Orchestra US

TRANSFORMING
AMERICA'S UNDER-RESOURCED ARTS COMMUNITIES

Business Plan
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Executive Summary

Opportunity

Problem

There are two problems in the United States today, the second of which holds the potential to solve the first.

1. Rural America's arts communities are under-resourced.

2. Recent college graduates in music performance & arts management are under-utilized.

According to a 2019 report by the National Governors Association, despite a robust cultural history that has enriched the nation and its people, Rural America is beset with social and economic challenges. Population migration and persistent poverty are contributing to a widening urban-rural divide in many states.

Solution

By using the creative sector - specifically, arts and culture assets - states across America have a viable approach for strengthening economic opportunities and vibrancy in rural communities.

Orchestra US will galvanize the talents of 70 extraordinary, engaging, and diverse recent college graduates in music performance and arts management through immersive leadership development trainings and interactive community residency programs, with a 60-member orchestra and 10 arts management fellows, designed to transform America’s under-resourced arts communities while shaping these artists and executives of the future who will deeply understand their responsibility to arts-based community development within the towns all across America who need them the most.

Market

Rural, under-resourced arts communities in America who desire transformation.

Competition

There is no direct competition from any competitor nationally or globally.
Key Activities

- Partner with under-resourced arts communities to design mutually agreed upon 3-week, full-orchestra residencies which include free performances, workshops, performance pop-ups, local artist collaboratives, and team building seminars with community business leaders.

- Identify and train 70 recent graduates in music performance and arts management through an 8-week music and leadership intensive in Southern California with courses in arts-based community development, career training for the 21st century, technology in the new world of music performance & engagement, diversity, and mindfulness.

- Place fellows in partner communities for arts-based initiatives for a 12-month residency, following the full-orchestra residency, with the objective of advancing and existing or starting a new arts organization in the community.

Direct Deliverables

- Engaging and inspiring immersive Orchestra US community residencies involving each and every stakeholder in all partner towns.

- Instilling music performance and arts management fellows with a 21st Century perspective and approach to arts-based community development with the desire and the skills to advance or create an arts initiative in an under-resourced arts community.

- Advancing or creating a new arts initiative within 18 months of the initial full-orchestra residency within every Orchestra US partner community.
Why Us?

Orchestra US differentiators:

- Orchestra US is focused on transforming rural, under-resourced arts communities in America with an arts-based community development approach.

- Orchestra US provides leadership development training and arts-based community development experiences not only for performing musicians, but also for young composers, conductors, and recent college graduates in arts management.

- Orchestra and Arts Management Fellows are paid a living wage of $1,000 per week while engaged in the Orchestra US program.

- The leadership team of Orchestra US combines over 50 years of expertise in arts-based community development, music performance, and arts administration. Artistic Director, David Lockington is a renowned conductor, cellist, composer, and educator who has performed and recorded with orchestras around the world, including Europe & Asia. President & CEO, Paul Jan Zdunek is a C-level performing arts & business executive who has successfully transformed organizations into flourishing artistic and economic strongholds. *(see Appendix for full bios)*

- Orchestra US advisors include award-winning artists and executives with expertise in concert & film composing, multi-genre music performance practices including Native American, leadership development, business strategy, and marketing & communications *(Advisors list on pp.22-24)*
Opportunity

Problem & Solution

Problem Worth Solving

There are two problems in the United States today, the second of which holds the potential to solve the first.

1. Rural America's arts communities are under-resourced.

2. Recent college graduates in music performance & arts management are under-utilized.

According to a 2019 report by the National Governors Association, despite a robust cultural history that has enriched the nation and its people, Rural America is beset with social and economic challenges. Population migration and persistent poverty are contributing to a widening urban-rural divide in many states.

Many rural areas have unique cultures to celebrate, yet they are also contending with problems related to an evolving economy, including the loss of industry, outmigration of young and skilled workers, rising poverty rates, health and health care barriers, educational attainment gaps, and physical and digital infrastructure needs. According to the *Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector: A Rural Action Guide for Governors and States* (2019), these concerns are especially urgent for governors who see rural communities rebounding more slowly from the last recession than metropolitan areas. Taken together, these challenges have contributed to a lack of investment in what makes rural places so special: the people, the artists and artisans, and cultural organizations.

By using the creative sector - specifically, arts and culture assets - states across America have a viable approach for strengthening economic opportunities and vibrancy in rural communities. Arts and culture have long been part of urban rejuvenation efforts; and now, an expanding body of research and practice showcases positive economic and quality-of-life outcomes associated with the rural creative sector. These studies suggest that rural arts-based community development initiatives strengthen interactional networks that foster civic engagement, sense of community, entrepreneurship, and creative transformation.
Linda Frye Burnham states in her paper, *Community Arts at Work Across the U.S.*, “Artists have been working with and for communities for thousands of years.” The community arts concept is a modern iteration of perhaps the oldest field, with a lineage that stretches back to humankind’s most essential pre-historic community-making, community-defining practices. Today, working artists, particularly those who are younger or involved in the performing arts, often seek out urban communities to pursue their work. However, 48 percent of US artists, as reported by the 2000 Census, are self-employed and mobile, and seek the amenities of rural areas.

