



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES TOGETHER WE HEAL CREATIVE PLACE  
PROGRAM GRANTEES**

*Mayor's Office and DCASE invest \$5.5 million in creative projects that promote healing  
in neighborhoods*

**CHICAGO** — Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, the Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice (OERJ), and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) announced the grant recipients for the Together We Heal Creative Place Program (CCP). The City will award 48 grants totaling \$5.5 million.

"Racial healing and transformation are an essential part of our ability to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and civil unrest of the past 2 years," said Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. "I want to thank and congratulate our grantees for their visionary plans to create shared spaces for our communities to come together to heal and unite. These spaces give residents the opportunity to reflect on our past, reclaim our present, and reimagine our future."

Ranging from \$25,000 to \$500,000, the grants will support artists in designing and implementing art projects that promote healing and transformation in Chicago's neighborhoods, with a focus on communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic racism.

The 48 finalists were selected from more than 180 applications based on artistic merit, project feasibility, benefit to the community, community engagement experience, and connection to the Together We Heal guiding values:

**\$500,000**

- Deeply Rooted Dance Theater / Blacks in Green - Growing Together: A Dance + Garden Project for the South Side
- Full Spectrum Features NFP / Latinos Progresando - Community Storytellers

**\$250,000**

- Sisters in Cinema / Yvonne Welbon - South Shore Remembers



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- Rome in a Day Productions Chicago / Alexandria Aikens - Parkway Picture Show
- Folded Map Project / Chicago Bungalow Association - unBLOCKED: Undoing the harmful effects of racist Land Sale Contracts
- Architresures / People for Community Recovery - Riverdale Creative Cultural Connections (RC3) Project
- #LetUsBreathe Collective / Su Casa Catholic Worker – Liberation Landing
- ConTextos NFP / MAAFA Redemption Project - Sankofa Story Garden: Reflecting, Visioning, Co-Creating
- The Firehouse Community Arts Center / Haman Cross III - Bell Park: Changing the Narrative and Healing Together through Art, Play & Life
- Sadia Nawab / IMAN Central - IMANifest Studios
- The Foundation for Homan Square / Alexie Young - Celebrating Creativity & Culture in Homan Square: Public Space Improvements for Health, Safety, & Belonging on Homan Avenue
- American Indian Health Service of Chicago, Inc. / Cyndee Fox-Starr – Mending Intergenerational and Historical Trauma (MIGHT)

**\$100,000**

- Urban Growers Collective / Chicago Art Department - South Chicago Farm Outdoor Art Studio and Culinary Maker Space: Design Charrettes and Activation
- Muddy Waters MOJO Museum / Chicago Blues Revival - The Mojo Garden and Performance Center
- Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project / Sarah Ross - Wall Turned Sideways
- Territory NFP / Root 2 Fruit Youth Foundation - Austin Safety Action Plan/Austin 2.0
- Taproots, Inc. / Antidote Inc. – Creative Conversations
- Mandala South Asian Performing Arts / Indo American Center – Arts Access and Cultural Healing on Devon, Chicago’s Little South Asia
- The Miracle Center, Inc. / Nitza Rosario - TMC Project Synergy
- Chicago Therapy Collective / Eisha Love - Together We Remember Elise
- People Matter / Angela Lin – Breaking Community Bubbles
- Pilar Audain / Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation - Year of Transformation through Solidarity

**\$45,000**

- Affinity Community Services / Jenn Freeman | Po'Chop - The People's Church of the G.H.E.T.T.O
- We Sow We Grow Project / The Black Bloom Project – Roots & Blooms



