THRIVE! Uplifting Theatres of Color is being offered with generous support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and developed and administered by Theatre Communications Group (TCG) with an Advisory Circle of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC*) theatre leaders (see below and webpage tab for THRIVE! Advisory Circle members). THRIVE! provides unrestricted funds for those who have all too often been outside the grantmaking sector’s funding opportunities: Black theatres, Indigenous theatres and Theatres of Color (BITOC*) based in the US (including Tribal Nations and US Territories) which are closely connected to and have positive impact on their chosen communities.
To do their best work, BITOC need support for salaries, rent, supplies and activities, as well as funds to offset loss of income caused by the pandemic. THRIVE! is providing general operating support so that BITOC can do what they do best—serving communities through theatre. THRIVE! aims to ease some of the pressures that BITOC face in fundraising, assist them in investing in their staff and artists, and help in their organizational success, beyond the scope of artistic projects and programming.

To address historical funding inequities (see FAQs on webpage), a minimum of 30% of the grants will be awarded to Indigenous theatre organizations, a minimum of 20% will be awarded to Black theatre organizations, with the remaining amount open to all other Theatres of Color. These distribution percentages were jointly created with the THRIVE! Advisory Circle.
Grant Categories:

Respond

25 rapid response grants of $10,000 each, unrestricted. RESPOND grants aim to address immediate, time-sensitive challenges that prevent ongoing work with their community. Recipients of RESPOND grants will still be eligible to apply for RECOGNIZE grants.

Recognize

20 general operating grants of $50,000 each, unrestricted. RECOGNIZE grants will be awarded to BITOC demonstrating a deep level of service to their chosen communities; a clear vision guiding their on-going and future work; and the highest potential for the THRIVE! program to positively impact their organization.

In addition, during the grant program period RECOGNIZE grantees will participate in REBUILD: A Learning Cohort working with BIPOC consultants to strengthen their effectiveness in specific areas and may include financial planning, crisis management and scenario planning, and program evaluation. Additional opportunities will include awareness building topics and intersectional programming. Working with the Advisory Circle, direct dialogues with grantmakers are a core component of REBUILD activities, with the intention that BITOC have opportunities to build their own relationships with grantmakers.

TCG recognizes there have been other significant efforts to financially support and strengthen BITOC led by both BIPOC and PWI, particularly since 2020. TCG is a theatre service organization and regrantor (see FAQs on webpage) collaborating with colleagues in the grantmaking sector who are committed to challenging funding inequities. Embedded in TCG’s mission and vision is a long-range goal to address and eliminate the structural barriers preventing BITOC from thriving to their full potential.
Who is this for?

Priority for RESPOND grants will be given to BITOC with the highest demonstrated need, economic and otherwise, and who have demonstrated valued service for their chosen communities. RECOGNIZE grants will serve to strengthen theatres with visionary leadership and impactful programming, as well as a record of valued service for their chosen communities.

Successful applicants will present a clear commitment to their chosen community and care deeply about all facets of their community’s day-to-day experience. They profoundly engage their community, maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with them and regularly practice deep inquiry about the quality of the community’s interaction with them. Not only will the applicant show how the community has been affected by their experience with the theatre, but also how the theatre’s staff, operations and programming have been affected by their interaction with the community.

TCG is inspired by the writings of W.E.B Du Bois and defines BITOC as organizations that have been founded by, for, about, with, and near BIPOC communities. THRIVE! recognizes that communities of color often disperse beyond one geographic area. Also, during this pandemic time, we recognize the difficulty of being in physical proximity to community members. For these reasons, we are defining “near” and “with” broadly to include digital and cultural proximity. In addition to these elements, BITOC are led by BIPOC.

Theatre organizations not originally founded by BIPOC, but which have undergone significant reimagining of their mission, vision, values, leadership and staff to self-identify as a BITOC, and which have publicly stated in word and practice that they are BIPOC-centered will be considered.

With the above exception, predominantly white theatre organizations, even if helmed by BIPOC leaders, are not eligible. However, TCG believes these BIPOC leaders and their theatres need support in order to succeed and addresses these needs through TCG programs and services separate from THRIVE! which include affinity spaces throughout the year and at the National Conference.

