What is it about?

Music has changed all of our lives. All children deserve the chance to experience this and the joy of making music. For some, the only chance they will get to have this experience is at school – but school budgets for music and other arts programming are shrinking.

The LARK Fund is a community-supported project to bring more musical instruments and equipment to Staten Island schools and non-profit organizations, through grassroots fundraising efforts. Musical instruments and equipment are unfortunately a rarity in today’s classrooms. The LARK Fund is changing that for Staten Island.

Background

The LARK Fund was started by Staten Island Arts in 2012 and ran successfully for 5 years under the organization. Projectivity began raising money for the Lark Fund through the Musication Festival series in 2012. After raising thousands of dollars for the Lark Fund, in 2017, Staten Island Arts chose to hand over the fund to Projectivity to administer and help grow.

How does it work?

Projectivity coordinates efforts to raise funds from community members. Schools or non-profit organizations complete a simple application process, and Projectivity convenes a panel of community members to select the winning schools. Anyone will be able to apply to be on the panel, and panelists will be selected based on their experience with music and music education. 100% of funds will be used directly to buy or repair musical instruments or equipment for use by school students or any non-profit organization. In the pilot year (school year 2012-13), four schools received mini-grants of $300 each. Over the last 5 years, with the help of the Staten Island community, that has been increased to up to $400 for each grant.

How can I help?

If you would like to participate in the Lark Fund, you can make a donation via credit card or Paypal at www.projectivitygroup.org, by click the red “Donate” tab in the top right corner of the web site. Please include a brief note that your donation is for the Lark Fund, this way we can keep track of funds raised for this program. Other ways to help are to volunteer to raise funds at community events, or ask your favorite local business to place a “Lark” canister at their check out. Contact David Nudelman at projectivityinfo@gmail.com for more information about ways to help raise funds.

Who can apply and how can I apply?

The Lark Fund is open to all Staten Island schools serving grades K-12, as well as non-profit organizations that provide some form of music programming or music events. To apply, schools or organizations must fill out a short online application along with submitting a recording or photographs representing their programs. The application is ongoing as long as funds are available to give away. Awardees are selected by a panel of outside music educators, teachers, and musicians convened by Projectivity Group.
How are grants decided?

Ability to benefit from this award, as measured by:

• 1/3 clarity of request – can you tell what they are going to do with the award
• 1/3 impact of the award – is the award likely to make a substantial difference to the music program
• 1/3 need – does the school and students have adequate resources to purchase instruments

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Lark Fund

Projectivity Group is pleased to introduce the LARK Fund, bringing musical instruments to Staten Island schools through mini-grants. Funds can be used to purchase or repair instruments for your school’s music program.

Projectivity Group will raise funds from community members. Our goal for the first year will be $2,000 to support 6-7 mini-grants; but whatever we raise, we will distribute. In the first year, the maximum request is $400. As money for the arts in our classrooms is harder to obtain, the LARK Fund will help to keep music in student’s lives.

How will it work?

To apply, schools and organizations must submit a short application with answers to the four questions on page two (required) and a recording or photographs representing your program (recommended).

Applications should be submitted by email to: Christian Penn, Arts in Education Program Director, projectivityinfo@gmail.com with the subject line “LARK FUND APPLICATION.” Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis as long as there is money in the fund to distribute. Decisions will be made about each application within 1 month of receiving applications.

Organizations that have or have not already been awarded a mini-grant from the Lark Fund are eligible to reapply 12 months after receiving notification from Projectivity about their submission.

If you have questions, or can’t submit the application by email, please email projectivityinfo@gmail.com or call Christian Penn at (301) 938-9335.
APPLICATION FORM

Please note that this is not a fillable form. Please send the following information in a word document (or compatible format).

At the top of your application, please list:

- your school’s name and address
- your name
- title
- contact information
- amount you are requesting

QUESTIONS

Please answer these in a total of 2 pages maximum, at least 11 point font.

1. Please briefly describe your school and your students.

2. Describe the music class or program that is in need of new or repaired instruments.

3. What items would your school purchase or repair with a Lark grant?

4. What difference would the purchased or repaired instruments make?

SAMPLE

Please send an audio or video recording of student music (preferred); or photographs representing the program. Indicate up to 3 start & end times totaling 5 minutes or less.

Formats: website link, mov, quicktime, mp3 or mp4, or mailed CD or DVD.

Photographs should be submitted in jpeg, maximum 5 images.

If you have questions, or can’t submit the application by email, please email projectivityinfo@gmail.com or call Dave Noodlez at (347-559-5228).
THE LARK FUND GRANTEE HISTORY

2013 - 4 awards, total awarded $1,200

**Port Richmond High School** has a band, orchestra, and small performing ensembles. Many students don’t have access to music lessons outside of school. They will be using their award to repair woodwind and brass instruments for their beginning classes, which are most badly in need of repair. Award: $300

**St. Claire’s School** is a pre-K through 8th grade Catholic school with an active general music program, a chorus, and a band that meets twice per week during their lunch period. They will use their Lark Fund award to provide maintenance for their band instruments and to repair their clarinets. Award: $300

**P.S. 30** is an elementary school with a full arts program and a supportive P.T.A., but like many schools, faces financial constraints when keeping instruments up to date. They plan to purchase one to two new band instruments with their Lark award. Award: $300

**I.S. 61 (The William A. Morris Magnet School of Arts and Letters)** has a strong magnet talent program in all of the performing arts and an impressive student orchestra. Instruments are difficult to maintain, being used by over 400 students per day. Funds will be used to replace a woodwind or stringed instrument that is in disrepair.

2014 - 2 awards, total awarded: $1,000

**The School of Civic Leadership & Patricia Cosmai** used the grant to buy new instruments so its music students will not have to share and will be able to bring instruments home to practice. Award: $500

**PS 5 Huguenot & Tina Montalvo** used funds for repairs and to purchase two new sets of orchestra bells to enhance their percussion section. Award: $500

2015 - 4 awards, total awarded: $1,300 plus musical instrument donations

**Douglas Barr & PS 11** used these funds to replace one of their instruments (a clarinet or trumpet) in their school band. Award: $200

**Andrea Caccese & PS 54** enhanced a music program that they’ve been facilitating during the lunch time to their 4th and 5th grade students by purchasing new instruments. Award: $450

**Elena Seminara & PS 373** is a District 75 school that services students in grades k-6 who are classified as on the autism spectrum, cognitively delayed and/or behaviorally challenged. The school repaired an old piano that they use for choral instruction. Award: $450

**Jo Ellen Fusco & PS 30** purchased instruments for a rock band for their 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students. Award: $200