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Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 10:11 AM
To: Jane Kitchel <JKitchel@leg.state.vt.us>; Alice Nitka <ANITKA@leg.state.vt.us>; Becca Balint <bballint@leg.state.vt.us>; Philip Baruth <PBaruth@leg.state.vt.us>; Richard Sears <RSEARS@leg.state.vt.us>; Robert Starr <RStarr@leg.state.vt.us>; rawestman@gmail.com
Cc: Chrissy Gilhuly <CGilhuly@leg.state.vt.us>; Stephanie Barrett <SBARRETT@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: [External] clarifying how ARPA funds to Arts Council would be used

[External]

Good morning,

I understand that the Committee would like to clarify how the proposed \$1.15 million in ARPA funds to the Arts Council would be used, and for which organizations.

(p. 100 of H.439 as passed in the House, Sec. B.1102: "To the Council on the Arts: \$1,150,000 for technical assistance for cultural and arts organizations to enhance digital presence.")

These grants are meant to equip cultural organizations with the digital programming and marketing skills they need to survive post-pandemic. Grants would cover staff training, streaming rights, and equipment costs. The Arts Council would award grants to a cohort of arts and culture nonprofits that recently received either Arts Impact or Arts Partnership grants from the Council. These are cultural organizations that have already been vetted by an external review panel that evaluated the quality of their programming, service to their communities, and organizational capacity. Depending on final grant amounts (to be based on demonstrated need and operating budget size) we anticipate making approximately 40 grants.

Please note: these grants for digital capacity-building would not address the huge economic losses that cultural organizations like River Arts and Helen Day Arts Center have faced, which both Sen. Westman and Sen. Baruth spoke about in last week's Committee meeting. Those economic losses are substantial and potentially devastating to Vermont's creative economy. We urge you to consider additional ARPA funds to address those needs, whether through the Arts Council or by ensuring that ACCD's aid to businesses will be available and accessible to arts and culture nonprofits.

I appreciate your consideration of this essential recovery aid for Vermont's arts and culture sector. Please let me know if I can answer questions or provide additional information. We are grateful for the legislature's support for the Arts Council.

Thank you!

Best,

Karen

Karen S. Mittelman

Executive Director

Vermont Arts Council

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