

# Aware 2022 and The Feather Project

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*Rapid Grants - Summer 2022*

## **Virginia Beach Art Center**

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532 Virginia Beach Blvd. Suite A  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

## **Project Title, Mission and Request Amount**

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### **Project Title\***

*Name of Project*

Aware 2022 and The Feather Project

### **Requested Amount\***

\$1,500.00

## **Project Narrative**

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*Questions I-VI make up the narrative portion of the application.*

*For question I, "Description of Funding Request", you have 7,000 characters (approximately 1,200 words or 2.5 pages single-spaced). For questions II-VII, you have 3,500 characters (approximately 575 words or 1 page single-spaced).*

*You can type directly into the text boxes or cut and paste from a separate document.*

### **I. Description of Funding Request\***

*Please describe the project your organization is seeking funding for, including its relation to your mission. Is it a new project or does it build on existing work?*

Aware 2022 is a 10 day art experience designed to bring history, cultural diversity and the community together through art. This is a new project. While modeled after art exhibitions held on a regular basis at the Art Center, Aware 2022 incorporates a new community-based art installation that will create an immersive experience within the Art Center.

In November 2022, the project will focus on local Native American history, specifically as it relates to the government-run initiative of Indian Boarding Schools.

Aware 2022 has four key components:

1. The keystone feature of Aware will be a large community-based art installation called "The Feather Project." The Feather Project calls attention to both the survivors and the lost children and lost generations of the Native American Community due to the Boarding School initiative of the Federal Government. (<https://thebookartist.com/feather-project/>) Beginning in August, 2022, members of the community, artists and non-artists will be asked to make a feather to

contribute to the installation. For 10 days in November, the feathers will be suspended from the ceiling of the gallery to create an immersive experience for the viewer. People who are making feathers are provided resources to educate themselves about Indian Boarding Schools, donate to healing efforts, and advocate for healing. They are asked to explain why they are participating and also to provide messages that they would like to send along with their feathers.

2. An art exhibition will accompany The Feather Project. Up to 50 artworks will be displayed, with priority given to artists of indigenous descent. Artworks will relate to Native American culture and history, past and present. The exhibition will be curated by staff as well as representatives from the local Nansemond Nation to ensure that imagery and treatment are sensitive and appropriate.

3. A Land Recognition event on November 4th will highlight the opening of both the art exhibition and The

Feather Project. Additionally, guest speaker Nikki Bass from the local Nansemond Indian Nation will speak about the local tribe and their relationship with the Indian Boarding Schools and with educational disparity throughout recent history.

4. Artist talks on November 13th, the final day of Aware 2022, will allow the artists to explain about their indigenous heritage, artworks, inspiration and answer questions from the public.

This project is aligned with the Art Center mission because it integrates with visual arts as a vehicle to engage a wide number of people in the community to create and contribute to the art installation. People will be creating art for the exhibition and installation, viewing art during the exhibition and interacting with artists and others during the Land Recognition event and artist talks.

## II. What are the key outcomes or deliverables of the project?\*

### **Outcome 1: Participation**

Collect at least 1500 feathers from individuals all across the US, including feedback about why they participated.

Hang art of at least 20 local artists, with most or many of them of indigenous descent.

Welcome 75 visitors for the Land Recognition Ceremony and presentation by guest speaker Nikki Bass. Welcome 150 daily visitors for the duration of the 10-day exhibition.

Have at least 5 artists participate in the Artist Talks.

### **Outcome 2: Increased Awareness**

Increase awareness and empathy relating to the Indian Boarding School program run in the US and the generational trauma experienced by survivors (measured via surveys).

Increase awareness about our local indigenous community, the Nansemond Indian Nation (measured via survey).

### **Outcome 3: Continuation of The Feather Project**

Identify additional locations around the US to reinstall the community artwork as a traveling exhibition. Generate additional participation in other communities to increase the number of feathers, stories and messages collected.

### **III. Statement of need or opportunity\***

*Please explain the need or opportunity this project serves, including why it is important or especially timely now.*

This project is timely, in part because November is Native American History Month and more importantly because of recent events relating to Indian Boarding Schools.

In June of 2021, unmarked remains and a mass grave were found at the sites of two former Indian Boarding Schools in Canada. This discovery brought a little known fact into the public consciousness--that Native American children were systematically taken from their families and forced to attend boarding schools in both the US and Canada. The stated purpose of these government-sponsored schools was to strip the children of their Indian culture and assimilate them into white, Christian society.

