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NYC THEATER SUBDISTRICT COUNCIL ANNOUNCES OVER \$2 MILLION TO INCREASE DIVERSITY AND OPPORTUNITY IN THEATER WORKFORCE

11 nonprofit theater organizations will receive funding for initiatives designed to increase access to professional theater roles among historically underrepresented communities.

New York – Today the City’s Theater Subdistrict Council (TSC) announced over \$2 million in funding for 11 local nonprofit theater organizations with the aim of establishing a more diverse pipeline of paid training and mentorship opportunities in the Theater Subdistrict and throughout New York City. The organizations receiving funding through TSC’s Round 5 grant initiative will help New York City’s theater community to cultivate a more inclusive and dynamic workforce, connect with new audiences, and promote a theater sector that is open and accessible to all New Yorkers. Driven by the stated goals of the TSC, as well as the recommendations of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs’ 2016 report on diversity in the cultural workforce, Round 5 grant funding promises to have a substantial, long-term impact on both the Theater Subdistrict and the broader NYC theater community from which the Subdistrict draws its talent.

“New York is a theater town. From the dynamic cluster in Midtown’s Theater Subdistrict to stages around the city, NYC’s theater scene attracts the very best performers, producers, and technicians, engaging audiences from across the city and beyond with performances that express the full breadth of our collective creativity, imagination, and emotion,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Bringing this level of excellence to our theaters takes a collaborative effort from a huge range of trained professionals. With the help of the Theater Subdistrict Council, New York can take the lead in expanding access to good paying career opportunities in theater for historically underrepresented communities, paving the way for theater to remain a vibrant sector that speaks to all New Yorkers.”

The Theater Subdistrict Council is a not-for-profit corporation established pursuant to a 1998 zoning regulation that allows owners of certain Broadway theaters to transfer air rights within the Theater Subdistrict, provided the theaters are preserved, there are commitments to use the preserved spaces for legitimate theater use, and funds are deposited into the Theater Subdistrict Fund. The TSC administers the Theater Subdistrict Fund and it allocates grants in furtherance of goals that include enhancing the long-term viability of Broadway, facilitating the production of new theater work, developing new audiences, and showcasing Broadway’s singular role in the history of American theater. The TSC Board of Directors consists of Mayor Bill de Blasio, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and Department of City Planning Director Carl Weisbrod, as well as four

representatives, appointed by the Mayor and the City Council Speaker, who hail from the performing arts, theatrical and related industries. Currently, these four representatives are Lin-Manuel Miranda, Paige Price, Daryl Roth, and George C. Wolfe. Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelppearl serves on behalf of the Mayor as Chair of the TSC.

TSC Member Lin-Manuel Miranda said, “theater has always played a significant role in reflecting and celebrating our diverse city. I am so proud to be part of an organization that benefits our theaters and allows them to cultivate rising talent and bring fresh perspectives on and off the stage. This targeted investment will help ensure new stories get told for years to come.”

“The theatre community in New York is an amazing and vibrant industry, attracting artists and audiences to our city. This investment will help theatre organizations thrive for years to come,” said **TSC Member and Broadway and Off-Broadway producer Daryl Roth**.

In line with the TSC’s organizational goals, funds from TSC’s fifth round of grant making will support a broad range of paid fellowship, mentorship, professional training, and career development programs that will connect Broadway and the theater community to new talent behind the scenes while increasing access for individuals underrepresented in the professional theater community. This comes at a time of major momentum towards increasing equity and access in the city’s cultural community. In January 2016, [a survey of nonprofit cultural organizations](#) that receive funding from the City’s Department of Cultural Affairs found that the city’s cultural sector as a whole fails to reflect the diversity of the city’s population. For instance it found that 70% of people employed in nonprofit theater identify as white / non-Hispanic, compared to 33% of all city residents, and only 35% of technical and production staff in the theater sector identify as female. Addressing this disparity by promoting more diversity behind the scenes will ensure that a broader range of voices is heard throughout the development of theater productions in New York City. This, in turn, will help to generate productions that attract new audiences to theater both on Broadway and throughout the five boroughs, thereby positively impacting the long term viability of the Broadway theater industry.

