

FY24 Office Partnership Grant

Applicant	Andrew Cohen
Applicant ID	APP-023786
Company Name	Excellence in the Community
Recipient Address	Excellence in the Community 10073 Stonewall Ct Sandy, Utah 84092
Phone	(801) 718-3862
Email	drew@excellenceconcerts.org
Funding Requested	\$60,000.00
Status	Submitted
Funded?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Application Title: 2024 Rural Excellence Community Concert & Education Engagement

Description:

Excellence in the Community is seeking to solidify our mission of bringing outstanding Utah musicians to eleven (11) underserved rural areas from February 2024 - December 2024. Our collaboration with UA&M and Main Street Priorities will foster cultural connections through free, high-quality concert experience and educational outreach, inspiring a love for music in diverse Utah communities. We anticipate strong positive outcomes to continue this program into 2025 with subsidized local funds.

General Information

Question: Name of the Organization

Excellence in the Community

Question: Project Coordinator's Name

Jeff Whiteley

Question: Project Coordinator's Title

Managing Director & Founder

Question: Project Coordinator's Phone Number

(801) 718-3862

Question: Project Coordinator's Email Address

jeff@excellenceconcerts.org

Question: Organization Street Address

10073 Stonewall Ct

Question: City

Sandy

Question: State

Utah

Question: Zip Code

84092

Question: County

Salt Lake County

Question: Organization Director's Name

Jeff Whiteley

Question: Director's Work Phone Number

(801) 718-3862

Question: Director's Email Address

jeff@excellenceconcerts.org

Question: Organization Website

<http://www.excellenceconcerts.org/>

Question: Federal Tax ID Number or EIN

XXXXXX9120

Question: UEI Number

938679227

Question: What will the source of funding be (to be completed by UA&M staff)

710|WQB|5103

Project Significance and Merit

Question: Describe the proposed partnership in detail. Include definition of partner roles, major milestones and/or timeline. (5,000 Character Limit)

Excellence in the Community (Excellence) is dedicated to amplifying the musical experiences for Utah communities, particularly in underserved rural areas. With a strong focus on fostering cultural connections through free, high-quality concerts and educational outreach, Excellence aims to inspire a love for music across diverse communities. Since receiving the one-time allocation of \$100,000 from the Utah State Legislature in 2019, we've had limited funding to facilitate concerts throughout rural Utah, setting the critical need for a partnership grant with Utah Arts & Museums (UA&M).

In collaboration with UA&M, Excellence plans to expand its community concert offerings, targeting eleven (11) underserved areas including Beaver, Piute, Rich, Sevier, Morgan & Millard (or Daggett). Along with collaboration and funding from the Main Street Program (a division of State Historic Preservation Office or SHPO) we'll provide concerts in Vernal, Parowan, Mt. Pleasant, Tooele & Helper. This partnership not only aims to provide free public concerts but also emphasizes interactive community outreach activities in local schools, enhancing the impact on both youth and adults. By leveraging the achievements of Utah's top musicians, Excellence seeks to contribute to the funding options for future concerts and overall quality of life in these identified counties.

Our comprehensive approach extends beyond the main concert event, encompassing pre and post-concert activities that actively engage city officials, residents, and local businesses. This collaborative involvement incorporates in-kind support for event production and distribution. Our process will include visits and meetings with city officials, school officials, businesses, and private citizens. Our goal is to identify the best possible outcomes for venue, educational opportunities, city involvement, and community awareness. One notable goal is creating ongoing collaboration with community partners aimed to create a cultural platform for future events. This serves Excellence's mission to cultivate sustainable collaborations that contribute to the long-term cultural enrichment of these regions while contributing to the broader goal of nurturing Utah's vibrant artistic landscape.

Anticipated positive outcomes include heightened audience participation and the solicitation of private dollar donations, restricted for a concert subsidiary slated for calendar year 2025 in their community.

With our past success with rural concerts and UA&M 2024 Calendar Partnership Grant, we'll ignite our momentum allowing us to expand this commitment to other requested cities including, not limited to, Price, Grantsville, Gunnison, Delta, and Brigham City in calendar year 2024.

