The Nile Project Residency at Appalachian State University
Amount Requested and Awarded: $7,500

Categories
- Global Opportunities Clusters/Learning Communities
- Infusion of Global Content
- Targeted Areas

Student Learning Outcome Intended
- **Goal 1:** Develop globally competent knowledge
  - Explain historical, political, scientiﬁc, cultural, or socioeconomic interconnections between the US and the rest of the world.
  - Describe some of the contested assumptions and intellectual debates across the globe that are relevant to their major.
  - Analyze the dynamics of global transactions as applied to a problem important to their field.
- **Goal 2:** Cultivate intercultural competencies
  - Apply knowledge of other cultures and countries.
  - Analyze a single issue from multiple perspectives.
- **Goal 3:** Foster globally competent citizenship
  - Demonstrate a sense of global interconnections and interdependencies.
  - Describe a social problem requiring collective remedies that transcend national borders.

Other Support
Have you received any other grant support for this project?: yes
Please specify: A total of $5,000 in grant funding from South Arts has been secured, and approximately $10,000 in ticket revenue is anticipated. With $7,500 in requested support from the QEP, the OACP budget will absorb the remaining project costs of approximately $16,500.
Have you received funding from the QEP before?: no

Summary of the Project
Description of the project actions and goals:
The Nile Project Residency at Appalachian State University, scheduled for the spring of 2017, is the culmination of a two-year planning process involving universities across North Carolina and beyond. Other university tour participants include UNC-Wilmington, North Carolina State University, East Carolina University, Western Carolina University and Wingate University. The tour builds on a foundation established in January 2015, when the Nile Project embarked on a 4-month U.S. tour consisting of 50 concerts with stops at Lincoln Center and the United Nations, as well as residencies with 30 universities.

The cornerstone of the project is the Nile Project Collective, comprised of musicians hailing from nations along the great river that connects 11 countries and over 400 million people. These artists from across the Nile Region come together to compose music featuring diverse instruments, languages and styles indigenous to the world’s longest river. In the process of creating music together, the politics of the Nile-- and the divisive issues related to such issues as access to water and resources-- became topics of conversation among the musicians.

As the Nile Project musicians worked together, they began to discover their “common ground” as artists by creating and performing music together, based on the cultural traditions of their respective nations. The group discovered the power of the arts as a catalyst for positive change. The discourse began to shift from a divisive geo-political argument to a uniting conversation.
Having built a strong foundation of understanding and trust, the Nile Project’s ultimate mission is to transform water conflicts in the Nile Basin by embarking on a journey toward greater understanding of the geo-political issues that divide their nations, and to discover ways in which to unify and collaborate in fostering the sustainability of their shared ecosystem.

Nile Project performances and residencies are designed to utilize the arts as a basis upon which to build understanding and to break down the barriers that divide us. The model can be applied not just to the politics of the Nile River Basin, but to communities everywhere who are struggling with similar challenges related to sustainability and protection of their shared ecosystem.

Since its founding in 2011, the Nile Project has grown to include 33 artists from ten Nile countries; has produced two highly acclaimed albums; attracted over 60,000 audience members to 75 concerts in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, U.A.E and the United States; organized over 120 workshops at 40 universities for over 10,000 students; and received widespread local and international press coverage.

The residency project at Appalachian State University will focus on a three-day residency in early April, to include a public performance, a school show for students in grades K-12 and a variety of activities designed to engage campus and community audiences of all ages.

Goals for the Appalachian State University residency include the following:

• To expose campus and community audiences to the rich musical and cultural traditions of the Nile region

• To create opportunities for campus and community audiences to interact with artists in meaningful ways

• To present a school show that promotes the school's teaching mission concerning Africa and the Nile Region

• To share the Nile Project's model for promoting sustainability, and to apply that model to the sustainability challenges facing our region

• To learn about ways in which the Nile Project promotes global understanding and awareness, and how it can serve as a model for conflict resolution, both locally and globally

Project goals relate in direct and significant ways to key student learning objectives established by the QEP. Students will develop globally competent knowledge regarding the Nile River Basin through interaction with the Nile Project Collective members and by learning about the historical, political, scientific, cultural, and/or socioeconomic challenges that threaten their shared ecosystem, and how these issues parallel challenges in our own community. Students will cultivate intercultural competencies by exploring commonalities between the Nile River countries and communities here in the U.S. struggling toward models of sustainability. Students will begin to understand the concept of interdependence as it applies to the Nile River Basin and to the environmental challenges facing their own communities—challenges which transcend local, state, regional and national borders. Finding solutions that can be shared and applied globally will serve to foster globally competent citizenship.

