2025-8763 Shakespeare in American Communities: Schools

Application ID

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Application Type

Shakespeare in American Communities: Schools

Organization Information

SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY 01-65
351 W UNIVERSITY BLVD Utah Shakespeare Festival
CEDAR CITY, UT 84720-2470
Phone: 435-865-8333

Mission Statement

The Utah Shakespeare Festival education department cultivates creative communities and human development through Shakespeare and instructional play for individuals, educators, schools, and communities with emphasis on at-risk and low-income populations.

Annual Operating Budget

$5M - $10M

Location Designation

Micropolitan

Applicant

Hannah Tripp
Education Associate
351 W UNIVERSITY BLVD
CEDAR CITY, UT 84720-2415

Phone: 303-594-7714
Email: usfeducation@bard.org

Publicity name

> What should we call your organization when we conduct any future publicity?

Utah Shakespeare Festival

Project Summary

> Please provide one to two sentences that summarize your project in plain, easy to understand language. This description will be displayed publicly when the grantees are announced.

The Utah Shakespeare Festival's annual Shakespeare in the Schools touring program reaches thousands of students throughout a 5-state region in the Intermountain West with a focus on schools for whom geography might otherwise limit arts access and participation. Our 2027 production will be The Tempest!

Prior grant recipient?

> Have you received a grant from Arts Midwest before?

Yes

Project Start Date

> When will the project begin?

01/01/2027

Project End Date

> When will the project end?

05/01/2027

Production

What is the name of the play/production you are presenting?

The Tempest

Requested Amount

What is the grant amount you're seeking? Please refer to the application guidelines for minimum/maximum limits. This field will automatically round to the nearest $10 increment.

$25,000

Anticipated adults served

An estimate of individuals 18 and older to be served by the project.

300

Anticipated youths served

An estimate of individuals 17 and younger to be served by the project.

14000

Anticipated total participants

This will auto-calculate based on your responses above and after you click the "Save" button.

14300

Venue(s) for performance(s)

School, Facility, Theatre company's venue, Community venue

Type(s) of performance(s)

Student matinees, In-school performances, Public performances

Number of schools reached

> How many schools will you reach with this project?

55

Grade levels reached

Grades 5-8, Grades 9-12

Types of educational activities

Pre- or Post-show discussions, Workshops, Other

Percentage of schools that will receive workshops or residency activities

> What (estimated) percentage of schools/students who view the performance will also participate in workshops or residencies?

76%-100%

Percentage of schools that will participate in pre- or post-show discussions

> What (estimated) percentage of schools/students who view the performance will also participate in pre- or post-show discussions or Q&As?

76%-100%

Number of performances for students

> How many performances will be held for school audiences? (This total should not include performances for general adult audiences.)

55

Number of actors in production(s)

7

Geographic areas reached

> Describe the area in which the project activities will take place.

The touring company spends three months on the road traversing the Intermountain West to visit schools in Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, and Wyoming.

Organization description narrative

> Tell us about your organization and the values that drive its work.

The Tony and Emmy Award winning Utah Shakespeare Festival is a destination theater that presents a rotating repertory of life-affirming classical and contemporary plays and musicals, and offers interactive audience experiences. We are committed to both artistic and educational excellence, as we inspire, entertain, and embrace the enduring power of live theatrical experiences

Founded in 1962 in Cedar City, Utah, the Utah Shakespeare Festival will celebrate its 66th season in 2027. The Festival began as the dream of visionary professor Fred. C. Adams, and is one of the oldest and largest Shakespeare festivals in the country with an audience of over 100,000 patrons annually.

Our well-rounded Educational programming offers events and engagement opportunities for learners of all ages both locally and regionally, and reaches 25,000 patrons and students annually. Our touring Shakespeare in the Schools program is a vital component of that outreach. 2027 will be the 33rd anniversary of the tour. Numerous programs are offered throughout the year in addition to the Shakespeare in the Schools tour, such as our Juvenile Justice outreach, the annual Shakespeare Competition which hosts over 120 schools and 3,000 students, The Bard’s Birthday Bash, and Summer camps and classes for students and educators. Free daily educational activities are offered throughout the summer season including orientations, seminars, and post-show discussions with theatre artists.

These events comprise the unique and immersive Festival Experience created by USF. The Festival is a leader in Shakespeare performance and theatrical innovation.

Description of production

> 1. Describe the selected production and why it was chosen, its relevance to today, and how it relates to the work of William Shakespeare (if it is not one of his plays). 2. Explain your company’s approach to the play(s). 3. Describe the professional artistic team (director, designers, actors, etc.), if known, and why they were chosen. 4. Provide the run time, and if shortened, why this decision was made and how the themes of the play will be maintained.

