

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 8, 2021

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**RECOVERY FOR ALL OF US: MAYOR DE BLASIO RELEASES GUIDELINES FOR
“OPEN CULTURE” PROGRAM**

*Cultural organizations can apply to produce performances and arts programming in
designated streets starting March 1*

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today released guidelines for the City’s [Open Culture](#) program, which will permit outdoor cultural performances on designated city streets this spring. Open Culture will provide stages for artists and cultural groups in all five boroughs, putting artists back to work and providing New Yorkers the opportunity to enjoy the arts safely in their neighborhoods.

“Arts, culture, and live events are the heart of New York City. Today, we’re bringing them back,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “From Open Streets, to Open Restaurants, to Open Culture, New York City has found creative and sustainable ways to connect New Yorkers to their neighborhoods while staying safe from COVID-19. I’m honored to support the cultural institutions who make our city great, and I can’t wait to see our creative community in action.”

"Art and culture make New York's communities stronger, more vibrant places and they provide jobs for cultural workers across the five boroughs," said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Gonzalo Casals**. "The pandemic has hit the cultural community hard, particularly the performing arts sector which thrives on live, in person experiences. With Open Culture, we're thrilled to raise the curtain on dozens of streets across the city as new sites for culture, community, and engagement, and we look forward to seeing our artists and cultural groups bring them to life later this spring."

“New York City can't come back without the creative economy, which has been severely impacted by the pandemic with so many live music and performing arts venues unable to operate since March of last year,” said **Anne del Castillo, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment**. “The Open Culture program allows people to safely experience our performing arts offerings while supporting the venues, cultural institutions and talented performers who make our great city the creative capital of the world.”

“Open Culture will provide critical revenue and recovery opportunities for hundreds of arts and entertainment organizations, while giving New Yorkers brand new ways to enjoy their neighborhoods. We are proud to work across city agencies to write the playbook on creatively using public space to meet needs during this time,” said **Ellyn Canfield, Executive Director, Citywide Event Coordination and Management**.

Modeled on the City’s successful and nation-leading [Open Streets](#) program, Open Culture is a new permit type available from the Mayor’s Street Activity Permit Office (SAPO) allowing for

ticketed performances, rehearsals, classes, and workshops. Arts and cultural institutions, as well as entertainment venues, can secure a permit for single day, socially distanced performances at over 100 street locations throughout all five boroughs. Following the release of these draft guidelines, applications will open to eligible organizations March 1, 2021 and will extend through October 31, 2021. Eligible organizations include:

- Arts and Culture Institutions: Members of the [Cultural Institutions Group](#) (CIG); recipients of [Cultural Development Fund](#) (CDF) support; recipients of [borough arts council](#) funding in 2019 or 2020; or other groups are eligible for CDF grant funding but haven't received before.
- Cultural Venues (Performance Venues): Entertainment facilities designed to be used for a performance in front of a live audience; this could include concert venues, theaters, and other establishments.

SAPO will accept applications on a rolling basis starting March 1, 2021. For complete guidelines, visit SAPO's [website](#).

"The Bronx Council on the Arts is proud to be a partner in this initiative that will help bring back arts and culture to the City, and particularly to the Bronx, where artists and the community have been so disproportionately impacted by the pandemic," said **Viviana Bianchi, Executive Director, Bronx Council on the Arts**.

"Open Culture is an incredible initiative that gives back in the spirit of creative, civic and economic sustainability. In this difficult time, artists have not stopped creating, even in their homes or online, and this initiative provides much needed opportunities to restore both city life and artists' careers, allowing the work to finally be shared again with New Yorkers," said **Lili Chopra, Executive Director, Artistic Programs, LMCC**.

"Brooklyn's dynamic artistic community has been eagerly awaiting opportunities to participate in the revitalization of our creative economy by presenting their work to the public in ways that are safe and engaging," said **Charlotte A. Cohen, Executive Director of Brooklyn Arts Council**, which partners with the City to amplify and empower local artists and arts organizations. "We are so delighted to see the City innovating the Open Culture Program as part of a collective effort to bring creativity back to our streets and our lives - we need the arts to reflect our shared humanity now more than ever, after a period of so much suffering and loss."

"The dance community is eager for this opportunity to begin down the road to a return to performances. The Open Culture program is a welcome first step towards that eventuality," said **Alejandra Duque Cifuentes, executive director of Dance/NYC**. "Dance and arts workers and groups from diverse communities and genres will be represented in our streets across our boroughs during the coming months, as we embrace this opportunity to safely create and experience art together again. We are grateful to the City and the many organizers who made this important program a reality and look forward to the ways we will work together to continue to serve the needs of the arts and cultural workforce as it recovers from the impacts of the pandemic."

"Members of the Cultural Institutions Group, as well as performing arts organizations throughout the city, and performers are all thrilled for the opportunities that Open Culture will provide. Artists will be bringing joy, beauty and unforgettable performances outside – safely," said **Taryn Sacramone, CIG Chair, Executive Director, Queens Theatre**. "The diversity of the cultural community will be on display with streets turned into stages across all five boroughs. It's a much-needed opportunity for artists to work and to connect with audiences, and something for all New Yorkers to look forward to - a reason for celebration!"

"Since its inception, LMCC has partnered with public agencies and artists in an effort to create, develop, and at other times recover and revitalize Manhattan through the Arts. We know firsthand how valuable Open Culture will be for NYC's artists and our local communities to come together, connect, and rebuild our City, and we are honored to participate in this initiative," said **Diego S. Segalini, Executive Director, Finance & Administration, LMCC**.

"We love the idea of bringing the arts to the people in their neighborhoods," said **Hoong Yee Lee Krakauer, Executive Director of Queens Council on the Arts**.

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