

WOMEN UNITED GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Organization Information

Organization Name

Prima Arts Inc.

EIN

27-3111556

Address

941 Wheatland Ave
Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17603
United States

Contact Name

Tessa Balencic

Contact Phone

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Executive Director / President (If different)

Mitch Nugent

Eligibility Criteria

Is your organization a registered nonprofit organization with an official letter of determination of 501c3 status from the Internal Revenue Service?

Yes

Has your organization operated in Lancaster County for at least one year (operating in Lancaster before July 1, 2024?)

Yes

Does your organization or program you are requesting funding for in this application serve primarily women over the age of 18?

Yes

Does your organization provide services to families at or below the ALICE threshold in Lancaster County?

Yes

Is your organization delinquent on any state or federal debt?

No

Does your organization share United Way's view of collaborative and inclusive service to the entire community, without excluding anyone on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other factor not relevant to a person's eligibility for service or ability to contribute?

Yes

Has your organization update your listing with PA 211 in the last 12 months?

Yes

Application Elements

Organization Description

Since its founding in 2010 by Mitch and Diana Nugent, Prima Theatre has been at the forefront of innovative storytelling in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. What began as pop-up performances has evolved into a nationally recognized boutique theater, celebrated for delivering fresh and engaging theatrical experiences that resonate deeply with audiences.

At Prima, our mission is to invigorate lives through theatrical artistry. We believe life's greatest moments are shaped by the experiences we share with others, and we strive to create bold, beautiful performances that bring people together. Our dynamic programming includes immersive concerts and contemporary theater, making us the region's most exciting and welcoming cultural hub.

Recent productions, such as ILLUMINATION, an enchanting candlelit holiday concert, and The Music of Queen + Journey, a high-energy celebration of classic rock, showcase our commitment to captivating audiences. Upcoming works, including 80s By Request Live! and Rob Bell's world premiere We'll Get Back to You, reflect our dedication to pushing creative boundaries and enriching the cultural landscape.

Through our performances, Prima Theatre fosters a vibrant community spirit, inspiring connection and engagement among all who attend.

Commitment to Equity

At Prima, we know storytelling bridges divides and drives societal progress, and creating a space where every voice is valued is central to our mission. With nearly 45% of Lancaster County residents identifying as BIPOC, our audience mirrors this diversity, with 38% from historically marginalized groups. Additionally, 55% of our creative team members come from these communities, allowing audiences to see themselves on stage, truly representing the community.

Workforce Development - NextGen: We equip underserved youth with essential skills through theater internships, leading to a 20% increase in employment rates and inspiring aspirations.

Inclusive Hiring & Purchasing: We prioritize diverse casting and mentorship while offering resources like housing assistance. Our inclusive purchasing supports local jobs and vendors.

Arts Access - The GreatList: We provide free or subsidized tickets to underserved communities through a texting platform, promoting inclusion and making live theater accessible to all.

We explore diverse narratives of equity, identity, and belonging through storytelling. By amplifying marginalized voices, we honor our history and craft an inclusive narrative that unites us.

Proposal Details

Main Priority Area

Women's Financial Stability

Grant Dollar Amount Requested

\$15,000.00

What percent of the overall project budget is covered by the Women United grant?

20

Project Description

Prima Theatre is proposing a two-part project focused on expanding our existing programming to enhance workforce development through our NextGen Internship Program and support an all-female cast for our upcoming production of *Disenchanted*, set to run in fall 2025. This initiative aims to level the playing field for women in the world of professional theater.

1. NextGen Internship Program: The NextGen Initiative equips underserved youth with essential skills through hands-on theater production internships. By engaging young women in marketing, event production, and technical roles, we help them develop valuable, transferable skills. Research shows that access to arts education significantly increases success rates in both academic and career pursuits. This expansion will allow us to offer additional internship positions, enhancing the number of youth we can serve. Funding will support program enhancements, such as technological upgrades and increased mentorship opportunities, ensuring we provide a cutting-edge learning environment.

2. Support for All-Female Cast: As part of *Disenchanted*, we are dedicated to featuring a wonderfully diverse all-female cast. This initiative is especially important as it addresses the underrepresentation of women in theatrical roles. We are requesting funding for stipends, housing, meals, and mentorship for these performers, enabling us to provide meaningful employment while fostering their artistic growth. Our goal is to empower these women by offering essential resources and professional mentorship as they navigate their careers in the performing arts.

