

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES – INSTITUTE FOR YOUTH, EDUCATION,
AND FAMILIES’ CITY COHORT INITIATIVE:

Improving Community Health and Resilience through the Arts

Connecting arts and health to create jobs and improve well-being and community conditions in cities to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

GOAL

Unite municipal leaders, community health centers, artists, and community members to spur local arts initiatives that improve social cohesion, economic resilience, and health outcomes to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Proposal Due: February 4, 2022

**Selection
Announcement:** March 14, 2022

Project Dates: February – August 2022
(*Specific timeframe is subject to change*).

**Submission
Information:** Please submit completed
online application

Questions? Contact the Health & Wellness team at
coo@nlc.org

THE OPPORTUNITY

The social, economic, and health tolls of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in empty city streets, American communities struggling with physical and mental health challenges, and profound economic disruption. This new initiative will leverage the power of the arts to support city leaders' efforts to improve the health, cohesion, and resilience of their communities.

The National League of Cities (NLC) Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute), in partnership with the One Nation/One Project (ONOP) initiative and with the engagement of Community Health Centers (CHCs), invites cities, towns, and villages, to participate in spurring creative artworks in their respective communities to improve community conditions and ensure: *'There's no place like home.'*¹

By leveraging local American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, this initiative will help your municipality build sustainable partnerships between local government, artists, CHCs, and the communities hit hardest by the pandemic to renew public spaces, create economic opportunities, and holistically improve community wellbeing.

IMPETUS FOR ACTION AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many facets of life, putting a significant burden on the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of residents, and exacerbating long-standing disparities, particularly in low-income areas and communities of color. By bringing together local government and the arts and health sectors through a unique partnership with Community Health Centers and individual arts project in each city, ONOP will use a large-scale arts and

¹ About One Nation/One Project: ONOP is a partnership between the National League of Cities and their municipal partners, Community Health Centers, and a team of national artists led by Lear deBessonet and Clyde Valentin. Inspired by the Federal Theater Project's seminal 1936 event, when 18 American cities and towns adapted the same play and opened it on the same night, ONE NATION/ONE PROJECT ultimately seeks to bring together 18 cities, towns, and villages in

wellness initiative to rebuild the social fabric of recovering communities across our nation. This project will deliver evidence-based benefits of the arts such as improved health outcomes and strengthened social bonds, and will provide new, equitable employment opportunities.

CITY PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT

An initial cohort of nine communities will be selected through this request for proposals. Teams will include municipal leadership, CHC representatives, local artists, and residents. Each participating city will be supported through extensive context-specific technical, artistic, and organizational assistance from ONOP's national team. ONOP is spearheaded by arts leaders Clyde Valentin and Lear deBessonet, with partners including J.J. Abrams' Bad Robot Productions, the George Washington University's Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy, and the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine.

Each participating city will be supported to use local resources to organize and carry out their own specific arts project that is inspired by the prompt: *"There is no place like home"*. This initiative seeks a broad range of creative ideas for projects including, but not limited to, performances, installations, festivals, events featuring any performing, literary, visual, digital, or other art form, or combination of art forms. Projects that include broad public participation from ideation to implementation are encouraged.

Support provided to selected sites will include:

- ◆ **Artistic guidance:** Cities will be supported in identifying local artists, with an emphasis on artmakers from groups historically excluded from public funding, including many BIPOC-led and grassroots artist collectives.

partnership with local artists, Community Health Centers (CHCs), and other local stakeholders. Each site will collaboratively create new art works designed to help cities bring people back to the public square in response to a shared prompt: *There's no place like home.*