These learning outcomes will be especially meaningful to the 70 to 75% of Appalachian State University students who do NOT currently enjoy the opportunity to travel abroad, by exposing them to the geopolitical challenges facing nations around the world, and the ways in which we as global citizens can collaborate to solve the most pressing problems affecting today’s world.

Any challenges you can foresee:
“Do unto those downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you.”
-Wendell Berry

One of the inherent challenges of a project of this magnitude is the enormity of the social and political issues involved. The Nile is the longest river in the world running through 6,695 kilometers of diverse
climates, landscapes and cultures. Water plays a pivotal role in the political, economic and social lives of the 462 million people inhabiting the eleven countries sharing the Nile. All countries have developed ambitious national development plans to fuel economic growth and promote poverty alleviation efforts that will depend on the use of shared Nile waters, yet the region does not share a vision for future development or a unified identity. The core issue at hand is how to peacefully allocate Nile water among citizens of the region.

One of the primary obstacles to productive dialogue is that the Nile watershed has not historically been conceptualized as a shared ecosystem that connects its inhabitants with each other and their natural environment. Rhetoric often promotes nationalism, portraying neighbors as adversaries rather than collaborative partners. Discourse is led from the top-down with little, if any, opportunities for cross-cultural citizen led dialogue. This cultural isolation has resulted in a pervasive mistrust that has manifested itself in the arduous negotiation process of ratifying the Nile Cooperative Framework Agreement, an international treaty to govern water distribution and infrastructure projects that would replace the existing 1959 treaty giving Egypt the majority water right annually and set different parameters for Nile water use. While the agreement has yet to win mutual consensus, progress was made on March 23, 2015, when Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan signed the Agreement on Declaration of Principles on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project, paving the way for further diplomatic cooperation on shared water resources. However, many details remain unresolved. It is clear that the model of "uniting conversation" established by the Nile Project Collective is more important now than ever.

A more practical challenge of the project is the goal of accomplishing meaningful dialog between Appalachian State University students and Nile Project Collective members in a relatively short period of time (three days). It will be imperative to work with project partners to effectively design the residency in such a way as to optimize the quality and substance of the residency activities so that the impact of the residency is significant and remains long after the project concludes.

Aspects of collaboration and/or interdisciplinarity:
Collaborators with an interest in the Nile Project include a broad-section of arts-related campus units, including the Hayes School of Music, Department of Theatre and Dance, Department of Art, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, the Turchin Center for the Visual Arts, and the Smith Gallery.

Other potential campus partners include Outdoor Programs, Sustainable Development, the Department of Biology, International Education, the Global, Gender and Equity Studies Program, and First Year Seminar. Community collaborators are still under formation, but strong interest in the project has been expressed by the Watauga Riverkeeper Program and the New River Conservancy. A strong connection to downtown churches, including the Unitarian Universalist Church, St. Luke's Church, and the Mennonite Brethren Church, is currently being explored, and will serve to enhance the all-important community connection to the project, while serving as a conduit for involving the African-American community in the project. The arts council in neighboring Ashe County, which shares some of the same water resources issues as Watauga County, has also expressed interest in working with the project.

In the coming weeks and months, the Office of Arts and Cultural Programs staff will work with confirmed and prospective project partners to develop residency goals and activities that utilize this remarkable project to address unique issues facing our community, while providing a memorable global arts experience for our campus and community.

Opportunities for external support (optional):
The budgeting plan described above will make it unnecessary for additional sources of support to be secured.

**Expected Results of the Project**
What are the tangible deliverables of this project?

- A publication
- A web site
- A database
Campus and community partnerships will be developed over the course of the project, and it is the intention of the project partners to maintain and build these relationships after the project is completed, as they will likely form the basis for future global learning opportunities for students that continue to reap benefits for students long after the project has concluded.

International travel opportunities for students resulting from relationships with Nile Project Collective members are another intended outcome of the project.

