

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Department of Public Transformation





*We believe
in the power of
rural creativity*

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Hello friends!

It is good to connect with you again! One of my favorite things about DoPT is that—in our sixth(!) year of growth—we are embracing the fact that we operate **in the intersections**.

Maybe it's because I am an adventurous traveler myself, but I truly appreciate how DoPT exists in spaces of cross-sector interconnection. In this unique role, we get the honor and privilege of bringing people together—in moments of virtual or in-person convenings and in moments of neighbor-to-neighbor gatherings, such as in events at The YES! House.

We get to feel the depth of supporting **hyper-local** projects—supporting artists working directly with their communities across the Upper Midwest through our Ignite Rural “at home” artist residency program—AND we get to feel the breadth of **national fieldwork**—connecting rural artists across the country to amplify their stories through Beyond the Clock.

In addition to being rural arts advocates and creative conveners, we also operate as intermediaries dispersing funds to rural cultural workers, incubators of rural arts projects/ideas, and cheerleaders of rural changemakers through programs like Activate Rural, which supported the development of artist-led creative gathering places in five communities across Minnesota during 2023.



DoPT is not only one thing. We work at the intersection of arts/cultural production AND economic development. *Y'all, we received our first grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to provide technical assistance to small businesses!* We work at the intersection of creativity AND civic life. We sit at tables with local municipal leaders AND national thought leaders in the fields of democracy, safety, and climate resiliency. We choose to do this intersectional work in and with rural communities because rural people and places know what it means to not be one thing—to wear many hats and to dance many dances... and, in these places, are the front porches where we like to sit.

With that, we invite you to grab your favorite front porch-sittin' chair and enjoy bits of our 2023 story. We hope that sometime soon, we get to join you on your front porch and hear the story of yours!

With gratitude for our path crossing yours,

Ash Hanson

Creative Executive Officer

Department of Public Transformation is an artist-led nonprofit organization that works to develop creative strategies for increased community connection, civic engagement, and equitable participation in rural places.

Our 150-year vision is one where rural communities across the country acknowledge, support, and integrate art and artists as vital contributors to economic, community, civic, and social life.

We believe that rural people and places have the answers they need to address community challenges and opportunities, but economies of extraction and narratives of deficit have fragmented many of our communities. This prevents us from reimagining our rural spaces and sharing the knowledge, skills, and resources we have to dream and build an equitable and just future. We seek to support rural communities in identifying and leveraging resources through artist-led, creative, cross-disciplinary, and radically inclusive programs. We believe in celebrating rural culture and cultural workers by uplifting small-town stories and connecting people to each other and their places. In doing so, we are working to shift damaging dominant narratives of what it means to live and work in rural America.

CORE VALUES

Accessible Play

We believe play is an essential component of human connection to break down perceived barriers and make room for vulnerability; we utilize the power of play to ignite and inspire meaningful connections, cultivate untapped creativity, and provide platforms for challenging conversations.

Deep Compassion

We believe in having deep compassion for the people and places we work with; we meet people where they are; we strive for critical self-awareness; we act as responsible stewards of the land and her stories.

Reciprocal Exchange

We believe everyone has value to add; we view our work as a reciprocal exchange and not an extraction or dissemination of knowledge, skills, or resources; we work with, not for; we work together.

Intentional Representation

We believe in intentional, intergenerational opportunities for women, non-binary people, people of color, LGBTQ2IA+, New American, and Indigenous community members to work towards equal representation in artistic and civic leadership; we strive to compensate artists equitably for their work.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Build Trust

We believe in leading with accountability to and for the people we serve; we understand rural cultural work is slow, generational, and relational; we strive to move at the speed of trust.

Prioritize Connections

We believe in being good neighbors and bringing good times to connect with each other across differences; we illuminate unexpected connections between people, places, and ideas.

Cultivate Creativity

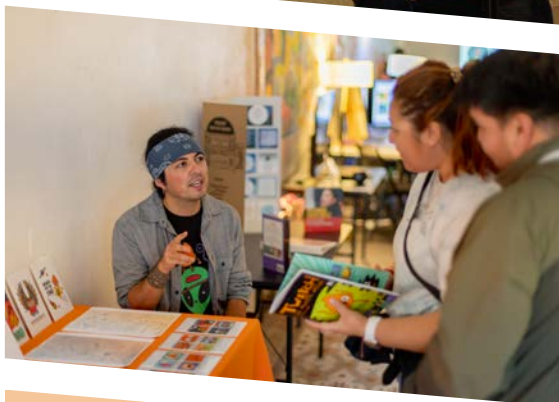
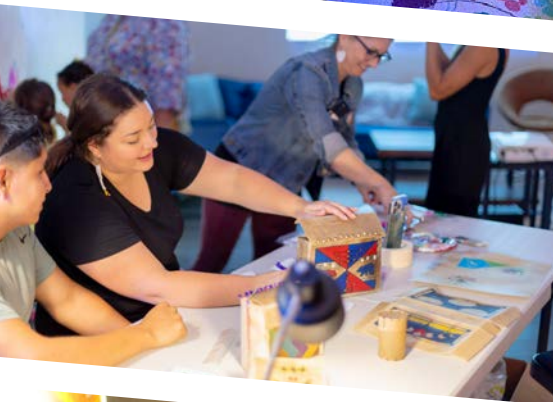
We believe engaging our creativity leads to happier, fuller lives and more vibrant, welcoming communities.

