

Subject: New submission ALBANY Arts, Culture, and Tourism Application

Date: Friday, June 30, 2023 at 5:29:05 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: jnytko@govsol.org

To: jnytko@govsol.org

General Information
Date of application
06/30/2023
Name of Entity
Bring on the Spectrum, Inc.
Entity TIN, EIN or Social Security Number
84-5002321
Entity physical address
71 Fuller Rd #6 Albany, NY 12205 United States Map It
Is the physical address different from the mailing address?
No
Website (if available)
https://www.BringOnTheSpectrum.org
Primary Contact Information
Primary contact name
Lisa Audi
Primary contact title
Founder/CEO
Primary contact phone
(518) 641-1971
Primary contact email
lisa@BringOnTheSpectrum.org
What is the primary contacts preferred method of contact?
Either
Entity Info and Structure
Which structure best describes the entity?
Non-profit organization
What is the date of establishment?
March 2020

Have you or the entity ever received any form of COVID-19 relief funds or loans specific to the negative impacts of the Pandemic?

No

General Project Information

Describe the arts/cultural/tourism activities your organization provides in Albany County.

Bring on the Spectrum Community Space and Sensory Gym hosts social, recreational and lifestyle activities for neurodiverse individuals of all ages, all abilities at our centrally-located facility at 71 Fuller Rd, Albany, 12205. We are immediately off both I-90 and I-87.

We have traditional art classes -- drawing, painting, ceramics, clay, mixed media. We also offer other creative arts including music, Improv and dance. Our hope for the fall is a Disney cabaret show.

In addition to the creative arts, we offer Zumba, yoga, Cooking Classes, fitness classes, Lego club, movie nights and more.

If an award is made, describe how Albany County will benefit. Where possible, please quantify impact.

Albany County will benefit in three key ways (1)) prominence amongst neurodiverse families by welcoming them to enjoy all that Albany County has to offer; (2) economic impact from a family's stay in the #518 (hotel, restaurants, gas, incidentals); (3) providing collaboration opportunities amongst local businesses and nonprofits within Albany County to make the county stronger together.

If an award is made, describe how the funds will help you to sustain your operations in Albany County.

We will be in Albany County for the long haul. We love our location and the ease of access from I-90 and I-87. We are in a building that has ample parking with "eyes on the door", helpful to families with individuals who elope. We are on a bus line. But for a non profit, it's a struggle to "do the work" and serve the community while strategizing for the future. This grant allows us to further establish ourselves while expanding our reach and impact through tourism. The opportunity to welcome visitors to BOTS from a broader area helps us, helps other non profit organizations in Albany County and helps the local business community.

Describe the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic increased or decreased demand for your services. As an option, you may attach to this application any optional information that supports you're the service increase or decrease being described below.

This program is particularly relevant today. Neurodiverse individuals and families were uniquely impacted by COVID-19. Neurodiverse adults in residential homes had to remain there with no visitors. Youth and children had no sports or lifestyle activities. They struggled with remote school, both from March 2020-June 2020 as well as interruptions to consistent in-person schooling from September 2020 to June 2021. During those 18 months, school districts struggled to fulfill IEPs. Children/tweens/teens did not receive their full support services. During the 2021-2022 school year, things improved but both school life and community life did not return to "normal" nor is the "new normal" ideal for the neurodiverse population. Today, programs for neurodiverse adults (day hab, without walls) are not at pre-pandemic levels. Individuals are not "out in the community" as many times per week as they once were. And, more critical, students who "aged out" of school during the COVID years are on wait lists to get into a program. They are at home with nothing to do. The direct support professional crisis has also had a huge impact on the ability for neurodiverse individuals of all ages to access the community. Bring on the Spectrum Community Space and Sensory Gym was needed pre-COVID; it is vital now.

Please select the grant opportunity you wish to apply to

Arts, Culture, and Tourism (ACT) Promotion Grants (Up to \$100,000)

Project Information – Promotion Grants

Please select whether the proposed project is new or existing

Creates a new initiative or project

Please provide a short summary of your proposed project including a project name, general description, total cost, reason(s) why you are pursuing the project and anticipated impact:

"BOTSA-Family Getaway to Albany County" would be the project title to the public. For us and Albany County, it is "Bring on the Families".

