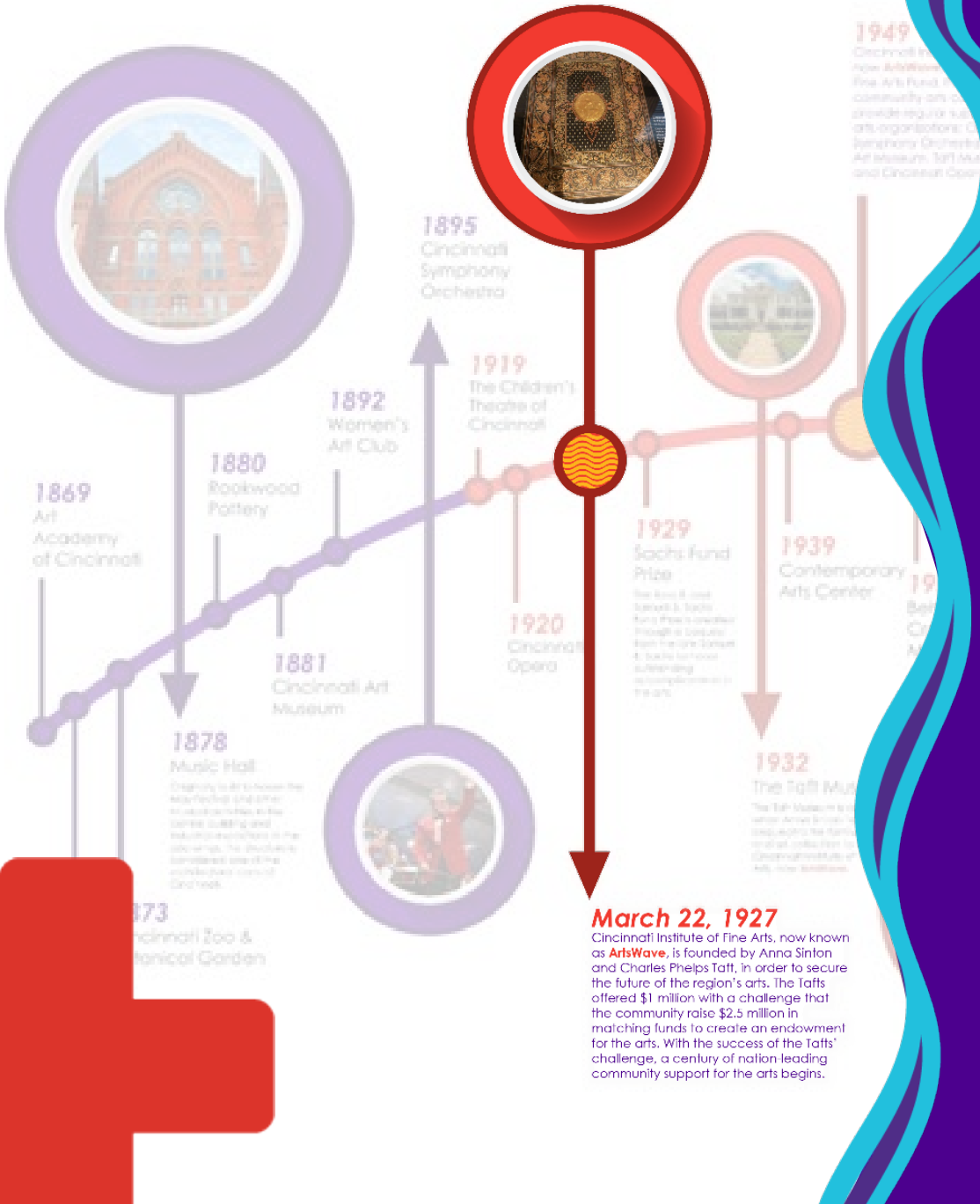
a shared vision from the start

March 22, 1927

Cincinnati Institute of Fine Arts, now known as **ArtsWave**, is founded by Anna Sinton and Charles Phelps Taft, in order to secure the future of the region's arts. The Tafts offered \$1 million with a challenge that the community raise \$2.5 million in matching funds to create an endowment for the arts. With the success of the Tafts' challenge, a century of nation-leading community support for the arts begins.



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a shared vision accelerates

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what do the *arts* do?

