

## **2021 ComEd Powering the Arts PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

### **Purpose and Overview**

Exposure to the arts is vitally important for the health of our communities. Coming together to share a cultural offering is a way to cultivate community and achieve social connection, which inspires and uplifts us all. Arts and culture should be accessible to everyone. Through this program ComEd and the League of Chicago Theatres look to reach audiences that have otherwise been unable to access the richness of cultural offerings throughout the ComEd service area.

Experiences in the arts increases creativity across the spectrum of human endeavor. Each experience provides audiences with further opportunities for interactions, whether they are inspired to educate themselves further about the topic or to create a work of art themselves, or perhaps to attend another event. Each exposure at a minimum enhances the quality of life for the audiences but can also, in profound ways, change lives.

Recognizing that access to art is crucial to the quality of our lives, ComEd has partnered with the League of Chicago Theatres to commit to supporting cultural institutions in northern Illinois with their efforts to reach new and diverse audiences in our communities. The ComEd Powering the Arts program has been designed to assist local institutions in these efforts by providing funding for some expenses toward these goals.

### **Key Dates**

Grant Cycle Opens:  
January 22, 2021, 9:00 a.m. CST

Application Deadline:  
March 26, 2021, 5:00 p.m. CST

### **Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are nonprofit arts and cultural institutions that are located within ComEd's service territory in the following counties: Boone, Bureau, Carroll, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Ford, Grundy, Henry, Iroquois, Jo Daviess, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, Livingston, Marshall, McHenry, Ogle, Rock Island, Stephenson, Whiteside, Will, Winnebago and Woodford.

Before applying, please check [ComEd's service territory map](#) to ensure your proposed project is located within the service territory boundaries. We are unable to fund projects that are located outside the service territory boundaries.

Schools, school districts, governments, and government-run organizations are not eligible to apply.

Eligible applicants must be in good standing with ComEd related to provision of utilities, and cannot have previously received grant/sponsorship funding from ComEd or Exelon within the past two years.

2019 and 2020 Powering the Arts grant recipients are not eligible to apply.

## **Eligible Activities**

Priority is given to projects that (a) demonstrate the ability to reach significant numbers of new and diverse audiences; and (b) commit to retaining these audiences after the funding period ends. We understand that many organizations are modifying their work during the pandemic to safely accommodate artists and audiences. We encourage applicants to think creatively about how they will deliver programming, including through virtual performances and experiences.

- Eligible activities could include, but are not limited to: Serving audiences that live in an area without immediate access to arts and cultural programs.
- Serving audiences that are limited because of economic circumstances.
- Serving senior citizens who have limited access to arts and culture.
- Serving audiences that have special needs such as those that have physical or cognitive disabilities.
- Serving audiences that previously have felt excluded from the work for ethnic or racial reasons.
- Serving audiences that have lacked exposure to arts and culture because of reduced funding for arts programs in public schools.

Special consideration will also be given to applications that include one or more of the following:

- Creative solutions to generate access for seniors living on a fixed income.
- Creative solutions that improve the lives of persons with disabilities.
- Reaching new audiences in rural areas of the ComEd service territory.
- Expanding access for audiences living on the South and West sides of Chicago.
- Partnerships with other community organizations.

To learn about projects that were supported in the past, please see the [2020 Powering the Arts Press Release](#).

## **Grant Amounts and Timing**

- Grants will be for amounts up to \$10,000 and may be used to pay for up to 75% of eligible activities (e.g. if requesting a grant of \$10,000, the total project cost must be greater than \$13,333).
- The grantee must have either secured a source of matching funds, or have submitted a pending application for such funds, to cover 25% or more of the project's eligible activities. Matching funds must be in cash from an external source committed to funding the same project. Operating funds and in-kind donations cannot be submitted as match. The status of all matching funds, whether secured or pending, must be indicated on both the application form and in the required budget attachments. Applications without matching funds will not be accepted.
- Grants will be awarded once per year.
- Applications are due by 5:00 p.m. CST on March 26, 2021. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

- Applicants awarded funds for their projects will be expected to fully expend the grant award by December 31, 2021. A final grant report is due within two months of the full expenditure of funds.

### **Grant Conditions**

- The applicant's cultural offerings must be open to the general public on a regular basis.
- Funds cannot be used to supplement current staff salaries; however, funds may be used to employ additional staff for project implementation.
- Organizations affiliated with schools, school districts, governments and government run organizations must have their own separate 501(c)(3) status in order to be eligible.
- Within two months of the final expenditure of grant funds, the applicant will submit a final report summarizing the work accomplished with the grant. Documentation of the project will be required, and can include photographs, videos or other types of documentation. The report must also include an explanation of accounting justifying the use of the grant funds, such as documentation of invoices, cancelled checks, settlement sheets, etc., as necessary for the particular project.

### **Applications**

Applications are available at [leagueofchicagotheatres.org/ComEdPoweringTheArts](http://leagueofchicagotheatres.org/ComEdPoweringTheArts). Upon submission of your application, you will receive a receipt confirming that your application has been successfully submitted.

### **Advisory Committee**

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. Final decisions on award recipients and amounts are at the discretion of ComEd.

### **Decision Timing**

Decisions on grant awards will be announced by late June or early July. 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 [PoweringTheArts@ChicagoPlays.com](mailto:PoweringTheArts@ChicagoPlays.com) right away if your contact person, address, or other important information changes after you submit your application.