

EMERGING ARTIST INITIATIVE

EMERGING ARTIST INITIATIVE ANNOUNCES RELIEF FUND

(July 1, 2020) The Emerging Artist Initiative (EAI), a new collective of young professionals in the arts, announced today the launch of the Emerging Artist Relief Fund. The grassroots initiative hopes to initially raise \$15,000 to support 30 young creatives and arts professionals with a one-time relief donation of \$500. EAI is currently accepting donations through its Facebook fundraiser.

The Emerging Artist Relief Fund will address and offset the immediate and emergency financial need of young artists and arts administrators who have been displaced as a result of COVID-19. Eligible applicants must be under 30 years old (or) within three years of receiving a degree or certification (or) within three years of beginning work as an arts professional. All applicants must provide at least one sample of their artistic work or experience, and must be in dire financial need. Priority funding will be given to those in the following communities: BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) or Native, transgender, disabled or immunocompromised, and those residing in rural areas. Applications are being accepted on the EAI website at www.eaifund.com.

The new relief effort, organized entirely by young arts professionals, launches with the intent to support a young demographic that has been hit particularly hard by COVID-19. Current relief efforts are not accessible for emerging artists who can't demonstrate extensive work history or experience. Young adults are also particularly more vulnerable during recessions, and cancelled internships, gigs, and professional opportunities only reinforce the structural hardships they encounter when trying to "make it" in the arts world.

As the long-term effects of COVID-19 ripple across the arts industry, it's clear that the financial and emotional impacts of the coronavirus will follow young arts professionals throughout their lives. EAI seeks to ensure that this next generation of artists has access to financial, emotional, and professional support.

Each application is carefully reviewed by a team of emerging artists, and an advisory board of arts professionals maintains oversight of financial and fund distribution. "EAI operates from trust; if you need emergency financial help, we believe you. We ask that people keep that trust by only applying if their financial need is imperative so we can equitably distribute funds." says Fund Coordinator, Kyle Ronyecs.

Beyond the Relief Fund, EAI hopes to give young and emerging artists a platform to showcase their work and advocate for institutional reform. "This initiative really goes beyond losing a role, internship, or gig. We want to encourage young people to use this pivotal moment to ask critical questions of the theatres, museums, and institutions that have perpetuated inequalities in our industry." says EAI Director, Evan Aanerud.

"We also just want to create a safe space for emerging artists. We are living through a time that is traumatic, unpredictable and isolating. It feels like all of the filth of the world is coming up at once, but we want young artists to know that despite it all, the arts community is one that will always be there to hold them up when they need it the most. From my own experience, whenever I have felt like I had nothing to hold onto, this community was always already there, reaching out their hands. That is what EAI is about." says Director of Outreach, Maya Richardson.

More information on donations and applications can be found on the EAI website at www.eaifund.com. You can contact the EAI team at emergingartistinitiative@gmail.com with any questions regarding applying or donating to the Relief Fund.