

Williamsburg Area Arts Commission

In 2020, the Williamsburg Area Arts Commission distributed 31 grants totaling \$156,800 to the following organizations:

- Accordion Renaissance
- An Occasion for the Arts
- Art at the River
- Aura Curiatlas
- Chesapeake Bay Wind Ensemble
- Flute Frenzy
- W&M Global Film Festival
- Institute for Dance
- Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation
- Open Door Concert Series
- Opera in Williamsburg
- Panglossian Productions
- Stagelights
- Tidewater Classical Guitar
- Virginia Arts Festival
- Virginia Opera Association
- Virginia Regional Ballet
- Virginia Repertory Theatre
- Virginia Symphony Orchestra
- Virginia Stage Company
- WHRO Public Media
- Williamsburg Book Festival
- Williamsburg Choral Guild
- Williamsburg Contemporary Art Center
- Williamsburg Youth Orchestra
- Williamsburg Youth Harp Society
- Williamsburg Music Club
- Williamsburg Players
- Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra
- Williamsburg Women’s Chorus
- Young Audiences Arts for Learning

Start Peninsula

Start Peninsula builds and celebrates the local entrepreneurial ecosystem in our region. Start Peninsula 2020 was hosted by the Greater Williamsburg area including James City County, the City of Williamsburg and York County, in partnership with the Cities of Hampton, Newport News and Poquoson.



Each winner receives \$5,000 to fuel their business growth and a six-month community membership to Launchpad, the Greater Williamsburg Business Incubator. All contestants will continue to have access to and gain guidance from local economic development departments.

In a shift for 2020, three Micro Pitch competitions were hosted throughout the spring and summer, with winners from each of those guaranteed a \$500 prize for participating in the final Pitch Competition in November.



LaunchPad

Launchpad is an entrepreneurial ecosystem partnership between the City of Williamsburg, James City County, York County, and William & Mary, and a key partner in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in our region. Members work alongside each other with customer-centric programming and activities and receive coaching from industry experts.



Launchpad benefits include:

- Connection to a wide variety of mentors
- Interaction with industry partners and investors
- SBIR/STTR and other commercialization proposal writing support
- Business model development support
- Workshops and one-on-one training sessions
- Network of entrepreneurial-minded mentors, industry experts, faculty, students and staff





Tourism Development Fund

Launched in 2019, Tourism Development Fund (TDF) grants are being leveraged to increase patronage to restaurants, hotels, and events in the City of Williamsburg through financial assistance and reinvestments in tourism products, place-making projects, special events, and public-private partnerships. While this fund was put on hold during 2020 due to the global pandemic, five projects are underway, and one completed, from the first round of 2019 TDF awards:

- **Parks & Recreation:** The City's Parks & Recreation Department used \$100,000 of the TDF to purchase a portable stage, which is now available for use throughout the City.
- **Williamsburg Regional Library:** TDF funds allowed the library to purchase additional outdoor furniture for the City Square Plaza along with additional lighting.
- **Kiwanis Park:** A fourth softball field in Kiwanis Park is expected to be under construction in 2021 after the site plan was revised and approved in November 2020.
- **Wayfinding Signage:** The City hired MERJE, a nationally recognized design firm with specific Community Wayfinding expertise, to work with the Williamsburg community to create an enhanced local signage system. Several public meetings and surveys have been held to gain inclusive community feedback.
- **Indoor Sports Complex:** In 2019, \$250,000 in TDF funds were awarded for the further study and design of a City-based Indoor Sports Complex. The City contracted with several sports tourism experts, including Victus Advisors, LLC, and HVS Convention, Sports & Entertainment Facilities Consulting, to review and update a sports tourism market study from 2017, evaluate the applicability of a regional programming plan to serve both the community demand and sports tourism/event demand, develop recommendations to maximize the facility for sports tourism events, and provide an economic impact analysis of the proposed sports complex.



Tourism Development Fund Outside Agency Awards

- **An Occasion for the Arts** – \$20,000. An Occasion for the Arts (AOFTA), an annual fine art and music festival, marked its 52nd year over the weekend of October 3-4, 2020. This historically in-person event shifted to an online show with streaming demos, concerts, and online purchasing options. The 2-day live streaming event featured local musicians, artists, shops, and workshops.
- **Culturefix** – \$290,000. Culturefix strives to improve Greater Williamsburg's cultural offerings for residents and visitors, by enhancing arts infrastructure; developing and promoting the arts and culture industry; and by creating a wide array of arts and cultural events. This organization shifted its programming and held a summer concert series virtually, averaging 2250 viewers per concert. They also held a "Masks & Music" concert series throughout September and October, in person at socially distanced tables. As a new offering in 2020, Culturefix hosted three weekends of Williamsburg Christmas Markets, attracting over 30,000 attendees.
- **Other** - An additional \$1.4 million in outside agency award grants was collectively distributed at different levels among the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, William & Mary Global Film Festival, Williamsburg Hotel Motel Association, and the PureSilk LPGA Championship.

"...this potential collaboration among the City, York and James City Counties, William & Mary, and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, represents a momentous opportunity for the region."

– MAYOR DOUG PONS
Williamsburg State of the City Address, December 2020