



City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Agenda - Final

Economic and Cultural Opportunity

Chairperson Jan-Michele Kearney
Vice Chair Seth Walsh
Councilmember Scotty Johnson
Councilmember Albi

Monday, January 26, 2026

10:00 AM

Council Chambers, Room 300

PRESENTATION

SPEAKER

ARTWORKS

Sydney Fine, Senior Director of Impact

AGENDA

1. [202600198](#) **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney, regarding *CREATIVE STUDIOS*, a Career Pathway Program at *ARTWORKS*.
Sponsors: Kearney
Attachments: [Presentation](#)

ADJOURNMENT

A black and white photograph of a photography studio. Four people are present: a woman on the left in a floral shirt and shorts, a man in the center in a dark shirt and jeans, a woman on the right in a jacket and jeans, and a man on the far right in a cap and jacket. They are surrounded by professional lighting equipment, including large softboxes and umbrellas on stands. The studio has a wooden floor and a white wall. The text 'Creative Studios' is overlaid in a large, white, serif font, with a horizontal line underneath it. Below the line, the text 'Career Pathways Program at ArtWorks' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. A hamburger menu icon is in the top right corner.

Creative Studios

Career Pathways Program at ArtWorks

City Support

Long-term Commitment to ArtWorks and Youth Employment Programs

The City of Cincinnati has long been a core partner of ArtWorks, supporting the seasonal Apprentice Program (ages 14–21). In 2022, the City expanded this partnership by launching the Creative Studios Program (ages 18 - 24) with a \$500,000 investment through American Rescue Plan funds. This commitment was further strengthened through a three-year contract funded by the City's Career Pathway Initiative, providing \$250,000 annually to support year-round youth employment.



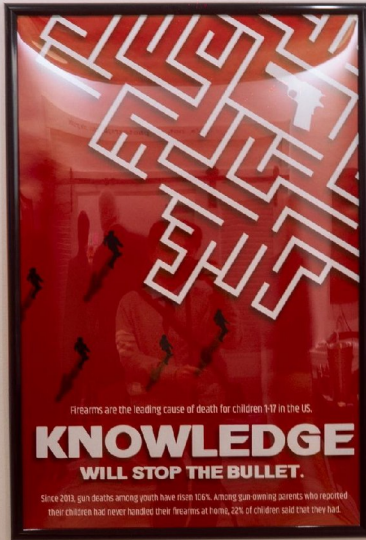
Launch and Evolution

Establishing Year-Round Opportunities for Young Creatives in Cincinnati

The Creative Studios program fills a vital gap for young adults aged 18-24, providing year-round employment and essential skill development. Participants engage in advanced training encompassing project management, budgeting, and client relations, ensuring they are equipped for future success and capable of thriving in diverse creative industries.



ARTWORKS CAMERA STUDIO



63%

This statistic highlights the critical link between youth employment and violence reduction, underscoring the need for initiatives that provide opportunities for young people in Cincinnati.

Supporting City Priorities

Alignment of Creative Studios with Cincinnati's Youth Employment Initiatives

Meaningful Employment

- Year-long, paid positions with consistent schedules
- Real responsibilities, deadlines, and accountability
- Youth are relied on as team members and leaders

Resume Builder

- Professional portfolios and documented client projects
- Experience managing clients, timelines, and deliverables
- References, work samples, and employment history

Entrepreneurship

- Direct exposure to client relationships and scope of work
- Understanding pricing, timelines, feedback, and revision cycles
- Preparation for freelance, contract, and small-business pathways

