

On Wisdom and Vision:

Humanities Organizations in Illinois During COVID-19



MARCH 2021



On wisdom and vision: humanities organizations in Illinois during COVID-19

Overview

The 177 nonprofit public humanities grantee partners featured in *On Wisdom and Vision: Humanities Organizations in Illinois During COVID-19*, have been profoundly impacted by COVID-19 operationally and programmatically. This group lost an estimated \$9,742,000 in revenue in 2020 and 14% report fearing permanent closure. These organizations suffered significant audience loss, reaching 1,700,000 fewer people than they originally anticipated serving during 2020.

At this historic moment – when Illinois is reeling from the impacts of the pandemic, a racial reckoning, and economic devastation – the role of public humanities organizations is both urgent and profound.

Analysis of Illinois Humanities’

COVID-19 relief grantmaking of \$710,000, funded primarily by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the federal CARES Act, to 177 nonprofit public humanities organizations across the state, provides a snapshot of the impacts of COVID-19 and a window onto the ways in which organizations are mitigating the effects of the pandemic within their communities and across the state.

Report findings describe a public humanities ecosystem populated by diverse organizations working locally in ways that have heightened relevance during – and post – pandemic. Many grantee partners are operating in areas in which households struggle to make ends meet, and in which COVID-19 has had a devastating (and disproportionate) impact. Given the role these organizations are playing – and in some

cases have played for more than a century – there is a clear need to better support this sector, bring more visibility to its work and impact, and to invest in these organizations as community anchors which foster economic opportunity and build community resilience.

About public humanities organizations in Illinois

Humanities are necessary for democracy and for enabling us to imagine what we want in our society. Research shows public humanities organizations provide the kinds of experiences which enable participants to be “more likely to engage in civic life, and more likely to hold aspirations for improving the common good.”¹ Furthermore, public humanities organizations drive significant revenue, particularly in Illinois.

Every county in Illinois has a

humanities organization and cultural assets; many are invisible to the funding and policy community. Rural communities, in particular, have historically received less visibility and funding in relation to their metro peers².

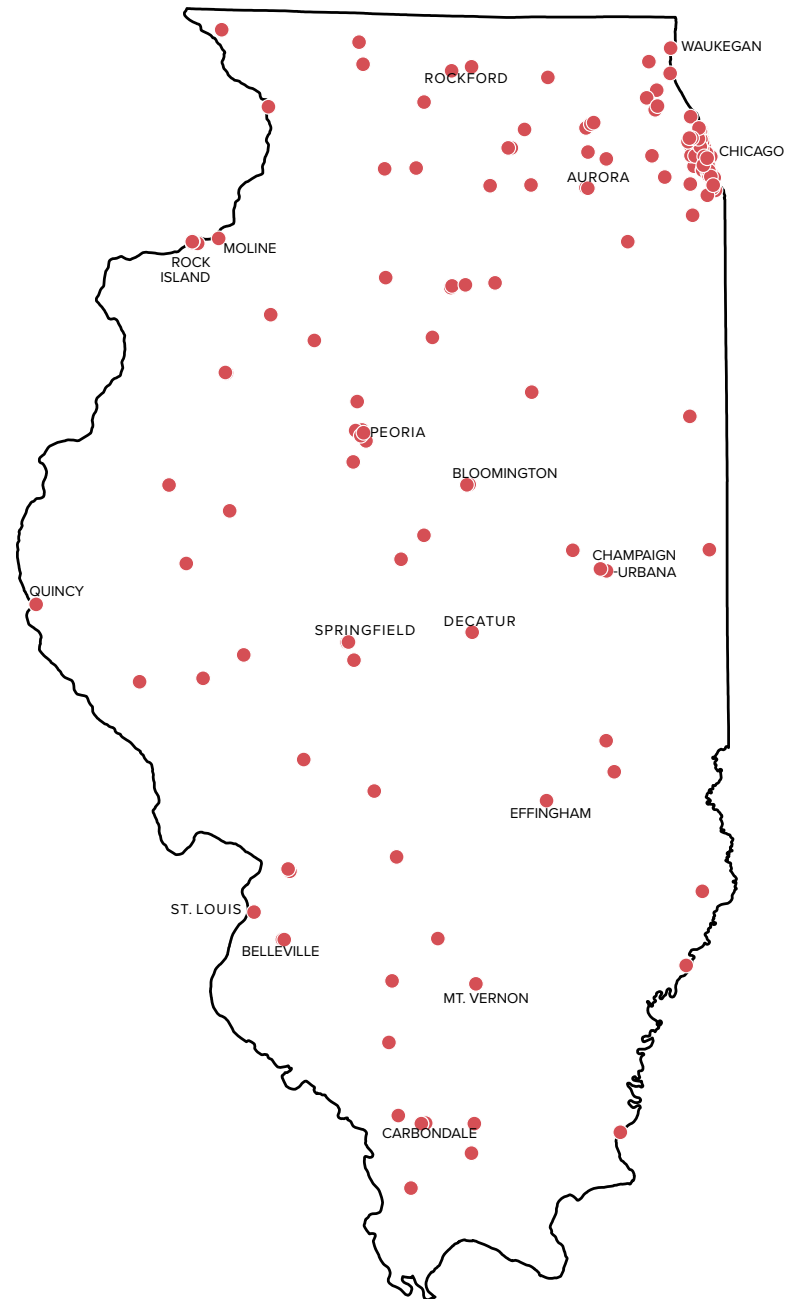
COVID-19 relief funding for the humanities in Illinois

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) received \$75 million in supplemental funding to assist cultural institutions and humanists affected by COVID-19 as part of the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act economic stabilization plan; 40% of the appropriation (\$30 million) was directed to the 56 state and jurisdictional councils, based upon NEH's standard population formula. As the state affiliate for the NEH, Illinois Humanities was tasked with distributing CARES Act relief funds and supplemented these dollars with money repurposed from general operations and dollars raised from private donors specifically for COVID-19 relief.

Illinois Humanities COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grants were available in three rounds between April and June, 2020. Organizations with budgets of up to \$1.5 million were eligible to apply for multiple grants.

- General Operating Grants awarded \$520,000 to 154 organizations for general operations including rent, payroll, utilities, etc;
- Program Innovation and Adaptation Grants totaling \$100,000 enabled 20 organizations to innovate, adapt, and increase access to their programming; and
- Community Resilience grants awarded \$90,000 to 15 organizations to make

Figure 1: Map of 177 Illinois Humanities grantee partners



The 177 grant organizations are located throughout Illinois. Many are found in population centers such as Chicago, Rockford, and Peoria. Others are in small and rural communities such as Shawneetown, Greenup, Rushville, Ipava, Utica, Bishop Hill, and Savanna.

community experiences during the pandemic visible and highlight local resiliency.

Relief grants served as singular opportunities for many organizations that were unable or ineligible to apply for other sources of federal, state or private philanthropic support due to size, location, or capacity.

“In the middle of April, we were notified we received the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grant,” said Erin Eveland, executive director of The HUB - Arts and Cultural Center, in Rushville.

“The knowledge that we had some relief funds coming gave us the ability to move out of survival mode and become creative again.”

“Because of the funds... we were able to focus on what our community needed and how we could best serve them.”

Distribution of grant funds

Illinois Humanities COVID-19 relief grant funding patterns

follow the state’s population distribution. Grantee partners from Cook County received the largest proportion of grant dollars. However, when analyzed against funding-per-resident, counties with the largest dollars-per-resident figures tended to be less-densely populated counties (i.e. counties with fewer than 10,000 residents) such as Scott, Gallatin, Stark, Putnam, and Schuyler counties.

The vast majority of grantee partners have budgets well under the eligibility requirements of the Illinois Humanities COVID-19 relief funds: half of the grantee partners have annual budgets of less than \$100,000 and 82% have annual budgets of less than a half a million dollars. Given that COVID-19 relief grants ranged from \$2,500 to \$7,500, it is notable that for two out of three recipients, grant awards represented more than 5% of their annual budgets; thirty two organizations received total grant dollars representing more than 10% of their annual budgets and 10 organizations received grants representing more than a quarter of their entire annual budget. These relatively “small” dollars had a significant impact.

Grantee partner contexts

Report analysis found that

when public humanities organizations in Illinois are mapped against demographic, geographic, and pandemic contexts, it becomes clear that humanities organizations are situated in communities that were under significant economic duress *prior* to the pandemic, and more than a third of grantees are located in places that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Two thirds of the 177 grantees are located in zip codes where more than 35% of households struggle to afford basic needs and 29% are located in communities where the majority of households are experiencing poverty. Given the preponderance of grantee partners located in zip codes experiencing high levels of poverty, it may not be surprising that 38% of grantees are located in zip codes with more COVID-19 cases than the statewide average.

Grantee partner experiences

Grantee partners undertook activities that support stronger and more equitable communities including hiring humanists and artists, creating jobs, offering trainings, documenting and amplifying cultural identity and community narratives, reframing their roles in terms of why their missions matter, engaging communities in making, storytelling, and

creative expression, and using spaces in new ways.

By being extremely flexible, adaptable, and promoting inclusivity, grantees pivoted in-person programs to new media and modes of service, relieved isolation and enlivened communities, and resisted layoffs and staff reductions. They documented and amplified cultural identity and community narratives, engaged communities in creating, storytelling and creative expression and, in some cases, found new ways to understand why their work – and their missions – matter.

“We believe that these are historic times, our museum has a responsibility in helping our community members heal from the social disruption and stay connected to one another,”

said Sue Scott, director of the Western Illinois Museum, located in Macomb.

Illinois Humanities' COVID-19 relief grantee partners' experiences align with what we know about how humanities organizations respond during times of crisis. Grantee partners are serving as community anchors for trusted information, for mitigating social isolation, for enabling people to make and create objects and narratives that help them to process loss, trauma, and joy. They are also – while under significant duress – finding ways to incorporate new technologies and new modes for delivering on their missions.

Experiences described by grantee partners strongly align with national and international

research about the role and experiences of public humanities organizations during COVID-19 specifically, and in times of severe crises in general.³ Illinois public humanities organizations – like their national peers:

- Are looking for ways to work differently and in less isolation;
- Are excited about, and anticipate, opportunities for organizational transformation – particularly in terms of new modes of engagement and new audiences;
- Expect and want to give more attention to equity and inclusion;
- Have a strong desire to network and connect with peers through meet ups, trainings, and peer-skill-shares; and
- Believe there is real value in developing a shared language and understanding of the overall landscape of humanities organizations.

Recommendations

Illinois Humanities is working to understand and learn from the intensive experience of this past year. The recommendations that follow are rooted in the reported experiences of grantee partners, research about the role of public humanities organizations in fostering social cohesion, well-being and community resilience, and analysis of grantee partners' geographic, demographic, and pandemic contexts.

For Illinois Humanities

Our recommendations for ourselves at this time include:

- Increase our capacity to support peer-to-peer learning, technical assistance, and partnership infrastructure statewide;
- Look at the ways in which an equity lens, paired with data, can help inform grantmaking priorities; and
- Evaluate the possibility of creating and maintaining a public directory of Illinois humanities organizations to bolster a community of practice and to help cross-sector stakeholders connect with local and statewide organizations.

For funders

- Increase capacity to support peer-to-peer learning, technical assistance, and support partnership infrastructure across our grantee partners and statewide partners;
- Look at the ways in which an equity lens, paired with data, can help inform grantmaking priorities;
- Invest in strengthening organizations' abilities to reflect local interests and identities and to participate in communities of practice and professional networks;
- Invest in organizations' ability to create, curate, and leverage digital and virtual content;
- Consider what proportion of dollars support organizations serving rural communities; and
- Of special note: relatively small grants (\$2,500-\$7,500) can have transformative impacts for small organizations, especially when they are in areas overlooked or underfunded by philanthropy traditionally.

For policy makers

- Include representatives from public humanities organizations in the development and implementation of public health and community development strategies;
- Promote, deploy, network, and hire humanists in recovery planning at the local, regional, and statewide level;
- Quantify and communicate regularly about the economic impact of public humanities organizations, particularly from rural areas; and
- Integrate and include humanities organizations in public/private partnerships involving philanthropy and private investors.

Conclusion

Recipients of COVID-19 relief grants are providing space, structure, and programming necessary to foster social cohesion. They enable people to become closer to one another, develop a better understanding of the places in which they live, and to create and share narratives about their experiences. Public humanities organizations have something substantial to offer during this pandemic and, as well, throughout the course of our recovery.

Overlooking this sector runs the risk of both losing community anchors most committed to preserving the artifacts, ephemera, and memory of Illinois' history and identity, as well as failing to capitalize on an ecosystem ripe to contribute to the state's ability to repair and heal the triple pandemics of COVID-19, racial reckoning, and disinvestment across rural and urban communities.

Attempts to “build back better” without these organizations at the table may leave Illinois bereft of the critical elements we need required to carry us into our post-COVID-19 state.

Illinois Humanities’ COVID-19 relief grants were made possible by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the federal CARES Act and the generosity of individual donors who contributed during Illinois Humanities’ 2020 Public Humanities Awards.

1 Helicon Collaborative, “Creative Placemaking Field Scan #4: Environment and Energy; Farther, Faster, Together: How Arts and Culture Can Accelerate Environmental Progress” ArtPlace America, (February 2018), <https://heliconcollab.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Farther-Faster-Together-1.pdf>.

2 Robert Atkins, Sarah Allred & Daniel Hart, “Philanthropy’s Rural Blind Spot,” Stanford Social Innovation Review (Spring 2021), https://ssir.org/articles/entry/philanthropys_rural_blind_spot?utm_source=Enews&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=SSIR_Now.

3 See AEA Consulting, “Arts Organizations’ Early Response to COVID-19 Uncertainty: Insights from the Field,” Wallace Foundation, (October 2020).

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Full report is available at ilhumanities.org/covid19report



About Illinois Humanities

Illinois Humanities, the Illinois affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, is a statewide nonprofit organization that activates the humanities through free public programs, grants, and educational opportunities that foster reflection, spark conversation, build community, and strengthen civic engagement. We provide free, high-quality humanities experiences throughout Illinois, particularly for communities of color, individuals living on low incomes, counties and towns in rural areas, small arts and cultural organizations, and communities highly impacted by mass incarceration. Learn more at ilhumanities.org and on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) @ILHumanities.

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MARCH 2021

Letter from the Executive Director & Board Chair

In the past year, we have witnessed the inequities of our society writ large in the devastating impacts of COVID-19. And we have known for some time that social isolation enables polarization and disunion.

But we also know the power public spaces have to mitigate social isolation and to bolster well-being. We appreciate that coffee shops, bookstores, and hair salons can serve as the proverbial “hearts” of a community. Libraries function as “palaces for the people.” Individuals, responding to disasters create “paradises in

hell.” It does not require a far stretch of the imagination to consider the possibility that public humanities organizations which, by design, foster community, inspire reflection and provide context, may have something substantial to offer during this pandemic and, as well, throughout the course of our recovery. In fact, it may be that attempts to “build back better” without these organizations at the table will deprive us of the very materials necessary to carry us into our post-COVID-19 state.

In the report that follows, we encourage readers to

consider not only the creativity and resourcefulness Illinois humanities organizations have brought in their responses to COVID-19, but also the ways in which they uniquely equip Illinois to forge a better future for us all.

Gabrielle Lyon,
Executive Director



Mae Hong,
Board Chair



12	CHAPTER 1: On wisdom and vision <i>By Gabrielle Lyon</i>
18	CHAPTER 2: In a year of duress, local humanities groups rise to meet the occasion <i>By Mark Hallett</i>
36	CHAPTER 3: The story the numbers tell <i>By Gabrielle Lyon</i>
48	CHAPTER 4: From community, resilience
60	CHAPTER 5: COVID-19 and the humanities: arches and keystones <i>By Gabrielle Lyon, Mark Hallett, and Jenn Yoo</i>
66	Directory
84	Appendices Grantee partner list Illinois Humanities' approach to grantmaking Photo credits Endnotes Bibliography

EXHAUST





CHAPTER 1

On wisdom and vision

What if paradise flashed up among us from time to time – at the worst of times? What if we glimpsed it in the jaws of hell? These flashes give us... a glimpse of who else we ourselves may be and what else our society could become.

– Rebecca Solnit, *A Paradise Built in Hell*

The arts and the humanities belong to all the people of the United States... An advanced civilization must not limit its efforts to science and technology alone, but must give full value and support to the other great branches of scholarly and cultural activity in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present, and a better view of the future... Democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens...

– National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-209)

Introduction

As of March 2, 2021, there have been 1,189,416 total confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Illinois and 20,583 people have died from the virus. The virulently disproportionate impact of the virus on Black communities and communities of color across the state has highlighted racial health disparities into stark relief.

The 177 nonprofit public humanities grantee partners featured in *On Wisdom and Vision: Humanities Organizations in Illinois During COVID-19*, have been profoundly impacted by COVID-19 operationally and programmatically. This group lost an estimated \$9,742,000 in revenue in 2020 and 14% report fearing permanent closure. These organizations suffered significant audience loss, reaching 1,700,000 fewer people than they originally anticipated serving during 2020. At this historic moment - when Illinois is reeling from the impacts of the pandemic, a racial reckoning, and economic devastation - the role of public humanities organizations is both urgent and profound.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) was established in 1965 as sustenance for a democracy “that demands wisdom and vision in its citizens.” Public humanities give participants the opportunity to think about what things mean – and why they’re significant – with other people. The ethical thinking, the social change possibilities, and the variety of perspectives that emerge enable the wisdom and vision that underpin the mechanics of democracy. Cultural traditions, artistic and humanistic inquiry, and community narratives provide the threads required to strengthen civic fabric.

Illinois Humanities' crisis-relief grantmaking of \$710,000 (funded primarily by federal CARES

Act funding) to 177 organizations across the state provides both a snapshot of the ways in which humanities organizations have been impacted by COVID-19 as well as a window into the ways in which these organizations mitigate the effects of the pandemic within their communities and across the state.

By being extremely flexible and adaptable, and promoting inclusivity, grantee partners pivoted in-person programs to new media and modes of service, relieved isolation and enlivened communities, and resisted layoffs and staff reductions. They also documented and amplified cultural identity and community narratives, engaged communities in storytelling and creative expression and, in some cases, found new ways to understand why their work – and their missions – matter.

Who this report is for

The goal of this report is to render the presence, contribution, and impact of Illinois humanities organizations more visible, and to illuminate the abilities of these organizations to increase community resilience, well-being, and equity.

This report is developed with cross-sector stakeholders in mind, namely:

- nonprofit humanities and cultural organizations interested in understanding how their work fits into a broader ecosystem within Illinois
- fundors and philanthropists who are weighing the ways in which investments in the humanities, arts, and culture intersect and are impactful
- policy makers and planners involved in developing approaches to enable strong, equitable recovery from the pandemic

- researchers⁴, for whom questions about the juxtaposition of the pandemic with humanities, arts and culture organizations are relevant and urgent

What are the humanities and why do public humanities matter?

Encyclopedia Britannica defines the humanities as “branches of knowledge that concern themselves with human beings and their culture or with analytic and critical methods of inquiry derived from an appreciation of human values and of the unique ability of the human spirit to express itself.”

The humanities are the examination of what it means to be human through the interpretation and discussion of all forms of thought and expression.

Humanities disciplines include history, literature, language, ethics, anthropology and archaeology, folklore, human geography, law, politics, religion, philosophy, and the interpretation of the arts.

How do public humanities manifest in our day-to-day lives? Adults reading for pleasure find an improved sense of community and cultural understanding. Tourists travel to historical sites and monuments for important family and personal trips. Viewing and talking about art, artifacts and monuments fosters observation skills and the opportunity for people to connect with history, culture, and each other. Understanding the past offers avenues for people to make sense of contemporary issues and events as complex, multifaceted and ever-changing. Persuasive written and oral communication, creative problem solving,

teamwork, decision making, and critical analysis are skills developed by the humanities and actively sought by employers. Public humanities spaces provide structure for gathering and meaning-making. Public humanities programs, in particular, create opportunities for citizens to think about why things matter, provide tools for conversation, and allow processes for giving and receiving feedback.⁵

There is a close connection between experiences with the humanities and civic engagement. Because public humanities emphasize curiosity, questioning, and dialogue, they offer a mode of inquiry and conversation that enables participants to engage, support, or challenge the ideals, beliefs, tensions, and prejudices of the communities in which they live.

“[Humanities] are about understanding how different and even opposed avenues may converge towards single common results, and this is precisely the issue currently at stake in the planet: how can different interests, when considered from the point of view of economy or society, converge?”⁶

Humanities organizations contend against social isolation

To ensure the safety of communities due to COVID-19, it was necessary to cancel events and festivals and to close museums and heritage sites. While necessary, these actions erode

social cohesion and reinforce isolation. Isolation obstructs the kinds of gathering and exchange required for civic engagement.

“Social exclusion” and “social isolation” occur when there is a lack of access to the kinds of opportunities, connections, and resources available to the majority.⁷ Research into the disparate community impact of the heatwave of 1995 in Chicago (which led to the deaths of more than 700 people) exposed that even within neighborhoods with similar racial and economic demographics, “shoddy social infrastructure discouraged interaction and impeded mutual support.”⁸ Humanities organizations, through local and place-based programs, help mitigate social isolation by illuminating lived experiences of those who have been unseen, unheard, or not understood by neighbors or society.

Humanities organizations foster public health

Beyond building social cohesion, public health research into the effects of engagement in cultural and arts activities demonstrates enhanced immune responses, a sense of well-being, increased community capacity, and increased abilities to communicate within and across communities and mobilize social change. Humanities organizations are well-versed in addressing some of the biggest challenges currently facing public health: creating social connection and communicating across differences during a pandemic. In some cases, these organizations are also supporting the transformation of social movements and culture change. When organizations provide access to the humanities they are, by correlation, in a position to help individuals cope with distress and support well-being during recovery.

Developed pre-COVID-19, “*Creating Healthy Communities Through Cross-Sector*

Collaboration,” presents a case for how collaboration between public health, arts and culture, and community development sectors is critical to addressing the issues and conditions that limit health in America. The work calls for “increased recognition of community assets such as knowledge, resilience, power, art, culture and lived experience,” asserting “community knowledge and community assets must be placed at the center of advancing health and health equity.”⁹

The humanities and crises

Communities with higher social infrastructure are more resilient, recover faster, and are better able to secure necessary resources. In 2018, the World Bank Group, evaluating the impact of cultural organizations in times of disaster and crises around the globe, called for “a culture-based approach for city reconstruction and recovery in post-crisis situations.”¹⁰ Although COVID-19 is a first-of-its-kind experience in this century in Illinois, the role of humanities organizations in aiding in resilience and recovery from natural disasters and public health emergencies around the world offers important trends to learn from.

In times of crisis, humanities organizations provide:

- Social cohesion, which is critical to ‘bouncing back’
- A shared sense of unity and identity
- Well-being through social engagement, enjoyment, and meaning-making
- Modes and media that support conversations about individual and group behavior, including behaviors that impact public health

- Inclusive dialogue that can incorporate diverse cultural expressions and cultural heritage
- A sense of ownership during conversations about recovery

Humanities organizations generate revenue

Contrary to a general assumption that nonprofit humanities organizations are “needy charities,” humanities organizations are not cost centers in the state’s economy. The opposite is true: decades of economic data at the local, state and national level show that the arts and culture sector is a major contributor to the economy. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reported in 2017 that arts and cultural production accounts for \$30,348,386,960 and 3.7% of the Illinois economy, contributing 224,102 jobs.¹¹

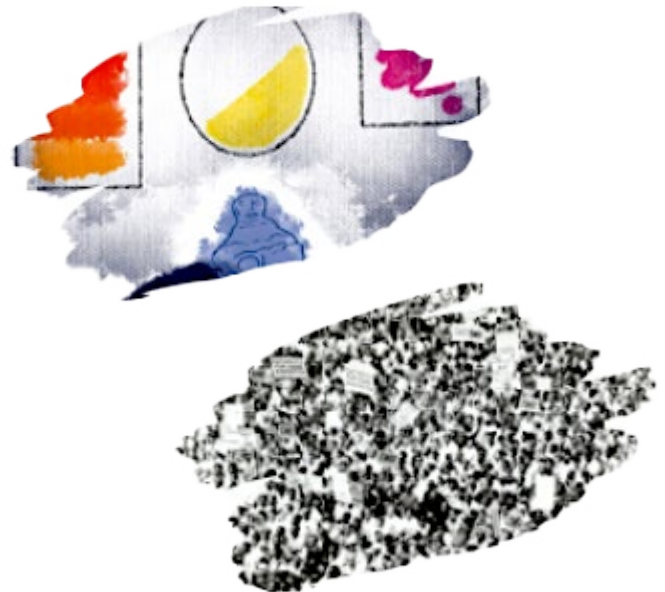
The state of humanities organizations in Illinois

Throughout this pandemic, humanities organizations have endured as community anchors continuing their work and, in some cases, transforming it. The investment of \$710,000 in 177 organizations has been meager in contrast to the estimated loss of revenue. But the pandemic has also given us an opportunity to re-evaluate the role, responsibility, and possibility these local places hold. The following chapter, *"In a Year of Duress,"* powerfully illustrates, the ways in which humanities organizations are critical for providing relief, restoration, and community well being. Extensive research undertaken by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences indicates,

cultural infrastructure that strengthens social bonds... and gives individuals the means and knowledge to develop their own cultural resources.