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- Greater Auburn Gresham Community Development Corporation / Maxwell Emcays - Signs of Change on 79th Street
- Urban Juncture Foundation / Asia Taylor – Train of Thoughts
- Kiela Smith-Upton / Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert - We ARE Legacy...Our Greater South Shore
- Urban Male Network / Pugs Atomz - Changing the Englewood Landscape
- Bridge To Freedom / James Crumb - Chicago Soul Arts
- 6018North NFP / Wisdom Baty - Soil and Soul
- Front Porch Arts Center / Free Street Theater - Front Porch Teen Theater and Storytelling Workshops
- Free Spirit Media / Westside Association for Community Action (WACA) - You Can't Kill the Revolution: A Cinematic Celebration of Arts & Activism on Chicago's West Side
- Melissa Lewis / Cristian Roldán-Aponte - Reclaiming Sanctuary
- Instituto Gaspar Yanga / Brown Wall Project - Plugs and Connections
- La Escuelita Bombera De Corazón / 18th Street Casa de Cultura - Agua
- The Southwest Collective / Nitsia Flores - Archer Ave Art Café
- Jennifer Pham / Christopher Quy-Hac tran - Argyle Community Healing & Placekeeping Project
- North River Commission / Natalia Virafuentes - We Are Albany Park
- HANA Center / Aram Han Sinfuentes - Citizenship for All: Storytelling for Immigrant Justice through NongGi Making
- Chicago Mobile Makers / Maya Bird-Murphy - Interlocking Visions: Strength(in) Community
- Haitian American Museum / Cranston Ramirez Knight - Healing Through A Pandemic
- Red Clay Dance Company / Vershawn Sanders-Ward - Rest.Rise.Move.Nourish.Heal
- Puerto Rican Arts Alliance / AfriCaribe - Camino Cultura, Activando Nuestro Espacio Comunitario

**\$25,000**

- Creative Chicago Reuse Exchange (CCRx) / T.H.U.G. Hippie - The Creativity Bus
- Lit Feelings / Jeweline Hale - Acting Up in South Deering and Once Upon a Pose
- Chicago Urban Art Retreat Center / Dianna C Long - Neighborhood Healing Project
- Wayfinding LLC / Levette Haynes - Wayfinding: West Side Lagoons
- Brianna Ramirez Smith / Marco Rios - The Giving Tree Mural of Humboldt Park



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“The Together We Heal Creative Place Program is a substantial investment in our city’s arts sector and in our communities,” said Erin Harkey, Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). “The selected projects leverage the arts to propel positive, transformative and lasting change in our City.”

The grantees were announced at the “Let’s Talk Healing, Chicago: The Year of Healing 2022 Summit,” held at Harold Washington Library. The summit also included policy presentations, performances from local artists, and interactive healing workshops led by community healing practitioners across various modalities: sound, food, dance, circlekeeping, research, and more.

“At the root of Together We Heal is the belief that before we can transform systems and structures, we must first transform ourselves,” said Candace Moore, Chief Equity Officer at the City of Chicago. “We look forward to the outcomes of projects selected for the Creative Place Program, which has limitless potential to heal our community from the inside out and give way to sustainable solutions that will change lives for generations to come.”

From Fall 2022 through Winter 2024, selected artists and organizations will work in partnership with stakeholders to create projects that strengthen the economic, physical, and social character of a neighborhood or place.

For more information on the Together We Heal Creative Place Program, please visit [chi.gov/togetherweheal](https://chi.gov/togetherweheal).

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### **About The Office of Equity and Racial Justice:**

The Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) seeks to advance institutional change that results in an equitable transformation of how we do business across the City of Chicago enterprise. This includes the City’s service delivery, resource distribution, policy creation, and decision-making. OERJ will do this by supporting City departments in normalizing concepts of racial equity, organizing staff to work together for transformational change, and operationalizing new practices, policies, and procedures that result in more fair and just outcomes. Visit [chicago.gov/equity](https://chicago.gov/equity).

### **About The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events:**

The City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) supports artists and cultural organizations, invests in the creative economy, and expands access and participation in the arts throughout Chicago’s 77 neighborhoods.



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As a collaborative cultural presenter, arts funder, and advocate for creative workers, our programs and events serve Chicagoans and visitors of all ages and backgrounds, downtown and in diverse communities across our city — to strengthen and celebrate Chicago. Visit [chicago.gov/dcse](https://chicago.gov/dcse).