**Musicians Living & Working in the US**

This map shows the public use micro areas (PUMAs) in the United States where there are a relatively high population of Visual & Performing Arts majors*

*Note that the census collects information tied to where people live, not where they work. It is possible that Visual & Performing Arts majors live and work in the same place, but it is also possible that they live and work in two different places.
Additionally, according to a recent research report by Peter Miksza and Lauren Hime out of the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University—*Undergraduate Music Program Alumni’s Career Path, Retrospective Institutional Satisfaction, and Financial Status*—only 49 percent of music performance graduates in the United States find a match between their first job or work experience to the kind of work they wanted and for which they trained. They are also accruing student loan debt, with most reporting debt ranging between $10,000 and $30,000, yet music performers were more likely to report salaries ranging between $10,000 and $20,000. This information is consistent with trends from the analyses of job satisfaction items, with performers indicating the least amount of satisfaction for income. Furthermore, approximately one in ten reported earning more than $60,000, highlighting the relatively limited remunerative nature of these music professions in general. This is due to the limited number of positions open in orchestras and ensembles annually, along with the barrage of applicants for so few positions, as well as the oversaturated solo artist market. Soon, even fewer openings and opportunities will exist due to the recent Covid-19 pandemic which will shutter a large number of organizations nationally and globally.

Our Solution

Orchestra US will galvanize the talents of 70 extraordinary, engaging, and diverse recent college graduates in music performance and arts management through immersive leadership development trainings and interactive community residency programs, with a 60-member orchestra and 10 arts management fellows, designed to transform America’s under-resourced arts communities while shaping these artists and executives of the future who will deeply understand their responsibility to arts-based community development within the towns all across America who need them the most.
Data

**Principals of Arts-Based Community Development**

- Creative sector initiatives are most effective when attuned to the particular creative assets and needs of rural communities
- Creative sector initiatives work best as part of a cohesive economic development plan in rural areas
- Creative sector initiatives add value when integrated with additional state and local policies and practices such as workforce development, community development and housing

*Source: Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector: A Rural Action Guide for Governors and States (National Governors Association 2019)*

**Rural Arts Organizations as Substantive Innovators**

- Rural arts organizations draw nonlocal audiences at higher rates than do urban arts. Rural arts organizations report that 31 percent of their audience travels "beyond a reasonable distance" to attend events compared to their corresponding urban counterparts at only 19 percent
- Rural counties that house performing arts organizations provide residents with higher incomes - up to $6,000 higher - than are reported in rural counties without performing arts organizations
- Two out of three rural businesses report that arts and entertainment are important for attracting and retaining workers
- Businesses that value the arts are more likely to report an expanding market for their products and services

*Source: Rural Establishment Innovation Survey (National Endowment of the Arts and U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service 2017)*

**The People and Profit Value of Arts & Culture in Rural Communities**

- The value that the arts and culture sectors added to the national GDP exceeded $763 billion. In 2015, arts and culture production contributed $67.5 billion to the economies of states in which 30 percent or more of the population lives in rural areas
- Arts and culture production in rural states employed nearly 628,500 workers

Artistic Quality is Critical to Success

- Arts-centered programs work. A study of arts programs in community and institutional settings has led to the conclusion that the two most critical contributors to success have been a clear artistic focus and the high quality of the artists involved. The most successful programs have been developed by artists making art, not artists doing something else. These artists have created art programs, not therapeutic or remedial programs that use art as a vehicle. This does not mean that they were not concerned with solving problems or unaware of the therapeutic or self-esteem building effects of their efforts. Quite the opposite, in fact. They often contend that these benefits are the unavoidable consequence of making art. It is their belief that they do the most good concentrating on the empowering qualities of the creative processes and not on the diagnosis or treatment of what is wrong.

Source: Arts-Based Community Development: Mapping the Terrain (William Cleveland 2011)
Why Now?

The need has always been there, yet it is only recently that the National Governors Association, whose members include all states, commonwealths, and territories in the United States, have made it a priority to address rural prosperity through the Arts & Creative Sectors, by drafting the *Rural Action Guide for Governors and States (2019)*.

The recent Covid-19* pandemic is threatening the very existence of already under-resourced arts communities. At the same time, the national civil unrest has brought to the forefront the racial and socioeconomic inequalities that exist in the United States. The convergence of these two events underscores the immediate need for Orchestra US to use the transcendental power of music to unite, comfort, and renew.