They can have an enormous payoff that transforms access to culture, opportunity, and economic development.”

Particularly in the time of COVID-19, the “cultural infrastructure” humanities organizations provide reduces isolation, builds resilience and, perhaps, holds critical keys to recovery. This value predates the pandemic and will be critical for an equitable recovery.



“Communities need more than fresh asphalt to thrive; they need a robust





CHAPTER 2

In a year of **D**uress, local humanities groups rise to meet the occasion

Illinois does not forget it beats.
A heart, a muscle, a fulcrum
For blood that runs deep, thrums
In this state, this land of former
Factories shuttered and farms
That keep marching, moving
Into relentless seasons, moon
Cycles. Illinois, you persist.

– Poet Tara Betts
(excerpt from “Illinois Bicentennial Poem”)

On March 16, 2020, things looked pretty dire for Contratiempo, an alternative space where the Latin American and immigrant literary, political, artistic, and academic scenes in Chicago connect with the migrant community in the city, across the U.S. and even in Latin America. Based in Pilsen and founded in 2004, the volunteer-driven organization, whose flagship program has been the quarterly magazine bearing its name, had lost funding for its summer programs and its participation in a San Antonio writers conference, as well as its “Poesía en Abril” festival. Staff continued to produce its radio programming from home, because Co-Prosperity Sphere, where Lumpen Radio has its studio, had to close due to the pandemic, and it was unknown when the print magazine would be published again.

At the same time, about 245 miles, or a four-hour drive, to the south and west, Western Illinois Museum (WIM) was seeing plans for an ambitious year quickly fall apart. The museum is based in Macomb, a community with a population of 20,000 located just south of the La Moine River and serves as the county seat of McDonough County. WIM considered 2020 as critical to a three-year expansion strategy and had planned a total of seventy four programs with the goal of increasing audience and revenue. But when the Museum, whose mission is to nurture “our history and culture,” closed due to COVID-19, sixteen programs were canceled outright and other plans put on hold.

Another 252 miles south of Macomb, the African American Museum of Southern Illinois (AAMSI), whose mission is to identify, preserve and portray the outstanding achievements of African American citizens, was facing an equally daunting crisis. Located in the city of Carbondale and in Jackson County in a region sometimes informally known as “[Little Egypt](#),” the Museum lost funding, as well as the ability

to carry out an annual fundraising event. Along with this scheduled event went AAMSI’s exhibition tours, reading spaces, collections, and community programs, as well as multiple planned collaborations.

In theory, all three groups – facing such daunting disruption – might have taken a hiatus. In some ways, it might have been a good time for a break to reassess their situations. But that was not in the cards.

Inspired by its longtime connection to immigrant thinkers, academics, artists and activists, and aware of its unique position to connect and inspire during the pandemic, Contratiempo embarked on what executive director Moira Pujols describes as an ‘enormously motivating creative journey.’ With all in-person public events and meetings canceled, Contratiempo figured out how to migrate all of its programming to the digital world. Its print contributors began to produce podcast ‘capsules’ on poetry, books and cinema, under the guidance of radio producer Stephanie Manriquez. “Radio is a natural for our Latinx audience,” says Pujols. “Hearing our voices tell stories places us in a vulnerable position, closer to them.”

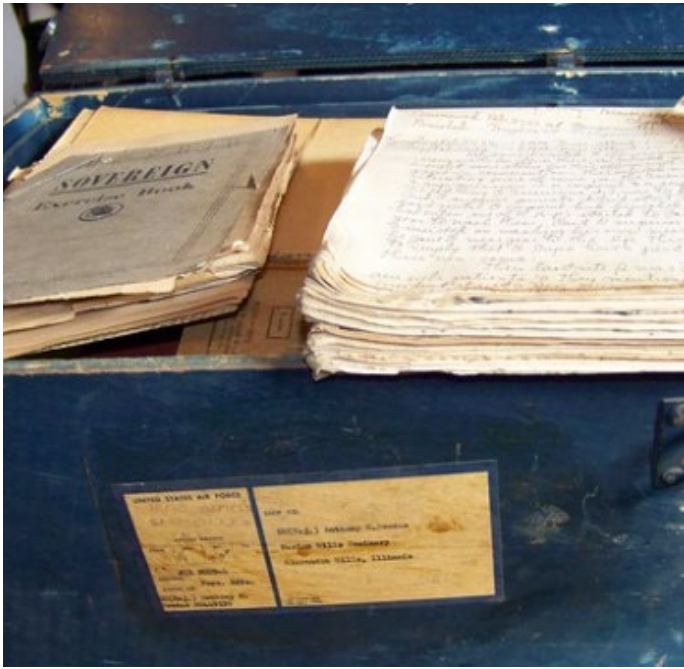
In Macomb, WIM director Sue Scott launched a #COVIDMemory project, where area residents could upload their written testimonials as well as audio and visuals depicting how the pandemic was affecting their lives. In addition, Scott (who describes WIM as a “participatory” museum, meaning that exhibits and programs are tools to create an authentic social connection), began to post video content for the community. The



Lincoln's Visit to Macomb

Why was Abraham Lincoln's visit to Macomb in 1858 historic? Well... let's get into it!

[WATCH VIDEO](#)



LATINOAMÉRICA ARDE
LASTESIS EN CHICAGO
POESÍA LATINOAMERICANA



videos are virtual tours of artifacts, telling the story of those who used them and why they played a significant role in area history. Interns created scavenger hunts to have people find historic sites in the county. Scott also used videos to provide news to financial supporters, posting them on the museum's YouTube channel. A flood of comments, emails, and even phone calls came back in response.

In Carbondale, the African American Museum of Southern Illinois saw an opportunity to regroup and redouble efforts. It received funding from the city, albeit less than normal. It experienced an increase in individual donors' support. It digitized one of its most popular programs, the book reading program for parents and their children, and launched a contest for young people to draw pictures in response to prompts around how the children are experiencing COVID-19.

In short order, all three bounced back from a devastating early 2020 and pivoted in remarkable ways. And they weren't alone – all across Illinois' 58,000 square miles and 102 counties, community-based cultural groups adapted in response to the challenges presented by COVID-19. With many shuttered from



in-person programming due to the lockdown, and most scheduled fundraising efforts curtailed and corporate support largely suspended for the time being, groups were initially at a loss for how to respond. But armed with grit, imagination, and resourcefulness, many community-based cultural groups threw caution to the wind by creating digital content, supporting local responses to the pandemic, and making appeals to local individual donors, many of whom responded in unprecedented ways.

When, in mid-March 2020, Illinois Humanities saw a lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was

imminent, it launched an initial grants response through repurposed general operating dollars. With the additional support of funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) through the CARES Act, Illinois Humanities COVID-19 Emergency relief grants provided 189 awards totaling \$710,000 to 177 humanities and cultural nonprofit organizations between March and July 2020. The bulk of funds were distributed as General Operating relief grants (\$520,000) to humanities organizations throughout Illinois with budgets of \$1.5 million or less. Twenty Project Innovation & Adaptation grants (\$100,000) supported efforts to create digital programming and content. Fifteen Community Resilience Projects (\$90,000) supported stories of community responses in facing COVID-19.

The data submitted by groups through their applications, reports, surveys, and individual interviews provides an invaluable glimpse into the state of humanities organizations across Illinois and how they have responded to challenges in 2020. Together they help give shape to an often overlooked sector that has a foothold in nearly every county in the state.

What is the public humanities 'sector'?

The humanities play out in people's lives at the forty eight community colleges across Illinois, the 3,859 public schools with their two million students, the state's 643 public libraries, as well as at chapters of other groups – say the League of Women Voters' forty one Illinois chapters and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's 26 Illinois adult branches and seven youth and college chapters. Here, though, we are talking specifically about the small, often volunteer-driven, community-based cultural groups – the 1,300 small museums and historical societies, the forty one members of the Chicago Cultural Alliance, the historic houses, cultural centers, literary groups, and others working in areas such as history, literature, language, philosophy, and education; in other words, the organizations strengthening community fabric by producing oral histories, curating local archives, creating virtual historic walking tours, using the arts to explore history and identity, coordinating book clubs, producing documentary films and radio programs, and designing digital curricula.

Some have been around for decades, some even date back

to the 19th century. But many are part of a newer crop. The HUB – Arts and Cultural Center, in Rushville (an hour east of Quincy), was created “as a pipe dream” just five years ago to foster a connection to the arts, rural culture, and local communities through exhibitions and educational experiences. Surviving in what executive director Erin Eveland describes as a “no-man's land of grants,” The HUB provides provocative programming, such as a recent exhibit, “Arts Kuba,” highlighting connections with Rushville's growing African immigrant population.

In the case of the Lithuanian Archives Project, it all started with a phone call. Audra Adomenas, who was then working at a library services nonprofit, got a call one morning from someone at the Marian Fathers Monastery on Chicago's south side. The caller – who'd learned of Audra's interest in Lithuanian history – said that due to renovation, boxes of old documents were being thrown away. Audra took off to visit the site, only realizing when she arrived that she had spent much of her time as a little girl playing there – no surprise, since the community had shifted from Lithuanian to Latinx in recent years. “I saw a dumpster overflowing with books, archival materials, many with children's drawings

in them. My first thought was how to get them out of there, to a safe place,” she recalls. Returning the next day with a rented truck and seven friends, all of whom spoke Lithuanian, they rescued what they could and moved items to storage. Among the treasures discovered that day were the journals of a Lithuanian American army chaplain who had served in the Pacific theater; they included psychological profiles of Japanese prisoners of war.

The LAP, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2020, is digitizing this material and other archives saved from Marian's Chicago site, which no longer exists. Reflecting on that phone call 10 years earlier, Audra – now the LAP's executive director – said:

“I didn't know that we would be starting a nonprofit. But I did know that the integrity of the community's history would be lost if we didn't do something.”

Most of these cultural organizations are relatively

small, and in an almost inadvertent nod to E.F. Schumacher’s “Small Is Beautiful,” prefer it that way, at least in some respects. As Jeanne Schultz Angel, director of learning experience at Naper Settlement and president of the Illinois Association of Museums, puts it, “Small museums are not puppies waiting to grow into big dogs. They’re little dogs. And if they were to disappear, you’d have a huge loss and an incredible void in culture across the state.”

And this tight-knit quality drives mission. “We believe that these are historic times,” said Scott of the Western Illinois Museum, and that our museum has a responsibility in helping our community members heal from the social disruption and stay connected to one another.”

How has COVID-19 impacted local cultural groups?

An American Alliance of Museums [study](#) released in July created quite a buzz in the museum world, concluding with the dire prediction that there was a ‘significant risk’ that more than 30% of museums might not survive 2020 due to COVID-19. Americans for the Arts [data](#) released in December showed that across Illinois, the median financial loss per arts group was at \$15,500. According to

Kartemquin Educational Films’ leadership, with production and shooting on hold indefinitely, much work in the documentary arena has dried up; in addition, the cancellation or postponing of film festivals removes the opportunity for filmmakers to screen works for potential partners. This most strongly impacts early-career and marginalized filmmakers without expansive networks.

Humanities groups across Illinois were clearly hurting; even the smallest are likely to have part-time staff, consultants, and monthly bills to pay. The LAP had to cancel its annual fundraisers, and on top of that had to move from its long-time office space. The Logan Square Chamber of Arts had to cancel a citywide celebration of 1920 women’s right-to-vote activities. NAJWA Dance Corps on the city’s South Side had to cancel all events and performances. The Springfield Theatre Centre had to cancel most of its 72nd season. The Stephenson County Historical Society in

Freeport, had to close its doors for months on end. The list goes on.

According to Illinois Humanities data, 90% of grantee partners lost revenue, and 49% had to dip into savings to survive. Overall, across 177 organizations, there was a combined loss of \$9,742,000, with some 35 organizations experiencing staff layoffs. In the beginning, many faced hiccups in trying to navigate the state’s lockdown rules; later, it was often the groups that rely on ticket sales for revenue – especially the historic houses and children’s museums – that were hurt.

This disruption came at a hefty price. Melissa Ngan, executive director of Fifth House Ensemble, said “COVID-19 has put our entire field into an existential crisis. As a performing arts and educational organization, the support system around our work has been greatly impacted. We have been able to shift many engagements



and projects to virtual formats, but there are major questions around how sustainable this will be depending on how long the pandemic lasts and how it impacts the financial ecosystem of presenters and funders.”

As one local cultural leader said, early on in the pandemic,

“We’ve survived natural disasters – flooding, tornadoes, but nothing like this.”

Then came the pivot(s)

In rapid succession, many small groups threw caution to the wind, tried out new digital tools, learned from mistakes, and marched on. This growth spurt seems a natural next step for cultural groups, but also mirrored the ways that audiences themselves were quickly adapting under lockdown. Looking out for the safety of their tour guides, The Canal Corridor Association in LaSalle transformed in-person tours into a recorded script. Chicago for Chicagoans produced digital walking tours, virtual lectures, and in addition, contracted local artists to create pieces that were then used as postcards. The Chicago Latino Theater

Alliance, or CLATA, migrated its annual “Destinos” theater festival to “Destinos Al Aire,” outdoor drive-in performances, in addition to creating new digital initiatives “Charlando” and “Mini Tesoros.” 826CHI, after closing its store, quickly made all of its after-school and in-school youth writing programs virtual. The Abe Lincoln Project in Pittsfield, produced a tourism booklet. Repertorio Latino Theater had to cancel programs from March through October, but instead decided to produce a film project called “Sin Mascaras,” or without masks.

According to Mary Smith, interim executive director of the Evanston-based Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, the museum is expanding substantially its virtual programming, including partnering with TriBraining to develop e-learning museum tours with supporting curriculum and lesson worksheets for teachers to use online. “Our goal,” Smith explained, “is to pilot the program, conduct focus groups and teacher training, and fully launch these e-learning tours as an alternative to in-person field trips.

“By raising the visibility and reach of the museum through virtual programming and tours, we aim to expand the number

of people who can e-visit and enjoy the museum and its programs and bring more to our communities than ever before,” she said.

In many cases there has been a silver lining to this pace of change: it has helped to dramatically expand audiences in new ways. Sara Chapman of Media Burn Archive in Chicago said, “An upside of this pandemic is that it has forced cultural organizations to completely rethink how we serve audiences, breaking decades-old patterns.” Media Burn Archive has started virtual talks with video artists, where filmmakers discuss film and social change, and now has audiences from all over the U.S. and the world. “We are creating a global community of people who care about media and social justice and that will continue long into the future,” Chapman added.

About Face Theatre Collective (AFT) in Chicago was planning a touring production of *Power in Pride*; instead, AFT worked with actors to adapt material and record in their homes to create *Power in Pride at Home*. This pivot yielded a series of three to five minute [videos](#), all now streaming for free on their website. This program attracted a major donation, and in addition, has helped build AFT’s national audience.

And Erin Eveland, at the Rushville-based HUB, said that the organization produced virtual artist talks, livestreamed on Facebook and Zoom.

“We had 200 views. For us, this is crazy. Then we did a poetry reading, and had people from California, from all over the country. It was insane to see the attraction of posting these things online.”

Innovation & adaptation projects

At \$5,000 per grant, the Innovation & Adaptation Project grants were meant to help propel this work forward. This portfolio supported twenty organizations (out of 140 applicants), to help humanities organizations harness virtual tools to further their work. Eleven of the twenty projects were scattered throughout the state, nine based in Cook County.

The pool of twenty awardees includes ten history sites or museums; three performing

arts organizations; two education organizations; and a cultural center, a public art group, and a group that uses book clubs, film screenings and discussion to create community among people with spinal injuries. Projects included using virtual platforms to bridge urban and rural audiences, taking oral histories online, hosting discussions, producing a zine, helping to disseminate the work of researchers, producing a virtual tour of a community’s murals, creating a toolkit for digital archiving, producing a digital museum tour, making educational programs available to adults, celebrating an Illinois author, producing walking tours, producing a Spanish-language theater experience on the impact of COVID-19, and digitally curating the history of African Americans in southern Illinois.

Honey Pot Performance (HPP), a creative Afro-feminist nonprofit launched



in 2001, used Innovation and Adaptation grant funds to produce monthly conversations and a half-day event on its Chicago Black Social Culture map. These events, called “Archiving Days,” were meant to document Black social culture from the Great Migration through the early 21st century, with a focus on the emergence of house culture in the 1970s and 1980s.

“We are adapting to the pandemic by imagining new ways to center and connect with communities,”

said Meida McNeal, artistic and managing director for HPP.

Responding to community needs

Some groups used lockdowns as an opportunity to take stock of collections in order to serve their stakeholders better – sort of “rainy-day” projects, but of the utmost importance, nonetheless. The Stark County Historical Society in Toulon moved forward with a plan to complete an inventory of its artifacts, purchasing a computer and software in order to take on the tedious task of putting records of all the



artifacts into the system. The Stephenson County Historical Society, with museum doors closed for three months, kept part-time staff employed cleaning, painting, taking inventory of historic artifacts, and eventually producing a traveling artifact kit for students (who would normally have come to the museum). The employees of the Ukrainian National Museum in Chicago decided to reorganize and refresh permanent collections

and create new exhibitions from them, but also to take on additional projects, such as creating a catalogue of donated artwork.

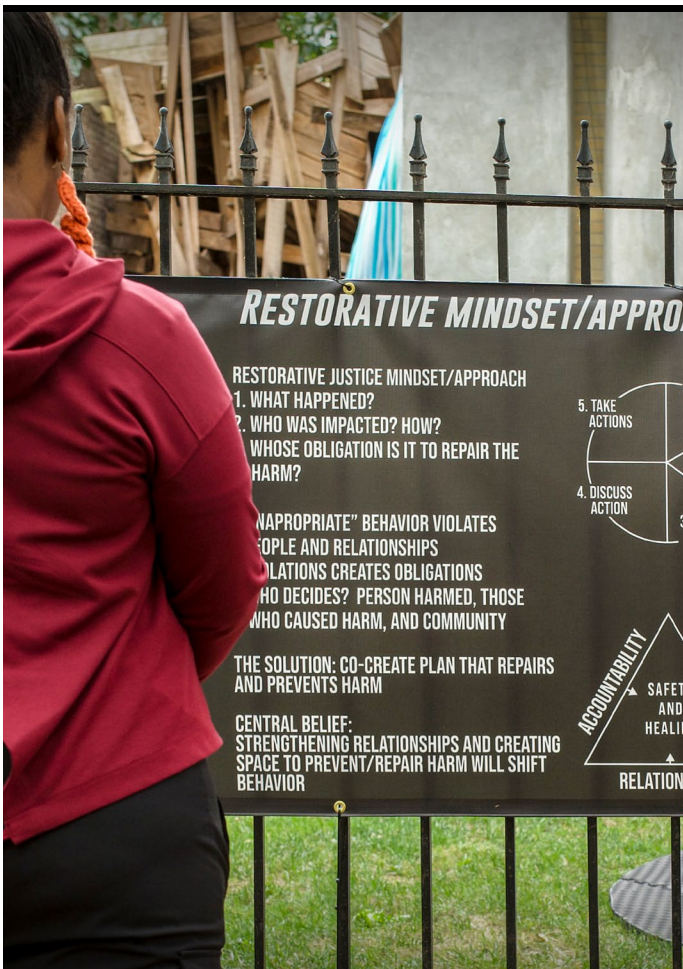
Many groups pivoted in other ways, exploring the needs of their communities in a responsive and even visceral way. Sixty Inches from Center, a Chicago-based arts publication and archiving initiative that supports and promotes art and writing that thrive primarily

outside of the mainstream historical narratives, saw early in the pandemic that many of its teaching artists, visual artists, curators, and freelance writers were losing full-time jobs, part-time jobs, contracts, service jobs, and teaching gigs. The focus of editorial meetings shifted to how to create opportunities to support its team, especially those substantially impacted. "As a result," said Sixty Inches' founder Tempestt Hazel, "we increased the paid writing opportunities and also created an internal mutual aid network between Sixty team members so that they could anonymously donate to a pooled fund for team members in need."

According to Miriam Larson, executive director at The Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center, the UCIMC, which fosters media and art emphasizing underrepresented voices and perspectives, prides itself in being responsive to community. After a local community member passed from COVID-19, family members reached out to station manager DJ BJ Clark at the Media Center's volunteer radio station for help with a funeral procession. The radio station set aside programming to air the favorite music of the victim, a dentist, so his widow and all the cars in the procession



El pincel adolescente: Voces negras



could stream the music and honor their loved one as they proceeded.

Many others found ways to provide emergency services for community members. Artists ReEnvisioning Tomorrow partnered with Peoria Playhouse Children’s Museum to create art kits for kids; each included three lesson plans, materials for the three projects, and a booklet with additional ideas or cultural connections. The Chicago-based Puerto Rican Arts Alliance likewise created virtual programming and sent art supplies to the homes of participating students. The Public Media Institute provided more than 900 meals to people in its community. The Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods, in Riverwoods, produced more than 1,200 mask-making kits as part of its Art Supply Exchange. They were distributed to Lake County hospitals, clinics, assisted living centers, and families. Produced with instructions in both English and Spanish, the kits appeared in early April – i.e. at a time when the need for protective equipment was particularly urgent.

A year of racial reckoning

But by far one of the most impressive, concerted themes – if you can call it that across 177 unique organizations - were efforts to respond to the public protests challenging systemic racism that followed the murder of George Floyd. For some, this meant continuing on a well-worn path, for others it meant exploring new territory.

Examples abound. The board of directors at the Center for Racial Harmony in Belleville started a podcast covering systemic racism and COVID-19. Crossing Borders Music in Chicago created a series of 20 videos on the music of Black composers. Deeply Rooted Dance is in the process of filming “Deeply 25: Black Edition,” to be aired early in 2021, along with a work entitled “Goshen,” which addresses issues of race and

equity. Definition Theatre, on Chicago's South Side, produced eight stories on racial healing. Design Museum of Chicago worked closely with blkHaUS studios to produce "Raising Products," a virtual series on art, design, and communities of color about making and unmaking. 6018North produced a series of outdoor exhibits, as well as Windows of the World, in which six curators conducted twenty five studio visits, responding to the prompt "How do we want to see the world when we come out?" The Al Raby Foundation, after canceling its summer lineup of programming, instead worked with students at Raby High School to do a Civil Rights History Challenge and gather oral histories. The Bronzeville Historical Society explored and championed the history of Nancy Green, the original "Aunt Jemima." Fifth House Ensemble pivoted all of its social impact residencies – such as its work with Deborah's Place and Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center - into virtual platforms.

Contratiempo, in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, released a special pandemic issue, "En Estos Tiempos," or "In These Times." In addition, its staff formed a translation cluster within its editorial board. This group collaborated with African American Chicago writers and artists, in reading, discussing, translating, and publishing their work in what would become the magazine's first-ever bilingual issue, "Voces Negras."

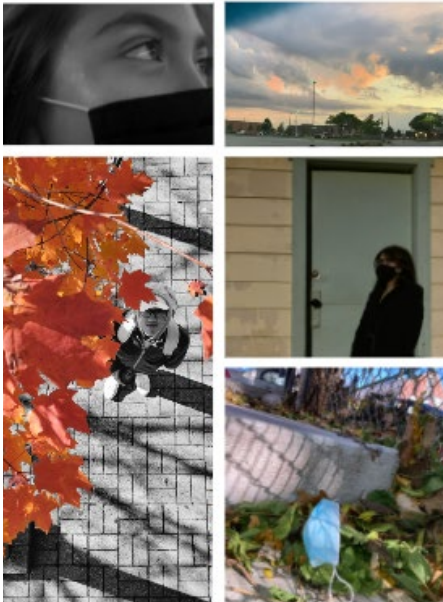
Addressing this challenge is ripe territory for humanities groups. As Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* stated on the *New York Times* opinion page on June 8, "If we do not learn the lessons of history and choose a radically different path forward, we may lose our chance at creating a truly inclusive, egalitarian democracy.

"No matter your race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexual orientation or background, you have much to gain by deepening your understanding of how we got into this place," Alexander continued.

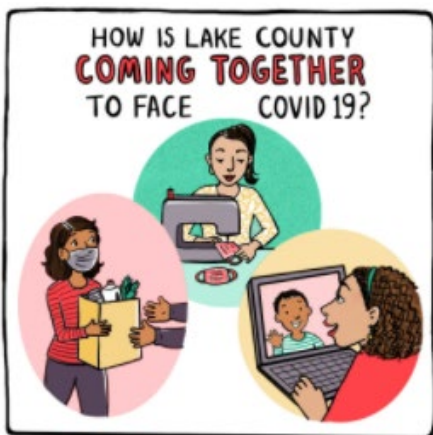
Community resilience projects

Responding to the social justice movement and inequities was also a major theme in the Community Resilience projects that received funding. Of the 15 projects, each receiving \$6,000 (and selected from ninety three applicants), eight are based in Chicago and seven elsewhere in the state. All reflecting community resilience under COVID-19, they include: family stories from the Chicago neighborhoods of Auburn Gresham, Austin, and South Shore (BECOME: Center for Community Engagement and Social Change); live-streamed dialogues on race and identity in the time of COVID-19 (Full Spectrum Features NFP); [videos](#) documenting the experiences of diverse Chicagoans during COVID-19 (Collaboration Theatre Company); a [podcast series](#) produced by Authors Circle alumni featuring stories from across the city (ConTextos); a comic book accompanied by street installations (Kuumba Lynx); oral histories with leaders of cultural groups across the city (the Chicago Cultural Alliance); and a print and audio series of interviews with community leaders (*South Side Weekly* in Chicago).