*BITOC and BIPOC are terms used here for solidarity purposes representing a multiplicity of racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. We acknowledge that the terms “BITOC” and “BIPOC” are imperfect, not universally embraced by many who identify as People of Color and/or People of the Global Majority, and that language is in a constant state of reimagination and redefinition. For reference, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color represent over 80% of the global population. It is possible that during the program period, the language may shift again.
What is THRIVE! uplifting?

An all-too-common narrative in the not-for-profit sector is the assumption that BITOC have only “needs” and “challenges,” and not solutions to larger field issues. Through the components of this program that include convenings and knowledge sharing, THRIVE! aims to support the ingenuity and tenacity of BITOC that have historically had a high impact with fewer funds. THRIVE! also aims to bring national visibility to BITOC-developed effective approaches to deepening relationships with their chosen communities, particularly during the current state of the country affected by COVID–19 and the protest movements demanding an end to structural and systemic racism. TCG will continue to uplift BITOC developed approaches in outlets that include American Theatre magazine, National Conference sessions, affinity and budget group meetings and fieldwide topical webinars.

What is the timeline?

Respond

**Online Info Sessions covering both grant categories:**
Thursday, March 15, 2022, 4pm ET* ([Sign up here](#))
**Office Hours:** with TCG staff and THRIVE! Advisory Circle
March 30 – April 15, 2022 ([Sign up here](#))
**Application Deadline:**
Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 11:59pm ET*
**Applicant Notification:** May 2, 2022
**RESPOND** grantee activities: No required activities

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Recognize

**Online Info Sessions covering both grant categories:**
Thursday, March 15, 2022, 4pm ET* ([Sign up here](#))
**Office Hours:** with TCG staff and THRIVE! Advisory Circle
April 18 – May 4, 2022 ([Sign up here](#))
**Application Deadline:** Friday, May 6, 2022, 11:59pm ET*
**Applicant Notification:** June 24, 2022
**RECOGNIZE** grantee activities:
- **REBUILD Learning Cohort** Online Orientation:
  July 15, 2022
- **REBUILD Learning Cohort** Activities with Assigned Journalists: July 15, 2022 – June 30, 2023

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*4pm ET is: 3pm CT, 2pm MT, 1pm PT, 12pm AT, 10am HT
*11:59pm ET is: 10:59pm CT, 9:59pm MT, 8:59pm PT, 7:59pm AT, 5:59pm HT
Is our theatre eligible?

THRIVE! embraces the broadest range of models and methods for theatre-making and understands that theatres are not uniform in aesthetic, approach, context, structure or delivery. At its core, theatre is an expressive and collaborative art form using any combination of words, voice, movement, media and visual elements to convey an idea, emotion or feeling. Programming activities may include development of new work; readings; workshops; educational activities; community conversations; podcasts; touring; work located in community venues; in addition to fully produced work on a mainstage.

Recognizing the broad structural and institutionalized barriers faced by BITOC in their operations and ability to program, the applicant’s organizational operating budget size will not determine the amount of funding. As the DeVos Institute reported in its 2015 study of Diversity in the Arts, “the 20 largest mainstream organizations have a median budget of $61 million; the 20 largest organizations of color have a median budget size of $3.8 million.” A difference of 16 times in median budget size is a glaring illustration of disparity.

THRIVE! recognizes and values the cultural wealth, community assets, and relationships that have historically been structural strengths of BITOC. **RECOGNIZE** applicants will have an opportunity to include in-kind contributions on the application form, as well as earned and contributed income. In-kind support may include use of space, services, equipment, supplies or meals. Applicants will be asked to provide a best estimate of the value of all in-kind contributions.

Note that leadership, staff and core members of applicant organizations are not required to provide proof of US citizenship.

**Eligible applicants in both RESPOND and RECOGNIZE will fully meet the following criteria:**

- Self-identification as a BITOC organization (founded by, for, about, with and near) based in the US (including Tribal Nations and US Territories) with organizational documents and platforms confirming this self-identification.

- Evidence of theatre as a central throughline in activities and programming

- Evidence of serving and engaging BIPOC community/communities
Is our theatre eligible for Respond?

RESPOND applicants must have either a:
- 501(c)(3) for their organization OR
- Fiscal sponsorship by an entity with a tax-exempt status OR
- Certificate of Incorporation OR
- If the applicant organization has not incorporated yet, a lead contact person who is able to receive taxable income in the US.