Behind the scenes for many years, groups such as the Native American Coalition for Boarding School Healing have been working to raise awareness about the conditions and abuses that children were subjected to in these schools. The Department of interior released its report on Boarding Schools in May 2022. There is legislation currently moving through both the US House and Senate, The Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the US Act, (H.R.5444 AND S.2907).

This is the time to bring awareness to this part of our shared American past. The goal and purpose of Aware 2022 and The Feather Project is to raise awareness, increase empathy and call people to action toward understanding and healing.

### **IV. Humanities Focus\***

*Describe in what ways the proposed project is grounded in humanities disciplines. What are its expected contributions to the humanities?*

The Aware 2022 exhibition and The Feather Project are humanities focused by bringing attention to a human experience which many people may not know had even happened. Many people in Southeast Virginia are unaware that there is a local indigenous tribe, much less that they recently gained recognition as a

Nation. Many think of the Native American story as a story of the past (Jamestown, Pocahontas) and the historical lore that relates. The Nansemond Indian Nation is thriving and continuing their traditions, and they have a rich, current culture to share.

The Feather Project also brings the opportunity for individuals to share personal experiences through the creation of a feather and submitting stories and messages with the feathers. Some of these stories and messages will be from non-indigenous individuals who are just learning about this chapter of American history. Some feathers and messages will be from Native Americans who have a direct connection with the boarding schools or have experienced their own discrimination within the modern school system.

The related art exhibition gives the opportunity for indigenous artists to express their heritage and for non-indigenous artists to focus and learn through the art-making process.

Aware 2022 is meant to create a bridge between people and start a conversation across cultures. The art exhibit and events will help non-indigenous people gain insight into the experience and culture of the local Nansemond Indian Nation. The Feather Project will introduce many to the history of the Boarding School initiative and help generate empathy and support for those affected.

## **V. Impact and Evaluation\***

*What would success look like, and how will you evaluate impact and outcomes of your Virginia Humanities funded work?*

Success for the Aware 2022 and The Feather Project would be indicated by the following:

- At least 1500 feathers are collected and included in the installation
- At least 5 people participate in preparing and installing The Feather Project
- At least 20 local artists have art in the exhibition
- At least 75 attendees at the Nov. 4 event
- At least 150 daily visitors for the duration of the 10-day exhibition
- At least 5 artists participate in the Artists Talks
- At least 70% of those surveyed report that they became more aware about Indian Boarding Schools as a result of participating
- At least 70% of those surveyed report that they learned more about our local Nansemond Nation as a result of participating

## **VI. Project Personnel\***

*Please list project personnel, their titles and the specific role(s) they will play in the project. Indicate who qualifies as the humanities scholar(s) and include a statement of the work they will be doing.*

Margaret Foltz, Executive Director, responsible for administrative and logistical aspects of the project. This includes gaining board approval, meeting with advisors/scholars, oversight of marketing efforts, managing project timeline and expenses, presentations and other responsibilities to ensure the project is a success.

Maggie Kerrigan, Artist, responsible for spearheading The Feather Project. This includes meeting with advisors/scholars, creating the website and surveys, recruiting the public to participate, leading workshops for making feathers, organizing the receipt of feathers and installation of the community art project.

Karen Kleinbrook, Exhibition Coordinator, responsible for the art exhibition and Artist Talks. This includes creating the call to artists and web page, curating the show with input from advisors, carrying out logistics of hanging the show, and organizing all aspects of the Nov. 4 event and the Artist Talks on Nov. 13.

Chief Emeritus Lee Lockamy, Nansemond Indian Nation, project advisor. Chief Lockamy has provided advice and guidance since the inception of this project to ensure that the Art Center staff are treating the topic in a sensitive and appropriate way.

Nikki Bass, Nansemond Indian Nation, guest speaker and advisor. Nikki will be the guest speaker at the Nov. 4 event, sharing information about the local Nansemond Indian Nation and relating the experiences of tribal citizens in the modern educational system as well as experiences with Indian Boarding Schools. She will also provide advice and guidance with the call to artists, the selection of artwork for the exhibition and plans for the Nov. 4th event to ensure that Art Center staff are treating all aspects of the project appropriately.