Pilsen-based Changing Worlds, whose mission is to foster inclusive communities through oral history, writing, and art programs that improve student learning, worked with Benito Juarez Community Academy students to help them process the effects and trauma from this time. Under the guidance of Chicago Public School (CPS) art teacher Liz Winfield, the students produced a mini-book of photos and writings, probing the questions,



Pandemic Portraits: Visual Stories of Community Resilience



How have our individual and collective lives been impacted? What does healing look like? and What does it mean to survive during a pandemic?

This work, in turn, became the focus of a WBEZ story by reporter Linda Lutton.

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods presents nature-inspired programs in the arts and humanities for people of all income levels, ages and backgrounds. With Community Resilience funding, Brushwood Center worked with Waukegan ethnographer Carla Aldana and illustrator Janet McDonnell to shine a light on community leaders and their stories in a bilingual initiative called “Lake County Leads.”

Carbondale Community Arts, in partnership with the African American Museum of Southern Illinois and Southern Illinois University Carbondale’s (SIUC) journalism school, worked with area high school students to produce videos in response to the region’s Black Lives Matter movement. One, a [nine-minute](#)

[interview](#) with Joseph Brown, professor of Africana Studies at SIUC, is entitled “Always A Fight.”

“There’s a larger issue of qualified Black people not being treated as if they are really that qualified,” Brown said. “And that’s because they don’t control the structure in which they have to work or live,” Brown added. “That’s the problem with equity. We will deny women. We will deny



Black and brown people. We will deny people who are differently-abled. Because we're not going to look at their credentials, we're going to look at how comfortable or uncomfortable they make us."

Other projects celebrated community resilience in other, equally creative, ways. These included a ceramic "memory wall" created by area youth (Atlanta Public Library District); a collection of photographs



and videos representing the stories of first responders (Aurora Regional Fire Museum); an evening of original music depicting "[Covid-19 Galena, The Story in Song](#)" (Galena Center for the Arts); and a "call to action" to small-town residents to express their experience of COVID-19 in various media forms (Savanna Historical Society).

The Effingham Public Library, which serves a largely rural population in Effingham County in east-central Illinois, took on an inspiring Community Resilience [project](#): "Effingham: At the Crossroads of Education." The library worked with renowned local photographer Tytia Habing to take portraits of local teachers, administrators and students with and without their masks; combined with personal interviews capturing how they

all pivoted to respond, these challenged assumptions about how school happens in the country.

“On one level, the work celebrates collaboration between parents, students, school support staff, and teachers as they work to keep each other safe while providing quality education,” said Johnna Schultz, assistant director of the library. “But on a deeper level, the work acknowledges the tension that the American promise of equal education for all simply isn’t possible – and this pandemic has created an education gap that will negatively affect many.”

Like many other cultural groups, the library also stepped up public services in other ways during COVID-19; for example, staff have taken laptops and WiFi to rural communities in the county to help people apply for unemployment.

More than dollars

The grants made by Illinois Humanities were relatively small dollars in the world of philanthropy, ranging from \$2,500 to \$7,500, but they played an impactful role during the pandemic. Findings from a survey of grantee partners on their priorities and needs helped Illinois Humanities

find ways to bolster funding by providing convening opportunities and capacity-building sessions. These led to other revelations about what humanities organizations need – and what they can provide.

Staff hosted a two-day virtual workshop, on how to facilitate small-group, reflective conversations; a workshop on “Virtual Programs & Audience Engagement,” and a two-day virtual workshop “Best Practices in Using Social Media.”

While these convenings provided resource-sharing opportunities, they also – in tandem with the grants – illuminated the ways in which local humanities leaders are eager for opportunities to be in community among colleagues.

“In the middle of April, we were notified that we received the COVID-19 Emergency relief grant,” said Erin Eveland of The HUB. “The knowledge that we had some relief funds coming gave us the ability to move out of survival mode and become creative again. Because of the funds... we were able to focus on what our community needed and how we could best serve them.”

“By receiving the IH general operating grant, we felt relief

that culture organizations like ours matter, that being a culture-specific history museum in Chicago matters,” said Tetyana Chervinska of the Ukrainian National Museum. “Such support gave us hope that things would work out and helped us to keep going.”

Kevin Wilmot of the African American Cultural & Genealogical Society in Decatur said, “In the middle of March, when the world as we knew it stopped, our income stopped. We lost all visitors and many volunteer hours. We lost the opportunity to host our annual Juneteenth Fundraiser banquet. This grant completed the financial resources to pay expenses for the first half of the year. This grant saved the day!”

Julienne McCormick of the Savanna Historical Society said, “When citizens were informed that their stories would potentially be a part of the ‘broader story’ state-



wide, there were comments of disbelief that we, from our small, outside-of-Chicago-community, would be included in such a project.”

Making the call for action

Entering a hopeful, yet uncertain, new year, there are concerns across the sector. The ability of smaller organizations to remain flexible under duress has obvious limits. For one thing, many have had to dip into whatever savings they had pre-COVID-19, leaving them on less certain footing should lockdowns once again impede revenue-generating activities.

Some worry privately that the funders who have stepped up in this difficult time won't be as readily available in the coming year. And some sectors, such as public libraries, as the Illinois Library Association's Diane Foote outlined in a September 2020 newsletter [piece](#), depend primarily on local property taxes, which are expected to be particularly hard-hit not immediately but in the medium-to-long-term. So, for the public humanities sector, in broad terms, while there is a need for strategic partnerships – with media, tech, universities, and school systems – there is also, simply put, a need for more supporters and more sustained support.



Making the case is a challenge for a sector whose brand has been notoriously lackluster, whose story has been so poorly told for far too long. This sector may be accused of being too divorced from 'real' issues affecting communities, perhaps too slow to respond to breaking news and too white to relate to the very real social inequities facing many of our neighbors and friends.

The picture that emerges in 2021 is of a diverse and dynamic sector, committed to sharing truthful and unfettered histories, to creative storytelling, to respectful and

actively inclusive dialogues, and to addressing inequities. It is clear that they inspire the joy that lifelong learning brings with it – but is it a stretch to imagine that they can also help address the next pandemic, economic slowdown, urban disinvestment or rural depopulation? What about climate change? Doesn't the commitment by these groups to understanding shared humanity allow us to imagine solutions we wouldn't otherwise? And – when one considers the commonalities that emerge from this remarkable set of stories from across the state – don't these narratives in

aggregate debunk some of the clichés that tend to shape the story Illinois tells about itself?

Gisele Hamm, MAPPING program manager at the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA), sees culture as being core to the IIRA's work with rural communities. Based in Macomb, the IIRA's MAPPING program facilitates strategic visioning and planning sessions with rural communities who have experienced population drain, dying newspapers, and a shrinking tax base, in order to pivot and imagine locally-led, sustainable growth. While 2020 presented many challenges to local civic engagement, Hamm sees culture playing a critical role in planning.

“There’s a growing interest in quality of life, not just in recruiting big business,” she said. “We’re seeing more millennials at the table. Boomers went to the jobs; millennials clearly want arts and culture.”

Danielle Allen, the renowned American classicist and political scientist at Harvard University (and one of the first instructors in Illinois Humanities' Odyssey Project), in accepting the Public Humanities Award given in 2018, explained, “We understand lives through stories. We also understand them through the analysis that history and social sciences bring... It’s not just that we understand a life through the arts and humanities, we have the chance to understand our life together...That’s why [this] work is so important, of building community conversations, with the resources of the humanities – inviting people to work together to diagnose our circumstances, and find pathways forward to improved human flourishing together, through

conversation...The caliber of our words, the art with which we yield them, is transformative... The humanities don't let us take language, and arts, and expression for granted. In that regard, they give people tools of empowerment over and over and over again.”

Elaine Scarry, in her provocative defense of thinking paired with rapid action as well as what she refers to as ‘equality of survival,’ (*Thinking In An Emergency*, 2011) stated: “The seduction against thinking in an emergency comes, as we have seen, from two sources: first, from a false opposition between thinking and acting; second, from a plausible (but in the end, false) opposition between thinking and rapid action. Now a third, equally potent, form of seduction becomes visible: the acts of thinking that go on in emergencies are not recognized by us as acts of thinking.” As Scarry concluded, “We need to turn to this work of mutual protection. If we are late in beginning, we are not yet too late.”

What wise words. It is not too late to do so. And to make sure that local, community-based cultural groups are at the table.





CHAPTER 3

The story the numbers tell

COVID-19 put an unprecedented strain on non-profit organizations in Illinois and on the people who make public humanities happen. Between March and July 2020, Illinois Humanities awarded \$710,000 through 189 COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grants to 177 humanities and cultural non-profit organizations experiencing financial hardship as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

This chapter summarizes information about the 189 COVID relief grants Illinois Humanities distributed in 2020 to 177 unique grantee partners and draws heavily on applications, surveys, reports, interviews and other input from grantee partners, in addition to contextual data from local and national sources.^{12 13 14} Several general research questions related to grantmaking trends, trends among grantee partners, and the contexts within which grantee partners shaped this analysis:

- How were grants distributed geographically?

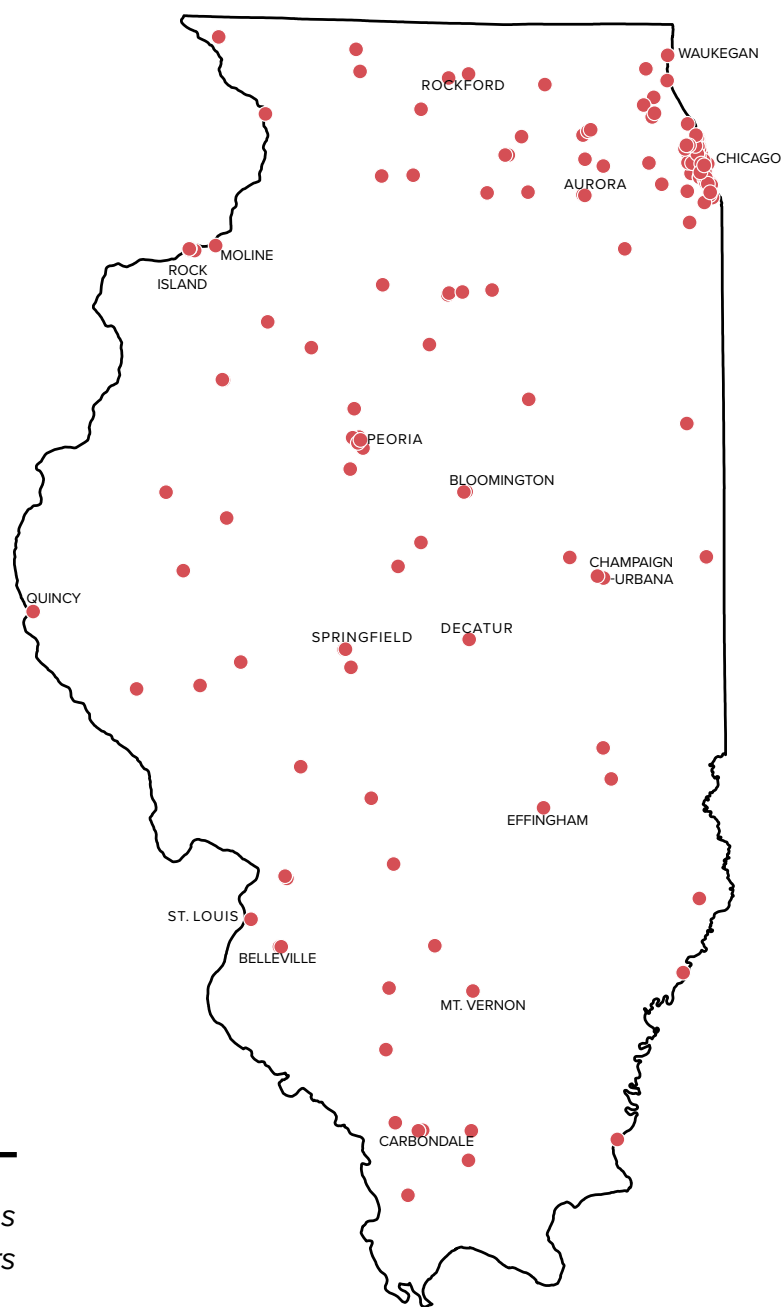


Figure 1: Map of 177 Illinois Humanities grantee partners

- What types of organizations received grants?
- How are organizations being affected by and responding to COVID-19?
- How does the geographic location of organizations compare with state and local characteristics such as population density, income, and COVID-19 incidence? In other words, what is the context within which these organizations are operating during this time?

How are public humanities organizations in Illinois being affected by, and responding to, the pandemic?

Every organization included in this report has been profoundly impacted by COVID-19, operationally and programmatically. This group of 177 humanities organizations lost an estimated \$9,742,000 in revenue in 2020. Ninety percent of organizations lost revenue and many organizations reported being at risk for layoffs; 14% reported fearing permanent closure.

Organizations suffered significant audience loss. Collectively, grantee partners estimated reaching nearly 1.7 million fewer people than they anticipated being able to serve during 2020.

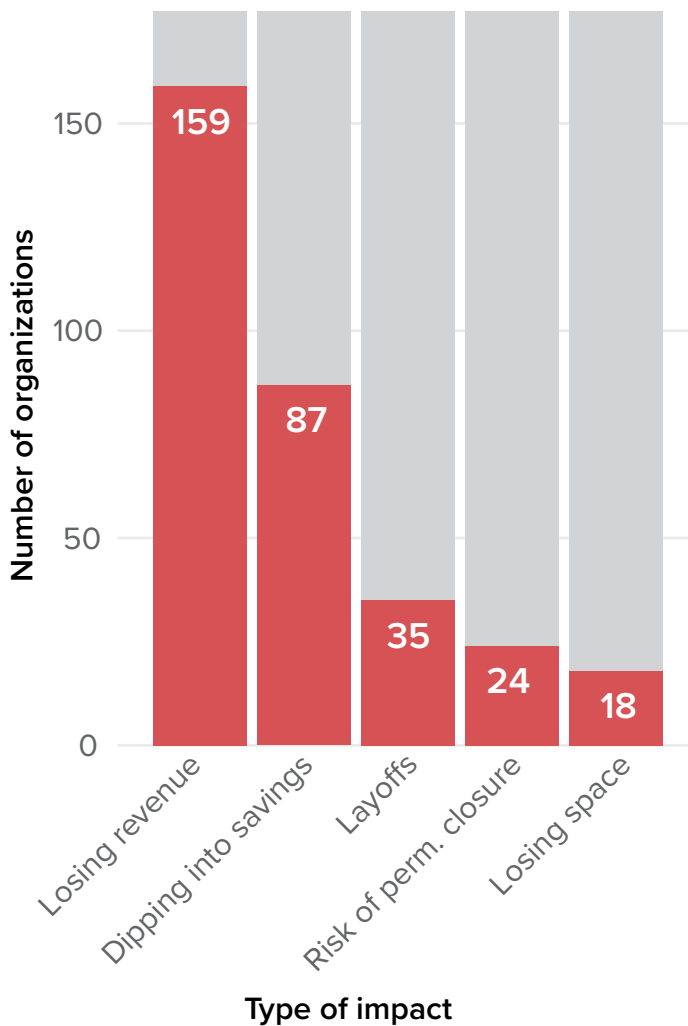
Although nearly all grantee partners reported reaching smaller audiences – due in no small part to the day-to-day challenges and ambiguities of conducting outreach and programming in a pandemic – grantee partners continued to find ways to serve an estimated 270,000 people through programs from June to September 2020.

While COVID-19 relief grants did not come close to meeting grantee partners’ financial needs, it enabled organizations to hire humanists and

artists, sustain staffing, and offer trainings; as well as document and preserve community experiences through storytelling and dialogue; use spaces in new ways; and reinforce and reframe why their missions matter. [See Chapter 2, In a Year of Duress] Experiences reported by Illinois Humanities COVID-19 grantee partners align strongly with findings from the October 2020 Wallace Foundation’s report, "Arts Organizations’ Early Response to COVID-19 Uncertainty: Insights from the Field," namely:

- Increased urgency from the sector to address systemic racism and social justice

Figure 2: Organizational impacts of COVID-19



- Acceleration of digital programming
- Intense focus on emergency relief fundraising
- Finding a diversified audience and broader reach through digital programming

lifelong learning in areas of humanistic inquiry such as literature, history, folklore, and art history.¹⁵

While some grantee partners have longstanding relationships with Illinois Humanities over the course of its 40-plus-year tenure as the state’s affiliate for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), forty five of the 177 grantee partners were first-time applicants to Illinois Humanities: 17 are located in Cook and collar counties, and 28 elsewhere in the state.¹⁶

What kinds of organizations were funded?

COVID-19 relief grants supported organizations with broad and diverse engagements in the humanities that provide critical access to educational and cultural resources for people across Illinois. These organizations facilitate

As part of the effort to describe the grantee partner landscape, Illinois Humanities assigned

Figure 3: Organization categories

Category	Organizations (Primary category)		Organizations (Secondary category)	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Arts: performing arts (theater, music, dance, etc.), visual arts, art centers	57	32.2%	11	6.2%
Civic and community engagement: social justice, advocacy, community organizing, chambers of commerce	7	4.0%	27	15.3%
Culture and heritage: cultural and ethnic awareness, heritage	12	6.8%	25	14.1%
Education: classes, schools, libraries, workshops, trainings, certifications	2	1.1%	98	55.4%
History: history museums and societies, historic preservation	78	44.1%	6	3.4%
Literature and writing: literature, reading, writing	8	4.5%	3	1.7%
Media: journalism, publishing, radio, audio, film, digital media, photography	13	7.3%	5	2.8%
TOTAL	177	100%	175	98.9%

categories to each organization drawn from the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) system used by the IRS.¹⁷ However, when Illinois Humanities staff met with grantee partners during a December 7, 2020 virtual meeting, grantee partners pointed out that many of the NTEE codes did not accurately reflect their work. As a result, staff developed seven categories derived from the NTEE descriptions and definitions of “the humanities” from the NEH to better describe and group “like” work.¹⁸ All 177 grantee partners were then asked to select up to two of these categories (See Figure 3).

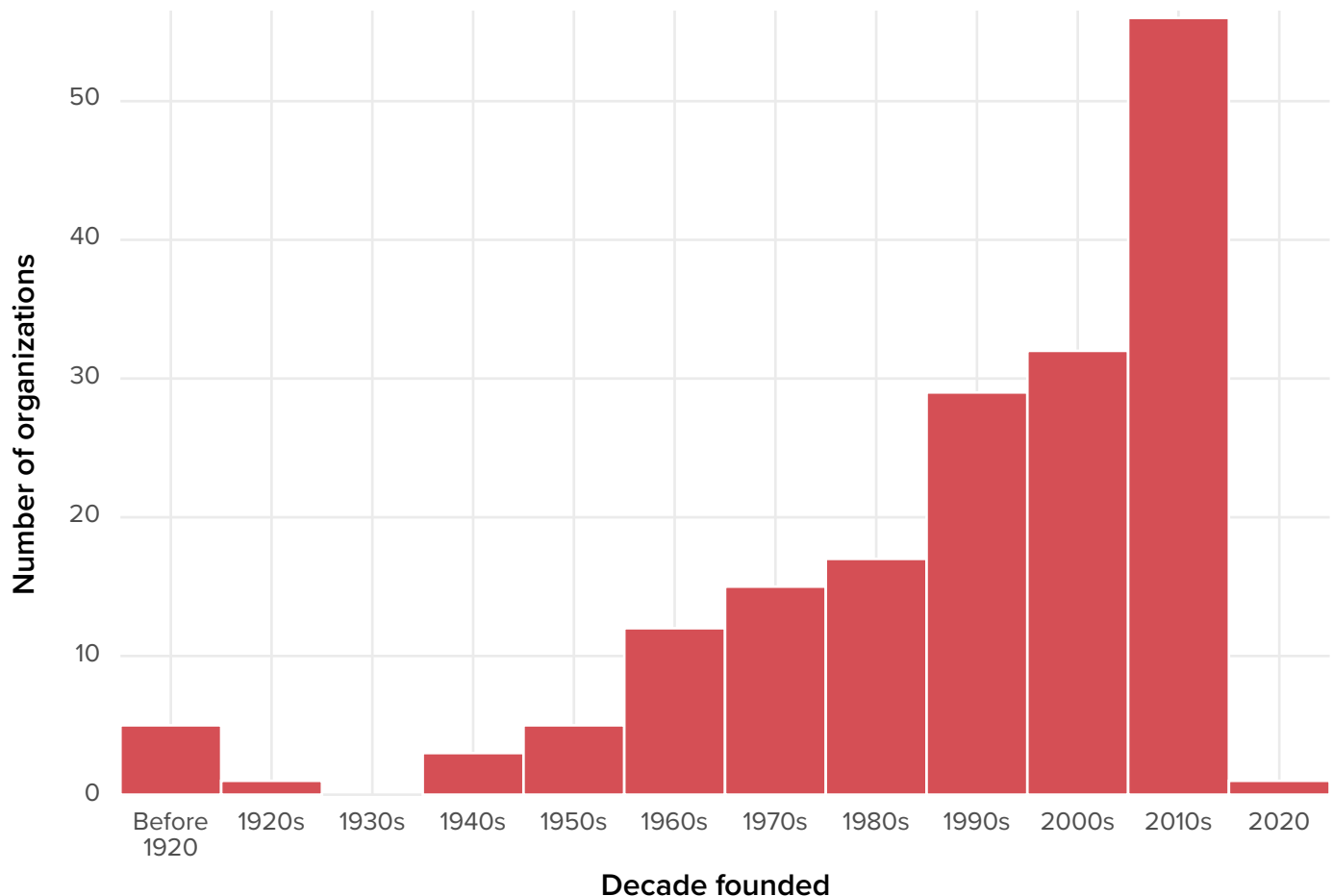
The average age of grantee partners is 20 years: half of grant recipients were founded in the year 2000 or later, demonstrating

a growing interest across communities in the need for humanities organizations. The oldest organization was founded in 1873. Five organizations are more than 100 years old.

Organizations with budgets of up to \$1.5 million were eligible to apply for Illinois Humanities COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grants. The vast majority of grantee partners have budgets well under the eligibility requirements of the relief funds: 82% have annual budgets of less than a half a million dollars and half of grantee partners have annual budgets of less than \$100,000.

Given that COVID-19 relief grant opportunities ranged only from \$2,500 to \$7,500, it is notable that for two out of three recipients, grant awards represented more than 5% of their annual

Figure 4: Organizations by decade founded



budgets; thirty two organizations received total grant dollars representing more than 10% of their annual budgets and 10 organizations received grants representing more than a quarter of their entire annual budget. These relatively “small” dollars had a significant impact.

How were grants distributed geographically?

576 applications were submitted from 66 of Illinois’ 102 counties. The 177 grantee partners are located throughout Illinois in 55 counties; many are found in cities such as Chicago, Rockford, and Peoria. Others are in small, rural communities such as Shawneetown, Greenup, Rushville, Ipava, Utica, Bishop Hill, and Savanna.

Grants were distributed throughout the state. Approximately one-third of applicants were approved in most regions. In 17 of 18 congressional districts, each district received an average of \$38,500 distributed across approximately eleven grantee partners.

COVID-19 relief grants were distributed in a similar pattern to pre-pandemic foundation giving in Illinois.¹⁹ Several counties received a slightly larger share of Illinois Humanities

COVID-19 grants compared to reported 2017 foundation dollars; these include DeKalb, LaSalle, Effingham, Jackson, and Logan Counties.

Relief funding aligns with population density

According to the United State Census Bureau, 88.5% of Illinoisans live in urban areas and 11.5% live in rural areas. Similarly, 160 grantee partners (90%) are located in urban areas and seventeen (10%) are located in rural areas.

160 COVID-19 grantee partners (90%) are located in urban areas and seventeen (10%) are located in rural areas.

The seventy six grantee partners from Cook County, (home to 41% of the state’s population), received the largest proportion of grant dollars. Overall funding patterns follow overall population distribution. However, when analyzed against funding-per-resident, counties with the largest dollars-per-resident figures tend to be less densely populated counties (i.e. counties with fewer than 10,000 residents) such as Scott, Gallatin, Stark, Putnam, and Schuyler counties.

