

WATERFIRE PROVIDENCE

– CREATIVELY TRANSFORMING OUR CITY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WaterFire Providence Announces an Open Call for Artists for the 2023-2024 Accelerate Cohort

A professional development program for young creatives under the age of 30

Providence, RI WaterFire Providence announces the launch of the 2023-2024 WaterFire Accelerate application. Starting on June 1, 2023, at 9:00 AM EST, the WaterFire Accelerate program will begin accepting submissions from prolific young creatives looking to take part in WaterFire's 12-month professional development program. The next cohort would kick-off in September 2023 and conclude in September 2024.

WaterFire's Accelerate program is a year-long professional development program for emerging creatives under 30. The program provides selected participants with funding, mentorship, and exposure to industry leaders, giving them the tools and resources they need to succeed in their chosen field. Accelerate is specifically designed to engage young artists who may not have had the opportunity to pursue a traditional arts education. Through a series of lectures, workshops and site visits, professionals in the field share their experiences and learnings in open discussions where topics involving best practices, self-representation, marketing, accounting, taxes and technology are explored. Each cohort represents the Providence community and is diverse in both the makeup of participants and their art mediums. The application can be found on the WaterFire website at <https://waterfire.org/accelerate>

"At WaterFire Providence, we're committed to supporting and nurturing the next generation of creative talent. We believe that the arts have the power to transform lives and communities, and we're excited to launch the 2023-2024 WaterFire Accelerate program to help young creatives achieve their full potential. We look forward to seeing the innovative ideas and fresh perspectives that this year's applicants will bring to the table, and we're honored to be a part of their journey to success," says Peter A. Mello, Managing Director + coCEO of WaterFire Providence.

Each artist receives a \$1,000 stipend, \$500 at the beginning of the program, and \$500 for the culminating group exhibition in the final months. This stipend helps each artist produce new works during the program and aligns with WaterFire Providence's overall mission of supporting artists and

recognizing the value of their craft. Aside from the group show, WaterFire provides various opportunities for Accelerate artists to showcase and sell their work throughout the program, such as the WaterFire ArtMarts, pop-ups at The Graduate's Sweet Dreams Society Studio and the UNFI Cafe PVD, and downtown WaterFire lighting events. Each artist also has the opportunity to include their merchandise at the WaterFire Arts Center Store.

WaterFire Providence has tapped local leaders in the arts community to be a part of the selection committee for the 2023-2024 cohort, as well as a current WaterFire Accelerate Artist, and three WaterFire staff members. The committee includes: Joe Wilson, Jr., Director, Department of Art, Culture + Tourism; Michael Rose, Gallery Manager at the Providence Art Club; Candita Clayton, gallerist, curator, and art advisor; Savaree Hazard-Chaney, current WaterFire Accelerate Member; Peter Mello, Managing Director + coCEO of WaterFire Providence; Nicole Nehiley, Community Relations Manager at WaterFire Providence and Grechel Rosado, Programs Coordinator at WaterFire Providence.

The current cohort consists of six artists, Denzel Amoah, Justin DeGraide, Savaree "Sav" Hazard-Chaney, Hannah Nahas, Rhue Nobre, and Elijah Trice. The opening of their group exhibition, *If These Walls Could Talk*, will be on Thursday, June 1, 2023. To read more about the current cohort please visit: <https://waterfire.org/waterfire-accelerate-presents-what-have-we-been-up-to/>

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About WaterFire Providence

WaterFire Providence® is an independent, 501(c)3 non-profit arts organization whose mission is to inspire Providence and its visitors by revitalizing the urban experience, fostering community engagement, and creatively transforming the city by presenting WaterFire for all to enjoy. Each year nearly 1 million people come to downtown Providence to experience WaterFire contributing over \$149,000,000 to the local economy, generating over \$9,000,000 of direct tax revenue for the State of Rhode Island and supporting 1,294 jobs for community residents and strengthening Providence's Creative Capital and Rhode Island's State for the Arts brands. For information about WaterFire Providence and the WaterFire Arts Center visit <https://waterfire.org/>.

About the WaterFire Arts Center

WaterFire Providence purchased the Art Center in 2012 and began rehabilitation for the vacant, historic, industrial building in the underserved Olneyville/Valley neighborhood of Providence. The 37,000 sq. ft. multi-use arts center has become WaterFire's first permanent home in the community and serves as its headquarters, production complex, and a multi-purpose arts venue as well as a social enterprise platform strengthening the organization's long-term financial sustainability. Exhibitions presented at WaterFire Arts Center will further the organization's agenda of providing arts and culture opportunities and experiences for all, regardless of social, cultural, or economic background. For more information about the WaterFire Arts Center including rental inquiries, please visit: <https://waterfire.org/wfac>