



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact:

dhughes@universitysettlement.org

University Settlement awarded \$61,000 by the New York State Council on the Arts

New York, NY – University Settlement today announced grant awards totaling \$61,000 from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to support the arts and culture sector. Through New York State’s continued investment in arts and culture, NYSCA has awarded \$80.9 million in FY 2026 to arts and culture nonprofits across all 10 regions and a historic number of artists.

NYSCA awarded University Settlement:

- **\$25,000 in Support for Organizations funding**, which will support programming for arts programs The Performance Project and The Creative Center
- **\$35,000 in Targeted Opportunities** funding supporting subsidized rehearsal rentals for artists at Speyer Hall at 184 Eldridge Street
- **\$1,000 in Support for Artists funding**, as part of larger awards made to 2024/2025 The Performance Project Artists in Residence Yibin Wang and Audrey Thao Berger

“Creative expression gives people space to explore feelings, build self-awareness, and cope with challenges, and for these reasons (and many more) arts programs are integral to our efforts to build community strength,” said University Settlement CEO **Melissa Aase**.

“We are most grateful for NYSCA’s support for our innovative arts programs The Performance Project and The Creative Center, which bring free arts instruction and opportunities to experience groundbreaking performances to more than 12,000 of our neighbors every year, and for empowering our efforts to make our white box theater Speyer Hall available to artists at a subsidized rehearsal rate of \$10 an hour.”

“New York’s arts and culture sector is a cornerstone of the state’s identity, and we’re making bold investments to ensure it remains strong,” **Governor Kathy Hochul** said.

“These grants will lift up artists and organizations in every region, fueling local economies and expanding access to the arts. Congratulations to all the grantees – your talent and dedication help power New York’s future.”

New York State Council on the Arts Executive Director **Erika Mallin** said, “During these challenging times, the New York State Council on the Arts has been a stalwart and innovative funder. These grants will serve artists and organizations in every region and county, fueling our economy and serving our communities. We know this support isn’t just an investment in the arts; it’s an investment in New York’s future. Congratulations to University Settlement and thank you for your perseverance, your creativity, and your tireless service to New York State.”

New York State Council on the Arts Chair **Patrick Willingham** said, “With the unwavering support of Governor Hochul and our Legislature, the Council is proud to congratulate this year’s grantees, whose collective efforts strengthen and benefit us all. I also want to recognize the work of NYSCA’s panelists, staff, and the entire Council, whose dedication has ensured that this critical support will reach every corner of New York State.”

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About University Settlement

University Settlement partners with 40,000+ New Yorkers in Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn every year to build on our collective strengths as we achieve healthy, stable, and remarkable lives.

For 140 years, we’ve fought poverty and systemic inequality by building highly effective social services in collaboration with our neighbors.

Established in 1886 as the first Settlement House in the United States, we bring the values of our movement into the 21st century by meeting New Yorkers where they live, listening deeply to all perspectives, and creating space for responsive cooperation.

Joining with our neighbors to make stable foundations where people of all ages can grow and pursue their dreams, we build community strength.

We infuse a commitment to civic engagement, equality, and communal action into each of our programs, which include early childhood education, youth development, healthy aging, mental health and wellness, housing advocacy and benefits assistance, English classes for adult immigrants, community centers, and the arts.

#NYCisUS. What can we do together? Learn more at www.universitysettlement.org

About the New York State Council on the Arts

The mission of the New York State Council on the Arts is to foster and advance the full breadth of New York State’s arts, culture, and creativity for all. To support the ongoing

recovery of the arts across New York State, the Council on the Arts will award over \$161 million in FY 2026, serving organizations and artists across all 10 state regions. The Council on the Arts further advances New York's creative culture by convening leaders in the field and providing organizational and professional development opportunities and informational resources. opportunities and informational resources. Created by Governor Nelson Rockefeller in 1960 and continued with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, the Council is an agency that is part of the Executive Branch.

For more information on NYSCA, please visit arts.ny.gov, and follow NYSCA's Facebook page, on X @NYSCArts and Instagram @NYSCouncilontheArts.