RESPOND applicants must also have a:
- Minimum of six months prior existence as a theatre organization with documented activities, an intention to continue operations and a lead contact person. Organizations and companies formed for a single project and moment in time are not eligible.
- Evidence of operations (other than in-kind revenue) as a theatre organization. This may include bank statements, payroll sheets, balance sheets, Profit & Loss statement. Applicants will be able to indicate in-kind contributions on the application form.

Is our theatre eligible for Recognize?

RECOGNIZE applicants must have:
- 501(c)(3) for their organization or fiscal sponsorship by an entity with tax-exempt status.
- Minimum of two years prior existence as a theatre organization with documented activities and an intention to continue operations.
- Evidence of operations (other than in-kind revenue) as a theatre organization. This may include bank statements, payroll sheets, balance sheets, Profit & Loss statement. Applicants will be able to indicate in-kind contributions in the Fiscal Information section of the application.
How does our theatre apply?

There are two separate application forms—one for RESPOND and a different one for RECOGNIZE. To apply, please visit the THRIVE! page on our website. There are multiple opportunities for applicants to receive support on their application, including live and recorded Info Sessions; one-on-one/small group Office Hours to answer questions and provide feedback to applicants prior to submitting their application. Sign up here for RESPOND and RECOGNIZE. For RECOGNIZE applicants, you can request post-notification feedback to help understand how your application was considered in the selection process.

The THRIVE! application process is taking into account technological and language barriers which applicants may be facing. Applications are accepted online in English, however alternatives to written applications are possible and program staff will help applicants navigate challenges related to language. To request accommodation or assistance in applying, please contact Raksak Kongseng, rkongseng@tcg.org, preferably two weeks before the application deadline.

How will our application be reviewed?

Acknowledging that organization size and resources vary, each application is evaluated individually. Applicants should articulate a clear mission statement, and address how COVID–19 impacted their ability to activate their mission.

Consistent with TCG’s mission and values, THRIVE! is prioritizing BIPOC from the TGNC and Disability communities and BITOC serving them.

In addition, THRIVE! prioritizes theatre organizations that:

- Specifically name an intent to make the world better for BIPOC in their core documents which detail their mission, vision and values
- Demonstrate a commitment to disrupting systemic racism through word and practice
- Actively work to deepen their own analysis of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion with evidence of a commitment across all areas of identity including race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, class, age, ability, and citizenship.
Respond

All applications meeting the criteria in the eligibility section above will be considered for a grant. Recipients will be selected through a randomly drawn lottery process, with the ultimate goal of distributing a minimum of 30% of the grants to Indigenous theatre organizations, a minimum of 20% will be awarded to Black theatre organizations, with the remaining amount open to all other Theatres of Color.

Recognize

A minimum of 30% of the grants will be awarded to Indigenous theatre organizations, a minimum of 20% will be awarded to Black theatre organizations, with the remaining amount open to all other Theatres of Color.

Applications will be reviewed by a national, independent selection panel of theatre professionals and community leaders, separate from the THRIVE! Advisory Circle, using the following criteria:

**Connection with and service for their chosen community:**
- Clearly stated identification of their chosen community and who their work centers
- Evidence of programming deeply impacting their chosen community
- Evidence of existing relationships and/or equitable partnerships with their chosen community

**Organizational structure:**
- Skills sets of core staff/leadership well matched to organizational goals and activities
- A commitment to artist compensation no less than the federal minimum wage
- Staff, artists, trustees identifying as BIPOC, Transgender, Gender Nonconforming, Disabled

**Impact of the grant:**
- Quantitative and qualitative impact of COVID-19 on the theatre
- Clearly stated case for how this grant will address opportunities and/or challenges
How will we know the results of the application process?
All applicants in both grant categories will be notified via email to the lead contact listed on the application form. **RESPOND** applicants by May 2, 2022 and **RECOGNIZE** applicants by June 24, 2022.

If our theatre is selected, when will we receive the funds?
In addition to a notification email, grant recipients will receive a letter of agreement stating the grant payment schedule.

**Respond**
**RESPOND** recipients will receive the full grant amount of $10,000 approximately 10 business days after TCG receives the signed agreement. **RESPOND** grantees will not be required to file written reports or to participate in any subsequent activities.

**Recognize**
**RECOGNIZE** recipients will receive grant funds in two payments, an initial payment of $42,500 after TCG receives the signed agreement and $7,500 at the end of **REBUILD** activities.