Our arts make our region
stronger, increasing
economic **vibrancy** and
connecting our community.



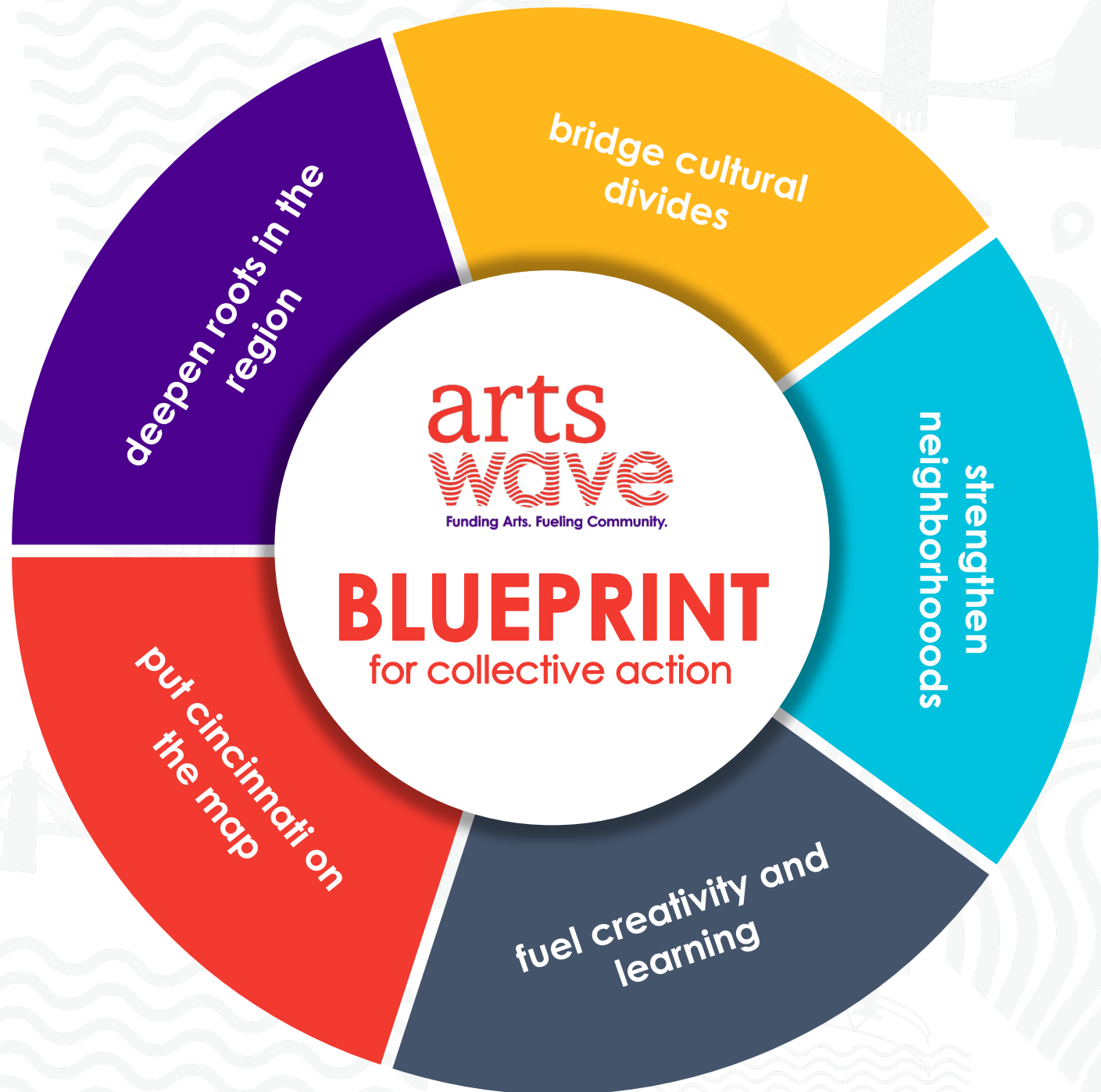
cincy's arts: *powering* the region

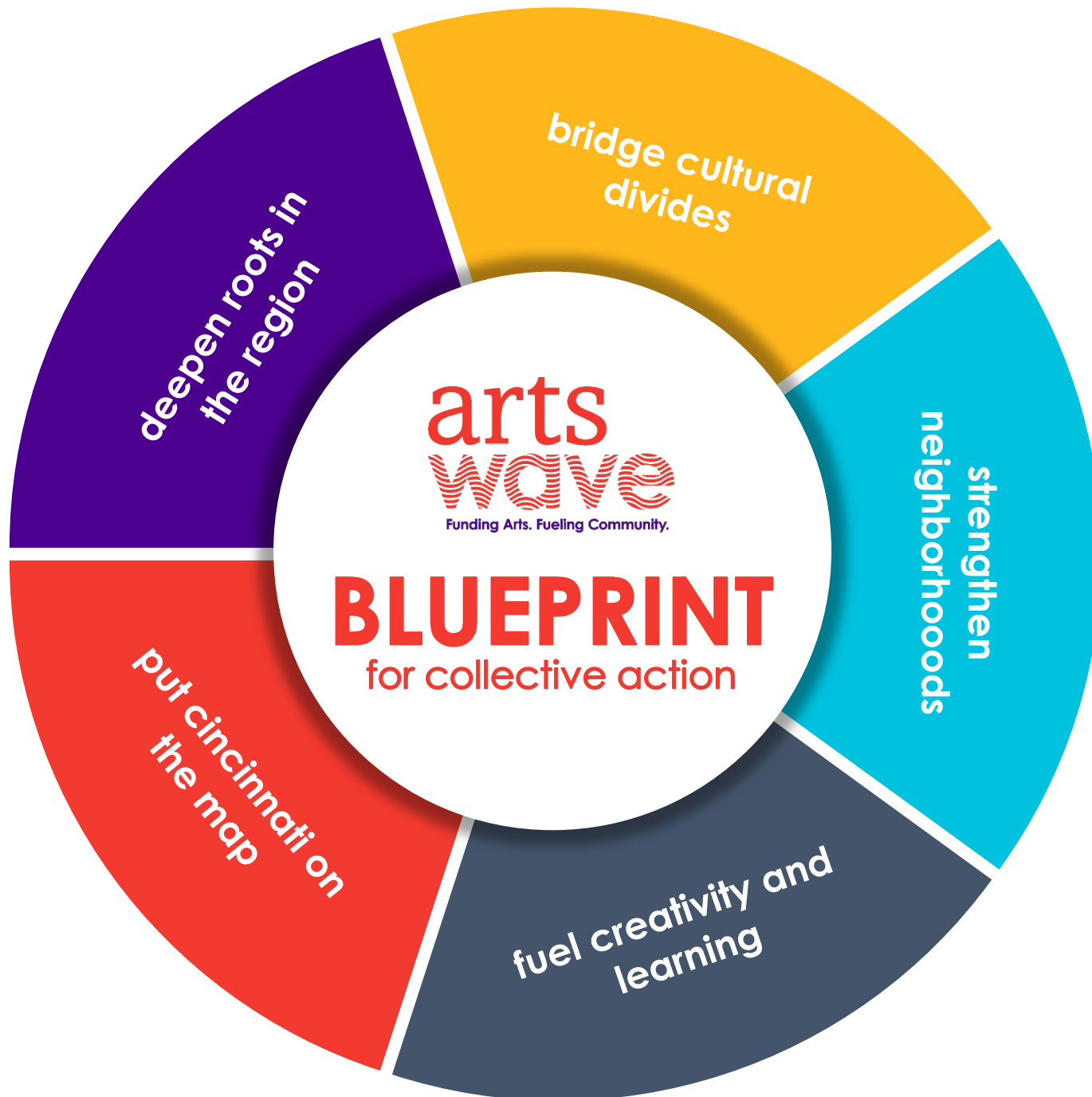
\$1.6 BILLION
ECONOMIC IMPACT
FROM 2019-2022



community *impact*

ArtsWave invests in five economic and social outcomes...through 150+ arts partners & projects





Blueprint Building Blocks

Arts Put Cincinnati on the Map:

To be a more competitive region for talent attraction by leveraging arts that are perceived as extraordinary.

Arts Deepen Roots in the Region:

To deepen feelings of engagement and connection to the community by widening participation in arts experiences, especially those that resonate with adults age 40 and under.

Arts Bridge Divides:

To promote cross cultural understanding by increasing the availability and accessibility of arts experiences that include and represent all races, ethnicities, ages, geographies, orientations, and more.

Arts Strengthen Neighborhoods:

To enhance the vibrancy of neighborhoods, particularly those that are underserved and/or revitalizing, by increasing the availability and accessibility of arts organizations and opportunities

Arts Fuel Creativity and Learning:

To promote the development of 21st century skills by ensuring that all children in the region, particularly those that are underserved, have access to multiple arts opportunities.



Inspire Grants for Individual Artists

overview

Funded by ArtsWave, City of Cincinnati, Duke Energy, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Contemporary Arts Center

purpose for artists

To financially support artists in our region who demonstrate the lived Black & Brown experience

To assist in helping artists grow professionally through:

- Mentorship for work development
- Individual business support
- Showcasing completed work
- Creating a cohort of artist for support





purpose for *community*



Support for artists to explore Truth and Innovation that drives a more equitable future:

- Social justice (e.g. equal rights; reproductive rights; trans rights; healthcare for all)
- Black Lives Matter
- Indigenous Sovereignty
- Healing and Accountability
- Tradition vs Innovation
- Written History vs Oral History
- Environmental Justice

Advance ArtsWave's Blueprint Goals

Selection: *the panel process*

- Panelists are volunteers in the community with arts experiences
- Panelists read and score all applications, based on criteria in the guidelines
- Panelists convene to discuss aggregate ranking
- Panelists recommend artists and amounts
- Recommendations are presented to ArtsWave:
 - Community Investment Committee
 - Executive Committee of the Board
 - Board of Directors



Highlights for 2025-2026

- Emerging Artists may apply for up to \$5,000 (maximum) for a project
- Practicing Artists may apply for up to \$10,000 (maximum) for a project
- Artists must propose a project that can be highlighted at Showcase in July 2026; however, social impact projects in the community will also be considered
- Artists must participate in artist cohort, including attendance at scheduled meetings and adhering to deadlines throughout the grant period
- Grant proposal submission deadline: October 27, 2025, at 5:00 pm



who may apply?

- Individual artist or teaching artist
- Artist demonstrating the Black & Brown lived experience
- 18 years+
- Full-time resident of Cincinnati MSA
- Have reported taxable income related to work as an individual artists or teaching artist in your most recently filed tax return
- And/OR a verifiable body of work through digital work samples or website
- Two-year rule begins with this cycle

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region





eligible request



Proposed art/programming should:

- Focus on the theme of “truth & innovation” through lived Black & Brown experience
- Leverage the power of the arts in one or more areas of Artswave’s Blueprint for Collective Action
- Showcase opportunity with possible community impact events
- Proposed art/programming must be completed by June 1, 2026

funding amounts

- Emerging Artists: up to \$5,000
- Practicing Artists: up to \$10,000
- May be funded in part or fully
- *Can your project be completed if not fully funded?*
- 50% will be paid when awarded
- 25% will be paid with completed Interim Report due on March 2, 2026
- 25% will be paid when project is fully completed for Showcase


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showcase curation @ CAC

July 2026: Evening reception for artists; Full day opening and performances

There may be a limited number of projects based on funding, genre, & showcase capacity

- Visual Arts: up to 10 projects selected
- Film: Approximately 5-10 projects selected
- Live performance: Approximately 5-10 projects selected
- Social Impact: a limited number of social impact projects within the community may be considered


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eligible expenses



- Artist Fee (self-compensation)
- Fees paid to other artists or collaborative partners as part of this project
- Materials/Supplies
- On-line tools/services
- Marketing
- Community engagement activities
- Other expenses directly associated with the funded activity (travel not eligible)

additional benefits

- Application drop-in sessions on Zoom on **October 13 and 23 at noon**. *Sign in briefly to ask a question about your application.*
- **Early submission feedback with application edit option by October 17 at 5:00 pm**
- **Monthly networking and progress meetings**
 - January 12, 2026 at 4:00 pm (All artists)
 - February 9, 2026 at 4:00 pm (Emerging artists)
 - March 9, 2026 at 4:00 pm (All artists)
 - April 13, 2026 at 4:00 pm (Emerging artists)
 - May 11, 2026 at 4:00 pm (All artists)
 - June 8, 2026 at 4:00 pm (All artists)
- **July 2026 Showcase at Contemporary Art Center**



application feedback

- **Feedback** will be returned within 5 days of receipt
- The sooner you submit, the better feedback you will get and more time to edit
- Application will be re-opened for you to edit; you must re-submit
- **Final deadline will still be October 27, 2026 at 5:00 PM**

If you submit your application by October 17, are you interested in feedback and an opportunity to then edit your applications by the deadline on October 27 at 5:00 PM? (required)

Select...



application eligibility

- Eligibility Questions: YES or NO
 - Name
 - Address
 - Proof of Residence (attachment)
 - Neighborhood/town/village/county
 - Phone/Email
 - Social Media
 - Using a Fiscal Agent?



artist information

- Artistic Discipline
- Artist Statement or Resume/CV (Attachment)
- **Describe how being a part of this grant program, artist cohort, and showcase will advance your artistic practice.**
- Artistic Work Samples (Up to 3 Attachments)
- OPTIONAL: Link to work
- Do you want feedback? (By October 17, 5 p.m.)
- Have you received the ArtsWave Black and Brown Artist Grant

Details of request

- Project Title
- Short Description: WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY and HOW
- Long Description: *Elaborate on the above description.*
- Final Project Details (150 words)
- Alignment with Theme and Blueprint (200 words each)
- Project start/end date
- Agreements:
 - I agree to meet monthly, updating my project with the artist cohort?
 - I will create a product as part of my project that can be showcased in July 2026 if not social impact.
 - My project can be completed by June 1, 2026.

project financials

- Total Project Budget
- Requested Grant Amount (up to \$5,000 OR \$10,000)
- Project Budget
- How will grant funds be spent, creating a narrative of your budget



PROJECT REVENUE/SUPPORT	Budgeted
ArtsWave (Should equal requested grant amount.)	
Contributed Revenue (Corporate, Foundation, Government, Individual)	
Earned Revenue (Admissions, Memberships, Contract, Special Events)	
Other Revenue/Support (In-kind, Volunteer labor, or Donated goods/services, for example)	
TOTAL PROJECT REVENUE/SUPPORT	0
PROJECT EXPENSES	
DIRECT PROJECT COSTS	Budgeted
Artist self-payment	
Artist fee for additional artists	
Production fees	
Consultants	
Training and professional development	
Materials and supplies	
Advertising	
Digital tools and technology	
Cultural facilities	
Other	
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES	0
TOTAL PROJECT SURPLUS/DEFICIT	0

Additional Attachments

Form W-9
Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification
Give Form to the requester. Do not send to the IRS.

1 Name (as shown on your income tax return). Name is required on this line; do not leave this line blank.

2 Business name/disregarded entity name, if different from above

3 Check appropriate box for federal tax classification of the person whose name is entered on line 1. Check only **one** of the following seven boxes.

4 Exemptions (codes apply only to certain entities, not individuals; see instructions on page 3).

5 Address (number, street, and apt. or suite no.) See instructions.

6 City, state, and ZIP code

7 List account number(s) here (optional)

Part I Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)
Enter your TIN in the appropriate box. The TIN provided must match the name given on line 1 to avoid backup withholding. For individuals, this is generally your social security number (SSN). However, for a resident alien, sole proprietor, or disregarded entity, see the instructions for Part I, later. For other entities, it is your employer identification number (EIN). If you do not have a number, see *How to get a TIN*, later.

Part II Certification
Under penalties of perjury, I certify that:

1. The number shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number (or I am waiting for a number to be issued to me); and

2. I am not subject to backup withholding because: (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) I have not been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding; and

3. I am a U.S. citizen or other U.S. person (defined below); and

4. The FATCA code(s) entered on this form (if any) indicating that I am exempt from FATCA reporting is correct.

General Instructions
Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code unless otherwise noted.

Future developments. For the latest information about developments related to Form W-9 and its instructions, such as legislation enacted after they were published, go to www.irs.gov/FormW9.

