

From: KINDING SINDAW HERITAGE FOUNDATION, INC
Potrirankamanis Queano Nur
Artistic / Founding Director

To: NYS Legislature hearing on Economic Development, and Arts
Thursday, February 9, 2023

My name is Potri Ranka Manis Queano Nur. I am writing to request robust support for NYSCA and for capital funding for culture! I am the founder and Artistic Director of Kinding Sindaw Heritage Foundation, Inc. We are 31 years of non for profit culture and arts organization that asserts the visibility and preservation of culture, arts, and living tradition that dates back 4th to the 10th century this culture and tradition connect the heritage of the Queens immigrant population. The Sanskrit heritage, the Islamic heritage, and the Hispanic heritage while examining the expanse of the influences among Melayu nations of Asia and the Spanish colonization. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued serving as a cultural arts and service-oriented organization. Our artistic, educational, and wellness programs were mostly transformed into virtual. We also have expanded our mission by distributing PPE and assisting senior citizens in their prescription and food errands. We are staying true to our organizational mission utilizing our artistic repertoire to implement mental health and wellness directives that were manifested in our virtual cultural arts education, reaching communities all over Queens, the NYC 5 boroughs, the East Coast, and even abroad and beyond.

Kinding Sindaw provides interdisciplinary services using ancestral and indigenous traditions to promote community wellness, and mental health, and enhance awareness of social and racial justice. Kinding Sindaw produces programming that involves the community in artistic workshops, encouraging communication and expression of issues affecting them through creative activities.

Emotions and thoughts that cannot be expressed in words can be transformed into dance, visual arts, music, and theater productions while simultaneously building communities through this creative interaction. Immigrant populations carry a wealth of ancestral arts and knowledge with them through their journeys.

Kinding Sindaw encourages the immigrant population to embrace and share their heritage in the process of building their art as an expression of their identity, empowering them as a community member.

Culture is the core of NY State's economy. For the past decade New York State's creative economy has contributed more than 7% to the GSP** annually, and pre-pandemic it generated 484,000 jobs and \$120 billion in economic activity.* Culture is a jobs multiplier, providing work not just for artists, but for museum administrators, security guards, sound technicians, costume creators, and the myriad other jobs that make up the creative economy.

New York's tourism industry depends on a thriving creative sector.** Culture taken as a whole is one of the leading drivers of tourism in New York State. If we want the tourism industry to survive, we need to invest in the cultural sector that brings visitors to our state.

Cultural centers anchor small towns and urban neighborhoods, driving street traffic to local businesses and restaurants, strengthening communities, providing programs for children and youth, and safer streets for everyone. A robust cultural life, with dance classes for kids and music festivals in town, and shows in local theaters for entertainment, is WHY people move to and remain in the NY States! We must invest in the human infrastructure of our communities and that means investing in our arts and culture organizations if we are to retain residents, many of who can now work remotely from anywhere. And for too long there has been a lack of investment in lower-wealth, often Black and brown, neighborhoods and cultural organizations. Every New Yorker needs the community to strengthen the power of culture.

Last year NY State distributed \$100M for arts programming through NYSCA. And an additional investment of \$150M in capital funding for cultural groups. We must have that funding renewed if we are to continue to do the work of rebuilding NY's economy and communities. A cut of the size proposed in the Executive Budget would be devastating to our recovery.