Shift Narratives

We believe that the story of rural communities must be told by people who live and work in rural communities; we believe geography must be considered in the national conversations around equity and access to resources; we believe rural-urban solidarity is vital to moving forward together.

Lead with Love

We believe in cultivating supportive, creative spaces and radically welcoming environments.



PROGRAMS

We support rural communities through artist-led, creative, cross-disciplinary, and cross-sector initiatives that celebrate and build on existing efforts while inspiring new ideas, approaches, and ways of thinking.

Our work sits at the intersection of arts and rural economic and community development; we are a nonprofit organization that seeks grant funding, but we're also distributing funds directly to artists and communities. Through piloting and building programs and networks with bird's-eye-view fieldwork, we operate as connectors and pollinators, encouraging creativity and ideas to grow.

As arts and cultural workers, we listen to the stories that rural people and places tell about themselves and the stories that are told about them. We critically examine and adjust our role in shifting damaging narratives of scarcity, isolation, and decline to those of abundance, connection, and hope.

DoPT is a multi-centered organization that works on projects and programs in and with Southwest Minnesota; statewide throughout Greater Minnesota; regionally in the Upper Midwest; and nationally across the United States.

Department of Public Transformation uses these four key strategies to achieve our mission:

- **Support** rural arts & cultural workers
- **Connect** rural municipalities & artists
- **Activate** rural community assets
- **Nurture** the rural arts & culture field

CONNECT

- Rural Civic Arts Partnership works with civic and municipal leaders, building peer networks, offering workshop series, and sharing resources to work with arts and cultural workers to develop creative strategies for civic engagement and community problem-solving

SUPPORT

- Ignite Rural invests in rural BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and Native artists and culture bearers through a cohort model to implement people-centered creative projects in their own communities
- Fiscal Sponsorship supports mission-aligned arts groups, individual artists, entrepreneurs, and small businesses working with arts-led strategies in rural communities

ACTIVATE

- Activate Rural uses a cohort-based learning lab to cultivate and increase welcoming physical infrastructure in rural communities using an artist-led asset activation framework
- The YES! House is a gathering space and arts venue in Granite Falls, MN, which offers creative programming for Southwest Minnesota residents of all ages and backgrounds

NURTURE

- Beyond the Clock is a series of virtual learning exchanges connecting and lifting up rural artists, culture workers, and connectors across the country
- Partnerships such as MN Rural-Urban Exchange with Art of the Rural, Rural Minnesota Community Safety with Nonviolent Peaceforce, and Radical Shift in Philanthropy with Minnesota Artist Coalition
- Consulting, coaching, mentorship, and communities of practice supporting rural civic and social artists, municipal staff, and curious communities in moving forward with creative projects and cross-sector initiatives



The YES! House is a creative community gathering space and arts venue in downtown Granite Falls, MN. It is an inspired inclusive space where staff and volunteers host locals, artists, and visitors in conversations, collaborations, and creativity. The space includes two apartments, a shared studio space, a performance venue, an art gallery, and a co-working/gathering space. Other spaces currently under renovation include a rock climbing room, an audio recording studio, a media lab, and an artist and wellness workshop/classroom.

The YES! House staff work closely with a group of local volunteers who make up the Creative Collaboration Team (CCT) to continue the “Art of Neighboring” event series, which showcases both local and visiting artists and creatives. Pictured below is The YES! House Program Coordinator Luwaina Al-Otaibi with the 2023 CCT in front of The YES! House.



2023 CCT

Mary Gillespie
Allie Cole
Joe Hauger
Beth Pullan
Ed McGill
Nicole Zempel
Jeremy Radtke
Janel Guertin
Tyler Gastecki



LEARN from your NEIGHBOR



The Creative Collaboration Team (CCT) hosted seven **Learn from Your Neighbor** events in which local community members shared their passions and skills with others!

The YES! House also hosted a visiting artist series and a variety of events hosted by local community members. Events ranged from concerts, dance classes, yoga classes, film screenings, art classes, and a community-created haunted house, just to name a few. The YES! House staff also support a wide range of community events and collaborations such as Meander Opening Night, Western Fest, SquidFest, Winter Solstice, and more!

