Thank you for listening to this recorded webinar about Dance/USA’s Fellowships to Artists, an initiative made possible through the support of the Doors Duke Charitable Foundation.

My name is Haowen Wang, Director of Regranting at Dance/USA.

In this video you will hear about the overall program, including its three components, as well as how to complete your letter of inquiry. If you do intend to apply, please read the full guidelines available on the Dance/USA website. Let’s get started.

[next page: Three Related Components]
The program itself has three main components. It’s chief component around which most of the resources are developed is to provide fellowships to artists to support their creative and social change work, and that would be work that impacts one or more communities. As the second element, Dance/USA will be providing a resource and support network to the fellows during the fellowship period, and then finally, fellows will have the option to help design and/or participate in fellowship initiatives during the fellowship period.

[next page: About DFA]
The program, which we call DFA, offers direct support to individual artists who have developed a sustained and intentional practice of working through dance and movement-based modalities to address social change.

DFA will fund 30 one-year fellowships of a minimum of $30,000 per awarded artist.

Fellowship funds can be used at the artist’s discretion. Awarded fellows are not required to complete a project with the financial award.

There will be some travel and/or virtual event attendance requirements and DFA will cover costs of travel and access.

[next page: About Art for Social Change]
So what do we mean by art for Social Change? We have used here a definition that we've adapted by the Leeway Foundation in Philadelphia, and Leeway has been doing this work for a long time.

Art for Social Change is work that intentionally affects and engages communities in terms of the artist's practice. The notion of art for social change would be integral to their ideas and their goals and the way in which they conduct their practice of creating and sharing their art. There should be an intentional analysis or review from the artist perspective of what that issue is and how to address it in communities, which might be in more traditional settings, or it may take place in a range of settings and locations.

[next page: Impacts]
There’s a lot of text on the slide about impacts, but art for social change can have so many different kinds of impacts. But primarily, I will highlight three things here and please know that the full list of this is also on the DFA website. If you're struggling to take notes, just know that a text transcription is available to this webinar, and the slideshow itself will be available for download as well.

Number one is that it creates a space for expression in some sense of community building among the audience or audiences or communities with whom the artist is connecting and engaging.

the second is that this art for social change work might be a strategy or tool or mechanism to create movements and address one of a host of very many issues in our society that are in need of addressing, frankly, whether they’re racism or classism or sexism or reclaiming a traditional practice or just altering something about how we think about ourselves or the world.

This brings me to my third point about traditional practices, which is that we want to be clear that often times, the mere fact that culturally specific artists and culture bearers continue to work is in and of itself challenging beliefs, shifting perceptions of power, and thus, a form of social change.

[next slide: about Art for Social Change]

If you are looking for specific examples of artists that this program seeks to support, our recommendation is to take look into the 31 artists that received the fellowship award in the first round cycle of this program. In addition, we commissioned writers to create 11 articles to take in-depth about the background, practice, and vision of our first round fellows.

- You can find the list of artists at www.danceusa.org/dfa-fellows
- You can find the 11 articles at www.danceusa.org/dfa-article-series

[next slide: fellowship amounts]

In terms of the fellowship amounts, Dance USA will be offering 30 one-year fellowships of a minimum of $30,000 per awarded artist, with a total allocation of at least $1 million dollars.
Now let’s talk about eligibility to apply.

- You need to be dance or movement-based artists based anywhere in the US and its territories, and a US citizen or permanent resident.

- Your practice needs to be dedicated to directly and meaningfully addressing the needs of one or more community(s).

- And your work with communities need to demonstrate respectful, ethical, and committed relationships with the communities with which your work is in dialogue.

There are three elements here that we don’t consider competitive in this program. The first would be artists whose practice mainly takes place in College environments because that artist is, say, a full time College Professor who creates work solely, or almost solely, on their students.

The second would be artists whose work is not tied to social change.

And the third, artists who would like to explore a particular social justice issue or do some research for a new work that they’re creating. But they don’t have that prior experience with the community who that issue directly affects. In this scenario, the artist wouldn’t be competitive.

Let’s take a few minutes to look at the review criteria, because these are the yardsticks by which the panel will be making their decision. The criteria are:

- Commitment
- Clarity
- Cultural integrity
- Disruption

The first thing the panel will be looking at is the level of commitment to a community.

The panelists might ask: What are the track record of your practice to demonstrate your commitment to a population, issues, and or place

and to what degree do you show accountability for how your work contributes to change?
How strong is the commitment to engaging the interests of community partners and intended participants?

Second, clarity,

Panelists will be looking to see the clarity of artistry and articulation of how the artist’s work uplifts visions of justice, dismantles systems of oppression, facilitates care and healing, or more

So to explain that a bit further, they will be looking to see if you are clear on what your intent and visions are as an artist. They will be sussing out the degree to which social change is intentional within the artist’s practice rather than something occasional or incidental.

