



NEWS FROM TCA: JANUARY 2024

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With the new year often come resolutions to learn something new, improve something you're already doing, be more active, and make more community connections. In this spirit, we're sharing a grantee story from the Midland Festival Ballet about hosting the Regional Dance America/Southwest conference. Photo: P.W. Dance Photography.

Applications Due Soon for Texas Touring Roster Inclusion

TCA is accepting applications for the 2024-2026 Texas Touring Roster through **January 31, 2024**.

The program is designed to ensure that all Texans have the ability to enjoy work done by outstanding Texas based companies and artists in their own communities. Artists from throughout the state apply to be included on the Texas Touring Roster.

Touring artists offer performances as well as optional services that may include workshops, master classes, lecture demonstrations, arts education components, residencies, or short performances. These artists must have a history of touring and must be willing to travel outside of



their community to do a performance. They are also required to maintain a reasonable fee range. Evaluators with expertise in touring arts evaluate applications to this highly competitive program.

TCA has prepared a wealth of **application resources**, all linked in the [program guidelines](#). We recommend that potential applicants review all these resources. TCA staff will also be offering **live online Q&A sessions** in January. Registration is required.

The next Q&A sessions will be held:

Friday, **January 5** at 10:00 AM Central (register [here](#))

Wednesday, **January 10** at 2:30 PM Central (register [here](#))

Thursday, **January 18** at 11:00 AM Central (register [here](#))

Monday, **January 22** at 2:00 PM Central (register [here](#))

Tuesday, **January 30** at 12:00 noon Central (register [here](#))

Beware of SAM-UEI Scams



If your organization has a SAM UEI (System of Award Management Unique Entity Identifier) issued by the federal government, TCA wants to remind you this service is **100% FREE**. Scammers are sending out convincing looking “official” emails offering to help with SAM UEI renewals for a fee. **Renewals are free**, so any mention of a fee should alert you that the email is a scam. TCA recommends marking those emails as junk, blocking those senders, and deleting those emails. Only organizations that apply directly to a federal agency for funding need to renew their SAM UEI.

ArtsHERE: New Grant Initiative from the National Endowment for the Arts

TCA wants to remind you of this new **national grant opportunity**.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awards thousands of grants each year to provide diverse opportunities for arts participation. However, historically underserved communities with rich and dynamic cultural identities continue to report lower arts participation rates than other groups. To address these disparities and better understand these dynamics, the NEA, in partnership with South Arts and in collaboration with the five other U.S. Regional Arts



Organizations, launched a new grant program, ArtsHERE.

ArtsHERE supports organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to equity within their practices and programming and have undertaken consistent engagement with underserved groups/communities. Grants are for specific projects that will

strengthen the organization's capacity to sustain meaningful community engagement and increase arts participation for underserved groups/communities. Grantees have access to peer learning and technical assistance opportunities designed to share knowledge and build networks. **ArtsHERE will award approximately 95 nonprofit organizations with non-matching grants of \$65,000 to \$130,000.**

As a pilot program, ArtsHERE will be documented and evaluated by the National Endowment for the Arts to better understand the project activities supported and how grantees approached this work.

The deadline to submit a Statement of Interest is **January 19, 2024**. To learn more, review the full guidelines, and submit a Statement of Interest, visit ArtsHERE.org.

Real Places: Texas Historical Commission Conference



TCA is a member of a group of State agencies that work together under a memorandum of understanding to promote tourism. One of our partner agencies, the Texas Historical Commission, is holding a conference soon that will address the needs of museums and other cultural venues. In fact, TCA will participate in a

session about cultural districts and main street programs, and there are several other sessions about using the arts to add more value and understanding to history and Texas places.

The Texas Historical Commission's Real Places 2024 conference will take place both virtually and in person, in Austin, April 3-5. Presented by the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission in partnership with Phoenix I Restoration and Construction, LLC, Real Places is the premier historic preservation and heritage tourism event in the Lone Star State, where anyone interested in protecting our past can work directly with industry leading experts to learn practical, actionable solutions they can apply in their community.

The packed schedule features more than 60 workshops, tours, and sessions; over 100 expert speakers from across Texas and the U.S.; five keynote presentations; and several fun networking events. Recordings will be available to all attendees, whether joining online or in person, so you'll be able to watch the great presentations you missed due to concurrent sessions.

Discounts are available for students and organizations registering multiple people at the same time. Learn more and sign up at realplaces.us.

Upcoming TCA Application Deadlines

TCA has several upcoming application deadlines. As always, the TCA staff is happy to discuss your goals and eligibility to determine which programs are right for you. You may also request that a TCA staff member review your application and provide feedback. Ideally, these requests would be made at least two weeks before the

application deadline.

Grant Program: Arts Respond Project

Arts Respond Project grants provide project assistance grants to nonprofit arts organizations on a short term basis and may include administrative costs directly related to the project. Projects must address one of the following priority areas: economic development, education, health & human services, public safety & criminal justice, or natural resources & agriculture.

