

# Memorandum



**Date:** May 20, 2020

**To:** Members, Cultural Affairs Council

**From:** Michael Spring, Director 

**Subject:** FY 2020-2021 Festivals and Special Events Grant Program (FEST) Panel Recommendations

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In light of the uncertainty surrounding the long-term impact of Covid-19 on public programs scheduled to begin after October 1, 2020, staff advised the Festivals and Special Events Grant Program Panel at the panel's orientation to review and score each proposal based upon both the quality of the application and the ability to satisfactorily address each of the evaluation criteria, as stated in the program's guidelines. The award recommendations will be computed using the established funding formula for this program. The program's FY 2020-2021 total allocation and the recommended grant award amounts per grantee will be presented to the Council for final review later this summer, after all the Spring cycle grants program panels have convened and preliminary FY 2020-2021 budget numbers are received.

Final grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funds in the Department's FY 2020-2021 budget, which is subject to the County's Budget as adopted in September 2020. At that time the Department will assess the grantee's feasibility of presenting public programs in traditional venues and performing spaces; if necessary, the Department is prepared to exercise appropriate contractual flexibility to include virtual programs and other program delivery strategies, as may be necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council approve the funding of thirteen (13) grants for the FY 2020-2021 Festivals and Special Events Grants Program.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Festivals and Special Events Grants Program (interim year) Panel, chaired by Councilor Rosa Sugrañes, convened on May 7, 2020 to review 13 applications requesting a total of \$1,055,000. The Panel recommended funding all 13 applications.

Applications were determined to be eligible based on the program's guidelines and criteria and were designated by the panel as qualified for funding consideration. In accordance with the program's guidelines, grant awards for any newly designated Festivals and Special Events organizations are made only if additional funding becomes available for interim fiscal years through an increase of funds available for the program.

The Festivals and Special Events Grants Program is designed to support festivals and special events taking place in FY 2020-2021 which are coordinated and presented by legally incorporated 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Florida corporations and/or units of local government. The program operates with two categorical designations:

1) **Cultural Organizations** - those organizations whose missions predominantly emphasize close examination of artistic disciplines and present activities that occur primarily indoors; and

2) **Community Organizations** - those organizations whose missions predominantly emphasize the celebration of heritages, arts and entertainment events and present activities that occur primarily outdoors.

Within each of these two categories, the applicant pool is divided into three levels for evaluation and funding consideration:

**Division A:** organizations with annual project budgets of more than \$1,000,000

**Division B:** organizations with annual project budgets between \$400,000-\$999,000

**Division C:** organizations with annual project budgets between \$150,000-\$399,999

Additionally, organizations must demonstrate an uninterrupted track record of producing the activity; a Board of Trustees/Directors; a professional staff leader/team; a reputation for programmatic excellence and credibility on a local, regional, national or international level; effective, broad reaching marketing strategies; and matching funds from the private sector.

The Festivals and Special Events Grants Program operates on a three-year review cycle. FY 2020-2021 marks the third year of a three-year cycle. In the first year of the cycle (FY 2018-2019), a comprehensive application submission was required, and a full panel review was conducted. In the subsequent two years of the cycle (FY 2019-2020 and FY 2020-2021), a more streamlined application form and review process was employed. Grants awarded in the FY 2018-2019 cycle of the program defined the grant award level for the next two years of the cycle, (including FY2019-2020 and the currently evaluated FY2020-2021) subject to annual adjustments based on organizational budget information, and contingent upon the availability of funding and upon a satisfactory review and recommendation of the interim applications by the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Festivals and Special Events interim year review panel and the Cultural Affairs Council. Grantees are required to satisfy all program criteria, as well as prior year's reporting requirements to be eligible for renewed consideration for funding.

Funding for Festivals and Special Events Grants Program is derived from departmental proprietary revenues. All funding recommendations are contingent upon approval of the Department of Cultural Affairs' FY 2020-2021 budget by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners and Mayor and are subject to availability of funds.

Attached is a list describing the projects recommended for funding.

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
FY 2020-2021 FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS GRANTS PROGRAM**

**Cultural Organizations: Division A**

**Miami Dade College**  
*Miami Book Fair*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the annual *Miami Book Fair* held November 2020 in downtown Miami. The literary festival, the largest and finest of its kind in the United States, transforms the Wolfson Campus of Miami-Dade College into the center of the literary world for 8 days. Over 300,000 book lovers, locals and visitors from throughout the United States and other countries visit downtown Miami to enjoy more than 300 acclaimed authors reading from their books and participating in panel discussions.

**Miami Dade College**  
*Miami Film Festival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the presentation of the annual *Miami International Film Festival*, to be held March 2021 in downtown Miami and South Beach. This multi-event film extravaganza, recognized as one of the top film festivals in the United States, brings as many as 65,000 individuals to the Gusman Center, South Beach and the sands of Miami Beach over its 9-day run, while various other events surrounding the festival will draw additional people to Miami-Dade County.

