

**BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY  
PHASE II: BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE**  
Bushwick, Brooklyn / Far Rockaway, Queens / Morrisania, The Bronx

## Program Guidelines

**Application Due: Thursday, November 7, 2019, 11:59PM**

### Overview

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs' (DCLA) community arts development program, *Building Community Capacity* (BCC), strives to reinforce arts and culture's transformative role in building and maintaining meaningful, healthy, and equitable neighborhoods. Taking a community-centric focus, the multi-year initiative brings together diverse cultural stakeholders to explore local context, create a community shared vision for arts and culture, and chart a course for collective action.

BCC operates in select neighborhoods in which the City is engaged in integrated planning and development efforts. Through a people-centered planning approach, City agencies work collaboratively with community stakeholders to actively shape their neighborhood. BCC was created to ensure both that culture is included as part of the City's interagency efforts, and that local cultural stakeholders have voice and ownership in their own community's development efforts.

DCLA recognizes that a neighborhood's arts and cultural ecosystem is multi-faceted and contributes significantly to community wellbeing. The creative sector intersects and interrelates with many domains of community life - from health, education, and economics, to faith, heritage, and family. As such, a neighborhood's cultural stakeholders are not only artists and arts-centered organizations, but also locally-invested institutions, agencies, and businesses who find value in the arts being part of their work.

BCC takes place over two distinct phases - Research & Discovery and Building Infrastructure. During the now completed first phase, participants investigated their neighborhood's arts and cultural ecosystem to gain a stronger understanding of local assets, opportunities, and challenges, all which can act as a catalyst for change. It was also a period of collecting unique stories and wisdom from the community, building relationships, and demonstrating how arts and culture can uniquely enliven and enrich a neighborhood, contributing to its health and character.

*The program's completed first phase launched in January 2018 in Bushwick (Brooklyn), Far Rockaway (Queens), and Morrisania (The Bronx). This application, for the second phase of the program, is now open to interested Community-Based Development Organizations serving these same neighborhoods.*

**Phase II, the focus of this application, is a 24-month period of community infrastructure building.** During this time, selected grantees facilitate broad community engagement and participatory decision-making. Through a highly interactive process, program participants identify and build a team committed to articulating a community-shared vision and charting a plan of action.

Collaboration and inclusiveness are fundamental to BCC. When individuals representing diverse sectors, demographics, and experiences work together, they each bring perspectives and resources that enable them to collectively achieve things they cannot do on their own, thus generating the greatest impact for their community.

Essential to BCC's collective approach to community arts development is the role of a backbone organization. Through a competitive application process DCLA will select a community-based development organization (grantee) to support local stakeholders as they develop a framework that enhances the community's support of and relationship with local arts and culture.

Participating organizations receive:

1. a grant to support the personnel needed to lead the work of community organizing and planning around arts and culture - accomplished by progressing through a series of coordinated activities;
2. ongoing technical assistance;
3. opportunities to engage in peer learning exchanges with grantees from the other participating neighborhoods;
4. trainings designed to ensure they are equipped with skills, connections, and methodologies that will enable them to tackle various issues both during and after the program's intervention.

BCC does not offer pre-set solutions, but helps community stakeholders address complex issues by looking at what change is desired and needed, how it happens, and who should be involved. The aim is to look beyond the short-term and find transformative approaches that are effective and sustainable.

## Eligibility

To be eligible an applicant must:

- qualify as a Community-Based Development Organization (CBDO) as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program, a BCC funding source (see [Exhibit B](#))
- be incorporated as a nonprofit organization in New York State and compliant with annual State and Federal filing requirements for nonprofit organizations
- be certified as tax exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3)
- serve one of the following three neighborhood study areas addressed in BCC Phase I (See [Exhibit A](#)):
  - Bushwick (Brooklyn)
  - Far Rockaway (Queens)
  - Morrisania (The Bronx)
- commit to fulfilling the backbone organization's role throughout all program elements while partnering with DCLA and diverse cross-sector community stakeholders

Preference will be given to organizations with at least two full-time staff members.

## Program Design

BCC is based on core premises that arts and culture are integral to a community's identity and wellbeing; that complex issues are most effectively addressed with diverse perspectives, combined efforts, and collective resources; and that those who live and work in a community are best positioned and motivated to chart their own destiny.