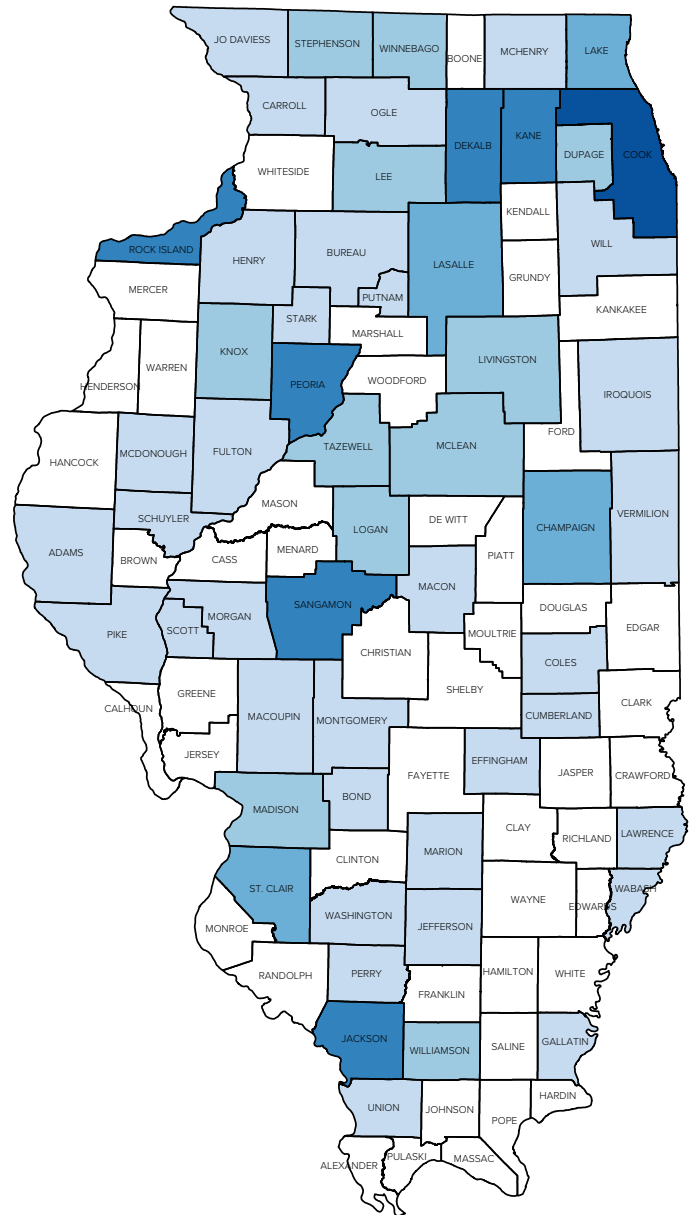
Figure 5: Grants by location

Location	Population (2017 est.)	Applica-tions	Funded	Percent funded	Funds awarded	% Funds awarded	Funds per resident
Cook County	5,274,129	275	81	29.5%	\$343,000	48.3%	6.5¢
“Collar counties” (DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Will)	3,325,693	42	16	38.1%	\$64,500	9.1%	2.0¢
95 other counties	4,370,331	259	92	35.5%	\$302,500	42.6%	6.9¢
TOTAL	12,970,153	576	189	32.8%	\$710,000	100%	5.5¢

Figure 6: Funding per congressional district

District	Grantee organizations	Grant funds	% Grant funds
1st	11	\$49,500	7.0%
2nd	0	\$0	0%
3rd	4	\$15,000	2.1%
4th	5	\$28,500	4.0%
5th	17	\$87,000	12.3%
6th	1	\$5,000	0.7%
7th	27	\$114,500	16.1%
8th	4	\$10,000	1.4%
9th	11	\$43,500	6.1%
10th	5	\$31,000	4.4%
11th	3	\$16,000	2.3%
12th	13	\$43,500	6.1%
13th	14	\$52,500	7.4%
14th	4	\$12,500	1.8%
15th	11	\$38,500	5.4%
16th	16	\$57,500	8.1%
17th	19	\$69,500	9.8%
18th	12	\$36,000	5.1%
TOTAL	177	\$710,000	100%

Figure 7: Grants by county



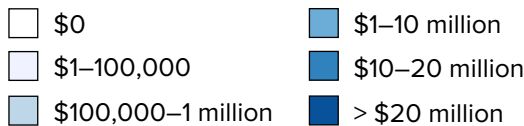
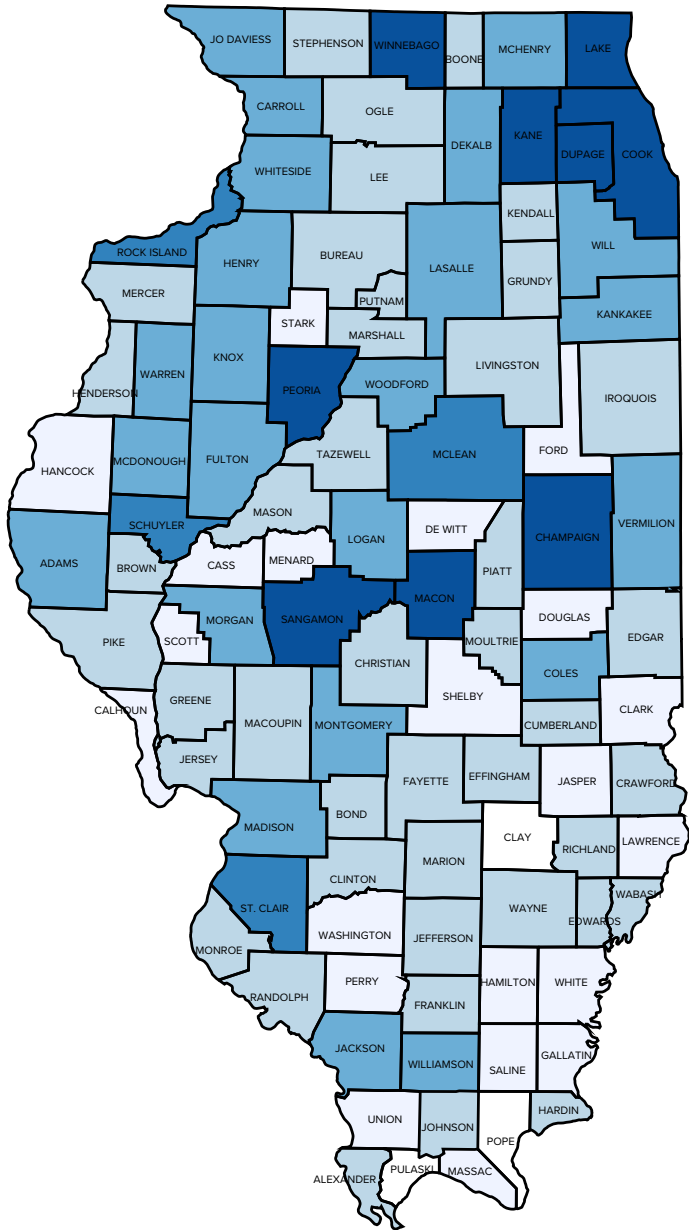
Organizations in 55 (out of 102) counties received grants. Cook County, which is home to 41% of the state's population, includes 76 grantee organizations.

Number of grantee organizations per county



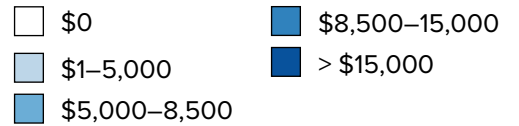
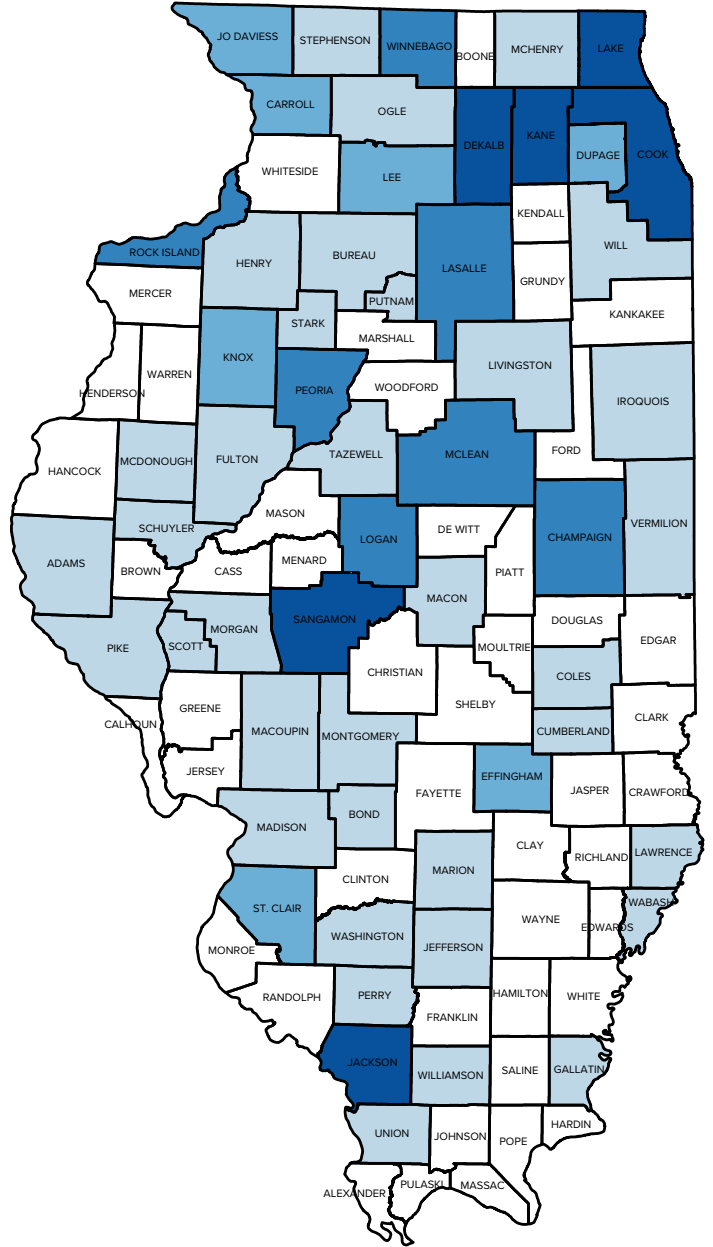
Sources: United States Census Bureau 2018, Illinois Humanities.

Figure 8: Forefront – Foundation giving to Illinois recipients by county, 2017



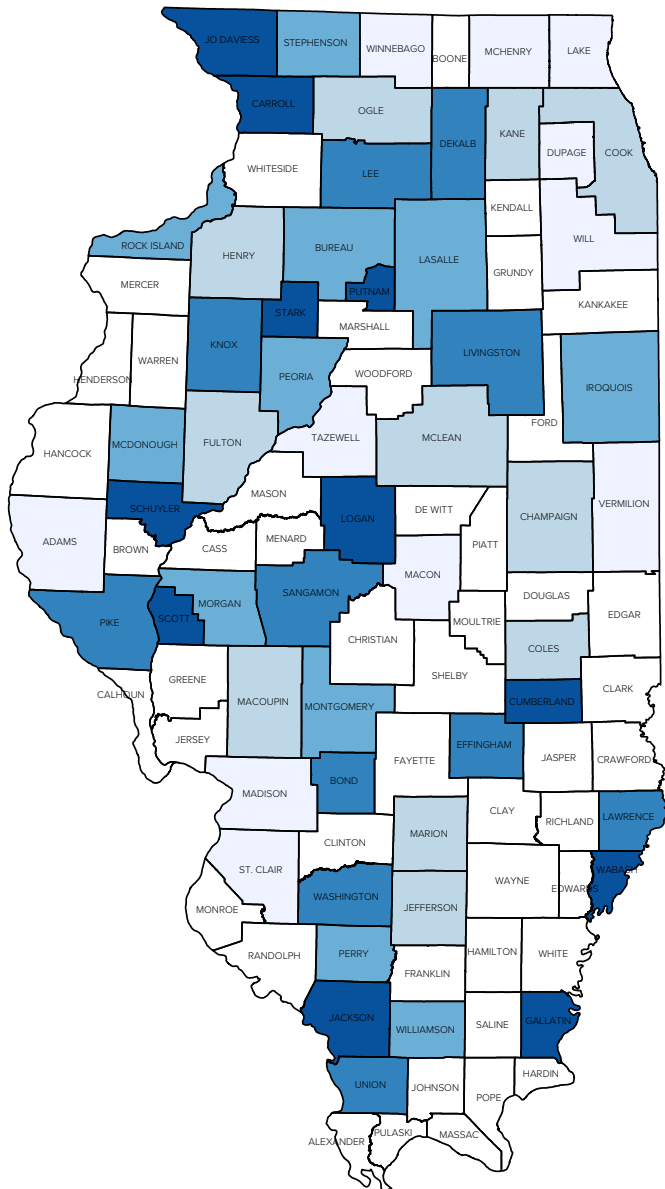
Forefront / Candid map source: “Giving in Illinois,” 2019. Based on 2017 grants awarded by all U.S. foundations available in the Candid database to recipient organizations in Illinois. Includes all grants of \$1,000 or more awarded by 7,577 U.S. foundations, including 2,551 Illinois foundations.

Figure 9: Illinois Humanities – COVID-19 grant relief funds by county, 2020



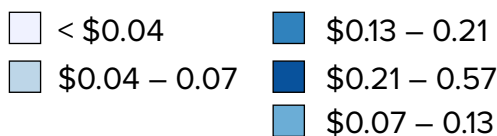
Illinois Humanities map sources: United States Census Bureau 2018, Illinois Humanities.

Figure 10: Grant dollars per county resident



Counties with the largest dollars per resident figures tend to be those with fewer than 10,000 residents such as Scott, Gallatin, Stark, Putnam, and Schuyler counties.

Grant dollars per county resident



Sources: United States Census Bureau 2018, Illinois Humanities.

Grantee partners' contexts

Illinois is sometimes called the most “American” of states because the racial, ethnic and immigrant diversity, age, educational attainment, and economic statistics closely parallel the overall United States. According to 2019 American Community Survey data, Illinois has nearly 13 million residents, the median age is 39, and nearly 12% of people are living below the poverty line. Of the state’s population, 61% of Illinoisans are White; 17% are Hispanic; 14% are Black, 6% are Asian and less than 1% are Native/Indigenous.²⁰ According to United Way, 35% of Illinois households struggle to afford basic needs. Such households are located throughout the state.²¹

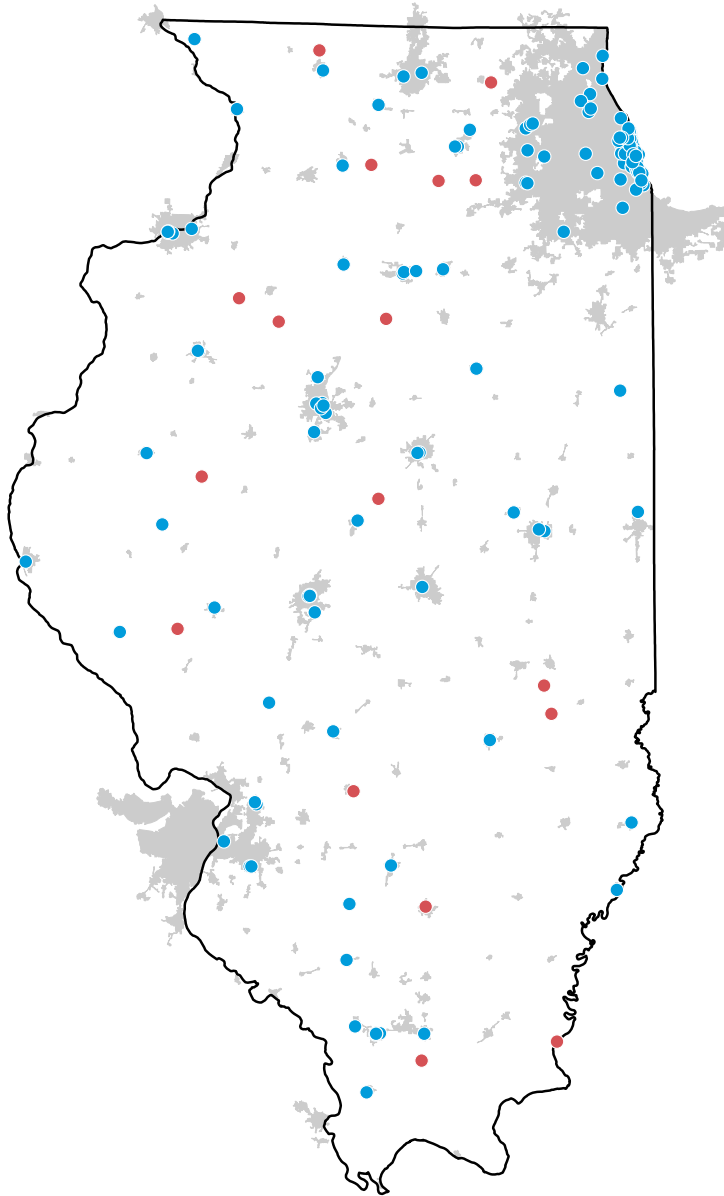
According to the United States Census Bureau, 88.5% of Illinoisans live in urban areas and 11.5% live in rural areas. The differences between urban and rural counties are myriad in Illinois: urban counties have higher wages, lower unemployment rates and higher levels of educational attainment than rural counties; rural counties have less access to healthcare, public transportation, broadband accessibility, K-12 education funding, and residents have shorter life expectancies.²²

These contexts of race and ethnicity, socio-economic levels, rural and urban differences, and the disparate impacts of COVID-19 in Illinois underline the importance of situating humanities organizations within local contexts of geography, demographics, and the pandemic.

Grantee partners operate in places with significant rates of poverty

Poverty spans urban and rural communities alike in Illinois. Two thirds of the 177 grantee partners are located in zip codes where more than 35% of households are experiencing poverty.²³ Fifty

Figure 11: Grantee Partners in urban & rural areas

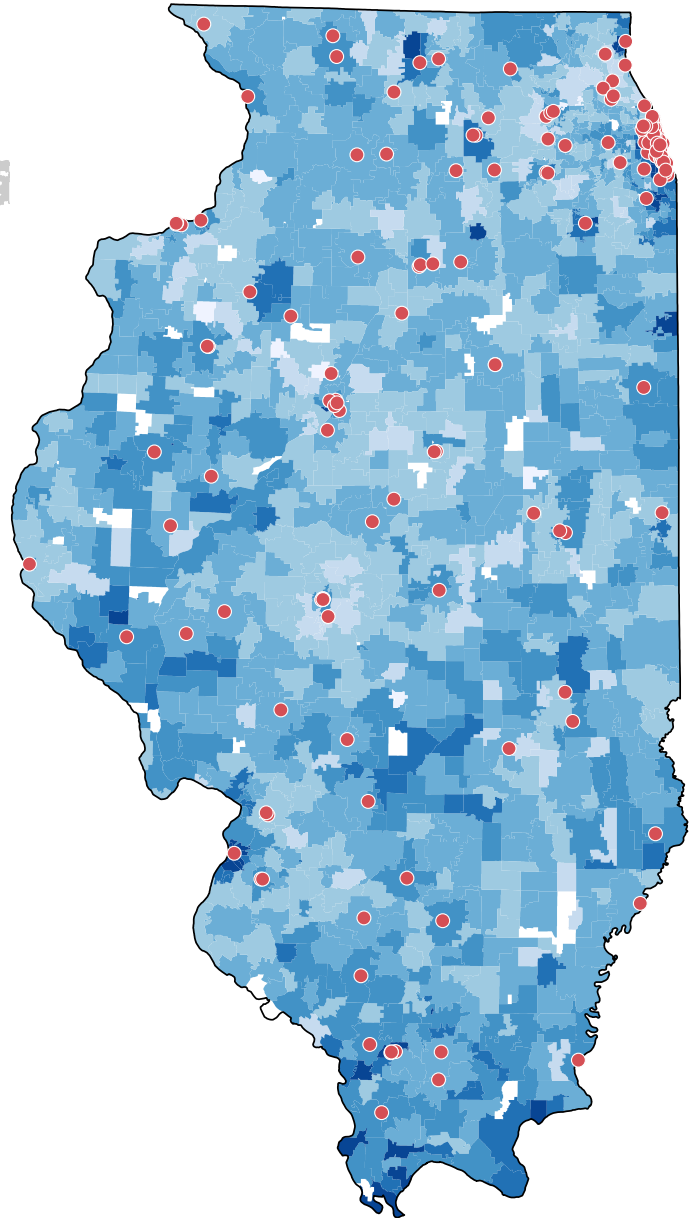


Legend

- Grant organization in rural area ●
- Grant organization in urban area ●
- Urban areas defined by Census Bureau ■

Sources: United States Census Bureau 2019, Illinois Humanities.

Figure 12: Organizations & community poverty levels



According to United Way, 35% of Illinois households struggle to afford basic needs. Such households are located throughout the state

Percent of households below the ALICE poverty threshold (by ZIP code)

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| □ < 10% | □ 20 to 30% | □ 40 to 50% |
| □ 10 to 20% | □ 30 to 40% | □ 50 to 60% |
| | | □ > 60% |

Sources: United Way 2020, United States Census Bureau 2018, Illinois Humanities.

Figure 14: Organizations & COVID-19 cases as of April 2020

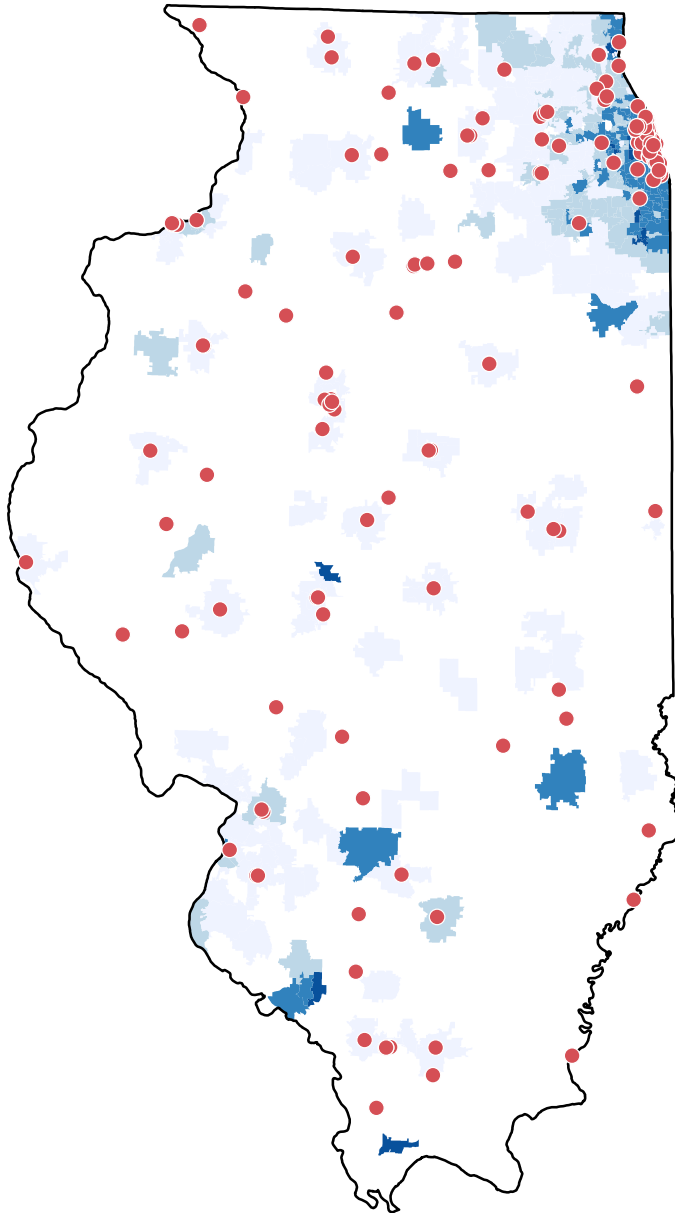
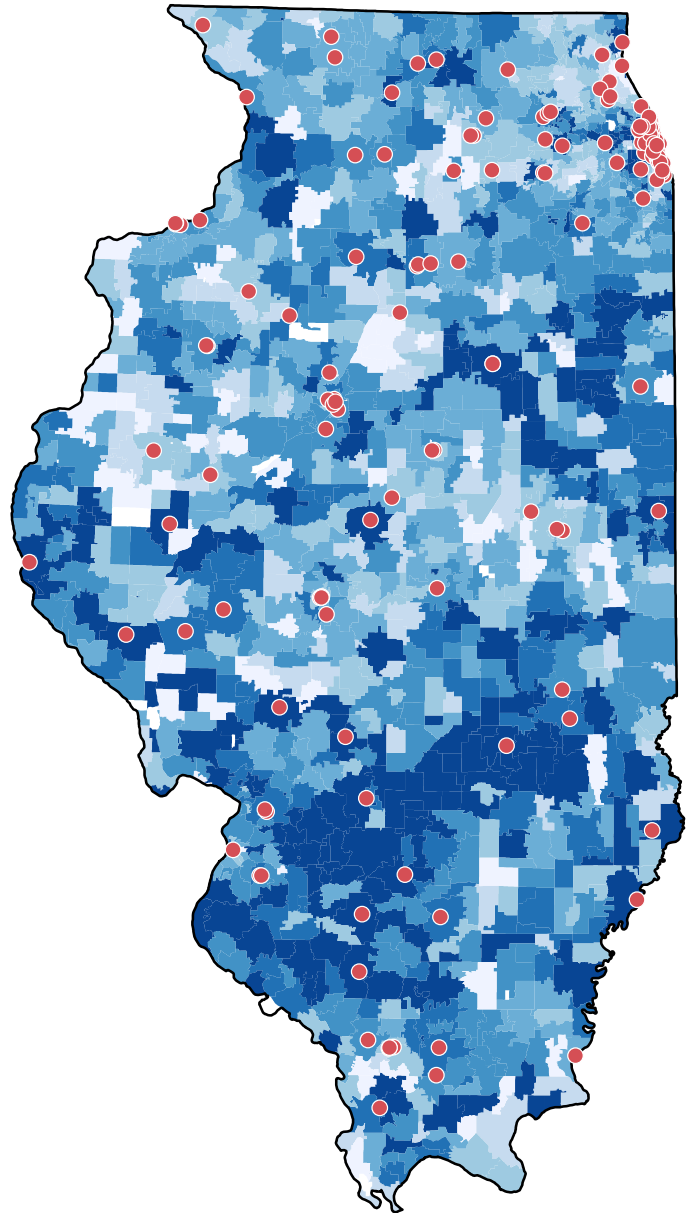



Figure 15: Organizations & COVID-19 cases as of January 2021



67 organizations (38%) are located in zip codes with more COVID cases per person than the statewide average. 25 organizations are in the most impacted zip codes where more than 10% of people have tested positive for COVID.

