

A close-up, profile view of a person with a mustache and a brown cap playing a saxophone. The person is wearing a red jacket and a small hoop earring. The background is a colorful, abstract wall with blue, purple, and pink tones. The text 'AAW' is overlaid in large white letters, with 'ARTISTS AT WORK' in smaller white letters below it.

# AAW

ARTISTS AT WORK

*Investing in **artists**  
and their **communities***

INDIANAPOLIS  
2025-2026

Photo of Jared Thompson, AAW Indianapolis Artist 2024-2025



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## ABOUT ARTISTS AT WORK (AAW)

Artists At Work (AAW) is a national workforce resilience program in the spirit of the WPA that supports artists and their communities through artistic civic engagement.

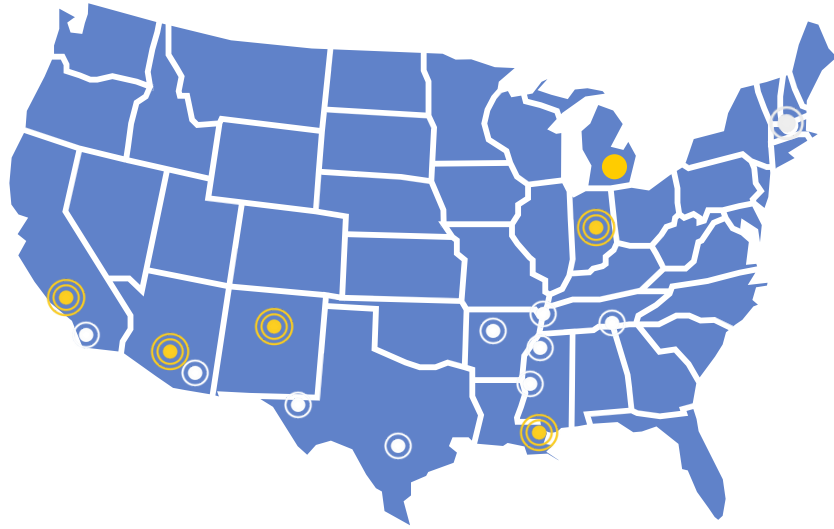
AAW provides artists with a W2 salary, healthcare, and access to retirement benefits, allowing them to deepen their art practice and work collaboratively in response to local community needs. AAW recognizes that artists are essential workers and their creative output and ability to thrive artistically and financially are key contributors to the well-being of local communities.

Since our inception in 2020, Artists At Work has provided 74 artists and culture workers across 11 states with a salary and health benefits, leveraging their power and creativity in partnership with over 80 cultural and community organizations throughout the nation.

## A NEW AAW PROGRAM FOR 2025-2026

Artists At Work is expanding its reach and impact in 2025-2026! This phase will build on existing partnerships, grow into new geographies, and pilot an extended 18-month employment term. AAW is thrilled to be able to provide new employment opportunities to 24 artists in six cities through key partnerships with:

- Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture (Los Angeles, CA)
- City of Albuquerque Department of Arts & Culture (Albuquerque, NM)
- Ashé Cultural Arts Center (New Orleans, LA)
- Southwest Folklife Alliance (Tucson, AZ)
- The Arab American National Museum (Dearborn, MI)
- Herbert Simon Family Foundation (Indianapolis, IN)



**AAW 2020-2025**

- New 2025 cohort in a returning city
- New AAW location coming 2025
- Previous AAW Cohort

To learn more about Artists At Work:  
[artists-at-work.org](http://artists-at-work.org) | [@aaw\\_artistsatwork](https://twitter.com/aaw_artistsatwork)

# OPPORTUNITY FOR ARTISTS

This new opportunity is intended for artists who will benefit and have the capacity to engage in a full-time (30+ hours per week) employment role that involves significant time commitment and project development within their community, as well as dedicated time to grow their personal artistic practice and skills.

