

# PANEL RESULTS & COMMENTS

## 2019 PROJECT SUPPORT II



### The Cleveland Shakespeare Festival

**Your Project Title:** Free Shakespeare, Season 22

**Your Project Summary:** We will produce 18 performances of free Shakespeare in Cuyahoga County. The actual plays are under discussion and negotiation, and will probably be announced by October of this year.

**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](#).



**Kelsey Brown**  
(Los Angeles, CA)



**Tré Hardin**  
(Nashville, TN)



**Brittne Knight**  
(Philadelphia, PA)



**Katie Skayhan**  
(Boulder, CO)



**Deidre Thomas**  
(Houston, TX)

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:** There is not sufficient detail on the community served or public benefit beyond free performances of Shakespeare plays. They work with local talent which is great and compensation is important to artist and commended. The phrase "routinely attract" suggests no intention around diversifying artists and possibly participants. Rather, these minority communities happen upon and find it somewhat accessible. This is where the community served narrative would have benefited from more specific detail not just on audience but also artists. Strategy for raising matching funds is clear.

### Panelist 2

**Score:** Yes

**Comment:** This project meets the funding criteria. The organization demonstrates an understanding of its community. I am glad to see that the troupe attracts actors from minority communities, and I like how the project describes a commitment to inclusive and unorthodox casting and production. The project is artistically and culturally vibrant and shows the organizational capacity to succeed.

### Panelist 3

**Score:** No

**Comment:** This application does not meet the funding criteria. Though there is a clear understanding that the material (Shakespeare) may not appeal to their larger intended audience, that implication that "people are afraid" and simply "removing ticket costs" does not by itself lead to a public benefit. This application signifies a lack of community partnerships and opportunities to engage people in your programming. Why do you assume people are afraid of Shakespeare? Are there schools and community organizations you can engage prior to break down the barriers of engagement? The assumption of fear does neither the organization nor the public any benefit.

### Panelist 4

**Score:** Somewhat

**Comment:** This project somewhat meets the funding requirements. This application doesn't demonstrate a great understanding of the community served. By keeping the program free, more participants are encouraged to come, but that doesn't explain how the program will

engage the community. The program does highlight the intentional efforts to provide equitable and diverse casting. This application prioritizes attendance and monetary contributions as a measure of success, but doesn't address measuring success in terms of public benefit. Because of the organizations history in putting on the festival, I am confident that they are capable of managing the project.

## Panelist 5

**Score:** Yes

**Comment:** Yes the applicant meets funding criteria. The performances seem well thought out and purposeful in their effort to include diverse populations and neighborhoods. The fact that they're free of charge also eliminates any barriers to low income or underserved populations from attending. I would hope that the organization also makes a purposeful effort to market to these low income areas specifically as to try and increase attendance from there. Perhaps consider including a zip code question on post surveys to determine what parts of town your audience is from, and how that can be addressed in following years. Organizational capacity seems well thought out and organized, along with clear goals and ways to measure them.

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

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