Third, in terms of cultural integrity, it’s important that you demonstrate that you work with communities is governed by ethical practice that shows awareness of power, privilege, and cultural context. And how are these questions explored within your practice?

Fourth, how does your work question norms, disrupts dominant culture, shifts perception and power dynamics, models new forms of action, or more?

In what ways does your work breakaway from established practices, either social or artistic? Or does it disrupt dominant systems by supporting traditional expressions?

[next slide: 2. Peer Cohort and Resource Network]
Dance/USA will be creating a peer community among the fellows. During the grant period, fellows will be required attend to a few mandatory meetings, either in-person or virtual. The fellowship period starts in Fall of 2022 and ends in Fall of 2023.

Please note that the travel and access costs for that meeting are covered by Dance/USA

[next slide: 3. Fellowship Initiatives]

in addition to the required meetings and events, Fellows will have the option to help design and/or participate in fellowship initiatives that explore the collective potential of the fellowship cohort.

Details of the fellowship Initiatives will be provided along with the announcement of the selection of the fellows in 2022.

[next slide: Letter of Inquiry Submission]

To be considered for this Fellowship. All applicants must submit a Letter of Inquiry, or LOI, form. The LOI is due on Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 6PM eastern time.
If you have a steady access to the internet, you may follow instructions on Dance/USA’s website to submit the LOI via our online application platform Submittable. Submittable will require an email and your name to create an account. After you set up an account and you can proceed to complete the LOI.

If you do not have steady internet access and would prefer to submit the LOI via a Microsoft word document on your computer, on our website you can find instructions to download the LOI form in Microsoft WORD format. Once you have done that, complete the application in WORD and email the completed LOI to fellowships@danceusa.org by the due date on December 8.

[next slide: How to Apply and What Happens to Your LOI]

In the LOI you will be asked to provide some answers to questions about your art for social change practice and a work sample. The letters of inquiry will go through a two-phase review process first by a group of readers for initial evaluation and scoring and subsequently the full panel. The readers and panelists will be made up of a diverse group artists and dance professionals in our field from across the country.

Panelists will understand that the quality of work samples, particularly on video, varies. Please don't worry too much about that. Work samples might be photos or documents or other kinds of materials.

By April of 2022, 60 artists will be invited to submit a full application. The full application it's not going to be super long. It will ask some additional questions about your practice. You will also be asked to submit longer work samples.

Importantly, If you are one of the 60 artists invited to submit the full application, you will be asked to provide reference letters of community members or community leaders who can speak to your relationship within the community that your work take place. And then finally, you will be asked to submit a video statement about yourself, your community, and your practice.

Artists do not need to complete a project as part of this fellowship. You do not have to submit a budget. This is not project support. No budget is necessary, neither the letter of inquiry phase nor the full application.

[next slide: To Get Help or Ask Questions]

Dance/USA shares the belief that proposal writing should not be a barrier to artists accessing funding. With this in mind, we offer DFA applicants several options of support during the application period. The following options are open to all applicants. You don’t need to be a Dance/USA member to access these services.

First, you can submit your narrative questions of the LOI and/or Full Application in video or audio formats, rather than a written one. Follow the instructions provided in the submission forms to submit the
video/audio files. Applications with video or audio answer formats will be judged by the same criteria as fully written proposals.

In addition to the application webinar, which is the video you are accessing now, there will be three technical assistance calls conducted via Zoom. These calls are specifically dedicated for applicants to ask questions about the program requirements and selection process. Follow instructions on our website to RSVP to a session before the LOI due date. ASL interpretation and Closed Captioning will be available at the calls. I will be there to answer your questions.

Finally, please register to free proposal coaching. Coaching sessions are 30-minute calls for the applicant to talk through their draft application with a proposal coach.

Proposal coaches are hired consultants, experts in the field who can help you gain insight into connecting your proposal relevance to the program goals and objectives. Proposal coaches cannot advise if your project will be selected.

Coaching sessions are only offered until November 24, 2021. Two weeks before the LOI due date.

Finally, DFA will accept submissions from applicants in any language. You may request to access guidelines and application in your preferred language. Upon receipt of the request, Dance/USA will work with its contracted language service company to translate the guidelines and application. Once you submit the application, we will then translate it back to English and submit to the online portal.

If you have any translation and interpretation requests, please reach out to me directly. My contact information is in the next slide.

**Next slide: Questions?**

This is the end of the DFA application webinar. If you have any further questions. Contact me either by email at fellowships@danceusa.org, or call (202) 725-4028. ASL and spoken language interpretation services are available upon request.