- ◆ **Connections to National Artists:** ONOP will look to connect each city with local artists as well as artists of national prominence with local affiliations.
- ◆ **Technical Support:** ONOP will offer comprehensive production support, including contract and budgeting templates, physical production design, and technical training for local producers.
- ◆ **Documentation and Research Support:** In partnership with the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, the Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy at George Washington University, CHC representatives, and local artists and participants, NLC will guide a framework for health outcome assessment and support data collection and analysis.
- ◆ **Peer-to-Peer Support and Hands-on Assistance:** NLC will support initial planning efforts in each municipality and will bring participating cities together quarterly for peer-to-peer learning.
- ◆ **Dissemination & Distribution:** Projects will be featured across the NLC network, with partner organizations, and in national media.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- ◆ **Commitment to leverage local ARPA Funding:** Participating cities, towns, and villages will allocate at least 2% of their respective ARPA funds, with a minimum commitment of \$500,000, to support an arts and wellness project within their respective communities by July 2024. A submitted application affirms that your municipality is committed to the use of these resources. ARPA funds may be supplemented by other local funding sources, and CHCs are encouraged to contribute a portion of their respective ARPA funds.
- ◆ **Commitment by the mayor and or city manager** to support the project and to continue to confront the economic and social challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ◆ Commitment by the local project team to participate in **quarterly peer-to-peer engagements** with other participating local teams.
- ◆ **Ability to assemble an effective core team** that includes a combination of top city executives (mayor, city manager) and/or cabinet-level city staff and senior departmental staff, local artists and/or local arts organizations, leaders from local CHCs, community representatives, and leaders from other key partner organizations (e.g., community-based organizations, business leaders, etc.).

KEY DATES FOR POTENTIAL APPLICANTS

What?	When?	Where?
Deadline for Letters of Interest (<i>encouraged but not required</i>) from the Mayor or City Manager	December 17, 2021	Submit to coo@nlc.org
Deadline for Applications from Interested Cities	February 4 2022	Submit online
Interviews of Finalist Cities (Tentative)	February 18- March 2022	TBA
Selection of Cities	March 14, 2022	
Welcome Call/ Orientation	March 24, 2022 (Tentative)	Virtual

PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Up to nine cities will be selected for this project. Only one application per municipality will be considered and must be submitted with the full support of the mayor and/or city manager. ***Interested applicants are encouraged to submit a letter of interest from their Mayor or City Manager by December 17, 2021***, and submit an online application ***by February 4, 2022***. The narrative should respond to the following prompts and questions:

Mayor/City Manager Availability & Support:

1. Describe the initial goal(s) for your city's engagement in this arts and health effort. Does your application have the support of your city's top executive (mayor or city manager)?

Team Composition:

The ideal team will include city leadership, Community Health Center leadership, local artists/local arts leadership, community representatives, and a local funding partner(s). Team participants must connect a large-scale arts project to health and equity goals.

2. Describe the team you will aim to assemble for this effort, including each organizational affiliation and position. If you do not have a local artist or artistic team identified, please describe the kind of artistic expertise needed for your project. (Please note: If you are selected as a finalist, we will discuss this in the finalist interview.)
 - a. Name and Title
 - b. Preferred Pronouns
 - c. Organization or City Department
 - d. City
 - e. Contact email

3. What is the population of your community?
 - Below 50,000
 - 50,000-100,000
 - 100,000- 250,000
 - 250,000-500,000
 - Above 500,000

ARPA Funding:

4. Identify the amount of ARPA funding your city plans to allocate to this project. How do you anticipate this project will fit into your larger plans related to COVID-19 recovery? If applicable, how are you currently using ARPA funding to improve the health and wellness of your municipality?

Arts & Health: Considering Relationships with the Public Square

This section intends to understand how your municipality is approaching program development, engagement, and evaluation when it comes to health and the arts.

5. Describe your municipality's current efforts to bring residents back into the city or public square. Include examples of efforts in communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19.
6. How has your municipality collaborated with artists? How did the collaboration(s) influence your municipality's program and community development processes?
7. How has your municipality assessed COVID-19 impacts on the arts?
8. How has/is your municipality collaborating with your local CHCs?
9. How does your municipality assess resident engagement, health equity, quality of life, mental health, and/or wellbeing (i.e., health factors beyond physical health)? How are you measuring community health factors (e.g., social cohesion, sense of belonging, social connectedness, etc.)? What type of index frameworks or tools are you using?

Other Public, Private, and Community Partnerships:

In this section, please describe how changing priorities due to the pandemic might be opportunities for long-term collaborations to improve health outcomes.

10. Describe your municipality's work to foster social connection. What is the focus of these projects? Who are the partners in the collaborative? How are these projects effective? What are the challenges?
11. There are many ways that the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped municipal private and public partnerships. Please describe an example of how private/public collaboration may have influenced resident connectedness or benefited residents to the municipality.
12. Describe the changes or partnerships formed from the COVID-19 pandemic that your municipality now sees as important for long-term resiliency and health equity. How have they involved artists and CHCs?

QUESTIONS

For questions about this initiative, please contact the Health & Wellness team at coo@nlc.org. Thank you.