Bring on the Spectrum Community Space & Sensory Gym is the only one of its kind within a minimum three hour radius of Albany County. Our Project, "BOTSA-Family Getaway to Albany County" will offer a major piece of what's missing from a family's life when there is a member with autism; the ability to travel and visit attractions that are not only of interest but mindful of the necessary safety, acceptance and understanding. We will reach out to neurodiverse families within a 200 mile radius of Albany County and invite them for BOTSA-Family Getaway to Albany County. Our focus will be on guest visits during Autism Acceptance Month in April 2024, April 2025 and April 2026. We will launch with a press conference in the fall with County Executive McCoy and key partners and promote/advertise during the winter. We will partner with area arts and cultural organizations to make their visit to Albany County memorable. Our goal with this program is to serve a minimum of 100 families over the course of the project.

TOTAL COST \$79,700

What amount of funding is being requested?

\$69,700.00

Please describe the entity's capabilities to implement the project you propose including organizational structure, staff members involved, a summary of similar initiatives you have undertaken and the date they were completed:

Bring on the Spectrum is more than capable of managing this project. We will assign weekly hours to one staff person to work on this project under the guidance of our CEO, Lisa Audi. Lisa is well versed in tourism and event travel from her time at Pepsi Arena where she was part of a team that secured the NCAA Frozen Four, NCAA Sweet Sixteen and NCAA Wrestling Championships and an impressive 8 NCAA events in 10 years. Later, in 2006-2008 while at Ed Lewi Associates, Lisa worked closely with the then-named ACCVB as well as CDTA on "Fan Fests" that were coordinated on behalf of the Capital Region LOC. A member of the business community for more than 30 years, Lisa is a strong believer in collaboration amongst nonprofits and local businesses, the crux of the Bring on the Families initiative. Recently BOTS completed a project with NYS Department of Health which included implementing 10 field trips with rural school districts in the outlying counties of Albany County in a condensed window of 5 months. These field trips included development of the program, distribution of NYS DOH materials and multiple other elements.

Please describe, in detail, the impact your proposed project will have on Arts, Culture and/or Tourism in Albany County. Describe how your project will attract new visitors to Albany County. Where possible use metrics/estimates of impact (i.e. increased visitation etc.).

Quite simply, it's very rare for families with youth especially, with autism or another intellectual or developmental disability, to travel. Our individuals, when dis-regulated, take time to go from the "Red" zone back to the "green" zone. Families worry about being disruptive for other hotel and attraction guests. Our individuals thrive on consistency and a vacation brings slight changes to simple things like when a meal is eaten. BOTS will mitigate these worries by partnering with hotels and local businesses who understand and plan accordingly with dollars budgeted for training. The number of new visitors will most likely be ALL that are secured through this program. In addition, families that have members with autism are loyal; there is a high likelihood of return visits because of its uniqueness. For other arts and culture organizations, it will also be new visitors and more importantly, for those that are nonprofits, it's an opportunity to live the credo we all share in some way -- all means all. And how wonderful will it be for neurodiverse individuals, many who enjoy the creative arts, music, etc., to do so in Albany County?

How will you track performance goals and define success? Include at least two key performance indicators and expected annual outcomes/impact during the reporting period (September 2023 - December 2026).

With specific visit windows (Autism Acceptance, April), with activities hosted at Bring on the Spectrum and with the close collaboration with local hotels and Discover Albany, we will be able to track results. Our year one goal (2024) is 20 families (with multiple guests) with increases year over year. Also of note, there will also be an impact from day visitors not reflected in the aforementioned counts.

What is the proposed project start date?

Fall/Winter 2023 for Spring 2024 start.

What is the anticipated date of completion?