48 events in
Granite Falls
during 2023!

“The YES! House has jolted my creativity in so many ways! From ‘one-of-a-kind’ events inside the building to one of the many ‘in-community’ events across all seasons, this place has the power to make me feel wildly creative and peacefully at home all in one experience!”

Jeremy Radtke
2023 CCT Member



IGNITE RURAL

During 2023, DoPT supported eight rural artists and culture bearers from North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and the 23 Native Nations through **Ignite Rural**. Each of these emergent artists received six months of programming designed to foster growth, a \$4,000 creative fund, and a \$6,000 living stipend to provide additional financial support to drive focus to their art. The residency culminated in an artist showcase at The YES! House in Granite Falls, MN. These artists brought unique perspectives to the program, contributing to the overall rural artist landscape. Through Ignite Rural, they not only advanced their artistic practices but also forged strong connections with each other and their communities, highlighting the vital role of rural artists and culture bearers across the Upper Midwest.

The program was led by Ignite Rural Program Director Holly Doll/Anpao Win (First Light Woman) and supported by an Advisory Committee of artists, community organizers, and changemakers: Angela Zonunpari, Anne O'Keefe, Dyana DeCoteau, Eileen O'Keefe, Nancy X. Valentine, and Peter Strong.



2023 IGNITE RURAL ARTIST COHORT

pictured below from left to right

Alixena Patnaude

Belcourt, ND (pop. 1,772)

Cecily Rose Engelhart

Wagner, SD (pop. 1,436)

Esmarie Cariaga

Vermillion, SD (pop. 11,915)

Leah Xiuzhen Rathe

Brainerd, MN (pop. 14,580)

Leticia (Gonzales) Snow

Saint Peter, MN (pop. 12,156)

Lynne M Colombe

Mission, SD (pop. 1,144)

Omani Luger

Mandan, ND (pop. 21,943)

Rocky Casillas Aguirre

Nerstrand, MN (pop. 294)

“The experience gave me the self-confidence I needed to work on a project I had been dreaming of for a long time. Thanks to DoPT I can now say I am a self-published comic book creator!”

Rocky Casillas Aguirre

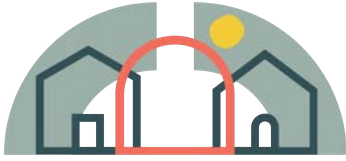
2023 Ignite Rural Artist

92 total
applicants in
2023

8 artists
selected

\$102,360
to artists &
culture bearers





ACTIVATE RURAL

Department of Public Transformation believes in working with artists, cultural workers, and connectors to strengthen rural places by supporting the role of community assets—social, cultural, and built—as a lens to help communities investigate and celebrate their collective story: past, present, and future. From creative taprooms and gathering places to multi-use community hubs and knowledge centers, DoPT supports creative building activation projects that inspire, motivate, and open up possibilities for rural communities across Minnesota through **Activate Rural**.

In 2023, we launched a two-year learning lab with an inaugural cohort of five building activation projects and teams. The Activate Rural Learning Lab is a cohort-based peer network and resource hub that supports community leaders and artists in cultivating welcoming and creative physical places of connection in rural communities. Each team received \$25,000 for artist-led community engagement projects, DoPT staff support and individually curated technical assistance, cohort exchange visit funds, and cohort-specific workshops and gatherings. The program is rooted in an artist-led asset activation framework and is working towards equitable access to social and financial capital, process transparency, and public participation.

**\$125,000 DIRECTED TO
RURAL COMMUNITIES**

2023-2025 ACTIVATE RURAL LEARNING LAB COHORT

Mni Sota Arts

Redwood Falls, MN (pop. 5,084)

City of Buhl

Buhl, MN (pop. 949)

Manoomin Arts Initiative

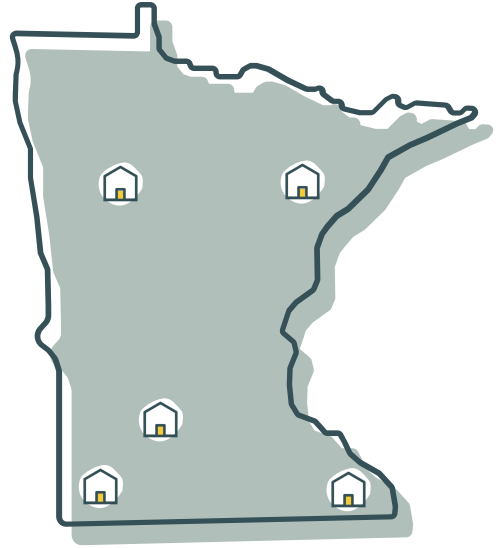
White Earth Nation (pop. 9,726)

Reclaim Community

Jasper, MN (pop. 606)

Spring Grove Cinema

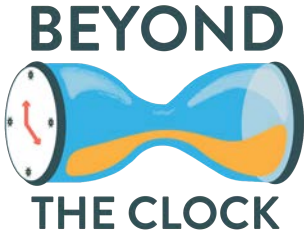
Spring Grove, MN (pop. 1,240)



“Being a part of the Activate Rural program has given us permission to think bigger about what is possible in our community. It allows us the opportunity to learn about new resources and ideas, while also holding us accountable to accomplishing our goals. The tools and programs have already had positive ripple effects in our work and we are so grateful!”

