
VISIT MCKINNEY GRANT APPLICATION

Applying Organization:

You're My Favorites, Inc. is a 501c3 entity that advocates for, promotes and facilitates the mentor/mentee relationship. This includes matching and vetting mentors with mentees, fundraising for mentor/mentee projects and producing events such as concerts and operas. We work alongside other organizations, including Goofy Foot Productions, A Fresh Prospective, Mariposa King Studios and other art related organizations. Through the cooperation with local talents, artists and visionaries, we have embarked on our next project for 2020, which is McKinney Summer Opera. As of now, the board members and the staff are volunteers. We are asking for a grant from McKinney CVB specifically for McKinney Summer Opera's presentation of the Marriage of Figaro.

The mission statement for McKinney Summer Opera is: To establish a Fine-Arts tradition in McKinney by creating innovative Opera productions that feature local musicians. To create performance opportunities for local musicians as well as learning opportunities for emerging local artists and to bring the timeless art of opera to the McKinney community.

The Figaro Project is a collective of artists and entrepreneurs who want to bring Mozart's classic Opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*, to McKinney, TX. We believe that the humor, drama and humanity of the classic production is just as powerful as it was when it was first performed over 200 years ago. In partnership with this project, we will work with the Summer Opera Academy, which is part of the McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra, to provide performance opportunities for young orchestra musicians to play alongside professional players. In the long term, this project would be the seed of an annual event that would provide fine-arts entertainment and classical fun for the community every year.

Tourism-Related Event or Project:

In 2018, the City of McKinney Historic Downtown was awarded the prestigious Cultural District Designation by the Texas Commission of the Arts. Our organization seeks to contribute to culturally significant events held in McKinney. When it comes to not just opera, but classical music in general, McKinney residents have few local options. To see an opera production, for instance, residence have to commute down to the City of Dallas at the Winspear for an opera. *The Figaro Project* intends to plant the seed of operatic tradition in the City of McKinney. If this is successful, this will be the first of a series of annual operatic productions. Our ultimate goal is to turn this into an arts festival that will be held in McKinney annually, with opera as the core theme. After collaborating with representatives of the Dallas Opera, we came to understand that this demographic of families in the suburbs is difficult for them to engage. With our efforts, we are hoping to bridge that gap and enrich not only the arts community but attract families from other suburbs in North Texas to McKinney.

Because of McKinney's distinction by Money Magazine as the "#1 Best Place to Live in America" and because of our strong relationship with McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra, we are planting our flag in McKinney. Almost everybody in our artistic team lives in Collin County. We play in McKinney. We enjoy your downtown, restaurants and shops. We do business in McKinney. This is our city of choice and we want to share this with others. As mentioned before, there is very little opera in this area. Not to mention, opera can seem intimidating and expensive for an average family. This project was designed to foster the art of opera to those who do not normally have the opportunity to experience it for themselves. What is important here is that we are focusing in our productions being a community effort. We are striving to employ local singers, musicians and fostering budding talent (mentor/mentee). Another example is we have spoken with the theater director in McKinney High School (venue) and we are employing theater tech students to do crew work, usher our shows, handing out programs and participate in a working project that would not normally be made available to them. We intend to have a show on July 10th and 11th 2020 at McKinney High School PAC at 1400 Wilson Creek Pkwy. The facility can accommodate an estimated 600 people. We will have a show each night and expect 1,000 seats to be filled. Tickets will be sold at \$10/student and \$15/adult. Through the audition process, we will be bringing in talent from surrounding communities. For the last 9 months we have created quite the buzz in the arts community not exclusive to McKinney. We have engaged the hearts and minds of corporations, such as Toyota of McKinney, as well as national recording artist, Vanilla Ice and opera legend Byron Mino. We have engaged the interest of professional opera singers, recording artists and musicians who otherwise would not have been performing in McKinney. Through our efforts in advertising and public relations, we have secured the services of Go PR Solutions, which is a PR Firm in Addison, TX. We have been awarded \$5,500 so far from McKinney Arts Commission and we are in talks with representatives of The Dallas Opera to not only help underwrite this project, but to promote it to their network of donors and members. *The Figaro Project* is a unique event for a unique destination... the City of McKinney. This grant money will be used for marketing, outreach and advertising.

Our marketing strategy is a multi-layered approach in order to reach donors, sponsors and our target audience (see Appendix A).

Alignment

The Figaro Project will be the largest project produced by Youre My Favorites, Inc dba McKinney Summer Opera. All grants awarded will be strictly used for the promotion and production of this annual event. Any profit made from the event will go towards next year's festival. This year's budget of \$60,000 will serve as a baseline for future productions. The cost of future productions will be determined by the size of the cast. The Figaro Project has 12 cast members. Future productions may have more or less members, as yet to be determined. Further, our costs may fluxuate in the event another venue becomes available that can accommodate the size of the production. Therefore, long-term costs will be difficult to predict as this is our first show. Our success will be measured not only by the number of tickets sold, but how well the community embraces the event. We hope to be able to measure the impact this fantastic production has on local businesses, including restaurants and hotels.

We hope to be able to arrange with local businesses packages that include dinners, tickets to the opera and hotel pricing.

While this is our first production, we are unable to provide financial statements and audits. Along with Goofy Foot Productions, we did produce a concert last summer at Legacy West Box Theater for recording artist John Rose, but this was a free event. An estimated 750 tickets were distributed.