In conclusion, Excellence in the Community's ambitious project seeks to bridge the cultural gap in underserved Utah counties by providing accessible, high-quality music experiences. The organization's strategic partnership with UA&M, coupled with its successful track record, positions Excellence to make a lasting impact on both the artists and communities involved, creating a legacy of enriched cultural experiences across the state.

Question: Describe how this partnership will benefit the constituents of the UA&M community. (2,500 Character Limit)

The partnership between Excellence in the Community and Utah Arts & Museums (UA&M) will greatly benefit UA&M constituents in rural counties. It addresses the dual mission of Excellence by employing deserving Utah artists and providing communities with access to live music events. Many talented Utah artists are not performing as frequently as they should, and UA&M recognizes the importance of strengthening rural Utah through high-quality arts experiences. Through this collaboration, eleven rural counties will receive the value of exceptional live performances with professional sound engineering and production quality. UA&M's constituents in these counties, currently underserved, will have access to both public performances and school outreach events. The model proposed ensures full-service support and technical assistance from UA&M, encouraging communities to sustain these offerings in the future. The impact of Excellence's rural concerts on the Town of Tabiona over the past three years has been truly remarkable. In a brief span, these events have woven unforgettable memories, fostering a heightened appreciation for music and generating a palpable buzz in a town where such vibrant events are a rarity. The city council wrote, "In a short period of time, you have provided great memories, a deeper appreciation for music, and a buzz around a town that typically doesn't have a lot of events happening....We appreciated giving us the chance, especially seeing the excitement before and hearing about the joy it brought people afterwards."

All concerts are provided free of charge, a critical aspect given the targeted counties' median income below \$32,000 per year. This partnership aligns with UA&M's commitment to democratizing access to the arts, fostering cultural enrichment in underserved regions, and creating a lasting impact on the constituents' quality of life through the transformative power of music.

Question: Describe why the applicant organization is uniquely poised to deliver the service. (2,500 Character Limit)

Since 2005, Excellence In The Community concerts has curated an impressive legacy, boasting over 1,200 dazzling performances across 36 venue locations throughout urban and rural Utah. Featuring talented musicians representing over 40 musical styles and genres, our concerts have become a cultural mainstay. In 2023, Excellence has facilitated 121 performances for Utah artists and expanded our reach by introducing four new venues through sponsorships, paving the way for a targeted 140 performances in 2024. These free events are designed to welcome attendees of all ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and lifestyles, providing a platform for experiencing new music and instruments. Through this inclusive approach, we proudly showcase the vast diversity of Utah's music industry. With 18,000 social media followers, 3,000 weekly newsletter subscribers, over 1,000 concertgoers, and an impressive 60 million views of our Livestream concerts, along with our dedicated "Joy Nation" members, our community continues to grow. Integral to our growth this past 6 months were four foundational initiatives: Hiring a Director of Development to solidify and expand funding programs, formalizing the Joy Nation membership program for community connection, expanding our board of directors to align with served communities, and standardizing our engagement processes. These efforts, combined with strengthened venue relationships, a strategic succession plan, have positioned us for continued success in fostering Utah's vibrant arts community. Lastly, we are financially debt-free with annual audits and board fiduciary oversight. Excellence has garnered support from Utah arts leaders, municipalities, and diverse artists, reflecting its commitment to quality and integrity. A longstanding partnership with Taylor Audio for high-quality sound, staging, and lighting equipment, staging, rounds out our artistic and technical expertise. Awards such as "Nonprofit of the Year" from Sandy City and the Downtown Achievement award from the Salt

Lake City Chamber of Commerce attest to Excellence's reputation for quality work. With global recognition, including an article in a Paris-based music magazine, Excellence's track record and accolades underscore its capability to deliver exceptional musical experiences.

Question: How will the project be evaluated? Include specific evaluation methods, expected outcomes, etc. (2,500 Character Limit)

Excellence is anticipating an overwhelming community response based on past rural concert experience and feedback, along with our successful foundational processes. We'll employ a comprehensive approach to evaluating and measuring the rural concerts success and impact. The evaluation methods include both quantitative and qualitative measures, targeting various aspects of community engagement, educational outreach, funding acquisition, and overall program effectiveness. Here are specific evaluation methods for each key area:

1. Audience Participation:

- Method: Monitor attendance at each concert event.
- Expected Outcome: Achieve a targeted ratio of audience participation compared to the population in a 10-mile radius of the concert location.
- Measure: Regularly compare actual attendance figures to the targeted percentage.

