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Speaking Notes, Final Presentation – Musical Exchanges Business Proposal

* Story about a musician who performed an exchange on one of our programs (fictitious)
* Case studies of musical exchanges and arts (education) programs leading to inclusion and fostering understanding between groups at the local, national, and international levels (BRIDGES - local, Namm - nat., NSO, Russia– global)
* Musical Exchanges builds upon the successful track record and colorful history of musical exchange programs, operating at the local, national, and international levels: generates economically and culturally dynamic communities, and fosters mutual understanding between groups of people using arts and cultures
* Journalist questions of who, what, when, where, how, and why
* NOSE structure
* Draw from executive summary and cover letter
* Name of construction co.
* Time schedule and plan of construction
* Initial costs will be covered by grants and equity investments from combination of federal and local governments, private groups, individual philanthropists and angel investors and venture capitalists, and assistance from donations and crowdfunding; sustaining costs will be covered by grants, donations, investments, and payments for concert performances and events

Gresham is a beautiful town in Oregon, situated near the major city of Portland. As you can see from this picture, the quality of life is good. The town is clean, there are nice shops, and life moves at a relaxed, sleepy place. Put yourself in the shoes of Joe Smith, a middle-class American man living in Gresham. Every day, he wakes up at 6:00 AM, gets dressed, eats breakfast, and heads to the car. He drives to the law firm’s office in Portland, a time-consuming commute. After navigating traffic and reaching the office, Joe starts his day in the big city. His wife also works in Portland, so the two kids walk themselves to school in Gresham and come home by themselves. Joe and his wife make solid wages and have decent jobs. But there’s a missing opportunity here in Gresham. What is it?

Since Gresham is a sleepy town close to Portland, it acts like a suburb for that major city. All of the biggest chances for professional advancement and sustainable 21st century office-work careers lie in Portland, and you need to commute there every morning and evening. Local revenue is limited for the Gresham, Oregon government. So, it was decided that a currently unused hotel in a scenic part of the town could be used to develop the economy and generate more revenue and interest in the community. This site will be called the Cultural Marketplace, and it will focus on showcasing the colorful local arts and culture. The site will become a hub for arts and culture, making the town a more dynamic place to live that attracts investment from the outside, creates substantial amounts of jobs independently of Portland, and allows people to work right where they live, avoiding the commute. It will enrich the region. Now, the Gresham Cultural Marketplace needs developers to put forth their proposals to fill the site and transform it into a vibrant community hotspot.

Musical Exchanges is well-suited to be a Cultural Marketplace developer. We are acutely aware of the need to revitalize the currently unused site for the Cultural Marketplace and to preserve its natural beauty and economic importance. As the founder of Musical Exchanges, I have seen first-hand what the benefits are of having vibrant arts in your local community, and how it positively impacts individuals. As a singer and violinist, the arts have made me who I am and opened doors to countless opportunities in my own life. Over time, I have seen my peers and members of my community benefit as much and more from the presence of the arts in their lives. The arts foster exchanges, communication, inclusion, and understanding. A young girl at my elementary school, Mosby Woods, immigrated from China to the US with very little knowledge of English and few chances to integrate into the school and community. Starting from a position of isolation and frustration, this young girl, Jane, learned to communicate with others first, non-verbally through music and theater arts. She loved the classes and after-school programs at Mosby Woods in these subjects, and she gradually came out of her shell and made friends. Gaining confidence and learning English in a fun, motivating environment, Jane and her family became deeply connected to the Fairfax, Virginia community. My close friend from elementary through high school, James Wagner, had difficulties concentrating in school before the arts entered his life. After gaining a creative outlet, he was able to focus and do well in his classes, get admitted to a high-calibur college, and start pursuing a scientific career. The value of artistic exchanges, specifically, is that it expands upon these positive benefits of the arts to build bridges and create a constructive dialogue between societies and communities. This makes the artistic experience even more of a novelty, and it makes audience members and artists alike curious to learn more about other cultures, foreign works of art, and networks enabling global performances. Musical Exchanges was founded to serve as an inclusive private-sector not-for-profit organization that would further these objectives and emphasize the benefits of the arts.

