

Image not found or type unknown

USVI and PR Artists Can Now Tap Into \$200,000 Emergency Covid-19 Fund

Coronavirus / **Published On November 02, 2020 05:18 PM /**

Staff Consortium **November 02, 2020**

Image not found or type unknown



Recording Artist Seanise Jeffers during a Dept. of Tourism-sponsored 'Harbor Night' event in 2019. By. REEMY-REEMZ PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY/VI CONSORTIUM/USVI DEPT. OF TOURISM

Artists in the U.S. Virgin Islands who have lost income due to the pandemic and are in dire need of financial support can now apply for aid to the Caribbean COVID-19 Emergency Fund launched by Beta-Local, an arts organization based in Puerto Rico, a release issued Monday has made known.

The Caribbean COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Artists in Puerto Rico (PR) and the USVI is made possible by a grant from the Open Society Foundation for a total of \$200,000, which will be

awarded in individual grants of \$2,000 to artists who are full-time residents of the USVI, and PR.

“There will be two separate pots of monies, one for the VI and one for PR, with funding for up to 20 artists allocated for the USVI,” explained Virgin Islands curator Monica Marin who is the Fund liaison for Beta-Local.

The application for artists residing in the US Virgin Islands is available at www.betalocal.org and closes on December 2, 2020. The call for entries in Spanish for artists residing in Puerto Rico has already commenced and similarly will be open for a month's time span. The selection process will be by a weighted lottery system based on the urgency of financial need. Applications that meet all the requirements and eligibility criteria will then be entered into a random selection process.

In times of emergency and crisis, one of the communities that is most disproportionately impacted are artists. Beta-Local recognizes that the vast majority of artists in the VI, PR, and the Caribbean depend on free-lance work to survive. According to the release, the Caribbean COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Artists, made possible by the Open Society Foundations (OSF), is aimed at individual artists in the United States Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who have lost income due to the COVID -19 pandemic and who are urgently in need of financial support for housing, food, health and dependent care expenses, among others. This is not a fund for artistic projects.

Artists residing in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who are over the age of 21 , and who have at least three years of professional experience or equivalent in any of the following disciplines can apply: performing arts, visual arts, film, new media, music and literature. More information on eligibility and other requirements is posted at www.betalocal.org or applicants can contact Monica Marin, the USVI grant coordinator and Beta Local liaison.

This is Beta-Local's second emergency fund, according to the release. The first was created after Hurricane Maria and helped 109 artists. Since 2014, the organization has held calls for production grants and other grants that have supported a total of 162 artists and art collectives from Puerto Rico.

The Open Society Foundations, founded by George Soros, are the world's largest private funder of independent groups working for justice, democratic governance, and human rights. They provide thousands of grants every year through a network of national and regional foundations and offices, funding a vast array of projects — many of them now shaped by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic

Beta-Local is a non-profit organization of Puerto Rico dedicated to supporting and promoting aesthetic practice. For more information on the Caribbean Emergency Fund, interested persons can visit www.betalocal.org or write to becas@betalocal.org.