



IMPACT REPORT

2022

Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater  Michelle Reid

HIGHLIGHTS

2022
SNAPSHOT

CULTURAL
GRANTS

PUBLIC
ART

TV &
FILM

FESTIVALS
& EVENTS

The City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) supports artists and cultural organizations, invests in the creative economy, and expands access and participation in the arts throughout Chicago's 77 neighborhoods. As a collaborative cultural presenter, arts funder, and advocate for creative workers, our programs and events serve Chicagoans and visitors of all ages and backgrounds, downtown and in diverse communities across our city — to strengthen and celebrate Chicago.

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR & COMMISSIONER

Dear Friends,

DCASE is proud to support creatives and expand access to the arts throughout Chicago's 77 neighborhoods.

In 2022, DCASE saw a transformational influx of resources to help support Chicago's creative economy. With these additional funds, and the restoration of our budget to 90% of pre-pandemic levels, DCASE was able to address the needs of the cultural community and support its ongoing recovery. Overall, DCASE granted more than 630 grants across seven programs, a 25% increase in the total number of grants awarded in 2021.

We also began the hard and necessary work of evaluating DCASE programs and operations to create a more efficient, effective, and equitable agency. We embarked on a new direction for cultural policy in Chicago, bridging partnerships with fellow City agencies to embed the arts in key initiatives across the city. We expanded support for artists, creative



workers and businesses, and significantly improved arts equity citywide through our grants, public art, and other cultural programs.

In collaboration with the [Department of Planning and Development](#) and [Chicago Department of Transportation](#), we've committed over \$6 million for public art in all [INVEST South/West](#) neighborhoods. We commissioned a mural and supported an Artist-in-Residence program with the [Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities](#). We also created an Artist-in-Residence program at Legler Library with the [Chicago Public Library](#) and supported the [Chicago Park District](#) to increase cultural offerings in neighborhood locations. Last, but not least, DCASE and Mayor Lightfoot worked with the [Department of Assets, Information, and Services](#) and many others to rename Chicago's oldest house in honor of the contributions of Bishop Louis Henry and Margaret Ford — now the Clarke-Ford House.

We are immensely proud of these shared accomplishments, and more essential work lies ahead. In 2023, DCASE will continue to position Chicago's cultural vitality as a driving and defining part of our city. Priorities include:

- > **Distribute American Rescue Plan (ARP) recovery funds** to address the current and emergent needs of the cultural and tourism sectors as they continue to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including our partnership with Choose Chicago
- > **Build collaboration with cultural partners and city agencies** to promote new models and programs which will expand audiences and increase access and participation in the arts
- > **Bring more public art and cultural programs to neighborhoods** while identifying priorities for public art investments and increasing employment of artists and creative skilled workers
- > **Continue to expand our cultural grants program** providing support to cultural organizations and artists with a focus on underserved neighborhoods
- > **Connect with stakeholders and communities** not currently participating in our programs to increase awareness of opportunities and understand and address barriers to access
- > **Commit to convening and evaluating the needs of the community** to inform strategic decision making, and the equitable growth of the cultural sector

On behalf of our [Leadership & Staff](#), thank you for your advocacy, partnership, and participation.

Sincerely,



Lori E. Lightfoot

Mayor
City of Chicago



Erin Harkey

Commissioner
Department of Cultural
Affairs and Special
Events

2022 SNAPSHOT

\$10 million

increase in Cultural Grants budget

630+

grants awarded across seven programs, a **25% increase over last year**

223%

increase in gen-op support to nonprofit arts organizations through CityArts Program

60%

increase in average grant size through Individual Artists Program, **60% of which were made to BIPOC artists as compared to 38% in 2016**

80

grants to dance artists and organizations as part of the Year of Chicago Dance

\$2.2 million+

in direct investment to dance industry through grants, marketing, programs, and performance fees

all 50

wards had grants awarded, compared to only 35 wards in 2016

690

new grant applicants, making up **40% of the total applicant pool**

\$5.5 million

to 48 grantees through Together We Heal Creative Place Program

\$6 million

committed for public art in all INVEST South/West neighborhoods

\$3.5 million

for public art projects at O'Hare International Airport

\$700 million+

in projected film production revenue for 2022

48

wards hosted film productions, with **1,562 film permits** issued

539

special event permits issued

130

events and programs providing **\$2 million in direct support** to artists and organizations

155,000

attendees at Taste of Chicago in Grant Park — featuring **33 local food vendors, 40 performers and acts**

5,200

attendees at Taste of Chicago community pop-ups in Austin, Pullman, and Little Village

25 million

Total local and global audience — including **20 million annual visitors to Millennium Park and 800,000 annual visitors at the Chicago Cultural Center***

**Estimated in 2019; expected to return to these pre-pandemic levels in 2023*



Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council Ballet Folklorico  Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago

CULTURAL GRANTS

In 2022, unprecedented investment in DCASE increased direct support for the arts sector from \$2.7 million to \$12.7 million through various grant programs. General operating support to nonprofit arts organizations through our CityArts Program increased 223%, with average awards increasing to just over \$22,000, compared to just \$6,798 in 2021. The Individual Artists Program, which provides direct support to artists, increased its average grant size by 60%. The Neighborhood Access Program provided \$1 million in funding to 33 organizations and artists leading arts and culture projects in their neighborhoods, 85% of which are located on the South and West Sides.

