

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS BRANDING & MARKETING PLAN

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

Young Audiences seeks a branding and marketing firm with experience working with nonprofits. The firm should have experience with and a strong understanding of mission-driven work and the constraints of limited budgets, resources and staff time. Experience working in educational marketing and branding is preferred.

The firm will guide Young Audiences staff, trustees and community through the process of refining our brand, helping us identify the niche that we can fill in arts education that helps YA reach the goal of serving every child every year. The branding and marketing plan must address the organization's business model where 50% of income is from sales and 50% is from contributions.

Interested firms should submit proposals according to the RFP by March 30, 2017.

### BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW

Arts education is who we are and what we do.

Our venue is the school. Our model of delivery brings professional teaching artists directly to students. By working directly in school environments, we eliminate barriers to participation and make the arts accessible to students of every socioeconomic background, geographic area, and ability. YA's teaching artists play a unique role in arts education. YA engages 226 professional teaching artists and provides them with the opportunity to introduce students to new artistic disciplines and cultures to give students the chance to connect with their personal creativity.

YA provides arts learning experiences that lead to young people who:

- Are self-aware and can express themselves effectively,
- Are aware of the world outside their own community,
- Are nimble and rigorous thinkers,
- Value the arts and engage in them as an essential part of their lives, and
- Are able to nurture these qualities in others.

Young Audiences' service region includes all 21 counties of NJ and the 7 easternmost counties of Pennsylvania: Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, and Philadelphia. Since our founding in 1973, YA has grown into the region's largest arts education organization. YA serves students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12, their teachers and their families. Over the last 44 years our programs have affected 12.5 million children. In 2015-2016, our programming was delivered in 573 schools. Within the arts education community, Young

Audiences leads the field and partners extensively to develop curriculum and program models, deliver programming for students with special needs, advocate for arts education, deliver artist training, and embed arts education as a component of school improvement.

We are a proud member of the national network of Young Audiences organizations comprised of 31 affiliates across the country. Each autonomous chapter shares a common mission, vision and goals. Young Audiences Inc., a national service organization, supports the work of the affiliates. Young Audiences New Jersey & Eastern Pennsylvania abides by the affiliate agreement that specifies the organization's name and visual identity.

## MISSION AND VISION

We inspire young people and expand their learning through the arts. The work of the Board of Trustees and staff is guided by a vision of a future in which all students in our region engage in high quality arts that are a basic part of their education, directly participating in the understanding and creation of art and arts integration.

Since its founding, Young Audiences has undertaken our work guided by these beliefs:

1. Arts are essential to the life and education of every child.
2. Teaching artists are a critical component of a rich arts education experience.
3. All forms of diversity are valued.
4. Barriers to participation can be surmounted.
5. Partnerships strengthen our work and our reach.
6. Advocating for arts education is our responsibility.

## CURRENT SITUATION

For the past 10 years, YA program staff have observed trends in education that have devalued arts education and cut budgets for arts spending while testing demands consume an increasing amount of the school calendar. Now, new policies like STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, **Arts**, and Math) initiatives and the US Department of Education's national ESSA legislation indicate that arts and creativity are being recognized as integral to a child's education. Young Audiences can no longer be "the best kept secret" in arts education.

Young Audiences operates on a budget of \$3 million with 45% earned income through program sales to educators and PTO/PTA groups and 55% contributed income from grants and donations from individuals.

Over the past 5 years program sales have been steadily decreasing, with a 33% drop since 2009. Earned income from sales fell nearly \$60,000 since 2014. In addition, diversification from earned income has declined – from 40% educators (using school funds) and 60% PTO/PTA representatives to today where 20% of sales come from educators and 80% from PTO/PTA.

Over the same period we have increased contributed income, including the successful completion of a \$3.1 million capital campaign in 2015 that established an endowment.

The Young Audiences business model strives to maintain a 50/50 allocation of earned and contributed income to achieve our ultimate goal of reaching every child every year with arts education programs. Note:

- The decline in sales directly impacts the number of students we serve each year. Over the past two years we have served 50,000 fewer children.

- In a typical year 65% of contributed income is allocated to serve students in schools that can't afford to purchase programs

### Marketing Efforts

The organization completed a new strategic plan for 2017-2019 that focuses on sales and contributed income growth. With a full-time marketing director since November 2012, our marketing efforts have grown as we undertake a comprehensive approach to broaden our reach and deepen our impact. The printed program guide is the centerpiece of our sales and marketing efforts. The guide is mailed to every school principal and PTO/PTA representative in our territory and includes a comprehensive description of our arts education offerings (performances and hands-on workshops in all art forms). Our website ([www.yanjep.org](http://www.yanjep.org)) features a searchable database of teaching artists and programs. Potential clients communicate with programming staff to schedule and purchase programs. Customer service remains a vital component of our sales model and noted reason for customer satisfaction.

Since 2012, we've implemented a multi-platform marketing strategy comprised of email communications, social media outreach, direct mail and referrals. In addition, we've launched two advocacy programs—the Arts Champions Awards and the #ArtsMatter video campaign. In fall 2016, YA entered into a strategic partnership with the NJ Arts Education Partnership to implement their multi-year public awareness and advocacy campaign, #ARTSEDNOW.