Percent of residents who tested positive for COVID
0%  >10%

Sources: IL Department of Public Health 2021, United States Census Bureau 2018, Illinois Humanities.

two grantee partners (29.4%) are located in communities where the majority of households (>50%) are experiencing poverty.

Grantee partners operate in places with significant rates of COVID-19

As of January 2021, Illinois had the fifth highest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the country overall. And, in tandem with the rest of the country, African Americans and Latinx people have borne a starkly disproportionate burden of cases and deaths. As of the writing of this report, Black and Hispanic Illinoisans are being vaccinated at half the rate of white residents.²⁴

Given the preponderance of grantee partners located in zip codes experiencing high levels of poverty, it may not be surprising that 38%

of grantees are located in zip codes with more COVID-19 cases than the statewide average. In fact, 25 grantee partners operate in zip codes where more than 10% of people have tested positive for COVID-19.

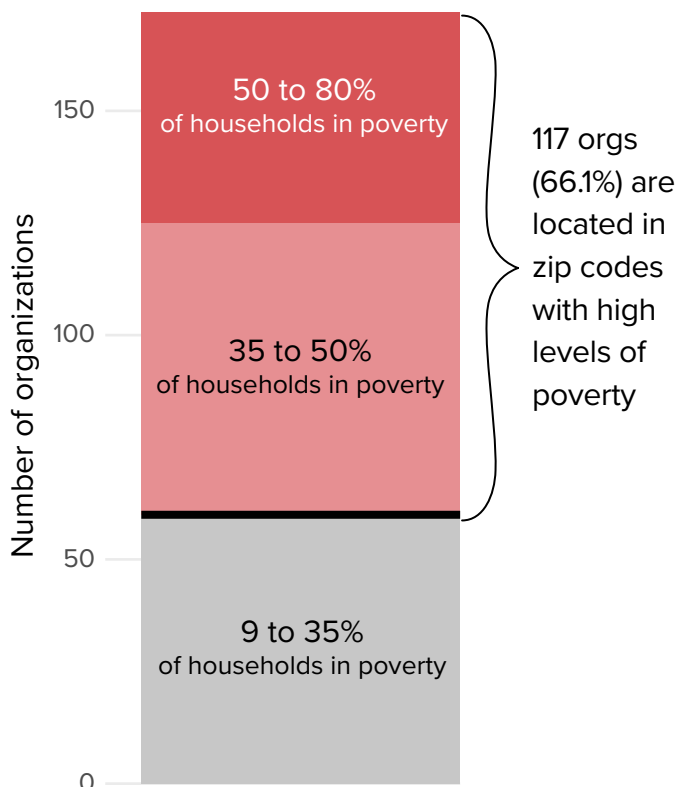
Summary

For many grantee partners, COVID-19 relief grants were transformative. Not only did the dollars provide urgently-needed relief, funds enabled them to deliver on missions during an unprecedented time. In some cases funds reached areas of the state that traditionally receive less funding. The geographic distribution of grants ensured broad and diverse access to public humanities to communities experiencing financial distress and areas suffering disproportionately from the impacts of the virus.

When grantee partners are mapped against demographic, geographic, and pandemic contexts, it becomes clear that humanities organizations are situated in communities that were under significant economic duress prior to the pandemic and more than a third of grantee partners are located in places that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

These data, when considered in sum, paint a landscape of an ecosystem populated by diverse organizations working locally in communities in ways that have heightened relevance during and post-pandemic times. Given the number of humanities organizations operating in areas in which households struggle to make ends meet, and in which COVID-19 has had a devastating impact, including areas in which there is disproportionate impact on surrounding communities, we need to understand the value of these organizations for increasing community resilience, social cohesion, and equity in a profoundly new light.

Figure 13: Organizations grouped by zip code poverty level



The projects funded by Community Resilience grants, profiled in Chapter 4, illustrate the ways in which the operational and programmatic responses of humanities organizations are serving to individually mitigate the effects of the pandemic within their communities and, collectively as a sector, across the state.







CHAPTER 4

From community, resilience

Illinois Humanities awarded \$90,000 in Community Resilience grants to 15 organizations across the state. The intent of the Community Resilience funding opportunity was to find ways to support humanities organizations to make visible the experiences of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlight stories of community resilience throughout. Grant funds could be used to cover operating, documentation, and program accessibility expenses, as well as to pay storytellers, scholars, writers, humanists, artists, musicians, photographers, interviewees, and participants. Grantee partners were asked to document their story-capturing process and supported projects needed to be available to the public.

This particular call for proposals was inspired by community history and public humanities efforts including [Paper Monuments](#); [One Poem at A Time](#); [Fill the Walls with Hope](#); the Pulitzer Center’s “[Mother of Mothers](#),” and the national [Works Progress Administration posters](#) – projects that understand the power of the humanities to leverage and elevate the potential of communities and the particularities of place.

Many of the Community Resilience projects were informed by the specific history of each community and drew on local assets and residents' stories. The descriptions that follow are in grantee partners' own words.

Atlanta Public Library District

Atlanta Public Library shines the spotlight on an experience of the pandemic often overlooked – the experience of children. Children in the Atlanta community had their summers turned upside down. The recreational opportunities they had looked forward to throughout the school year – library, swimming pool, baseball diamond – were closed. They were unable to meet with their friends across town. Meanwhile, many families struggled with illness, loss, and financial strain. The library provided an opportunity for kids to tell their stories through art, creating a permanent art installation in the canteen of the library's children's space. Library staff worked with the local school district to provide art supplies and guide kids through the process of sketching their memory of

COVID-19 summer, writing an explanation of their drawing, and painting the images on ceramic tiles. These tiles were later professionally installed in the arrangement of a mural. Photographs of the tiles and student explanations are being assembled into a book and a map for visitors in addition to appearing on the library's website and social media.

Aurora Regional Fire Museum

Aurora Regional Fire Museum reached out to an underrepresented subset of the public – firefighters – to gather stories of their experience working during the COVID-19 pandemic. Focusing on Northern Illinois, but expanding across the state, the museum used online surveys to capture the stories of firefighters bravely confronting new dangers in order to keep



their communities safe. The Museum collected images of firefighters with and without PPE in order to highlight the human faces behind the masks and to document the various styles of PPE used during the pandemic, including improvised and makeshift PPE used in the face of dire shortages. These images and stories formed the basis of a public exhibit open to visitors and shared extensively over social media. The museum's social media presence has grown over 13% since the start of the pandemic, reaching more audiences than ever.



faith-based community representatives, nonprofit organizations, universities, and corporate representatives, BECOME has broadened the reach of resources and services in these communities and empowered residents to shape leadership decisions. The Maximizing Impact Initiative has also resulted in a comprehensive tool for connecting people to resources and three videos bringing attention to partner community’s context, situation, and acts of service and resilience. In a recent panel hosted by Chicago African Americans in Philanthropy, BECOME spotlighted South Shore Works, a resident-founded and driven coalition.

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Walk or Drive Up (rain or shine)
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AustinComingTogether.org

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods

Recognizing the intertwined impacts of COVID-19, racial and social inequalities, and environmental health, Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods launched “Lake County Leads: Stories of Environmental Justice and Empowerment during COVID-19.” Carla Aldana, a Waukegan resident and ethnographer with a passion for environmental justice, conducted Zoom and phone interviews with five extraordinary Lake County residents of various

BECOME: Center for Community Engagement and Social Change

When the pandemic first gained momentum in March

of 2020, BECOME mobilized its networks on the South and West sides of Chicago immediately. Within a week of Illinois and Chicago issuing “shelter in place” orders, BECOME virtually convened strategy meetings with local and national nonprofit representatives in order to address the needs of marginalized Chicago communities. Out of these conversations, BECOME developed the Maximizing Impact Initiative focused on the South Shore, Auburn Gresham and Austin neighborhoods. By facilitating discussions, information sessions, and data-driven webinars among community members,



backgrounds and ages who demonstrated resilience in supporting their communities during the pandemic. Stories include a librarian who leveraged networks to distribute PPE and a Latina mom who set up a food distribution center in her basement. Illustrator Janet McDonnell, in collaboration with Aldana, brought the themes from the community stories to life in a variety of artistic forms. The final

storytelling products were disseminated throughout the community, in partnership with the Lake County Health Department, as part of a digital campaign, including video vignettes, comics, blog posts, and social media posts.

Carbondale Community Arts

Carbondale Community Arts (CCA) is creating space for

intergenerational and cross-cultural conversation in rural Illinois communities about the pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests, and the future of the community. With the support of the Community Resilience grant, they partnered with Southern Illinois University (SIU) School of Journalism to provide much-needed employment to Carbondale youth during the pandemic while also raising stories of resilience in Southern Illinois Black communities into public conversation. Through a seven-week program, youth and SIU student mentors collaborated to gather videos of oral histories of Black Carbondale and Southern Illinois residents about their experiences during the pandemic and in the Black Lives Matter movement. The students gained crucial technical and video editing skills while learning how to compile multiple stories into a single video presentation. The video testifies to many experiences of resilience, but also seeks to be a resource for future resilience. In addition to being shared widely through student presentations, exhibitions, and online platforms, it will be preserved in CCA's archive and the African American Museum of Southern Illinois' archive.

Changing Worlds

For a changing community like Pilsen, a community already grappling with the effects of gentrification, pollution, and racial and economic inequity, the experience of COVID-19 was especially fraught and complex. Two Changing World artists and Pilsen residents Diana Solis and Jean Parisi worked with high school students at Benito Juarez High School and on their own to collect videos, audio, and photos from Pilsen residents answering the question, “How have you failed, survived, and thrived in the time of COVID-19?” The materials were collaboratively combined into a digital scrapbook intended to serve as a collective memory of the pandemic. All the people interviewed identified strongly with the Pilsen community and lamented the loss of interpersonal interactions that lay at the heart of the community’s strong ties. Still, community members came together to reimagine family traditions, support one another through unimaginable loss, and provide for each other through food drives and caring for the homeless population.



Chicago Cultural Alliance

Arts and culture professionals have been deeply impacted by the pandemic but are also at the forefront of community healing. The Chicago Cultural Alliance is collecting and archiving Stories of Arts Resilience (SOAR) during the COVID-19 pandemic. In collaboration with several artists, performers, archivists, oral historians, curators, museum administrators, collections managers, graduate students, and researchers, Chicago Cultural Alliance conducted and recorded a series of dialogic oral histories – two arts professionals interviewing one another – reflecting on arts resilience during the pandemic. Using StoryCorps Connect, an innovative tool developed by

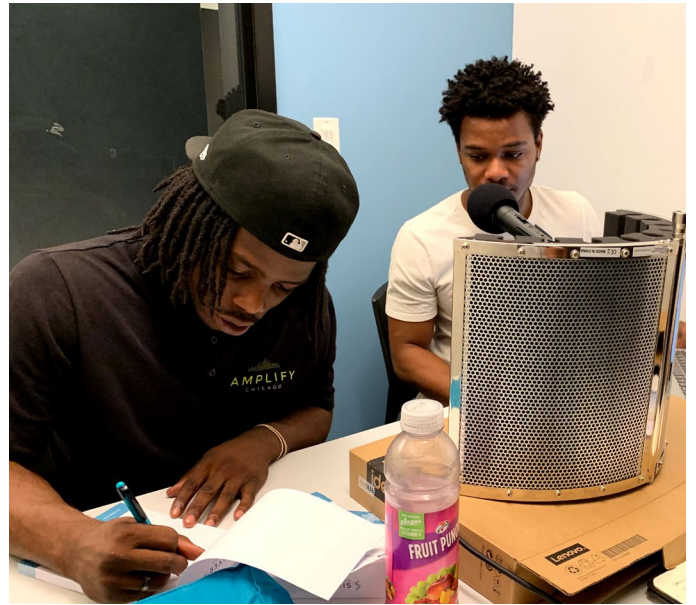


StoryCorps Chicago, 20 to 30 oral histories have been collected reflecting a broad range of arts and museum professionals and diverse cultural groups. SOAR will serve as the foundation for a free, publicly-accessible archive stored in perpetuity at the Library of Congress. This archive will serve as a critical resource for the arts community in Illinois and nationwide to build solidarity, heal, and envision long-term planning in the face of crisis.

Collaboraction Theatre Company

Collaboraction focused its efforts on amplifying the voices and artwork of ‘essential’ Chicago communities too often cast aside. Collaboraction hired five Chicago artists – Mia Park, Sami Ismat, Jasmin Cardenas, Teh’Ray Hale Sr. aka PHENOM, and Willie Round – to create short, personal videos bringing attention to the impact of the pandemic on their lives and communities. The artists speak from their varied, overlapping experiences as essential workers, as members of Asian-American, Black, and Latinx communities, immigrant and refugee communities, and neighborhoods spanning Little Village, Englewood, Kenwood, Austin, and North Lawndale. Each video was unique and reflected the artistic vision and personal insights of each artist. Cardenas’ video “Essential?...’Tengo que trabajar” took the form of candid interviews with theatre artists and essential workers in Little Village while Ismat’s video “Transfixed” took the form of a solo video performance about his experience as a Syrian refugee caught in a fraught immigration system while grieving his father’s passing from COVID-19. The videos have already garnered thousands of views on multiple online streaming platforms and received glowing praise in the *Chicago Tribune*.





ConTextos

ConTextos is ‘Complicating the Narrative’ on COVID-19 and communities directly impacted by the criminal justice system, racism, and economic inequality in Chicago. ConTextos hired two of their alumni authors and founders of the podcast show *Complicating the Narrative*, Mariah and Tatiana, to produce six new episodes. The third season of the podcast features stories of community resilience during the summer of 2020 from a diverse group of organizational participants and partners. These participants and partners include Chicago Public School (CPS) students, IMAN (Inner-City Muslim Action Network), MAAFA Redemption Project, ConTextos Open Circle participants, and ConTextos alumni. These episodes, which were promoted extensively over social media to broad audiences, paint a picture of humanities organizations, community organizations, and diverse community members supporting each other through a summer of adversity and opportunity.

Effingham Public Library

Effingham is sometimes referred to as the “Crossroads of America” due to its location at the crossroads of Interstates 57 and 70. With the pandemic of 2020, the rural community of Effingham also found itself at the “Crossroads of Education,” trying to find the right path forward. To honor Effingham’s teachers, principals, parents, and community members who stepped up to support students through this period of unprecedented change, Effingham Public Library conducted interviews with and photographed teachers, administrators, and students from local schools. The photographs were intended to highlight the teachers and principals who cooked and delivered meals so students wouldn’t go hungry, ‘teacher parades’ were organized so young students could see their teachers, and locations were identified to distribute school supplies and technology for parents engaging in remote learning for the first time. Prints of these photographs were pasted onto concrete and brick surfaces of businesses around downtown Effingham using a special wheat-paste application method. The photographs, along with the interviews, were documented and shared online on a dedicated

Instagram page and on the library’s website to invite public conversations acknowledging the extraordinary efforts of community members and how to best support all residents going forward.

Full Spectrum Features

Full Spectrum Features invited us to pause during the pandemic, and to reflect with humor and humility on the unique experiences of a subset of POC – performers of color. In collaboration with Dominizuelan, a comedic duo made up of Chicago acting and theatre veterans Wendy Mateo





and Lorena Diaz, Full Spectrum Features created a short film featuring a series of humorous sketches highlighting the systemic racism that actors and other performers of color experience every day. Full Spectrum Features also invited the public to engage with the film through a series of weekly live watch parties on Twitch and Facebook Live. During these live watch parties, Lolo, Mateo, a special guest, and the public engaged in a dynamic virtual conversation on different aspects of race and identity. The premiere watch party, “Identity is a Construct,” attracted over 100 audience members. Other watch party



themes include: “Identity is Real & Also an Illusion,” “Identity is Profitable & Also Curated,” and “Identity is Divisive and Also Unifying.”

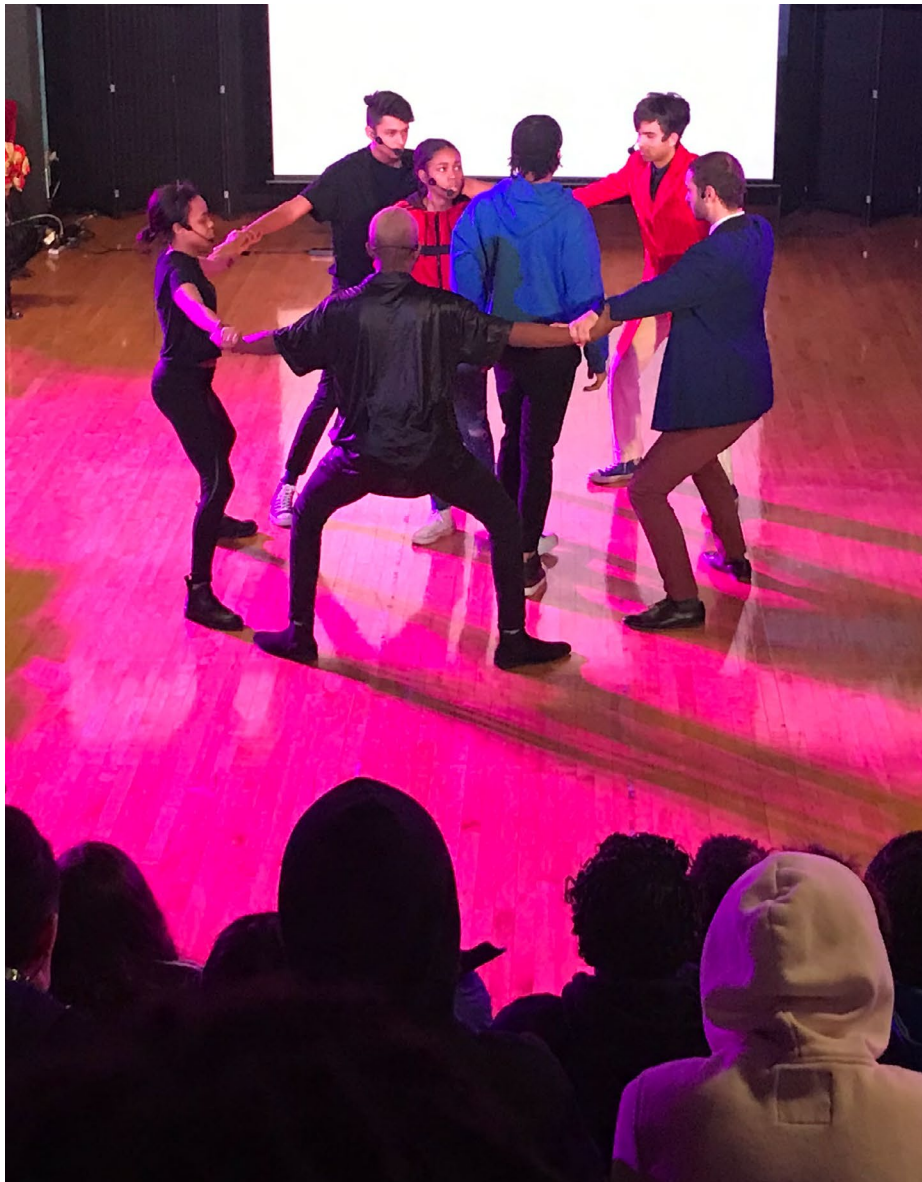
Galena Center for the Arts

Galena – a historic rural town nestled among rolling hills – has always depended on its talented musicians to draw throngs of tourists into the local establishments. COVID-19 hit Galena hard, especially its songwriters and musicians who are at the backbone of the town’s tourism-oriented economy.

To showcase the resilience of the arts community in Galena during this challenging time, the Galena Center for the Arts organized the virtual concert “Covid-19 Galena, The Story in Song,” inviting local songwriters to use the hardships of the pandemic as creative source material to write and perform original songs. Songwriters recorded their songs from home while sheltering in place and Galena Center for the Arts enhanced the videos and compiled them into a dynamic virtual concert incorporating photography from local photographers to increase visual impact. The series premiered on YouTube on October 29 and has been garnering views daily. It will remain freely accessible online in perpetuity as a resource for the community.

Kuumba Lynx

Kuumba Lynx worked with residents of the Uptown and Englewood neighborhoods to promote intergenerational conversation and create new spaces and resources for community resilience through creative writing and art. Engaging their dedicated teaching artists and restorative justice facilitators, Kuumba Lynx hosted 12 discovery sessions and writing classes over Zoom this summer with



the pandemic, every member of Savannah's community was impacted in different ways and faced unique challenges. Savannah Historical Museum's COVID-19 Community Conversations Project sought to provide a shared virtual platform where these individual stories could emerge from isolation, gather, and commune. The museum asked community members from all walks of life – from the fire chief to the high school economics teacher to the funeral home director, to a family struggling with remote learning – to speak candidly about how they experienced the pandemic. The stories have been compiled on the museum's website as a series of narratives, photographs, and videos that illustrate the vibrance and resilience of this community even in the midst of a pandemic.

South Side Weekly

Life during COVID-19 often feels like dystopia, especially for many South Side communities on the frontlines of multiple simultaneous fights against racial injustice and economic inequality. The South Side Weekly, a community print and online publication, invited community members to envision new futures – utopias – for the South Side in the midst of crisis. The organization

50 participating artists, youth, and families. They discussed their experiences of racism and the impact of COVID-19 on their lives as intertwined issues, transmitting these reflections through poetry and prose. Young artist Jaharri Brodnax translated their writing into a series of inspirational posters posted in predominantly low-income Black, Latino, and Arab neighborhoods across Chicago. Brodnax also created the Sprout Coloring Book, an

artistic expression of these writings alongside quotes from the summer writing sessions, that children and families across Chicago can relate to and use as an artistic outlet for their feelings.

Savanna Historical Society

Savanna is a small, tight-knit community on the banks of the Great Mississippi. During

collected submissions of photography, poetry, audio pieces, comics, illustrations, and prose for compilation into the November 11 Future Visioning issue. In addition to 250 mail subscribers, the issue was available in free boxes on the street, in bars and cafes, libraries, community centers, and food pantries across the South Side. The issue is also available for free on South Side Weekly's website, which reaches 60,000 audience members per month. South Side Weekly further partnered with community-based institutions with delivery services, such as the Market Box Program at the Experimental Station and South Side Blooms, a cut flower delivery service, to distribute copies of the issue to new audience members. By envisioning new futures, South Side Weekly engaged marginalized communities in an act of collective hope in pursuit of racial and social justice, and community wellbeing.



CHAPTER 5

COVID-19 and the Humanities in Illinois: keystones and arches





key-stone: a central stone at the summit of an arch, locking the whole together.

“A post-COVID-19 community should foster social inclusion, build accessible public spaces and civic institutions, safeguard all forms of cultural heritage, protect and support culture professionals, promote diversity, creativity and innovation, and integrate the arts and culture sector into its recovery and development.”

– Culture & Community in a *Time of Crisis: A Special Edition of Culture Track*.
Culture Track, 2020.

The 177 grantee partners featured in this report are not comprehensive of all humanities and cultural organizations in the state, but they set into stark relief the impact of COVID-19 on such organizations. They also, make radiantly visible the robust ecosystem and critical role these organizations are playing in making their communities healthier, less isolated and more resilient.

As the state increasingly faces the need to grapple with its complex histories, public health disparities and a collective racial reckoning, humanities organizations can serve as the keystones needed to enable us to arch towards the future.