Overall, DCASE granted more than 630 grants across seven programs, a 25% increase in the total number of grants awarded in 2021.

A survey and a series of input sessions in January organized with Arts Alliance Illinois and the Chicago Cultural Alliance gathered vital community perspectives to guide our grantmaking strategies and other work throughout this year.

\$10 million

increase in Cultural Grants budget

223%

increase in gen-op support to nonprofit arts organizations through CityArts Program

\$2.2 million+

in direct investment to dance industry through grants, marketing, programs, and performance fees

2022 was also the Year of Chicago Dance. We supported the recovery of the dance sector, with 20 grants to dance and movement artists, and 60 grants to dance organizations and presenters including 14 CityArts Program grants focused on addressing critical issues facing dancers and the field of dance. Direct investment to dance organizations and artists through grants, marketing, programs, and performance fees was over \$2.2 million.



📷 Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago



📷 Matt Karas



📷 Michelle Reid



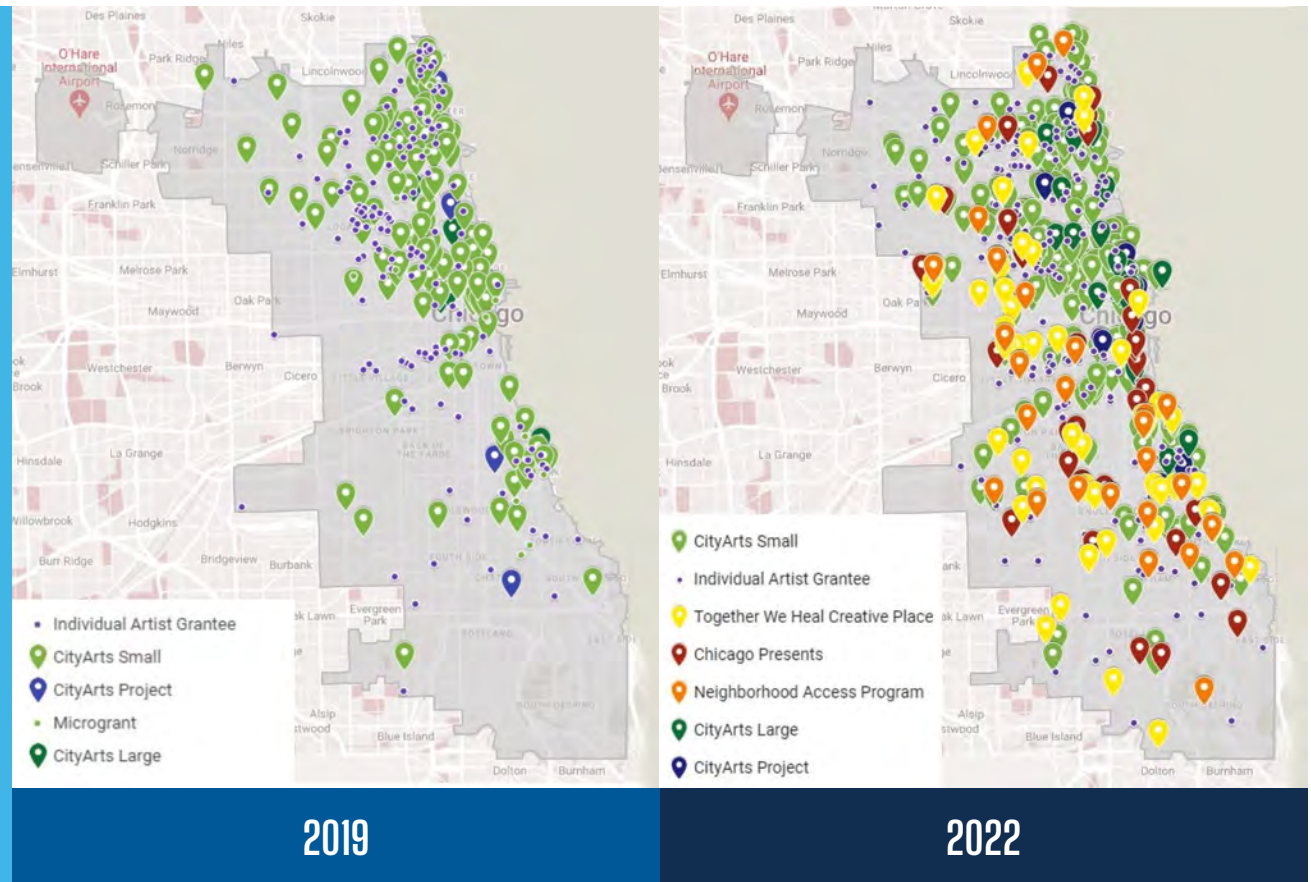
📷 William Frederking