"The role of arts initiatives in building engaged social interactions serves both the purposes of expressive individuality and support of communality, creating new interdependencies, relationships, and processes. The creative process helps to drive innovation and the progressive modification or destruction of existing cultural and institutional forms through the expansion of inclusive social networks that build collaborative agency. One means of analyzing these network interactions is to view them as ongoing processes that can be interpreted through their effects on community wellbeing and belonging.

Community-based arts programs and the community processes they entail can be powerful catalysts for social change leading to network expansion and development of viable, healthy communities.”

Source: *The Creative Fire: An Interactional Framework for Rural Arts-Based Development* (Bruce Balfour, Michael W-P Fortunato, Theodore R. Atler 2016)

*NOTE: Orchestra US will first bring together Fellows in the summer of 2021, when we believe there will either be a vaccine for Covid-19 or many more sophisticated and safe guidelines to follow from the CDC. Additionally, the program delivery methods that Orchestra US will employ allow for social distancing and creative formats of delivering music and arts services to rural communities.
Target Market

Target Communities

Rural, Under-Resourced Arts Communities in America Who Desire Transformation.

Deciding where to draw the line between urban and rural can be a complex task. Densely developed “downtowns” and sparsely populated areas are relatively easy to identify. Where does an urban area end as settlement patterns change from the city center to suburbs and beyond? The ambiguity of the urban area’s edge is diminished with the application of standard measures including density, distance, and population size.

**Graphic Depiction of Urban/Rural Classification**

Orchestra US will partner with local, regional, and national community & arts development and agencies to identify and target under-resourced arts communities that desire transformation (see page 16 for more details).
Target Assessment Components

Asset-Based Community Development: A thriving community must be supported primarily from within by its members, resources, and capacities, for the present and future.

Cross-Sector: Community development requires collaborative effort that emphasizes a holistic systems approach because many community issues are diffuse, multidisciplinary, multi-agency, multi-stakeholder, and multi-sector in nature. Cross-sector refers to community development activities among and between often separately defined areas of influence and expertise such as education, public safety, human services, and the arts.

Community-Based: Activities created and produced by and with community members that combine significant elements of community access, ownership, authorship, participation, and accountability.

Arts-Based Community Development: Arts-centered activity that contributes to the sustained advancement of human dignity, health, or productivity within a community. These include arts-based activities that:

- Educate and Inform us about ourselves and the world
- Inspire and Mobilize individuals or groups
- Nurture and Heal people or communities
- Build and Improve community capacity or infrastructure

Sustainable Development: Locally generated economic, social, and cultural development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Target Activities

Partner with Rural, Under-Resourced Arts Communities

- Orchestra US staff will, with the help of national research partners, identify those rural, under-resourced arts communities throughout the United States.
- Once identified as a potential partner, Orchestra US will build a mutual interest partnership agreement with those under-resourced arts communities.
- Orchestra US, along with leaders from identified partners, will map the arts needs and assets of their unique communities so a residency plan, which includes activities and outcomes that are meaningful, can be created collectively.
- Execute mutually agreed upon Orchestra US and community residencies that include:
  - Free orchestra performances
  - In-school performances and workshops
  - Community specific pop-up ensembles throughout the region
  - Local artists' performances, creative designing, and workshops with Orchestra US musicians
  - Team-building workshops with community business leaders and Orchestra US management

Identify and Train Recent Graduates in Music Performance & Arts Management

- Audition and select the most extraordinary, engaging, and diverse graduates in music performance from colleges and conservatories around the US.
- Interview and select the most extraordinary, engaging, and diverse arts management college graduates from throughout the US.
- In addition to providing music preparation required for the community residencies, Orchestra US will design an 8-week leadership development intensive for all music performance and arts management fellows in the areas of:
  - Arts-based community development
  - Career training and options for the 21st Century
  - Forming and managing a nonprofit
  - Technology in the new world of music performance & engagement
  - Human relations, team culture and community engagement
  - Wellness & Mindfulness
Place Fellows in Partner Communities for Arts-Based Development Initiatives

- Every Orchestra US partner community will be expected to engage and contribute financially to support an arts management Fellow of the Orchestra US program for a 12-month residency within the community in the year following the full-orchestra residency, with the objective of advancing an existing or starting a new arts organization in the community. Additionally, partner communities will be expected to engage Orchestra US music performance fellows in the year following the full-orchestra residency as Artists-in-Residence.

Residency Case Study:

An artist moved into the town New York Mills, MN and started the New York Mills Regional Cultural Center in a refurbished farmhouse with the help of community members. He organized a board of directors, enlisted a local bank for funding, and formed a partnership with the city council to create the regional cultural center under the status of an economic development project. The results: the population growth to 1,199 was twice the projected estimate by the city council prior to the center's opening and seventeen new businesses opened creating an employment increase of 40 percent.

