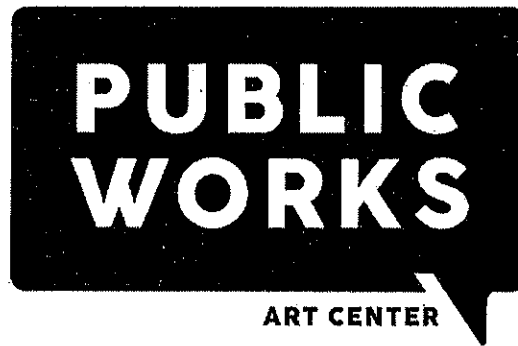


Intended use of funds, if approved:

1. One year annual operational costs to allow for an operating reserve account to be established, supporting the sustainability of the organization: \$329,000
2. On-site classroom improvements to allow for more students to take pottery classes at once and to improve the quality of affordable Summerville art education for residents and support for mobile art classroom and to provide opportunities to lower-income neighborhoods by bringing the art center to parks, community centers, and the like: \$20,000
3. Construction costs to improve lighting, electrical, structural quality and aesthetic, and function of Main Floor "East" Gallery (will also bring in higher caliber of artists and more event rental contracts to support operating costs): \$60,000
4. Accessibility project completion to include interior lift, automatic door openers/closers, paved access road, and ADA-compliant ramp (Raised \$103,000 to date on our own!): \$25,000
5. Technology upgrades: staff computers, tablet, touch screen display for lobby area to allow for visitors to access and sign up for classes and opportunities, technology needs for special events (to be a more robust, accessible, and attractive event space for rentals) including a PA system, a projector, an automatic projector screen, and upgrades to our outdoor stage area: \$23,000
6. Lighting and storage upgrades for our community (South) gallery, dark spaces overlooked by original contractors, and our loading dock/storage area (safety and aesthetics): \$15,000

Total: \$472,000



January 27, 2023

**Public Works Art Center**

135 West Richardson Avenue

Summerville, SC 29483

(843) 900-3225

Public Works Art Center is an 11,000 square foot, family-friendly 501(c)(3) nonprofit community art center in the heart of walkable Downtown Summerville, South Carolina that serves as a major tourist destination and amenity for locals and visitors alike. In 2018, a group of nine longtime community members formed as a board and relentlessly pursued an effort to transform the old town post office into a creative, cultural community space for all to enjoy, and secured the building in 2019. With tireless dedication, they raised nearly \$500,000 from the community to renovate the building, and opened with great fanfare in February of 2020. Unfortunately, Covid-19 hit Summerville just three weeks later, and the nonprofit was forced to close. Finding the silver lining, the team worked on their strategic plan via zoom during the shutdown, took DEI classes, and finished renovations, reopening in June of 2020. Now, 2500 people a month visit the art center enjoying FREE admission for all, making Public Works Art Center the most visited tourist destination in Summerville proper, and one of the most popular destinations in Dorchester County.

Public Works Art Center includes three galleries that change every eight weeks, making it a very lively, engaging space that always offers something new to see. As a reflection of our intention to make the arts accessible to all, admission is always free, and there is always at least one free craft or activity for visitors of all ages to engage with that tie into the exhibitions,

allowing them to connect with themselves and each other. Special events, often partnerships with other South Carolina nonprofits such as Dorchester Paws, Dorchester County Library, Palmetto Luna, Free Verse Poetry Festival, Beyond Basic Life, Heart Inclusive Arts Organization, and others, are numerous and almost always completely free. Once a year, the art center offers a community exhibition in which every member of the community can display work, including children, without a juried process, allowing even exhibiting work to be without barriers and allowing artists to learn how to submit to exhibitions and the process that takes. We also offer affordable classes for all ages in a host of different mediums, summer camps, twelve studio artist spaces, an outreach vehicle called "Artie the Artmobile," birthday party options, event rental space, an artisan gift shop, and so much more.

Despite opening three weeks before the pandemic hit Summerville, Public Works Art Center has made a dedicated effort to remain free, offer free art activities for all visitors, and provide affordable art classes for all ages. In addition to being one of the more affordable summer camp options in town, Public Works Art Center also offers scholarships for summer camps with the help of the South Carolina Arts Commission, making it possible for everyone who wishes to attend summer camp to be able. With inclusion as a dedicated focus, Public Works Art Center also raised over \$100,000 for an accessibility overhaul to include an interior lift, an ADA-compliant ramp, push buttons on entry doors, and more, all while managing to stay afloat post-pandemic.