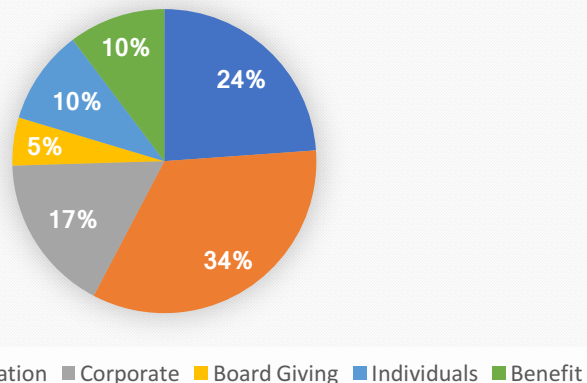
Part one of a market research study was completed in fall 2016 that focused on sales and the clients that purchase programs. A second phase will focus on discovering where those new markets are and how to reach them effectively. Initial results are below:

- YA has a strong seal of approval from its clients
- There is conflicting data on price, with responses stating cost of programming as prohibitive but higher priced programs sell better than lower cost ones
- Customer satisfaction is high
- YA should ensure that diversity continues to be reflected in its programming
- Communications within existing circles have been more effective than communications to new markets
- Competition comes in several ways:
  - Companies offering assembly experiences (arts and non-arts) include authors visits from the Morristown Festival of Books, the Bureau of Lecturers, Sneak Peeks, Morris Arts Showcase, ZooAmerica, Sciencetellers, Quitty Creek Nature Park, Liberty Science Center, and Mobile Ed Productions.
  - Teaching Artists: Despite attempts for artists on the YA roster to schedule programs only through YA, some artists schedule programs directly with school clients.
  - Field Trips

### Fundraising

Young Audiences fundraises with a two-person development staff responsible for raising \$1.5 million each year, as follows:

## Contributed Income FY17



The new strategic plan includes goals for growth by total amount and by expanding contributions from individuals outside of the Princeton/Mercer County area.

In 2012 market research was conducted with YA donors and funders. The work was undertaken through a feasibility study for the capital campaign and concluded:

- Perceived strengths are that YA is a well-run organization, and donors believe in the mission and excellence of programs
- The top weakness was a lack of public awareness of the organization
- Loyal donors identified the top barrier to donating to YA is the lack of awareness of Young Audiences by prospective donors
- Donors believed the most compelling reason to support the campaign was the mission

### DESIRED OUTCOMES

Positive outcomes we foresee from a branding and marketing effort are:

- Create a strong organization-wide brand that conveys the value of YA's model of arts education and serves as an umbrella for all YA communications and outreach efforts
- Prioritize sales and fundraising targets within the construct of the new branding and brand communication idea
  - Produce tools for use in sales or fundraising that leverage the brand and brand communication idea
- Create a growth plan for both sales and donor contributions with activities designed to reach each milestone

### PROJECT SCOPE

Young Audiences seeks a firm to undertake the following:

- Conduct a needs assessment based on research on-hand and conducted-to-date
- Analyze the competitive landscape to identify best practices or opportunity gaps
- Identify "best practices" organizations in the larger world of non-profits
- Develop branding elements including the brand communication idea
  - Brand values, personality, tone, promise, and positioning must be at the center of the brand development

- Develop a long-term (2-3 year) brand strategy with clear identification of the primary and secondary targets
- Develop a creative roadmap based on identified constituent communication needs and brand communication idea/umbrella brand
  - Develop key brand messages to be included in all communications and targeted sub-messages appropriate for specific audiences or uses
- Audit the organization's current print and digital communications to evaluate the gap between current practices and desired long-term communications objectives
- Provide recommendations for timing and reach of launch based on existing budget parameters

### REQUIRED DELIVERABLES

- Findings summary and brand strategy document
- Target audience identification and prioritization
- Key messages by audience
- Board and staff training

### PROPOSED TIMELINE

RFP Distribution:	March 1, 2017
RFP Deadline:	March 30, 2017
Selection:	April 1, 2017
Consultant work	April to August 2017
September	Recommendations presented to Board of Trustees for next steps

### BUDGET

Budget Range: \$30,000 to \$40,000

### PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

#### Firm Information

Provide agency's name, address, URL, telephone and fax numbers. Include name, title and e-mail address of the individual who will serve as agency's primary contact. Include a brief description and history of your firm.

#### Project Approach

Please explain your project approach, style and process.

#### Provide biographies of key staff

Please include a summary of experience of all key staff.

#### Experience

Proposals should include a list describing projects that are similar in scale that your firm has completed. Please include at least one in-depth case study that includes a limited number of creative samples. Where possible, highlight work for analogous organizations.

#### Schedule and Timeline

Proposals should include the proposed work schedule, timeline, and deliverables.

**Cost**

Proposals must include the estimated cost for all work related to tasks and deliverables outlined in the schedule/timeline.

**DEADLINE**

Please submit your proposal by March 30, 2017.

**SUBMIT TO / CONTACT**

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