Courtney Bergey Swanson

2023-2025 Activate Rural Cohort Member



Beyond the Clock (BTC) is a monthly online gathering for rural connectors and cultural workers that fosters fellowship, shared learning, and community care. Co-hosted by Department of Public Transformation and Voices for Rural Resilience, with support from the Rural Assembly, BTC invites creative rural rockstars from across the country to join digital happy hours and learning exchanges that connect and inspire.

Our goal is to create connections for rural, place-based cultural workers—regardless of location or physical boundaries—that help them sustain work that often feels isolating. Rural arts and culture workers often oscillate between the need to belong in their community and the need to lead the way in embracing new cultures, values, and attitudes. Operating in this space requires vulnerability, courage, discomfort, self-love, and grace. We model these qualities in our virtual gatherings and strive to curate a space that sustains rural practitioners, allowing them to continue leading rural communities toward vibrancy, equity, beauty, and love—embracing the best of our past and our future aspirations.

BTC Learning Exchanges invite rural connectors and cultural workers to share experiences, grapple with tensions, and celebrate the joys of rural work. Topics include preventing burnout, accessing resources, cultivating joy, and more. Practitioners share their voices, generate ideas, and find breakthroughs for daily challenges alongside their peers, advancing missions and contributions as vital, valued community members.

2023 FEATURED GUESTS



Whitney Kimball Coe
Athens, TN (pop. 14,371)



Ne-Dah-Ness Rose Greene
Leech Lake Reservation (pop. 11,388)



Sharon Mansur
Winona, MN (pop. 25,842)



Nikiko Masumoto
Del Rey, CA (pop. 1,491)



Kelly Yarbrough
Manhattan, KS (pop. 53,829)

2023 ILLUSTRATOR-IN-RESIDENCE



Molly Gurney
Moab, UT (pop. 5,321)

9 Beyond the
Clock virtual
gatherings
during 2023!



Attendees
represented
23 states, as well
as Canada and
the UK!

"I look forward to Beyond the Clock every single month because I can count on the space to be rejuvenating and full of love. I always leave the hour feeling like I've learned something and found good connection with those who join. It fills my cup up."

Taneum Fotheringill

BTC Participant and Partner
Director of Programs & Partnerships, Rural Assembly

2023 STAFF



Luwaina Al-Otaibi
The YES! House Program Coordinator



Holly Doll, Anpao Win (First Light Woman)
Ignite Rural Program Director



Benjamin Domask-Ruh
Activate Rural Program Assistant



Elisa Franco
Communications Coordinator



Ash Hanson
Creative Executive Officer



Hannah K. Holman
Creative Operating Officer



Sarina Otaibi
Activate Rural Program Director

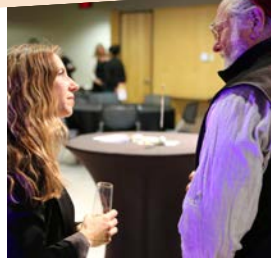


*The staff and board members listed, including titles, are accurate as of December 31, 2023.
To view the current staff list, please visit publictransformation.org.*

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Heather McDougall, Chair
Jenn Lamb, Vice Chair
Mary Welcome, Secretary
Rachel Schwalbach, Treasurer
Lauren Carlson
Anna Claussen
Leah Cooper
Rachel Engh
Ashley Hanson, Ex Officio (voting)

Hannah Holman, Ex Officio (non-voting)
Jessica Huang
Bethany Lacktorin
Anne O'Keefe
Beth Pullan
Joanna Schnedler
Leu Solomon
Melissa Wray





ARTISTS, COLLABORATORS, PARTNERS

Alixena Patnaude
 Allie Cole
 Amanda Lovelee
 Angela Zonunpari
 Anne O'Keefe-Jackson
 Ashley Goodwin
 Autumn Cavender-Wilson
 Beth Pullan
 Betsy Pardick
 Bluenose Gopher
 Public House
 Catherine Reinhart
 Cecily Rose Engelhart
 Center for Rural Strategies/
 Rural Assembly
 City of Buhl
 City of Mahanomen
 Courtney Bergey Swanson
 Crystal Johnson
 Crystal Severance
 Dakota Goodhouse
 Dakota Wicohan
 Dallas Kluksdal
 Danielle Paul
 Dawn Espe
 DJ Virjil
 Dyana DeCoteau

