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DANCE/USA ANNOUNCES END OF THE DANCE/USA FELLOWSHIPS TO ARTISTS PROGRAM

Washington, D.C. (July 23, 2026) Dance/USA, the national service organization for dance, announces that the **Dance/USA Fellowships to Artists (DFA) program** will conclude following the end of its current and third round in October 2026. Created in 2018, the DFA program honors dance and movement-based artists with sustained practices in art for social change, and has awarded 86 Artist Fellows from across the United States and its territories. The Round Three Artist Fellows were announced in November 2025, and this cohort will be the final one of the program. The DFA program has been made possible with generous, multi-year support from the Doris Duke Foundation, which will conclude at the end of 2026. Dance/USA has been working in partnership with the Doris Duke Foundation for nearly two decades, a collaboration that has fueled major field initiatives, such as Engaging Dance Audiences (EDA) and DFA.

“The focus of DFA is the artists, and that remains: celebrating the 86 outstanding artists of the program who have committed their lives and work to social transformation through movement and dance. We are deeply grateful to the artists, advisors, and administrators who built DFA together. This work has shown how institutions can hold power differently, how artists shape systems, and what it takes to build more equitable forms of support,” shared **Haowen Wang, Dance/USA Director of Regranting**.

One of the few regranting programs with an unrestricted financial award available to independent artists, the DFA program supports dance and movement-based artists from across the U.S. and its territories who work at the intersection of social and embodied practices. **DFA recognizes the wide variety of ways in which artists engage in social transformation through dance, which often do not fit into established models of arts funding.** This includes community-building and culture-bearing practices, healing and storytelling practices, activism and representational justice practices, and more.

As the DFA program concludes, Dance/USA is using this moment to reflect on what DFA has built, and what it reveals about the future of artist-centered funding.

Since 2018, DFA has provided more than \$2,727,000 of unrestricted funds directly to artists, along with additional resources. In Rounds Two and Three, DFA expanded beyond funding to support artist-led gatherings, providing paid time for collaboration, rest, and reflection. These

spaces were self-directed by the artists, with financial and administrative support from Dance/USA.

Over the course of DFA's nine years, over 190 artists and cultural workers have contributed their time, expertise, and labor to the program's evolution. DFA has evolved into a field-recognized model for equitable grantmaking that positions artists not only as recipients of funding, but as co-designers of the structures that support their work. Following the conclusion of DFA, Dance/USA will document and share the program's learnings and perspectives with the broader arts and philanthropic sectors.

[Learn more about the Dance/USA Artist Fellows and their work.](#)

About the DFA Program

At the heart of DFA is a commitment to center artists in shaping the program itself. The fellowship has been co-designed through ongoing collaboration with artists who bring lived expertise to questions of policy, language, and process. DFA convened groups of Disabled artists and Indigenous artists to provide direct feedback on program guidelines and the application process. More than 90% of [DFA's peer readers and panelists](#) are working artists, ensuring that selection reflects field knowledge and community accountability. Importantly, DFA always compensates artists for their labor.

Round One of DFA was led by Suzanne Callahan, with program advisors Anne Huang and Keryl McCord. Rounds Two and Three have been led by Haowen Wang, with Program Advisors Laurel Lawson, Peter Rockford Espiritu, and Michèle Steinwald. DFA is administered by Dance/USA.

[Learn more about the program by visiting Dance/USA's website.](#)

The People

DFA has been shaped by a broad community of artists and cultural workers. This includes those who contributed labor to the program's design and delivery, as well as the Fellows whose participation, feedback, and practice shaped the program. **We recognize those who built DFA together.**

DFA Artist Fellows

Round One (2018-2020)

Ana Maria Alvarez

Holly Bass

Charya Burt

Ananya Chatterjea

Sarah Crowell

Mama Naomi Diouf
Sean Dorsey
Tony Duncan
Marjani Forté-Saunders
Robert Gilliam
Naomi Goldberg Haas
Jennifer Harge
Antoine Hunter
Assane Konte
Laurel Lawson
Patrick Makuakane
Paloma McGregor
Yvonne Montoya
Christopher Kauai Morgan
MurdaMommy
José Navarrete
Prumsodun Ok
Allison Orr
Alleluia Panis
Danys “La Mora” Pérez
Pamela Quinn
Deneane Richburg
Vanessa Sanchez
Rosy Simas
amara tabor-smith
Qacung Yufrikan

Round Two (2021-2023)

MK Abadoo
Prathiba Natesan Batley
Mesma Belsaré
Natalie Benally
Phil Chan
Jemal “P-Top” Delacruz
Tyde-Courtney Edwards
Peter Rockford Espiritu
Jenn Freeman | Po’Chop
Gabriel “MoFundamentals” Gutiérrez
Harrison Guy
Dr. Julie B. Johnson
Petra Kupperts
ShanDien Sonwai LaRance
cat mahari
Muisi-kongo Malonga

