



*Caring People* ∞ *Quality Programs* ∞ *Exceptional Service*

# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Brian Phillips, Assistant City Manager  
**Date:** January 29, 2021  
**Subject:** FY 2021/22 COTA Funding Recommendations

The Commission on the Arts (COTA) has prepared its FY 2021/22 funding recommendations. The City Council authorized COTA to allocate \$193,093 for the next fiscal year. This is a \$9,195 increase over the budgeted amount for the current FY 2020/21 fiscal year. COTA has recommended allocating \$187,535 directly to agencies for FY 2021/22 annual grants, and reserving \$5,558 for spring and fall special project grants.

A total of 16 agencies submitted applications for funding this year compared to 18 in FY 2020/21. The Ames Chapter of the Des Moines Metro Opera Guild, Central Iowa Touring Ensemble, and CoMotion Dance have contracts for the current year, but did not request funds for FY 2021/22. Friends of Ames Strings requested COTA funds for FY 2021/22 after taking a hiatus of several years from applying for COTA funds.

The following pages contain the individual agency recommendations and brief descriptions of their activities.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>2020/21 Adopted</b>	<b>2021/22 Requested</b>	<b>2021/22 Recommended</b>
ACTORS	\$ 16,330	\$ 20,000	\$ 16,890
AIOFA	9,900	10,000	9,260
Ames Chamber Artists	4,742	5,500	4,858
Ames Children's Choirs	12,800	14,000	12,948
Ames Choral Society	3,704	4,000	3,610
Ames Community Arts Council	11,288	12,000	11,004
Ames Chapter of Des Moines Metro Opera Guild	1,105	-	-
Central Iowa Touring Ensemble	4,025	-	-
Central Iowa Symphony	10,910	15,000	12,170
CoMotion Dance	3,239	-	-
Dancercenter Dance Company Foundation	2,568	5,000	4,050
Friends of Ames Strings	-	5,000	4,010
Good Company	1,750	1,950	1,825
India Cultural Association	8,951	15,000	10,175
KHOI	5,130	7,000	5,704
Kids CoMotion	2,900	3,000	2,716
Octagon Center for the Arts	47,583	49,500	47,114
Story Theater Company	13,530	32,925	23,913
Town & Gown	18,039	18,300	17,288
<b>Annual Grants Total</b>	<b>\$ 178,494</b>	<b>\$ 218,175</b>	<b>\$ 178,494</b>
<b>Reserve for Spring/Fall Special Grants</b>	<b>\$ 5,404</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 5,558</b>
<b>Total COTA Budget</b>	<b>\$ 183,898</b>	<b>\$ 218,175</b>	<b>\$ 193,093</b>

**ACTORS, INC. (Ames Community Theater) - \$16,890**

The Ames Community Theater (ACTORS) produces up to five main stage shows each year that appeal to all aspects of the community. ACTORS invites community members to participate in live theater as performers, technicians, musicians, artists, and/or audience members. All positions at ACTORS are staffed with volunteers. Additionally, the cast and crews are not charged a participation fee. The income produced by each show is applied to the cost of staging the production including a prorated portion of the overhead of the building. COTA funding is used to supplement the actual cost of staging ACTORS five main stage productions each season.

**Ames International Orchestra Festival Association, Inc. (AIOFA) - \$9,260**

The purpose of AIOFA is to inform, educate, and foster awareness among audiences of the value of classical music. This is achieved by providing financial support for and promoting live performances of outstanding orchestra as part of the Performing Arts Series at Stephens Auditorium. The goal is to reach audiences of all ages, enhance concert attendance, and increase awareness of the value of classical music performances. COTA funding is used to underwrite artists' fees, outreach activities, and special discounts targeted at youth, students, and those who might never have attended a classical music concert.

**Ames Chamber Artists (ACA) - \$4,858**

The Ames Chamber Artists (ACA) is an auditioned choir for men and women in central Iowa, organized to provide excellent choral performance of many styles of music to varied audiences in Ames and the surrounding area. ACA performs at least two concerts per season and often collaborates with other musicians to expand the types of music performed, as well as the number of performances offered to the community. It has long been a purpose of ACA to promote lifelong choral singing to young people, so ACA seeks opportunities to perform with school choirs and children's choirs.

