

SPRE 105: Funding Artist-Oriented Spaces: A Community-Centric Approach



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Further Together Fundraising



How do we keep paying rent - while keeping artists at the center of power, access, and fundraising?

Many spaces are closing or shrinking.

Artists are struggling to find space that reflects their needs.

How do we do both - stay sustainable and be truly community-centered?

This is the tension we are here to explore.

Space is not just a cost - access is community infrastructure.

What We Will Cover



Today's Toolkit!

- 1) What Artists Need?
- 2) Community-Centric Fundraising
- 3) Strategy – Funding Artist-Oriented Spaces
- 4) Artists as Co-Stewards in Fundraising
- 5) Advocating for Bigger Shifts

Let's jump in 



SECTION 1:

The Need - Artist

Access as Impact



How Artists Defined Access

From Community
Based Research for
JAYU's
Community Access
Program

Access includes:

- Feeling welcome
- Knowing how to use the space
- Predictable booking times
- Low-barrier equipment and tech
- Sensory + emotional safety
- Access to mentorship and hosts
- Affordable or sliding-scale space
- Quiet areas + rest zones
- Representation in leadership and staffing



JAYU Community Access Program Research

If you fund rent without access, the space stays empty. If you fund access without rent, the space disappears.

SECTION 2: The Framework Understanding Community-Centric Fundraising





Community-Centric Fundraising: The 10 Principles

1. Fundraising must be grounded in race, equity, and social justice.
2. Individual organizational missions are not as important as the collective community.
3. Nonprofits are generous with and mutually supportive of one another.
4. All who engage in strengthening the community are equally valued, whether volunteer, staff, donor, or board member.
5. Time is valued equally as money.
6. We treat donors as partners, and this means that we are transparent, and occasionally have difficult conversations.
7. We foster a sense of belonging, not othering.
8. We promote the understanding that everyone (donors, staff, funders, board members, volunteers) personally benefits from engaging in the work of social justice – it's not just charity and compassion.
9. We see the work of social justice as holistic and transformative, not transactional.
10. We recognize that healing and liberation requires a commitment to economic justice.



community-centric
fundraising

communitycentricfundraising.org



Applying CCF to Artist Access & Space

Community-Centric Fundraising fundamentally changes how we approach funding space:

- Access is a racial, economic, and justice issue – not a perk
- Space serves the ecosystem, not just one organization
- Artists, staff, donors, and funders are all stakeholders
- Time, care, and labor are resourced – not extracted
- Funding space is about belonging, not transactions
- Economic justice is required for sustainable access

SECTION 3: Strategy Funding Artist-Oriented Spaces

The Problem: Rent Feels Unfundable

The Solution: Reframe Rent as Access Infrastructure

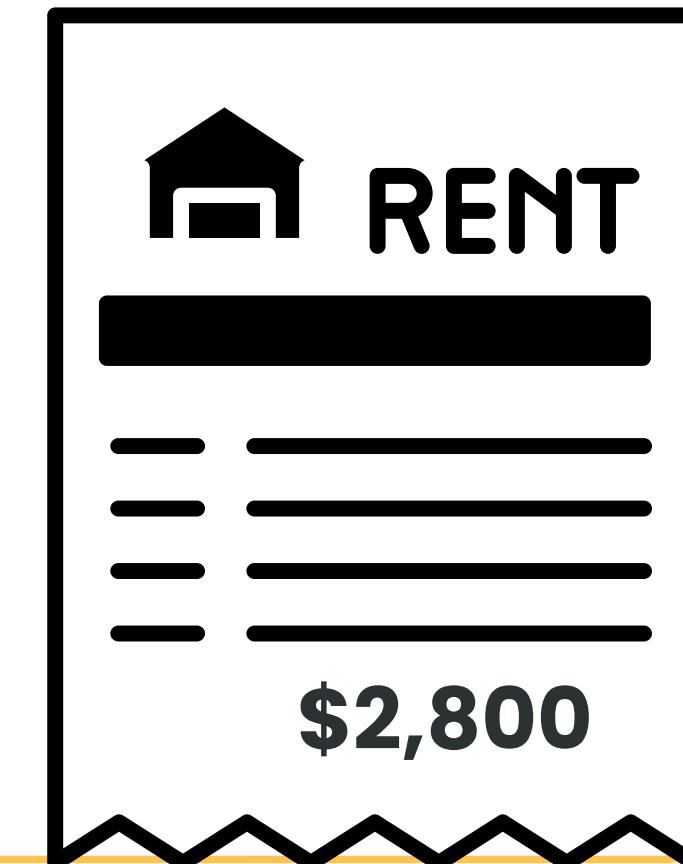
Common Barriers:

- Funders call it “admin” or “overhead”
- Donors find it hard to connect with

Reframing with CCF:

- Rent = cultural infrastructure
- Rent = access enabler
- Rent = community resource (not private real estate)

Funders see: “Admin cost”
We show: “300+ hours of artist access monthly”



Build Your Budget From Community-Identified Needs

Need	Budget Line Item	Fundable Language
Predictable space use	Evening/Weekend Access	"Flexible access for working artists"
Orientation + welcome	Host/Peer Mentor Staffing	"Human supports and mentorship"
Sensory Design	Lighting, sound tools, rest zone	"Accessible creative environments"
Access to Equipment and Materials	Tech lending + gear budget	"Reducing digital and economic divide for creatives"

Name these things in your core budget, not just as extras.



