UMEZ MERTZ GILMORE SEED FUND FOR DANCE FULL APPLICATION

$5000 grants to support 16 dance projects taking place in Upper Manhattan from January 1, 2022, to February 28, 2023

Seed Fund for Dance Cycle 1 is open now! We are accepting applications for projects happening between January 1 and July 31, 2022.

The Cycle 2 application (for projects happening from August 1, 2022, to February 28, 2023) will open on January 31, 2022. Stay tuned!

ABOUT THE UMEZ MERTZ GILMORE SEED FUND FOR DANCE
UMEZ is seeking creatives with exceptional dance and/or choreographic talent, who exhibit a distinctive voice, and whose career path would benefit from the recognition and visibility that this award offers.

Grants will support individual dance artists, ensembles, collectives, and nonprofit organizations with budgets of $250,000 or below in their pursuit of a project that expresses their artistic vision.

Funding is intended for dance-centric projects, ranging from folk/traditional forms to contemporary and socially engaged artistic practices. These projects must be available to a public audience and can be concerts, performances, festivals, or other ventures that foster community engagement through dance.

Applicants are encouraged to use funds to pay artist fees, recognizing that for communities to benefit most from artistry, artists must thrive.

Competitive projects will demonstrate a strong artistic vision, thoughtful project planning, and clear plans to engage a specific audience. Funding priority will be given to projects that uplift the cultural activity and aspirations of the community in which they are presented and are created by artists with deep connections to the content and community involved.

Applicants whose work is rooted in the lived experience of Upper Manhattan's Black, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrant, and other communities of color, as well as those artistically led and producing work by marginalized communities (LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, low income, and/or aging), are strongly encouraged to apply.

More information is available on the Cultural Investments page of the UMEZ website [Cultural Investments — Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (umez.org)], including an Application FAQ and PDF of the full application. The UMEZ Cultural staff is available to assist all applicants on a one-to-one basis. Applicants may submit questions and/or request a meeting to culture@umez.org.
ELIGIBILITY QUIZ

Which of the below best describes you as an applicant?*

• Individual Dancemaker
• Dance Collective
• Nonprofit Dance Organization [501(c)3]

Individual artists must self-identify as dance makers focused on the creation and/or performance of dance to be eligible for the Seed Fund for Dance. Collectives and organizations must have a dance-centric mission: one that promotes the knowledge, appreciation, practice, and/or performance of dance.

Do you live in Upper Manhattan?*

• Yes
• No

Upper Manhattan is defined as north of 98th Street on the east side of Fifth Avenue, and north of 110th Street on the west side of Fifth Avenue for the purposes of this program.

Have you carried out or participated in publicly accessible programs in at least two (2) of the last five (5) calendar years? *

• Yes
• No

Congratulations!

You are eligible to submit an application for the UMEZ Mertz Gilmore Seed Fund.
PART 1 of 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL

The questions in Part 1 of the application will give the jury an understanding of your proposed project. The information and materials provided in Part 1 should address the four points of program criteria below, by which the jury will review applications and make recommendations for funding.

1. Artistic merit: The artistic excellence - or the potential for excellence - of the proposed project as well as the merit of the creative team’s body of work based on information included in the application and associated work samples.

2. Clarity of project proposal: The cohesiveness of the application and adequate description of all elements of the project.

3. Project feasibility: The appropriateness, effectiveness, and thoroughness of the planning process guiding the proposed activity.

4. Audience engagement: The explicit understanding and description of the audience experience, including project relevance to the intended community, and connection to the applicant’s artistic vision and goals.

Reminder: The criteria are not listed in order of priority; each is equally important. Each application will be reviewed based on how it meets a balance of all four criteria.

Part 1 includes four sections:

A. Application Summary
B. Narrative Questions
C. Project Budget
D. Work Samples
A. APPLICATION SUMMARY

The following questions will give the grant jury a snapshot of your proposed project and provide UMEZ with a few key data points for reporting purposes.

Applicant name *

If an organization, list the legal name here.

Alias or other name used publicly (if applicable)

Applicant website

If applicable.

Project title *

Project summary (100-word limit) *

Limit: 100 words
Project type *
- Outdoor performance
- Indoor performance
- Workshop
- Education project
- Training or youth program
- Creative aging project
- Humanities project
- Other

Select all that apply.