Based on what is being learned nationally, there may be an emerging mandate: arts and culture organizations are being called upon to be more active in their communities and more reflective of community stories and experiences. Notable findings from surveys and interviews from 124,000 respondents sourced from 635 cultural organizations, nationally (namely museums, collections, historical societies, performing arts organizations, and arts and cultural centers) about the role of culture and community engagement during COVID-19 include:

- Digital programming is providing needed options. 53% of respondents reported participating in one or more digital cultural activities
- Support for creativity is providing much-needed solace. 81% surveyed reported doing something new and creative (cooking and baking), making something by hand (like pottery, quilting, knitting), making art, photography, creative writing
- Content creators matter. 62% of people are accessing cultural content from history museums and history attractions, performing arts centers and individual and ensemble performers
- Inclusion and representation are urgent matters. Respondents – particularly communities of color and indigenous communities – are looking to cultural organizations to tell stories that are relevant

and reflect their experiences

- Many people who are participating in online content had not physically visited these kinds of places in the past year

Perhaps the take-away most relevant to our Illinois ecosystem is the following:

“Americans want arts and culture organizations to become more active participants in their communities and they want to see their communities better reflected in these organizations.”²⁵

These findings align strongly with what Illinois humanities organizations are expressing:

- They are looking for ways to work differently and in less isolation
- Organizations expect and want to give more attention to equity and inclusion
- Organizations are excited about, and anticipate, opportunities for organizational transformation – particularly in terms of new modes of engagement and new audiences
- The desire to network and connect with peers through meet-ups, trainings and peer-skills-shares is high
- Organizations believe there is real value in developing a shared language and understanding of the overall landscape of humanities organizations, and they want to contribute to that community

What follows is a set of ideas and recommendations drawn from the research, analysis and conversations with grantee partners that inform this report.

BIG IDEAS

1 Humanities are necessary for democracy and for enabling us to imagine what we want in our society. Public humanities organizations, by design, provide the kinds of experiences which enable participants to be “more likely to engage in civic life, and more likely to hold aspirations for improving the common good.”²⁶

2 Public humanities organizations contribute to individual and community resilience. Recipients of COVID-19 relief grants are providing space, structure and the programming to foster social cohesion. They are enabling people to become closer to one another, develop a better understanding of the places in which they live, and create and share narratives about their experiences.

3 Illinois Humanities COVID-19 relief grantee partners’ experiences align with what research shows about how public humanities organizations respond during times of crisis. Grantee partners are serving as community anchors for trusted information, for mitigating social isolation, for enabling people to make and create objects and narratives that help them to process loss, trauma, and joy. They are also – while under significant duress – finding ways to incorporate new technologies and new modes for delivering on their missions.

4 Every county in Illinois has a humanities organization and cultural assets; many are

invisible to the funding and policy communities. Public humanities organizations are insufficiently visible as a sector and undervalued as a resource. Rural communities, in particular, have historically received less visibility and funding in relation to their metro peers.²⁷ Overlooking this sector runs the risk of losing those community anchors most committed to preserving the artifacts, ephemera and memory of Illinois’ history and identity, and simultaneously failing to capitalize on an ecosystem ripe to contribute to the state’s ability to repair and heal the triple pandemics of COVID-19, racial reckoning, and disinvestment across rural and urban communities.

5 Humanities organizations in Illinois are often operating in places in which people were experiencing economic distress before COVID-19 and which have been disproportionately affected by the impacts of the pandemic. The operational and programmatic responses of grantee partners are serving to individually mitigate the effects of the pandemic within their communities and, collectively as a sector, across the state. Understanding the contexts in which these organizations are operating amplifies the importance and significance of their humanities missions.

6 Money counts – especially for organizations with smaller budgets. Relatively small grants (\$2,500 – \$7,500) can have transformative impacts for small organizations, especially when they are in areas overlooked or under-funded by philanthropy traditionally. Public and philanthropic funds directed to humanities organizations should be understood as investments, not diversions. As outlined in Chapter 1, public humanities organizations are not “cost-centers;” rather, they help bolster revenue in Illinois.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For Illinois Humanities

Illinois Humanities is working to understand and learn from the intensive experience of this past year. Given Illinois Humanities' mission, capacity and core competencies, our recommendations for ourselves at this time include:

- Increase our capacity to support peer-to-peer learning, technical assistance, and partnership infrastructure statewide
- Look at the ways in which an equity lens, paired with data, can help inform grantmaking priorities
- Evaluate the possibility of creating and maintaining a public directory of Illinois humanities organizations to bolster a community of practice and to help cross-sector stakeholders connect with local and statewide organizations

For funders

- Understand public humanities organizations as integral to investments in resilience, well-being, community development, and equity
- Support mechanisms for connectivity among organizations with humanities missions
- Invest strengthening organizations' abilities to reflect local interests and identities and to participate in communities of practice and professional networks
- Invest in organizations' ability to create, curate, and leverage digital and virtual content

- Consider what proportion of dollars support organizations serving rural communities
- Of special note: relatively small grants (\$2,500-\$7,500) can have transformative impacts for small organizations, especially when they are in areas overlooked or underfunded by philanthropy traditionally

For policy makers

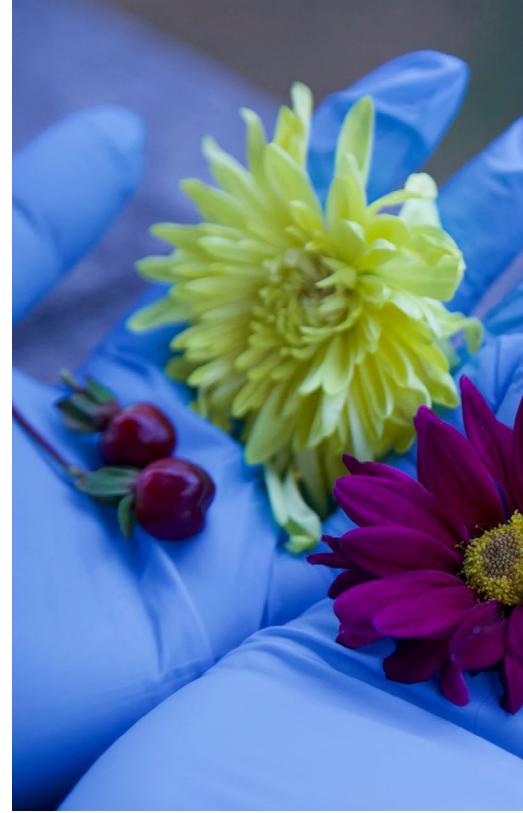
- Include representatives from public humanities organizations in the development and implementation of policies, particularly public health and community development strategies
- Promote, deploy, network, and hire humanists in recovery planning at the local, regional, and statewide levels
- Quantify and communicate regularly about the economic impact of public humanities organizations, particularly those from rural areas
- Integrate and include humanities organizations in public/private partnerships involving philanthropy and private investors

CONCLUSION

We will need an “all hands on deck” approach to address the plethora of plagues we are facing: COVID-19, racial inequity, economic devastation, and the social isolation these ills foment. Collective efforts are required to address our crises – and will be required for the long haul ahead in mending our shared civic fabric, frayed-for-decades.

As we look towards a post-COVID-19 horizon, what might it mean if we fail to include the very organizations that provide context “for ensuring intervention designs (whether programmatic, policy based, or infrastructural) suit their target populations both culturally and aesthetically?”²⁸

In Illinois, we have an opportunity to redefine the role and invest in the value of public humanities organizations; in doing so we will be better able to imagine and to create a healthier, more connected, and equitable state.














irectory

Illinois Humanities awarded 189 grants to 177 unique organizations. The following directory is a snapshot of all the organizations, listing their contact information and grant awarded. To view and download more details about each organization, visit ilhumanities.org/directory.

Directory Key:

- Organization name**  Indicates grant received
- Address  General operations
- City, State, Zip  Program Innovation & Adaptation
- County  Community Resilience
-  [webaddress](#)
-  @handle
-  @handle
-  @handle
- Category** –
Primary | Secondary type
- Project** –
 [project webaddress](#)

[1820 Col. Benjamin Stephenson](#)

[House](#) ©

409 S Buchanan
PO Box 754
Edwardsville, IL 62025
Madison County
stephensonhouse.org
@1820StephensonHouse
@benlucystephenson
@Stephenson1820

Category –

History | Education

[6018North](#) ©

6018 N Kenmore
Chicago, IL 60660
Cook County
6018north.org
@6018north
@6018north
@6018north

Category –

Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

[826CHI](#) ©

1276 N Milwaukee Ave
Chicago, IL 60622
Cook County
826chi.org
@826CHI
@826chi
@826CHI

Category –

Literature and Writing | Education

[Abe Lincoln Project/Looking for Lincoln in Pike County](#) ©

PO Box 62
Pittsfield, IL 62363
Pike County
pikelincoln.com
@AbeLincolnProject

Category –

History | Education

[About Face Theatre Collective](#) ©

5252 N Broadway Ave FL2
Chicago, IL 60640
Cook County
aboutfacetheatre.com
@aboutfacetheatre
@aboutfacechi
@aboutfacechi

Category –

Arts | Education

[Adler Arts Center](#) ©

1700 N Milwaukee Ave
Libertyville, IL 60048
Lake County
adlercenter.org
@theadlercenter
@theadlercenter

Category –

Arts | Education

[African American Museum of Southern Illinois](#) ①

1237 E Main St Unit 1046
University Mall
Carbondale, IL 62901
Jackson County
africanamericanmuseumsi.org
@AAMSiCarbondale
Category –
Culture and Heritage | Arts
Project –
[youtube.com/channel/
UCqjFmaQ7RV3YEXj4O3G81Cg](https://youtube.com/channel/UCqjFmaQ7RV3YEXj4O3G81Cg)
| [africanamericanmuseumsi.org/
covid-19-art-project-s.html](http://africanamericanmuseumsi.org/covid-19-art-project-s.html)

[African-American Cultural & Genealogical Society of Illinois](#) ©

235 W Eldorado St
PO Box 25251
Decatur, IL 62525
Macon County
african-americancultural.org

@evelynhood66

Category –

History | Culture and Heritage

[AI Raby Foundation](#) ©

7230 S Indiana
Chicago, IL 60619
Cook County
rabyfoundation.org
@rabyfoundation
@rabyfoundation
@rabyfoundation

Category –

Civic and Community Engagement |
History

[American Blues Theater](#) ©

4809 N Ravenswood Ste 221
Chicago, IL 60640
Cook County
americanbluestheater.com
@americanbluestheater
@american_blues_theater
@americanbluesth

Category –

Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

[American Farm Heritage](#) ©

1395 Museum Ave
PO Box 606
Greenville, IL 62246
Bond County
[americanfarmheritagemuseum.
com](http://americanfarmheritagemuseum.com)
@americanfarmheritagemuseum

Category –

History | Culture and Heritage

[Artists Reenvisioning Tomorrow](#) ©

919 NE Jefferson Ave
Peoria, IL 61603
Peoria County
artincpeoria.org

f @artinceoria
@ @artinceoria
t @artinceoria
Category –
Arts | Education

Atlanta Public Library and Museum ®

100 NW Race St
PO Box 568
Atlanta, IL 61723
Logan County
globe atlantapld.org
f @Atlanta-Public-Library-and-Museum-379230795465483
Category –
History | Education
Project –
Summer of COVID-19
globe bit.ly/38i3vfa |
bit.ly/3v53uVM

Aurora Historical Society ©

PO Box 905
Aurora, IL 60506
Kane County
globe aurorahistory.net
f @AuroraHistory
@ @aurorahistory
t @aurorahistory
Category –
History | Education

Aurora Regional Fire Museum ®; ©

53 N Broadway
Aurora, IL 60505
Kane County
globe auroraregionalfiremuseum.org
f @AuroraRegionalFireMuseum
@ @aurora_firemuse
t @aurora_firemuse
Category –
History | Education
Project –

Essential Stories: Firefighting in a Pandemic
globe auroraregionalfiremuseum.org/essential-stories

Backbones ①

PO Box 7334
Prospect Heights, IL 60070
Cook County
globe backbonesonline.com
f @BACKBONESONLINE
@ @backbonesonline
t @backbonesonline
Category –
Civic and Community Engagement | Education
Project –
globe bit.ly/3rx8m3C |
bit.ly/3v6lOh9

Ballet Quad Cities ①

613 17th St
Rock Island, IL 61201
Rock Island County
globe balletquadcities.com
f @balletquadcities
@ @balletquadcities
t @BalletQC
Category –
Arts | Education
Project –
globe youtu.be/EFrjSnRRWPM |
youtu.be/SH-zfzXkLY4

Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture ©

6500 S Pulaski Rd
Chicago, IL 60629
Cook County
globe balzekasmuseum.org
f @Balzekas-Museum-of-Lithuanian-Culture-170807661630, @Stanley.
Balzekas, @BalticDisplacedPersons
@ @balzekasmuseum

t @BalzekasM
Category –
Culture and Heritage | Education

BECOME: Center for Community Engagement and Social Change ®

207 E Ohio St
Chicago, IL 60611
Cook County
globe becomecenter.org
f @Become.Inc
Category –
Civic and Community Engagement | Education
Project –
Maximizing Impact Initiative
globe youtu.be/Vyf9HrhmAOg |
bit.ly/3c5FV6k

Bishop Hill Heritage Association ©

103 N Bishop Hill St
Bishop Hill, IL 61419
Henry County
globe bishophillheritage.org
f @bhheritageassociation
Category –
History | Culture and Heritage

Bronzeville Black Chicagoan Historical Society ©

10 W 35th St Ste 9D3-1
Chicago, IL 60616
Cook County
globe bronzevillehistoricalsociety.wordpress.com
f @BronzevilleHistorical
Category –
History | Education

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods ®; ©

21850 N Riverwoods Rd
Riverwoods, IL 60015
Lake County

brushwoodcenter.org

[@BrushwoodCenter](#)

[@BrushwoodCenter](#)

[@BrushwoodCenter](#)

Category –

Media | Education

Project –

Lake County Leads: Stories of Environmental Justice and Empowerment during COVID-19

brushwoodcentergallery.org/lakecountyleads.html

[Bureau County Historical Society](#) ©

109 Park Ave W

Princeton, IL 61356

Bureau County

bureaucountyhistoricalsociety.com

[@Bureau-County-Historical-Society-205135920951](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Canal Corridor Association](#) ©

754 First St

LaSalle, IL 61301

LaSalle County

iandmcanal.org/about-us-canal-corridor-association

[@ilmicanal](#)

[@iandmcanal](#)

[@IMCNHA](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Carbondale Community Arts](#) ®; ©

304 W Walnut St

Carbondale, IL 62901

Jackson County

carbondalearts.org

[@CarbondaleCommunityArts](#)

[@carbondalearts](#)

[@CCA62901](#)

Category –

Arts | Education

Project –

COVID-19/BLM High School

Journalism Mentor Program

vimeo.com/476714239

[Cedarville Area Historical Society](#) ©

450 2nd St

Cedarville, IL 61013

Stephenson County

cedarvilleareahistoricalsociety.org

[@CedarvilleHistoricalSociety](#)

[@cedarville_historical_society](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Center for Racial Harmony](#) ©

PO Box 296

Belleville, IL 62222

St. Clair County

centerforracialharmony.org

[@Center.for.Racial.Harmony.SaintClairCounty](#)

[@Rharmony207](#)

Category –

Civic and Community Engagement | Education

[Centralia Area Historical Society](#) ©

240 S Locust St

Centralia, IL 62801

Marion County

[facebook.com](https://facebook.com/CentraliaAreaHistoricalMuseum)

[CentraliaAreaHistoricalMuseum](https://facebook.com/CentraliaAreaHistoricalMuseum)

Category –

History | Education

[Changing Worlds](#) ®; ①

329 W 18th St Suite #506

Chicago, IL 60616

Cook County

changingworlds.org

[@changingworlds1](#)

[@changingworldschicago](#)

[@ChangingWorlds1](#)

Category –

Arts | Education

Project –

bit.ly/2PFDjVf | changingworlds.org/virtual-programs

[Charnley-Persky House Museum Foundation/Society of Architectural Historians](#) ©

1365 N Astor St

Chicago, IL 60610

Cook County

sah.org/about-sah/charnley-persky-house

[@sah1365](#)

[@sah1365](#)

[@sah1366](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Chicago Blues Museum](#) ©

PO Box 804423

Chicago, IL 60680

Cook County

bit.ly/3kU2QWu

[@Chicago-Blues-Museum-208904142563117](#)

[@Chicago-Blues-Museum-208904142563117](#)

Category –

History | Culture and Heritage

[Chicago Collections Consortium](#) ①

2350 N Kenmore Ave 116D

Chicago, IL 60614

Cook County

chicagocollections.org

[@ChiCollections](#)

[@chicagocollectionsconsortium](#)

[@ChiCollections](#)

Category –

History | Education

Project –


bit.ly/3eiiJob |


bit.ly/30o973d


[**Chicago Cultural Alliance**](#)

641 W Lake St #200
Chicago, IL 60661
Cook County

 chicagoculturalalliance.org

 @chicagocultural

 @chicagocultural

 @chicagocultural

Category –

Culture and Heritage | Civic and
Community Engagement

Project –

SOAR (Stories of Arts Resilience)

 bit.ly/3cb5iUs

[**Chicago for Chicagoans**](#)

4954 N Spaulding Ave #2
Chicago, IL 60625
Cook County

 chicagoforchicagoans.org

 @chicagoforchicagoans

 @chicagoforchicagoans

 @chi4chicagoans

Category –

History | Education

[**Chicago Latino Theater Alliance**](#) [**\(CLATA\)**](#)

180 N Michigan Ave Suite 305
Chicago, IL 60601
Cook County

 clata.org

 @latinotheater

 @latinotheater

 @latinotheater


Category –

Arts | Culture and Heritage


[**Chicago Poetry Center**](#)

641 W Lake Street Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60661
Cook County

 poetrycenter.org

 @PoetryCenter

 @chicagopoetrycenter

 @poetrycenter

Category –

Literature and Writing | Education

[**Chicago Public Art Group**](#)

3314 S Morgan St Unit 1
Chicago, IL 60608
Cook County

 chicagopublicartgroup.org

 @ChicagoPublicArtGroup


 @chicago_public_art_group

 @ChicagoPAG

Category –

Arts | History

Project –

 sofaexpo.com |
vimeo.com/491298626

[**Chicago Youth Shakespeare**](#)

641 W Lake St Ste 200
Chicago, IL 60661
Cook County

 chicagoyouthshakespeare.org

 @cyshakes

 @cyshakes

 @cyshakes

Category –

Arts | Education

[**Children's Theatre of Elgin**](#)

1700 Spartan Dr
Elgin, IL 60123
Kane County

 cteelgin.com

 @cteelgin

Category –

Arts | Education

[**CivicLab**](#)

1643 N Larrabee St Unit 1
Chicago, IL 60614

Cook County

 civiclab.us

 @CivicLab

Category –


Civic and Community Engagement |
Education

[**Collaboration Theatre**](#) [**Company**](#)

PO Box 10085
Chicago, IL 60610
Cook County

 collaboraction.org

 @collaboraction


 @Collaboraction

 @Collaboraction

Category –

Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

Project –

Peacebook 2020: Essential
Perspectives
 bit.ly/3kUdCfp |
bit.ly/38h7oRF

[**Colonel Davenport Historical**](#) [**Foundation**](#)

PO Box 4603
Rock Island, IL 61204
Rock Island County

 davenporthouse.org

 @coloneldavenporthouse

Category –

History | Culture and Heritage

[**ConTextos**](#)

641 W Lake St Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60661
Cook County

 contextos.org

 @ConTextosChi

 @contextoschi

 @contextoschi

Category –

Literature and Writing | Civic and
Community Engagement

Project –

Complicating the Narrative: Season
Three

[youtube.com/
watch?v=NqldWf0ElwQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqldWf0ElwQ) | [anchor.
fm/complicating-the-narrative](#)

[contratiempo nfp](#) ©

641 W Lake St Suite 200

Chicago, IL 60661

Cook County

[contratiempo.net](https://www.contratiempo.net)

[f](#) @contratiempo

[@](#) @contratiempochicago

[t](#) @revcontratiempo

Category –

Literature and Writing | Culture and
Heritage

[The Corn Stock Theatre](#) ©

1700 N Park Rd

West Peoria, IL 61604

Peoria County

[cornstocktheatre.com](https://www.cornstocktheatre.com)

[f](#) @cornstocktheatre

[@](#) @cornstocktheatre

[t](#) @CornStockPeoria

Category –

Arts | Education

[Crossing Borders Music](#) ©

1330 W Albion Ave Unit G

Chicago, IL 60626

Cook County

[crossingbordersmusic.org](https://www.crossingbordersmusic.org)

[f](#) @CrossingBordersMusic

[@](#) @crossingbordersmusic

Category –

Arts | Culture and Heritage

[Crossroads Blues Society](#) ©

PO Box 840

Byron, IL 61010

Ogle County

[crossroadsbluessociety.com](https://www.crossroadsbluessociety.com)

[f](#) @groups/crossroadsbluessociety

[t](#) @Crossroads_IL

Category –

Arts | Education

**[Cumberland County Historical &
Genealogical Society](#)** ©

213 W Cumberland

PO Box 582

Greenup, IL 62428

Cumberland County

[cumberlandcountyhistory.org](https://www.cumberlandcountyhistory.org)

[f](#) @cumberlandcountyhistory

Category –

History | Education

[David Davis Mansion Foundation](#) ©

1000 Monroe Dr

Bloomington, IL 61701

McLean County

[DavidDavisMansion.org](https://www.DavidDavisMansion.org)

[f](#) @judgedavid.davis

[@](#) @daviddavismanion

[t](#) @DavisMansion

Category –

History | Education

[Deeply Rooted Dance Theater](#) ©

17 N State 19th Floor

Chicago, IL 60602

Cook County

[deeplyrooteddancetheater.org](https://www.deeplyrooteddancetheater.org)

[f](#) @DeeplyRootedDanceTheater

[@](#) @deeplyrooteddance

[t](#) @drpdance

Category –

Arts | Culture and Heritage

[Definition Theatre Company](#) ©

4850 S Drexel

Chicago, IL 60615

Cook County

[definitiontheatre.org](https://www.definitiontheatre.org)

[f](#) @DefinitionTheatre

[t](#) @DefinitionTheat

Category –

Arts | Culture and Heritage

[DeKalb County History Center](#) ©

Location: 1730 N Main St

Mailing: PO Box 502

Sycamore, IL 60178

DeKalb County

[dekalbcountyhistory.org](https://www.dekalbcountyhistory.org)

[f](#) @DeKalbCountyHist

[@](#) @dekalbhistorycenter

[t](#) @DeKalbCountyHis

Category –

History | Education

[Design Museum of Chicago](#) ©

72 E Randolph St

Chicago, IL 60601

Cook County

[designchicago.org](https://www.designchicago.org)

[f](#) @designmuseumchi

[@](#) @designmuseumchi

[t](#) @designmuseumchi

Category –

Arts | Education

**[Discovery Depot Children's
Museum](#)** ©

128 S Chambers St

Galesburg, IL 61401

Knox County

[discoverydepot.org](https://www.discoverydepot.org)

[f](#) @Discovery-Depot-356500137182

[@](#) @discoverydepot1

[t](#) @discoverydepot2

Category –

Education | Arts

Project –

bit.ly/2O9Ctj8 |
bit.ly/3bj9q5r

[Easley Pioneer Museum Foundation](#) ©

230 W Broadway
Ipava, IL 61441
Fulton County

[facebook.com/
EasleyPioneerMuseum](https://facebook.com/EasleyPioneerMuseum)

Category –
History | Education

[East Bluff Community Center](#) ©

512 E Kansas St
Peoria, IL 61603
Peoria County

eastbluffcommunitycenter.org
[@ebccenterpeo](https://facebook.com/ebccenterpeo)

Category –
Civic and Community Engagement |
Education

[Eastlight Theatre](#) ©

201 Veterans Dr
East Peoria, IL 61611
Tazewell County

eastlighttheatre.com
[@eastlighttheatre](https://facebook.com/eastlighttheatre)

[@eastlightstage](https://instagram.com/eastlightstage)
[@eastlightstage](https://twitter.com/eastlightstage)

Category –
Arts | Education

[Effingham Public Library](#) ®

200 N Third St
Effingham, IL 62401
Effingham County

effinghamlibrary.org
[@EffinghamPL](https://facebook.com/EffinghamPL)

[@effinghamlibrary](https://instagram.com/effinghamlibrary)
[@Efflibrary](https://twitter.com/Efflibrary)

Category –

Arts | History

Project –

Effingham: At the Crossroads of
Education

bit.ly/3rv7DQr |
bit.ly/3qqqESL

[Elgin History Museum](#) ©

360 Park St
Elgin, IL 60120
Kane County

elginhistory.org
[@ElginILHistoryMuseum](https://facebook.com/ElginILHistoryMuseum)
[@elginhistorymuseum](https://instagram.com/elginhistorymuseum)
[@elginhistory](https://twitter.com/elginhistory)

Category –
History | Education

[eta Creative Arts Foundation](#) ©

7558 S South Chicago Ave
Chicago, IL 60619
Cook County

etacreativearts.org
[@etacreativearts](https://facebook.com/etacreativearts)
[@etacreativearts](https://instagram.com/etacreativearts)
[@etacreative](https://twitter.com/etacreative)

Category –
Arts | Culture and Heritage

[Ethnic Heritage Museum](#) ©

1129 S Main St
Rockford, IL 61101
Winnebago County

ethnicheritagemuseum.org
[@ethnicheritagemuseum](https://facebook.com/ethnicheritagemuseum)

Category –
Culture and Heritage | History

[Fifth House Ensemble](#) ©

332 S Michigan Ave Ste 121-F501
Chicago, IL 60604
Cook County

fifth-house.com
[@fifthhouseensemble](https://facebook.com/fifthhouseensemble)

[@5he](https://instagram.com/@5he)

[@fifthhouse](https://twitter.com/fifthhouse)