**What part of your rent or operations budget
could better reflect your access values?**

3 Ways to Make Rent Fundable

1. Reframe rent as impact delivery

"This space enables 150+ hours of affordable creative time for equity-deserving artists monthly."

2. Create an Access Fund

\$50/month = one artist's access covered (funds a % of rent)

3. Layer revenue sources

Grants, donors, earned income = diversified and values-aligned



The Layer Cake Revenue Model

A Values-Aligned Revenue Recipe



GRANTS →
INCLUDE RENT/MORTGAGE AND
EQUIPMENT UNDER "PROGRAM DELIVERY"
*CORE COSTS + SPECIFIC ACCESS-
FOCUSED PROGRAMMING

SPONSORSHIPS + COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS → NAME REST ZONES ,
ROOMS OR ORIENTATION DESKS, ARTIST
STIPENDS, EQUIPMENT SETS

MONTHLY DONORS → ACCESS
FUND/"ACCESS CHAMPIONS CIRCLE"

EARNED REVENUE → SLIDING SCALE
RENTALS/CO-OP MODEL, WORKSHOPS,
MERCH

CROWD/SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS →
EQUIPMENT OR PHYSICAL AND SENSORY
UPGRADES

A Simple Framework for Fundable Space Narratives

We believe that [VISION OF IMPACT].
We offer [SPACE/PROGRAM] to [COMMUNITY].
This helps artists [PROBLEM].
The result is [OUTCOME] so they can [IMPACT].



Example

We believe that [everyone deserves space to heal, create, and connect].
We offer [studio access and creative community] to [queer and racialized young people].
This helps [artists return to practice and feel safe showing up].
The result is [more equitable participation] so they can [move from one-time access to sustained artistic practice and community connection].

Why Our Space Is More Than Just a Room

Our downtown studio is more than a roof and four walls – it's a hub of cultural care, creation, and community. It is where over 300 equity-deserving artists access space that reflects their realities and nurtures their practice.

We are seeking operational support of \$80,000 to sustain the costs of rent, utilities, and staffing required to run this artist-centered space. These funds directly support:

- 1,000+ hours of low-barrier studio time per year
- Artist-led orientation, mentorship, and booking supports
- Shared gear, equipment, and rest zones to ensure accessibility
- Staff time for mentorship and co-design

Rather than framing space as overhead, we see it as cultural infrastructure – the foundation that enables healing, belonging, and artistic sustainability. In the words of one of our artists:

“This is the first place where I feel like I don’t have to shrink who I am to create.”

With your support, we can ensure our space continues to reflect the access needs and aspirations of the communities we serve.

SECTION 4: Artists as Co- Stewards, Not Subjects



Artists as Fundraising Partners, Not Passive Beneficiaries

Ways artists can co-steward fundraising:

- ✓ Review budgets
- ✓ Shape access priorities
- ✓ Co-present to funders/donors
- ✓ Co-create messaging
- ✓ Help define impact + metrics
- ✓ Participate in governance (paid!)

Artists Are Not Stories. They Are Collaborators.

Ethical storytelling practices in fundraising:

- ✓ Clear, informed consent
- ✓ Paid storytelling + labor
- ✓ Draft review + approval
- ✓ Ability to withdraw consent and expiration
- ✓ Credit and compensation for art, images, music
- ✓ Avoid trauma exploitation
- ✓ Let artists choose what story they want told



Access Requires Systemic Change, Too

It's not just about doing better internally – we need to push for systemic shifts so access becomes viable, sustainable, and funded.

Here's what we should advocate for:

- Bold conversations with funders to advocate for unrestricted funding
- Thriving wages for artists so they can rent, lead, and own
- Cross-org collaboration to share space, costs, and power
- Policy change to treat space as cultural infrastructure
- Public investment in non-commercial creative space

Key Takeaways

- Rent is a community asset, not just a cost
- Aligning funding with equity and accessibility strengthens both mission and sustainability.
- Funding artist-oriented spaces requires centering artists not as beneficiaries, but as partners in fundraising.

Thank You!

Q & A

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Free Toolkit



LinkedIn



Podcast
(wherever you find podcasts)

