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GUARANTEED MINIMUM INCOME PILOT FOCUSED ON ARTISTS EXPANDS TO RURAL MINNESOTA

A guaranteed income pilot led by Springboard for the Arts will focus on the creative workforce across urban and rural communities in Minnesota.

February 13, 2023, St. Paul, MN – Beginning in March 2023, Springboard for the Arts' [Guaranteed Minimum Income pilot program for artists and culture workers](#) will continue in St. Paul, and expand to artists residing in Otter Tail County, MN.

Inspired by the City of St. Paul's People's Prosperity Pilot and the Mayors for Guaranteed Income network, Springboard's pilot focuses on the creative workforce, providing \$500 of unrestricted monthly support to 50 artists in the Frogtown and Rondo neighborhoods of St. Paul, and 25 artists in Otter Tail County for 18 months, beginning in March 2023.

Originally launched in 2021 as a "sidecar" to the City of St. Paul's People's Prosperity Pilot, Springboard's pilot explores the local impact of guaranteed income on artists, culture bearers, and creative workers, and provides a national model for the inclusion of artists in policies that address economic inequity.

"We are excited to deepen our commitment to this work in St. Paul's Rondo and Frogtown neighborhoods, and in Otter Tail County. We believe that urban-rural solidarity is possible and necessary for economic justice. Artists are an essential part of creating vibrant and just local economies," says Laura Zabel, executive director of Springboard for the Arts.

Michele Anderson, Rural Director at Springboard for the Arts, continues, "From our rural headquarters in Fergus Falls, Springboard has had a front row seat to the needs and impact of artists in Otter Tail County for 12 years. Along with many local partners in economic and community development, we have witnessed the many ways that artists are essential to the quality of life in the communities here, but are sometimes overlooked or lack the investment and safety nets that other sectors have benefited from. This program will be a game changer for artists who want to stay in this region and contribute to their communities."

Springboard's Guaranteed Income for Artists Pilot selected the 2023 recipients at random from an eligible pool of artists in St. Paul and Otter Tail County. At least 75% of recipients identify as Black, Native and/or People of Color.

"The arts and artists play an enormous role in local and regional development. We are eager to see how this program will unfold as a way to provide an additional measure of economic stability," says Greg Wagner of West Central Initiative, which serves the 9-county region of West Central Minnesota, including Otter Tail County.

Springboard will continue its research partnership with the [University of Pennsylvania Center for Guaranteed Minimum Income \(GMI\)](#) to understand the impact of guaranteed income on individuals and local communities. Springboard is also partnering with St. Paul and Otter Tail County artists to design projects that address stereotypes and misconceptions around economic insecurity and to share the impact of guaranteed income in rural and urban contexts. We will have more information about how artists can be a part of this work in Spring of 2023.

The pilot is supported in part by the McKnight Foundation, the Bush Foundation and the Kresge Foundation. Springboard is a 2023 Power of Cash Narrative Grant recipient, awarded by the Economic Security Project (ESP) and Guaranteed Income Community of Practice (GICP). Grant support will fund creative work by Otter Tail County artists centering GMI and economic justice stories throughout the year.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Springboard has distributed over \$1.5 million in direct aid to creative workers in the region. Laura Zabel explains, "Artists build social connection, improve mental health, rethink public spaces, and tackle our most pressing challenges like environmental justice, racial equity and education. If we are going to tap into artists' skills to help us imagine a new future, we need to find new ways to support the sustainability of our creative community."

About Springboard for the Arts

Founded in 1991, Springboard for the Arts is an economic and community development organization for artists and by artists. Based in St. Paul and Fergus Falls, MN, Springboard's mission is to support artists with the tools to make a living and a life, and to build just and equitable communities full of meaning, joy, and connection. Our vision is of a world where artists are essential; local economies are vibrant and just; and the systems that surround us are human-centered. Springboard's work has been featured in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Stanford Social Innovation Review and The Guardian and directly impacts over 22,000 artists each year in our home state of Minnesota. Through national tools and training Springboard's programs have been replicated in over 100 communities across the U.S. and internationally. Learn more about our work at: www.springboardforthearts.org.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What is Guaranteed Minimum Income?

From Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, “A guaranteed income is a monthly, cash payment given directly to individuals. It is unconditional, with no strings attached and no work requirements. A guaranteed income is meant to supplement, rather than replace, the existing social safety net and can be a tool for racial and gender equity.”

Why is Springboard doing this?

The last few years has shown how fragile our existing social supports are, and how our ecosystem for artists and creative workers needs more investment to be equitable and sustainable. Americans for the Arts’ report COVID-19 Impact Survey for Artists and Creative Workers, shows that 62% of artists have become fully unemployed because of COVID-19 and 95% have experienced income loss from COVID-19. In addition to the specific challenges of the COVID-19 crisis, the pandemic has illuminated that there is little to no safety net for most individual artists, creating a pressing emergency of equity in economic opportunity, especially for artists who are Black, Indigenous and/or People of Color. While many recovery efforts focus on nonprofit arts organizations or business relief; artists and creative workers are falling through the cracks.

The disruption across the whole economy, which has specifically and catastrophically affected the creative, entertainment, service, and retail industries, requires a response larger than any one donor, organization, or foundation. In the coming year, Springboard for the Arts seeks to address these vulnerabilities through a combination of direct services to meet artists’ needs and broad programming to address systemic issues. Inspired by the existing People’s Prosperity Guaranteed Income Pilot in St. Paul, we are excited to pilot direct, unrestricted, noncompetitive financial support, in the form of Guaranteed Minimum Income, for culture workers.

Are you using public money to fund this pilot?

No, the Guaranteed Income for Artists Pilot is being funded by private foundations and support, including the Kresge Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, and the Bush Foundation.

I’m an artist in St. Paul or Otter Tail County, can I apply?

We are not taking open applications for the Guaranteed Income for Artists Pilot. Recipients have been selected at random from an eligible pool of artists who have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 and have received support from Springboard’s Coronavirus Personal Emergency Relief Fund and other services. We are focusing this pilot on 50 artists in the Frogtown and Rondo neighborhoods of St. Paul, and 25 artists in Otter Tail County.

Additional resources on Guaranteed Income:

Mayors for Guaranteed Income: <https://www.mayorsforagi.org/>

Guaranteed Income Pilots Dashboard: <https://guaranteedincome.us/>

Stockton Demonstration Project findings: <https://www.stocktondemonstration.org/>

Peoples Prosperity Guaranteed Income Pilot in St. Paul:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/financial-empowerment/peoples-prosperityguaranteed-Income-pilot>

Guaranteed Income Pilot in Rural Georgia:

<https://dailyyonder.com/guaranteed-income-initiative-to-focus-on-rural-black-women-in-georgia/2022/05/23/>

Other guaranteed income pilots working with artists:

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA/Bay Area:

<https://ybca.org/guaranteed-income-pilot/>

Creatives Rebuild New York: <https://www.creativesrebuildny.org/>

Power of Cash Narrative Change Fellowship: <https://www.economicsecurityil.org/fellowship>

“Exhale” illustration by Briana Williams. <https://www.briinoir.com/meet-the-artist>

