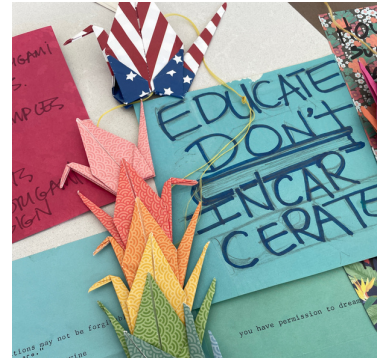


# ARTISTS AT WORK INDIANAPOLIS



AAW INDIANAPOLIS FAQ'S FOR ARTISTS | 2023



A project of THE OFFICE performing arts + film, Artists At Work (AAW) is a workforce resilience program in the spirit of the WPA designed to support communities through artistic civic engagement.

## ABOUT US

Artists At Work is a national workforce resilience program of THE OFFICE performing arts + film, that provides artists with a living wage salary, health benefits, professional development, and an equitable framework to leverage their creative skills to address the pressing issues of their local community.

Each AAW Artist is paired with a participating cultural organization and paid a living wage salary to do two things: to continue to make art, and to be embedded in a local social impact initiative that will benefit from their skills and creative thinking.

The idea is to give stable employment to artists -- so they can keep being artists -- and simultaneously integrate their creative problem solving into the local ecosystem so that communities can move together towards a more sustainable and just future.

Artists At Work (AAW) leverages the power and creativity of artists to respond to local community needs across a range of issues including:

- child welfare
- food and housing security
- antiracism
- physical and mental health
- justice reform
- sustainable and equitable development
- environmental justice and climate resiliency
- immigration

Follow AAW on Instagram at @aaw\_artistsatwork or visit our website at [www.artists-at-work.org](http://www.artists-at-work.org) to learn about all of the AAW Artists in our growing community.



## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**PAY ARTISTS A LIVING WAGE SALARY** to support their artistic practice and enable them to launch creative projects that serve their communities.

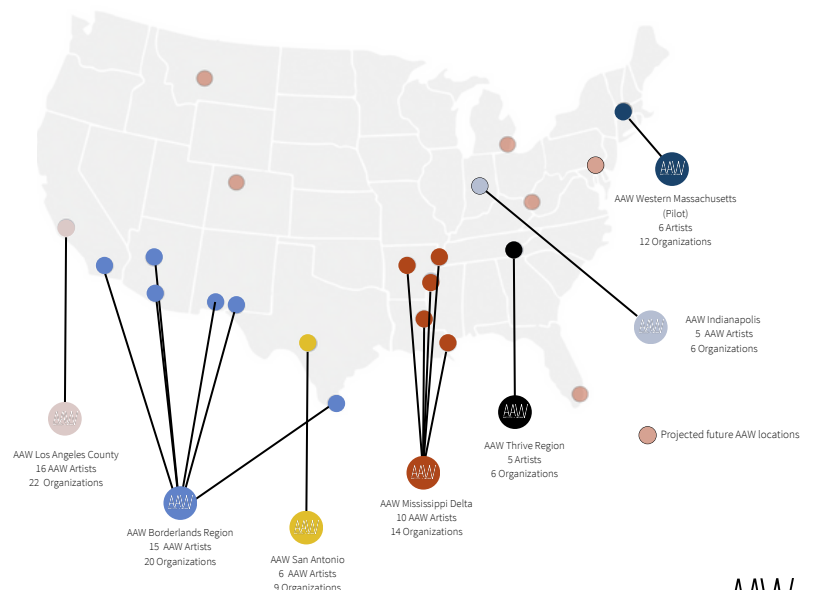
**SUPPORT THE CULTURE SECTOR** by partnering with organizations that host AAW Artists and bring their work to the public by providing funding and resources.

**HELP COMMUNITIES FLOURISH** by embedding AAW Artists in local social impact initiatives, allowing them to contribute their creative problem-solving skills to crucial programs that benefit community members.

## GROWTH & IMPACT

Since a successful pilot program in Western MA in 2020, Artists At Work (AAW) has provided **62 artists across 10 states** with a living wage salary and health benefits, with over **80 cultural and community partners** joining the effort.

We prioritize supporting and working with BIPOC artists, organizations and culture workers. Our current and recent activations celebrate that 80% of our AAW Artists are BIPOC individuals and 80% of our Culture Hubs are BIPOC-led and/or BIPOC-serving.