Kesha McKey
Christopher "Unpezverde" Núñez
Luis Ordaz Gutiérrez
Nkeiruka Oruche
iele paloumpis
Bhumi B Patel
Angelina Ramirez
Potri Ranka Manis
Vershawn Sanders-Ward
Gema Sandoval
Dr. Iquail Shaheed
Shakiri
Olivier Tarpaga
Anna Martine Whitehead

Round Three (2024-2026)

Tonya Marie Amos
Arthur Avilés
Leila Awadallah
Carol Bebelles aka AKUA
Rashida Bumbray
Dakota Camacho
Yanira Castro
Murielle Elizéon
Ani/Anito Gavino
Kevin Lee-Y Green
Kayla Hamilton
India Harville
Cal Hunt
Quynn Johnson
Kwikstep aka DJ KS 360
Kerry Lee
Gesel R. Mason
Lucy Salazar
Aguibou Bougobali SANOU
Kenneth Shirley
Nadhi Thekkekk
Umi IMAN
Sage Ni'Ja Whitson
Tamara "Şàngóbámikẹ" Williams
Pioneer Winter

DFA Advisors, Consultants, Administrators, and Facilitators

Ebone Amos

Suzanne Callahan
Chon Cousins
Gillian Ebersole
Peter Rockford Espiritu
Marjani Forté-Saunders
Anne Huang
Mariclare Hulbert
Laurel Lawson
Keryl McCord
Michèle Steinwald
Johanna Tschbull
Haowen Wang
Acacia WoodsChan

DFA Pre-Launch Planning Committee

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Suzanne Callahan
Amy Fitterer
Keryl McCord
Eleanor Savage
Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

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Alice Sheppard

Zahna Simon

Judith Smith

Indigenous Artist Working Group

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Pelenakeke Brown

Dakota Camacho

Peter Rockford Espiritu
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Christopher Kauai Morgan
brooke smiley

DFA Panelists and Peer Readers

Round One Panelists (2018-2020)

T. Lulani Arquette
Adriana Gallego
Indira Goodwine-Josias
Jeremy Guyton
Lily Kharrazi
Toby MacNutt
Tanya Mote
Judith Smith
Katrina Toews
Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

Round Two Panelists (2021-2023)

Charya Burt
Tony Duncan
Monique Jenkinson
Mama Naomi Diouf
Paloma McGregor
Hope Mohr
Marissa “Mia” Morris
Corbett Joan O’Toole
Awilda Rodríguez Lora
Amirah Sackett

Round Two Peer Readers (2021-2023)

Pelenakeke Brown
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Thaddeus Davis
Thomas F. DeFrantz
DejaJoelle
Ambre Emory-Maier
rachel hickman
Millicent Johnnie
Alison Kopit
Maia Maiden aka Rah Fyah
Patrick Makuakane
MurdaMommy

Alleluia Panis
Joycelyn Reynolds
Deneane Richburg
Vanessa Sanchez
Zahna Simon
Cheri Stokes
Arwen Wilder
Taja Will
Nancy Xiong
Anonymous Peer Reader (3)

Round Three Panelists (2024-2026)

MK Abadoo
Anthony Aiu
Qacung Blanchett
Alejandra Duque Cifuentes
Sekou Heru
Julie B. Johnson
Mar Parrilla
Bhumi Patel
Shireen Rahimi
Judith Smith
amara tabor-smith

Round Three Peer Readers (2024-2026)

Sami L.A. Akuna
Hanaah Bates
Prathiba Batley
Bernard Brown
Sharon C. Carelock
Colin Clark
Kenna-Camara Cottman
Anthony Denaro
Kate Elswit
Jenn Freeman | Po'Chop
Keala Fung
Robyn Gardenhire
Gabriel "MoFundamentals" Gutiérrez
Harrison Guy
rachel hickman
Tyra Jackson
Millicent Johnnie
Alison Kopit
Maia Maiden aka Rah Fyah

cat mahari
Julio Ollin Medina
Ariane Michaud
Keith F Miller Jr
Toran X. Moore
Jasmine Orpilla
James Pakootas
Kamakoa Page Zablan
Manai Alleluia Panis
Amirah Sackett
Gema Sandoval
Toni Shapiro-Phim
Zahna Simon
Olivier Tarpaga
Arwen Wilder
Anonymous Peer Reader (5)

Contributing Partners at Doris Duke Foundation

Ashley Ferro-Murray
Brandi (Stewart) Glover
Maurine D. Knighton

Special Thanks to Kevin Douglas at [Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees](#) and Iliana Perez at [Immigrant Rising](#) for guiding DFA in developing our immigrant artist policy in Round Three. DFA also followed policy recommendations from [this guide by Define American](#).

Countless others contributed to DFA's success by promoting the program, offering insights and feedback, supporting artists as they applied, and more. Thank you.

About Dance/USA

Propelled by our belief that dance can inspire a more just and humane world, Dance/USA will amplify the power of dance to inform and inspire a nation where creativity and the field thrive.

Established in 1982, Dance/USA champions an inclusive and equitable dance field by leading, convening, advocating, and supporting individuals and organizations. Dance/USA's core programs are focused in the areas of engagement, advocacy, research, and preservation. Learn more about Dance/USA at danceusa.org.

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