

January 6, 2016

Ms. Elizabeth Hall  
Executive Director  
Milton Family Foundation  
1201 Esketh Way  
Portland, Oregon 97210

Dear Ms. Hall:

On behalf of the Upstream Makers Collective — its staff, board of directors, and the communities we serve — I am submitting a letter of inquiry for our new **Maker-in-Residence pilot project**. The Maker-in-Residence project will place eight expert makers in four rural schools for month-long residencies. We believe this project aligns perfectly with the Milton Foundation's goal of "supporting initiatives that increase access to visual and performing arts education," as well as your organization's long history of funding rural causes.

### **Organization Overview**

Founded in 2013, the Upstream Makers Collective is a diverse network of writers and storytellers, musicians, performing artists, painters and photographers, sculptors, woodworkers, metal artists, book and textile artists, and other craftspeople. Our mission is to support the development of a rural culture that contributes to the common good of the people and the land. To this end, we coordinate monthly art exhibitions and maker workshops in our gallery in downtown Little Pudding, Oregon, as well as community storytelling events at a local grange hall. Last year, our core programs served approximately 6,000 people in rural Marion and Clackamas Counties. This includes individuals from all walks of life — children, families, retirees, professional artists, tourists, etc. — not to mention the countless others who viewed our farm-based public art installations and pop-up exhibits.

### **Significance**

The Maker-in-Residence project is significant because a growing body of research suggests that students who have access to arts education demonstrate improved problem-solving and social skills; score better in science, writing, and mathematics; have higher SAT scores; and are more likely to aspire to college.

And yet, while there is an emerging consensus about the importance of arts education,

poorer students are far less likely to have access to arts instruction – a significant imbalance in rural areas where many schools serve high numbers of low-income students. The four small, rural schools served by this project are all Title 1 schools, and the percentages of students eligible for Free or Reduced Meals range from 66% to 81%. None of the schools employ art teachers, and two of the schools – Davenport Elementary and South Falls Elementary – serve communities that are too remote for most families to bring their children to Little Pudding for private art classes. The principals of all four schools are enthusiastic about the Maker-in-Residence project, as are the regular school-day teachers who have been involved in the initial planning stages.

## **Project Description**

To address the lack of dedicated arts education, the Upstream Makers Collective is partnering with the Little Pudding School District to create the Maker-in-Residence project, which we will pilot in four rural elementary schools during the 2016-2017 academic year. At each school, two artist-makers will participate in month-long residencies (one in the fall and one in the spring). Over the course of those four weeks, the artist-makers will lead two one-hour sessions with each grade, kindergarten through sixth. The sessions will be tied to the regular school day curriculum, integrating art with core subjects such as math, science, history, geography, reading, and writing. The artists will also lead one afterschool workshop for students and their families, and they will work with teachers, staff, and students to produce a culminating event: an art installation, an exhibition in the school library, etc. At the beginning of the year, the artists will also collaborate with the district's curriculum supervisor to lead a professional development workshop for elementary school teachers on how to integrate art and making into everyday classroom instruction.

The makers chosen to participate in this project will be practicing artists with experience in the classroom setting. (Preference will also be given to artists who reflect the demographics of the school communities.) They will submit a lesson plan before beginning the residency. Artist-makers will engage students in hands-on instruction, demonstrating both traditional and contemporary techniques, and explaining the art projects' cultural context. The project will be overseen by an Implementation Team that includes Upstream's education coordinator, the district curriculum director, and one teacher from each school. At the conclusion of the pilot project, the Implementation Team will identify the best practices necessary to successfully expand the program to an additional four rural schools.

The following objectives have been identified for the Maker-in-Residence project:

- By June 1, 2017, all 490 students at the project schools will have participated in at least 28 hours of direct arts instruction in the classroom.

- By June 1, 2017, at least 100 students and their families will have participated in an after-school arts workshop.
- At least 15 elementary teachers will participate in the professional development workshop to be held in October 2016.
- At least 500 students, families, and other community members will attend the year-end exhibitions.
- At least 80% of teachers will report being satisfied with the results of the Maker-in-Residence project, as measured by a year-end survey.
- As a result of this project, at least 60% of teachers will report in the year-end survey a change in practice related to integrating the arts into everyday classroom instruction.

### **Cost of the Project**

The Upstream Makers Collective is requesting \$5,000 from the Milton Foundation to support the Maker-in-Residence project. The total cost is \$19,170. To date, \$9,500 has been raised in the form of small individual donations, a substantial gift from an anonymous donor, and four \$500 grants from the Parent Teacher Committee at each school. We believe this shows significant community support. The Maker-in-Residence project will also be the focus of an upcoming school auction at Davenport Elementary. In addition, Little Pudding School District is covering the costs associated with the professional development workshop, as well as the time of its curriculum director. A \$2,500 grant was recently submitted to the Abiqua Foundation; it is pending decision. Additional grants are planned to Gabel Charitable Trust and the Stokes Foundation.

We hope to provide you with even more information about our organization, this project, and the community we serve. If you have any questions at this point, please do feel free to contact me by phone at (503) 555-1234 ext. 567, or by email at [rachel@upstreammakers.org](mailto:rachel@upstreammakers.org). Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Rachel Young  
Executive Director

Enclosure: IRS Determination Letter for 501(c)3 Status