

Applicant Information

Type of Activity Artwork Creation
Project Discipline Visual Arts
- Painting

Arts Education None of this project involves arts education

NEA Primary Strategic Outcome Creation

Total Adults Engaged In Person 30

Artists Directly Involved 2

Youth (under age 18) Engaged In Person 15

Populations Benefited by Race American Indian/Alaska Native, White

Populations Benefited By Age No single age group listed above made up more than 25% of the population directly benefited

Populations Benefited By Distinct Groups No single distinct group listed above made up more than 25% of the population directly benefited

Project Descriptors Accessibility

Amount Requested \$6,000

Provide a very brief summary of the applicant's proposal. It should summarize the information explained in detail in the narrative section, and should be no longer than 2 or 3 sentences.

Through this project, <ARTIST 1> (Oglala Lakota) and <ARTIST 2> (Muscogee/Choctaw/ Apache), will create a large scale mural in a public space in downtown <CITY>. By exploring their indigenous identities, the place in which they live, and the community that exists around them, they will be able to share with viewers the importance of the earth, the world around us, and embracing cultures in our everyday lives. The design will involve research into the history of the area in which the art will be created and the diversity of the people in the community, and its proximity to a cultural hub will ensure its appreciation and high viewership by people from all backgrounds.

Grant Amount Requested?

6000

Total project cost?

6000

Date(s) of Project Event(s)

Installation will happen between <DATE> and <DATE>, with a community unveiling at the end of that time period.

Number of Artists Participating

Two main artists, although we plan on inviting others to participate depending on availability.
Visual arts - mural

Collaborative Grant Narrative

INTRODUCTION

Through this project, <ARTIST 1> (Oglala Lakota) and <ARTIST 2> (Muscogee/Choctaw/Apache), will create a large-scale mural in a public space in downtown <CITY>. By inviting community input, exploring their indigenous identities, the place in which they live, and the community that exists around them, they will be able to share with viewers the importance of the earth, the world around us, and embracing cultures in our everyday lives. The design phase will involve research into the history of the area in which the art will be created and the diversity of the people in the community, and the mural's proximity to a cultural hub will ensure its appreciation and high viewership by people from all backgrounds. The artists have worked together on other projects, both artistic and other, in the past and have an excellent track record of working collaboratively and completing high-quality projects in budget and on-time.

<ARTIST 1>

<ARTIST 1>'s work focuses on concepts that deal with identity, history and place. These narrative works often draw from aspects of his life, family and experiences. Quite often, Native American people are subjugated to an old idea of who we used to be; or rather, a romantic idea dreamt up in a Hollywood studio or from a fictional book. Major museums and galleries often have a niche section for any racial population, often segregated from the larger body of work which he felt was an injustice to those artists. Through his work he strives to break through that barrier by including Native American perspectives, while touching upon universal themes that resonate with a wider audience, so that it can be included in a larger body of work.

When <ARTIST 1> was a young artist, the community he grew up in relied on a tourist economy which weighed heavy on the stereotypical Native American imagery. It had nothing to do with any current or personal issues many Natives deal with today. Like many other Native artists, he was expected to paint these one sided narratives for a quick dollar. He did not want to perpetuate the stereotype of the "romantic Indian" for tourists. Nor did he want to perpetuate the stereotype of a "drunk Indian" or anything negatively associated to that degree by the locals. Instead, he took the direction of painting the realities he saw growing up. He chose to paint his ancestors' past experiences (which only goes back a couple generations) through a Native American perspective, not through a tourist's romantic perspective. <ARTIST 1> wants his artwork to start a dialogue with the viewer, engage them on various levels where they can ask questions, be curious and empathize with the work. He believes this work needs to happen in our society, where we can talk about identity, history and place in order to be inclusive.

<ARTIST 1> recently returned from a six-week residency at the Institute of American Indian Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he was exposed to an incredible amount of art - creation, exhibition, and inspiring conversations and ideas. Through that renewal of creative energy, he

has returned to South Dakota full of ideas and a revitalized desire to steep himself in his community, invite participation, and have his artwork reach the largest number of people possible both physically and creatively.

<ARTIST 2>

<ARTIST 2> was born in <REDACTED>. His parents are Creek and Mississippi Choctaw. He grew up in the suburbs of Tulsa until he was 21. <ARTIST 2> enlisted in the U.S. Army and proudly served his country for 3 1/2 years, fourteen months of which were spent in various hot spots in Iraq. After being honorably discharged, he discovered the Institute of American Indian Arts while on a road trip with his father. <ARTIST 2> immediately fell in love with the energy of Santa Fe and the serene landscape of the Southwest. Soon after this excursion, he enrolled there and studied video production. <ARTIST 2> graduated in 2010 with his BFA in New Media Arts - Moving Images. After graduation, he would be reminded of another passion he once carried when his then future wife discovered an old sketchbook of his. She encouraged him to start creating 2D art again. In the past 4 years, <ARTIST 2> has been building his portfolio and has captured a few accolades while doing so. His awards include: "AWARD" at the 2011 Black Hills Pow Wow, the "AWARD" at the 2012 Red Cloud Art Show, and the 2013 Red Cloud Art Show "AWARD" for most innovative use of traditional methods and techniques for a collaborative piece with his wife, 3rd place at the 2013 Black Hills Pow wow, 1st place in painting and drawing at the 2014 Cherokee Holiday Art Show, and 2nd place at the 2014 Black Hills Pow Wow. <ARTIST 2> now resides in <CITY>, SD with his wife, <REDACTED>, Lakota, who is an award winning bead artist and <REDACTED>.

