

Commission's Grant Application Form

Shelby County Board of Commissioners

GRANT APPLICATION

Legal Name of the Organization:	Blues City Cultural Center
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EIN:	58-1396725
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Street Address of Organization	314 A. W, Willis
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Office Phone:	901-292-2397
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E-mail	dfbluescity@yahoo.com
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

First Name	Levi
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Last Name	Frazier Jr.
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GENERAL CONTACT FOR THIS REQUEST(if other than Executive Director)

First Name	Deborah
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Last Name	Frazier
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Title:	Project Director
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DESCRIPTION OF GRANT REQUEST

Program/Project Area:	Orange Mound
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Amount Requested	\$20,000
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Total Organizational budget (for current year):	\$248,200
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Total Project/Program Budget: \$105,800

Dates covered by this budget: July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2016

Project/Program Name: This is Orange Mound and If You Can't Stand the Heat

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Please summarize in a short paragraph the purpose of your agency. Briefly explain why your agency is requesting this grant, what outcomes you hope to achieve, and how you will spend the funds if a grant is made.

Founded by Deborah and Levi Frazier Jr, Blues City Cultural Center is a non-profit performing and visual arts organization. For over 35 years, BCCC has used the stage and other venues as platforms to enlighten, empower and transform the lives of Shelby County residents. BCCC believes the foundation for change can be found in artistic endeavors that ultimately help people discover new ways of engagement, expression and self-determination. Our programs resonate across cultures and generations by fostering dialogue, understanding and acceptance. Whether our work increases human capacity, explores issues of homelessness and poverty, facilitates conflict resolution, or provides opportunities for creative expression, it celebrates the human spirit and adds voice to our shared experiences and common humanity. BCCC is requesting funding for two projects in Orange Mound (District 10). This Is Orange Mound (project 1) engages elders and youth in developing a relatable, authentic neighborhood tour that animates significant spaces and places in the neighborhood. This project uses the performing and visual arts to extend upon tourism courses at Melrose High School and the Historic Landmarks Driving Tour developed by Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation. Presently, Melrose High School is one of the only schools in the Shelby County System that provides courses in tourism. When Tennessee Tourism Commissioner Kevin Triplett spoke with Melrose youth regarding the importance of telling their own stories, he encouraged them to use their narratives to add value to heritage and local tourism. This Is Orange Mound aligns with the school's endeavor to integrate place-based assets and cultural heritage within its tourism courses. Further, it blends arts and tourism while fostering a creative economy. Youth, who will be paid a stipend, assume roles found in the arts and tourism industries: performing artists, docents,

researchers, writers and visual artists. In assuming these roles, they acquire marketable skills while increasing an understanding of the importance of stewardship in sustaining the heritage and history of their neighborhood. This is Orange Mound begins July 2016 and ends June 2017. It includes a neighborhood tour, creative arts and tourism workshops, and a city-wide youth summit on tourism. The funds will be used to pay youth stipends, operational expenses and institutionalization of neighborhood-based tourism within Orange Mound. The current partners in this project include Melrose High School, Melrose Center for Cultural Enrichment, Heritage Tours and Memphis Heritage. If You Can't Stand the Heat (project 2) uses the arts to engage age 50+ Orange Mound residents in health issues that disproportionately impact African American populations, particularly hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol and heart disease. In addition to addressing these issues, the role of caregivers is integrated throughout the project since family members or friends frequently provide supportive care. Staged as a live soap opera with neighborhood residents as leading characters, If You Can't Stand the Heat is a six-month serial whose storylines focus on a typical African American family and the manners in which they confront health issues. Using the kitchen (specifically the kitchen table) as the center for family discussions, most serial episodes will correlate with national health campaigns (e.g. November – National Caregiver Month, February – American Heart Month, and March – Diabetes Awareness Month). As with traditional soap operas, each serial ends with a cliffhanger to ensure that audiences will return to see how characters resolve a particular situation or dilemma. Audiences will be instructed on how to use smartphones and other technologies keep abreast of health issues and provide commentary on each episode. At the conclusion of each episode, health care professionals will lead an audience (TalkBack) discussion related to the health issue presented in the serial. To engage audiences between episodes, they will receive a health passport whereby they can record steps they have taken to improve their health. The passport also serves as documentation for attendance and engagement. To extend If You Can't Stand the Heat beyond the live audience, episodes will be videotaped for viewing on the BCCC youtube channel and the lobby/waiting areas of Christ Community Health Services and the Orange Mound Community Services Center. The final episode serves as the culminating activity for the

project. Residents who have attended all six performances and/or used their passport as a gateway to good health will be recognized and receive a gift/prize. If You Can't Stand the Heat begins in August 2016 and concludes in May 2017. The current partners include AARP, Christ Community Health Center, FitNation and Orange Mound Services Center Drama Ensemble.

