

Creative Arts Workshop

Proposal for Yale University President's Public Service Fellowship -- Summer 2021

- **Organization:** Creative Arts Workshop
- **Full street address of organization:** 80 Audubon Street, New Haven, CT 06510
- **Website:** www.creativeartsworkshop.org
- **Name and title of person who will be the Fellow's direct supervisor** (*the supervisor must be available for Fellow to contact throughout the week*):

Anne Coates, Executive Director

- **Phone number and e-mail address of proposed direct supervisor:**

203-562-4927 acoates@creativeartsworkshop.org

- **Placement dates** (*8-11 weeks between Tuesday, June 1 and Friday, August 13, 2021*):

June 1-August 13

- **Are placement dates flexible?** Are you able to accommodate a Fellow working in a different time zone?

Yes, dates are flexible. Can accommodate a fellow working in a different time zone

- **Proposed 37.5 hour per week work schedule:**

M-F, 9-5 with schedule to accommodate Fellow-required activities, one hour lunch per day

- **Organization description:**

Creative Arts Workshop is a center for contemporary arts in New Haven, serving as a community and production space for artists and the broader community—to cultivate ideas, impact social change, and connect with new networks. Our mission is simple: foster creativity through engagement in the visual arts. We believe that creativity is part of the human experience and that everyone is inherently creative.

Our vision is a thriving New Haven region enriched by creativity--and that CAW helps unlock that for everyone. We serve the New Haven region and its residents—more than 1800

students per year alone take workshops at CAW. Our student body that takes classes and workshops is overwhelmingly from New Haven.

We have a 22,000 square foot building with 3 floors of classroom studio space for the visual arts, as well as a two-floor gallery. We offer classes in pottery, printmaking, book arts, weaving, metal sculpture and metal jewelry making, and drawing and painting. We serve all ages, from 6 months to seniors in their 90s.

- **Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting:**

Creative Arts Workshop seeks a Yale University President's Public Service Fellow to help undertake a *History of Creative Arts Workshop* project. First incorporated in 1961, this venerable arts anchor institution celebrates its 60th year in 2021. We seek a YPPS Fellow to undertake this multi-level research project that helps us to not only celebrate our past but contextualize our plans for the future.

- **Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.**

Creative Arts Workshop seeks a Yale University President's Public Service Fellow to help undertake a *History of Creative Arts Workshop* project. First incorporated in 1961, this venerable arts anchor institution celebrates its 60th year in 2021. We seek a YPPS Fellow to undertake this multi-level research project that helps us to not only celebrate our past but contextualize our plans for the future.

Working with staff, board, faculty, long time students, and artists throughout New Haven, the Fellow will assemble and carry out a work plan that includes original research, catalog, evaluation and assemblage of existing histories, and at least an initial set of key 1:1 interviews (such as with our founder, nonagenarian accomplished sculptor, Ann Lehman (who still teaches advanced metal sculpture at CAW). Organizationally, it is a priority to gather Interviews with key CAW constituent who were involved in the formation in the early years of the organization as it may be possible.

These will help us draw a picture of our history, our place in New Haven and the people and arts ecosystem here. These histories will enable people to share their stories about CAW and Audubon Street in their own words, with their own voices, through their own understanding of this remarkable place. Anecdotally, we've heard is that so many of our region's visual artists have "gotten their start" at CAW, the stories we'll collect will illuminate their history and connection with CAW, and the community at large.

Not only will it shine a light on the arts and the arts ecosystem here, but also how important creativity is to everyone. Owners of successful businesses or elected and appointed officials who aren't practicing the visual arts, talk fondly about their time at CAW as a child, or even

as an adult when they came to CAW to reenergize or connect with creativity that helps them solve complex problems on the job.