**Phase I: Research & Discovery – COMPLETED.** Beginning in January 2018 competitively selected BCC grantees, engaged in a research and discovery process to investigate their neighborhood area's cultural ecosystem. Employing various data collection methods, grantees documented the cultural assets (institutions, places, and activities), considered relevant local history, and explored who is present, including key demographics as well as participant feedback regarding cultural interests, behaviors, motivations, and challenges. Comprehensive findings, recently released as three community-specific *Neighborhood Arts and Cultural Inventories*, provide insights, depict local context, and reveal not only the interconnections between community and art, past and present, but also suggest why culture is vital to a neighborhood's future. The reports are available for viewing or download at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dcla/programs/community-capacity.page>

**Phase II: Building Infrastructure (24 months, estimated start Dec 2019).** Building on the progress of Phase I, newly selected BCC grantees will work with diverse community cultural stakeholders to build awareness of, interest in, and support for local arts and culture. During this phase, grantees will use Phase I findings as the basis to engage community members in active discussions. Hosting both large community conversations and intimate gatherings, grantees will enable community members to explore what they think of the findings, share additional insights, and provide input on areas to address. Through the process, grantees will identify and build a diverse and inclusive team committed to articulating a community-shared vision and constructing a plan of action.

Resources, workshops, and cohort convenings provide opportunities for stakeholders to grow skills, as well as to support strengthening relationships across sectors during and after program intervention. The variety of activities are structured to provide participants with constructive and enduring capacities as well as to help guide progress toward community goals. BCC is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather to provide stakeholders with a collaborative framework to effect community-level change.

**Phase II is comprised of three main stages:**

### 1. Community Engagement and Participatory Decision-Making

- Share research findings from Phase I and collect feedback through community engagement events, including a gathering of neighborhood cultural organizations and a facilitated community forum
- Stimulate discussion and capture insights about significant community-level issues facing various aspects of the local cultural ecosystem
- Build a steering committee of key and invested cross-sector community stakeholders
- Co-create a shared vision for change

### 2. Developing the Community Action Plan

- Craft a plan for addressing an issue(s) at the intersection of community and arts and culture
- Work with steering committee members and community partners to transform the shared vision into an action plan
- Include a series of goals, activities, and measurements for achieving the community's vision for change.

### 3. Finalizing the Community Action Plan and Turning It into Action

- Finalize a plan that proposes a viable framework for community-level change
- Engage community members whose work intersects with the plan as well as those with interest and relevant experience
- Potentially prototype quick-action project(s) to test the newly developed framework

**Grantees must exhibit a readiness and commitment to engage in all of the following program elements:**

#### ❖ **Backbone function**

The **grantee organization** plays a critical role in maintaining overall strategic coherence throughout the BCC initiative as well as coordinating and managing the day to day operations and implementation of stakeholder activities. Its function is more to empower community members to guide and implement collective efforts rather than doing the work alone.

The grantee organization serves in a neutral capacity and is responsible for convening community stakeholders and facilitating cross-collaboration and coordination between various partners, workgroups, and supporters. Additional functions include relationship-building, communicating, and developing resources and support for community/program efforts.

Program funds primarily support dedicated **staff** (1 full time equivalent) capable of maintaining an independent, impartial role necessary to guide community-created vision and strategy, support participant activities, build public engagement, and mobilize resources. A program manager, responsible for broad oversight and for serving as general point person, should be a staff person of the grantee organization. However, various program activities and tasks may be divided among other individuals from the community with supplemental competences, connections, and availability.

#### ❖ **Cohort Meetings and Training Workshops**

Cohort meetings, presentations, and community tours enable program participants to share updates, learn about each other's work, and exchange knowledge. Four of the cohort meetings will include a training component designed to build knowledge and skills related to BCC core activities.

Anticipated workshop topics include:

- Community Change
- Inclusive Community Engagement
- Developing Metrics of Success
- Sustainability Planning

#### ❖ **Technical support**

The ***Building Community Capacity Handbook*** is a comprehensive guide of the program's methodology, roles and responsibilities, scheduled activities, and core tasks. It also provides many practical tools, templates, insights, and resources that participants can use and adapt as they work with their community. Importantly, the handbook makes clear how and when participants will engage with BCC staff as well as with peers from the other communities.

