

Racial Equity Grants for Individual Artists (REGIA)

The new Racial Equity Grant for Individual Artists (REGIA) program renews grant-funded support for artists of color, building upon ArtsBuild's Equity in the Arts grant program active in 2017 and 2018 and funded by Benwood Foundation. Equity in the Arts grants supported projects led by local Black and Latino artists.

The new REGIA grant program strives to support the work of diverse artists that are reflective of our community. National reports done over the years have shown funding inequities in the nonprofit arts sector, and REGIA is aimed at providing more racially equitable grant funding in our community. The program is for artists who identify as one or more identity groups: Arab/Middle Eastern, Asian, Black or African-American, Hispanic/Latino(a)(x), Indigenous (e.g., Native American, Pacific Islander). Each year a different group will be prioritized for grant funding. Award amounts will be up to \$10,000.

The first round of grants was made available for artists who identify as Black or African American and are living and working in Hamilton County. Grant funding was made available in three funding categories: Artist Works, Equipment, and Professional Development. Funding for the new program is provided by individual donors, Lyndhurst Foundation, Benwood Foundation, and Footprint Foundation.

The goals for the program include:

- Making arts funding more equitable in our community by creating access to resources for artists of color in Hamilton County.
- Providing support to established and emerging racially diverse artists.
- Broadening the types of artists supported in the community.
- Ensuring the distribution of financial and capacity-building resources for minority artists.

2021 Racial Equity Grants for Individual Artists Recipients (Round 1)

Charlie Newton is a painter and [visual artist](#) whose practice combines uniquely African American spiritual traditions with themes of the Black diaspora and African American history. Newton is also the founder of [SPLASH](#), an educational program offering art classes to low-income youth in Chattanooga. Funding from the REGIA grant will support *The Black Bible*, a large-scale art exhibition at [Stove Works](#) exploring Black spirituality, debuting in January 2022.

Christian Kofi Mawuko, originally from Ghana, is an internationally touring [musical artist](#) who practices and teaches traditional African drumming as the leader and founder of CK Mawuko Entertainment (drumming and dance group) and [Ogya World Music Band](#). Kofi has spent the last 35 years as a professional teaching artist in Hamilton County Schools, providing Ghanaian drumming, dance and African storytelling. The REGIA grant will fund professional development through research and training with Ghanaian traditional musicians and storytellers in partnership with Jazmine LeBlanc, co-founder of [ELLA Library](#), to share his art in Hamilton County Schools through newly developed performances and teaching models that will grow his teaching art practice.

Anthony M. Wiley is a [musical artist](#), [producer](#), and veteran whose practice integrates mindfulness and seeks to deconstruct toxic masculinity and counteract the effects

of trauma. As a recipient of the REGIA grant, Anthony will collaborate with other local Black artists and music producers to create a new album. Anthony will also be partnering with [Dynamo Studios](#) to offer a new program opportunity for students of Howard Connect Academy to film a documentary about the production of the album.

The Artist Seven is a [muralist, illustrator, and designer](#) whose work is influenced by popular culture and graffiti. He is the host of the semi-annual [Burnin' Bridges Mural Jam](#), in which local and visiting artists create murals together in formerly industrial spaces, engaging members of the surrounding community. As a recipient of the REGIA grant, he will create a new landmark mural installation at 110 E. 7th Street in downtown Chattanooga.

Carl Cadwell is a Chattanooga musical artist and composer, whose work blends jazz influence with pop and experimentalism. He is also the founder of [Skypunch Studios](#), a production studio providing music and sound resources to regional and national partners, including the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Get Vaccinated Chattanooga (BCBST), RISE (Shane Morrow), and The Pop-up Project. Funding from the REGIA grant will support equipment purchases to expand his ability to take on larger production projects and work towards expanding his studio into a commercial space.