**Ames Children's Choirs Association, Inc. (ACC) - \$12,948**

Ames Children's Choir (ACC) is open to children who desire to develop their singing skills. The choirs are dedicated to promoting musical excellence among the youth of Central Iowa and providing the Ames community with quality musical performances and opportunities. It is ACC's goal to make these experiences affordable for all children in the community. COTA funds are used to provide scholarships for singers, commission new works, support music purchases, professional fees, and facilities rental. During their 27th season (2021-22), ACC will continue to utilize outdoor spaces for retreats, rehearsals, and even performances and broaden their audience to provide important experiences for children needing social interaction. ACC will, as always, continue to provide outstanding artistic and educational experiences for youth in Ames and the surrounding communities.

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### **Ames Choral Society (ACS) - \$3,610**

The Ames Choral Society (ACS) benefits Ames by providing a community chorus open to all interested singers in the Ames area. ACS performances include diverse, high-quality secular and sacred choral literature. Members are high school age and older. COTA funding allows the ACS to purchase music for special compositions and to hire additional instrumentalists and solo vocalists. The funds also allow ACS to keep dues affordable and assist with the rising costs of publicity, including website expenses. Now entering its 56th season, ACS benefits Ames by providing a community chorus open to all interested singers in the Ames and central Iowa area

### **Ames Community Arts Council (ACAC) - \$11,004**

The Ames Community Arts Council (ACAC) was created in 1976 by the Mayor of the City of Ames as an umbrella organization dedicated to celebrating the arts in Ames. ACAC is a member-based organization and encourages any interested individual or group to join. The ACAC serves local artists, arts and cultural organizations and businesses, and all the citizens of Ames. The Arts Council is committed to building a strong sense of community; encouraging participation in the arts at every level; and helping artists succeed. Many ACAC activities are free of charge. The COTA operational grant enables ACAC to promote cultural events, recognize excellence with the annual Arts Awards, feature artists on the fall Studio Tour, offer small grants for local murals and Arts in Education and also provide workshops, gatherings, and performances for artists and the community.

### **Central Iowa Symphony Association (CIS) - \$12,170**

Central Iowa Symphony (CIS), an Ames-based community orchestra, offers superior live symphonic performances for Ames area residents. CIS provides area musicians and audiences with satisfying musical experiences and unique educational and cultural activities. The symphony and its audiences also have long been the beneficiary of the talents of young local artists—including students from the Ames School District and four other central Iowa school districts—who play in the orchestra, perform as soloists, and sing in choral groups. CIS performs concerts many times throughout the year. Funds from COTA provide CIS with the means to cover annual expenses, including marketing of concerts, rehearsal and concert hall rent, guest artists, and music and equipment fees.

### **Dancer Dance Company Foundation - \$4,050**

The Dancer Dance Company Foundation (DDCF) provides volunteer and financial support for the education, development and advancement of dancers while enriching the Ames community through the art of dance. The funds received through COTA will be used to fund the rental of the Ames High

School Auditorium for its annual Dancer Showcase. This annual event provides an average of 50 performers ages 5 to 18 the opportunity to both showcase their hard work and dedication in the field of dance, as well as entertain hundreds of community members through its 3-hour long program. The funds are needed for both facility rental, janitorial service and sound and lighting support for the performance.

### **Friends of Ames Strings (FOAS) - \$4,010**

Friends of Ames Strings (FOAS) sponsors a two-week Summer String Workshop for local orchestra students of all skill levels. The workshop, led by an invited director from outside the Ames area, provides approximately 25-30 hours of instruction for elementary and middle school students. Participants improve skills, network with other string players, and perform in ensembles. The workshop also provides leadership opportunities for advanced players and high school-aged string coaches. This event culminates with a public concert. COTA funds will be used to offset honoraria costs to keep the program affordable.