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Narrative - Organization

Current programs and accomplishments. Please emphasize the achievements of the recent past.

BCCC has impacted thousands of underserved populations throughout the Memphis area. Within the 2015-2016 fiscal year, it reached nearly 12,000 individuals. Over 95% were African Americans with low-to-moderate incomes or resided in communities with limited resources and access to the arts. Through Seek-To-Serve, a servant leadership program, grassroots leaders ages 50+, acquire practical skill-based training and mentoring that can lead to improvements within their lives and communities. They wrote Don't Count Me Out, a collection of poignant stories about their lives. In writing the book, they discovered and used their voices to articulate often hidden narratives that validated their importance to the Memphis community. To further validate the importance of these stories and present them in a public forum, BCCC dramatized the book into a theatre performance presented during the 2016 Neighborhood USA National Conference. In its commitment to provide quality programming to youth, BCCC sponsored a summer camp in 2015 that integrated the arts with science, technology, and life skills. Youth collaborated with professional artists to create artistic works in theatre, creative writing, dance, music and visual art. A parent commented: "I'm very pleased with the Blues City Cultural Center. My daughter came home and had so [many] great things to talk about. I'm grateful and would like to thank everyone that took [part] in putting a smile on not just my daughter face but on mine as well." Through Sew Much Love, women who reside in homeless shelters in Uptown sew love, make art, and build community. Linda, who was physically abused in three marriages, found the shelter depressing. Yet, when she came to Sew Much Love, the joy, the brightness of the day comes out, the happiness comes out" Diane created a doll in the image of the Stature of Liberty which traditionally symbolizes

freedom and equality. For her, the tarnished green tones of the stature depict capitalism and money. In her artistic interpretation, Lady Liberty is stone grey signifying gloom and dismal circumstances while the chains about her feet represent the multitudes of discarded individuals. While Diane's art made a strong political statement about disenfranchisement, others were more personal. Terry whose life has encompassed abuse, rape and addiction made religious crosses from tree branches. Her life has "never been on track," Now, she simply wants to "get her life back." Sew Much Love is a transformative process that encourages women to see beyond their hardships while finding joy in discovering who they really are and what they can accomplish. As a social enterprise, it provides homeless women with transitional income from the sale of their artworks. To commemorate the 125th Anniversary of Orange Mound, BCCC collaborated with residents to stage two original theatrical productions recounting the rich cultural heritage of the neighborhood. Audiences could relate to the familiar stories of Park Avenue when it was known as "The Drag," live entertainment at the Handy Theater, and the Golden Wildcats of Melrose High School. Like an unfolding history lesson, the productions led audiences on a reminiscent journey of the triumphs, challenges and possibilities for a vibrant, caring community. Our motto—Arts for a Better Way of Life—is intrinsic in our work. Whether we assist youth address challenges that can impact their future, help 50+ populations find their voices, or support homeless women in charting new paths, BCCC strengthens and enriches lives and communities through the arts.

Numbers of paid full-time staff: 1

Number of paid part-time staff: 25

Number of volunteers: 60

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Narrative - Funding Request

Please describe the program/project for which you seek funding	This Is Orange Mound is designed to develop an authentic neighborhood tour based on cultural assets deemed significant by elders and youth in Orange Mound. While it supports the
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and include how it will benefit the general welfare of residents in Shelby County, TN.

efforts of Melrose High School to integrate place-based assets and heritage within its tourism coursework, it positions neighborhood youth as stewards in sustaining the cultural heritage of Orange Mound. Additionally, the city-wide Youth Summit on Tourism will engage youth throughout Memphis and Shelby County in meaningful 21st century learning applications that foster stewardship, preservation, heritage and tourism within their respective communities and neighborhoods. If You Can't Stand the Heat addresses common health conditions that disproportionately affect 50+ African American populations. The Memphis and Shelby County Health Department estimates that 35% of the 50+ population in Orange Mound have medical conditions related to high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease. Both This Is Orange Mound and If You Can't Stand the Heat use the arts as a platform to engage residents in making positive changes within their lives and neighborhood. Further, these projects can serve as models for other Memphis and Shelby County neighborhoods in implementing resident-driven initiatives that build human capacity, promote community engagement, and strengthen civic infrastructure.