More specifically, work will include:

- Create and get sign-off on work plan
- Map out scope of oral histories and other information gathering (instruments may include surveys)
- Schedule, conduct, record and have transcribed oral histories
- Review and assemble existing historical accounts and histories of Creative Arts Workshop and neighboring institutions, as well as the creation of the Audubon Arts District
- Review cast of participants over time (directors, board members, awardees, key instructors, key New Haven participants)
- Develop key list of interviews (founder, former directors, former board members)
- Develop question set
- Explore collaborations undertaken, and not, as may be possible
- Develop inquiry into recent programs that reached out to new communities (example: 2019 exhibition Sanctuary Cities and the Politics of the American Dream)
- Identify new opportunities and collaborations that may emerge in the course of research and conversations, especially with respect to those communities not served or underserved by CAW and/or the arts in general in New Haven.
- Assemble and review photographs in CAW collections
- Research historical photos in other collections as available
- Create plan for final report and timeline to accomplish necessary activities for research, writing, presentation
- Produce and deliver final report.

Depending on availability of interviewees and pathways identified, it is understood that this work may be iterative. We understand that the Fellow may indicate in their final recommendation's a series of next steps to be taken for the organization to continue this work, including a list that may be developed during the project of additional interviews and oral history sessions that CAW should undertake.

This project work is an important part of understanding CAW as an organization in the context of New Haven and the arts in New Haven. The arts are not only an important component in the cultural vibrancy of the downtown area, but also its economic vitality. The arts are a draw to the downtown area. Creative Arts is in the heart of the award-winning Audubon Arts District, founded in the early 1970s and undergoing new revitalization efforts to live up to its name and brand promise where vibrancy and sparking creativity and engagement is at the heart of what we do and want to amplify.

CAW is a forward-thinking and planful organization; we undertake this project not for nostalgia's sake, but to act as an important grounding and catalyst for our future.

Importantly, this work helps illuminate whom we have served, and we expect it may show who we have not served as well. We view this as humbling work, which will identify work to be done and perhaps pathways to help achieve it.

Work products:

- Create both high level and detailed chronology and historical timeline for CAW
- Creative narrative history for use in public-facing documents and Fall 2021 celebratory events as may be planned
- Final report: inclusive of methodology, bibliography, link to photo repository for project, acknowledgments, recommendations for storage of gathered materials, recommendations for next steps, iterations as applicable

List specific skills/experience required for this work:

- Superior research skills both with provided material and research to primary existing material as well as original research to gather new information, artifacts, and oral histories.
 - Excellent organization and documentation skills
 - Faithful and unbiased listening skills
 - Solid time and project management skills
 - Strong communication skills, manifested in interviewer role, writing, synthesizing, reporting to supervisor etc.
 - Ability to distill information into compelling prose, while being faithful to spirit of interviews
 - Ability to catalog oral histories
 - Experience in humanities-related research preferred; experience in other oral history projects helpful
 - Awareness of potential sensitivities, and ability to navigate them
 - Keen sense of curiosity, persistence, accuracy, discretion, humility, care for value of written documents as well as the oral traditions essential
 - Commitment to anti-racism work
- **Equipment/resources you will provide to help Fellow conduct work:**

CAW will provide organization-branded email address and G-drive, MS office if needed, access to all software in our G-suite account. We will also provide an extension in our phone system with which to field calls and retrieve messages. We will make available all other software and services we use to help provide a strong foundation and smooth operation. (e.g. corporate zoom account, transcription account, photo assemblage software)

CAW will provide historical accounts as may already exist, and any digitized files that pertain to the project (board lists, building / construction dates and relevant participants, exhibition related materials, teacher rosters, images, videos, catalogs as may be relevant.

Wherever possible, CAW leadership will make introductions to assist in the work.

Fellow will participate in weekly remote staff meetings, to understand their work in context of the operations and plans of the organization, and have the opportunity in real time to share celebratory stories and project challenges

- **Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present.** If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.

We've had great experience working with Yale. We have had a Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking intern in 2019 to help work on a new product for our workshop/classes portfolio, as well as worked with two (about to be three) teams from SOM, Social Impact Club on targeted pricing, facilities usage and marketing related work.