### **Good Company: A Women's Choral Ensemble, Inc. - \$1,825**

Good Company (GC), a women's choral ensemble, was started in 1993 as a way to foster the singing of choral music written for treble voices. GC singers perform challenging music in numerous languages across a wide range in musical history and, increasingly, music written by female composers. GC reaches out to all segments of the Ames community and the surrounding areas through participation and performance. GC holds at least two concerts a year and participates in special musical performances throughout the year to benefit many diverse groups.

### **India Cultural Association - \$10,175**

The India Cultural Association (ICA) was formed in 1992. Its mission is to assist and promote educational, youth, literary, charitable, and cultural activities with the intent to maintain, preserve, and foster the cultural and secular heritage of India and also to enhance friendship and understanding with people from various cultural backgrounds. It also strives to share the secular and rich culture of India with Ames and surrounding areas. The organization plans to host performance events (virtual and in-person) ranging from cultural events such as dance, music, theater, and stand up comedy, along with community-wide events such as a talent nights, picnics, movie nights, or sports days.

### **KHOI FM - \$5,704**

KHOI is an Ames-based noncommercial volunteer-driven community radio station. The mission of the station is that of a cultural institution – to build community and promote creativity and arts in central Iowa through over the air broadcasts, on the internet, and with live performances. The organization provides local and area residents access to local and national news, community events, musical and verbal arts, and opportunities to learn and participate in radio programming and production, as well as volunteer coordination and radio station management. KHOI plans to continue broadcasting music events featuring local musicians, to host community events, and to commission visual arts to complement special audio programming. Taking advantage of a new partnership opportunity with

Stephens Auditorium, KHOI will continue the Pantorium Sessions live concerts either on the Stephens lawn or on the Stephens stage.

### **Kids Co 'Motion - \$2,716**

Kids Co 'Motion (KCM), founded in 1989, offers workshops and performances to introduce and to train children ages 8-18 in the Ames area in the art of creating and producing dances, specifically modern dance. KCM is designed to be accessible for all levels of dance experience and develops future leaders and, in addition to acquiring dance skills, participants learn discipline of collaboration. COTA support helps support this annual workshop and performance for the community.

### **The Octagon Center for the Arts - \$47,114**

The Octagon Center for the Arts (Octagon) is a non-profit community arts organization that has offered art exhibits and quality educational programs for children and adults since 1966. The Octagon also holds special events and has a retail art shop promoting local artisans. The Octagon partners with the Main Street District, Ames Community Arts Council, local schools, Mainstream Living, ISU, YSS, United way, the Ames Public Library and the Boys and Girls Club of Story County. COTA funds enable the organization to reach 32,000 people a year in some form of art experience and expression, by providing annual operational support for workshops, supplies, marketing, shop artists, etc.

### **Story Theater Company - \$23,913**

Founded in 2006, the mission of the Story Theater Company (STC) is to increase the number of theatrical opportunities for the children of Ames and surrounding communities through performances and workshops, and to expose children to positive role models from the ISU theatre department who teach the fundamentals of theatre while encouraging self-confidence, responsibility and teamwork. In 2019-2020, STC will produce two full-scale productions for ages 9-18; a full-scale "mature" show for participants aged 13-18; and, to address the growing interest in performance opportunities for local youth, STC will again produce a "tween" show, for participants ages 9-13. COTA funds help support annual operational expenses, including rehearsal and performance space rentals, supplies, educational workshops, royalties and performance licenses.

### **Ames Town and Gown Chamber Music Association - \$17,288**

Ames Town and Gown (ATG) Chamber Music Association is dedicated to presenting the finest solo musicians and small ensembles -- internationally renowned performers, as well as rising young stars -- to Ames citizens of all ages and demographics. For its 70th season in 2019-2020, ATG will present five concerts to be held in the Ames City Auditorium, Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall at Iowa State University, and other venues such as the First United Methodist Church in Ames. ATG continues to seek innovative opportunities for outreach and collaboration within the Ames community, such as master classes in cooperation with the ISU music department, performances for students at local schools, or special "Ask the Artist" performances at the Ames Public Library. COTA funding assures programs of the highest breadth and quality by supporting artists' fees, rental of concert halls, printing costs, publicity, etc.