DCASE grantees are now more reflective of the city of Chicago – 60% of Individual Artists Program grantees are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) as compared to 38% in 2016; grants to BIPOC-led organizations increased by 13% over 2021 and organizations on the South and West sides increased by 6%; and grants were awarded to artists and arts organizations in all 50 wards in 2022, compared to only 35 wards in 2016. In addition, 76% of our grant review panelists across all programs were BIPOC. Our community outreach and awareness efforts also paid off with over 690 new applicants, which made up 40% of the total applicant pool.

Additionally, DCASE received American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding to support the city’s recovery. DCASE is deploying these funds to support new grant and relief programs, tourism and industry support, and citywide marketing efforts. The first grant program was designed in partnership with the Office of Equity & Racial Justice. The Together We Heal Creative Place Program recognizes the importance of the arts in promoting health, healing and safety for communities and recently awarded \$5.5 million to 48 grantees whose projects will support artists in designing and implementing art projects that promote healing and transformation in Chicago’s neighborhoods.

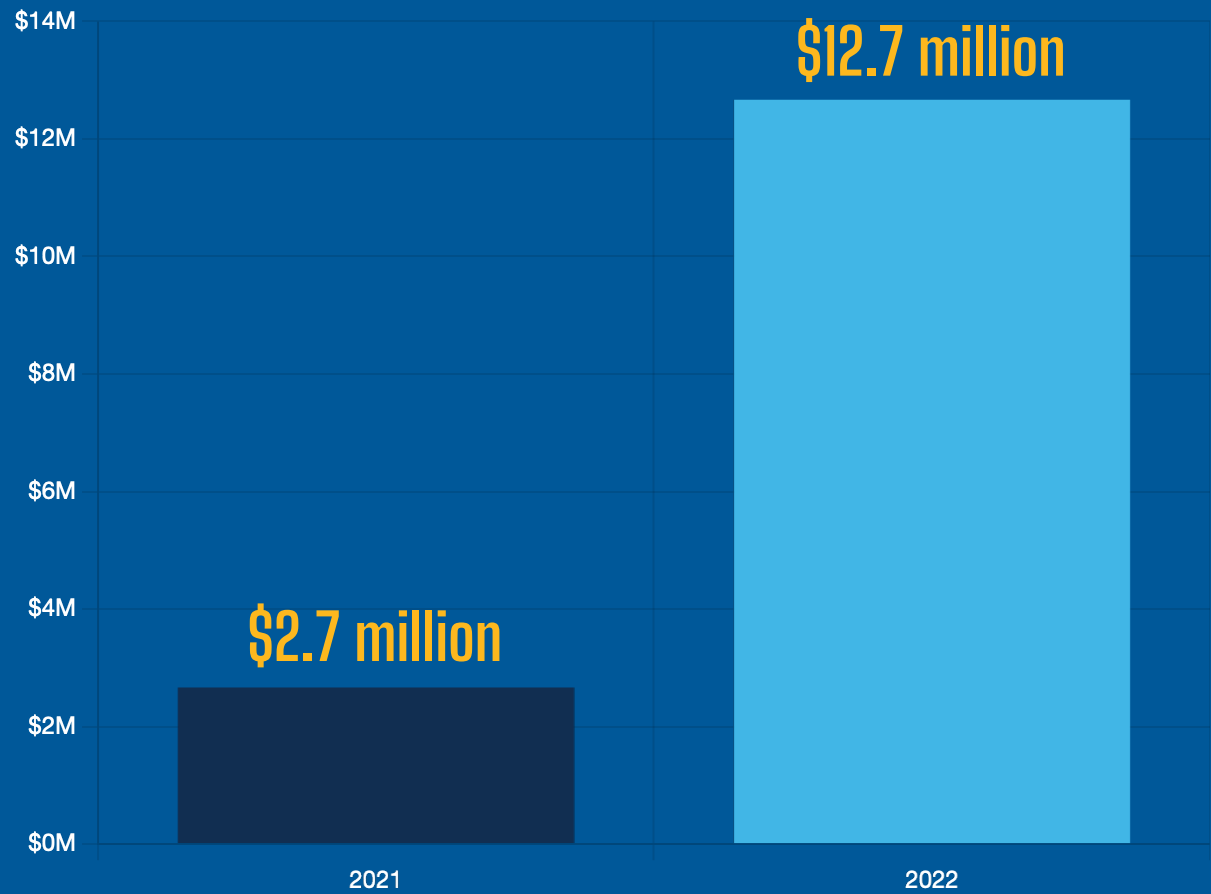
DCASE GRANTMAKING MAP

In 2022, DCASE proudly awarded grants to artists and arts organizations in all 50 wards of the city.



