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In Minnesota, The Nation's Longest Guaranteed Income Pilot for Artists Expands to 5 Years

Setting National Model for Guaranteed Income, Springboard for the Arts Doubles Participation for Rural Artists and Adds Wrap-Around Support Services

ST. PAUL, MN — Minnesota's [Guaranteed Income for Artists](#) pilot, operated by Springboard for the Arts, announced plans today for a major expansion that will extend support to five years, add 25 rural artists, and offer "wrap-around" support services such as personal finance and housing counseling.

This enhancement, making it one of the longest guaranteed income trials in the U.S., aims to produce robust research demonstrating impact and potentially driving policy changes that could lead to government-run and funded programs in the future, according to [Springboard for the Arts](#), the nonprofit that operates the pilot program.

The expansion will extend support for the 75 current participants to a full five years, far exceeding the typical 12-18 month duration of most pilots. It will also enroll 25 new rural artists for the same extended timeline. All participants receive \$500 monthly no-strings-attached payments. This addition will bring the total to 100 participants, evenly split between St. Paul and Otter Tail County, cementing its position as the only guaranteed income program in the nation to include rural artists.

As part of a new partnership with LSS Financial Counseling, Springboard for the Arts will also provide all pilot participants with "wrap-around" services - a comprehensive set of support resources that build long-term economic stability and financial well-being. These include personal finance guidance, student loan debt assistance, and housing counseling.

Initial data from the pilot, which launched in 2020, shows that participants used the income for critical needs: 36% for essential purchases and services, 30% for food, and 10% for housing. The program is a "sidecar" pilot to St. Paul's guaranteed income pilot, which has [resulted](#) in positive outcomes in employment, physical and mental health, and other indicators of well-being and quality of life. Since its launch, the Guaranteed Income for Artists pilot has been funded by private foundations at different phases, including the Bush Foundation, Kresge Foundation, and the McKnight Foundation, without utilizing public funds.

The announcement coincides with [International Basic Income Week](#) and the opening of "EXHALE," an exhibition featuring artworks by 25 artists participating in the Guaranteed Income for Artists pilot program. All featured artists received stipends through Springboard's Artists Respond program to create artwork about the opportunities that guaranteed income offers. Springboard will also expand this initiative by selecting locally rooted artists to develop a broader portfolio of projects focused on economic justice, community wealth building, and policies like guaranteed income.

"Our program is emerging as a national model, demonstrating how guaranteed income can transform artists' lives, build community resilience, and strengthen local economies," said Laura Zabel, Springboard for the Arts executive director. "We're not just defying political headwinds—we're changing the narrative with data, artwork, and meaningful stories of impact. When artists can focus more on their work, families and community instead of worrying about basic needs, everyone benefits."

Fiber artist Torri Hanna, who began receiving \$500 monthly in March 2023, said: "The guaranteed income has been a crucial safety net. It allowed me to pay off credit card debt, improve my credit score, and even save for a down payment on a house." Based in Otter Tail County, Hanna and her daughter recently purchased a home together, attributing this milestone to the program's stability. "Knowing that \$500 will hit my account each month has made financial planning so much easier," Hanna added. "It covers unexpected costs like car or home repairs, giving me peace of mind."

The program's extension allows researchers to now examine how participants' decisions and planning are affected over an extended period when they know the guaranteed income will last for five years. Springboard has partnered with the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Guaranteed Income Research to conduct comprehensive impact studies.

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 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?

Individual artists and culture workers have little to no safety net to rely on. Many work as freelancers or gig workers, leading to unpredictable income. This issue is exacerbated for artists who are BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, disabled, or live in rural or underinvested urban areas.

The pandemic exposed these challenges, prompting Springboard to expand its emergency relief fund to assist over 2,500 artists and help 80 communities nationwide establish local emergency funds. While we are proud of our emergency response efforts, we recognize that such measures are not a long-term solution. Systemic change and bigger policy ideas are crucial.

Guaranteed income policies offer a promising approach to addressing systemic poverty at both local and national levels. We advocate for including artists in these economic justice movements, both as beneficiaries and as key allies in driving systemic change.

Inspired by the People's Prosperity Guaranteed Income Pilot led by the City of Saint Paul, we are excited to advance direct, unrestricted, noncompetitive financial support for artists and culture workers.

Are you using public money to fund this pilot?

We are collaborating with private funders at local, regional, and national levels to advance this initiative, without utilizing any public funds. We deeply appreciate the McKnight Foundation's generous support for this phase of our program expansion.

Additional resources on Guaranteed Income:

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

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

City of Saint Paul: People's Prosperity Guaranteed Income Pilot -

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/financial-empowerment/guaranteed-income#peoples-prosperity-pilot>