

City of La Crosse Arts Board

3. Community Impact Grants

Driftless Urban Orchestra, Lucas, Cullan
1715 Mississippi Street
La Crosse, WI 54601, US
7135164113
cullan@driftlessorch.org

Submitted: Jan 26 2026 8:28AM



Section 1 (CIG) - Contact & Project Information

1. Name(s)/Organization

Driftless Urban Orchestra, Inc.

2. Mailing address

Driftless Urban Orchestra, Inc.
1715 Mississippi Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

3. Email address

cullan@driftlessorch.org

4. Phone number

(713) 516-4113

5. Website (optional)

www.driftlessorch.org

6. Biography

The Driftless Urban Orchestra (DUO) is a nonprot chamber ensemble dedicated to fostering local musical talent, promoting equity in the performing arts, and amplifying the work of traditionally underrepresented composers. Through innovative, community-centered programming, DUO provides high-quality musical experiences that are accessible, inclusive, and reective of the region it serves.

7. 1-2 Page Resume or CV

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**8. Project Title**

Driftless Urban Orchestra 2026 Mini-Season

9. Brief Project Description

In the first half of 2026, DUO presents a mini-season designed to deepen community engagement and arts education. Highlights include the Children's Music Lab at the Children's Museum of La Crosse, where families explore how an orchestra creates music through rehearsals and a culminating Rug Concert, and a mainstage May concert at the Cappella Performing Arts Center featuring DUO's largest group to date performing works by Copland, WI-born composer Kimberly Osberg, and other diverse composers. These programs expand access to classical music and strengthen cultural vitality inside La Crosse.

10. Project Start and End Dates

February 7, 2026 - May 5, 2026

11. Requested Funding Amount

12000

12. List of Participants

Organizations: Children's Museum of La Crosse, Cappella Performing Arts Center

Personnel:

- DUO Musicians, Volunteers: Cullan Lucas, Leisha Lucas, Tara Kelly, Paul Jewson, Hailey McKinley, Sarah Herath, Beth Becker, Kira Guetschow, Vickie Rortvedt, Jennifer Wartham, Mariah Olson, Liz Bahr
- La Crosse Children's Museum Staff: Andrea Higgins, Ann Christianson, Meg Schoh
- Cappella Performing Arts Center Staff: Matthew Curtis, Rachel Kouba

13. Conflicts of Interest

Not applicable; no current contracts with the City of La Crosse

14. Previous Funded Projects

No

15. Are you a non-profit that is registered in the City of La Crosse?

Yes

16. Federal Tax-Exempt Status



17. Letters of Support



Section 2 (CIG) - Project Description

1. Project Location

For the DUO 2026 Mini-Season, we have two separate locations/area partnerships. The first is a monthslong residency at the Children's Museum of La Crosse (207 5th Ave S, La Crosse, WI 54601), and the second location is the Cappella Performing Arts Center (721 King St, La Crosse, WI 54601)

2. Project Description

During the first half of 2026, DUO is presenting a focused mini-season through June 2026, designed to deepen community and educational impact. This mini-season includes two anchor programs:

The Children's Music Lab - Rug Concert & Rehearsals at the La Crosse Children's Museum: A month-long artistic residency in February with the La Crosse Children's Museum offering kids and families a behind-the-scenes look at how an orchestra creates music from how instruments work and musicians rehearse, to how a performance comes together. Each session features a rehearsal open to all museum patrons and culminates with a final Rug Concert, a family-friendly performance where children can see, hear, and explore music up close at the end of the month.

Mainstage Performance: A culminating May 2026 concert at the Cappella Performing Arts Center featuring DUO's largest ensemble to date. The program includes Aaron Copland's Appalachian Spring, a companion work by Wisconsin-born composer Kimberly Osberg, and additional chamber works by diverse composers. This performance will showcase DUO's artistic growth while delivering a high-quality musical experience for the La Crosse community.

Together, these activities strengthen cultural vitality, support arts education, and create meaningful access points

to classical music within the community.

3. Project Execution & Timeline

DUO 2026 Mini-Season – Project Execution Timeline

Project Period: November 2025 – June 2026

This timeline emphasizes educational outreach, accessibility, and community engagement as central goals of the DUO 2026 Mini-Season, integrating learning opportunities and inclusive access throughout all phases of the project.

November–December 2025: Educational and Access Planning

DUO establishes educational goals, access priorities, and budget parameters for the mini-season. Partnerships with the La Crosse Children's Museum and Cappella Performing Arts Center are confirmed to ensure welcoming, family-friendly, and accessible environments. Repertoire and program concepts are selected with an emphasis on age-appropriate learning, informal education, and broad audience appeal. Fundraising strategies are aligned to support free or low-barrier participation.

January 2026: Outreach Development and Fundraising Launch

DUO launches its individual giving and grant campaigns, highlighting the project's focus on educational access and community impact. Marketing and communication materials are developed to reach families, educators, and community members who may not typically attend orchestral performances. Residency schedules, interactive activities, and rehearsal plans are finalized with accessibility and engagement in mind.

February 2026: Children's Music Lab Residency

DUO conducts a month-long residency at the La Crosse Children's Museum, providing free or low-cost rug concerts, open rehearsals, and hands-on demonstrations for children and families. Programming is designed to reduce barriers to participation and foster curiosity about orchestral music. Attendance, informal feedback, and documentation are collected to measure educational reach and community engagement.

March–April 2026: Concert Preparation and Audience Building

DUO prepares the spring concert as a continuation of its educational mission, connecting repertoire and program notes to themes introduced during the residency. Outreach efforts focus on welcoming new and first-time audiences through partner networks and accessible messaging. Donor and sponsor acknowledgments emphasize support for education and access.