General Operating Support

If applying for general operating support, briefly describe how this grant will be used.

N/A

Project Support

Please explain the specific project including a statement of its primary purpose and the need or problem that you are seeking to address.

The primary purpose of This Is Orange Mound is to engage youth, elders and other stakeholders in creating authentic narratives about their neighborhood that can translate into local tourism while promoting a creative economy. This project addresses the need for additional cultural resources in Orange Mound and also fulfills a need to unite youth/elder voices in telling relatable stories about the community. The primary purpose of If You Can't Stand the Heat is to use the arts as an instrument to influence the health decisions and conditions of 50+ populations in Orange Mound, particularly those who face problems related to high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease. Further, it addresses the roles of caregivers. The AARP 2015 Livable Community Survey found that 43% of 50+ populations in Orange Mound are caregivers for an adult family member.

How does the project contribute to your organization's overall mission?

Our overall mission is provide the performing and visual arts to underserved, marginalized populations. Both This Is Orange Mound and If You Can't Stand the Heat address the creative needs of individuals who are commonly excluded or unnoticed by mainstream arts organizations. Within Orange Mound, there are limited resources and opportunities for the arts. While BCCC values residents as untapped audiences, we recognize that many have potential artistic talents that would place them center-stage in telling their own stories. Therefore, the majority of our efforts result in original performing and visual artworks that capture intergenerational voices and life.

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Narrative - Evaluation

Please explain how you will measure the effectiveness of your activities. Describe your criteria for a successful program and the results you expect to have achieved by the end of the funding period.

BCCC utilizes a professional evaluator with expertise in designing culturally-relevant, human-centered data collection instruments to measure the effectiveness of its programs. The evaluation process will use a mixed-methods approach that combined qualitative and quantitative methodologies to collect dependable and descriptive data. The data collection instruments included surveys, interviews, a discussion circle (focus group), observations and an examination of project-related documents. A triangulation of these methodologies and instruments ensured validity and reliability while producing a holistic analysis of the project. The anticipated outcomes of This Is Orange Mound include the development of a relatable, authentic neighborhood tour, increased awareness among youth regarding their roles in safeguarding and protecting cultural heritage assets within their respective communities, and an increased understanding of the relationship between arts and creative economies. The anticipated outcomes of If You Can't Stand the Heat include changes in health behaviors among 50+ African American populations in Orange Mound, increased participation in physical activities that can lead to improved health conditions, and an increased understanding of the relationship between lifestyles, aging and health. BCCC estimates that these projects can collectively reach 2,500 residents and other stakeholders.

Attachments:

If your request is under \$25,000 please attach the following:

1. Copy of the entity's 501 (c) 3 certificate for charitable organizations or 501 (c) 4 certificate for civic organizations

2. Most recent IRS Form 990 or Financial Statements (balance sheet and income statement) as of the most recent fiscal year end certified by Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer of the entity.

3. Complete Budget for grant request

If your request is \$25,000 or more please attach the following:

1. Copy of the entity's 501 (c) 3 certificate for charitable organizations or 501 (c) 4 certificate for civic organizations

2. Copy of an annual audit as of a date within 18 months of the start of the current fiscal year.

3. Complete Budget for grant request

File 1 [irs 1980.pdf](#)

File 2 [BluesCenterCulturalCenterInc11.10.15 \(1\).pdf](#)

File 3 [PROJECT BUDGET - County Commission 2017 2.pdf](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Read, and if you agree to the provisions, sign the following:

The information provided has been submitted in good faith and as completely as our records and recollections permit.

I understand that the information provided in this application shall be open to inspection upon filing with the office of the Shelby County Board of Commissioners.

Signature: Deborah Frazier

Printed Name: Deborah Frazier

Date 8/15/2016