Source: Artists’ Centers: Evolution and Impact on Careers, Neighborhoods and Economies. (Humphries Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota 2006)
Competition

There is No Direct Competition Nationally or Globally

Indirect Competition

New World Symphony
America’s Orchestral Academy
Michael Tilson Thomas, Artistic Director

The New World Symphony, America’s Orchestral Academy (NWS), prepares graduates of music programs for leadership roles in professional orchestras and ensembles. A laboratory for the way music is taught, presented and experienced, the New World Symphony consists of 87 young musicians who are granted fellowships lasting up to three years. The fellowship program offers in-depth exposure to traditional and modern repertoire, professional development training and personalized experiences working with leading guest conductors, soloists and visiting faculty.

Each summer, Carnegie Hall’s Weill Music Institute (WMI) brings together the brightest young players from across the country to form the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America (NYO-US), a free program for all participants. Following a comprehensive audition process and a multi-week training residency with leading professional orchestra musicians, these remarkable teenagers embark on a tour to some of the great music capitals of the world while serving as dynamic music ambassadors.
The American Youth Symphony’s mission is to inspire the future of classical music by providing landmark fellowships to virtuosic young adults and exceptional, innovative, and free concerts to the Los Angeles community. Competitively selected, our orchestra is comprised of 100 musicians who represent extraordinary talent from all over the world.

**Orchestra US Differentiators**

- Orchestra US is focused on transforming rural, under-resourced arts communities in America with an arts-based community development approach
- Orchestra US provides leadership development training and arts-based community development experiences not only for performing musicians, but also for young composers, conductors, and recent college graduates in arts management
- Music Performance and Arts Management Fellows are paid a living stipend as part of the Orchestra US program
- Orchestra US guiding values include:
  - Excellence in artistry, management, and governance
  - Diversity that mirrors the fabric of America
  - Team culture that reflects the personal passion in all we do
  - Authenticity in our approach
  - Intentionality in our actions
  - Sustainability in our solutions
Execution

Milestones & Metrics

Key Deliverables

Direct Deliverables

• Engaging and inspiring immersive Orchestra US community residencies involving each and every stakeholder in all partner towns
• Instilling music performance and arts management fellows with a 21st Century perspective and approach to arts-based community development with the desire and the skills to advance or create an arts initiative in an under-resourced arts community
• Advancing or creating a new arts initiative within 18 months of the initial full-orchestra residency within every Orchestra US partner community

Indirect Deliverables

• Mitigating community isolation by building connections
• Diversifying regional economies by attracting visitors, businesses, and investments
• Injecting pride and enlivening rural communities
• Improving quality of life
• Promoting inclusivity

Identifying Under-Resourced Arts Communities

Orchestra US will identify under-resourced arts communities based on their Arts Vibrancy Index Score which is the result of a variety of sources including: US Census Bureau, IRS 990s, DataArts’ Cultural Data Profile, Theatre Communications Group, League of American Orchestras, National Endowment for the Arts, Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. There are three main rubrics: supply, demand, and public support for arts and culture on a per capita basis. We gauge supply as total arts providers, demand with measures of total nonprofit arts dollars in the community, and public support as state and federal arts funding. We use multiple measures since vibrancy can manifest in many ways.
Company

Overview

Why We Exist

Many studies have examined the beneficial effects of creative placemaking in urban communities to attract cultural entrepreneurs and stimulate collateral businesses in the larger ecosystem; however, rural communities have often been ignored.

Research literature suggests that rural arts-based community development initiatives strengthen interactional networks that foster civic engagement, sense of community, entrepreneurship, and creative transformation.

Working artists, particularly those who are younger or involved in the performing arts, often seek out urban communities to pursue their work. However, 48 percent of US artists, as reported by the 2000 Census, are self-employed and mobile, and seek the amenities of rural areas.

Diversity

Orchestra US values diversity that mirrors the fabric of America. Diversity is embedded in all that we are and all that we do – internally and externally. To that end, our goal is to have a minimum of 50% non-white Fellows, Staff, Board Members, and Advisors. To date, we have 50% non-white Staff, 66% non-white Board Members, and 60% non-white Advisors (Fellows will be identified in spring 2021).

Current and complete list of Staff, Board Members, and Advisors at: https://orchestraus.org/who-we-are
Mission, Vision & Values

Mission:

Transforming America’s under-resourced arts communities.

Vision:

Orchestra US is committed to transforming America’s under-resourced arts communities through immersive, interactive residencies with an extraordinary, engaging, and diverse ensemble of recent college graduates in music performance and arts management.

Values:

• Excellence in artistry, management, and governance
• Diversity that mirrors the fabric of America
• Team culture that reflects the personal passion in all we do
• Authenticity in our approach
• Intentionality in our actions
• Sustainability in our solutions
Appendix

Arts Vibrancy Index Map 2019