Category –
Arts | Education

[Firebrand Theatre](#) ©

7363 N Ashland Blvd Apt 1
Chicago, IL 60626
Cook County

firebrandtheatre.org
[@firebrandtheatrechicago](https://facebook.com/firebrandtheatrechicago)
[@firebrand.theatre](https://instagram.com/firebrand.theatre)
[@FirebrandChi](https://twitter.com/FirebrandChi)

Category –
Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

[Free Write Arts & Literacy](#) ©

1932 S Halsted St #100
Chicago, IL 60608
Cook County

freewriteartsliteracy.org
[@freewritechicago](https://facebook.com/freewritechicago)
[@freewritechi](https://instagram.com/freewritechi)
[@freewritechi](https://twitter.com/freewritechi)

Category –
Arts | Literature and Writing

[Full Spectrum Features](#) ®; ©

Cook County
fullspectrumfeatures.com
[@fullspectrumfeatures](https://facebook.com/fullspectrumfeatures)
[@fullspectrumfeatures](https://instagram.com/fullspectrumfeatures)
[@fullspectrumnfp](https://twitter.com/fullspectrumnfp)

Category –
Media | Civic and Community
Engagement

Project –

Identified
[fullspectrumfeatures.com/
identified](https://fullspectrumfeatures.com/identified)

[Galena Center for the Arts](#) ®; ©

971 A Gear St

Galena, IL 61036
Jo Daviess County
galenacenterforthearts.org
[@GalenaCenterForTheArts](https://www.facebook.com/GalenaCenterForTheArts)
Category –
Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement
Project –
COVID-19 Galena-The Story in Song
bit.ly/3eciuyY |
bit.ly/3bmTJdO

[**Galesburg Civic Art Center**](#)

114 E Main St
Galesburg, IL 61401
Knox County
galesburgarts.org
[@galesburgarts](https://www.facebook.com/galesburgarts)
[@galesburgcivicartcenter](https://www.instagram.com/galesburgcivicartcenter)
Category –
Arts | Education

[**Gallatin County Historical Society**](#)

434 Main St
Shawneetown, IL 62984
Gallatin County
gallatincountyhistoricalsociety.webs.com |
GallatinCoHistoricalSocietyIL.vistaprintdigital.com
[@Gallatin-County-Historical-Society-413940078733590](https://www.facebook.com/Gallatin-County-Historical-Society-413940078733590)
Category –
History | Education

[**General John A. Logan Museum**](#)

1613 Edith St
Murphysboro, IL 62966
Jackson County
loganmuseum.org
[@generaljohnaloganmuseum](https://www.facebook.com/generaljohnaloganmuseum)
Category –
History | Education

[**Genesis Theatre Foundation**](#)

1120 40th St
Rock Island, IL 61201
Rock Island County
genesis.org
[@GenesisGuild](https://www.facebook.com/GenesisGuild)
[@genesiusguild](https://www.instagram.com/genesiusguild)
[@genesiusguild](https://www.twitter.com/genesiusguild)
Category –
Arts | Education

[**Glessner House**](#)

1800 S Prairie Ave
Chicago, IL 60616
Cook County
glessnerhouse.org
[@GlessnerHouse](https://www.facebook.com/GlessnerHouse)
[@GlessnerHouse](https://www.instagram.com/GlessnerHouse)
[@GlessnerHouse](https://www.twitter.com/GlessnerHouse)
Category –
History | Education

[**Glidden Homestead and Historical Center**](#)

921 W Lincoln Hwy
DeKalb, IL 60115
DeKalb County
gliddenhomestead.org
[bit.ly/30jl6z0](https://www.facebook.com/bit.ly/30jl6z0)
[@glidden_homestead](https://www.instagram.com/glidden_homestead)
[@JFGHomestead](https://www.twitter.com/JFGHomestead)
Category –
History | Education

[**Global Girls**](#)

8151 S South Chicago Ave
The Global Studio
Chicago, IL 60617
Cook County
globalgirlsinc.org
[@GlobalGirlsInc](https://www.facebook.com/GlobalGirlsInc)
[@globalgirlsinc](https://www.instagram.com/globalgirlsinc)
[@globalgirlsinc1](https://www.twitter.com/globalgirlsinc1)

Category –
Arts | Education

[**Greater Livingston County Arts Council**](#)

209 W Madison St
Pontiac, IL 61764
Livingston County
artsinpontiac.org
[@PCartcenter](https://www.facebook.com/PCartcenter)
Category –
Arts | Education

[**Guild Literary Complex**](#)

641 W Lake St Ste 200
Chicago, IL 60661
Cook County
guildcomplex.org
[@GuildLiteraryComplex](https://www.facebook.com/GuildLiteraryComplex)
[@guild.literary.complex](https://www.instagram.com/guild.literary.complex)
[@guildLITcomplex](https://www.twitter.com/guildLITcomplex)
Category –
Literature and Writing | Civic and
Community Engagement


[**Hairpin Arts Center/Logan Square Chamber of Arts**](#)


2810 N Milwaukee Ave 2810 N
2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60618
Cook County
hairpinartscenter.org
[@HairpinArtsCenter](https://www.facebook.com/HairpinArtsCenter)
[@hairpinartscenter](https://www.instagram.com/hairpinartscenter)
[@HairpinArts](https://www.twitter.com/HairpinArts)
Category –
Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

[**The Haitian American Museum**](#)

4654 N Racine Ave
Chicago, IL 69640
Cook County
hamoc.org

 bit.ly/3ruCVqY

 @hamoc_1804

 @hamoc1804

Category –

Culture and Heritage | Civic and
Community Engagement

[Hamilton Wings](#)

14 Crescent St

Elgin, IL 60123

Kane County

 hamiltonwings.com

 @hamilton.wings

 @HamiltonWings

Category –

Arts | Education

[Hegeler-Carus Foundation](#)

1307 Seventh St

La Salle, IL 61320

LaSalle County

 hegelercarus.org

 @hegelercarus

 @hegelercarusmansion

 @hegelercarus

Category –

History | Education

[Heterodyne Broadcasting/WDBX](#)

Radio 

224 N Washington St

Carbondale, IL 62901

Jackson County

 wdbx.org

 @WDBX91.1

Category –

Media | Arts


[Hinckley Historical Society](#)

145 E Lincoln Ave

Hinckley, IL 60520

DeKalb County

 hinckleyhistoricalsociety.com

 @HinckleyHistoricalSociety

Email: [hinckleyhistoricalsociety@](mailto:hinckleyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

[gmail.com](mailto:hinckleyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

Category –

History | Education

[Historical Society of Quincy and](#)


[Adams County](#) 

425 S 12th St

Quincy, IL 62301

Adams County

 hsqac.org

 @hsqac

Category –

History | Education

[History Center Lake Forest Lake](#)

Bluff 

509 E Deerpath

Lake Forest, IL 60045

Lake County

 lflbhistory.org

 @lflbhistory

 @lflbhistory

 @lflbhistory

Category –

History | Education

Project –

 bit.ly/3egUoPU | [youtube.com/](https://youtube.com/watch?v=frLqZQNJS8I)
[watch?v=frLqZQNJS8I](https://youtube.com/watch?v=frLqZQNJS8I)

[Honey Pot Performance](#)

5014 N Springfield Ave #1

Chicago, IL 60625

Cook County

 honeypotperformance.org

 @honeypotperformance


 @honeypotchicago

 @HoneyPotPerf

Category –

Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

Project –

 [honeypotperformance.org/if-](https://honeypotperformance.org/if-then)
[then](https://honeypotperformance.org/if-then) | [honeypotperformance.org/](https://honeypotperformance.org/chgpblksocialculturemap)
[chgpblksocialculturemap](https://honeypotperformance.org/chgpblksocialculturemap)

[Hoogland Center for the Arts](#)


420 S Sixth St


Springfield, IL 62701

Sangamon County

 hcfta.org

 @hooglandcenterforthearts

 @hcfta

 @HCFTA

Category –

Arts | Education

[The HUB-Arts and Cultural Center](#)

210 N Congress St

Rushville, IL 62681

Schuyler County

 thehubart.com

 @thehubart

 @thehubart

 @thehubart

Category –

Arts | Education

[Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project](#)

1045 S 5th St

Springfield, IL 62703

Sangamon County

 illinoisroute66.org

 @ILRoute66

 @illinoisroute66

 @ILRoute66

Category –

History | Education

[Illinois Rural Heritage Museum,](#)

[Inc.](#) 

187 Fairground Rd

PO Box 58

Pinckneyville, IL 62274

Perry County

illinoisruralheritagemuseum.org
@Illinois-Rural-Heritage-
Museum-106382779425685
Category –
History | Culture and Heritage

[Illinois State Historical Society](http://illinoisstatehistoricalsociety.org)
5255 Shepherd Rd
Springfield, IL 62703
Sangamon County
historyillinois.org
@Illinois-State-Historical-
Society-112877422100328
Category –
History | Education

[Illinois State Museum Society](http://illinoisstatemuseum.org)
502 S Spring St
Springfield, IL 62706
Sangamon County
illinoisstatemuseum.org
@IllinoisStateMuseum
@ilstatemuseum
@ILStateMuseum
Category –
History | Arts

[Imagine Hillsboro Theater Group](http://ihtheatergroup.org)
PO Box 234
Hillsboro, IL 62049
Montgomery County
ihtheatergroup.org
@pg/ihtheatergroup
Category –
Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

[In My Brother's Shoes](http://inmybrothersshoes.org)
435 W Diversey Pkwy Suite 2
Chicago, IL 60614
Cook County
inmybrothersshoes.org
@inmybrothersshoes
Category –

Media | Civic and Community
Engagement

[International Children's Media
Center](http://icmediacenter.org)
625 N Kingsbury St
Chicago, IL 60654
Cook County
icmediacenter.org
@ICMediaCenter
@ICMediaCenter
@ICMediaCenter
Category –
Media | Education

[Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and
Outsider Art](http://intuitartcenter.org)
756 N Milwaukee Ave
Chicago, IL 60642
Cook County
[art.org](http://intuitartcenter.org)
@intuitartcenter
@intuitartcenter
@intuitartcenter
Category –
Arts | Education

[Iroquois County Historical Society](http://iroquoiscountyhistoricalsociety.com)
103 W Cherry St
Watseka, IL 60970
Iroquois County
[iroquoiscountyhistoricalsociety.
com](http://iroquoiscountyhistoricalsociety.com)
@oldcourthousemuseum
Category –
History | Culture and Heritage

[Jacksonville Main Street](http://jacksonvillemainstreet.com)
PO Box 152
222 W State St
Jacksonville, IL 62651
Morgan County
jacksonvillemainstreet.com
@JacksonvilleMainStreet

@jacksonville_main_street
@JaxMainStreet
Category –
Civic and Community Engagement |
Arts

[Jefferson County Historical
Society](http://historicjeffersoncountyl.com)
1411 N 27th St
Mount Vernon, IL 62864
Jefferson County
historicjeffersoncountyl.com
@jchsil
Category –
History | Education

[Joliet Area Historical Museum](http://jolietsmuseum.org)
204 N Ottawa St
Joliet, IL 60432
Will County
jolietsmuseum.org
@JolietMuseum
@jolietsmuseum
@Joliet_Museum
Category –
History | Education

[Kartemquin Educational Films](http://kartemquin.com)
1901 W Wellington Ave
Chicago, IL 60657
Cook County
kartemquin.com
@Kartemquin
@kartemquin
@kartemquin
Category –
Media | Civic and Community
Engagement

[Katherine Dunham Centers for Arts
and Humanities](http://katherine-dunham.org)
1005 Pennsylvania Ave
East Saint Louis, IL 62201
Mailing:

PO Box #6 East Saint Louis, IL 62202
St. Clair County
kdcah.org
@KDCAH
@kdcah
@kdcah
Email: kdcah@ymail.com

Category –
Arts | Education

[Korean Cultural Center of Chicago](#)

9930 Capitol Dr
Wheeling, IL 60090
Cook County
kccoc.org/wps/en
@kccoc
@kccoc_chicago

Category –
Culture and Heritage | Arts

[Kuumba Lynx](#)

4501 N Clarendon Ave
Chicago, IL 60640
Cook County
kuumbalynx.com
@kuumbalynx20
@Kuumbalynx
@Kuumbalynx

Category –
Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

Project –
SPROUT (Spitting Powerful Rhymes
Organically Unleashing Truths)
kuumbalynx.com/asiam

[La Grange Area Historical Society](#)

444 S La Grange Rd
La Grange, IL 60525
Cook County
lagrangehistory.org
@Lagrangehistorical

Category –
History | Education

[LaSalle County Historical Society](#)

101 E Canal St Box 278
Utica, IL 61373
LaSalle County
lasallemuseum.org
@lchsmuseum
@lchs.utica.burgoo
@LaSalleCoMuseum

Category –
History | Education

[Lawrence County Historical Society](#)

619 12th St
PO Box 425
Lawrenceville, IL 62439
Lawrence County
lawrencelore.org
bit.ly/2ObI0KW

Category –
History | Education

[Lincoln Heritage Museum](#)

300 Keokuk St
Lincoln, IL 62656
Logan County
museum.lincolncollege.edu
@LincolnHeritage
@lhm1865
@lhm1866

Category –
History | Education

[Lincoln Highway Interpretive Center](#)

136 N Elm St
Franklin Grove, IL 61031
Lee County
illinoislincolnhighwayassociation.org
@LincolnHighway
@LincolnHwyAssoc

Category –
History | Arts

Project –
bit.ly/3I0Ekmr | bit.ly/3sYk4ok

[Lincoln Log Cabin Foundation](#)

402 S Lincoln Highway Rd
Lerna, IL 62440
Coles County
lincolnlogcabin.org

@lincolnlogcabin
Category –
History | Education

[Lithuanian Archives Project](#)

4641 N Ashland Ave
Chicago, IL 60640
Cook County
lithuanianarchivesproject.org
@LithuanianArchivesProject
@lithuanian_archives_project

Category –
Culture and Heritage | Media

[Livingston County Historical Society](#)

115 W Howard St
Pontiac, IL 61764
Livingston County
livchs.org
bit.ly/3rtTTpi

Category –
History | Education

[Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition](#)

#1 Old State Capitol Plaza #1
Springfield, IL 62701
Sangamon County
lookingforlincoln.org
@LookingforLincoln
@lookingforlincoln
@Looking4Lincoln

Category –
History | Education

Project –

bit.ly/3rpK8lv | bit.ly/3eeHqC0

[Macoupin County Historical](#)

[Society](#)

920 W Breckenridge St

Carlinville, IL 62626

Macoupin County

mchssociety.org

[@MacoupinCountyHistoricalSociety](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Madison County Historical](#)

[Society](#)

801 N Main St

Edwardsville, IL 62025

Madison County

madcohistory.org

[@madcohistory](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Magnolia Township Preservation](#)

[Association](#)

110 N Peoria Street

PO Box 23

Magnolia, IL 61348

Putnam County

magnoliatpa.org

[@MagTwp](#)

Category –

History | Education

[McHenry County Historical Society](#)

6422 Main St

PO Box 434

Union, IL 60180

McHenry County

mchenrycountyhistory.org

[@pages/McHenry-](#)

County-Historical-

Society/109520782418180

[@mchenrycountyhistory](#)

Category –

History | Education

[McLean County Museum of](#)

[History](#)

200 N Main St

Bloomington, IL 61701

McLean County

mchistory.org

[@McLeanCountyMuseumofHistory](#)

[@mchistorymuseum](#)

[@mchistorymuseum](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Media Burn Archive](#)

935 W Chestnut St Ste 405

Chicago, IL 60642

Cook County

mediaburn.org

[@mediaburnvideo](#)

[@mediaburnarchive](#)

[@mediaburnvideo](#)

Category –

Media | Civic and Community

Engagement

[Mexican Cultural Center](#)

103 W Washington St

West Chicago, IL 60185

DuPage County

mccdupage.org

[@MexicanCulturalCenterDuPage](#)

[@MexicanCultural](#)

Category –

Culture and Heritage | Civic and

Community Engagement

Project –

[facebook.com/](https://facebook.com/watch/?v=980807889062948)

watch/?v=980807889062948

[Midway Village Museum](#)

6799 Guilford Rd

Rockford, IL 61107

Winnebago County

midwayvillage.com

[@RockfordHistory](#)

[@midwayvillagemuseum](#)

[@Midway_Village](#)

Category –

History | Education

[Midwest Writing Center](#)

401 19th St

c/o RIPL

Rock Island, IL 61201

Rock Island County

mwcqc.org

[@MidwestWritingCenter](#)

[@mwc_qc](#)

[@mwc_qc](#)

Category –

Literature and Writing | Education

[Mitchell Museum of the American](#)

[Indian](#)

3001 Central St

Evanston, IL 60201

Cook County

mitchellmuseum.org

bit.ly/30lyhzi

[@mitchellmuseum](#)

Category –

Culture and Heritage | History

[Museum of the Grand Prairie](#)

950 N Lombard St

Mahomet, IL 61853

Champaign County

museumofthegrandprairie.org

[@museumofthegrandprairie](#)

[@museumofthegrandprairie](#)

[@musgrandprairie](#)

Category –

History | Education

Project – bit.ly/30pNzTS | bit.ly/3elsMsQ

[Musical Arts Institute](#) ©

9244 S Lafayette
Chicago, IL 60620
Cook County
musicalartsinstitute.org
@musicalartsinstitute
@musicalartsinstitute_mai
@MusicalArtsInst
Category –
Arts | Education

[Muslim American Leadership Alliance](#) ©

47 W Division St #159
Chicago, IL 60610
Cook County
malanational.org
@MALANational
@MALANational
@MALANational
Category –
Arts | Culture and Heritage

[MWAH! Performing Arts Troupe](#) ©

159 Cottage Hill Ave Apt 215
Elmhurst, IL 60126
DuPage County
mwah.net
@mwahtroupe
@mwahtroupe
@mwahtroupe
Category –
Arts | Education

[NAJWA Dance Corps](#) ©

1631 S Michigan Ave Unit #103
Chicago, IL 60616
Cook County
najwadancecorps.org
@najwadancecorpsorg
@najwa.corps
@ndc2015
Category –
Arts | Culture and Heritage

[National Public Housing Museum](#) ⓘ

625 N Kingsbury St
Chicago, IL 60647
Cook County
nphm.org
@thenphm
@the_nphm
@the_nphm
Category –
Culture and Heritage | Media
Project –
<http://bit.ly/3rxqGjZ> |
<http://bit.ly/3v0jVCN>

[NON:op Open Opera Works](#) ©

2419 N Drake Ave FL 1
Chicago, IL 60647
Cook County
nonopera.org
@NONopera
@nonopera
@nonopera
Category –
Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

[Old School Museum](#) ©

110 E Cherry
Winchester, IL 62694
Scott County
oldschoolmuseum.org
@OldSchoolMuseumIL
Category –
History | Education

[OPEN Center for the Arts](#) ©

2214 S Sacramento
Chicago, IL 60623
Cook County
opencenterforthearts.org
@OPENcenterforthearts
@opencenterforthearts
@OpenCenterArts
Category –

Arts | Education

[P.A.S.T. of Union County](#) ©

102 S Main
Jonesboro, IL 62920
Union County
@friendsofpast
Category –
History | Culture and Heritage

[The Paper Machete Group](#) ©

1133 W Pratt Blvd Unit 2
Chicago, IL 60626
Cook County
thepapermachete.org
@thepapermachete
@thepapermachete
@thepapermachete
Category –
Arts | Media

[Peoria Historical Society](#) ⓘ

611 SW Washington St
Peoria, IL 61602
Peoria County
peoriahistoricalsociety.com
@PeoriaHistoricalSociety
@PeoriaHistorica
Category –
History | Education
Project –
[peoriariverfrontmuseum.org/
posts/1500](http://peoriariverfrontmuseum.org/posts/1500)

[Pilot Light](#) ©

1516 W Carroll Ave Ste 1
Chicago, IL 60607
Cook County
pilotlightchefs.org
@pilotlightchefs
@pilotlightchefs
@pilotlightchefs
Category –
Education | Civic and Community

Engagement

[PlayMakers Laboratory](#) ©

4021 N Broadway Suite 1
Chicago, IL 60613
Cook County

🌐 playmakerslab.org

📘 @playmakerslab

📷 @playmakers.laboratory

🐦 @PMLaboratory

Category –

Arts | Literature and Writing

[Preservation and Conservation](#)

[Association of Champaign County](#) ©

44 E Washington St
Champaign, IL 61820
Champaign County

🌐 pacacc.org

📘 bit.ly/3v2lwYM

📷 @paca_champaign

Category –

History | Civic and Community

Engagement

[Preservation of Egyptian Theatre](#) ©

135 N 2nd St
DeKalb, IL 60115
DeKalb County

🌐 egyptiantheatre.org

📘 @dekalbegyptiantheatre

📷 @egyptiantheatre

🐦 @egyptiantheatre

Category –

History | Arts

[Public Media Institute](#) ©

3219 S Morgan St
Chicago, IL 60608
Cook County

🌐 publicmediainstitute.com

📘 @lumpenradio,

@coprosperitychicago

📷 @lumpenradio,

@coprosperitychicago,

@lumpenradio, @buddy.chicago

🐦 @lumpenradio

Category –

Media | Arts

[Puerto Rican Arts Alliance](#) ©

3000 N Elbridge

Chicago, IL 60618

Cook County

🌐 praachicago.org

📘 @PuertoRicanArtsAlliance

📷 @puertoricanartsalliance

🐦 @PRAACHICAGO

Category –

Culture and Heritage | Arts

[Quad Cities Jazz Festival](#) ©

719 17th St

PO Box 166

East Moline, IL 61244

Rock Island County

🌐 facebook.com/polyjazzheritagefest

Category –

Arts | Civic and Community

Engagement

[The Raupp Museum](#) ©

530 Bernard Dr

Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

Cook County

🌐 rauppmuseum.omeka.net

📘 @RauppMuseum

Category –

History | Education

[Que4 Radio](#) ©

2643 W Chicago

Chicago, IL 60622

Cook County

🌐 que4.org

📘 @Quennect4Tribe

📷 @que4radio

Category –

Media | Culture and Heritage

[Ray Bradbury Experience](#)

[Museum](#) ①

13 N Genesee St

Waukegan, IL 60085

Lake County

🌐 raybradburyexperiencemuseum.org

📘 @RBEMuseum

📷 @rbemuseum

🐦 @RBEMuseum

Category –

History | Literature and writing

Project –

🌐 raybradburyexperiencemuseum.org/centennial

[The Rebuild Foundation](#) ©

6918 S Dorchester

Chicago, IL 60637

Cook County

🌐 rebuild-foundation.org

📘 @rebuildfoundation

📷 @rebuild_foundation

🐦 @rebuildfdn

Category –

Arts | Civic and Community

Engagement

[Red Mask Players](#) ©

Location: 601 N Vermilion

Mailing: PO Box 814

Danville, IL 61834

Vermilion County

🌐 redmaskplayers.com

📘 @RedMaskPlayersinc

Category –

Arts | Education


[Reddick Mansion Association](#) ©

100 W Lafayette St

Ottawa, IL 61350

LaSalle County

🌐 reddickmansion.org

 @ReddickMansionandGardens

Category –

History

[Repertorio Latino Theater](#)

[Company](#) ⓘ

913 N Monticello Ave

Chicago, IL 60651

Cook County

 facebook.com/repertoriolatino

 @repertoriolatino

Category –

Arts | Culture and Heritage

Project –

 youtu.be/fJ8zm6POHAs

[Robbins Historical Society](#)

[Museum](#) ⓘ

PO Box 1561

3644 W 139th Street

Robbins, IL 60472

Cook County

 robbinshistorymuseum.org

 @robbinshistorymuseum

Category –

History | Civic and Community

Engagement

[Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home](#) ⓘ

810/816 S Hennepin Ave

Dixon, IL 61021

Lee County

 reaganhome.org

 @reaganhome

 @reaganhome

Category –

History | Education

[Savanna Museum & Cultural](#)

[Center](#)

®; ⓘ


406 Main St

PO Box 124

Savanna, IL 61074

Carroll County

 savannamuseum.org

 @savannamuseum.org

Category –

History | Culture and heritage

Project –

COVID-19 Community Conversations

 savannamuseum.org/home-1

[Shabbona-Lee-Rollo Historical](#)