**DCLA staff** will help advance the goals of the overall program by providing ongoing technical assistance as well as a supportive environment for learning and improvement. In addition to hosting meetings and workshops, DCLA staff support includes, but is not limited to:

- One-on-one goal setting meetings
- Monthly check-in calls to track progress and troubleshoot challenges
- Serving as a resource for building relationships with local stakeholders and City agencies
- Periodic site visits
- Coaching, as needed, available by phone, email, or in person

#### ❖ **Program Activity Outputs**

Major milestones and required activities include:

- Community engagements (including a gathering of local cultural organizations, a facilitated community conversation event, and multiple small group forums)
- Steering committee formation and management
- Community vision document with an executive summary
- Community action plan document (including progress materials, customized presentation)
- Sustainability assessment and plan
- Identification and potential implementation of small projects used to test the action plan

#### ❖ **Program Timeline, Tools, and Reporting**

Learning and adapting are essential to effective progress. Various program instruments ensure that participants and DCLA have a mutual understanding of ongoing progress and/or challenges, as well as provide space to discuss and make constructive adjustments.

Tools and reporting include:

- Monthly Tracking Tools
- Budget Tools
- Program and Self-Assessments
- Others, as needed

BCC is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather to provide stakeholders with a collaborative framework to effect community-level change. In addition to the grantee's instrumental backbone role, other players and resources will be necessary and integral to community transformation. Ultimately, each community will develop its own unique vision, goals, and strategies. After the program's intervention, community participants will be able to utilize and replicate the frameworks, tools, skills, connections, etc. to own and effectively advance its continued transformation.

## **Grant Awards**

The grant award for BCC Phase II (24 month program - anticipated December 2019 - November 2021) will be an estimated \$240,000 per neighborhood. Grantees will be expected to complete set program activities for the 24 month program, defined by each city fiscal year (July 1-June 30).

The final amount of funding awarded by DCLA will be based on panel recommendations, and available funding, at DCLA's sole discretion.

All awards are contingent upon receipt of sufficient funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program.

DCLA will provide all technical assistance and training sessions free of charge to program participants.

**Payment Structure:** A payment schedule defined by each city fiscal year (July 1-June 30) will be included in a Grant Agreement provided by DCLA. Following completion of all City grant requirements, at DCLA's sole discretion, grantees will receive an initial payment amount of up to 80% of the fiscal year award. At DCLA's sole discretion, final payment will be provided at the end of each city fiscal year, following review of grantees' participation and fulfillment of program obligations.

## Application Process

|                           |   |  |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Application Seminars   | October 8, 2019: 10 -11:30am<br>October 10, 2019: 3 - 4:30pm<br>October 25, 2019: 10 -11:30am<br>October 30, 2019: 3 - 4:30pm<br><br>DCLA, 31 Chambers St, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fl<br>New York, NY 10007 | All interested applicants must send a representative to attend an Application Seminar<br><br>To RSVP.email:<br>BCCinfo@culture.nyc.gov |
| 2. CBDO Certification Due | November 7, 2019  | Limited to Application Seminar attendees only  |
| 3. Application Due        | November 7, 2019  | Limited to eligible applicants only  |

### 1. Application Seminar

Community-based development organizations that are interested in applying for BCC Phase II are required to attend an Application Seminar. Topics to be covered include: program goals, activities, and expectations; understanding and meeting eligibility requirements; and reporting requirements. Additionally, DCLA staff will answer questions about the application process.

To RSVP: Email: BCCinfo@culture.nyc.gov

### 2. CBDO Certification

Organizations that have attended an Application Seminar and wish to apply for BCC Phase II are required to submit a Community-Based Development Organization Certification by November 7, 2019, demonstrating they meet the criteria described in [Exhibit B](#). Certifications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and applicants will be notified of a determination within 2-3 business days.

### CDBG Eligibility Requirements

BCC is supported by City tax levy funds as well as federal funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. An activity may be assisted in whole or in part with CDBG funds only if it meets explicit eligibility requirements set by HUD.

### 3. Application Submission

DCLA will notify each organization that has demonstrated its eligibility as a Community-Based Development Organization, and request the submission of a proposal.