“The isle is full of noises.”

Caliban’s haunting line captures the spirit of The Tempest, a play that echoes with music, magic, and questions about freedom, power, and forgiveness. For Utah Shakespeare Festival’s 2027 Shakespeare in the Schools tour, we have chosen The Tempest for its resonance with today’s audiences, especially young people navigating a rapidly changing world shaped by technology, communication, and evolving forms of connection. Shakespeare’s late romance asks: What does it mean to take responsibility for our power? How do we heal the harm we’ve caused? And how can simple acts of love and forgiveness restore what has been broken?

Director Ian Geers’ production concept explores how humanity’s interaction with the natural world shapes the story’s conflicts and opportunities for renewal. In this vision, the island of The Tempest is not a lush paradise, but a scarred and rocky world, one shaped by Prospero’s domination and the imbalance between human will and nature’s rhythm. Ariel and Caliban are embodiments of the air and earth, reflecting that broken relationship. Their imprisonment mirrors the desolation of the island. As Prospero learns to release control and forgive, the world begins to renew, a vivid metaphor for rediscovering balance between people and the world around them.

In this landscape, The Tempest becomes a story about restoration. This production invites students to consider how understanding and empathy can help rebuild relationships and strengthen community bonds. Forgiveness, in Geers’ words, becomes “a lighthouse in the storm,” guiding us toward healing and renewal.

The world of the play will be crafted from salvaged, handmade, and repurposed materials providing an “Old World”, post-apocalyptic aesthetic inspired by survival and resourcefulness. Prospero’s garments and tools will be pieced together from remnants of his past life; the spirit’s form will emerge from the land in stone, shell, and shadow. This visual language reflects both decay and resilience, giving young audiences an immediate, tactile connection to the story’s themes of creation and renewal.

At its heart, the production focuses on relationships: a father learning to let go, a daughter growing into her own power, and individuals choosing compassion over resentment. The connection between Prospero and Miranda anchors the story. Their evolving bond mirrors the broader human struggle to face our past actions and move forward with kindness. Through Miranda and Ferdinand’s innocent love, audiences witness a new beginning inspired by forgiveness, one that frees not only people but the world itself.

The touring company includes seven actors, a stage manager, and a tour manager. This core group is supported by a professional director and design team. The touring company is selected through a

national audition and hiring process. Actors are also teaching artists, and will be asked to interview and discuss their teaching experience.

Director, Ian Geers, brings extensive experience as an actor, teaching artist, and director with national touring companies like Montana Shakespeare in the Schools, and National Players Classical Touring Company. His educational work spans Shakespeare text analysis, improvisation, and storytelling through physical theatre. Geers's approach combines rigorous textual insight with an imaginative approach, helping students discover Shakespeare as a living, relevant art form that speaks directly to their lives.

The production will run approximately 75 minutes, meeting the logistical needs of our partner schools while preserving the essential story and emotional arc. The script will be a collaborative cut between the tour director and education director, focusing on Prospero's journey toward forgiveness and the relationships among Prospero, Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban. This focused adaptation maintains Shakespeare's language while using clear, physical storytelling to deepen students' engagement with his work.

Through this production, Utah Shakespeare Festival will bring The Tempest to students across the region, offering artistic experiences that encourage reflection on their own lives and communities. In a time when young people are constantly asked to navigate storms of their own, The Tempest offers a vision of calm after the tempest – a reminder that, through art and understanding, we can all find our way back to shore.

Description of educational activities

> 1. Describe, in detail, the content of the educational programming activities. 2. Describe the credentials of teaching artist or other staff who will lead these activities. 3. Explain how you will address the needs of students of different backgrounds, abilities, ages, and learning styles. 4. If offering virtual or hybrid activities, describe how students will have access to the activities and how you will ensure participation and engagement.

Our educational content is designed in alignment with Utah Theatre Standards and the National Arts Standards for Theatre, and our pedagogy is informed by learning sciences research and ongoing practice in arts education, embodied learning, and cognitive development. USF's Shakespeare in the Schools tour provides a production-specific Study Guide, a talkback following every show, an "assembly version" of the show, and three workshops to accompany the performance.