Number of dance artists participating in this project *

Name of primary project venue *

Primary project venue zip code *

If you have multiple locations/venues for your proposed project, list additional venues/locations/neighborhoods here.

Project public component start date *

Project public component end date *
B. NARRATIVE

The narrative makes up the core of your project proposal. The following questions provide the opportunity to share the brief story of your project including the artists involved and the community in which you are working while also sharing the pertinent facts that help the jury understand and visualize your project. Please keep the program's four points of criteria (artistic merit, clarity of project proposal, project feasibility, and audience engagement) in mind when answering these questions.

1. Briefly describe your impetus for dance. Why do you pursue dance as an art form? What do you hope to communicate or achieve? What are 2-3 major dance events you have participated in or presented over the last 5 years? (100-word limit).

2. Briefly describe how you define artistic excellence. How does it manifest in your work? What artistic lineages and legacies is your work a part of (e.g., Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Katherine Dunham, Rokafella)? (100-word limit).

Limit: 100 words
3. Clearly describe your proposed project, (who, what, where, why, when). Please address the project's artistic goals, the activities you will undertake, and the project's timeline. (500-word limit)

Limit: 500 words

4. Provide a list of participating artists in this project and how you know them. (200-word limit)

Limit: 200 words

5. Who are you trying to reach? Describe the relevance of the proposed project to these communities. How will you make sure the people you want are in the audience? (100-word limit)

Limit: 100 words

6. Help the panel understand who you will turn to for support for this project. Describe any existing networks and partners in Upper Manhattan as well as the nature of the relationship. (200-word limit)

Limit: 200 words
7. Enter up to three (3) short biographies of your project's key artistic personnel.

If you are applying as an individual dancemaker or as the lead artist of a collective, include your bio in the Bio 1 field below. For bios of additional personnel, please indicate their roles in the proposed project. (Note: Bios help demonstrate relevant past experience for your proposed project.)

Bio 1 (100-word limit) *

Limit: 100 words

Bio 2 (100-word limit)

Limit: 100 words

Bio 3 (100-word limit)

Limit: 100 words
C. PROJECT BUDGET

The Project Budget must be completed using UMEZ's template. This allows for consistency of review for jurors and UMEZ staff.

Download the 2021 Project Budget Template here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pM96rBgzDhM0l_HDjKPk7BiHStfCBXRQ/view?usp=sharing

Your request amount to UMEZ Mertz Gilmore Seed Fund must be at least $5,000, therefore, you will need to show expenses of at least $5,000. If your budget exceeds $5,000, your income plan can include funds you have already raised, if any, and those you are planning to apply for or request, including potential ticket sales and in-kind (non-cash) contributions.

Each project is different; therefore, project budgets will vary in terms of the types of expenses included. The Project Budget Template incorporates a broad sampling of eligible expenses. Many of the sample expenses included may not be relevant to your project. In that case, leave the field blank or enter a zero (0).

(Note: The project budget is both a plan and a working document. For funded projects, the grantee will use the same budget format submitted with the application to record the actual expenses incurred and specific income received as the project is executed. Once the project is complete, the resulting form, as certified by the grantee, will become the final financial report for the grant.)

Project Budget: Upload *

Acceptable file types: xlx, xlsx.  

Upload a file

No files have been attached yet.

Choose Files

Total project expenses (as described in the budget). Reminder: Must be at least $5,000.*
D. WORK SAMPLES

Work samples are the primary way by which you share your artistry with the jury and are an essential part of your application. Prepare a well-organized presentation that best represents your work and relates to your proposed project.

You will be asked to provide:

a. Work Sample Format - indicate which option you are submitting
b. Work Samples - enter links or upload files
c. Work Sample Inventory - provide short descriptions for each work sample.

Work Sample format

- Option 1: 2 Video Recordings
- Option 2: 1 Video Recording and 5 images

Recording #1 link*

Submit a recording of past or current dance works or projects by providing a link to a video sample hosted on one of these external sites: YouTube.com, Vimeo.com, or via cloud storage platforms including Dropbox or Google Drive. Work samples should be from 2016 or later. This link should be active through December 31, 2021.
Recording #1 password (if applicable)

Recording #1 cue point (if applicable)

(0:00:00)

Recording #1 description *

Please provide the following:

Title of Work:
Artist Name(s):
Year:
Venue or Location:
Annotation: Describe why you chose this specific sample.