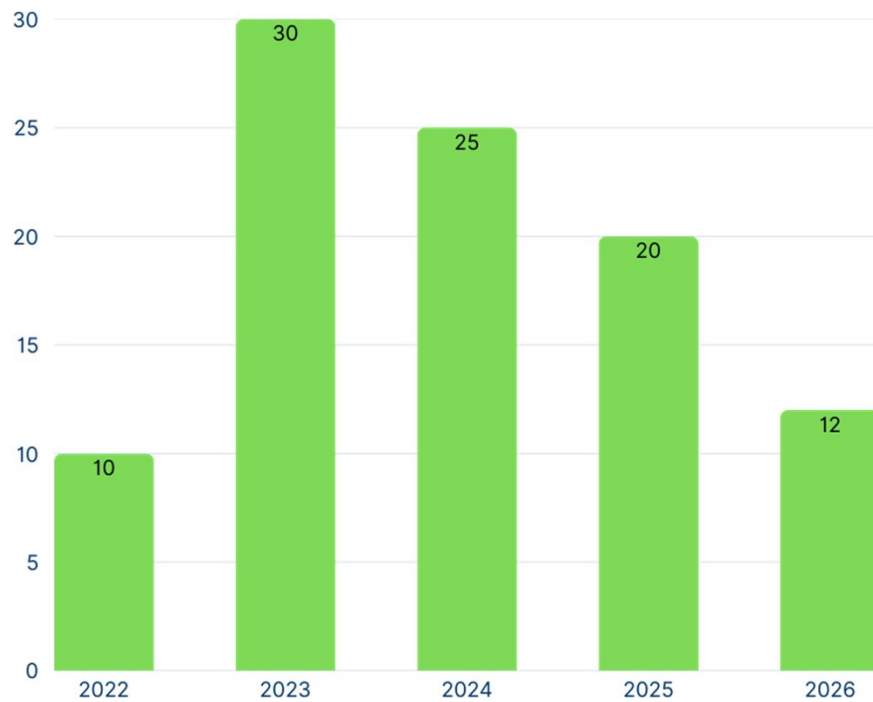


Research and Development Process Overview



Foundations

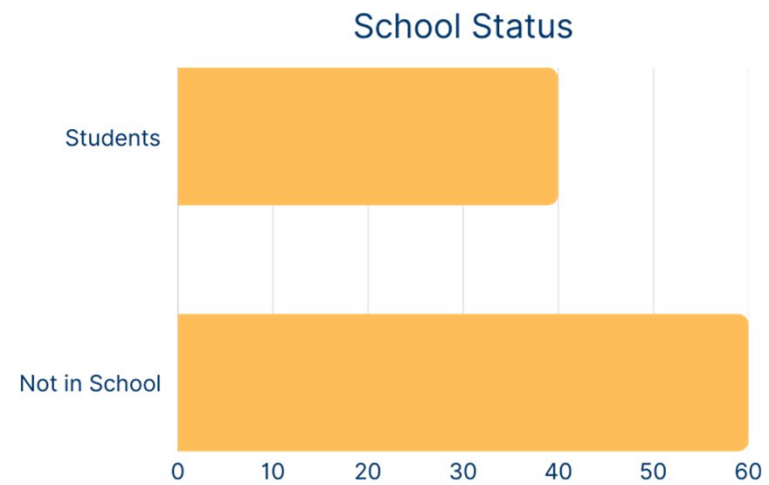
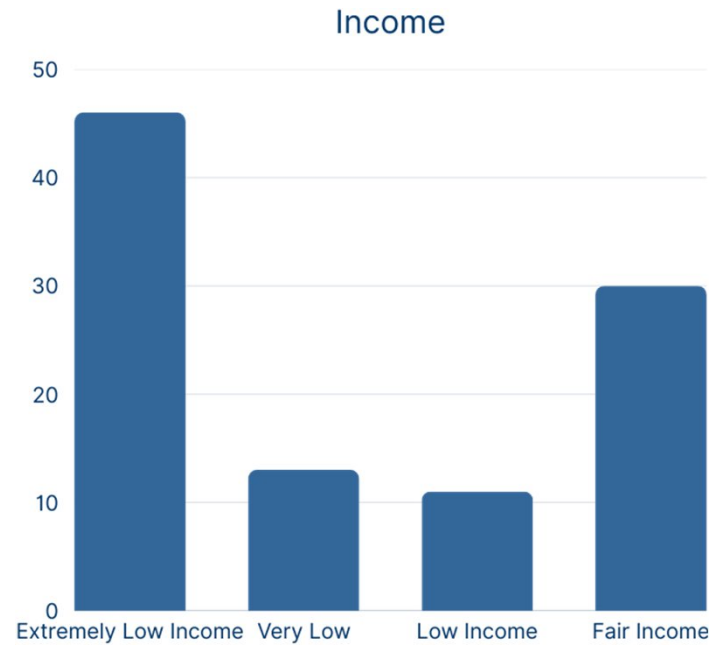
Three years of research to inform program design choices.