Purpose of Form
An individual or entity (Form W-9 requester) who is required to file an information return with the IRS must obtain your correct taxpayer identification number (TIN) which may be your social security number (SSN), individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), adoption taxpayer identification number (ATIN), or employer identification number (EIN), to report on an information return the amount paid to you, or other amount reportable on an information return. Examples of information returns include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Form 1099-INT (interest earned or paid)
- Form 1099-DIV (dividends, including those from stocks or mutual funds)
- Form 1099-MISC (various types of income, prizes, awards, or gross proceeds)
- Form 1099-B (stock or mutual fund sales and certain other transactions by brokers)
- Form 1099-S (proceeds from real estate transactions)
- Form 1099-K (merchant card and third party network transactions)
- Form 1098 (home mortgage interest), 1098-E (student loan interest), 1098-T (tuition)
- Form 1099-C (canceled debt)
- Form 1099-A (acquisition or abandonment of secured property)

Use Form W-9 only if you are a U.S. person (including a resident alien), to provide your correct TIN.

If you do not return Form W-9 to the requester with a TIN, you might be subject to backup withholding. See *What is backup withholding*, later.

Cal. No. 10231X Form W-9 (Rev. 10-2018)

REMINDER:

Grants are

TAXABLE

INCOME.

Account for
taxes to be
paid.

more information

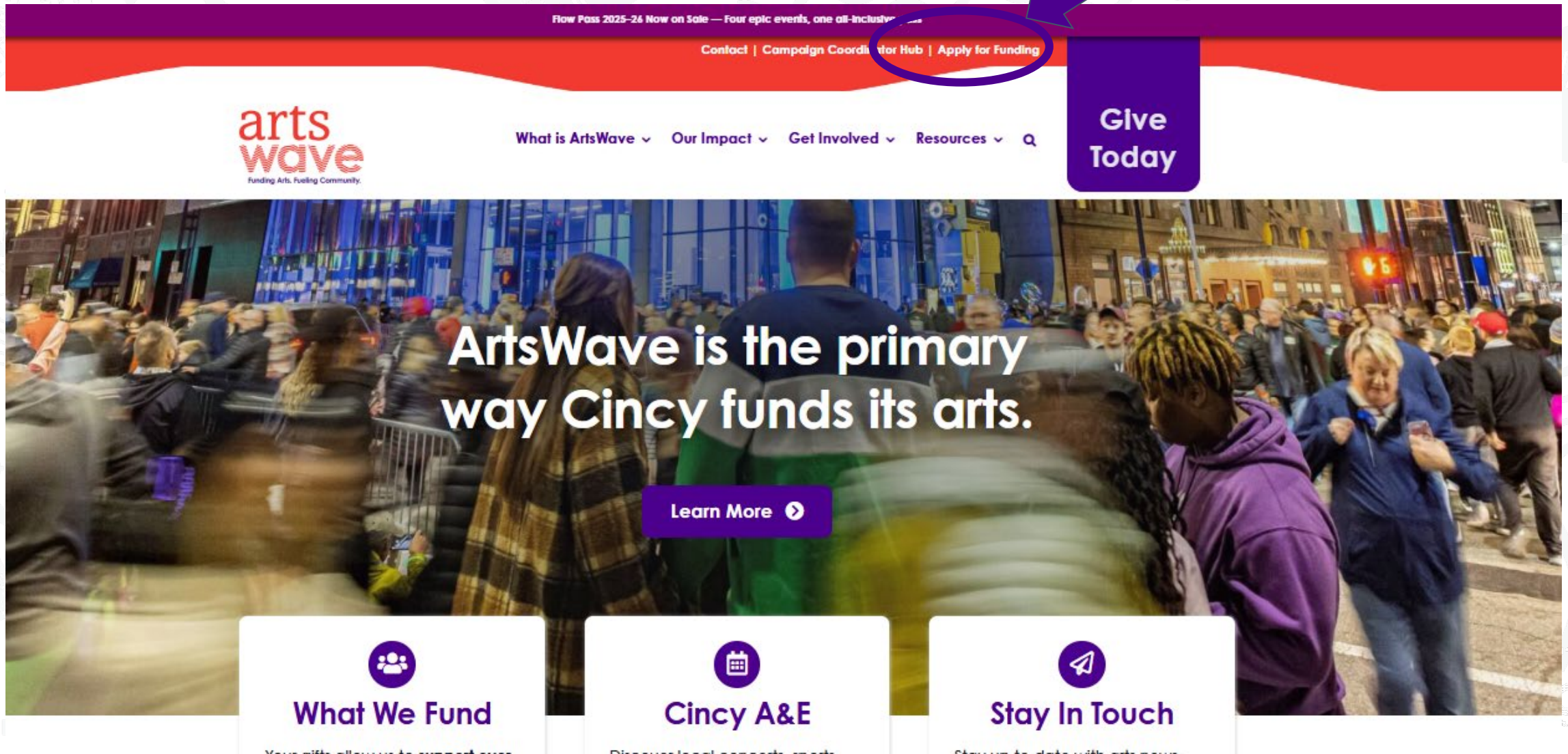
- Cincinnati Artist Census (Optional)
- Voluntary Survey
- Statement of Assurances
 - Taxable income
 - Allowable expenses only
 - Answered true and correctly