“The Council has a long standing commitment to the visual and performing arts of this City, and this career development proposal will create a path to more opportunities to those who are seeking jobs in the theatre district,” said **Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “We look forward to the continued partnership with the artistic community to make it more diverse, develop skill sets, and provide employment so that New York City can continue to be one of the world’s leading cultural centers.”

City Planning Commission Chairman Carl Weisbrod said, “today’s announcement is a great example of how zoning goes far beyond the physical realm to strengthen the fabric of our city. It is proving here to be a vital tool for both preserving New York City’s historic cultural and architectural treasures and for increasing equity in communities that

are vital to New York's continued prosperity. I congratulate the theater community for its whole-hearted embrace of the goals of the Theater Subdistrict."

"Most of the people involved in creating great theater never appear on stage," said **NYC Cultural Affairs Commissioner and TSC Chair Tom Finkelparl**. "Thanks to this new funding from the Theater Subdistrict Council, we can help encourage the next generation of artists, technical workers, administrators, and leaders and expand the horizons of New York's dynamic theater community. These programs will feed energy and new talent into the Theater Subdistrict, an amazing and vibrant zone in the cultural life in New York City."

"There's a lot you can find in New York that you can't find anywhere else, but maybe the best example is our uniquely vibrant theater and performing arts community," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "These grants are a down payment on the continued success of our theaters and an increasingly diverse theater workforce, and demonstrate once again that leveraging neighborhood development rights to invest in our city's future is a win-win."

"These recipients exemplify why New York City is the theater capital of the world," said **Council Member Corey Johnson**. "I'm always proud to work with the organizations in my District to preserve the West Side's legacy as a beacon for arts and theater, and I congratulate them on these well-deserved grants. I can't wait to see the excellent work they produce as a result!"

"The theater has always been a mainstay of our city's culture and economy, and it is vitally important that careers in the performance arts are accessible to all," said **City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer**. "These grants will create a pipeline of paid training and mentorship opportunities in the theater sector and cultivate a more diverse and dynamic theatrical workforce. I'm glad to work with the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Theater Subdistrict Council to support a cultural sector that reflects the diversity of our city."

"These vital equity initiatives, such as the training program at Teatro SEA in my Council District, provide important opportunities for more New Yorkers to pursue their dreams in the theater arts," said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin**. "By offering more paid positions at linguistically and culturally diverse theater companies, we are truly breaking down barriers to artistic achievement that have stubbornly persisted up to the present day. I thank the city's Theater Subdistrict Council for this effort to create a more equitable and diverse theater community."

"The Theatrical Workforce Development Program is a necessary extension of the work Roundabout has been doing for the past 20 years in New York's public schools through Education @ Roundabout. Our programs have always aimed to leverage the resources of the nation's largest not for profit theatre to create partnerships with students, educators, early career professionals, and audiences, always using theatre as a tool to both captivate and mobilize the communities we serve. We are so proud to be adding to

that important work by now joining with IATSE to provide this pathway into technical theatre careers for New York City public school graduates. And we are thrilled to spearhead this first-in-the-industry initiative, which we hope can become a model for similar programs nationwide,” said **Todd Haimes, Artistic Director/CEO of Roundabout Theatre Company.**

“The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) represents over 130,000 technicians in live theater, motion picture and television production, trade shows and exhibitions, broadcasting, and concerts. Roundabout’s Theatrical Workforce Development Program will play an important role in creating tangible pathways for economically disadvantaged students into sustainable well-paying careers. IATSE is proud to partner with Roundabout in providing this new program and welcome this as an opportunity to build a more economically and racially diverse technical theater workforce. We feel this partnership is vital to strengthen the ties of the arts to the larger New York City community,” said **President Matthew Loeb, IATSE International.**