97

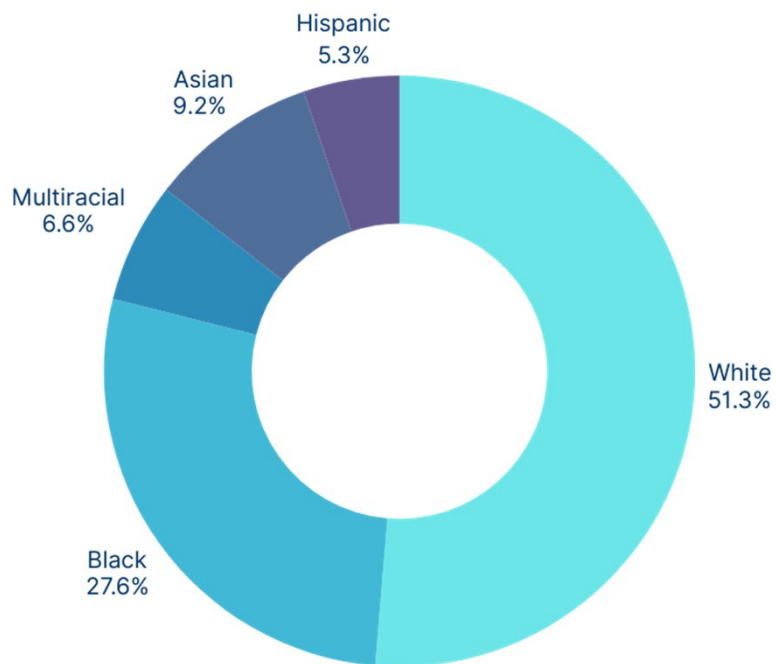
Each number represents a young person with a consistent paycheck, schedule, and professional expectations.

