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EmcArts Names Finalists in the ArtsFwd Business Unusual National Challenge

Seven Finalist organizations will crowdsource bold new ideas in response to their most pressing challenges for a chance to win \$35K.

The public is invited to contribute on ArtsFwd.org through July 25, 2013.

June 19, 2013 – ArtsFwd.org has launched an online crowdsourcing initiative, which is the third phase of the **2013 Business Unusual National Challenge**, a competition-collaboration centered on the most pressing adaptive challenges facing arts organizations today. This phase of the project lasts from June 19 through July 25, 2013 and is designed to foster collaborative idea and inspiration sharing among the 7 Finalist organizations, big thinkers and strategic leaders from inside and outside the arts sector, the ArtsFwd readership and community, and the public.

The Finalists

The Finalists are: **Boston Children’s Chorus, Dance New Amsterdam, globalFEST, HowlRound, Kennedy Heights Arts Center, Theatre Bay Area, and WaterFire Providence.** *(See below for more about each organization.)*

About Crowdsourcing

The Business Unusual National Challenge’s crowdsourcing initiative provides an online platform for the 7 Finalist organizations to pose **two research questions** related to their adaptive challenge and receive input from a wide range of contributors. Furthermore, this initiative creates a space for cross-disciplinary, open dialogue in a sector that too often keeps conversations isolated in silos of artists, administrators, or funders.

Anyone from the public is welcome to participate in this initiative. The ArtsFwd team and each Finalist organization have specially invited a cross-sector group of big thinkers and community stakeholders to share individual perspectives and responses to the Finalists’ research questions, as well.

For more information about the Challenge and to read the Finalist entries, visit: ArtsFwd.org/Challenge.

Karina Mangu-Ward, Director of Activating Innovation said:

“We are excited to be introducing this new form of crowdsourcing to our field. We believe it will accelerate and strengthen the move towards innovation and adaptive change in the arts sector, and provide a new platform for engaging big thinkers across sectors around important organizational challenges and issues.”

Responses to Finalists’ research questions will inform each organization’s understanding of their adaptive challenge, which they will then revise into a full proposal and submit for consideration for the Challenge prize of \$15,000 cash and \$20,000 worth of facilitation resources.



About the Challenge Finalists and their Research Questions

[Boston Children's Chorus](#) is redefining their relationship with their communities around social bridging.

Research question: What role do racial dynamics play in creating obstacles for arts/cultural organizations that want to be more inclusive, effective, vibrant and relevant? What other nonprofit organizations are concerned about social bridging and doing it well?

[Dance New Amsterdam](#) is providing infrastructure to arts practitioners to help them develop entrepreneurial artistic and business practices.

Research question: What, in your opinion, are basic skill sets that are unique to artists, but are also applicable to cross-sector and cross-discipline business development? How might some of those artistic skills benefit entrepreneurship?

[globalFEST](#) is developing a package of support services for world music artists in the United States.

Research question: What are the most valuable services we could provide to the world music field beyond our flagship New York showcase and touring fund?

[HowlRound](#) is creating a peer-to-peer digital currency that matches artists' needs to the community's available resources.

Research question: What resources could help you make a stronger impact and support your creative and cultural work?

[Kennedy Heights Arts Center](#) is creating sustainable ways of earning revenue through social enterprise.

Research question: How might we leverage our unique assets to create socially valuable products or services? What are successful arts-based social enterprises and why do you think they are successful?

[Theatre Bay Area](#) is rethinking their membership model and considering the concepts of ownership, citizenship, and engagement in sustaining the overall health of the theatre and dance ecosystem.

Research question: Are the concepts of "citizenship" and "the common good" in the arts community meaningful to you? What organizations do you belong to and what has motivated you to join them?

[WaterFire Providence](#) is developing a new revenue model that will engage a wider group of stakeholders and beneficiaries through stewardship and reinvestment programs.

Research question: What do you believe is our value to the state, city, local businesses and residents, out of state visitors, and your family?

About ArtsFwd

ArtsFwd is a place for leaders in the sector to share and learn about adaptive strategies and the power of effective innovation. Important new strategies are being developed throughout the professional arts and culture sector, but too often these advances remain isolated within their organizations. Our aim as a field-wide learning platform is not to encourage mere replication of successful projects, but to share the process of innovation and to foster a new understanding of how adaptive change is achieved. www.ArtsFwd.org

About EmcArts

Recognized as the leading nonprofit provider of innovation services to the arts sector nationwide, EmcArts 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. www.EmcArts.org