Criteria for Evaluation

- Project must reflect the lived Black and Brown experiences
- Projects must align with ArtsWave's Blueprint for Collective Action
- Track record of artistic work shows skill and potential
- Project will advance artist's work and career in the arts
- Project budget and timeline are reasonable and sufficient to execute the project
- Artist will be an active participant in the artist cohort

how to *apply*: ARTSWAVE.ORG



Flow Pass 2025-26 Now on Sale — Four epic events, one all-inclusive

Contact | Campaign Coordinator Hub | **Apply for Funding**


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What is ArtsWave ▾ Our Impact ▾ Get Involved ▾ Resources ▾ Q


Give Today

ArtsWave is the primary way Cincy funds its arts.

Learn More ▶

 What We Fund
Your gifts allow us to support over

 Cincy A&E
Discover local concerts, events

 Stay In Touch
Stay up to date with arts news

ts
ive
to leading communities

how to *apply*

📍 Young Professional Grants

📍 Inspire Artist Grants

Funded by City of Cincinnati and other partners

ArtsWave's Inspire Grant for individual artists will provide resources for the creation of inspiring artwork and career development for under-represented artists in the Greater Cincinnati Region. Proposed artwork should authentically reflect the lived Black and Brown experience. Artists must present a project idea that can be highlighted at Showcase in July 2026 and participate in artist cohort activities throughout the development of their project.

The FY2026 Inspire Artist Grant for Individual Artists application is now open!

HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY2026

*Emerging Artists may apply for up to \$5,000

*Practicing Artists may apply for up to \$10,000 for a project

*Artists must propose a project that can be highlighted at Showcase in July 2026

*Artists must participate in artist cohort, including attendance at scheduled meetings and adhering to deadlines throughout the grant period

*Grant proposal submission deadline: October 27, 2025, at 5:00 pm

FY2026 Inspire Grant Guidelines

To apply, click [HERE](#)



FY2026 Inspire Grant Overview Registration

Drop-in Session 1-October 13, 2025 [Link](#)

Drop-in Session 2-October 23, 2025 [Link](#)

Note: Starting in the FY26 grant cycle, an artist may receive funding for two (2) consecutive years and then will be required to take one (1) year off before applying for another grant. For example, if you receive an Inspire Grant FY26 and 27, the next application cycle you would be eligible for would be the Inspire Grant FY2028.

how to *apply*



At ArtsWave, we want everyone in Greater Cincinnati to experience the positive benefits of the arts – a more vibrant regional economy and more connected communities. In fall 2015, ArtsWave released the **Blueprint for Collective Action in the Arts** which outlines five community goals, a roadmap for their achievement, and a framework for ArtsWave's community investment strategy and grant programs for the next ten years.

All applicant organizations are asked to demonstrate how their work aligns to one or more of these five strategic areas. We strongly recommend downloading and reviewing this document to familiarize yourself with this framework before applying for ArtsWave support.

FY2026 Inspire Artist Grant

Ends on Mon, Oct 27, 2025 5:00 PM

Guidelines ▾

Apply

BLINK 2026 Call to Artists – Projection Mapping Application

Ends on Wed, Oct 8, 2025 11:59 PM

Apply



key *dates and questions*

Early Application Review	Virtual Drop-in Sessions	Application Deadline	Funding Decision	Interim Report	Project Completion Date
October 17, 2025 5 p.m.	October 13 & 23, 2025 Noon	October 27, 2025 5 p.m.	No Earlier than December 6, 2025	Due March 2, 2026	By June 1, 2026



thank you!

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2026 Inspire Grants

October 2, 2025

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