



ChiArts Foundation FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

When and why did the Foundation become a separate entity?

- ChiArts Foundation was launched in January 2021 to formalize the public-private funding model that has supported ChiArts since its founding. This structure allows a school board to focus on the learning community and school operations, while the Foundation focuses on philanthropy, marketing and communications, and community partnerships.

How were the arts funded before the launch of the ChiArts Foundation?

- Since opening its doors in 2009, ChiArts' conservatories have relied on private funds raised by volunteers, managed and supported by a team of fundraising staff. The launch of ChiArts Foundation formalized a public/private partnership, though the fundraising structure and team remained the same.

How do the School and Foundation work together?

- The school and Foundation collaborate to identify the arts programming financial needs each year. The School outlines its funding priorities, and the Foundation raises funds to meet those needs through individual donations, grants, and events. Both organizations share the same goal: ensuring ChiArts' students have access to exceptional, tuition-free arts training.

Does the ChiArts Foundation provide grants to other organizations?

- No. ChiArts Foundation is not a grantmaking entity. Its mission is to support arts education opportunities that inspire and nurture current, future, and former students of The Chicago High School for the Arts.

Who contributes to the ChiArts Foundation, and where do funds go?

- The Foundation invites a generous community of individuals, foundations, and corporations to provide philanthropic support for ChiArts' donor-funded arts programs. Supporters include civic and community leaders, local and national philanthropic foundations, ChiArts families, alumni, faculty, and staff. Gifts are made through grants, fundraising events, and other annual and multi-year commitments. All Foundation funds are independently audited each year and used exclusively to support ChiArts' arts conservatories and related initiatives.

Does the Foundation provide funding for other ChiArts programs besides the arts conservatories?

- In addition to direct costs for ChiArts' conservatories, representing the majority of funds raised, the Foundation funds marketing, communications, outreach, summer arts learning programs, and Foundation-led alumni programs. These programs have always been supported by private fundraising, even before the launch of the Foundation in 2021.



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Are there other institutions with a public/private partnership model similar to ChiArts and the ChiArts Foundation?

- Yes. Many universities, schools, and public entities have philanthropic partners. A similar example would be that of the Chicago Public Library Foundation and Chicago Public Libraries in Chicago. Baltimore School for the Arts and the BSA Foundation is an example of an arts high school with a philanthropic partner. Each public/private partnership is uniquely formed to fill gaps in public funding.

Does the Foundation have an endowment?

- No. The Foundation has a board-directed investment fund to reserve at least six months of operations. As this fund grows, it provides long-term sustainability to ensure the lasting legacy and vitality of ChiArts' conservatories.

How can I help?

- You can join our community of supporters by making a one-time or monthly contribution. Visit our "[Ways to Give](#)" page to learn more. We also appreciate your efforts to help spread the word about ChiArts to your network of friends, family, and colleagues. Stay connected to opportunities and help promote ChiArts by joining our mailing list and following us on social media.

Does the foundation hold any control over the school's financial, program, operations, or hiring decisions?

- No. The Foundation solely operates as a philanthropic partner to the school and maintains a separate 501(c)(3) status. The Foundation does not manage or control the school's programming, curriculum, or operational and HR decisions.



*ChiArts Foundation's Annual Benefit,
Kerfuffle! 2024 & Bold Visions 2025*

*Photos by Timmy Samuel & Oscar Muñoz
(ChiArts Faculty).*