Spring 2026

Please provide key performance indicator(s) demonstrating anticipated results

Indicator	2024	2025	2026
Families visited	24	40	60

Please provide key project milestones inclusive of the anticipated timelines and descriptions

Milestone	Anticipated Timeline	Task Description
Collaboration	Sept/Oct 2023	Meet to collaborate with arts, cultural and destination attractions, local hotels, restaurants, etc.
Press Conference	Oct/Nov 2023	kick-off press conference with County Executive McCoy, local business and nonprofit partners
Marketing Materials	Oct/Nov 2023	create video, marketing flyers, etc for distribution
Launch Digital ad campaign	Dec 2023/Jan 2024	Promote BOTSA Family Getaway on blogs, Facebook, IG and digitally via website ads
Ongoing	Dec-April 2024, 2025, 2026	Review advertising results, refine messaging, etc.
Media Coverage	April 2024 (and each April)	Photo advisory to TV, print, etc. for coverage of the program and families visiting. Enlist Christina Arangio (WTEN and parent of neurodiverse youth) to offer a welcome tour to our first round of guests

At the top of this page is a downloadable project budget. Please download the budget form and upload it here.

- [BOTSA-Family-Getaway-Budget.pdf](#)

If you are funding a multi-year initiative, please provide a breakdown of funding level per year below*:

2023	2024	2025	2026
20,000	25,000	15,000	9,700

Is any upfront funding needed to successfully implement your proposed project?

No

Describe how the funding will support a sustainable Arts/Culture/Tourism initiative that will continue to serve Albany County residents after ARPA funds have been exhausted .

The saying is "it takes a village". For families with a member who has autism, they can become isolated from other families with neurotypical children. It's hard for anyone to walk in the autism shoes. People can say they understand, but rarely do. BUT, there is a village in the autism community. And families will know of this program through Facebook pages, blogs, etc that are centered on life with autism. The initiative doesn't end, it becomes a self-sustaining opportunity. Over the three year window, the process/template will be created, modified and improved so it can continue beyond this initiative. Because no one else is offering this, it will also gain sustainability from press/media attention.

Explain why ARPA Funds Are Needed to Complete the proposed program/project. Would the proposal be Possible Without ARPA Assistance? Describe how your proposal would be impacted if you are awarded a smaller grant than requested?

ARPA funds are needed because the scale of this project requires funding sources that provide for collaboration and innovation relative to tourism. Bring on the Spectrum could not promote tourism and Albany County as a destination with it. The impact on the proposal if provided less funding would be to review areas of outreach (cities/market) which may impact families served.

Tax Information

Please upload Federal tax returns for 2021

- [CHAR-500.pdf](#)

If available, please provide your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov

N8CFZB7RNNH7

Risk Assessment

Has the entity adopted and/or implemented policies relating to: records retention, conflict of interest, code of ethics, and/or nondiscrimination policies?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify which policies have been adopted

All

Is the entity properly insured?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify which types of insurance(s) are held and the limit(s).

Commercial General Liability(\$1M/\$2M) Automobile Liability (\$1M) Umbrella Liability (\$1M) Workers compensation (\$1M/\$1M/\$1M) Disability Statutory Directors & Officer Liability (\$1M) Employment Practices Liability (\$1M)

Does the entity have a financial management system?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please provide details about the financial management system.

We utilize Quick Books. Our bookkeeper and accounting firm has experience tracking grant funding and expenses.

Has there been any change in the entity's key staffing positions in the last 2 years?

No

Has the entity previously done work for the Federal government (i.e. Is the entity experienced in managing Federal funds)?

No

The County is careful about identifying and avoiding conflicts of interest, especially with grants awarded through the County. A conflict of interest arises when a person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest intersect. In this situation, there is the potential for biased professional judgment and lack of objectivity which creates a serious conflict when one of the interests can benefit financially or personally from actions or decisions made in the official capacity. A conflict of interest exists whether or not decisions are affected by a personal interest; there only needs to be the possibility of bias for a conflict. If your organization knows of a possible conflict of interest with your application for funds please disclose that information here. Otherwise write "None."

None

Certifications

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 1

- I Have Been Provided a Copy and Understand the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (see link or PDF included at the top of page)

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 2

- Should the County Allocate ARPA Funds, I am Able to and Pledge to Adhere to ALL Compliance and Reporting Requirements of the U.S. Treasury as it relates to any State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 3

- I Understand the County Will Contact me if/when Additional Information is Needed and that Information will be Promptly Provided to the County to Support Reporting Requirements

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 4

- If for Any Reason I am Unable to Comply with the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Requirements I will Immediately Notify the County in writing by email or letter

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 5

- All Information Submitted in this Application is True & Accurate

Electronic Signature Agreement

- I Agree

Type name

Lisa Audi