



Samuel G. Roberson Jr. Resident Fellowship

Supporting the work of Black Theatre
Artists in Chicago

Funded by the McMullen & Kime Charitable Trust

Administered by the League of Chicago Theatres



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

THE SAMUEL G. ROBERSON JR RESIDENT FELLOWSHIP IS FOR EARLY TO MID-CAREER BLACK THEATRE ARTISTS BASED IN CHICAGO.

The Fellowship provides a grant to a Black Theatre Artist to fund a residency of up to one year in partnership with a Chicago area theatre. **The artist** and the **host theatre** will work together to outline the project and conceive how the residency time will be spent. This fellowship is funded by the McMullen & Kime Charitable Trust and administered by the League of Chicago Theatres.

Each year, the League of Chicago Theatres will spotlight one concentration in Theatre Arts on which to focus the residency. The focus might be on funding a residency for a Director, Artistic Leader, or Educator, for example.

The focus of the 2020 Samuel G. Roberson Jr Resident Fellowship Award is **Playwriting**.

Awards

Artists will be awarded \$20,000 for participation in the program.

Host theatres will be awarded \$7,500 for their support to the artist.

Description

It is expected that the artist and host theatre will work together toward a public performance of a play, performance piece, or other performance endeavor. Education programs will also be considered but they must be artist driven.

The spirit of this award encourages a relationship to be developed between the artist and the theatre that benefits the development of the artist's career. The project should be driven by the needs, artistic growth, and professional development of the artist. Host theatres are expected to support the artist through the development of the work and the end of the timeline is not expected to be the end of the relationship.

Priority will be given to host theatres that have a stated mission to produce work by Black or BIPOC artists.

APPLICATIONS

Applications consist of a project narrative and a bio from the artist. The host theatre must document the ways in which they will support the artist in this work for the duration of the residency. Project narratives and host theatre documentation must be submitted separately.

Eligibility

Artists

- Must identify as Black, or of the African diaspora.
- Be an early to mid-career artist
- Reside in Chicago or a neighboring suburb
- Be able to complete the residency without significant interruption.
- Have completed at least two full-length straight plays or musicals (only one can be an adaptation).
- Have made a commitment to playwriting as a professional goal.
- Cannot be enrolled in a full-time degree/certificate program at the time of participation

Host Theatre

- Must be a nonprofit located in Chicago
- Preference will be given to theatres with a stated mission to produce work by Black or BIPOC artists
- Must commit to supporting the artist for the duration of the program through a variety of specific opportunities agreed upon by the artist and host. Examples include: providing time and space for a workshop or series of workshops, access

to office space and equipment, mentorship, introductions to literary managers and other artistic leaders in Chicago, invitations to openings and other events where the playwright can network, memberships in trade organizations, etc.

- Membership to the League of Chicago Theaters is not required

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Successful applications will demonstrate that the artist and the organization have mutual goals and that the organization is willing to support the artist to develop their project. Logistics and schedules should be mutually agreed upon before submission.

Artist Materials

- **One Page Resume**
- **Two Work Samples** (*10 pages each*) - From two separate and distinct scripts. Samples do not need to come from the beginning of your play. If you feel your sample requires a brief contextual introduction, feel free to include that on the first page.
- **Project Narrative** (*no more than 3 pages*) – Introduce yourself and your journey into playwriting. Why have you decided to pursue this career? What three themes tend to emerge most in your plays? What is the goal of your residency with your host theatre? Please be as specific as possible, being clear about outcomes and timelines. Please include a timeline of what you wish to accomplish. Will you be working on an existing work or beginning a new work? Describe what you will achieve by the end of your residency. (For example, it might be a reading or submission of a substantial body of work.) Why is the relationship with your host theatre important to you? How will this fellowship contribute to your artistic and professional growth? What value does the host theatre bring to your work?

Host Theatre Materials

Required submission along with artists narrative and timeline.

- **Letter of Support written by host theatre:** Please outline goals and objectives that you will meet for the duration of this residency. Why is your organization enthusiastic about working with this playwright? What special or unique value will this relationship bring to your organization? How will you mentor, advocate, and help support your resident playwright during the residency? Please be as specific as possible.
- **Financials:** Please detail how any of your grant funds will be used to support the artist.
- **501c3 Documentation**

Completed applications should be sent to:

robersonfellowship@chicagoplays.com by the Artist with the subject line

Roberson Fellowship 2020: [Applicant Name]

With documents labeled **RobersonFellowship_[Applicant name]_2020**

Applications due: **September 13th, 2020**

SELECTION PROCESS

Completed and eligible applications will be reviewed and ranked by an advisory committee composed of members of the region's nonprofit arts and culture community. This process is “blind” and will not include any identifying information. Selection criteria will be as follows:

Playwright

- Writing samples that demonstrate literary skills and originality
- Evidence that the fellowship can contribute to the playwright’s artistic and professional growth
- Evidence of commitment and ability to complete the proposed project
- Demonstrated commitment to a career as a playwright as evidenced by previous experience.

Host Theatre

- Evidence of commitment, ability, and a clear plan to support playwright’s proposed fellowship objectives
- Appropriateness of partnership with the playwright and commitment to a deepened relationship
- Demonstrated commitment to advocate for the resident playwright within the Chicago arts community during and after the fellowship is complete - for instance, advocating for production of the completed work or introducing the playwright to others who can help their career, creating new opportunities for the playwright.

Notification of Recipients

Final decisions on award recipients are made by the League of Chicago Theatres. Decisions on grant awards will be announced by October 30th, 2020.

All communication regarding your application, including notification of awards and distribution of grant funds, will be directed to the contact person listed on your application. To avoid delays in receiving your notification of award or other important correspondence, please contact the League of Chicago Theatres immediately if your contact person, address, or other important information changes after you submit your application.