Activity dates must be: Between April 1, 2024 and August 31, 2024

Application deadline: Midnight on January 16, 2024

Application form: [Online](#)

Application Limit: Organizations may submit one application for this deadline. Organizations should not submit more than one application addressing the same priority area per fiscal year.

Resources: [Grant guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

Designation Program: Cultural District Designation

This program designates special zones in cities and Texas communities that harness the power of cultural resources to stimulate economic development and community vitality.

Application deadline: Letter of Intent to apply due January 31; application due June 15

Application form: On [Cultural Districts Program page](#)

Resources: [Program guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

Designation Program: Touring Roster Inclusion

Texas based nonprofits, individuals, universities, and unincorporated/for profit groups providing arts performances apply to be included on the 2024 2026 Texas Touring Roster. See separate article in this newsletter.

Application deadline: January 31, 2024

Application form: On [Submittable](#)

Resources: [Program guidelines](#), [FAQ](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

Grant Program: Arts Respond Performance Support

This program provides professional artist fees to Texas nonprofits, schools, colleges, and units of government for hiring an artist from the [Texas Touring Roster](#) to do a performance. These applications are funded based on a percentage of contracted fees.

Activity dates must start: Between March 15, 2024 and June 14, 2024

Application deadline: Midnight on February 1, 2024

Application form: [Online](#)

Resources: [Grant guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#), [FAQ](#)

Support Texas Arts with the *State of the Arts* License Plate



TCA's new black and silver *State of the Arts* minimalist design license plate is shipping and is available to order at <https://www.myplates.com/go/arts>.

This plate design can go on a passenger car, motorcycle, trailer, or private bus (attention, Texas bands!). TCA will receive a portion of the sales

of the plate. Note that this plate is part of MyPlates' "Lone Star Series," but only the *State of the Arts* plate supports TCA. There is a price break for those ordering their plate for multiple years. Make a long term commitment to the arts!

Apply to Be a TCA Grant Evaluator

Each year, TCA invites roughly 200 Texans to serve as peer reviewers of the grant applications we receive. We are grateful to these members of our arts field who donate their time and knowledge to our panel review process and assess the quality of grant applications. The peer review process is central to the Commission's efforts to maintain an accountable, accessible awards system for the State of Texas.

If you would like insight into the grant evaluation process, we invite you to nominate yourself to serve on a panel. TCA is not able to pay for this work, but it will allow you to gain experience as a grant evaluator, see how other organizations present their programs and challenges, and ensure that TCA grant decisions can be made—we really can't do this without you. Nominations are accepted year round and can be made [here](#).

Panels can be held online or in person in Austin. TCA reimburses for travel and hotel costs for in person meetings. For online panels, TCA assigns reviewers no more than 25 grant applications to help keep the workload reasonable. **Evaluators can also be grant applicants**—TCA excludes evaluators from reviewing and scoring an application that they submitted or have any other conflict of interest with.

Grantee Spotlight: Dance Festival in Midland Brings Communities Together



Every fall, TCA staff spend many, many hours reviewing report forms that grantees submit as they close out their grants. These reports share arts organizations' trials and tribulations, challenges and solutions. Many of these stories will resonate with others across our field, so we're sharing some of them through grantee spotlights.

Since 1963, Regional Dance America/Southwest (RDA/SW), one of five regional associations in the United States composed of pre professional nonprofit dance companies, groups, and guilds in the United States, has provided support for dance companies in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. In 2023, the **Midland Festival Ballet (MFB)** hosted RDA/SW's annual dance festival, inviting all Southwest member companies to Midland for three days of dance classes taught by master faculty and three nights of performances. To bring the event to life, MFB partnered with local vendors including caterers, event rental and decor businesses, the West Texas Symphony, a piano store, and more. The Ballet was proud to promote so many local businesses and products during the event, and it gave the organization a new level of exposure within the community itself.

The festival was a huge success, with attendees flooding into downtown Midland. Under MFB's care, the conference brought in visiting RDA/SW company directors and an additional twenty five instructors, dance musicians, guest artists, choreographers, and notable dance professionals from outside the community. The festival also became the first RDA/SW festival to offer an African Dance class and to have live orchestral accompaniment at a performance.

Particularly exciting was the number of Midland Festival Ballet alumni who re engaged with the organization to volunteer for the festival. Former MFB dancers served as volunteer leaders, parents of youth dance students donated hours of their time to various volunteer committees, and one alum even served as a faculty member for the festival. As MFB enters its 30th anniversary season, the organization will not forget the experience of bringing together so many members of the community through this festival.

TCA is proud to be able to support Midland Festival Ballet and so many other wonderful organizations across the state who bring the arts to our fellow Texans.

Photo: P.W. Dance Photography

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