Thus far, Public Works Art Center has operated on a "shoestring budget" in an effort to sustain its operations. We receive funding from the SC Arts Commission, the Donnelley Foundation, and the Coastal Community Foundation, along with other service groups and individual donors and accommodations tax grants, and these donations and grants are integral to our success. With that said, we are a standalone nonprofit entity - not a line item on the town budget, with no endowments or related pools of money to pull from. Having opened in 2020, we could use some help getting our building and operations up to speed so we can sustain for the long-term. In 2022, projected expenses came in \$40,000 under budget, and projected income came in \$40,000 over budget, showcasing our staff's ability to work hard to bring in income and

spend as little as possible. However, necessary projects and upgrades around the center have had to be set aside as we work to become a sustainable organization that opened during the pandemic while simultaneously raising money for our expensive, but important accessibility project. Necessary construction projects that will ensure safety and building usability have been put on hold indefinitely, classrooms need important upgrades, and the organization as a whole needs technology upgrades as well to do our jobs most effectively.

This one-time funding opportunity will allow Public Works Art Center to focus on the mission at hand - to be a family-friendly, inclusive space for our entire community to connect with themselves and one another - while working to focus more on development and finish out the necessary projects that have been put on hold. Being such a popular destination, and being located in the tourist-friendly, Downtown District means that we are contributing to the vibrancy of Downtown Summerville and being an economic driver to the surrounding community. More than an arts destination, we are a hub of activity, positivity, creativity, and connectivity right in the heart of Dorchester County.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of our request. If approved, we promise to honor the gift by being true financial stewards of it, making sure it is an investment into the success of Public Works Art Center, the 2500+ people who enjoy the space every month for free, and our community as a whole.

With Gratitude,

Jana Riley

Executive Director

Public Works Art Center

(843) 860-6049

[jana@publicworksartcenter.org](mailto:jana@publicworksartcenter.org)

# In 2022:

We welcomed over 20,000 visitors, all with FREE admission!

Showcased over 500 local artists through 24 unique exhibitions.

Ensured every exhibition had free family-friendly activities for visitor engagement.

Held dozens of free, community-connecting events.

Provided summer camp for 250 creative local children and created a scholarship program!

Held a wide range of art classes for over 850 students of all ages.

Raised over \$100,000 for an accessibility overhaul including lift, ramp, + more!

Partnered with nearly a dozen local nonprofits.

And SO much more!