Musical Exchanges has a twenty-year track record, since its inception in 1998 in Washington DC, of stimulating local economies around the nation through performances and exchanges of global arts and cultures, the employment of local artists, maintenance crews, and management teams for each branch, and the attraction of outside investments in communities that have a Musical Exchanges branch. Musical Exchanges accomplishes these goals by developing a sustainable and dynamic hub of arts and cultures at its locations.

**Here are our goals for the Gresham site: Everyone will benefit from this project for inclusive growth.**

* **First, Gresham Residents will benefit –** This space will create employment opportunities in management, maintenance, and construction. It will also create an enjoyable and unique performance space that can be visited regularly and easily by residents of Gresham and the greater region.
* **Second, Local and Global Musicians will benefit-** Local and international performance and visibility-raising exposure opportunities will be provided by Musical Exchanges through paid fellowships with partners in various countries worldwide. While local musicians leave Gresham to share their art and culture with other countries, foreign musicians will come to Gresham to spread their own vibrant music with the local Gresham population.
* **Third, the Gresham, Oregon Government hosts will benefit-** The Musical Exchanges space at the Cultural Marketplace site will bring new ways to generate major outside interest and investment in Gresham, increased local employment opportunities, and increased economic and cultural independence from nearby Portland. Gresham will also acquire a new, socially responsible, not-for-profit corporate citizen

**Here is our plan for how we will realize our vision for the Gresham Musical Exchanges space and what it will be like:**

Musical Exchanges will create an auditorium/concert hall space within the Cultural Marketplace, which will include a stage, 1,000 seats, and a two-window ticket booth for in-person purchases of tickets for concerts. We have constructed a precise schedule for the construction and initiation of this Gresham, Oregon Musical Exchanges branch. This process will be scheduled, managed and implemented by Musical Exchanges in collaboration with the respected firm Jansen Construction Company over a period of three months. From our worldwide network of partners established and expanded over twenty years, we have selected three French and Italian musicians to perform inaugural concerts at the Gresham Cultural Marketplace, should we be confirmed as a site developer.

Our full business proposal document includes more in-depth answers as to **why** this organization meets the needs of the Gresham community and Cultural Marketplace site by stimulating the economy and invigorating local art and culture, **what** our solution will look like, **how** we will realize this vision, and **who** will benefit **in what ways** from the outcomes of this collaborative cultural development project.

**To strengthen our argument for a space in the Cultural Marketplace site, and to further illustrate the value of arts and arts exchange programs, Musical Exchanges has provided examples of the impact of the arts. These examples show the benefits of arts and arts exchange at the local, national, and international levels.**

**The first case study is BRIDGES: Harmony Through Music, illustrating the local benefits of arts and arts exchanges for generating understanding and inclusion. Case Study #1, Arts Education and Management - *BRIDGES: Harmony Through Music (local)***

**What is it?** BRIDGES: Harmony Through Music is an intensive after-school music education program for disadvantaged students at Cunningham Park, Elementary School in Vienna, Virginia. It emphasizes the positive value of diversity, and increases awareness of cultures and the arts. The BRIDGES program focuses on the disadvantaged, but is open to all Cunningham Park Elementary School students. The program offers over three hours after school multiple times a week, and each day of the program is comprised of academic tutoring, group musical lessons and performances in band, orchestra, and chorus, as well as a healthy snack. All of the students learn one band instrument of their choice and one orchestral instrument of their choice, while everyone develops his or her voice in chorus. The students rehearse and perform songs from a variety of different musical styles, from pop and jazz to classical and folk international music.

**When, where, how, and why was it established?** The program was started in 2013 and was initially staffed completely by volunteers. Ms. Bonny Tynch, a music teacher at Cunningham Park, saw that many students were coming to her asking her to listen to them on their instruments. Ms. Tynch realized that they were hungry for extra instruction and assistance with music, but their families couldn’t afford that. She enlisted the support of her music teacher colleagues. BRIDGES was to be based on El Sistema (The System), a highly successful Venezuelan intensive after-school music education program for children in the ghettos that was created to keep them safe from crime and provide a positive, academically-enriching environment.