Program Demographics

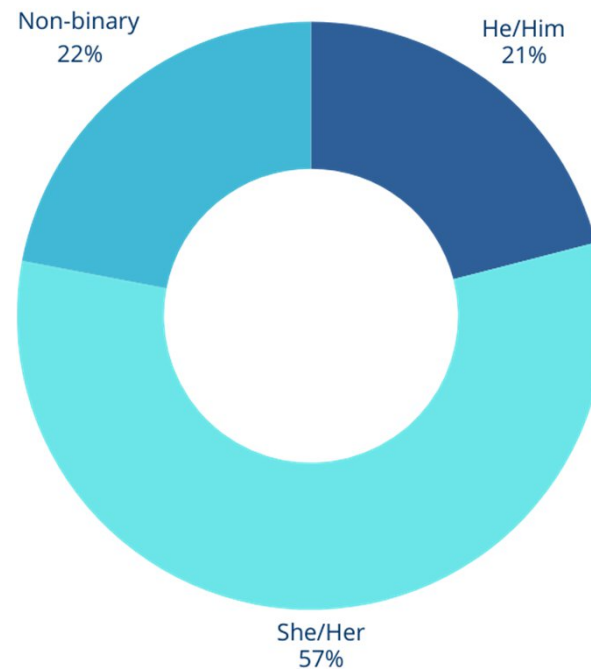


Program Demographics

Race & Ethnicity



Gender





Creative Studio Partnerships

- AARP
- Al. Neyer
- Annex Gallery
- Bartlett Wealth Management
- Bethany House
- BLINK
- Blue Oven Bakery
- CET
- City of Cincinnati Career Pathway Initiatives Program
- Cincinnati Recreation Commission
- Civitas/Apple TV
- CMHA
- Columbia Township
- Corporex
- FEG
- Filson Queen City Kitchen & Bar
- Fleet Feet
- Freestore Foodbank
- Frito Lay (Doritos Solid Black Campaign)
- GE
- Guerbet
- Hamilton County
- Hines
- Ken Anderson Alliance
- Kiddy Kare Young People's Liberation School
- Lydia's House
- Messer Construction
- Milford United Methodist Church
- Pendleton Neighborhood Council
- Pennrose
- Red Bike
- RKCA
- Roebling Point Investors
- S. Lebanon Elementary School
- Tender Mercies
- Thermo Fisher
- Tri-Health
- Urban Sites
- Western & Southern Open
- WorldAtWork

Professional Development

Comprehensive Curriculum for Creative Skill-Building and Employment Readiness

The Professional Development curriculum is designed to provide participants with holistic skill-building opportunities beyond art production.

Through nine structured sessions, participants engage in various topics that enhance their creative capabilities, employability, and professional growth, ensuring they are well-prepared for future career opportunities and challenges.



**“I HAVE BECOME LIFT
CERTIFIED, CREATED A
WEBSITE, BUILT OUT
MULTIPLE PROFESSIONAL
DOCUMENTS, AND ADDED
OVER 30 PIECES TO MY
PORTFOLIO.”**

Mural Studio

Aspects of Mural Curriculum

- Intro to Mural Making & Painting Techniques
- Design & Color Theory for Large-Scale Works
- Project Management & Client Communication
- Budgeting, Team Planning, and Final Delivery

Number of Community Murals Produced: 30
with 10 more to be produced this year!



Camera Studio

Aspects of Camera Curriculum

- Camera Operation, Lighting & Editing Basics
- Visual Storytelling & Creative Direction
- Studio & On-Location Shoot Production
- Post-Production, Budgeting & Project Wrap-Up

Types of work created: social media reels, mission videos, event photography, experiential photo booths, headshots, music videos, and photo-based murals



Career Growth Sessions

Session 1: Personal Management

- Personal Mission Statements, Goal Setting
- Personal Asset Mapping
- Prioritization + Time Management

Session 2: Working with Others

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Belonging
- Workplace Inclusion + "Safe" Space
- Liberatory Design Mindsets
- Empathic Critique
- Project Management
- Organizational Systems for Accountability
- Working Collaboratively
- Active listening
- Brainstorming
- Conflict Resolution

Session 3: Staying Healthy + Positive

- Mental Health / QPR Training
- Work-Life Balance Strategies

**“THROUGH CAREER
GROWTH SESSIONS
AND OTHER EVENTS, I
HAVE MORE PERSONAL
CONNECTIONS WITH
PEOPLE FROM LOCAL
ORGANIZATIONS IN
CINCY THAT I DID NOT
HAVE BEFORE.”**

Career Growth Sessions

Session 4: Writing About Artwork + Creating a Portfolio Website

- Artist Statements: Content, Form, Meaning
- Writing a Press Release
- How to Build a Website

Session 5: Public Speaking

- Public Speaking, Presentation Skills, Talking About Your Work

Session 6: Finance + Budgeting

- Financial Literacy + Budgeting
- Starting a Sole Proprietorship Business in Ohio
- Pricing Your Work

Session 7: Networking + Opportunities

- Networking, Relationships, Finding Opportunities
- Personal Branding and Social Media Presence

