

2024 -- H 8098

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

Introduced By: Representatives Slater, Voas, O'Brien, and Diaz

Date Introduced: March 22, 2024

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 42-75 of the General Laws entitled "Council on the Arts" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **42-75-14. Rhode Island creative futures fund.**

4 (a) A fund shall be established within the state treasury to be known and maintained as the
5 "Rhode Island Creative Futures Fund." The fund shall be in the amount of eighteen million dollars
6 (\$18,0000,000) and shall be funded by:

7 (1) Monies currently held by the state pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA);

8 (2) Appropriations from the general assembly; and/or

9 (3) A general obligation bond approved by Rhode Island voters.

10 (b) The principal purpose of the fund is to assist nonprofit arts and cultural organizations
11 that have sustained economic harm due to the COVID-19 pandemic and need financial support to
12 build back to pre-pandemic levels. The funds shall be awarded and dispersed as rapidly as possible,
13 with the entirety of funds directed from ARPA being allocated no later than December 30, 2024
14 and spent no later than December 30, 2026.

15 (c) Monies appropriated to, or designated for the fund shall be distributed by the Rhode
16 Island State council on the arts (RISCA) and/or Rhode Island commerce corporation (commerce
17 corp.) as follows:

18 (1) \$14.46 million dollars to thirteen (13) pre-qualified, named nonprofit arts and cultural
19 organizations:

- 1 (i) AS220, Providence – one million dollars (\$1,000,000);
2 (ii) FirstWorks, Providence – five hundred ten thousand dollars (\$510,000);
3 (iii) The Gamm Theatre, Warwick – one million dollars (\$1,000,000);
4 (iv) Mixed Magic Theatre, Pawtucket – one hundred forty thousand dollars (\$140,000);
5 (v) Newport Contemporary Ballet – five hundred seventy-five thousand dollars
6 (\$575,000);
7 (vi) Providence Public Library – two million six hundred fifty thousand dollars
8 (\$2,650,000);
9 (vii) R.I. Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School, East Providence – two million six
10 hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$2,650,000);
11 (viii) Riverzedge Arts, Woonsocket – three hundred forty thousand dollars (\$340,000);
12 (ix) The Steel Yard, Providence – five hundred seventy thousand dollars (\$570,000);
13 (x) Trinity Repertory Company, Providence – two million six hundred fifty thousand
14 dollars (\$2,650,000);
15 (xi) United Theatre, Westerly – five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000);
16 (xii) WaterFire Providence – one million six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000);
17 (xiii) Willbury Theatre Group, Providence – two hundred seventy-five thousand dollars
18 (\$275,000); and
19 (2) Three million five hundred forty dollars (\$3,540,000) to Rhode Island commerce corp.
20 and/or RISCA for distribution to other nonprofit arts and cultural organizations economically
21 harmed by the COVID-19 pandemic in accordance with regulations to be promulgated by RISCA
22 and/or commerce corp., less an administrative fee of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000).
23 Nonprofit arts and cultural organizations not named above shall be eligible to apply for creative
24 futures fund grants.
25 (d) Any ARPA funds not granted by December 1, 2024 shall be distributed proportionally
26 among the named organizations. Award eligibility and amount for pre-qualified, named
27 organizations and grant applicants shall be determined by measurable pandemic losses, budget size,
28 economic impact and number of jobs retained. Organizations that are minority led and primarily
29 serve or represent a minority community shall receive additional support, consistent with ARPA's
30 emphasis on rectifying the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on communities of color.

31 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

1 This act would establish a Rhode Island creative futures fund in the amount of eighteen
2 million dollars (\$18,000,000) to be awarded to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations that are
3 experiencing continued economic harm due to the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute to the
4 cultural, economic and educational vitality of the state. The fund would be established with
5 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, through an appropriation by the general assembly,
6 and/or proceeds from a general obligation bond approved by voters.

7 This act would take effect upon passage.

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