## VII. Partnering Organizations

*Please list any partnering organizations and the role they will play in the project.*

Nansemond Indian Nation of Chesapeake Virginia:

--Chief Emeritus Lee Lockamy, Nansemond Indian Nation, project advisor. Chief Lockamy has provided advice and guidance since the inception of this project to ensure that the Art Center staff are treating the topic in a sensitive and appropriate way.

--Nikki Bass, Nansemond Indian Nation, guest speaker and advisor. Nikki will be the guest speaker at the Nov. 4 event, sharing information about the local Nansemond Indian Nation and relating the experiences of tribal citizens in the modern educational system as well as experiences with Indian Boarding Schools. She will also provide advice and guidance with the call to artists, the selection of artwork for the exhibition and plans for the Nov. 4th event to ensure that Art Center staff are treating all aspects of the project appropriately.

Tidewater Arts Outreach (TAO)--will be offering Feather-Making Workshops as part of their program offerings throughout the fall of 2022. TAO is also sharing the information with their artist roster to encourage artists to contribute feathers.

## Project Promotion

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**How do you plan to promote this project? Check all that apply.\***

- Email
- Website
- Fliers
- Other

## Project Promotion. If "Other" is selected:

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**Please list other planned promotional methods**

Social Media posts, press release

## Expected Audience

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### Expected Audience\*

Check all that apply in these three categories and tell us how many people you expect to attend.

- In-person audience (people who came to live event, people at exhibit, etc)
- Virtual audience (Zoom or Facebook Live-type – in-person over digital medium)

## ***If "In Person" is selected:***

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**Please select expected in-person audience**

Greater than 1,000

## ***If "Virtual" is selected:***

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**Please select expected virtual audience**

21-50

## ***Project Start and End Dates***

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### **Project Start Date\***

*Enter the date you expect the Virginia Humanities-funded portion of your project to begin. The funded portion must begin no earlier August 1, 2022.*

08/01/2022

### **Project End Date\***

11/30/2022

### **Grant Activity Locations**

The Aware 2022 exhibition and The Feather Project will be located at the Virginia

Beach Art Center: 532 Virginia Beach Blvd. Suite A

Virginia Beach, VA 23451

(US Congr. 2, VA Senate 8, VA House 82)

Feather-Making Workshops will be held at the following locations:

--Harbor's Edge, One Colley Avenue, Norfolk, VA 23510 (US Congr. 3, VA Senate 6, VA House 89)

--Sullivan House, 2033 General Booth Blvd., Virginia Beach, VA 23454 (US Congr. 2, VA Senate 8, VA House 84)

--Westminster Canterbury, 3100 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23451 (US Congr. 2, VA Senate 8, VA House 82)

More workshops will be added at additional locations as staff capacity allows.

Facebook Live of presentation will be streamed on <https://www.facebook.com/ArtCenterVB>

Information for The Feather Project is posted here: <https://thebookartist.com/feather-project/>

The call to artists and information about the events will be posted on the Art Center website: <https://www.artcentervb.org>

## Budget and Cost Share

BUDGET CATEGORY		GRANT	Cost-Share		TOTAL	NOTES
		REQUEST	CASH	IN-KIND		
<b>1</b>	<b>Salaries/Benefits</b> (list individually and itemize)					
	Lead artist on The Feather Project	500	0	1500	2000	Generating website, outreach for participation, preparation and installation
	Executive Director, overall admin of Aware 2022, working with Nansemond partners, Community support	0	1000		1000	Grant from Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission
	Karen Kleinbrook, Exhibition Coordinator, execution of art exhibition	0	700		700	Grant from Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission
	Volunteers to hang exhibition, assemble Feather Project prior to installation, provide support at events (greeters, etc)	0	0	480	480	Based on 20 volunteers, 2 hours each at \$12 per hour
<b>2</b>	<b>Stipends or Honoraria</b>					
	Guest speaker from Nansemond Nation	300	0	0	300	
<b>4</b>	<b>Supplies</b> (Itemize)					
	Foam core for installation of Feather Project into drop ceiling of gallery	400	0	0	400	
<b>5</b>	<b>Promotion</b> (Itemize)					
	Social Media sponsored ads--both for participation in Feather Project and for attendance at events	300	0	0	300	
<b>6</b>	<b>Printing</b> (Itemize)					
	Posters and handouts		100	0	100	Grant from Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission
	<b>TOTAL</b>	1500	1800	1980	5280	