The funded proposals represent a diverse range of innovative programming designed to promote excellence, equity, and access in New York’s unparalleled theater community through paid training, mentorship, and other career development opportunities. The full list of programs includes:

- **Brooklyn Academy of Music - BAM Apprentices in Stagecraft (BAS) program** (\$227K): BAS will engage individuals from underrepresented communities in rigorous stagehand and production training, teaching them new skills through hands-on work experience. BAS will connect these participants to new networks, giving them recognized credentials in the field of theater production and placing them on a secure career path.
- **BRIC – Downtown Brooklyn Arts Management Fellowship** (\$200K): A comprehensive professional training program to give young people from underrepresented communities an opportunity to develop practical skills, leadership, and professional networks needed for a successful career in theater and arts administration. Fellows will spend a year working with and receiving mentorship from staff at a consortium of organizations in Downtown Brooklyn: BRIC, Theatre for a New Audience, the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), and Mark Morris Dance Group.
- **Epic Theater Ensemble – Expanding Epic NEXT Arts Leadership Initiative** (\$175K): A rigorous mentorship program that identifies and develops future leaders in theater from traditionally underrepresented communities in New York City. Epic NEXT is a comprehensive approach to youth development through theater, pairing participants with professional mentors, providing opportunities for participants to become future artistic and managerial leaders in the cultural community.
- **Harlem Stage – Administrative Fellowship Program** (\$200K): Harlem Stage’s administrative fellowship program will provide meaningful opportunities for professional development, including full-time on-the-job training, mentorship, and networking opportunities. Fellows will work alongside a passionate and diverse

team of arts administrators to support and create new opportunities for artists and communities of color in the performing arts.

- **Manhattan Theatre Club (MTC) – Early Career Training Program (\$175K):** MTC will use TSC funding to increase diversity among participants in its internship and fellowship programs, which serve as pipelines for developing future staff for MTC and across the theater community.
- **New 42nd Street – The New 42 Fellowship Program (\$225K):** A yearlong immersion in the inner workings of The New 42nd Street/New Victory Theater, The New 42 Fellowship Program will provide participants who have graduated The New Victory Theater’s popular Usher Corps who are recent or soon-to-be college graduates with the skills, resources, and experience needed to transition into full time employment within the theater industry.
- **New York Theatre Workshop – 2050 Administrative Fellows Program (\$250K):** A professional development program designed to provide first rate instruction and mentorship to young theater professionals, NYTW’s Administrative Fellows Program will expand the existing 2050 Artistic Fellows Program to include people from underrepresented communities who are seeking careers in arts administration.
- **Roundabout Theatre Company – Theatrical Workforce Development Program (TWDP)(\$250K):** Roundabout’s TWDP will, in partnership with the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) union, bridge the gap between existing development initiatives for young adults and entry-level jobs in the professional technical theater industry.
- **Teatro SEA – Technical Training Program (\$200K):** Teatro SEA’s training program will provide participants with the skills necessary to pursue a career in technical theater by offering the theater’s technical personnel both classroom-based and on-the-job training so they can continue to grow their careers at Teatro SEA and in the larger theater community with these in-demand skills.
- **Theater Breaking Through Barriers (TBTB) – Theater Management Apprenticeship Program (\$80K):** TBTB’s apprenticeship program will train disabled artists to become arts administrators, providing a path to long term employment in the field of theater.
- **Theatre Development Fund (TDF) – TKTS Apprenticeship Program (\$250K):** Participants in TDF’s apprenticeship program will work in the iconic TKTS booth in Times Square as an access point to employment on Broadway for underrepresented communities. Participants will receive hands on training in theater box office management.

Programs supported by the TSC Round 5 grant program will take place between January 2017 and June 2018. [Learn more](#) about the theaters preserved and contributions received over time as a result of this zoning requirement as well as previous rounds of Theater Subdistrict Council grants, which total more than \$7.5 million.