Dyess Media LLC
 Edwin McGill
 Eileen O'Keefe
 Elicia Madetzke
 Eliza Blue
 Emily Klarer
 Emma Woods
 Esmarie Cariaga
 Falls Cafe & Canoe
 Fern Cloud
 Gina Morken
 Granite Area Arts Council
 Heath Armstrong
 Heidi Eger
 Jacqui VanMinsel
 James Arentson
 Janel Guertin
 Janet Klarer
 Jennifer Reyes
 Jeremy Radtke
 Jewel Starz
 Joseph Allen
 Joseph Hauger
 Karina Kafka
 Katherine Mothes
 Kazua Melissa Vang
 Kelly Yarbrough

Kevin Springer
 Khou Lor
 Kristie Weinkauff
 Leah Xiuzhen Rathe,
 Leah XR Creative LLC
 Leticia (Gonzales) Snow
 Letitia Thomas-Skalicky
 Living At Home-
 Block Nurse Program
 Luke LeBlanc,
 145 Entertainment LLC
 Lynne M. Colombe
 Manny's
 Manoomin Arts Initiative
 Mary Gillespie
 Mary Welcome
 May Lee-Yang
 Melissa Peterson
 Melissa Wray
 Michelle Vavricka
 MN Rural-Urban Exchange
 Miranda Moen,
 MO/EN Design Practice
 Mni Sota Arts
 Moira Villiard
 Molly Gurney
 Morgan Ironheart

Nancy X. Valentine
Nathaniel Haskell
Ne-Dah-Ness Rose
Greene-Jordan
Nhatt Nicols
Nichole Cross
Nicole Zempel
Nikiko Masumoto
Nonviolent Peaceforce
Omani Luger
Open Book
Paul Drees
Pioneer PBS
Racing Magpie
Rebecca Dallinger
Reclaim Community

Region Five
Development Commission
Renee Loeffler
Rocky Casillas Aguirre
Ryan Meehan
Sharla Bengtson
Sharon Mansur
Shay Knobloch
Sod House Theater
Søren Olsen
Southwest Initiative
Foundation
Southwest Minnesota
Arts Council
Southwest Minnesota
Housing Partnership/
Partnership Design, LLC

Spring Grove Cinema/
Spring Grove
Communications
Springboard for the Arts
Sureeporn Sompamitwong
Tamara Isfeld
Tara Laidlaw
Tara Mason
The Foundry
THIEF Ludlow
Tyler Gastecki
Voices for Rural Resilience
Winfred Jackson
Witt Siasoco

*If your name has been
misspelled or omitted in error,
please let us know so we can fix
our mistake moving forward!*

*“DoPT has a deep and powerful impact.
Their work stewards and strengthens
the bonds of connection and collaboration
between artists, communities, and
organizations across sectors.
This kind of field building is essential
to the continued growth and
quality of life in rural communities.”*

Matthew Fluharty
Field Partner
Executive Director, Art of the Rural

OPPORTUNITIES

Some lessons we have learned along our way

MOVING AT THE SPEED OF TRUST

During 2023, we focused on slowly and intentionally building and strengthening our relationships and partnerships (locally, in Southwest Minnesota and across the country) and increasing diversity on our board, staff, and committees by dedicating time and resources to these important efforts. We believe that true transformation comes from fostering deep, meaningful connections and ensuring that diverse voices are represented and heard. Prioritizing trust and inclusivity enhances our ability to support and connect with rural communities effectively, as we continue to work towards cultivating environments of trust, equity, and community care.

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

We are thrilled to announce the successful completion of our first audit, earning a “clean opinion” from our auditor. An audit is a thorough examination of our financial records—and is required for nonprofits with annual revenue of \$750,000—necessitating significant resources and diligence. This major milestone for our small arts nonprofit demonstrates our commitment to transparency and financial integrity, reflecting our dedication to building a strong foundation and solid operational processes. As we continue to foster creative connections and support rural artists, this accomplishment is worthy of celebration, marking our progress and setting a high standard for our future endeavors.

CONTINUING ACCOUNTABILITY WORK

Transparency and accountability are crucial in community work. We work towards this through collective leadership in our programs. In 2023 we invited a 7-member YES! House Futures (YHF) Committee of local residents and an interim group of 5 members representing the Creative Collaboration Team (CCT) and YHF to initiate the design of The YES! House Advisory Council's structure, which will be initiated in 2024 to ensure a shared vision and stewardship of The YES! House. In Activate Rural, we began working with the cohort on a Transparency and Accountability process for Community Engagement. Our Equity & Engagement Committee (made up of members of board and staff) meet monthly to hold us accountable to our values and investigate any underlying inequities within our policies, systems, and services.