**Cultural Organizations: Division B**

There were no applicants in the Cultural Organizations: Division B category.

**Cultural Organizations: Division C**

**Borscht Corp.**  
*Borscht Film Festival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the Borscht Film Festival (BFF), which both uniquely produces and exhibits multimedia works that expand Miami's identity in film. BFF will take place at venues across Miami and feature world-class, short film showcase; interactive transmedia screenings, regional filmmaking panels with industry leaders, bike crawls parades and more.

**Inffinito Art & Cultural Foundation, Inc.**  
*Brazilian Film Festival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the annual *Brazilian Film Festival of Miami*, the only film festival in the world exclusively of Brazilian cinema. The festival showcases approximately 40 Brazilian films and brings more than 200 actors, distributors and exhibitors of the international film industry. The festival takes place at two locations in Miami Beach over its week-long run. The festival also features a Brazilian marketplace, seminars, workshops open to the public with free admission.

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
FY 2020-2021 FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS GRANTS PROGRAM**

**Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival**  
*Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the annual *Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival*, to be held April – May 2021. The festival will boast an impressive array of films including features and shorts, panel discussions and events across its 10-day event.

**Miami Hispanic Ballet Corp.**  
*International Ballet Festival of Miami*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the annual *International Ballet Festival of Miami*, the only one of its kind in the State of Florida, which is responsible for bringing to Miami-Dade County performances by over 200 artists from more than 20 ballet companies representing countries from Europe, Asia, Latin America and North America.

**Community Organizations: Division A**

**Coconut Grove Arts and Historical Association**  
*Coconut Grove Arts Festival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the *Coconut Grove Arts Festival*, one of the largest and most prestigious events of its kind the world. Held during President's Day weekend in February, the festival draws over 150,000 people to Miami from throughout Florida, the United States, Canada, Latin America and Europe. More than 336 internationally acclaimed artists selected from over 1,600 applicants exhibit in 11 categories. The festival is ranked as one of the top five arts festivals in the country by Sunshine Artist Magazine.

**Florida International University Board of Trustees,  
for the benefit of the School of Hospitality**  
*South Beach Wine and Food Festival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the annual South Beach Wine and Food Festival to be held in Miami Beach. The festival hosts a masterful blend of industry celebrities, world class seminars and tastings, and exclusive dinners providing an innovative and unique four-day epicurean experience. The centerpiece of the festival is the Grand Tasting Village, featuring seminar tents offering educational opportunities in the culinary arts such as chef chats, demonstrations, and cultural and lifestyle seminars.

**Community Organizations: Division B**

**Bayfront Park Management Trust**  
*New Year's Eve Celebration*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support Downtown Miami's New Year's Eve Celebration on December 31st in Bayfront Park. This event is the largest free New Year's Eve celebration in South Florida, providing a safe, nonalcoholic, family-oriented environment to ring in the new year. The event includes a 50-foot holiday tree, a menorah lighting ceremony, the Big Orange's ascent and fireworks over Biscayne Bay.

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
FY 2020-2021 FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS GRANTS PROGRAM**

**Junior Orange Bowl Committee, Inc.**  
*Jr. Orange Bowl Festival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the annual Junior Orange Bowl Festival. The festival brings together more than 12,000 youth from 60 countries and throughout the United States and includes drawing, photography, the cultural arts, chess, sporting events and "The World's Largest Youth Parade." There are 20 varied cultural and sporting events from October to March.

**Miami-Broward One Carnival Host Committee, Inc.**  
*Miami Carnival*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support the annual Celebration of Miami Carnival. Events feature bands, costumed masquerades, calypsos, food and thousands of revelers. The festival attracts and engages the leading costume designers, musicians, and visual artists, paying homage to the Caribbean Diaspora community based in the South Florida.

**Community Organizations: Division C**

**German American Social Club, Inc.**  
*Oktoberfest*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support *Oktoberfest Miami*, an annual festival celebrating German traditions. In keeping with the mission of the German American Social Club, the festival is open to the general public and aims at preserving, exhibiting and fostering German culture, traditions and folk life. The festival will be held in October on the grounds of the German American Social Club of Miami. Attendance is expected to exceed 20,000.

**University of Wynwood, Inc.**  
*O Miami*

*Award to be calculated based  
upon FEST funding formula*

Funds are requested to support *O Miami*, an annual county-wide festival that's mission is for every single person in Miami-Dade County to encounter a poem during the month of April. O, Miami will produce or co-produce around 40 events and 20 projects over 30 days, each one designed to change the audience for poetry in Miami. These events take place all over the county and involve multiple partners big and small.