DCASE GRANTMAKING BUDGET

In 2022, unprecedented investment in DCASE increased direct support for the arts sector from \$2.7 million to \$12.7 million.



CHICAGO ARTIST PROFILES

DCASE is pleased to introduce and celebrate four Chicago artists who received 2022 Individual Artists Program grants.



📷 Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago

MEET MALLORY RAVEN-ELLEN BACKSTROM



(she/her), Oakland neighborhood

An artist, writer, and teacher, Mallory Raven-Ellen Backstrom creates *Fairy Tales for Sun-Kissed Women*, an anthology of short stories and immersive audiobooks.

“This award means that I can publish my stories in accordance with my highest vision. It has provided me with creative freedom, financial agency, and artistic access to the tools required to release my best work. I have been empowered to share my fairy tales and to pursue my unfettered potential with joy.”



📷 Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago

MEET GEOFF BRADFIELD

(he/him/his), Portage Park neighborhood

Geof Bradfield plays saxophone, bass clarinet, and other instruments and composes music inspired by Charlie Parker, Melba Liston, Lead Belly, Shona mbira music, and Gullah spirituals.

“*[Receiving this grant award] will allow me to record and document a new body of work integrating African instruments – the Zimbabwean mbira and Brazilian berimbau – into a 12-piece jazz ensemble. And it might mean I can rent a nicer van the next time I’m in Europe (instead of the milking truck we used when I first toured Europe in 2001).*”



📷 Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago

MEET AYAKO KATO

(she/her), Ukrainian Village neighborhood



Ayako Kato creates dance movement works that “convey people’s common and fundamental beauty and dignity as humans and as a part of nature and nature themselves.”

“This award means a lot to me, by sensing some people care what I am doing through dance. I can develop and create more opportunities for myself and my colleagues, paying them as professionals. I can courageously go for what I imagine – to nurture my current ETHOS project, as my peaceful weapon to contribute to social change.”



📷 Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago

MEET ISABEL QUINTERO

(she/her/hers), Irving Park neighborhood



Isabel Quintero “performs in plays or with music or in films that others have written or that I have created, in English, Spanish, or both.”

“When I think about what it means to be chosen for this award, I weep. Every single time, I weep. Being an artist is a constant internal struggle. But I have kept at it consistently – but probably not gracefully – for 20 years. I’m embarrassed to admit I haven’t had a voice lesson since college, but I can do that now! Receiving this award feels like I’m coming up for air, taking a deep breath, and slowly exhaling; and then... I feel the warmth of the sun on my face.”

PUBLIC ART

Our public art program continued to see record growth this year. We've committed over \$6 million for public art in all [INVEST South/West](#) neighborhoods. In partnership with the Department of Aviation, DCASE will deliver \$3.5 million for public art projects at O'Hare International Airport. There were also a record number of aldermanic menu-supported public art projects in 2022. We have worked collaboratively with aldermanic offices to facilitate public art installations that will enhance the exterior of libraries, schools, parks, community spaces, and other neighborhood assets. And the [Chicago Monuments Project](#) final report was released, announcing grants to support the creation of new works that celebrate our city's diverse history.



\$6 million

committed for public art in all
INVEST South/West neighborhoods

\$3.5 million

for public art projects at O'Hare
International Airport



INVEST SOUTH/WEST

Mayor Lightfoot's signature community development initiative to reverse decades of disinvestment on Chicago's South and West Sides, [INVEST South/West \(ISW\)](#) celebrated its 3-year anniversary in 2022. DCASE mounted arts projects with Artists-In-Residence in three of the ISW neighborhoods: Dorian Sylvain (Auburn Gresham), Eric Hotchkiss (Englewood) and Fernando Ramirez in partnership with Project Onward (New City/Back of the Yards). DCASE collaborated with the [Department of Planning and Development](#) and the Mayor's Office to commission artwork on construction fencing surrounding shovel-ready projects in ISW community areas. In Phase 1 of the project, DCASE collaborated with Rahmaan Statik in Auburn Gresham, Isiah "Thoughtpoet" Veney in Englewood, and Keith Brownlee and Dwight White in Austin.