BECOMING AN INTERMEDIARY

We have continued to step into our role as an intermediary by both advocating for geographic equity and redistributing resources to rural changemakers. With only 5-7% of national philanthropic resources reaching rural communities, we're committed to changing this narrative. In 2023, we distributed over \$293,000 to rural artists and projects, empowering creative leaders to drive transformational change. This is a path we are dedicated to continuing, ensuring that rural voices are heard and supported. By directing more resources to rural communities, we aim to foster vibrant and equitable rural futures and move toward our mission by uplifting rural creative changemakers and continuing to advocate for the resources they need to thrive.

2019-2023

FINANCIAL

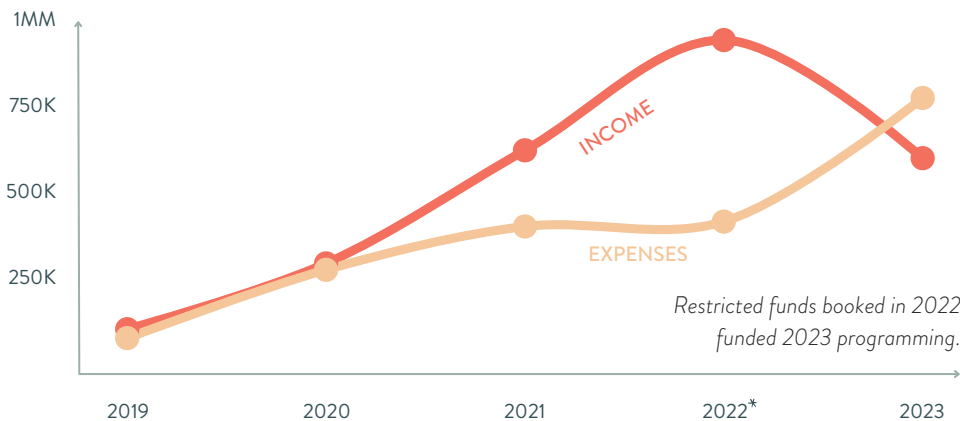
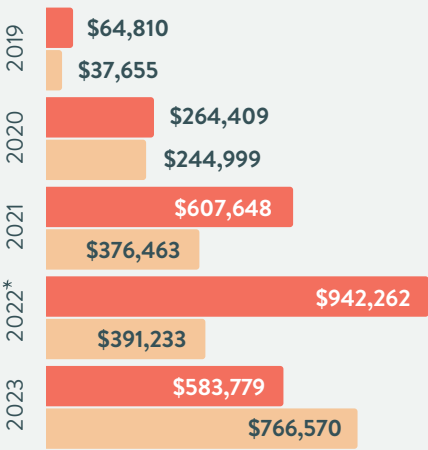
TRENDS

* We have updated our numbers to reflect our 2022 audited financial statements!

In the state of Minnesota, nonprofits that reach a \$750,000 income threshold are required to undergo an independent financial audit, and we completed our audit after the release of the 2022 Annual Report. Although there were a few differences, these were identified during the audit process, and we received a “clean opinion” on our inaugural nonprofit audit!

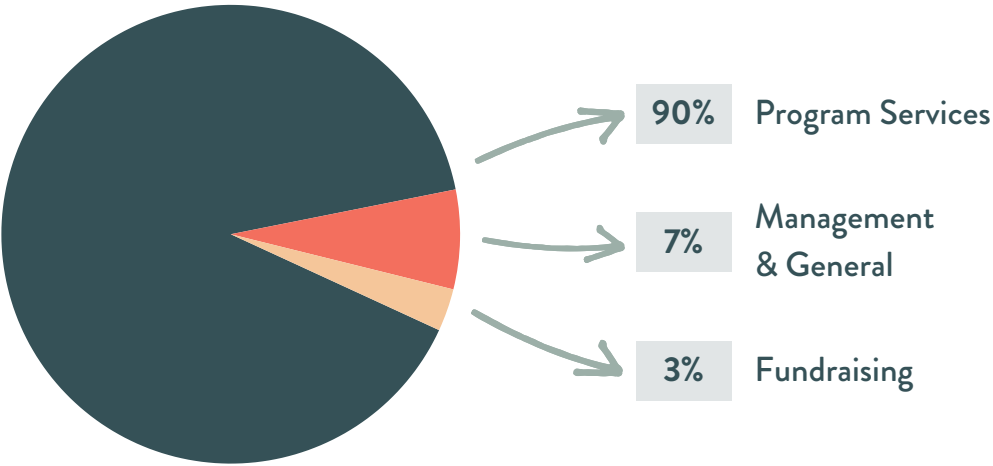
A “clean opinion” in a nonprofit financial audit means that the auditors found an organization's financial statements to be presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). This indicates that the financial statements are free of material misstatements and provide an accurate representation of the nonprofit's financial position.

