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Exploring Community Vitality Through Craft

Center for Craft and the University of North Carolina Asheville launch new regional grant program to consider craft’s role in healthy communities.

ASHEVILLE, NC (June 28, 2023) – The Center for Craft is excited to announce an innovative partnership with the University of North Carolina Asheville’s UNC Gillings Master of Public Health (MPH) program, to explore the community vitality impacts of engaging with craft. Six awarded artists, artist collectives, or art organizations will be selected for $2,200 grants to use craft to engage with regional communities in Western North Carolina.

Center for Craft Executive Director Stephanie Moore conveys "Craft contributes significantly to the vitality of a community by fostering creativity, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting social connections." Through the practice of traditional and contemporary crafts individuals develop skills, express their artistic abilities, and find a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Craft also plays a crucial role in preserving cultural traditions and strengthening identity, passing down knowledge from one generation to the next. Craft activities bring people together for social interactions and collaboration that create a sense of belonging. This collaboration is an opportunity to better understand the ways in which craft acts as an indicator of and pathway to a healthy, resilient future.

Proposals from artists, collectives, and organizations in Western North Carolina are encouraged to submit a letter of interest to be selected for the pilot program. Proposed projects should take place between September - November 2023, and engage the community with craft in some way. Each selected project will be paired with a UNC Asheville MPH student who will use methods they are learning in their coursework, taught by UNC Asheville faculty member and MPH co-director Dr. Ameena Batada, to explore and measure impacts of each project.

The Center for Craft invites letters of interest to be sent to ahelgeson@centerforcraft.org before July 24 (11:59 pm) EST, 2023. There will be a virtual information session on July 7, 2023, at 3 p.m. EST.

For more information about the 2023 Craft and Community Vitality Grant and to register for the virtual information session, please visit our [website](http://centerforcraft.org) or email ahelgeson@centerforcraft.org.
ABOUT CENTER FOR CRAFT
Founded in 1996, the Center for Craft’s mission is to resource, catalyze, and amplify how and why craft matters. We increase access to craft by empowering and resourcing artists, organizations, and communities through grants, fellowships and programs that bring people together. The Center is widely acknowledged as one of the most influential 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations working on behalf of craft in the United States. For more information, visit www.centerforcraft.org.

ABOUT THE UNC ASHEVILLE UNC GILLINGS MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH) PROGRAM
The UNC Asheville-UNC Gillings Master of Public Health (MPH) is an MPH degree program offered jointly by both UNC Asheville and the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health on the campus of the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) in Asheville, N.C. The concentration in Place-Based Health centers people and their communities as the catalyst for transforming systems to promote wellbeing for all. The joint MPH program features small cohorts of up to 24 students, case and community-based activities, and instruction by interdisciplinary faculty and community practitioners who bring real-world experience to the classroom.