



My name is Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham, I am the Executive Director of Museum Hue, an arts organization dedicated to the advancement of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and all Peoples of Color throughout the arts field. We are a membership and community based organization collectively advocating for greater racial equity in arts funding and offerings for art professionals of color through our HueArts New York initiative. I join my colleagues working across creative disciplines throughout the state in thanking the Committee for your leadership.

Arts and culture workers are important to New York state's economy. Arts and culture-related industries, also known as "creative industries," provide direct economic benefits to the state and communities: creating jobs, attracting investments, generating tax revenues, and stimulating local economies. In addition, because they enhance quality of life, the arts and culture are an important complement to community and economic development, enriching local amenities and attracting young professionals to an area.

The arts play an essential role in creative and social lifeways across New York. The arts sector generates \$110 billion in economic activity according to the Comptroller's Report on the Creative Economy, or one in every eight dollars churning through the City's economy; it highlights the vastness of the cultural sector with over 400,000 jobs. Due to Covid 19, Arts venues were forced to close and cancel programs. So in order for the vibrancy that is New York's arts and culture to be revived we need the support of the New York state government.

Black, Indigenous, and people of color arts organizations have been disproportionately funded and impacted way before the Covid -19 pandemic. Our arts and culture ecosystem needs vital funding to ensure survival. Museum Hue has identified over 500 of these arts entities and believe an implementation and deployment of a new \$100 million funding model over 5 years will help accomplish the following objectives:

1. Regrant equitable funding to BIPOC arts entities across New York State/City;
2. Provide professional development opportunities to strengthen BIPOC arts entities;
3. Advocate for city/state policies and practices to provide support for BIPOC arts;
4. Assist BIPOC arts entities in gaining long-term spaces to operate.

As a lifelong New Yorker and art professional, I know firsthand the impact of the arts field. Especially the arts entities in communities of color, they deserve a commitment to their survival from our government, elected officials, communities, philanthropists, and businesses. They greatly contribute to the vibrant portrait of New York's cultural landscape. These arts leaders have also proven to be resourceful and resilient in the face of a long history of chronic underinvestment and limited financial support. The HueArts initiative offers an opportunity for them to thrive so they can best serve the communities they represent across New York.