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### **\$400,000 in Artist Relief, Grants and Commissions Announced by ArtsWave, City of Cincinnati and Duke Energy**

November 6, 2020 – At a press conference held outside the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURFC), ArtsWave, the engine for the arts, working in partnership with the City of Cincinnati and Duke Energy, announced two opportunities which will provide \$400,000 in total to local artists in the form of pandemic relief and creative project support.

The Cincinnati Arts Access Fund (CAAF) is being established by the City of Cincinnati with \$200,000 in CARES Act funding. Two-hundred eligible artists of all types (visual artists, performers, actors, musicians, singers, etc.), who are city residents and who earn 25% or more of their income through their art, can receive COVID-related relief grants of \$1,000 each. Two application deadlines, November 20 and December 4, being administered by ArtsWave, are designed to distribute the funds before the end of the year.

“The coronavirus pandemic is causing extreme hardship for large numbers of out-of-work artists in Cincinnati,” said City Council member Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney, who proposed the CAAF. “These grants can be used to reimburse living expenses or to find new ways to generate income.”

As a giveback, artists will find a way to share their art with the City. “You might hear a violinist playing outside of a nursing home, or a spoken word artist performing poetry on the corner of a neighborhood business district,” said Kearney. “They might be Cincinnati Arts Access Fund recipients!”

A second, separate \$200,000 program for projects addressing the theme of “truth and reconciliation” was announced by Cincinnati Council member Greg Landsman. Black and Brown artists are eligible to apply for up to \$10,000 to create a work, in any artistic discipline, that helps re-imagine a more just and equitable future.

“Cincinnati’s Black and Brown artists have long been chronicling our uneven progress to overcome racism and division,” City Council member Landsman said. “These grants are

another way for us to lift up their voices and bring our community together." The City of Cincinnati is contributing \$75,000 toward this program.

To extend the program to artists throughout the Cincinnati metro and Northern Kentucky region, Duke Energy is providing \$25,000 in additional funding. Rhonda Whitaker Hurtt, Vice President, Community Relations & Economic Development for Duke Energy, added, "Artists and their works have the ability to lead us to greater empathy and compassion. This is especially true of Black and Latino artists. Their talents, creations and perspectives can help us make sense of recent challenges and prompt us to take further action toward greater equality for all."

ArtsWave will match both investments with \$100,000 from its Arts Vibrancy Recovery Fund, resulting in a funding pool that will enable a total of 20-25 projects that explore the program's strategic focus on truth and reconciliation. All artists selected for grants will be asked to involve community partners and to exhibit or present their work to the public in summer 2021. To execute the program, ArtsWave will collaborate with local partners including the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and ROMAC (Robert O'Neal Multicultural Arts Center). The application deadline is December 1, 2020.

"ArtsWave is honored to be partnering with the City of Cincinnati and Duke Energy to create these two important funding opportunities for artists," said Alecia Kintner, president and CEO of ArtsWave. "We have a chance to provide much-needed financial relief for 200 vital contributors to our creative community, and we are investing in the continued work and impact of Black and Brown artists across our region."

Eligibility guidelines, program requirements and applications for both the Cincinnati Arts Access Fund for artist relief and the Truth and Reconciliation Grants for Black & Brown artists are available at [www.artswave.org/apply](http://www.artswave.org/apply).

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### **About ArtsWave:**

ArtsWave, a nonprofit serving the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky Region, is the engine for the arts. Its roots stem back to the late 1920s when the Cincinnati Taft family provided initial investment matched by community support. In the late 1940s, it evolved to become the first united arts fund in the nation and in the mid-1970s, the first organization to initiate workplace giving for the arts. ArtsWave continues to innovate while leading, as illustrated by its No. 1 rank nationally in community arts fundraising; coordination of a sector-wide Blueprint for Collective Action; piloting of new technologies to maximize arts engagement; and development of resources for the arts.

Strong funding for the arts has allowed Cincinnati's arts and culture scene to become a national draw and regional asset, creating a wave of economic and community benefits. Each year, ArtsWave supports the work of over 100 arts organizations, school outreach programs, festivals, community centers, neighborhoods and various collaborations through impact-based grants. In 2020, ArtsWave amassed \$13+ million for

the arts, through a combination of its 2020 Campaign and a separate Arts Vibrancy Recovery Fund, designed to ensure the solvency and a vibrant return of the region's arts assets in the wake of the unprecedented health and economic crisis.

ArtsWave is focused on helping the Cincinnati Region's arts sector weather the coronavirus crisis. The region's arts sector has an economic impact of more than \$300 million annually and includes more than 225 organizations throughout Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky and Southeastern Indiana that employ 10,000+ individuals as artists, performers and staff. The sector was hit at the onset of the coronavirus crisis, when venue and performance closures were announced in early March. ArtsWave has accelerated \$2.4 million in grant payments for 43 organizations which receive operating revenues, expanded its \$10,000 Working Capital Bridge Loans for eligible arts organizations, and has provided Emergency Arts & Culture Organization grants to 47 organizations. The public can help fund these and additional, evolving efforts at [artswave.org/give](https://artswave.org/give).