2. K-12 Student Involvement:

- Method: Track the number of K-12 students attending educational and concert events.
- Expected Outcome: Increase the participation of K-12 students in cultural events, aiming to inspire future community leaders and instill an appreciation for the arts.
- Measure: Compare the number of students attending events over time.

3. Project Grant Funding Requests:

- Method: Submit applications for Project Grants from the State of Utah for additional cultural events.
- Expected Outcome: Secure funding for expanding cultural activities in rural communities.
- Measure: Track the number of successful grant applications and the amount of funding obtained.

4. Funding Sources:

- Method: Monitor and record private donations, corporate sponsorships, city/county funding, and venue funding.
- Expected Outcome: Generate sufficient funds to support a concert subsidiary in fiscal year 2025, ensuring sustainability of arts and culture in communities.
- Measure: Regularly update a financial ledger.

5. Audience Survey and Feedback:

- Method: Distribute surveys with QR codes and website directions at each event for direct feedback.
- Expected Outcome: Understand audience preferences, artist feedback, and community needs.
- Measure: Analyze survey responses to identify trends, preferences, and areas for improvement.

6. Artist Survey and Feedback:

- Method: Collect feedback from artists regarding their experience with the project.
- Expected Outcome: Identify strengths and weaknesses in the artist experience, leading to improvements for future concerts.
- Measure: Aggregate artist feedback and identify common themes or suggestions.

Question: Upload the Project Budget Form which can be found on the Utah Arts & Museums website: <https://artsandmuseums.utah.gov/project-grants/>

[Partnership Grant_FY24-Arts-Museums-Project-Budget-Final.xlsx](https://artsandmuseums.utah.gov/project-grants/) (1/9/2024 3:58 PM)

Question: Description of partnership written by UA&M staff member outlining the structure of the partnership from the perspective of UA&M. (3,000 Character Limit)

UA&M is excited to partner with SHPO's Main Street Program in engaging Excellence in the Community to provide concerts and community outreach in eleven of Utah's rural communities. The counties and cities we are focusing on receive little to no funding currently from our grants programs. Bringing high quality performing artists and presenting to them in a professional capacity opens the doors in these communities for continued engagement. We plan to be hands-on in this process in order to build relationships that we can continue to foster. Along with professional performances we are planning deeper community engagement by requiring that the artists also do community outreach. This can include school performances with talk-backs, performing and sharing stories with senior centers, or inviting local community performers to share their craft as opening acts or performing alongside the professional artists. This deeper level involvement is vital to this grant and is at the heart of relationship building that can lead to long term engagement.

Any community we touch with this grant will benefit our Division by enhancing the quality of life in rural Utah by providing opportunities to experience culture, facilitating connections, and providing direct services. Our agency's mission is to inspire and connect people and communities and encourage a vibrant and culturally engaged state and this grant will certainly help us succeed in doing that. Especially in the areas of the state where we struggle to make connections. UA&M is prioritizing six counties that have no GOS grants. This includes: Beaver, Piute, Rich, Sevier, Morgan, and Daggett (possibly this will shift to Millard). The Main Street program is prioritizing the following: Helper (Carbon), Parowan (Iron), Mt. Pleasant (Sanpete), Tooele City (Tooele), and Vernal (Uintah).

Partnering with Excellence in the Community accomplishes the following important things:

- * Providing quality arts programming in rural Utah
- * Building relationships in remote areas in Utah where we have not been successful in creating relationships
- * Providing mentoring opportunities if the concerts and school performances are successful that may lead to future programming that is supported locally.
- * Providing opportunities for musicians to perform for adequate compensation.
- * By partnering with Excellence, we will be significantly more efficient with staff time because Excellence will be doing the on the ground leg work to create relationships. UA&M staff will be making visits to each of the counties.

In all of our research in Utah, Excellence in the Community is the best organization that can provide this work efficiently, effectively, and within our budget.