P.A.R.T.Y. (PUBLIC ART REIMAGINING TOUR WITH YOU)

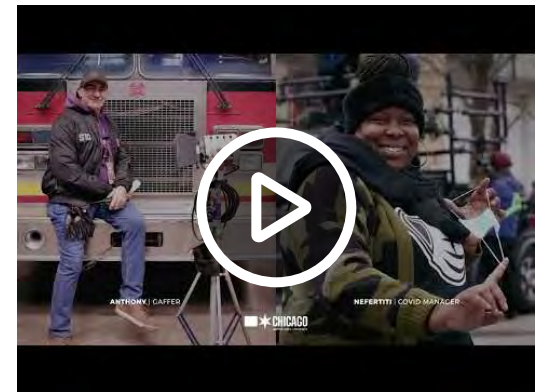
In 2022, DCASE worked with the Department of Planning and Development as well as Englewood Arts Collective, Floating Museum, and VS Creative Consulting to launch [P.A.R.T.Y. \(Public Art Reimagining Tour with You\)](#) – an initiative to develop a Public Art Vision Plan for each INVEST South/West neighborhood. Each plan will outline public art themes, types, and locations unique to each neighborhood, contributing to its revitalization. Throughout the summer and fall, artist teams collected community input via surveys and in-person pop-ups in Auburn-Gresham, Austin, Bronzeville, and Englewood.





TV & FILM

Film production revenue hit a record high of \$630 million in 2021, shattering pre-pandemic levels by \$70 million. This signals a strong recovery and positive economic impact for communities — including projects such as the Regal Mile Studios, a state-of-the-art media campus in the South Shore neighborhood. Revenue is projected to exceed \$700 million in 2022, with 48 wards hosting film productions and 1,562 permits issued. Beyond permitting, and as part of Chicago’s COVID-19 Task Force report, the Film Office spearheaded “[Chicago Made](#),” a new workforce development program that seeks to reimagine the region’s workforce infrastructure and create a plan to invest in displaced young workers; its first cohort included 25 participants, across 12 career pathways.

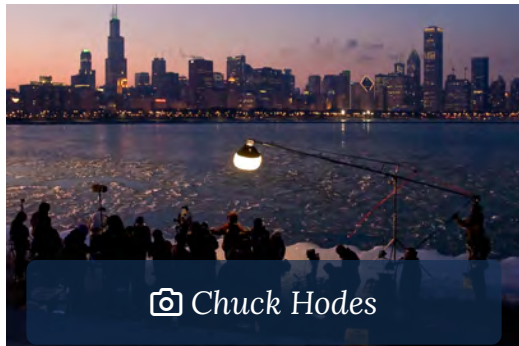


\$700 million+

in projected film production revenue
for 2022

48

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CHICAGO TV & FILM INDUSTRY PROFILE

In 2021/2022, DCASE launched an ongoing public awareness campaign using the “Chicago Made” brand to highlight the vital role Chicago’s TV and film industry plays in the city. The campaign showcases the industry’s enormous economic impact, introduces local film workers as neighbors and friends, and highlights the diversity of “reel” jobs available across our city.



NINA ESCOBEDO: BRINGING A PASSION FOR COSTUMES TO CHICAGO'S TV AND FILM INDUSTRY

By Matt Simonette

Nina Escobedo credits her grandmother for sparking the childhood interests that ultimately led to her becoming a professional costumer working in Chicago.

"My grandmother taught me to sew at the age of four," recalled Escobedo. "It started with buttons and embroidery. Once I had legs long enough to reach a sewing machine pedal, she taught me how to make pillowcases and aprons."

That early tutelage inspired a deep passion for wardrobe and costumes in Escobedo. After two years as wardrobe supervisor for Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated that she pivot. So Escobedo, who lives on Chicago's North Side, is now taking part in the City's "Chicago Made" workforce development initiative linking residents with film and television productions shooting in the city.

Escobedo received on-the-job training from Local 769 costumers Jennifer Jobst and Angela Verdino as they prepared for an upcoming Netflix feature to be filmed at Cinespace Chicago Film Studios...

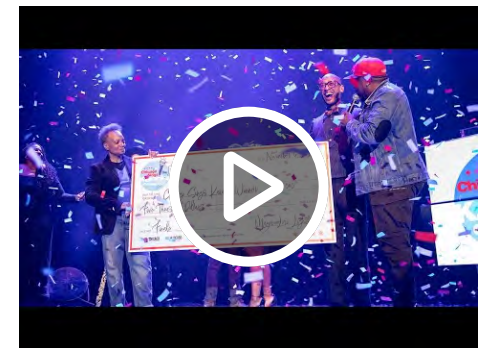
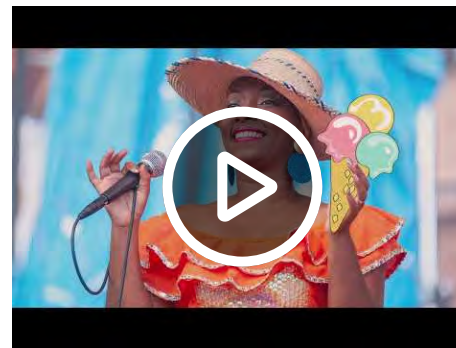
[Read More →](#)



Jamiah Rogers  Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

In 2022, we saw the return of our beloved summer festivals and special events, such as Taste of Chicago, the Air & Water Show, Gospel Music, Blues, Jazz, House Music, and World Music Festivals, City Markets including the historic Maxwell Street Market, the 25th Chicago SummerDance series featuring a special [Teen Village hosted by SocialWorks](#) during the SummerDance Celebration, the Millennium Park Summer Music Series, the Millennium Park Summer Film Series, the Chicago Presents program, Chicago Band Roster, and many others.