## AAW INDIANAPOLIS

### TIMELINE

Wednesday, September 6 2023:

- Open call for participating artists begins

Friday, October 13 2023:

- Open call closes

Early-Mid December 2023:

- Final 5 artists selected

Early February 2024:

- Public Announcement of AAW Artists + Program Partners

March 1, 2024:

- 5 AAW Artists begin on payroll + benefits

March 2024 - February 2025 (one year term, monthly milestones):

- Months 1 - 3: AAW Artists meet with their organizational partners and set goals & objectives
- Months 4 - 6: AAW Artists meet regularly with their organizational partners; start of public activations
- Months 7 - 9: AAW Artists are working towards meeting their goals and objectives
- Months 10-12: AAW Artists have met their goals and objectives and can present the impact of their project

February 28, 2025:

- End of AAW Artist term

April 30, 2025:

- Evaluation period

## HERBERT SIMON FAMILY FOUNDATION

Herbert Simon Family Foundation is a private non-operating foundation. Established in 1999, the foundation has been providing support for organizations in hopes of creating more equitable, sustainable and vibrant communities with an emphasis on Indianapolis and Indiana. Herbert Simon Family Foundation works in partnership with Central Indiana Community Foundation and The Indianapolis Foundation to support the foundation's grantmaking and community involvement. The foundation grants to organizations in the areas of: Arts & Culture, Basic Needs, Environment and Climate, Jewish Causes, and Social Justice.

Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF) is a public charity and part of a \$1.1 billion philanthropic collaborative—including The Indianapolis Foundation, Hamilton County Community Foundation, Women's Fund of Central Indiana and IMPACT Central Indiana— collectively working to mobilize people, ideas and investments to make this a community where all individuals have equitable opportunity to reach their full potential—no matter place, race or identity. By working together, the collaborative focuses on three things; helping people invest in the causes that matter most to them, awarding grants to effective not-for-profit organizations, and providing leadership to make Central Indiana a better, more beautiful, more equitable community. For more information about CICF, visit [cicf.org](http://cicf.org)

## OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

This opportunity is intended for artists who will benefit and have the capacity to engage in a full-time (30+ hours per week) employment role that involves significant time commitment and project development within their community, as well as dedicated time to grow their personal artistic practice and skills.

The Artists At Work program will provide the following to participating artists:

- An annual salary of \$32,500, plus full health benefits
- Professional development & mentorship, including workshops and other resources
- Connection to the work of local social impact organizations and initiatives in areas such as antiracism, justice reform, sustainability and equitable development, health, economy, homelessness and housing, child welfare, worker's rights, and immigrant rights, among others
- Social media assets to promote your work and your AAW project
- A monthly framework to guide your community engagement, projects and personal practice
- In-person and virtual cohort gatherings, including: celebrations, workshops, work shares and studio visits to be planned throughout the term





## AAW VALUES & PRINCIPLES

### WE VALUE ARTISTS AS WORKERS

We intentionally provide artists with a living wage salary, and full health benefits, rather than a stipend or grant in order to show value for their work product and set them up to be able to use resources like unemployment benefits and COBRA following their term in the program.

### ART IS ESSENTIAL TO A HEALTHY SOCIETY

Culture and artists are indispensable parts of American life and our local economies.

### PRIORITIZE LOCAL VOICES

While AAW sets up an overarching national framework for its workforce resilience program, each AAW cohort reflects the local ecosystem through partnerships with local leaders, organizations, artists, and audiences that know their communities best.

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ARE PARAMOUNT

In selection of locations, hubs, staff, advisors, fellows, and artists, AAW is committed to equitable and diverse representation across age, race, gender, and sexual orientation as well as cultures, disciplines, and geographies.

### PUBLIC ART IS A PUBLIC GOOD

Art and culture are woven into the fabric of our lives—not as a luxury we can do without, but as a vital part of a functioning society, integral to our economic, social, and civic life.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Artists At Work (AAW) is structured as a dynamic network of partnerships between artists, cultural organizations (with a focus on those with BIPOC leadership), and social impact initiatives. Each participating artist is paired with a cultural organization and paid a living wage salary with full health benefits for one year. The artists continue to create art while being embedded in local social impact initiatives that provide direct services to community members across a range of cross-sector issues including child welfare, food and housing security, antiracism, physical and mental health, justice reform, sustainable and equitable development, environmental justice and climate resiliency, and immigration.

Each AAW Artists works directly with community members over a one-year term to co-create projects that benefit communities in one of three primary ways: helping communities heal from trauma, preserving cultural legacy and heritage, or advocating for and amplifying community voices on behalf of issues that are directly impacting their lives and well-being.