This project not only promotes artistic excellence but also directly addresses the imbalance in representation within the industry, creating inclusive opportunities for women in our community. By expanding our programs, we strive to inspire the next generation of female artists and leaders, ensuring their voices are recognized and celebrated on stage.

Collaboration

Yes, we plan to collaborate with several key organizations to enhance the impact of our NextGen program. We have established partnerships with local high schools and universities, including the School District of Lancaster (SDoL), Franklin & Marshall College, Millersville University, and the Pennsylvania College of Art and Design (PCAD). These collaborations enable us to recruit underserved youth, particularly female interns, for hands-on internships in theater production and arts administration, providing vital career-building experiences.

Additionally, we will work with local businesses, including TAIT, Clair Global, and Lapp Electric, to offer mentorship and professional development opportunities for our female interns. These collaborations will enrich their learning experience, enabling participants to gain insights from industry professionals and build connections that enhance their future career prospects.

We will also collaborate with other theaters, producers, and industry professionals to support our all-female cast for *Disenchanted*. By fostering these connections, we can provide the cast with valuable mentorship and opportunities for future advancement in their artistic careers. Together, we aim to create a vibrant arts scene that reflects the diversity and talents of Lancaster while nurturing the next generation of female creative leaders.

Implementation Plan

NextGen Internship Program:

To successfully implement the NextGen Internship Program, Prima Theatre will begin by recruiting underserved youth, particularly young women, through partnerships with local high schools and community organizations. We will engage in outreach efforts, including informational sessions and workshops, to attract a diverse pool of applicants. Once selected, interns will participate in a comprehensive training program that covers essential skills in theater production, marketing, and technical roles.

Each intern will be paired with a dedicated mentor from our team, who will assess their existing skills and interests and set specific goals for their time in the program. As interns progress, many will have the opportunity to specialize in areas such as marketing or event production, working closely with staff members who have relevant expertise. Mentors will conduct regular check-ins to monitor their development and adjust their learning paths as necessary. At the conclusion of their internships, we will conduct evaluations to assess each intern's growth in skills and their

achievement of the goals set at the beginning of the program.

Support for All-Female Cast:

For the production of *Disenchanted*, we will conduct auditions to assemble a diverse and talented all-female cast. Our focus will be on creating an inclusive environment that empowers these performers. Once selected, cast members will receive stipends, housing assistance, and meals throughout the production process to alleviate financial burdens and allow them to focus on their artistic contributions.

To further support their development, we will provide mentorship from experienced professionals in the industry, helping them navigate their careers in the performing arts. This initiative not only provides meaningful employment but also builds essential skills and confidence for the cast members, preparing them for future opportunities in theater and beyond.

Together, these two components of our implementation plan reinforce each other, fostering a supportive community for aspiring female artists and enriching the cultural landscape of our region.

Outcomes & Evaluation

For the NextGen Program, our goal is to provide 5 internships to local female high school and college students, giving them essential skills in theater production, marketing, and technical roles. We aim for a 100% completion rate, with an 80% increase in self-reported skills based on pre- and post-program surveys. We also hope to see at least 50% of our interns landing arts-related jobs within six months of completing the program. A wonderful example is Ali Murphy, a former intern who learned everything from marketing to tech; she grew into her role as Prima's Music Director and has since made waves in the broader arts scene.

At the same time, we're thrilled to support 6 female performers for *Disenchanted*. This initiative will provide stipends, housing, meals, and dedicated mentorship, empowering these artists and helping them build valuable connections in the industry. To evaluate our outcomes, we'll track key metrics like internship completion rates, participant feedback, and job placements. Regular check-ins and end-of-year assessments will help ensure that everyone meets their goals and that our programs are effective.

With your support, Prima Theatre can expand these initiatives and create lasting impacts, nurturing the next generation of women leaders in the arts. Together, we'll build a dynamic, inclusive community that celebrates diversity and empowers future generations of artists.

Documents

Required Documents

- [Prima-Board-Membership-Chart.pdf](#)
- [Prima-990_2023.pdf](#)
- [Prima-990_2023_24.pdf](#)
- [24-25-FY-PRIMA-BUDGET.pdf](#)
- [Prima-Women-United-Project-Budgetpdf.pdf](#)
- [IRS-Determination-Letter.pdf](#)