The Study Guide is designed to be interactive and is divided into two sections: information and activities for teachers and students to explore before the show, and follow-up activities like lesson plans and discussion prompts for after the show. Through the intentional pre/post design of the Study Guide, we

hope to extend the impact of the tour beyond the one day we get to physically spend in each school. A talkback follows every production. This vital time is the actors' opportunity to connect with the entire school. Built to encourage different types of participation, the talkback starts with low-risk questions (Raise your hand if...), progresses to open-ended questions (Why do you think...), and then invites questions from the students. The assembly version of the show is targeted towards younger audiences where scenes from the show are included but focuses on the actors presenting the themes of the show. Before beginning the tour, the company identifies important themes they want to elevate, and practices pivoting student questions to relevant theatre and life examples.

Workshops are developed by the Education Department in collaboration with the company members. Topics are identified and outlines are constructed before the company arrives; during the rehearsal process, company members collaborate in education sessions to create workshops that suit their strengths and based on the topics identified. The content of each workshop is specifically tied to the accompanying production.

The Festival created asynchronous virtual workshops and games that are available on our website at any time for no cost. Our focus, however, is on in-person interaction. The company members serve as the teaching artists in the classroom. Actors who have experience in touring and teaching are given preference in hiring. These actors are found through national auditions. As part of the rehearsal process, actors receive pedagogical training to provide them with an extensive toolbox to pull from on the road.

Our workshops are designed to offer routes to success for students in multiple domains. The design of our educational programming is built around not only content-learning goals, but also socioemotional learning goals, criticality, and active ways of thinking.

Through specifically designed workshops presented in connection with the production, USF teaching artists highlight content and themes from the play and invite students into the practice of theatre making. Students are encouraged to explore their roles as active participants in the making and meaning of Shakespeare. Through playful collaboration with our teaching artists, students practice active learning through explorations of Shakespeare's text, themes of the production, and practical applications in their daily lives and studies.

The USF touring company offers a portal to Shakespeare and participatory arts education for many students who might otherwise have limited opportunities to access theatre performance and practice. Artistic practice as a method of learning centers student expertise and experience, and offers the potential for successes and discoveries distinct from the expectations of typical academic classroom settings.

Description of feasibility and capacity

> 1. Describe your company's strategy to reach at least five middle and high schools. 2. Explain your organization's background in providing performances and educational activities to students. Provide details about any existing relationships with schools/educators. 3. Briefly describe the fee structure of your educational programming (e.g. free tickets, bus subsidies, etc.) and how any subsidies are determined and funded. 4. Describe how your company has the ability to pivot the proposed programming in response to unforeseen challenges.

2027 will be the 33rd year of USF's Shakespeare in the Schools touring program. In the past three decades we have developed rich and sustaining relationships with schools, teachers, and students across the Intermountain West. Our 10-week tour can accommodate 50-60 schools, and every year we have a waitlist. Situated in the mountains of Southwestern Utah, USF is uniquely located to reach rural and remote communities across a multi-state region in addition to our presence in schools in urban centers such as Las Vegas and Salt Lake City. Our ability to travel over distances with the tour allows us to reach a varied collection of schools, such as:

Small rural schools - These schools are frequently separated by great distances, have a wide range of ages (grades 5–12), and have limited financial resources. The Festival also has ongoing positive relationships with several schools in Dine (Navajo) and Paiute nation communities.

Large urban schools - Metropolitan schools visited by the tour have large venues where 2,000+ students attend and participate in performances and workshops.

Unique student populations - These schools include residential treatment centers, juvenile detention centers, or special service schools. These performances are often life-altering events for both the artists and the audience.

Our fee structure varies by location and venue. Thanks to state funding from the Utah Legislature, we are able to offer the tour for free to Utah public and public charter schools. Private and out-of-state schools and venues are charged a fee on a sliding scale centered at $1500/performance. Schools with a high percentage of students receiving Free and Reduced Lunch are provided additional subsidy based on available grants and individual donations, while professional public venues are charged the full at-cost rate or performances. In past years, the NEA Shakespeare in American Communities grant has allowed us to bring the tour to numerous schools outside of Utah at a deeply discounted rate, enabling us to reach students who otherwise have limited access to live theatre due to geographic, social and economic factors. For that history, we are very grateful.

In recent years, we have created and continued to refine the assembly-version of the production, which has become a cornerstone of our flexible programming. The 75-minute production that tours is logistically complex: every member of the 9-person company is essential, and the geographic reach of

the tour makes sending an understudy from the home theater impractical. To address these challenges, we developed a 45-minute assembly-version: a highly adaptable performance built around key scenes, monologues, and audience interaction. This format allows us to tour the full 75-minute production with confidence, while also providing schools the option of a shorter, interactive experience that can better suit varied schedules, spaces, and student needs. Over time, some schools have specifically requested the assembly-version for its dynamic engagement, demonstrating its value as both an educational and theatrical tool. This flexible addition to our programming ensures that every performance, regardless of circumstances, delivers the energy, artistry, and impact that USF is known for.