During 2023, we were below the income threshold, so we elected to complete an independent financial review instead of a full audit. No material misstatements were found and the financials are prepared in accordance with GAAP.



2023 FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Functional expense allocation for a nonprofit organization is the process of categorizing and assigning costs to various functional areas, such as program services, management and general operations, and fundraising, to accurately reflect the organization's spending and resource utilization in achieving its mission.



Non-Profit Doesn't Mean No Profit

Nonprofit finances can fluctuate based on the timing of grant dollars and pledges, funding restrictions, multi-year commitments, program timelines, and more. It is possible for a non-profit organization to end one year with a surplus and another year with a deficit. In fact, some organizations can develop a (somewhat) predictable cycle of surpluses and deficits based on the relationship between their program spending and donor timing.

During 2023, DoPT spent more funds than we raised, causing a negative change in net assets. We expected this because we received significant grant support in previous years (including a \$525,000 multi-year grant for Activate Rural!) that was spent to implement programming in 2023. We anticipate there will be a continual ebb and flow from year to year as we work to achieve our mission.

2023 AT A GLANCE

INCOME

Individual Contributions	\$ 9,879
Foundation and Organization Contributions	471,108
Business and Corporate Contributions	13,350
Government Grants	28,500
Special Event Contributions	2,569
Earned Revenue	58,373
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 583,779

NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTION: \$654,081

EXPENSE

Staff and Benefits	\$ 323,524
Professional Services	53,099
Contractors	176,290
Equipment	722
Program Expenses	16,959
Office Expenses	6,881
Artist Project Budgets	111,160
Regranted Funds	2,013
Facilities	9,597
Travel and Meetings	44,182
Marketing and Communications	7,836
Miscellaneous	3,088
Depreciation	8,971
Interest Expense	2,248
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 766,570

NET

\$ (182,791)

We grew to a staff of seven in 2023!

\$150,701 paid directly to artists!

We ended 2022 with restricted funds intended for programming in 2023 and beyond!

BALANCE SHEET

as of December 31, 2023

ASSETS

Cash	\$ 499,826
Grant Receivable	50,000
Accounts Receivable	-
Prepaid Expenses	574
Property, net	501,449

TOTAL ASSETS	1,051,849
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LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$ 13,627
Refundable Advance	20,000
Notes Payable	71,727
Total Liabilities	105,354

This is the remainder on our forgivable loan!

NET ASSETS

Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 582,649
With Donor Restrictions	363,846
Total Net Assets	946,495

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 1,051,849
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What is a Balance Sheet?

A balance sheet is a snapshot of a moment in time. Also known as a “statement of financial position,” this report gives an idea of the worth of an organization (assets and liabilities) on a given day. A more complete picture of an organization can be found by understanding its Profit and Loss Statement, Balance Sheet, and Budget, as well as its mission, vision, values, and program timelines.

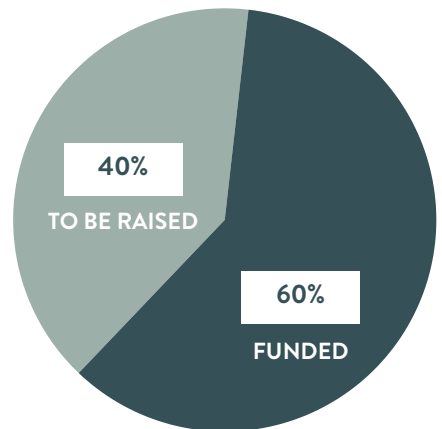
THE SAY YES! CREATIVE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

DoPT is in the midst of the **Say YES! Creative Capital Campaign** to renovate and transform The YES! House, a creative gathering space and arts venue located at 726 Prentice Street in Granite Falls, MN.

The programming and design of the space emerged through a year-long (and ongoing) community engagement process in which local community members collaborated with local and national artists and architects to dream and plan. Existing community assets were also mapped to avoid duplication of resources and services, aiming to amplify and complement the work of artists and community members already thriving in the region.

The Campaign began in 2018 with preliminary research and infrastructure repair, then entered its quiet phase in earnest in 2019. DoPT intended to publicly launch the Campaign in 2020—on the cusp of the emerging COVID-19 pandemic—and made the decision to postpone amidst uncertainty. Construction continued progressing with infrastructure work and specific projects made possible by early contributions, loans, and restricted grants. The Campaign was officially launched publicly in February 2022.

As of December 31, 2023, the Campaign raised approximately \$585,233 (60% of the updated goal) and spent approximately \$771,289 (80% of the updated budget.) The amount spent is currently greater than the amount raised due to the timing of funding agreements and receipts; this is made possible by the utilization of secured low-interest loan funds and prior unrestricted surpluses.