In the fall, Mayor Lightfoot and DCASE launched a new program, the Chicago Sings Karaoke competition, supporting 18 neighborhood venues and showcasing Chicago's talent, boasting **more than 500 participants**.



This year, all DCASE festivals and events incorporated neighborhood components, which resulted in over 130 events and programs providing \$2 million in direct support to artists and organizations participating in cultural events in communities throughout the city, and special event permitting reached pre-pandemic levels in 2022, with the team issuing 539 permits.

DCASE and its partners presented a vast array of free cultural programming for the public in Millennium Park, at the Chicago Cultural Center, and on the Chicago Riverwalk. Special projects included the launch of a Millennium Park residency program for four organizations next year — and several notable exhibitions, a new dance studio residency, and audience engagement programs at the Chicago Cultural Center.





Chicago Cultural Center G.A.R. Restoration and Reopening

2022 SOURCES OF SUPPORT

DCASE is grateful for the steadfast support of our partners. Our work in the areas of Cultural Grants, Public Art, TV & Film, and Festivals & Events is made possible by corporate sponsorships as well as corporate, foundation, and government grants. In 2022, we reopened the meticulously restored Grand Army of the Republic rooms at the Chicago Cultural Center, made possible by a generous anonymous gift of \$15 million. (The yearlong restoration has since been lauded by numerous historic preservation groups.) All told, DCASE raised a total of more than \$3.7 million in 2022, including City matching funds.

CORPORATE, FOUNDATION, AND GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Amazon	McDonald's	Terra Foundation for American Art
Artis	Millennium Park Foundation	United Airlines
BMO Harris Bank	National Endowment for the Arts	U.S. Bank
Chicago Park District	National League of Cities	USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program
ComEd	Northern Trust	Walder Foundation
Globetrotters Engineering Corporation	Peoples Gas	Walgreens
Illinois Arts Council Agency	Pritzker Foundation	Walmart
Kraft Heinz	Streamables, Inc.	