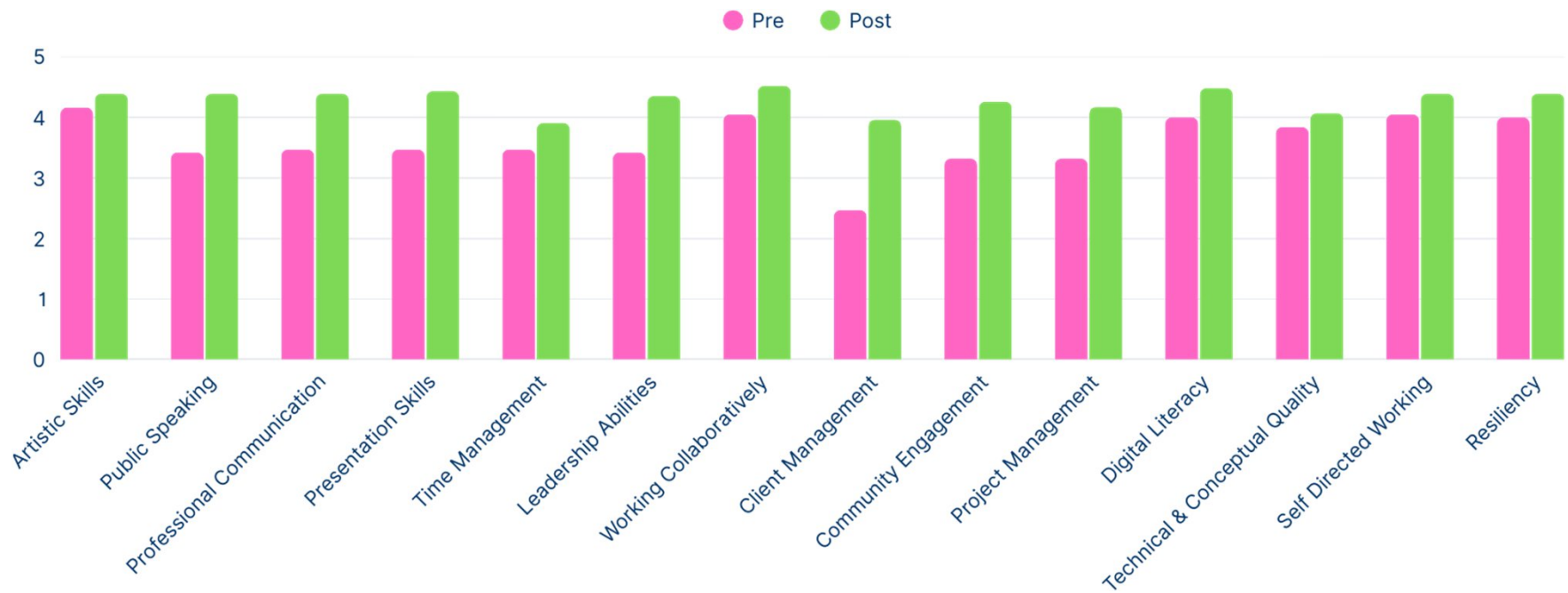
Session 8: Grants + Proposals + Contracts

- Writing Proposals + Contracts
- Grant Writing

Session 9: Professional Document + Portfolio Review

- Portfolio Review Workshop with Creative Agency or Gallery Reps

Career Growth Data



Each measurement category increased by 1 - 2 confidence points by end of program (scale of 1 - 5)



100%

of Studio Artists completed the following professional documents before completing the program:

- Professional portfolio
- Resume
- Website
- Headshot
- Artist statement

Measurement Next Steps

Enhancing tracking and engagement for program alumni success

Following up with all alumni of program 1 year after program completion with survey. Examples of questions include:

- Are you currently employed?
- Are you working in the creative industry?
- Are you working in the Greater Cincinnati region?



Sustainability of Creative Studios

Financial and operational strategies for lasting impact in Cincinnati's community

- The future of the program is unknown.
- The Mural Studio is on a pathway to be sustainable through earned revenue.
- In 2026, we've had to pause operations on the Camera studio and reduce employment overall.
- Our hope is to establish greater diversity in creative studio services. Startup funds would be important for non-mural studios to ensure continued youth engagement and development through the arts.



Thank You

Questions?

"My network has expanded since joining the program. I've built meaningful connections with board members, the administrative team, my teammates, and my manager—each of them incredibly talented in their own way. Through ArtWorks, I was also connected to several freelance opportunities, which helped me grow even further within the creative sector."

"The program helped launch my career in the fastest and most impactful way possible. I had the opportunity to work with real-world clients, which elevated my portfolio to a new level."

"Through various artworks networking events, I have gained connections in many different sections of the art world that I can call to for most things. I wouldn't have had access to these resources if not for ArtWorks."