

ComEd Powering the Arts Program

In Collaboration with The League of Chicago Theatres

2023 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 increase creativity across the spectrum of human endeavor. Each experience provides audiences with further opportunities for interaction, whether they are inspired to educate themselves further about the topic, create a work of art themselves, or perhaps to attend another event. Each exposure enhances the quality of life for the audiences but can also change lives in profound ways.

Recognizing that access to art is crucial to the quality of our lives, ComEd has partnered with the League of Chicago Theatres to support cultural institutions in northern Illinois in their efforts to reach new and diverse audiences. 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.

Important Dates:

Grant Cycle Opens: Friday, January 13, 2023, 9:00 a.m. CST

Application Deadline: Friday, March 24, 2023, 5:00 p.m. CST

Eligible Applicants:

- **Organizations currently receiving funding from ComEd or organizations that were awarded the Powering the Arts grant in 2021 or 2022 may not apply for the 2023 cycle.**
- Eligible applicants include 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.
- Please be aware that ComEd's service territory does not perfectly match county lines and your organization must be in the service territory.
- Before applying, please check [ComEd's service territory map](#) to ensure your proposed project is within the service territory boundaries. You can zoom out to see if your organization is within the boundary marked by the blue line. We are unable to fund projects that are 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 the provision of utilities.

Eligible Activities:

Priority will be given to projects that (a) demonstrate the ability to reach significant numbers of new and diverse audience members; and (b) commit to retaining these audiences after the funding period ends. For the purposes of this grant, new and diverse audiences should be thought of as groups of patrons, students, or community members that your organization has not normally had the resources to engage or to offer programming on a regular basis.

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 have limited access 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 have been 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 last year, please see the [2022 Powering the Arts Program Press Release](#).

Grant Amounts and Logistics:

- 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 from an external source committed to funding the same project. Designated internal operating funds and in-kind donations are not considered matching funds. The status of all matching funds, whether secured or pending, must be indicated in the budget section of the application. Applications without matching funds will not be accepted.

- Previous grant recipients are eligible to reapply every two grant cycles. If your organization received this grant in the 2021 or 2022 cycle, you are not eligible for the grant in 2023.
- Applications are due by 5:00 p.m. CST on Friday, March 24, 2023. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
- Applicants awarded funds for their projects will be expected to use the grant award by the end of the applicant company's 2023-24 fiscal year. A final grant report is due within two months after the end of your 2023-24 fiscal year.

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 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.

Applications:

- Grant applications are available to download at:
leagueofchicagotheatres.org/ComEdPoweringTheArts.
- Upon submission of your application to [PoweringTheArts@chicagoplays.com], you will receive an email confirmation that your application has been submitted successfully (please allow 24 hours for this email confirmation).
- Please write the subject line of your application email in this format:
YourOrgName_ComEdApp_2023.
- Please name your application file with the same format:
YourOrgName_ComEdApp_2023.

Advisory Committee:

Completed and eligible applications will be reviewed 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 relayed to applicants in June 2023. A press release will formally announce the grantees later in the summer of 2023. All communication regarding your application, including notification of awards and distribution of grant funds, will be sent 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] right away if your contact person, address, or other important information changes after you submit your application.

Contact:

If you have any questions or concerns about this process please email [PoweringTheArts@chicagoplays.com] or call Jamie Abelson, Director of Programs, at (312) 554-9805.