Our matched funds do not come from income from schools; rather, we provide matching funds internally through staff salaries and organizational materials. USF provides the salaries for the education director, some of the designers and technicians, the tour booking manager, etc; these organizational salaries match the NEA funds. This internal match – rather than relying solely on earned income – enables us to offer Shakespeare in the Schools Tour for free to as many schools as possible.

School partners

> Provide a list of the core partner schools that are interested in ensuring that this programming is available to their students. This may include schools who have participated in the past or schools who have expressed interest for the upcoming year.

The Southwest Utah Youth Center, UT
Canyon View High School, UT
Cedar High School, UT
Gateway Preparatory Academy, UT
Pine View High School, UT
Milford High School, UT
The City of Las Vegas, NV
Monument Valley High School, AZ
Whitehorse High School, UT
Montezuma-Cortez High School, CO
Tintic High School, UT
Mountain View High School, UT
John Hancock- Eagle Mountain, UT
Lakeview Academy, UT
Decker Lake Youth Center, UT
East Midvale Middle School, UT
Roy High School, UT

Budget

Organization's total revenue (current fiscal year)

$8,582,410.00

Organization's total expenses (current fiscal year)

$8,571,143.00

Organization's total revenue (last fiscal year)

$8,571,143.00

Organization's total expenses (last fiscal year)

$7,664,924.00

Expense Description	Paid by Grant	Paid by Applicant	Paid by 3rd Party	In-kind	Total Match
Printing	$0.00	$250.00	$0.00	$0.00	$250.00
Scenery/Prop Supplies	$0.00	$2,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,000.00
Costumes	$0.00	$2,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,500.00
Electrics	$0.00	$250.00	$0.00	$0.00	$250.00
Production Maintenance	$0.00	$2,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,000.00
Photography	$0.00	$200.00	$0.00	$0.00	$200.00
Truck Rental	$0.00	$8,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$8,500.00
Vans	$0.00	$14,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$14,000.00
Fuel	$0.00	$5,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$5,000.00
Travel	$0.00	$10,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,000.00
Lodging	$25,000.00	$11,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$11,000.00
Per Diem	$0.00	$24,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$24,750.00
Misc Supplies	$0.00	$250.00	$0.00	$0.00	$250.00
Ed Supplies	$0.00	$150.00	$0.00	$0.00	$150.00
Tour Director	$0.00	$4,480.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,480.00
Fight/Intimacy director	$0.00	$2,800.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,800.00
Tour Manager	$0.00	$11,760.00	$0.00	$0.00	$11,760.00
Tour Stage Manager	$0.00	$11,760.00	$0.00	$0.00	$11,760.00
Tour Actor 1	$0.00	$10,920.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,920.00
Tour Actor 2	$0.00	$10,080.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,080.00
Tour Actor 3	$0.00	$10,080.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,080.00
Tour Actor 4	$0.00	$10,080.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,080.00
Tour Actor 5	$0.00	$10,080.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,080.00
Tour Actor 6	$0.00	$10,080.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,080.00
Tour Actor 7	$0.00	$10,080.00	$0.00	$0.00	$10,080.00
Tour Costumes Crew	$0.00	$7,056.00	$0.00	$0.00	$7,056.00
Tour Costume Designer	$0.00	$3,360.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,360.00
Scenic and Props	$0.00	$2,240.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,240.00
Total Project Expenses:	**$25,000.00**	**$195,706.00**	**$0.00**	**$0.00**	**$195,706.00**

Use this space to offer more detail about your budget

Assurance of Compliance

> This grant derives from federal sources, specifically the National Endowment for the Arts. As such, your project, if funded, must abide by certain terms. Please read these terms carefully so you are aware of the assurances you will have to make.

- ○ I acknowledge that these terms will apply to my grant, if funded, and we will be able to comply.

Did you use AI?

> Did you use AI to help you complete your application?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Certify

> I certify on behalf of my organization that the information provided in this application is true to the best of my knowledge. Furthermore, I certify that: - My organization is eligible to receive federal funds and not delinquent in the repayment of Federal debt. - My organization is a unit/division of government, a Federally-recognized tribal government, an institution of higher education, or a 501c3 nonprofit. - My proposed activity space(s) are accessible to people with disabilities. - My project budget does not include match from another federal source. - My organization does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency), in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.); on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.); on the basis of sex, in any education program or activity, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.).

- ◉ I certify