## AAW MILESTONES

AAW is in regular communication with each AAW Artist, Culture Hub, and Social Impact Initiative, setting monthly milestones as a guidepost for each partnership and project. At the top of each month the regional administrative fellow sends out a milestones document for the artists to reference project goals and deadlines, upcoming workshops, and general program announcements. Through these milestones documents, we aim to provide structure to empower artists to continue in their practice and community engagement.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Artists At Work also provides participating artists with professional development workshops on workforce sustainability topics. These workshops cover areas such as fundraising as an independent artist, overall financial wellness and budgeting, social media, grant writing, PR & marketing, and trauma-informed practice and self-care for artists.

## EVALUATION

Artists At Work (AAW) is committed to rigorous evaluation to measure program impact and identify best practices. Key evaluation metrics include the number of artists employed, the number of projects completed, community engagement rates, qualitative feedback from participants, and measurable changes in attitudes and behaviors related to the targeted issues. AAW Artists work directly with community members over a one-year term to co-create projects. AAW Artists work across a variety of social impact areas that broadly fall into one of three areas of community engagement: helping communities heal from trauma, preserving cultural legacy and heritage, or advocating for and amplifying community voices on behalf of issues that are directly impacting their lives and well-being.

Artists At Work regularly conducts conversational interviews with AAW Artists and partners to receive feedback. A comprehensive evaluation report will be conducted at the end of the program.



## **What types of artists are eligible to apply for Artists At Work?**

Artists, culture bearers and culture makers of all disciplines and traditions may apply! However, all applicants must be local to the greater Indianapolis metropolitan area to be eligible for AAW Indianapolis and need a valid social security number, applicable visa / right to work in the United States to be added to payroll.

## **What will I do as an AAW Artist during the one-year program term?**

AAW ARTISTS have two areas of focus – continue their own artistic practice, and engage with and become a resource for their communities by working with a local Social Impact Organization or Initiative.

During the term, AAW ARTISTS will:

- o Engage with their own studio practice and creation of their work!
- o Commit time and creative thinking to supporting the mission and work of a local Social Impact Organization or Initiative and the communities they serve; this includes reflecting and research, build relationships with staff and community, as well as active public events.
- o Create new work, an ongoing project or engagements in collaboration with organizational partners and community members; when possible, the program encourages a free, public aspect of the work (presentation, exhibition, event, or virtual gathering).
- o Keep a video, audio, or written journal and/or other documentation of the work created during participation and share this documentation. Actively document their process.
- o Engage in regular progress check-ins and meetings, and a final evaluation after the completion of Artist's 12-month term.
- o Provide THE OFFICE with periodic open and honest feedback on the program, challenges and needs throughout the 12-month period.
- o Participate in professional development workshops and regularly scheduled work shares with other regional Artists.
- o If applicable, present new work in partnership organizational partners and community members.

## **Are the payments to AAW Artists a stipend or grant?**

Artists are considered employees of THE OFFICE performing arts + film, Inc. during their term with the Artists At Work program and will receive a salary administered through our payroll with applicable taxes withheld. Our aim is to support artists' work with a base living wage, healthcare benefits and workers compensation coverage during their time with the AAW program, and provide them access to unemployment benefits and COBRA coverage after their term.

## **Are there additional resources for expenses associated with my AAW project?**

Yes! Each AAW Artist in Indianapolis has a budget of \$5,000 for materials and equipment to be used towards your AAW social impact project. We ask that you discuss the details with the AAW administrative team.

## **Can AAW Artists take other work?**

We understand artists may have additional opportunities or unique employment situations arise during the AAW period, and we certainly don't want to put people in a position to turn down work. As long as each artist is able to maintain their contribution to their social impact project and continue their own practice while holding additional employment, they remain eligible for the program. What we would like to avoid is selecting artists who already have ample funding or a full-time artistic position / appointment that will continue on throughout the program period.

## **Are there other AAW Artists and/or organizations outside of my region that I can connect with?**

AAW is a growing network that includes 62 artists and administrative fellows and over 80 cultural and cross-sector organizational partners across 10 states (Arkansas, Arizona, California, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Mexico, Tennessee, Texas). We will have opportunities throughout the term to connect with this national cohort. If there are any artists or organizations you would like to contact in particular, please let us know.

## **I have more questions! Who should I direct them to?**

The AAW team at THE OFFICE is happy to field any questions; for general program inquiries: Gabriela Yadegari, [gabriela@artists-at-work.org](mailto:gabriela@artists-at-work.org) ; for contract, finance or health insurance inquiries: Kyla Gardner, [kgardner@theofficearts.com](mailto:kgardner@theofficearts.com).



# AAW

ARTISTS AT WORK

*Investing in Artists  
and their communities*

