

## Request for Qualifications:

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2 Positions: Vocal Coach/Choral Director and Choral Accompanist

### Introduction

Increasing research shows that involvement in artistic activities can help older adults live longer, healthier lives with more vital cognitive functioning. Singing, in particular, uses the entire body and mind, provides vocal exercise that improves the tone of the speaking voice, increases lung capacity and improves posture. In addition, new studies indicate that those adults involved in regular singing activities in particular, experience less depression, greater enjoyment in life, less need for medication and fewer falls and injuries.

The Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission and the City's Older Adult Services continue to collaborate on the Creative Aging Program, intended to introduce and engage older adults (50+ years old) in high quality arts experiences. The Creative Aging Choral Initiative is the latest project of this highly successful collaboration.

### Project Description

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#### Background

Many older adults have enjoyed singing in their past or have always wanted to sing, but can be tentative about participating in established community singing groups for a variety of reasons. They may define themselves as being without talent, or no longer having a good enough voice, coordination or eyesight to succeed at it. They may feel shy or intimidated at the prospect of being an awkward beginner in an established choral group, or unable to get to evening rehearsals.

Through the Creative Aging Choral Initiative, the collaborating agencies seek to inspire and encourage elders to become involved in an ongoing older adult singing group. The first two years of this proposed project would be focused on establishing a sustainable group at Ethel Hart Senior Center in Sacramento. Plans for future years include developing other similar singing groups in other sites in the city that could collaborate with the Hart group to produce larger concerts or festivals in celebration of their growing elder singing community.

#### Project Activities

Class activities would focus on learning and improving singing skills, healthy use of an aging voice, increased breath support, learning to sing in harmony in both small ensembles and a large group, and other musical skills like reading music, incorporating hand-held instruments or performing for others. Although performances for peers and others will be a part of the class experience, they will not be the primary focus. The class would be open to older adults who have never sung, as well as experienced singers. This ongoing class/chorus would be structured to allow new participants to join 3-4 times per year to build capacity of the group while allowing existing participants to continue to build their skills uninterrupted by a continual flow of new students.

The class will be held at Hart Senior Center in Sacramento tentatively beginning January 2014 for approximately 46 sessions per year and will continue for two years. The class will be an hour long with few holiday or other schedule interruptions in order to ensure a dependable routine for participants. A minimum

of 20 older adults will participate in the class initially, with plans to steadily increase participation over the two years to 75 or more participants. If demand exceeds those numbers and the space capacity of Hart Senior Center, efforts will be made to create a second class/chorus at Hart or another site.

## Submit Your Qualifications

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The Creative Aging Choral Initiative seeks a **professional vocal coach/choral director** and a **professional accompanist** to lead the class/chorus. The successful candidate for vocal coach/director will be chosen for their expertise as an excellent musician, for their experience as a teacher knowledgeable about the needs of nurturing and shaping an aging voice, and for their capacity to effectively lead multi-level groups. The accompanist will be chosen for their expertise as an excellent musician, for their successful experience as an accompanist and for their capacity to respond flexibly and competently to the fluid demands of an educational project of this nature. Successful candidates must have daytime availability during the week in order to be considered.

**Compensation for vocal coach/choral director and accompanist:**

Vocal Coach/Director: \$10,400 over two years

Accompanist: \$6,320 over two years

Compensation includes up to 8 informal performances over the 2 year period.

### How to Submit

Interested candidates should submit the following via email to [lnorman@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:lnorman@cityofsacramento.org) by **3:00 p.m. on Monday, November 25, 2013**. Be sure to specify whether you are applying for the vocal coach/choral director or accompanist position.

**Vocal Coach/Director Position:**

1. Professional résumé, no longer than 2 pages in length.
2. A brief description of your teaching and artistic philosophies, as they relate to the proposed project, no longer than 2 paragraphs.
3. A 1-page response to the following prompts:
  - a. If selected, what specific activities might you use to assist seniors in improving singing skills and building their ensemble capacity, given the special considerations of the population?
  - b. If selected, what strategies might you use to help build interest in and commitment to the group?
4. Two references (including phone numbers and email addresses) and up to three (optional) letters of reference, reviews, or a combination of the two.
5. An artist sample, no longer than 3 minutes in duration, demonstrating the musical skills and abilities necessary to successfully lead this group. Web links are preferred, but CD/DVDs are also acceptable. Send hard-copy submissions to: SMAC, Attn: Creative Aging Choral Initiative, 300 Richards Blvd, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Sacramento, CA 95811.

**Accompanist Position:**

1. Professional résumé, no longer than 2 pages in length.
2. A brief description of your accompanying, and/or teaching philosophies, as they relate to the proposed project, no longer than 2 paragraphs.
3. A 1-page response to the following prompt: If selected, how might you support the goals of assisting older adults in improving singing skills and building their ensemble capacity as a group through your role as an accompanist?
4. Two references (including phone numbers and email addresses) and up to three (optional) letters of reference, reviews, or a combination of the two.
5. An artist sample, no longer than 3 minutes in duration, demonstrating the musical skills and abilities necessary to successfully accompany this group and support the work of the vocal coach/director.

Web links are preferred, but CD/DVDs are also acceptable. Send hard-copy submissions to: SMAC,  
Attn: Creative Aging Choral Initiative, 300 Richards Blvd, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Sacramento, CA 95811

## Candidate Review & Selection

Arts Commission staff will screen submissions for eligibility. A review panel comprised of representatives from collaborating agencies and arts professionals will make recommendations by evaluating and ranking each candidate. Their evaluations will be based on the following criteria:

- 1. Artistic Quality**
  - a. Vocal coach/director: specifically in regards to vocal coaching, choral repertoire, teaching and directing skills
  - b. Accompanist: specifically in regards to mastery of piano and accompanying skills
- 2. Educational Skill**
  - a. specifically in regards to knowledge of and experience with an older adult population
- 3. Leadership**
  - a. Specifically in regards to the candidate's personal style and their demonstrated capacity to build loyalty and a following in similar projects.

All panel and staff decisions are final and are not subject to appeals. The panel will meet in early December, 2013 to review submitted proposals. The specific date of the review will be posted on the Arts Commission website at [www.SacMetroArts.org](http://www.SacMetroArts.org). The review panel process may be followed by individual interviews with selected candidates based on recommendations of the review panel.

## Next Steps

Staff typically notifies all candidates of their application status within 2 weeks of the review date.

Successful candidates must agree to work with Arts Commission and Hart Senior Center staff to develop and execute the Initiative. Further, successful candidates must complete a contractual agreement and any necessary tax documents.

## Inquiries

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Please feel free to contact Arts Commission staff with any questions. All inquiries should be directed to Laura Norman at [lnorman@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:lnorman@cityofsacramento.org) or 916-808-3979.