While still serving in a combat zone, <ARTIST 2> bought a video camera and began documenting his experience on film. Over a decade later he is an acclaimed painter and graduate of the Institute of American Indian Arts. "I am White Mountain Apache," he said, "but I was adopted, and my parents are Muscogee Creek and Mississippi Choctaw. I honestly don't know a lot about White Mountain Apache culture, but it's one of my life's goals to learn more. I want to know more about who I am as a Native American and let that steer my journey as an artist.

"Like many Native artists and Native people I grew up fascinated by the iconic, historic leaders, like Sitting Bull, Geronimo, and Red Cloud. They are like our Native superheroes and I've definitely focused on them in my work. Drawing them, and repeating those images again and again, has been a kind of self-taught art education for me. I've worried a lot about being offensive since I'm not Lakota myself or tribally affiliated with most of the other historical figures I paint. I don't want to take something that is sacred to one nation and misrepresent it. So I tried very hard to respect those images and treat them with care—and I hope I've inspired people to learn about that time in history.

"But now I'm in a place where I'm wondering what my next body of work will be. Although I admire those iconic Native figures I need to figure out what's really inside of me and to be

inspired by my own history and identity.”

<ARTIST 2> currently works for <COMPANY> delivering arts programming and professional development to artists and community members living in all parts of the reservation. Seeing the impact of continued support to Lakota artists and seeing the inspiration and expressions of culture are rekindling the creative spirit in <ARTIST 2>’s heart.

Project Plan

- Phase 1 - Research and Design - This collaborative project will begin with community engagement sessions where the artists will talk to community members about culture, community, and place. Artists will hold one session in <CITIES>. They will partner with local organizations to invite artists and community members for an in-depth discussion, and gather contact information to invite participants to the unveiling event after the artwork is completed. Using that information, the artists will create the design for the mural.
- Phase 2 - Implementation and Creation - The exterior wall space that will be used are two walls connected at a 90-degree angle (see photo below). Each wall is 12 feet high by approximately 30 feet long, broken up by doors and windows at various locations. Positioned in the rear of a parking lot, which doubles as a venue for events, it will be centrally located and hugely visible. After finalizing the design, <ARTIST 2> and <ARTIST 1> will purchase materials needed for the piece and begin sketching, painting, and/or applying the artwork onto the walls. The rate of completion of the work will be dependent on weather, but delays for inclement weather is not expected.
- Phase 3 - Sharing and Celebrating - a date will be chosen for a final unveiling and community celebration, and members of the <CITIES> will be invited. Artists will invite partnerships with <GALLERIES> (the three tenants of the buildings), and possibly other organizations to amplify the event. At this event, all participants in the design process will be acknowledged and invited to be recognized as the piece is unveiled.



Impact

This project will be **not** just a collaboration between two artists, but among the artists, their cultural identities, and the community. Both artists have been working on their artistic skill and expression as well as grounding themselves in community work and engaging with people of all backgrounds through art. To complete a large-scale and highly-visible project like this would come at just the right time in both of their careers, as it could serve as a launching pad for them as they each evolve and grow as artists, good family and community members, and leaders.

The **location** for their work is also ideal because <ARTIST 1> and <ARTIST 2> have consistently participated in <GALLERY> activities for the last two years. <ARTIST 1> was one of the original studio tenants with his <GROUP>, and after a short hiatus he has opened his own studio. <ARTIST 2> and <REDACTED> have been involved in classes, pop-up sales, and have parked the Rolling Rez Arts mobile unit in the parking lot for programming. Both feel that <GALLERY> mission of centering Lakota and other Native cultures while using art and creativity to foster and build community are a perfect location for a collaborative, community-based cultural artwork like this.

Budget

Fees

Lead Artist Fee	2,200
Collaborating Artist Fee	2,200
SubTotals:	\$4,400

Project Materials & Equipment (list each item and its cost):

Art materials - paint, brushes, wheat paste, etc	600
Community input meeting materials	296
Final unveiling event materials, publicity, refreshments	500
SubTotals:	\$1,396

Milage: Figure the nubmer of miles to be traveled by both artists and multiply by .37 per mile.

<CITY> to/from Pine Ridge (222 miles round trip)	82
<CITY> to/from Eagle Butte (332 miles round trip)	122
SubTotals:	\$204

Other Travel (cost such as lodging, meals, airfare, etc.)

SubTotals: \$0

Expense Totals: \$6,000

South Dakota Arts Council
711 East Wells Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of <ARTIST 1>' and <ARTIST 2>'s application for a Collaboration Grant. I have been following both artists' evolutions for many years, and this program would be a great opportunity for the two of them to continue their journeys in both growing as an artist and sharing their knowledge and artistic skills with the community.

We are working at <GALLERY> to build a nexus of artistic and cultural expression around Lakota culture and artists in downtown <CITY>, and we are always looking for ways to create opportunities for artists and to increase access to the arts for our community. This project could do both and more! As we have seen over and over, the experience of seeing and interacting with artists as they create public works is a guaranteed way to deepen the impact of artwork. Also, it cannot be overstated the impact that this will have on our Lakota neighbors and community members to see artwork reflective of them and other Native cultures featured in such a public space!

We are expanding our artist studios into another section of our building, and we have multiple surfaces on that section where <ARTIST 1> and <ARTIST 2> will be able to integrate their artwork and mural into our working business and studios. The location, in the corner of the parking lot where everyone will see as they enter, will maximize the eyes that will be on the art. We also have a secondary surface facing north towards the railroad tracks and one of the busiest intersections in the state!

Please take this letter as a wholehearted recommendation for <ARTIST 1> and <ARTIST 2> for the Collaboration Grant, and I feel that this opportunity could be life changing for both artists, as well as impactful and important for our community. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,