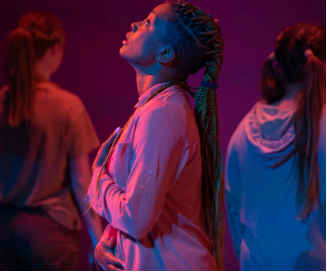
## 2025-2026 AAW Program provides:

- W2 salaried employment for an 18-month term (6/1/2025 - 11/30/2026)
- \$40,000 annual salary rate (\$60,000 in gross earnings)
- 100% employer paid health benefits
- Access to a 401k retirement account
- Partnership with community organizations
- Professional development, mentorship and networking
- Time dedicated to deepening and growing your artistic practice

## During the 18-month term AAW Artists will:

- **Make Art!** – This is the primary responsibility of each AAW Artist – to continue and make time for their own art practice on their own terms. (Approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of their time each week).
- **Develop a Community Project** – Each AAW will work collaboratively with local partners to develop a project that actively engages with and addresses the needs of their community, leveraging art and creativity for social impact. (Approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of their time each week).
- **Document the Process** – AAW Artists will keep a video, audio, or written journal and/or other documentation of their process throughout the year. Team AAW is invested in amplifying the inspiring work of AAW Artists and their communities through storytelling on social media and other platforms.
- **Participate in Professional Development** – Artists At Work (AAW) will regularly host workshops throughout the year aimed at helping to equip AAW Artists with new skills and training to better leverage their creativity for community engagement work and sustainable employment opportunities.
- **Set Milestones & Give Program Feedback** – Team AAW embraces a growth mindset and collaborative learning. AAW Artists will receive suggested monthly milestones during the term of the program to help guide the process and will be asked periodically for open and honest feedback on the program.
- **Share Work** – AAW Artists will share their work publicly with members of the community at two points during the term – at the midpoint for a works-in-process presentation and at the end for a final celebration!

**INDIANAPOLIS ARTISTS APPLY HERE NOW**



## WORKING IN COMMUNITY: INDIANAPOLIS

Artists At Work (AAW) is structured as a dynamic network of partnerships between artists, cultural organizations and social impact initiatives– that sets artists up with strong local and national contacts, professional development, and systems of support.

There are two primary types of organizational partners that Artists will work with in the program: lead cultural partners and community-based organizations.

### Lead Cultural Partner: Herbert Simon Family Foundation

The lead cultural partner in Indianapolis – the Herbert Simon Family Foundation– will help AAW bring this opportunity to local artists and align program goals and activities with regional needs to amplify AAW’s overall impact.

Established in 1999, Herbert Simon Family Foundation has been providing support for organizations in hopes of creating more equitable, sustainable and vibrant communities with an emphasis on Indianapolis and Indiana. Herbert Simon Family Foundation works in partnership with Central Indiana Community Foundation to support the foundation’s grantmaking and community involvement. The foundation grants to organizations in the areas of: Arts + Culture, Basic Needs, Environment + Climate, Equity + Justice, and Jewish Causes.

The implementation of Artists At Work in Indianapolis was made possible by the support of the Herbert Simon Family Foundation.

### Community-based Organizations

Throughout the AAW term, Artists will work directly and collaboratively with Community-based Organizations. These organizations are deeply engaged in social impact work within their community. They can be a non-profit organization, mission-driven collective, or other stakeholder working with and on behalf of local constituents in response to community needs including mental health, substance abuse recovery, cultural preservation, youth welfare, climate resiliency, antiracism, and migrant justice, among others. AAW and the Herbert Simon Family Foundation will work with selected artists to help identify a community-based organization that they can partner with, as needed.

The Community-based Organizations in Indianapolis will work directly with AAW Artists on an ongoing basis throughout the term to:

- Provide knowledge, expertise and other resources to AAW Artists on their social impact area of focus and the mission of their work in the community
- Connect AAW Artists with their constituents and other community members
- Ideate and collaborate with AAW Artists on a Community Project that aims to actively engage with and address the needs of their community, leveraging art and creativity for social impact
- Provide Team AAW with metrics, engagement statistics and other qualitative data for impact reporting and program evaluation