Submit a maximum of five (5) digital images saved as JPEG files. 1500 pixels in the longest dimension is recommended. Each image filename must be saved as: "ApplicantName_#" (e.g., JohnSmith_01.jpg / JohnSmith_02.jpg / etc.). *

Acceptable file types: pdf, jpg, jpeg.

Upload up to 5 files. Work samples should be from 2016 or later.
Select up to 5 files to attach. No files have been attached yet.
PART 2 of 2: APPLICANT PROFILE

You have now completed most of the application. The remainder of the form will focus on who you are as an applicant and ask for the necessary documents to confirm your eligibility for the program.

Part 2 contains two sections:
A. Demographic Information
B. Proof of Address

Demographic Questions

To understand the demographics of UMEZ’s applicant pool and evaluate the impact of our grant programs, we invite you to optionally select all the terms that you use to identify yourself racially/ethnically, in regard to gender and age as well as immigrant and disability status. The choices below are not exhaustive or intended to be limiting or prescriptive. You may write in additional or alternate responses as well.

UMEZ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and gender identity, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, disability, age, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law.

Please select all that apply, you may select more than one response.

For organizations, please select the responses that best describe your executive leadership and board members.
Race/Ethnicity - With which of the following do you most closely identify as an individual artist, your members as a collective, or your leadership as an organization?

- **Black** - includes those who identify with nationalities or ethnic groups originating in any of the Black racial groups of Africa including African American and Caribbean.

- **Hispanic/Latinx** - includes those who identify with nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America, and other Spanish cultures.

- **Asian/Pacific Islander** - includes those who identify with nationalities or ethnic groups originating in the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

- **Arab/Middle Eastern/North African** - includes those who identify with one or more nationalities originating in the Arabian peninsula and neighboring territories, inhabiting much of the Middle East and North Africa.

- **Native American/Indigenous** - includes those who identify as Indigenous peoples, First Nations, Aboriginal peoples, and/or Native peoples of the Americas with tribal affiliation or community attachment.

- **White** - includes those who identify with nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Europe.

- **Let me describe.**

Gender - Which of the following most accurately describes you as an individual artist, your members as a collective, or your leadership as an organization?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Transgender
- Intersex
- Let me describe.
Community Affiliations - Which of the following do you most closely identify with as an individual artist, your members as a collective, or your leadership as an organization?

- I or we are immigrants
- I or we are members of the LGBTQ+ community
- I or we identify as persons with visible or invisible disabilities or chronic conditions
- I or we consider ourselves low income
- I or we are members of the aging population
- Let me describe.

UMEZ acknowledges the historic marginalization, disenfranchisement, and disinvestment of people who are affiliated with any and all of these communities. Our inclusion of this question is to understand the full spectrum of the communities represented in the applicant pool so that funding decisions are just, equitable, and inclusive.
Proof of address*

Acceptable file types: pdf, doc, docx, jpg, jpeg.

Choose Files

Individual artists /lead applicants of a collective should upload a copy of a valid state ID or IDNYC (college /university ID is not acceptable). Please note: if an ID is not available or the address does not match the individual's address entered in the application, provide a copy of a utility bill (e.g., electric, cable, gas, etc.). P.O. Boxes are not acceptable.

Nonprofit Organizations should upload the Letter of Determination from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) indicating tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) with an address in Upper Manhattan. Please note: if the address on the Letter of Determination is a P.O. Box or shows an address that does not match the organization’s actual address in Upper Manhattan, provide a copy of the utility bill (e.g., electric, cable, gas, etc.) for the organization’s actual location in Upper Manhattan.

Select up to 5 files to attach. No files have been attached yet.

■ By checking this box, I acknowledge that the information contained in this application and its attachments is accurate and complete.*

You've reached the end of the application! Please click the Apply button below to submit for review. If you are not ready to submit, click Save Draft and you can continue to edit your application until the deadline of September 8, 2021, at 5 p.m.