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EmcArts partners with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to launch Rounds 7 and 8 of the *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts*

Seven arts organizations, selected from across the country, will participate in unique immersion program to uncover new strategies, launch new projects

Proposals for Round 7 participation will be accepted through August 9, 2012

June 4, 2012—In 2012, EmcArts, the leading nonprofit provider of innovation services to the arts sector, will further advance its pioneering *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts*, an immersion program for arts organizations to incubate organizational innovations. The *Innovation Lab* is funded by a generous \$1.6 million grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF). EmcArts is pleased to partner with DDCF to deliver two more Rounds of the program to seven participating organizations from across the country in 2012 and 2013. Eligible organizations are producing and presenting organizations (including college-based presenters) in theater, dance and jazz.

EmcArts is also undertaking research to determine how best to support innovation and adaptive change among service organizations and other arts development agencies. Based on that study, we expect to develop a first Lab cohort especially designed for service organizations, to begin participation in early 2013.

Originally launched in 2008 with a DDCF grant of \$1.5 million, EmcArts' *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts* helps teams from nonprofit theater, dance, jazz and presenting organizations design and prototype new ideas and launch real-life projects that address major adaptive challenges facing arts and cultural organizations. Participants take part in a 12-month immersion program featuring an extended framework of individual coaching and group facilitation, guided by field research and led by EmcArts' expert facilitators. Ultimately, the Lab gives arts organizations the time and space they need away from the regular workplace to plan, engage, participate and learn how to innovate effectively. Participating organizations also receive much-needed risk capital to underwrite experimentation.

Of the Lab, its external evaluator wrote in 2010: "[The program] provides a needed antidote to the general trend of throwing resources, time and energy toward flavor-of-the-month initiatives that seem attractive in turbulent times."

Ben Cameron, Program Director for the Arts at DDCF, said: "The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is pleased once again to extend support for the EmcArts *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts*. This program is especially important in changing times and its many impacts, not only on the supported organizations, but on the larger field of the performing arts, are already evident."

Richard Evans, President of EmcArts said: "We are thrilled to continue the development of the Lab with generous support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Today's operating environment for the arts is highly complex. Arts leaders must be able to adapt their programs, strategies and organizational structures thoughtfully and quickly to respond to rapid changes and fleeting opportunities. Yet, after years of growth-oriented management, the resource structures and cultures



of nonprofit organizations typically resist innovation, and adaptive capacities are underdeveloped. Organizations require interventions—formal assistance and effective frameworks like those provided through the *Innovation Lab*—to support the design and testing of new strategies. Otherwise, we see experiments eroding over time into variants on everyday practice. Fresh approaches and solutions are lost, and the expansion of cultural vitality is severely limited.”

Selection Process

Organizations are selected to participate in the *Innovation Lab* via a competitive RFP process. ***The application deadline for Round 7 of the Lab is Thursday, August 9, 2012. Information may be found in the RFP at www.EmcArts.org.*** Professionally managed producing and presenting organizations in theater, dance and jazz are eligible to apply for the Lab. **Questions about eligibility and submitting a proposal should be directed to Liz Dreyer, EmcArts National Programs Manager, at (212) 362-8541 x 27.**

About the Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts

EmcArts' *Innovation Lab* has three phases:

Phase 1 – EmcArts works with participants to identify an Innovation Team (of up to 10 people) at each organization, which then explores new approaches, defines project goals and success measures, and conducts pertinent research.

Phase 2 – Innovation Teams from all participating organizations attend a 5-day Intensive residential Retreat that serves as a “project accelerator,” giving teams time to focus on key decisions about their projects.

Phase 3 – EmcArts grants Lab participants \$30,000 in seed money (plus \$9,000 in unrestricted funds) to support the prototyping and evaluation of innovative strategies before full launch.

The partnership with DDCF provides funding for two Rounds of the Lab, with each Round comprised of three or four organizations. The first Round (Round 7) will launch in October 2012 and end in September 2013. Round 8 will be announced with an RFP later in 2012.

To date, 23 organizations have participated in the *Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts*, representing a range of disciplines and launching a variety of innovative initiatives in community engagement, uses of technology, collaborative programming and strategic alliances, among others. Past participants include: Adventure Stage /NUSH (IL); Apollo Theater (NY); Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company with Dance Theater Workshop (NY); Center of Creative Arts – COCA (MO); Children’s Theatre Company (MN); The Civilians (NY); Dad’s Garage (GA); Denver Center Theatre Company (CO); Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (VT); HERE Arts Center (NY); Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (MD); The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington DC); MAPP International Productions (NY); [New Dramatists](#)* (NY); Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OR); The Pearl Theatre (NY); Roadside Theater/Appalshop (KY); Springboard for the Arts (MN); STREB Lab for Action Mechanics (NY); University Music Society, Ann Arbor (MI); Woolly Mammoth Theater Company (Washington DC); [The Wooster Group](#)* (NY) and [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts](#)* (CA).

* Indicates projects featured in multimedia profiles on ArtsFwd.org, EmcArts’ online platform for arts leaders to learn and share about adaptive strategies and the power of effective innovation.

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About EmcArts

Recognized as the leading nonprofit provider of innovation services to the arts sector nationwide, EmcArts (www.EmcArts.org) serves as a nonprofit intermediary for arts funders, and as a re-granting agency and service organization for the arts field around innovation and adaptive change. Our innovation programs support the development and implementation of mission-centered new strategies by arts organizations of all sizes. The programs range from directly incubating specific innovation projects to introductory programs that enable new thinking and build a culture of innovation across local arts communities. EmcArts is a 501(c)(3) organization.

About DDCF

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (www.ddcf.org) is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, the environment, medical research and the prevention of child maltreatment, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties.