

BUFFALO Commons

Proposal for Research

Created by the Partnership for the Public Good and Cornell in Buffalo, the **Buffalo Commons** seeks to make **Buffalo-Niagara-focused research** accessible to the community and to inspire collaborative efforts among researchers and practitioners that will expand that body of knowledge.

Through the research portal, community organizations can propose topics for research that would help them serve the public. Students and faculty can then choose from those topics and produce work to benefit the community. The Buffalo Commons will publish and archive the resulting research so that it is easily available. A description of your initiative will help researchers choose your topic.

Name ___Parrish Gibbons Herzog_____

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Name of your Organization ___Arts Services Initiative of WNY (ASI)_____

Brief Description of what your organization does/is and/or the community served:

Arts Services Initiative of Western New York, Inc. (ASI) promotes the cultural sector's vital role in economic development and the community through advocacy, capacity building, and collaboration. Our work includes the administration of funding to artists and cultural organizations, advocacy for the sector policies, "the arts meet business" professional development workshops, and programs like Arts Access, which provides low-income families with free admission to theaters, museums and art events.

Brief description of the research needed

Our organization would like comprehensive data on the decrease and elimination of art and music programs/classes in public schools in Erie and Niagara Counties. Our organization has not been able to identify or present holistic data on this topic due to capacity and connections to who may have this information (or how this information may be tracked). This data would be beneficial when advocating for the creation and continuation of such programming like our Arts Access Program. The Arts Access program benefits many underserved families in Erie and Niagara Counties and since 2013, the number of families using Arts Access Passes to attend arts and cultural activity has increased. Feedback from our pass holders has been that they are not able to gain arts and cultural access in other places, especially children in schools; however "word of mouth" cannot build a study or a case. ASI would like to have actual data, stats, and numbers to back that up and back up our Arts Access Program.

Potential Title of Proposed Research Project (Optional): The Elimination of Arts in Public Schools

Is there a specific date by which this research is needed? January 2019 (flexible)

How will this research be used to aid the community? ASI advocates for the arts and cultural sector as a whole, and the importance of art in our lives. This data will be used to build a case as to why funding art programs through non-profit groups and artists is critical for the quality of life of residents and others in our region. Access of art and music in schools is dwindling and research such as this can paint a clear picture as to how public funding for art and culture is being reallocated towards other programs.

What (if any) other community groups are involved: The Greater Buffalo Cultural Alliance, the Cultural Alliance of Niagara, Young Audiences of WNY and their Arts Partners for Learning group, would be instrumental in utilizing and distributing the research, and they would also advocate for the sector with the collected data in a variety of ways. For example, ASI partnered with Americans for the Arts to produce the *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 Report* for WNY and we continually use that study for facts, figures, and demonstrations when advocating for the arts sector as a viable economic driver; for public funding policy; and for grant proposals and other leadership requests.

What resources can you offer to aid the researcher (access to data, people to interview, etc.) We have the access to the WNY cultural database of contact information to all of the cultural organizations in the 5 counties of WNY. Michele Agosto, Supervisor of Curriculum in Art Education for Buffalo Public Schools, is a member of the Arts Partners for Learning leadership team in addition to ASI and a great arts partner in general. In addition to staff at Young Audiences of WNY.

Please send this form to buffalocommons@cornell.edu