### Review and Evaluation Procedures

DCLA will convene a panel (anticipated November 2019) to review each application and score it based on the Evaluation Criteria below. The total possible number of points is 100. The panel members' individual ratings will be averaged to determine a score for the application. Applications

must receive a minimum average score of 70 to be considered for funding. Following panel review, applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome. One grantee will be selected per neighborhood.

## Grant Evaluation Criteria

The grant application asks a series of questions specifically designed to provide panelists with information that is pertinent to the established evaluation criteria. Thus, the overall application should effectively address the following:

### **Institutional Leadership** **50%**

Applicant:

- has a full-time presence in the community
- is perceived as a neutral convener and honest broker as opposed to an advocate of specific viewpoints, as evidenced through previous experience and community support
- is viewed as a credible organization with deep relationships and knowledge of the community, as evidenced through previous experience and community support
- has experience with strategy development, community engagement, and community planning and development
- has capacity to manage program components; specifically, has designated a staff member for a project oversight role, as well as identified other individual(s) from staff or from the community as needed to handle various required program related tasks
- proposed a budget and expenditures that will satisfy its ability to fulfill program goals and expectations

### **Team capacity, experience, and community knowledge** **30%**

Applicant team:

- has the ability to provide project management, strategic guidance, and leadership
- has the capacity to execute all program components (including but not limited to: supporting all aspects of local participation, managing communications, attending meetings and trainings, managing and tracking all budgets/expenses, completing and submitting required documents and reports)
- has broad-based knowledge of the neighborhood, with access to local cross-sector and cross-functional stakeholders
- has general knowledge of/experience with the local cultural ecosystem (players, places, and activities)
- can communicate in the most commonly spoken languages used in the neighborhood
- understands the time commitment and has sufficient time available to meet program expectations

### **Awareness/understanding/support of community's interest in arts and culture** **20%**

Applicant organization:

- has relationships with, and access to local arts and cultural stakeholders (e.g. organizations, artists, educational institutions, community centers, businesses, libraries, parks, etc.)
- demonstrates knowledge of neighborhood's desire to enhance or transform arts and culture's role in community planning and development
- has participated as a voice or player in advancing components of the local arts and cultural ecosystem
- is familiar with BCC Phase I findings as well as related recent studies, research, and local discussions, projects, etc.

## Appeal Process

Any applicant considered for competitive support may contact DCLA for an explanation of funding awarded, or to find out why an application was declined. If, following a conversation with the appropriate DCLA staff, an applicant believes it has been declined unfairly, the applicant may submit a written appeal to Perian Carson, the director of Community Arts Development at DCLA, by email at pcarson@culture.nyc.gov or by mail at, 31 Chambers Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10007. Applicants have twenty-one (21) days from the date of the notification letter to request a conversation with the appropriate DCLA staff; after the conversation, the applicant must submit an appeal within ten (10) business days. The applicant's appeal must set forth the reason why the applicant believes reconsideration is appropriate.

The grounds for reconsideration are:

**Non-presentation of information:** Information available in the proposal prior to the deadline set for panel review was not presented by the applicant and might have altered the outcome of the decision; or

**Misrepresentation of information:** Information known prior to the deadlines set for panel review was not appropriately presented and, if presented differently, might have altered the outcome of the decision. Failure to respond to appeal procedures will invalidate the appeal. Appeals are reviewed by the Commissioner of DCLA who will attempt to render a final decision within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the appeal. The DCLA Commissioner's determination is final and will be sent in writing to the applicant making the appeal.

Appeals are limited to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria for Phase II of the BCC program, outlined above.

## Grant Administration and Legal Requirements

When an applicant is allocated funds, DCLA will prepare a Grant Agreement that will be entered into. A representative from the CBDO with signatory authority then signs the Grant Agreement. All groups receiving City support through DCLA must comply with all pertinent City, State and Federal legal requirements and DCLA will notify organizations separately of particular applicable regulations. In addition, every funded applicant must comply with the following requirements:

### Insurance:

Grantee organizations are required to carry Commercial General Liability (“CGL”), Workers Compensation, and Disability Benefits insurance, and to name “the City of New York, including its officials and employees” as an additional insured (CGL policy only). Such organizations are required to submit certificates of insurance for such policies, a certification of insurance broker or agent (CGL policy only), and an additional insured endorsement (CGL policy only). Note: The CGL policy naming the City, including its officials and employees, as an additional insured must be in effect for the entire grant term described in the applicable Grant Agreement.

