

PANEL RESULTS & COMMENTS

2019 PROJECT SUPPORT II



Cleveland Blues Society, Inc.

Your Project Title: Blues Jam Program - Live Music Series

Your Project Summary: Cleveland Blues Society hosts monthly jams at a different Cuyahoga County venue approximately once a month (10 - 12 times per year), have a booth with live music all week long in August at the Cuyahoga County Fair. This helps us meet our mission to promote awareness and appreciation for the Blues and grow membership. It also provide our membership opportunities to hear local and national blues artists and host special events to foster fellowship.

Final Score: Somewhat. Overall, the panel felt that the applicant provided some evidence throughout the application that the funding criteria were met.

CAC Grant Amount: \$4,000

To ensure an impartial and transparent application review process, CAC convened an online panel of arts and cultural professionals from outside the region who evaluated and scored eligible applications.

Panelists scored each application based on the Funding Criteria—Public Benefit, Artistic and Cultural Vibrancy and Organizational Capacity—with an emphasis on Public Benefit. For more details regarding the panel process and full panelist bios, please review the [Panel Guide](#).



Sarah Benvenuti
(New York, NY)



Tracie Hall
(Chicago, IL)



Leesa Jing
(Indianapolis, IN)



Carly Jones
(Raleigh, NC)



Kevin O'Hora
(New York, NY)

Below you will find each panelist's score and comment on your application in response to the question: **With an emphasis on public benefit, does the applicant demonstrate evidence that it meets CAC's three funding criteria?**

Note: Panelist scores and comments are presented in no particular order.

Panelist 1

Score: Somewhat

Comment: This proposal only somewhat indicates public benefit. Though the project references the Blues Jam Series, it does not outright speak to the reach and diversity of program participants or audiences. As well, the links provided did not fully speak to urgency, need or public benefit. In fact, the links could have indicated richer racial and ethnic diversity more reflective of Cleveland's demographics. With that said, if funded, this or future projects should look at any gaps in public reach and performer representation.

Panelist 2

Score: No

Comment: The project does not meet the funding criteria. More details would've been helpful throughout the application. The project itself wasn't exactly clear to me. I'm curious how venues and bands are vetted, and who decides the final locations and performers. How is the community involved in this decision making, if they are included? Does the organization dictate the music played, or do bands have free reign? The community wasn't really defined at all in the beginning - the question was instead answered with project logistics. Having a deeper understanding of the audience would help the applicant write a more clear narrative. The budget isn't detailed at all - I'm not sure what exactly CAC funds would be used for.

Panelist 3

Score: Somewhat

Comment: This proposal somewhat meets the funding criteria. The organization seems capable of presenting concerts and has a thorough understanding of the Cleveland Blues community. The proposal conveys that the project is likely to reach a large constituency due to the interest in supporting Blues music among community groups. The proposal does not clearly demonstrate how it will make efforts to engage the community beyond performance. For example, the proposal claims that students will be engaged but does not elaborate on how they will be involved, how many will participate, etc. I am unclear on their plan to finance the project because the budget lacks detail and does not indicate a fundraising plan beyond the requested funds and earned revenue.

Panelist 4

Score: Yes

Comment: Public Benefit: could use a more clear picture of the public: is it just the audiences of these venues? Strong partnerships and clear mission show benefit. Artistic & Cultural Vibrancy: partners and performers and professionals with strong background in this musical form. Organizational Capacity: you've achieved this before and have strong partnerships. You have a clear plan for achieving your project. Question on finances: you say these are free performances but your income comes from annual memberships. This is confusing. Would like clarity on budget plan.

Panelist 5

Score: Somewhat

Comment: This application somewhat meets the funding criteria. Public Benefit: The Cleveland Blues Society is providing spaces for jam sessions throughout the community - many times, in "everyday" settings, which speaks to accessibility. A clearer definition of community and more intentional programming would have strengthened the application. Artistic and Cultural Vibrancy: There is a lack of reflection on community needs or ways to inspire people to think creatively/differently. Teaching Blues music history is an intriguing concept - but I would like more detail. Organizational Capacity: This could be improved by stronger partnerships. Matching funds coming from other sources besides annual membership and merchandise would strengthen the proposal.

Questions? Cuyahoga Arts & Culture is here to assist. Please contact:

Luis Gomez
program manager
lgomez@cacgrants.org
216.515.8303 x106

Heather Johnson-Banks
program manager
hjohnsonbanks@cacgrants.org
216.515.8303 x108

Dan McLaughlin
program manager
dmclaughlin@cacgrants.org
216.515.8303 x101