



**MAYOR BARAKA ANNOUNCES SECOND ROUND  
OF FUNDING FOR ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS**  
*Funds to be administered in partnership with Newark Arts*

**Newark, NJ—March 16, 2021**—Mayor Ras J. Baraka today announced a second round of funding through the City’s Creative Catalyst Fund that will provide artists and art groups with flexible grant support during the coronavirus crisis and beyond. In January 2020, Mayor Baraka had announced a broad vision for the City’s cultural sector that encourages equitable funding for the arts and the kind of investment that will help sustain the creative community and grassroots arts organizations. The Creative Catalyst Fund launched in April 2020, in the early part of the COVID-19 crisis that took an enormous financial toll on the creative sector.

“Newark has been a center for the arts throughout its history,” said Mayor Baraka. “COVID-19 has severely impacted our arts community – creating economic loss for artists and galleries. It has also provided them with a new canvas of experiences to document creatively. It is both a moral and economic imperative for us to support our local arts community by helping them regain their footing and continue to curate and tell the stories of Newark and its people.”

Last year, Creative Catalyst Fund applicants reported an estimated total of \$4.5 million in monetary loss due to COVID-related closures, lost income and canceled events, with an average loss of \$12,650 for artists and \$87,992 for organizations. In light of this, the City of Newark streamlined the design of the Fund as much as possible to allow for flexibility in how grantees may use awarded funds.

In 2020, the Creative Catalyst Fund awarded a total of \$800,000 in grant funds to 120 artists and arts organizations, administrated by the Division of Arts and Cultural Affairs, in partnership with Newark Arts. The average award amount last year for general operating support was \$10,727 and \$3,098 for artists and artist collectives. Grantees used the funds to help pay for rent, staff, programming, supplies and equipment, and COVID-related expenses. Many grantees were able to pivot to virtual programming.

The Fund is a multi-year initiative providing up to \$1 million dollars annually for at least three years. This year the City is providing \$750,000 and has received an additional \$50,000 from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

“Direct cash assistance to artists and arts organizations has been critical during the pandemic. The Creative Catalyst Fund supported more than 100 Newark-based creatives last year, but unfortunately, the need is still great. Providing resources as the arts community prepares to restart is critical, and the Dodge Foundation is pleased to support this effort,” said Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation’s Program Director of Arts Sharnita C. Johnson.

Applications for the grants will be available online at <https://cityofnewark-arts.submittable.com/submit>.

**The deadline to apply is Friday, April 16, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.** A selection committee will evaluate the submissions.

Prospective applicants will choose between two grant streams, based on eligibility:

- **General Operating Support** for which Newark-based LLC and non-profit arts and cultural organizations with annual operating budgets up to \$2 million are eligible. The grant range is \$2,500 to \$25,000. Grants over \$5,000 must be matched by funds raised from other sources.
- **Artist Fellowships** for which Newark-based individual artists or artist collectives working in any artistic discipline are eligible. The grant range is \$1,000 to \$10,000. There is no matching requirement.

“We are one year into the COVID-19 pandemic. Most people agree that the arts community was the first to be impacted by the shutdowns, and the arts community will be the last to return. Newark Arts is thrilled to partner with the City of Newark to help distribute these funds to the hard-working artists and creatives who are part of our robust economy,” said Jeremy V. Johnson, Executive Director of Newark Arts.

The arts contribute more than \$178 million to Newark’s economy, support roughly 5,000 local jobs and generate \$15.5 million in local and state taxes. The Fund will support the local community of artists as well as small-to-midsize arts and cultural organizations, all of which provide immense social and economic value to the City of Newark by revitalizing neighborhoods, inspiring students, and generally improving the quality of life for city residents.

The Fund aligns with *Newark Creates*, a cultural plan researched and developed by Newark Arts, and made final in 2019. *Newark Creates* is a collaborative plan on behalf of the City. The plan, funded by Prudential and The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, details an 18-month organized initiative of community members, nonprofit, for-profit, and governmental stakeholders working together to advance an equitable foundation for Newark to thrive with arts and culture. More information about resources and opportunities for artists and arts organizations can be found at [www.newarkarts.org](http://www.newarkarts.org).