**Now, you may be wondering: What are the program’s concrete results?** The students in this program, after as little as one year of participation, exhibit improved behavior during school and during the program, develop networks of friends among their peers and mentors among the school’s teachers and staff, and integrate their families into the local community. The disadvantaged population of students that BRIDGES concentrates on started with reading and mathematics test scores that were towards the bottom of the school as a whole, but after these students went through the BRIDGES program, received its academic tutoring and snacks, and developed a positive musical passion or hobby, their test scores climbed to a position above the averages for the general school body. Juan, for example, came to Cunningham Park Elementary School from El Salvador. While he had an excellent grasp of English and was obviously a very bright child, he struggled in school. He acted out in class, got angry or sad easily, and bullied other students. The teachers learned from conferences with his parents that there was a situation of poverty and instability at home that led Juan to act out. After a semester in BRIDGES, though, the results of the program were already obvious. Not only did Juan act out much less, but he also completed more of his homework, participated in class, didn’t feel a need to bully his peers, and made friends with his peers in the orchestra.

**The second case study moves to both the national and international levels, focusing on the US National Symphony Orchestra. Case Study #2, Russian and American Musical Performance Exchange - *The National Symphony Orchestra (national and international)***

**What is it?** The National Symphony Orchestra is a private American orchestra music group that travels around the country and the world performing an ever-evolving mixture of American and global repertoire from the classical and popular music genres, among others. In their national performances, they share with their audiences this unique mix of musical influences from the US and around the world, inspiring fellow musicians, entertaining audiences, and respecting international cultures and artistic traditions. They also perform abroad. They performed in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory in Moscow, Russia on Wednesday, March 29, 2017. The performance featured Russian music, not American music, in an effort to foster understanding between the nations and to show appreciation for Russia’s great traditional of expressive works in the classical orchestral music canon. The performance was also meant to honor the 90th birthday of the great Russian cellist and conductor, Mstislav Rostropovich, who served for many years as the NSO’s beloved conductor.

As reported by Anne Midgette of The Washington Post, this concert came at a critical time for both the US and Russia, as political relations have become increasingly strained in recent years. The results were an enthusiastic and entertained Russian audience, American musicians who had gained first-hand experience of the different world perspective of another culture, and a performance space that generated significant revenue. Bridges of mutual understanding were strengthened between the American and Russian societies.

**A third case study, focusing again on the national and international level of arts exchanges, now follows.**

**Case Study 3 (national and international)**

**The Former US Ambassador to Ecuador, Adam Namm, was known for playing traditional Ecuadorean music, in addition to American music, in order to overcome the negative and tense political relationship between the United States of America and Ecuador.**

Let’s start with Mr. Namm’s cultural background. Studying abroad in France as a college student, he was inspired pursue globally-focused work. So, Mr. Namm embarked on a 30-year career with the US Department of State. This led him to serve in various positions around the world, including as the US ambassador to Ecuador.

In Ecuador, there was significant anti-American sentiment among government officials. This made the job of being an American diplomat quite challenging. The general population, however, had a more neutral opinion of the US overall, and often enjoyed American culture and products. Realizing this, Mr. Namm discovered that an effective way to foster understanding and promote better relations between these two countries would be to help Ecuadoreans and Americans appreciate each other’s musical traditions. Mr. Namm first played American jazz, and then traditional Ecuadorean music. He performed these songs with local artists, eventually forging strong bonds within both the government and the community.

**This is what Musical Exchanges has achieved with its previous branches – a dynamic revitalization of the local community of the Musical Exchanges branch, the creation of connections that foster mutual understanding between local communities, national populations, and global ‘societies’ of musicians, artists, and art consumers, and mechanisms for inclusion and expression of community members.**

**Throughout our twenty years of experience, we have developed and maintained strong, productive branches in Washington DC and Pittsburgh that have international partners and affiliates. We have developed a financial network to make our work possible. So, to cover the costs of our branches, we use this network, which is composed of federal and local grants from the State Department, National Endowment for the Arts, and local government arts initiatives, donations from individual philanthropists with an interest in our work to angel investors, venture capitalists, and philanthropic groups. We also acquire over 25% of our annual funding through ticket sales and performance event revenue. Details of our financial strategy are available in the full business proposal document.**

**Musical Exchanges hopes to bring its history of sustainable and accessible arts exchanges to the Gresham, Oregon community. We always prioritize dynamism in and positive relations with the communities in which we operate. Thank you.**