



## **In Progress**

Flexible Support FY22 Sample Grant Application

### **Group's Purpose**

In Progress has been promoting the voices of newly developing artists since its inception in 1996. Our purpose is to diversify cultural dialogue and pave the way for new voices in the field of digital artmaking. At In Progress we tell stories through three artforms – video, photography and music. Our goal is to teach artists to develop content, technique, purpose and passion for their own stories. Since the beginning, In Progress has partnered with urban, rural and tribal communities. In 2021, a core group of media artists now run many of In Progress's existing programs, serve on the board of directors, produce art, teach, and actively organize within their respective communities.

In Progress has a proven history of developing long-term relationships with communities and individuals in order to maintain quality, well-structured arts programs. The organization has 3 focus areas:

- Artist Services: providing professional mentorship, exhibition opportunities, and access to quality production resources, for those committed to further developing their skills as practicing media artists.
- Community Initiatives: digital storytelling programs designed in partnership with rural and tribal communities to provide opportunities for youth to speak through the art of digital media.
- School Partnerships: working directly with educators and administrators to offer school residencies, curriculum development and digital arts program development.

### **Grant Number & Project Name**

FS22-1-062 NEXUS Professional Development Program for Digital Artmakers

### **Project/Program Description**

NEXUS is a digital arts program that provides mentorship, access and presentation opportunities to 24+ self-taught artists that face barriers to traditional professional development opportunities.

## Project or Program

### DESCRIPTION

NEXUS is dedicated to increasing the professional expertise, viability and connectedness of emerging media artists from underserved communities. The program includes skill training, mentorship, presentation, and networking opportunities for artists that have limited access to professional arts training. Disciplines of focus include photography, video and music.

### GOALS

NEXUS works on the premise that everyone has the potential to achieve artistically and professionally given the opportunity to connect and learn with others. It employs an adaptive model for adult learners that begins with individual assessment and goal planning, and then works with participants to design effective learning plans that will advance their abilities to create and present professionally produced digital artwork.

Qualified teaching artists mentor 24 participants, providing formal guidance, and instruction. They critique artwork, and guide participants through creative processes.

Core participants gain access to creative production equipment (cameras, light kits, sound recording tools) at no cost. They gain access to the use of our main floor studio, music studio, screening room and post-production suite. Participants receive individual consults with preparing portfolios and resumes. As the program reaches its conclusion, participants present publicly through exhibition, screenings and group gatherings.

### ALIGNMENT

NEXUS takes artists that are at different stages of their professional development and brings them together in activities that help build a foundation for long-term engagement. The program is critical to our organization's purpose of "paving the way for new voices in the field of digital artmaking." By identifying, training, and connecting artists in a professional learning process, In Progress is also able to also identify potential mentors and activity leaders that ultimately contribute to In Progress's future role as an arts organization.

### LOCATION

Nexus takes place in the north end neighborhood of Saint Paul at our Saint Paul studio. The studio provides 1750 of studio and meeting spaces designed to accommodate multimedia artists. . In Progress has been in this neighborhood for 10 years now and is seen as a connected and accessible resource. Many of the artists served by this program, live in the neighborhood.

### ACTIVITIES

Primary Program activities December 2021 - June 2022.

- individual assessment and ongoing evaluation of all artists entering the program;
- foundational technical trainings offered to all participants in the program;
- mentorships with professional working artists;
- coaching sessions that target the individual learning needs and ongoing portfolio assessment;
- screenings, exhibits and gatherings designed to build participants public network (depending on pandemic guidelines some activities may be held remotely).

Activities are scheduled to meet the needs of participants and mentors in the program.

## Community

In Progress offers programs throughout the state of Minnesota, but for the purposes of this opportunity will focus our community description of those that will participate in the NEXUS program.

### PARTICIPANTS

24 core adult participants (age 18+) 96% BIPOC; 20% living with a disability, 10% on probation; 100% identifying as low-income or poor. 100% lacking formal foundational learning in the digital arts. Many have had to put their artistic endeavors aside periodically to tend to family needs, income barriers, and other pressures related to poverty. Participants may apply to the program through our website, or join (as many do) via introductions made by current and past participants. 100% live in the Twin Cities.

12 additional participants will receive brush up training, access to creative spaces and digital production equipment. These are typically past participants that need limited guidance but still require access due to economic barriers. This group also provides inroads for new participants - engaging them in informal instruction, and opportunities for collaboration. The participants will mirror the demographics of new participants.

80 additional audience members represent an extension of participants' personal networks. Ages extend from the very young to elders. Audience participation is anticipated to be 85% BIPOC.

### CONNECTIONS

The artists that connect with In Progress do so across ethnicity, artistic discipline, age, experience, and learning/creative style. Where there is commonality is in a shared value of what it means to be an artist, what it means to encounter barriers to participation, and what it means to engage with other artists.

In Progress operates on a continuum that is not top down but instead lateral, most often led through ideas presented by participants that are then actualized through targeted program development and board leadership. Our core purpose of "paving the way for new voices," requires that we listen, watch and act as a whole community within the bounds of available resources. In Progress continues to stay strong and relevant

following this principle and those that participate in NEXUS often lead new initiatives for the organization, and stay connected to programming for years to come.

## ROLES

Leadership identified for this project include:

- digital artists that have five or more years teaching experience;
- mid-career practicing artists with 10+ years of experience;
- one administrator that has 34 years of experience in digital arts learning design.

In Progress will assign mentors from a roster of 30+ artists that have provided teaching services to In Progress over the years. All are independent contractors with a majority identifying as BIPOC.

As an organization, In Progress typically serves 93% BIPOC populations and it works to be accessible to all that want to connect. The board of directors also mirror's its constituency's ethnicity, income levels, and artistic disciplines.

## Proposal Budget

### Project Budget Expenses

NEXUS Funding December 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022 MRAC Flexible Support Funding  
\$18000 Contracted Teaching Artists/Mentors (\$50/hr @ 360 hrs)  
\$ 9600 Studio Supervision & EQ checkurs (6 months @ \$1600 per month)  
\$ 5000 Program Director & Assessment Services (\$50/hr @ 100 hrs)  
\$ 2400 Digital Art supplies (exhibit print supplies - \$1400, \$1000 SD cards, external drives)

### Total Project Cash Expenses

\$35,000.00

### Amount Requested

\$15,000.00

### Project Budget Income

\$15000 McKnight Foundation (secured)  
\$ 5000 NEA Cares Act (secured)  
\$15,000 MRAC Flexible Support

### Total Project Cash Income

\$35,000.00

## ***(Important!)* Additional Fields Required**

Please note that in the full application there are additional fields that will need to be completed and are not shown to panelists.