



News Release

Contact: Diane Scott, Professional Development Program Manager, UMKC Small Business & Technology Development Center, 816-235-6769, scottdia@missouri.edu.

\$100,000 Creative Communities Investment Grant Sparks Innovative Programs for Artists

Kansas City Metro artists to benefit from new business development programs and services

Leveraging Investments in Creativity (LINC) has awarded a \$100,000 challenge grant to a partnership of Kansas City arts and business support organizations to begin new professional development programs for artists in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. The funding will be used to offer:

- *Artist, INC*, a series of in-depth entrepreneurial seminars that will reach more than 100 artists over the next two years, and
- *KCArtistLink*, which will enable all artists in the region to connect to a network of nonprofit resource organizations that can provide information about business-building and support programs.

“It’s wonderful to see the creative and entrepreneurial potential of Kansas City’s amazing community of artists be acknowledged and supported through this investment,” said Paul Tyler, Grants Director of the Arts Council of Metropolitan Kansas City. “With this decision LINC is demonstrating great confidence in the potential of this region to continue its growth as a new center of creativity in the Midwest.”

First professional development program to launch in May

The first offering of *Artist, INC*, an eight-week series of Monday night seminars for individual artists, will begin in May 2009. The program, developed through the UMKC Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), is designed to provide artists with small business skills to manage the business end of their art careers.

“Artists, as sole proprietors, are not really different than other small business owners,” notes Diane Scott, Professional Development Program Manager at the SBTDC. “Artists are passionate about the art they create, but many need more knowledge and skills to market their art or manage the financial end

of their work.” The program will provide groups of 25 multi-disciplinary artists with specific business training, peer-to-peer learning and mentoring from established area artists serving as program facilitators. The program will repeat in the fall of 2009 and three more times in 2010.

KCArtistLink to connect artists with business resource organizations over the internet

KCArtistLink will be launched in summer 2009. *KCArtistLink* is an online network connection tool using the U.S.SourceLink model, which links business development resources to the people that need them. *KCArtistLink* will create a community referral network linking area arts and small business support services to the artist community in the region. It will enable artists to easily find and connect with the resource organizations that can meet their particular professional needs.

Creative Communities initiative implemented in Kansas City through innovative local partnerships

LINC is a ten-year national initiative to improve conditions for artists by providing knowledge, information and financial resources to organizations in 15 communities across the country. The Arts Council of Metropolitan Kansas City, in partnership with Charlotte Street Foundation, is the lead Kansas City participant in the Creative Communities program of Leveraging Investments in Creativity, funded by the Ford Foundation.

The initiative was embarked upon in the spring of 2007 by Charlotte Street Foundation and the Arts Council of Metropolitan Kansas City. In 2008, this coalition was joined by KCSourceLink, the UMKC Small Business and Technology Development Center and the University of Missouri Extension. The coalition also receives strategic support and guidance from the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance and the Kansas City Art Institute, and numerous local area artists were involved in the community planning process. Funding to match the LINC investment over the past two years has been provided by several local sources, including Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation, Francis Family Foundation, Steve and Karen Pack Family Foundation, American Century Investments, Bank of America, Hallmark Cards and the Missouri Arts Council.

For more information about LINC and applying for the Artist, INC seminars, please go to www.LINC.ArtsKC.org.

###