### Legislative Notification

We urge each organization to keep its elected and appointed representatives in City government informed of its activities. The City Council, the Borough Presidents, and other elected officials are critically important to the process of funding initiatives that advance the creative sector's vital role in improving community well-being. In addition, each of the 59 Community Boards plays an advisory role both in the City budget process and in the coordination of municipal services. Since organizations are offering to lead community arts development activities through their applications,

and since DCLA's budget is established through the same process as that of all City agencies, DCLA suggests that copies of this application be given to the Council persons, Borough Presidents, and District Managers of the Community Boards representing the districts and boroughs that the organization serves. Contact information for all elected officials can be found on the City's website, [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

## Further Questions

Applicants are required to attend a BCC informational seminar conducted by DCLA. Further inquiries can be made by contacting DCLA Community Arts Development staff at:

- [BCCinfo@culture.nyc.gov](mailto:BCCinfo@culture.nyc.gov)
- (212) 513-9335

## **Exhibit A**

### **Eligible Neighborhoods**

The following neighborhoods are eligible to participate in BCC Phase II. Study area boundaries are depicted in each neighborhood's Neighborhood Arts and Cultural Inventory (NACI) report, available for viewing or download at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dcla/programs/community-capacity.page>

- **Bushwick, Brooklyn**
- **Far Rockaway, Queens**
- **Morrisania, The Bronx**

To learn about City-led planning initiatives in these neighborhoods, refer to the following agency websites:

- NYC Department of City Planning: [www.nyc.gov/planning](http://www.nyc.gov/planning)
- NYC Economic Development Corporation: [www.nycedc.com](http://www.nycedc.com)
- NYC Housing and Preservation Development: [www.nyc.gov/hpd](http://www.nyc.gov/hpd)
- NYC Department of Small Business Services: Neighborhood 360 Commercial District Needs Assessments (CDNA reports): <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/about/publications-reports.page#cdna>
- Building Healthy Communities: <http://www1.nyc.gov/nyc-resources/building-healthy-communities.page>

## Exhibit B

### Qualifying Community-Based Development Organizations

Organizations participating in this BCC program must comply with federal requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program, under Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations. (CFR)

#### **CBDO Eligibility**

Organizations must meet all the components listed below in order to be considered an eligible Community-Based Development Organization (CDBO), pursuant to 24 CFR:

- Is an association or corporation organized under State or local law to engage in community development activities (which may include housing and economic development activities) primarily within an identified geographic area of operation within Bronx County (Bronx), Kings County (Brooklyn), New York County (Manhattan), Richmond County (Staten Island), or Queens County (Queens);
- Has as its primary purpose the improvement of the physical, economic, or social environment of its geographic area of operation by addressing one or more critical problems of the area, with particular attention to the needs of persons of low- and moderate-income;
- The governing body's membership is comprised of at least 51% of the following:
  - Low- and moderate-income residents of its geographic area of operation;
  - Owners or officers of private establishments and other institutions located in and serving its geographic area of operation; and/or
  - Representatives of low- and moderate-income neighborhood organizations located in its geographic area of operation.
- Is not an agency or instrumentality of the City of New York and does not permit more than one-third of the membership of its governing body to be appointed by, or to consist of, elected or other public officials or employees or officials of an ineligible entity;
- Requires the members of its governing body to be nominated and approved by the general membership of the organization, or by its permanent governing body;
- Is not subject to requirements under which its assets revert to the City of New York upon dissolution; and
- Is free to contract for goods and services from vendors of its own choosing.

**Note:** It is possible that an organization, by virtue of its make-up or corporate function, would not necessarily meet the requirements of a CBDO stated above, but that the need for investment in the community could outweigh the need for standard CBDO certification. Decisions regarding these organizations will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of DCLA, NYC OMB, and HUD.

#### **Additional Information**

To learn more about U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program, please visit:

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/communitydevelopment/programs](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs)

For inquiries regarding Building Community Capacity eligibility requirements, contact DCLA at [BCCinfo@culture.nyc.gov](mailto:BCCinfo@culture.nyc.gov) or (212) 513-9335.