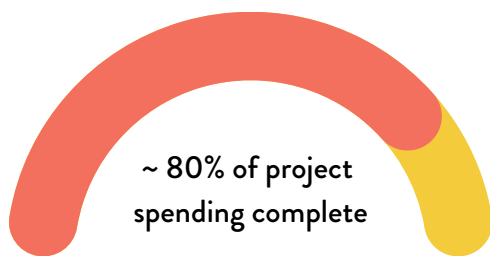


Please note the figures listed here are for fiscal year 2023. As of the publishing of this report, the Say YES! Creative Capital Campaign is over 99% funded! Your support today can close this campaign and set up a celebration in our 2024 Annual Report. Please visit theyeshouse.org to learn more and make a contribution!



Check out these awesome progress photos!

Photos from 2023 and 2024, when this report was published.



Big thanks to these amazing construction partners who have made this progress possible!

Custom Ag Services in Montevideo, MN
 Duinick Concrete in Willmar, MN
 Ethan Weber Construction in Granite Falls, MN
 Granite Falls Construction in Granite Falls, MN
 Gustaf's Masonry in Slayton, MN
 Heartland Electric in Montevideo, MN
 Historic Design Consulting in Vadnais Heights, MN
 Homeboat Collective from all over America (and beyond!)

Jack Bunting Construction in Aitkin, MN
 Jeff Johnson Excavating in Clara City, MN
 LA Construction & Design in Granite Falls, MN
 MO/EN Design Practice in Austin, MN
 Nationwide Glass in Willmar, MN
 Olsen Plumbing & Heating in Montevideo, MN
 Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership in Slayton, MN/Mankato, MN
 The Sawmill Lumber Yard in Granite Falls, MN
 Tostenson, Inc in Montevideo, MN
 ... and countless community volunteers!

SUPPORTERS

If your name has been misspelled or omitted in error, please let us know so we can fix our mistake moving forward!

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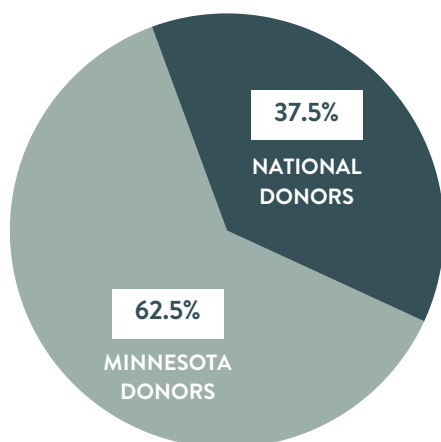
DoPT's work is supported by grant funds, corporate donations, and generous support from individuals across the country. These resources enable us to move our mission forward and get our work done. Your support makes this work possible, and we are so honored to be in community with you.

Thank you!

To join these generous supporters with a tax-deductible contribution, please visit publictransformation.org/donations

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LOOKING FORWARD

Thank you for sharing in our evolving story! 2023 was a year of profound (re)connection in a post-pandemic landscape, where we have all been striving for balance between Zoom meetings and in-person gatherings, productivity and rest, socializing, and staying home. We remain filled with gratitude for our community of supporters, practitioners, and partners who hold us in our complexities and imperfections (as we, too, seek to find balance) and propel us forward in our work to connect across perceived barriers and amplify important stories of hope from the most remote corners of our shared home.

Our 2023 theme was **“Grounding and Growing,”** which guided us to launch new programs, expand existing efforts, and focus on strengthening our foundation with new/updated policies, procedures, and accounting practices (including completing our first audit with a “gold star!”) and building our capacity as a growing nonprofit organization.

As we continue another year of activating, supporting, connecting, and nurturing rural arts and cultural workers alongside our partners in the field in 2024, we are inviting a steady **“Spirit of Inquiry.”** To us, this theme signifies our ongoing commitment to fostering curiosity and exploration within the realms of rural connection, community development, and civic engagement.

By embracing a spirit of inquiry, we encourage a culture of asking, listening, and sharing the intricate, joyful, and complex dynamics of rural life. We seek to delve deeper with our rural arts and culture collaborators, working together toward innovative and creative solutions that ignite transformative change and envision and enact a more inclusive and connected rural future.

It has been an honor and a joy to be in community with you over the past five years, and we hope that you will continue the journey with us for the next five... and beyond!



With love from your neighbors,
Department of Public Transformation



DEPT OF PUBLIC TRANSFORMATION

COLLABORATE WITH US!

Collaboration is at the core of all we do. Every person who contributes to our mission—whether through ideas, energy, enthusiasm, or financial support—becomes a collaborator of DoPT, supporting the field of arts and culture to co-create more equitable and vibrant futures for rural places. Thank you for your ongoing support, and we look forward to connecting with you soon!

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This report was prepared and designed by Department of Public Transformation staff.*

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