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

90.9fm WDCB

America Dimensions

Capital Vacations

Chicago Jazz Magazine

Chicago Transit Authority

DownBeat

E. & J. Gallo Winery

Eli's Cheesecake Company

Geico

Goose Island Beer Company

Greenlight

Hilton Hotels & Resorts

Humana

Illinois Air National Guard

Illinois Lottery

iMentor Chicago

John Deere

Lavazza

Leaf Home Water Solutions

Millennium Garages

NBC 5 Chicago

Paramount Home Entertainment

Pepsi

Powering Chicago

Reser's Fine Foods

Rosa's Lounge

Samsung

Telemundo Chicago

The Boeing Company

US Marine Corp

Visit Mississippi

Visit Pensacola

WBBM

WGN-TV

WLS-TV

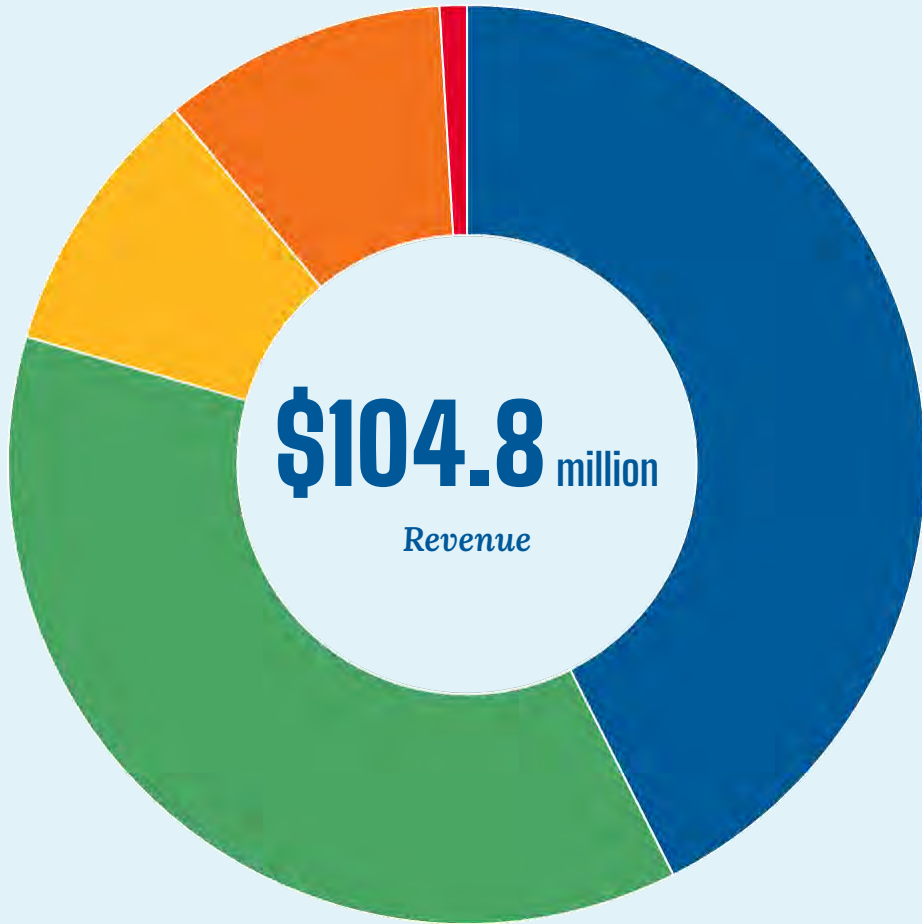
Yasso Frozen Yogurt

ZEN B

Zespri Kiwi



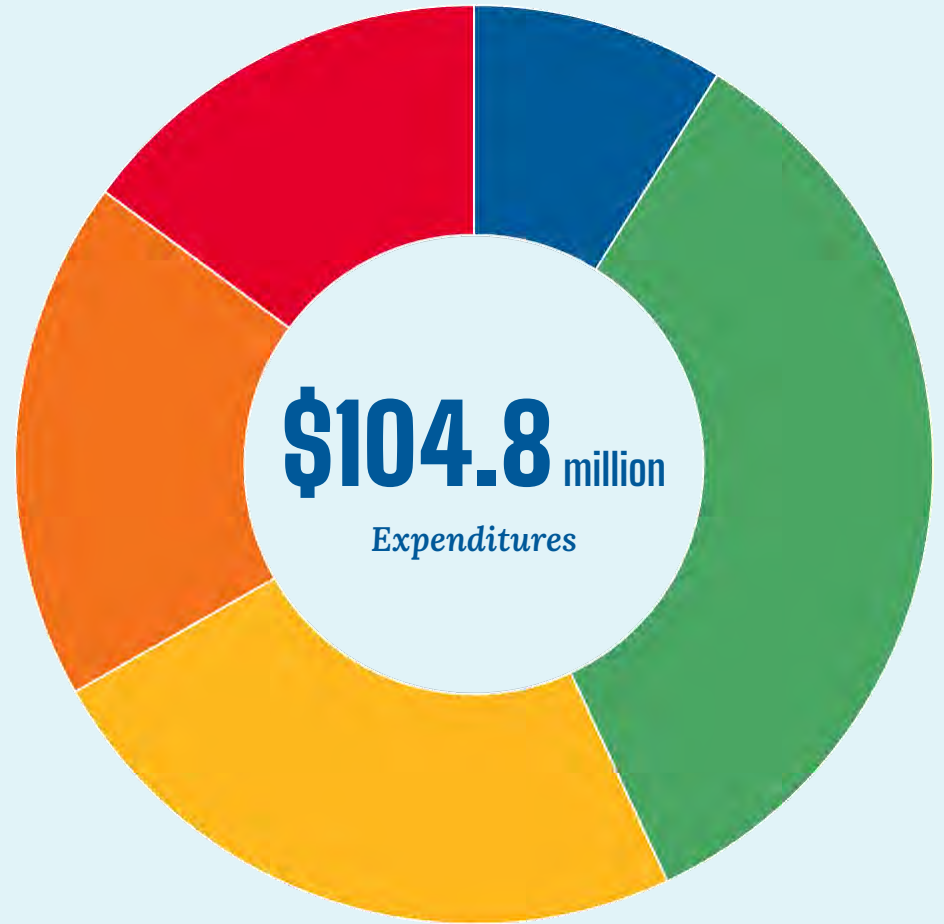
FINANCIALS



2022 REVENUE

\$104,832,000

- DCASE Operating Fund
- Grants*
- Fund 100 (General Fund)
- General Obligation Bonds
- Other



2022 BUDGET

\$104,832,000

- Salary & Benefits
- Programming / Public Art
- Cultural Grants*
- Tourism Support*
- Operations

**Includes one-time Federal funding from American Rescue Plan (ARP)*

LEADERSHIP & STAFF

CULTURAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Appointed by Mayor Lightfoot, our 30-member advisory board met quarterly, and both advised and supported Commissioner Harkey and the senior team in their efforts to support creatives and drive meaningful impact. Cultural Advisory Council members were embedded in specific projects – including the development of a new DCASE mission statement, the launch of a new recovery grant program (Together We Heal Creative Place Program), and recommendations for the We Will Chicago arts and culture pillar. And members played a critically important role as ambassadors to raise awareness of the DCASE resources and opportunities available to the arts and culture community. We are grateful to this dedicated group of arts leaders for their invaluable guidance and advocacy.