## Thanks to our funders:

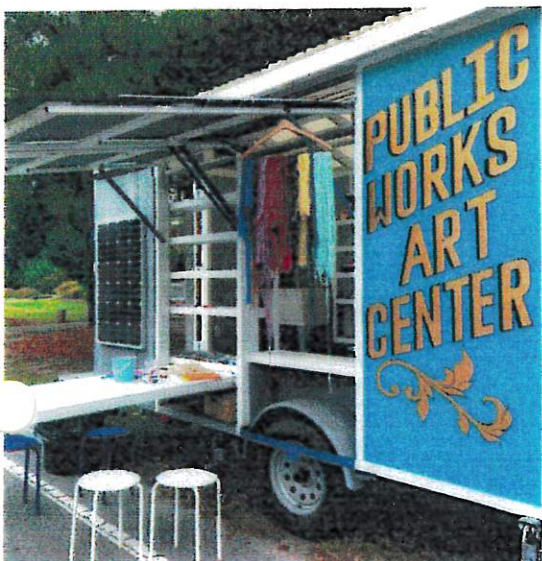


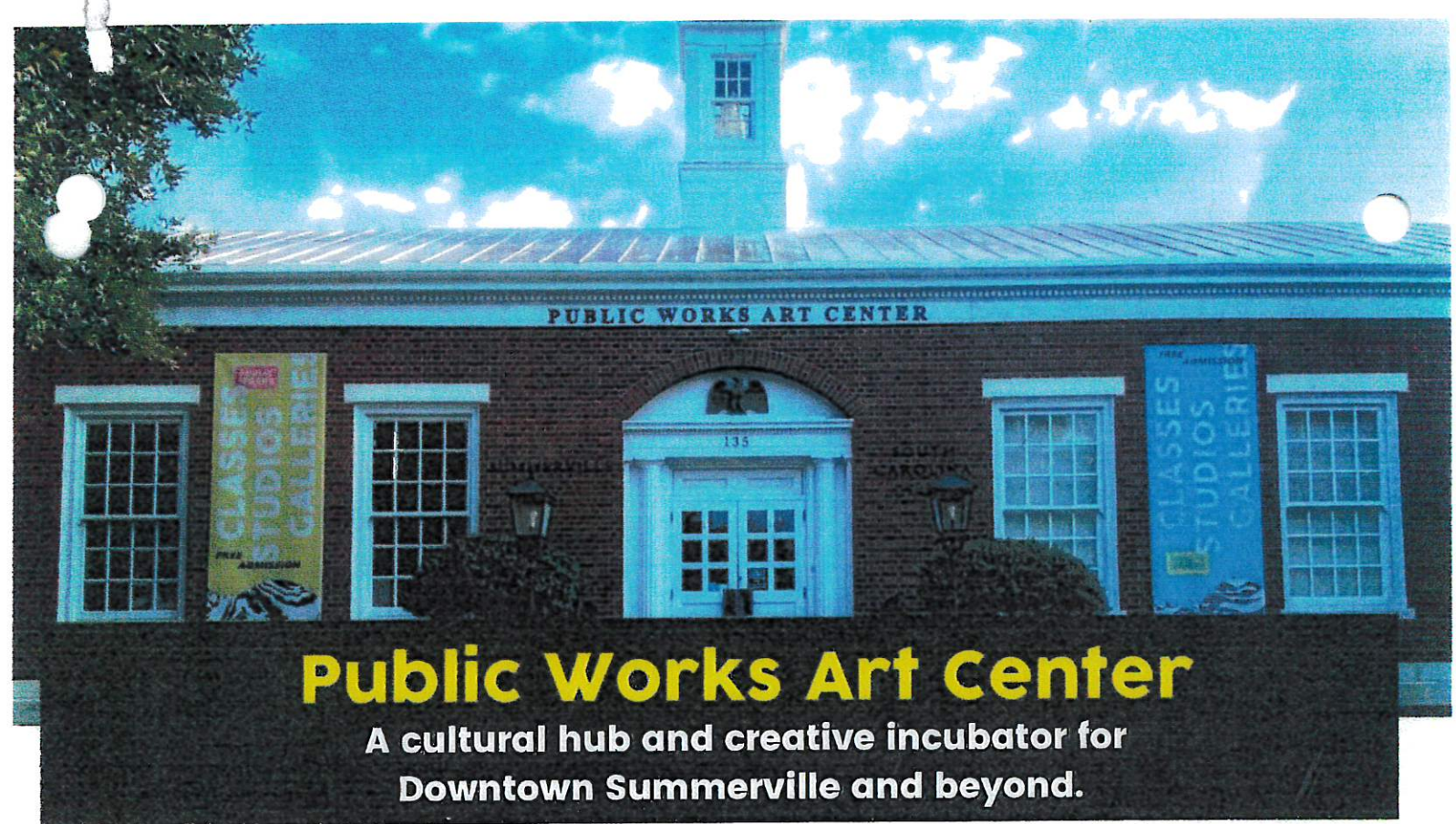
GAYLORD AND  
DOROTHY DONNELLEY  
FOUNDATION



Coastal  
Community  
Foundation  
OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Special thanks to our many individual donors, community partners, and local service organizations.





# Public Works Art Center

A cultural hub and creative incubator for  
Downtown Summerville and beyond.

Located in the old town Post Office in the heart of Downtown Summerville, just steps away from boutique shops, restaurants, and the town square, Public Works Art Center is an 11,000 square foot, family-friendly 501(c)(3) nonprofit community art center filled with creativity, positive and enthusiastic energy, and intention. Public Works Art Center officially opened in February 2020 after a dedicated grassroots effort, and has survived and thrived despite the pandemic.

With free admission, three galleries rotating exhibitions every 6-8 weeks, opportunities for artists of all experience levels to display, free diverse special events, classes for all ages, a pottery studio, an artisan and art supply gift shop, summer camps, twelve studio artist spaces, an outreach vehicle, birthday party options, event rental space, and so much more, Public Works Art Center is THE cultural hub and creative incubator for Downtown Summerville and beyond.