Assessment Plan
Please describe your plan to evaluate the success of your project:
The evaluation process for events presented by the OACP begins with a review of quantitative data, including ticket sales and the rate (and range) of participation in residency activities. A quantitative review also includes financial/budget reports, and the results of any fundraising efforts. This data is supplemented by qualitative measures of success. Key to this process is a review of audience feedback (surveys collected at performances and residency activities, informal feedback and discussion with audience members), input from the Arts & Cultural Programs Advisory Committee, a review of media coverage (including any reviews about featured performances), and assessment by OACP staff in conjunction with project partners. Surveys will focus on the extent to which the stated goals of the QEP were attained via this project.

Part of the evaluation process will also include plans for continued relationship-building among the project partners, as the basis for future projects supporting QEP learning outcomes.

Time Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 18, 2016</td>
<td>Anticipated notification of QEP funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 2016 - APRIL 2017</td>
<td>Continued residency planning with project partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 2, 2017</td>
<td>Community residency activity: Engaging the Faith Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community residency activity: The Arts and Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 3, 2017</td>
<td>Campus residency activities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World Music/Percussion Master Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Dance Master Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender and Equity Studies Master Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campus Forum on the “Innovation Campus” Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Symposium on Global Understanding and Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food from the Nile Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 4, 2017</td>
<td>K-8 School performance (matinee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residency activity with Mountain Pathways School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evening public performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JULY 2017</td>
<td>End-of-project report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DESCRIPTIONS OF RESIDENCY ACTIVITIES (to be finalized in coming weeks):

Engaging the Faith Community:
In this lecture/demonstration with Mina Girgis and Nile Project musicians, featuring a “mini-performance” and background on the Nile Project. Goal will be to introduce members of the faith community to the project and engage them in subsequent activities throughout the residency. Target audience: area churches and synagogues

The Arts and Sustainability:
Exploration of the Nile Project model and how it can be applied to local communities devoted to protecting its own eco-system. Target audience: campus and community sustainability contacts, including Watauga and Ashe Country Riverkeepers, New River Conservancy and several university departments: Turchin Center for the Visual Arts, Sustainable Development, Biology, Outdoor Programs

World Music/Percussion Master Class:
Members of the Nile Project will offer a hands-on master class for students in the Hayes School of Music, to demonstrate the variety of instruments, musical styles, and rhythmic and modal systems from the countries represented in the Nile Project.

African Dance Master Class:
Musicians from the Nile Project will present a lively master class for students in the Department of Theatre and Dance, surveying music and dance traditions from some of the 11 countries bordering the Nile River basin.

Gender and Equity Studies Master Class:
Women from the Nile Project Collective will discuss issues related to gender and race, and how these issues inform their work as artists, and their role as members of the collective.

Campus Forum on the “Innovation Campus” Model:
Members of the university community will join with Nile Project Collective members in exploring how the concept of sustainability, which is a priority for Appalachian State, can be extended to cultural sustainability. The Nile Project may provide some important lessons for campus leaders committed to broadening the definition and working model for sustainability.

Evening Symposium on Global Understanding and Conflict Resolution:
How can the Nile Project model for geo-political problem solving and conflict resolution be applied more broadly? Participants to include faculty and students from International Education, QEP, Global, Gender and Equity Studies, First Year Seminar, Department of Anthropology, Diversity Council.

Food from the Nile Region:
Evening symposium will feature a sampling of foods from Nile Basin countries.

K-8 School Performance:
This matinee performance at the Schaefer Center for the Performing Arts will be offered to students in grades K-12 in schools from a 10-county region across western North Carolina. Performance will feature educational component, and study guides will be offered for participating classrooms, in order to prepare them for the performance and providing meaningful background for student audiences.

Residency activity with Mountain Pathways School:
A specific activity proposed by Dr. Suzi Mills of the Hayes School of Music faculty illustrates the ways in which the Nile Project can serve as an innovative learning model for students. This activity will involve 77 students from a local elementary school who will work with university music students in the weeks leading up to the Nile Project residency to construct traditional African instruments out of recycled materials, participate in a local fishing expedition, and learn about the connections between environment, natural resources and culture. On April 4th, following the school matinee, a workshop for these students will be led by Nile Project musicians, who will teach them about African instruments, and demonstrate how these instruments are used to create music indigenous to the Nile Region.

Evening Public Performance:
To be featured as part of the university academic performance series, “The Schaefer Center Presents…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARTIST/RESIDENCY FEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARTIST HOUSING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER RESIDENCY COSTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LOCAL TRANSPORTATION, MEALS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARKETING/PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>