May 2026: Community Concert Presentation

DUO presents its spring concert at Cappella Performing Arts Center, offering an inclusive performance experience that reflects the season's educational work. The concert serves as both an artistic presentation and a community gathering, reinforcing connections between learning, creativity, and live performance.

June 2026: Evaluation and Educational Impact Reporting

DUO evaluates the mini-season's educational outcomes by compiling attendance data, participation metrics, and partner feedback. Grant and donor reports highlight access, outreach, and learning impact, and findings

4. Required Materials

Required Project Materials

The following materials are required to plan, execute, and evaluate the DUO 2026 Mini-Season, with an emphasis on educational outreach and accessibility. Some of the following are already owned or created by DUO, denoted with an *

Administrative and Planning Materials

- Detailed project budget and cash-flow tracking spreadsheet*
- Partnership agreements with the La Crosse Children's Museum and Cappella Performing Arts Center*
- Musician, conductor, and guest artist contracts*
- Project calendar and internal production timeline*

Artistic and Educational Materials

- Sheet music, scores, and parts for both programs
- Copying as required for music facilitation

- Signed Rental Agreements for music outside of public domain
- Educational curriculum outlines for Children's Music Lab activities
- Activity supplies for hands-on demonstrations (e.g., rhythm instruments, manipulatives, visual aids)
- Program notes written for general and first-time audiences
- Rehearsal plans and schedules*

Production and Technical Materials

- Chairs, stands, and basic stage equipment (as required beyond venue-provided resources)*
- Sound and lighting support coordinated with venue partners*
- Accessibility accommodations as needed (e.g., clear signage, seating considerations)

Marketing and Outreach Materials

- Mini-season branding assets
- Print and digital promotional materials (posters, flyers, social media graphics)
- Email and community partner outreach templates*
- Physical programs for all concerts
- Photography and Videography for events to be used in post-event reporting/marketing/donor stewardship

Fundraising and Development Materials

- Grant narratives, budgets, and attachments*
- Donor appeal letters and online giving content*
- Thank-you letters and stewardship materials*

Evaluation and Reporting Materials

- Attendance tracking tools and sign-in sheets*
- Audience and participant feedback forms*
- Photo and testimonial documentation
- Final financial reports
- Grant and donor reporting narratives

5. Durability & Maintenance Plan

This project funds a one-time educational residency and live performances, not a permanent physical installation. While no durability or maintenance plan is required, the project's impact is sustained through community partnerships, documentation, and educational outcomes.

6. Plans for Removal

All materials and staging used for the residency and performances will be immediately cleared following the conclusion of the events in consultation with community partners.

7. Target Audience

The target audience, children, families, and community members, will be engaged through a combination of interactive educational experiences and accessible live performances. During the month-long Children's Music Lab residency at the La Crosse Children's Museum, audiences will participate in open rehearsals, a culminating rug-concert, and hands-on demonstrations that invite curiosity and direct interaction with musicians. These informal settings reduce barriers to entry and encourage first-time engagement with live orchestral music. The spring concert at Cappella Performing Arts Center builds on these experiences by welcoming community members into a culminating performance that reinforces learning, connection, and shared cultural experience.

8. Under-Served Audience (optional)

DUO engages potentially-underserved audiences by meeting families where they already gather and offering widely accessible, welcoming experiences. Interactive museum programming and approachable performance formats reduce financial and cultural barriers, encouraging participation from audiences who may not otherwise attend orchestral concerts.

9. Artistic Goals

This grant will directly support DUO's artistic goal of presenting high-quality orchestral music in formats that are accessible, relevant, and community-centered. Funding will allow the ensemble to contract with professional musicians, develop thoughtfully curated repertoire, and present performances that emphasize connection and learning. By supporting both an educational residency and a culminating concert, the grant enables DUO to deepen artistic excellence while expanding how and where orchestral music is experienced.

Media



"DUO Artspire Performance 2024"

Materials/Media:

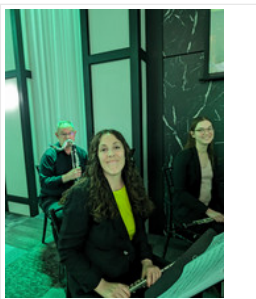
Size:



"DUO Lax Area Comm Foundation Perf"

Materials/Media:

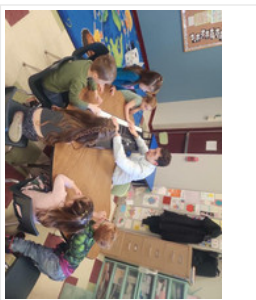
Size:



"Lax Area Comm Foundation Perf 2"

Materials/Media:

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"Educational Outreach 1"

Materials/Media:

Size:



"DUO Ensemble Reading Session"

Materials/Media:
Size:



"DUO Reading Session 2"

Materials/Media:
Size:



"Educational Outreach 2"

Materials/Media:
Size:



"Educational Outreach 3"

Materials/Media:
Size:



"Educational Outreach 4"

Materials/Media:
Size:

Project Budget

Category	Requested Total	Approved
Salaries	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Materials & Consumables	\$500,000	\$500,000
Travel & Transportation	\$200,000	\$200,000
Operating & Direct Costs	\$300,000	\$300,000
Competition	\$200,000	\$200,000
Grand Total	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

15 KB

Provided by Applicant

*This is a working document subject to change and should not be used for final budgeting. The budget should be finalized by the end of the fiscal year. The budget should be finalized by the end of the fiscal year. The budget should be finalized by the end of the fiscal year.

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