[Museum](#) ⓘ

119 W Comanche

Shabbona, IL 60550

DeKalb County

 slrmuseum.com

 @slrmuseum

Category –

History | Education

[Silent Theatre Company](#) ⓘ

4154 N Tripp Ave #1

Chicago, IL 60641

Cook County

 silenttheatre.com

 @silenttheatrechicago

 @silenttheatre

Category –


Arts | Media

[Silk Road Rising](#) ⓘ

150 N Michigan Ave Ste 1970

Chicago, IL 60601

Cook County

 silkroadrising.org

 @SilkRoadRising

 @silk.road.rising

 @Silk_Road

Category –

Culture and Heritage | Arts


[Sixty Inches From Center](#) ⓘ

436 E 47th St #308

Chicago, IL 60653

Cook County

 sixtyinchesfromcenter.org

 @SixtyInchesFromCenter

 @sixtyinchesfromcenter

 @fromthecenter

Category –

History | Media

[South Side Community Art Center](#) ⓘ

3831 S Michigan

Chicago, IL 60653

Cook County

 sscartercenter.org

 @SouthSideCommunityArtCenter

 @southsidecommunityartcenter

 @sscartercenter

Category –

Arts | Culture and Heritage

[South Side Weekly](#) ®; ⓘ

6100 S Blackstone Ave

Chicago, IL 60608

Cook County

 southsideweekly.com

 @southsideweekly

 @southsideweekly

 @southsideweekly

Category –

Media | Education

Project –

Envisioning New Futures

 bit.ly/3esK4UG | bit.ly/3qtlc0g

[Springfield Theatre Centre](#) ⓘ

420 S 6th St

Springfield, IL 62701

Sangamon County

 springfieldtheatrecentre.com

 @SpringfieldTheatreCentre

 @springfield_theatre_centre

Category –

Arts | Education

[St. Charles History Museum](#) ©

215 E Main St
St. Charles, IL 60174
Kane County
stcmuseum.org
Facebook: @StCharlesHistoryMuseum
Instagram: @stc_history
Twitter: @STCHistoryMus
Category –
History | Culture and heritage

[St. Clair County Historical Society](#) ©

701 E Washington St
Belleville, IL 62220
St. Clair County
stcchs.org
Facebook: @stcchs
Twitter: @STCCHS
Category –
History | Culture and heritage

[Stark County Historical Society](#) ©

318 W Jefferson
PO Box 524
Toulon, IL 61483
Stark County
Facebook: [facebook.com/
StarkCountyHistoricalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/StarkCountyHistoricalSociety)
Instagram: @starkcountyhistoricalsociety
Category –
History | Education

[Stephenson County Historical Society](#) ©

1440 S Carroll Ave
Freeport, IL 61032
Stephenson County
stephcohs.org
Facebook: @StephCoHS
Instagram: @stephcohs
Twitter: @StephensonCoHS
Category –
History | Culture and heritage

[Still Point Theatre Collective](#) ©

4300 N Hermitage Ave
Chicago, IL 60613
Cook County
stillpointtheatrecollective.org
Facebook: @SPTCchicago
Instagram: @stillpointofficenetwork
Category –
Arts | Civic and Community
Engagement

[Strategy for Access Foundation](#) ©

4800 S Chicago Beach Dr Suite 1707s
Chicago, IL 60615
Cook County
fun4thedisabled.com
Facebook: @fun4thedisabled
Instagram: @fun4thedisabled
Twitter: @fun4thedisabled
Category –
Media | Civic and Community
Engagement

[Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical Society](#) ©

719 N 11th St
PO Box 312
Pekin, IL 61555
Tazewell County
tcghs.org
Facebook: bit.ly/30pPAPH
Category –
History | Education

[Thebes Historical Society](#) ©

519 Sunset Dr
Marion, IL 62959
Williamson County
thebescourthouse.com
Facebook: @ThebesCourthouse
Category –
History | Education

[Third Coast International Audio Festival dba Third Coast](#) ©

PO Box 410726
Chicago, IL 60641
Cook County
thirdcoastfestival.org
Facebook: @thirdcoastfest
Instagram: @thirdcoastfest
Twitter: @thirdcoastfest
Category –
Media | Education

[The Ukrainian National Museum](#) ©

2249 W Superior St
Chicago, IL 60612
Cook County
ukrainiannationalmuseum.org
Facebook: @UkrainianNationalMuseum
Instagram: @ukrainiannationalmuseum
Twitter: @UkrNatIMuseum
Category –
Culture and Heritage | History

[Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center](#) ©

202 S Broadway Ave #100
Urbana, IL 61801
Champaign County
ucimc.org
Facebook: @ucimc
Instagram: @uc.imc
Twitter: @UCIMC
Category –
Media | Arts

[The Vegan Museum](#) ⓘ

2100 N Racine Ave Unit 3B
Chicago, IL 60614
Cook County
veganmuseum.org
Facebook: @thevegmuseum
Instagram: @thevegmuseum
Twitter: @thevegmuseum
Category –

History | Education

Project –

[youtube.com/channel/
UCdwJFkhPm1o3KvwNPKctFmQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdwJFkhPm1o3KvwNPKctFmQ)

[The Voices and Faces Project](#) ⓘ

47 W Polk St Ste #170

Chicago, IL 60605

Cook County

[voicesandfaces.org](https://www.voicesandfaces.org)

[f](#) @TheVoicesandFacesProject

[@](#) thevoicesandfacesProject

[@](#)VoicesandFaces

Category –

Literature and Writing | Civic and
Community Engagement

Project –

[voicesandfaces.org/workshop](https://www.voicesandfaces.org/workshop)
| [voicesandfaces.org/lectures-
trainings](https://www.voicesandfaces.org/lectures-
trainings)

[Wabash Roots'n'Que Festival](#) ⓘ

801 W 9th St

PO Box 305

Mt Carmel, IL 62863

Wabash County

[rootsnque.com](https://www.rootsnque.com)

[f](#) @MarketStreetMTC

Category –

Arts | Education

[Washington County Historical](#)

[Society](#) ⓘ

326 S Kaskaskia St

PO Box 9

Nashville, IL 62263

Washington County

bit.ly/2MXfEia

Category –

History | Education

[Western Illinois Museum](#) ⓘ

201 S Lafayette St

Macomb, IL 61455

McDonough County

[wimuseum.org](https://www.wimuseum.org)

[f](#) @wimuseum

[@](#) wimuseum

[@](#) wimuseum

Category –

History | Culture and heritage

[Wheels O' Time Museum](#) ⓘ

1710 W Woodside Dr

Dunlap, IL 61525

Peoria County

[wheelsotime.org](https://www.wheelsotime.org)

[f](#) @wheelsotimemuseum

[@](#) wheelsotime

Category –

History | Education

[Williamson County Historical](#)

[Society](#) ⓘ

105 S Van Buren St

Marion, IL 62959

Williamson County

[wcihs.org](https://www.wcihs.org)

[f](#) @wchsillinois

Category –

History

[Y'all Rock Carbondale \(Libre\)](#) ⓘ

215 N Washington Ave

Carbondale, IL 62901

Jackson County

[yallrockcarbondale.com](https://www.yallrockcarbondale.com)

[f](#) @yallrock618

[@](#) yallrock618

Category –

Arts | Education

[Young Chicago Authors](#) ⓘ

1180 N Milwaukee Ave Ste 2

Chicago, IL 60642

Cook County

[youngchicagoauthors.org](https://www.youngchicagoauthors.org)

[f](#) @YoungChicagoAuthors

[@](#) youngchicagoauthors

[@](#) YoungChiAuthors

Category –

Literature and Writing | Education

Appendices

Grantee partner list

Organized by grant type

General operating support

Listed by organization name and county

1820 Col. Benjamin Stephenson House, Madison
6018North, Cook

826CHI, Cook

Abe Lincoln Project/Looking for Lincoln in Pike
County, Pike

About Face Theatre Collective, Cook

Adler Arts Center, Lake

African American Cultural & Genealogical
Society of Illinois, Macon

Al Raby Foundation, Cook

American Blues Theater, Cook

American Farm Heritage, Bond

Artists Reenvisioning Tomorrow, Peoria

Aurora Historical Society, Kane

Aurora Regional Fire Museum, Kane

Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, Cook

Bishop Hill Heritage Association, Henry

Bronzeville Black Chicagoan Historical Society,
Cook

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods, Lake

Bureau County Historical Society, Bureau

Canal Corridor Association, LaSalle

Carbondale Community Arts, Jackson

Cedarville Area Historical Society, Stephenson

Center for Racial Harmony, St. Clair

Centralia Area Historical Society, Marion

Charnley-Persky House Museum Foundation/
Society of Architectural Historians, Cook

Chicago Blues Museum, Cook

Chicago for Chicagoans, Cook

Chicago Latino Theater Alliance (CLATA), Cook

Chicago Poetry Center, Cook

Chicago Youth Shakespeare, Cook

Children's Theatre of Elgin, Kane

CivicLab, Cook

Collaboration Theatre Company, Cook

Colonel Davenport Historical Foundation, Rock
Island

contratiempo nfp, Cook

Crossing Borders Music, Cook

Crossroads Blues Society, Ogle

Cumberland County Historical & Genealogical
Society, Cumberland

David Davis Mansion Foundation, McLean

Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, Cook

Definition Theatre Company, Cook

DeKalb County History Center, DeKalb

Design Museum of Chicago, Cook

Easley Pioneer Museum Foundation, Fulton

East Bluff Community Center, Peoria

Eastlight Theatre, Tazewell

Elgin History Museum, Kane

eta Creative Arts Foundation, Cook

Ethnic Heritage Museum, Winnebago

Fifth House Ensemble, Cook

Firebrand Theatre, Cook

Free Write Arts & Literacy, Cook

Full Spectrum Features, Cook

Galena Center for the Arts, Jo Daviess

Galesburg Civic Art Center, Knox

Gallatin County Historical Society, Gallatin

General John A. Logan Museum, Jackson

Genesis Theatre Foundation, Rock Island
 Glessner House, Cook
 Glidden Homestead and Historical Center,
 DeKalb
 Global Girls, Cook
 Greater Livingston County Arts Council,
 Livingston
 Guild Literary Complex, Cook
 Hairpin Arts Center/Logan Square Chamber of
 Arts, Cook
 Hamilton Wings, Kane
 Hegeler-Carus Foundation, LaSalle
 Heterodyne Broadcasting/WDBX Radio, Jackson
 Hinckley Historical Society, DeKalb
 Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County,
 Adams
 Hoogland Center for the Arts, Sangamon
 Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, Sangamon
 Illinois Rural Heritage Museum, Inc., Perry
 Illinois State Historical Society, Sangamon
 Illinois State Museum Society, Sangamon
 Imagine Hillsboro Theater Group, Montgomery
 In My Brother's Shoes, Cook
 International Children's Media Center, Cook
 Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art,
 Cook
 Iroquois County Historical Society, Iroquois
 Jacksonville Main Street, Morgan
 Jefferson County Historical Society, Jefferson
 Joliet Area Historical Museum, Will
 Kartemquin Educational Films, Cook
 Katherine Dunham Centers for Arts and
 Humanities, St. Clair
 Korean Cultural Center of Chicago, Cook
 Kuumba Lynx, Cook
 La Grange Area Historical Society, Cook
 LaSalle County Historical Society, LaSalle
 Lawrence County Historical Society, Lawrence
 Lincoln Heritage Museum, Logan
 Lincoln Log Cabin Foundation, Coles
 Lithuanian Archives Project, Cook
 Livingston County Historical Society, Livingston
 Macoupin County Historical Society, Macoupin
 Madison County Historical Society, Madison
 Magnolia Township Preservation Association,
 Putnam
 McHenry County Historical Society & Museum,
 McHenry
 McLean County Museum of History, McLean
 Media Burn Archive, Cook
 Midway Village Museum, Winnebago
 Midwest Writing Center, Rock Island
 Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, Cook
 Museum of the Grand Prairie, Champaign
 Musical Arts Institute, Cook
 Muslim American Leadership Alliance, Cook
 MWAH! Performing Arts Troupe, DuPage
 NAJWA Dance Corps, Cook
 Non:op Open Opera Works, Cook
 Old School Museum, Scott
 OPEN Center for the Arts, Cook
 P.A.S.T. of Union County, Union
 Pilot Light, Cook
 PlayMakers Laboratory, Cook
 Preservation and Conservation Association of
 Champaign County, Champaign
 Preservation of Egyptian Theatre, DeKalb
 Public Media Institute, Cook
 Puerto Rican Arts Alliance, Cook
 Quad Cities Jazz Festival, Rock Island
 Que4 Radio, Cook
 Red Mask Players, Vermilion
 Reddick Mansion Association, LaSalle
 Robbins Historical Society Museum, Cook
 Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home, Lee
 Savanna Museum & Cultural Center, Carroll
 Shabbona-Lee-Rollo Historical Museum, DeKalb
 Silent Theatre Company, Cook
 Silk Road Rising, Cook
 Sixty Inches From Center, Cook
 South Side Community Art Center, Cook
 South Side Weekly, Cook
 Springfield Theatre Centre, Sangamon
 St. Charles History Museum, Kane
 St. Clair County Historical Society, St. Clair
 Stark County Historical Society, Stark

Stephenson County Historical Society,
Stephenson
Still Point Theatre Collective, Cook
Strategy for Access Foundation, Cook
Tazewell County Genealogical & Historical
Society, Tazewell
The Corn Stock Theatre, Peoria
The Haitian American Museum, Cook
The HUB-Arts and Cultural Center, Schuyler
The Paper Machete Group, Cook
The Raupp Museum, Cook
The Rebuild Foundation, Cook
The Ukrainian National Museum, Cook
Thebes Historical Society, Williamson
Third Coast International Audio Festival dba
Third Coast, Cook
Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center,
Champaign
Wabash Roots'n'Que Festival, Wabash
Washington County Historical Society,
Washington
Western Illinois Museum, McDonough
Wheels O' Time Museum, Peoria
Williamson County Historical Society, Williamson
Young Chicago Authors, Cook

Program innovation & adaptation

Listed by organization name and county

African American Museum of Southern Illinois,
Jackson
Backbones, Cook
Ballet Quad Cities, Rock Island
Changing Worlds, Cook
Chicago Collections Consortium, Cook
Chicago Public Art Group, Cook
Discovery Depot Children's Museum, Knox
History Center Lake Forest Lake Bluff, Lake
Honey Pot Performance, Cook
Lincoln Highway Interpretive Center, Lee
Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition,
Sangamon
Mexican Cultural Center, DuPage

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Champaign
National Public Housing Museum, Cook
Peoria Historical Society, Peoria
Ray Bradbury Experience Museum, Lake
Repertorio Latino Theater Company, Cook
The Vegan Museum, Cook
The Voices and Faces Project, Cook
Y'all Rock Carbondale (Libre), Jackson

Community resilience

Listed by organization name and county

Atlanta Public Library and Museum, Logan
Aurora Regional Fire Museum, Kane
BECOME: Center for Community Engagement
and Social Change, Cook
Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods, Lake
Carbondale Community Arts, Jackson
Changing Worlds, Cook
Chicago Cultural Alliance, Cook
Collaboraction Theatre Company, Cook
ConTextos, Cook
Effingham Public Library, Effingham
Full Spectrum Features, Cook
Galena Center for the Arts, Jo Daviess
Kuumba Lynx, Cook
Savanna Museum & Cultural Center, Carroll
South Side Weekly, Cook

Illinois Humanities' approach to grantmaking

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) received \$75 million in supplemental funding to assist humanities and cultural institutions affected by COVID-19 as part of the CARES Act. As the state affiliate for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Illinois Humanities was able to award \$710K in COVID-19 relief dollars comprised of primarily CARES funds and supplemented with repurposed general operating and specialized fundraising efforts.

The Illinois Humanities team set out to move dollars out the door quickly and efficiently with minimal barriers to applicants. Given Illinois Humanities' mission to ensure access to the humanities statewide, having a broad-based and geographically diverse applicant pool was a priority. This priority became more urgent as public health lockdowns began to impact organizations' services and, in some cases, staffing and overall viability. For instance, Illinois Humanities recognized the importance of supporting rural communities which traditionally receive fewer philanthropic dollars.²⁹ This decision took on additional weight upon realization that general CARES funding was restricted to municipalities with populations of more than 500,000.³⁰

An early decision was made to prioritize cultural nonprofit organizations with operating budgets of less than \$1.5 million and to encourage statewide applications by creating discrete Emergency Relief Grant portals: one for organizations based in Cook County (where roughly 41% of the state's population resides) and one for organizations based outside of Cook County. These relief grants served as singular opportunities for many organizations who were unable or ineligible to apply for other source of federal, state or private philanthropic support due to size, location, or capacity.

Illinois Humanities COVID-19 relief funding opportunities were available in three distinct rounds between April 8, 2020 and June 15, 2020.³¹ Organizations were eligible to apply for more than one grant.

- General Operating Grants provided emergency relief support for humanities-based organizations throughout the state impacted by COVID-19. \$495,000 for General Operating Grants was awarded to

154 organizations in sums of \$2,500-\$7,500, based on budget size.

- Program Innovation and Adaptation grants enabled humanities-based organizations to innovate, adapt, and strengthen access to their programming. \$100,000 for Program Innovation and Adaptation was awarded to 20 organizations in sums of \$5,000 each.
- Community Resilience grants supported humanities-based efforts to make community experiences during the pandemic visible and highlight resiliency throughout the state. \$90,000 were awarded to 15 organizations in sums of \$6,000 each.

Illinois Humanities targeted outreach to underserved communities both within and outside of Cook County. On April 29, 2020, in partnership with Illinois Arts Council Agency (IACA), Illinois Humanities co-hosted a virtual event for arts and humanities organizations across Illinois to discuss the opportunities for CARES Act funding.³² Illinois Humanities promoted grant opportunities through social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), monthly newsletters, announcements in local newspapers, and extensive outreach emails to grantee partners, former grantee partners, past program participants, and statewide associations including the Illinois Library Association and Illinois Association of Museums.

Endnotes

- 1 Helicon Collaborative, “Creative Placemaking Field Scan #4: Environment and Energy; Farther, Faster, Together: How Arts and Culture Can Accelerate Environmental Progress” ArtPlace America, (February 2018), <https://heliconcollab.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Farther-Faster-Together-1.pdf>.
- 2 Robert Atkins, Sarah Allred and Daniel Hart, “Philanthropy’s Rural Blind Spot,” Stanford Social Innovation Review (Spring 2021), https://ssir.org/articles/entry/philanthropys_rural_blind_spot?utm_source=Enews&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=SSIR_Now.
- 3 See AEA Consulting, “Arts Organizations’ Early Response to COVID-19 Uncertainty: Insights from the Field,” Wallace Foundation, (October 2020). <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Survey-of-arts-leaders-report-from-AEA.pdf>; Laurel Blatchford and Nella Young, “Culture and Creativity are Fundamental to Resilient Communities,” Community Development Innovation Review 14, no. 2 (November 13, 2019), <https://www.frbsf.org/community-development/publications/community-development-investment-review/2019/november/state-policy-innovations-to-support-creative-placemaking/>; Bryan Zarou et al., “COVID-19 in Illinois: Impacts on Nonprofits 2020” Forefront, (January 2021): <https://myforefront.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nonprofit-Survey-Report-1.8.2021.pdf>; LaPlaca Cohen and Slover Linett Audience Research, “Culture & Community in a Time of Crisis: A Special Edition of Culture Track” (Culture Track, July 7, 2020), https://s28475.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CCTC-Key-Findings-from-Wave-1_9.29.pdf; UNESCO and The World Bank, “Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery,” (Paris: UNESCO, 2018).
- 4 This report draws frequently on research exploring Arts and Culture organizational impacts. Research about “humanities organizations” is notably absent from the literature base. However, “Arts and Culture”-based research (which, for the purposes of this report, includes arts and cultural production, creative placemaking, research about the impact of COVID-19 on arts and culture organization etc.) consistently includes and integrates humanities organizations and humanities activities (i.e. history museums and historic sites; poetry and literature; dialogues and facilitated conversations; cultural and ethnic awareness, heritage museums; broadcasting, publishing; musical interpretation; post-performance “talk-backs,” etc.).
- 5 “The Humanities in Our Lives,” American Academy of Arts & Sciences, (November 1, 2018): <https://www.amacad.org/publication/humanities-in-our-lives>.
- 6 Luiz Oosterbeek, “Cultural Integrated Landscape Management: A Humanities Perspective,” Arkeos, vol. 43 *Maçao: Instituto Terra e Memória*, (2017), 17.
- 7 No Isolation. (2017, April 2018) *What is Social Isolation?* Retrieved from: www.noisolation.com/global/research/what-is-social-isolation.
- 8 Eric Klinenberg, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life* (New York, New York: Penguin Random House, 2018), 6.
- 9 J. Sonke et al., “Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration [White paper]” University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine / ArtPlace America, (2019), 11.
- 10 UNESCO and The World Bank, “Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery,” (Paris: UNESCO, 2018), 8.
- 11 Bureau of Economic Analysis, “2017- Illinois, Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA)” U.S. Department of Commerce, (March 17, 2017): <https://apps.bea.gov/data/special-topics/arts-and-culture/summary-sheets/Arts%20-%20Illinois.pdf>.

12 Data and Analysis

Internal Illinois Humanities data and grantee partner organization data:

- “Final report” tables summarizing responses from forms completed by all 177 grantee partners.
- Grant application tables including responses from the 576 applications.
- Tables compiled from emails and other communications with grantees including organizations’ selection of their categories and confirmation of how their data is represented in this report.

External data:

- United States Census Bureau: Population data; geographical boundaries for counties, zip codes, and congressional districts; and urban/rural classifications.
- Forefront / Candid: Tables and PDF reports pertaining to philanthropy in Illinois.
- GuideStar: Nonprofit database information such as year founded.
- United Way: ALICE measurement for income and poverty.
- Illinois Department of Public Health: COVID-19 data by zip code.

13 Data analysis process. The project team asked grantee partners to provide information about their organizations through applications, surveys, and reports about and how grant funds were used. The team gathered additional contextual data from the external sources listed in the data section. Second, these data were organized and combined in R, a programming language for statistics and data visualization. Third, the team performed a variety of analyses using the data. Analyses were conducted in R. Fourth, organizations and grants were mapped in Esri ArcGIS Pro, a geographic information systems (GIS) software tool. Fifth, results from analyses in R and ArcGIS were combined and visualized using R and the Adobe Creative Suite. This resulted in the maps, charts, and other visualizations in this report. Sixth (and lastly), the team wrote the narrative for this report based on the analysis results and based on many meetings, emails, and phone conversations with grantee partners.

14 Organizations reported these impacts in Sept/Oct 2020. Impacts may have changed as the pandemic continues.

15 See Chapter 2, ‘Under Duress,’ 18.

16 Staff attribute the robustness of this diversity of grantee partners to a combination of the duress experienced and targeted outreach efforts.

17 All nonprofit organizations have an NTEE code (available through GuideStar and other publicly-accessible documentation) that categorizes their primary function.

18 “About the National Endowment for the Humanities,” The National Endowment for the Humanities, accessed 2021: <https://www.neh.gov/about>.

19 Forefront and Candid, “Giving in Illinois,” 6. According to Forefront, Illinois foundation giving reached a record \$5.1 billion in 2017. The top Illinois funding priorities for foundation giving in 2017 were education, health and human services. Cook County garnered the largest share of foundation support. Recipients in Cook County benefited from 78% of grant dollars awarded to recipients in the state and 71% of the number of grants.

20 “American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates,” Census Reporter Profile page for Illinois, The United States Census Bureau, (2019): <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/04000US17-illinois/>.

21 “Research Center – Illinois,” ALICE Project – Illinois, United Way of Northern New Jersey, last modified 2020: <https://www.unitedforalice.org/illinois>.

- 22 “A Snapshot of Rural Illinois” Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs and Western Illinois University, (2015): http://www.rwhc.com/mediasite/6-App-Chris%20Merrett_Plenary%20am.pdf.
- 23 United Way, “Research Center – Illinois”; “Cartographic Boundary Files - Shapefile 2018,” The United States Census Bureau, accessed 2021: <https://www.census.gov/geographies/mapping-files/time-series/geo/carto-boundary-file.html>. Alice is a poverty definition that means “Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed.” This definition was created by the United Way to help “define and understand the struggles of households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level but not enough to afford a bare-bones household budget.” United Way 2020; United States Census Bureau 2018.
- 24 Joe Maher, Jenny Whidden, Stacy St. Clair, Alice Yin, Robert McCoppin, Leslie Bonilla, and John Keilman, “Stark divide in Illinois COVID-19 vaccinations by race, ethnicity and age, new data shows,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 12, 2021.
- 25 Ibid, p 27.
- 26 Jackson, S. Magsamen, V. Rubin, K. Sams, and S. Springs. Rep. *Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration [White paper]*. University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine / ArtPlace America, 2019, 26.
- 27 Philanthropy’s Rural Blind Spot. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/philanthropys_rural_blind_spot?utm_source=Enews&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=SSIR_Now
- 28 Jackson, S. Magsamen, V. Rubin, K. Sams, and S. Springs. Rep. *Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration [White paper]*. University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine / ArtPlace America, 2019, 9.
- 29 Forefront and Candid, “Giving in Illinois 2019” (Candid, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.15868/social-sector.35783>.
- 30 “The CARES Act Provides Assistance for State, Local, and Tribal Governments,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, last modified December 27, 2020: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares/state-and-local-governments>.
- 31 See Directory for grantee partners by grant type.
- 32 CARES Act Funding: A Community Conversation. Cohosted by the Illinois Arts Council Agency & Illinois Humanities. (April 29, 2020): <https://illinois.webex.com/recordingservice/sites/illinois/recording/play/27c80c2a3966458da73f17a6d4256856>.

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- Barsdate, Kelly, Ryan Stubbs, Frank Woodruff, and Jeremy Brownlee. "State Policy Innovations to Support Creative Placemaking." *Community Development Innovation Review* 14, no. 2 (November 13, 2019): <https://www.frbsf.org/community-development/publications/community-development-investment-review/2019/november/state-policy-innovations-to-support-creative-placemaking/>.
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