CHICAGO CULTURAL ADVISORY MEMBERS (AS OF 12/31/2022):

Amina J. Dickerson | *President, Dickerson Global Advisors, Chair*

Alison Cuddy | *Curator and Writer, Vice Chair*

Juan Días | *Co-Founder & Executive Director, Sonos de México Ensemble*

Bob Faust | *Owner, Faust and Special Projects Director, Nick Cave Studio*

E. Brooke Flanagan | *Executive Director, Steppenwolf Theatre Company*

Robert Gomez | *Owner, Subterranean/Beat Kitchen/Underbar; Co-founder of Chicago Independent Venue League (CIVL)*

Esther Grisham Grimm | *Executive Director, 3Arts*

Tracie D. Hall | *Executive Director, American Library Association*

Akilah S. Halley | *Executive Director, Marwen*

Kevin Iega Jeff | *Creative Director, Deeply Rooted Productions*

Blake-Anthony Johnson | *Chief Executive Officer, Chicago Sinfonietta*

Josephine Lee | *President, Uniting Voices Chicago*

Tonika Lewis Johnson | *Artist, Folded Map Project*

Bill Michel | *Associate Vice President and Executive Director of UChicago Arts and the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, University of Chicago*

Cesáreo J. Moreno | *Chief Curator & Visual Arts Director, National Museum of Mexican Art*

Margaret C. Murphy-Webb | *Executive Director & Co-Founder, South Side Jazz Coalition*

Coya Paz | *Artistic Director, Free Street Theater*

Claire C. Rice | *Executive Director, Arts Alliance Illinois*

Silvia Rivera | *Business Strategist, Listening Post Collective*

Paul J. Sznawajs | *CEO, Parliament*

Vivian Teng | *Managing Director, Cinema/Chicago and the Chicago International Film Festival*

Omar Torres-Kortright | *Executive Director, Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center*

Kaoru Watanabe | *Associate Director, National Cambodian Heritage Museum and Killing Fields Memorial*

Tanner Woodford | *Founder & Executive Director, Design Museum of Chicago*

Debra Yepa-Pappan | *Native Community Engagement Coordinator, Field Museum*



DCASE STAFF

This hard-working and talented team of 66 creative workers strive to fulfill the mission and charge of DCASE on a daily basis. In 2022, special staff-led projects included setting and advancing racial equity priorities for the Department, crafting a new Mission statement, and convening the Performing Arts industry.



DCASE STAFF (AS OF 12/31/2022):

Erin Harkey | *Commissioner*

Jennifer Johnson Washington | *First Deputy Commissioner*

Kalena Chevalier | *Deputy Commissioner, Cultural Grants and Resources*

Gabriel Godwin | *Deputy Commissioner, Finance and Administration*

Ann Hickey | *Deputy Commissioner, Operations*

Lisa Lorick | *Assistant Commissioner, Human Resources*

Jamey Lundblad | *Deputy Commissioner, Marketing and Development*

Nancy Villafranca | *Deputy Commissioner, Programming*

Jonah Zeiger | *Deputy Commissioner, Chicago Film Office*





David Adams

Tahira Baig

Meghan Beals

Benjamin Branda*

Jennifer Brown

Nikki Butler

Amanda Carlson

Rogelio Cerritos

David Chavez

Deidre Edwards

Sonya Eldridge

Joseph Fonzino

Susan Friel

Vivian Garcia

Joanna Goebel

Betsey Grais

J.Mark Hackman

Zhenesse Heinemann

Neal Heitz

Nancy Herman

John Hundrieser

Camille Jackson

Christine Jacob

Cheryl Johnson

Thavary Krouch

Frayne Lewis

Madeline Long

Maria Lopez

Greg Lunceford

Nathan Mason

Meida McNeal

Nina Melendez

Lionel Melgar

Justin Meng*

Michael Mikuta

Yescenia Mota

Timothy Olson

Anita Owens

Julie Partynski

Maria Rosario Maryrose

Pavkovic

Laura Reyes Brown

John Rich

Lydia Ross

Daniel Schulman

Joshua Schwimer

Maja Stachnik*

Janeth Stines

Brett Swinney

Mariam Thiam

Melissa Thomfohrda

Carlos Tortolero

Jose Vazquez

Tara Vock

Melanie Wang

Monica Wilczak

Tenisha Wilkins

Nora Zboril

**Student interns*



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STAY CONNECTED:      