**RECOGNIZE** recipients will be asked to complete an Operating Budget Form with information about the theatre’s income and expenses. The program will minimize and streamline the grantee reporting process, and details will be included in the letter of agreement.
What is REBUILD?

RECOGNIZE grantees will also receive more specific information about REBUILD: A Learning Cohort activities, which begins with an Orientation. Grantees will identify and determine workshop topics to strengthen their effectiveness in specific areas and topics may include financial planning; crisis management and scenario planning; media; program evaluation. Additional opportunities will include awareness-building topics and intersectional programming. Other activities will include meetings with the THRIVE! Advisory Circle and leaders in the grantmaking sector.

Working with the Advisory Circle, direct dialogues with grantmakers are a core component of REBUILD activities, with the intention that BITOC have opportunities to build their own relationships with grantmakers.

To extend learnings and information sharing beyond the RECOGNIZE grantees, BIPOC journalists will be assigned to follow the work of THRIVE! grantees, bringing national visibility to their effective approaches to deepening relationships with their chosen communities, as well as their artistic work and any emerging trends. Journalists will also track REBUILD activities and learnings. The articles will be published in American Theatre magazine and widely disseminated throughout the arts field, BIPOC media and platforms, and other related sectors.

For RECOGNIZE grantees, TCG program staff will be present during the REBUILD sessions and hold a limited number of meetings with grantees as a cohort and individually. Combined with the journalists assigned to grantees, TCG program staff will have opportunities to assess the program's impact. Grantees will be encouraged to request staff assistance at any point. Traditionally, TCG program staff are less concerned with binary definitions of success/failure and instead center reflection and self-evaluation.

One of the desired outcomes of the THRIVE! Program is to both deepen long established relationships with BITOC and to invite BITOC who are less familiar with TCG to benefit from the mentoring, networking and other programming that TCG offers.
Who can I contact for more information and questions specific to our theatre?

The THRIVE! program administrators are Emilya Cachapero (she/her/siya), Director of Grantmaking Programs and Raksak “Big” Kongseng (she/they), Assistant Director of Grantmaking Programs.

Please email Big at rkongseng@tcg.org for more information.

Who is contributing to this program?

*Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (arts@ddcf.org): Underwriting the program*

The mission of the *Doris Duke Charitable Foundation* is to improve the quality of people’s lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and the prevention of child abuse, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. For more information, you can visit [https://www.ddcf.org](https://www.ddcf.org).
Who is contributing to this program?

Advisory Circle: Partnering with TCG to develop and design the program

TCG is working closely with an Advisory Circle of BIPOC theatre leaders and representatives of BITOC throughout the life of the program to ensure that the program is relevant and useful.

Advisory Circle members include:

Andrea Assaf, Founding Artistic Director, art2action
Miranda Gonzalez, Producing Artistic Director, Urban Theatre
Andre Harrington, Professor of Design at California State University, San Bernardino
Dr. Nicole Hodges Persley, Artistic Director, KC Melting Pot Theater
Leslie Ishii, Artistic Director, Perseverance Theatre
   and Board President, Consortium of Asian American Theaters & Artists (CAATA)
Jonathan McCrory, Executive Artistic Director, National Black Theatre
Alexandra Meda, Artistic Director, Teatro Luna
Kate Moore Heaney, Artistic Producer, Noor Theatre
Meena Natarajan, Executive and Artistic Director, Pangea World Theatre
Ryan Opalaniyetet Pierce, Artistic Director, Eagle Project
DeLanna Studi, Artistic Director, Native Voices
K. Zaheerah Sultan, Founder and Executive Director of Mind Your Business Art
Meredith Suttles, Managing Director, Marin Theatre Company
   and Steering Committee Member, Black Theatre Commons
Torange Yeghiazarian, Founder, Golden Thread Productions
Who is contributing to this program?

**TCG: Partnering with the Advisory Circle and implementing the program**

Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, leads for a just and thriving theatre ecology. Since its founding in 1961, TCG’s constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to over 700 Member Theatres and affiliate organizations and over 7,000 Individual Members. TCG reaches over 1 million students, audience members, and theatre professionals each year through its programs and services.

The Global Theater Initiative, TCG’s partnership with the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics, serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute. TCG believes its vision of “a better world for theatre, and a better world because of theatre” can be achieved through individual and collective action, adaptive and responsive leadership, and equitable representation in all areas of practice. TCG is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

[https://circle.tcg.org](https://circle.tcg.org)