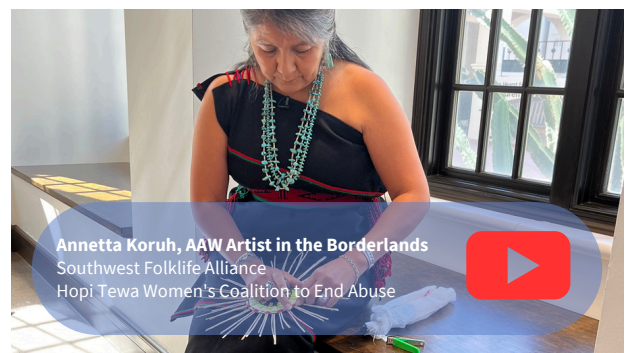
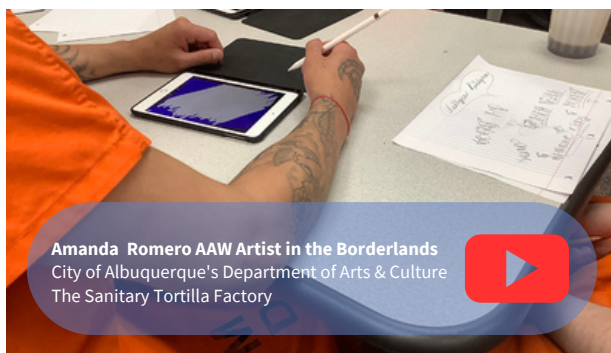
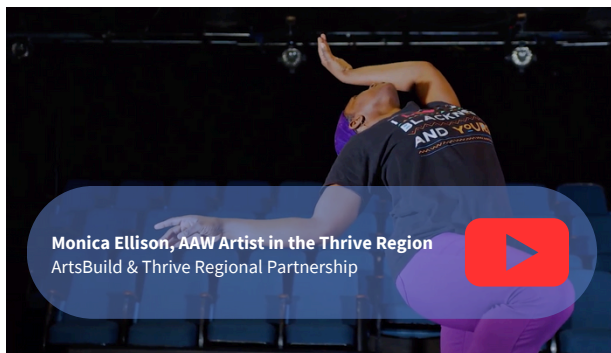


# WHAT DOES AN AAW COMMUNITY PROJECT LOOK LIKE?

One of the key aims of the Artists At Work program is to leverage art and creativity for social impact.

This happens through projects that are led and developed by AAW Artists in partnership with their organizational partners and members of their local community. While the creativity, variety and scope of the community projects that AAW Artists have developed during their time with the program is boundless, we have found that these projects benefit communities in one of three primary ways: promoting community wellness, preserving cultural legacy and heritage, or advocating for and amplifying community voices on behalf of issues that are directly impacting their lives and well-being.

Below are just a few examples of the many projects created by AAW Artists that have left us incredibly inspired. Click through to hear from each artist on their work and time with AAW. You can also find more on our [YouTube Channel](#).



**What types of artists are eligible to apply for Artists At Work?**

Artists, culture bearers and culture makers of all disciplines and traditions may apply! However, all applicants must be local to the area to be eligible and need a valid social security number, applicable visa / right to work in the United States to be added to payroll.

**What will I do as an AAW Artist during the 18-month program term?**

AAW Artists have two areas of focus – continue their own artistic practice, and engage with and become a resource for their communities by working with a local Community Organization or Initiative.

**Are the payments to AAW Artists a stipend or grant?**

Artists are considered employees of THE OFFICE performing arts + film, Inc. during their term with the Artists At Work program and will receive a salary administered through our payroll with applicable taxes withheld. Our aim is to support artists' work with a W2 salary, healthcare benefits and workers compensation coverage during their time with the AAW program, and provide them access to unemployment benefits and COBRA coverage after their term. More information about THE OFFICE performing arts + film can be found at: [theofficearts.com](http://theofficearts.com)

**Are there additional resources for expenses associated with my AAW project?**

Yes! Each AAW Artist has an additional budget for materials and equipment to be used towards your AAW community project.

**Where can I learn more about Artists At Work and past artists and projects?**

Please visit our website for more on Artists At Work, and explore [Artists At Work's YouTube](#) channel to hear from AAW Artists on their experience and impact.

**Can AAW Artists take other work?**

We understand artists may have additional opportunities or unique employment situations arise during the AAW period, and we certainly don't want to put people in a position to turn down work. As long as each artist is able to maintain their contribution to their social impact project and continue their own practice while holding additional employment, they remain eligible for the program. What we would like to avoid is selecting artists who already have ample funding or a full-time artistic position / appointment that will continue on throughout the program period.

**Are there other AAW Artists and/or organizations outside of my region that I can connect with?**

AAW is a growing network that includes 74 artists and administrative fellows and over 80 cultural and cross-sector organizational partners across 11 states (Arkansas, Arizona, California, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Mexico, Tennessee, Texas, Indiana). We will have opportunities throughout the term to connect with this national cohort.

**I have more questions! Who should I direct them to?**

The AAW team at THE OFFICE is happy to field any questions; for general program inquiries please email [artistsatwork@theofficearts.com](mailto:artistsatwork@theofficearts.com).

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