

# 2040



# HARLEM STAGE: 40 YEARS AND BEYOND



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# Glossary

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**The Capstone Group (“The Group”):** the group of Columbia Sustainability Management Program Students who supported Harlem Stage throughout the Spring semester of 2024.

**Social sustainability:** the practice of identifying and managing business impacts, both positive and negative, on people. (UN Global Compact, n.d.)

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities (“HBCUs”):** any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary [of Education] to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or is, according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation. (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.)

**Artivism:** the act of creating cultural works that are rooted in the rejection of oppression and amplification of the oppressed. “The most radical art is not protest art but works that take us to another place, envision a different way of seeing, perhaps a different way of feeling.” (Robin Kelly, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*, 11.) (New Music USA, n.d.)

**Greenhouse gas emissions (“GHG emissions”):** gasses that trap heat in the atmosphere (e.g., carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide). (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, n.d.)

**Heating, Ventilation, and Air Condition (“HVAC”):** the systems used to heat and/or cool buildings. (Petro Home Services, n.d.)

**Events Industry Council (“EIC”):** a non-profit federation of international organizations within the events industry. (Event Industry Council, n.d.)

**International Organization for Standardization (“ISO”):** an international nongovernmental organization that develops proprietary, industrial, and commercial standards. (International Organization for Standardization, n.d.)

**Emissions factors:** are numerical values that relate the quantity of pollutants released to the atmosphere with an activity or process that generates emissions, such as industrial operations, transportation, or energy production. These factors are essential for assessing air quality, developing regulations, and implementing pollution control strategies. The US EPA Emission Factors Hub serves as a central repository for accessing emissions factors data.

**NYCW Region eGRID Code:** In order to calculate location-based GHG emissions, the accurate emission factor needs to be used because emissions can vary significantly based on factors such as geographic location, climate, economic activities, energy sources, and regulatory policies. The NYCW is the emission factor related to the region Harlem Stage is located. It refers to NPCC NYC / Westchester / Eastern Power Grid. (Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory, n.d.)

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# Executive Summary



Harlem Stage is a performing arts center located in the heart of Harlem, New York City, that is dedicated to showcasing diverse artistic expression from artists from all walks of life. At the intersection of sustainability and arts, Harlem Stage aims to model leadership and inclusivity. While sustainability often conjures images of environmental conservation, its scope extends far beyond these boundaries, also encompassing social, cultural, and economic dimensions crucial for the flourishing and well-being for all.

This capstone project aims to redefine the relationship between art and sustainability, with Harlem Stage as the proof point. While Harlem Stage demonstrates a commitment to sustainability through various initiatives, the organization's limited resources influence the potential growth opportunities that could result from implementing strategies of amplification and promotion. Such strategies could also benefit from a more cohesive framework to communicate their efforts and as

such, this capstone project will highlight the proposed three new guiding principles for Harlem Stage - People, Planet, & Profit.

As Harlem Stage already conducts numerous community outreach programs, the team thought creatively of potential opportunities for expansion and collaboration. The recommendations presented in this capstone project urge Harlem Stage to establish an academic linkage between prestigious institutions like Columbia University and HBCUs, such as Howard University or those within the Atlanta University Center. These partnerships could leverage the shared cultural experiences between the Harlem community and other communities across the U.S. to nourish and expand its community for future generations. Additionally, with the evolving landscape of arts education in HBCUs and federal incentives supporting this development, Harlem Stage can actively engage in promoting arts programs and nurturing a new generation of artists, researchers, and cultural leaders. By leveraging its influence and resources, Harlem Stage can contribute to the advancement of arts education, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and cultural expression among students of color, while enriching both the community and the broader cultural landscape.

When evaluating the Planet pillar, the Capstone Group evaluated the organization's assets to enhance sustainability, initially planning to audit energy usage, material selection, carbon emissions, and waste generation. They found Harlem Stage already prioritized waste reduction, recycling, and energy efficiency. Subsequent discussions with Harlem Stage explored further integration of environmental sustainability into operations, including a greenhouse gas emissions analysis and creating a waste vendor pamphlet tailored to Harlem Stage's resources and event needs.

When evaluating the Profit pillar, the Capstone

# Executive Summary



Group referenced Harlem Stage's goal to raise \$25 million in 5 years through its Campaign for Harlem Stage as a guiding post for potential recommendations. The organization boasts a diverse group of funders, with Pat Cruz, its Artistic Director and CEO, playing a pivotal role for over 40 years. As Cruz prepares to retire this year, sustaining Harlem Stage's legacy beyond her tenure will be crucial. The Capstone Group's research revealed an opportunity to expand Harlem Stage's reach to new artists and donors. To achieve this, a social media fundraising guide is proposed, outlining strategies like Facebook ads and Instagram donations. Additionally, a Junior Board is recommended, with a detailed plan for its establishment, including guidelines, structure, and recruitment strategies.

The Capstone Group's final deliverables and recommendations for Harlem Stage encompass both internal and external strategies. Internally, we're structuring the Capstone Group's multiple ideas and initiatives into a coherent framework to help document and expand their ongoing work. Externally, we're providing an Impact Report that functions akin to an ESG (Environmental, Social,

and Governance) report, providing a plug-and-play mechanism for HarlemStage to communicate their sustainability practices to their stakeholders for the coming years. Through these efforts, Harlem Stage is poised to lead the arts industry in embracing sustainability practices, demonstrating a commitment to enduring impact and advancement.

# Harlem Stage Capstone Group



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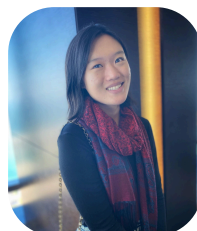
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# Problem Statement



Sustainability rarely finds its place in discussions surrounding arts and culture. More commonly, it is linked to environmental conservation and ecological practices. Although commonly understood as ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future’, its true meaning goes beyond this narrow definition to include essential and interconnected factors across social, cultural, and economic. *Art, which is frequently viewed through the lenses of creativity, expression, and appealing aesthetics, may appear disconnected from sustainability.* However, through deeper assessment, the two concepts show a deep link.

In this capstone project, Harlem Stage remains the focal point of redefining the broader definition of sustainability as well as its applicable social, cultural, and economic dimensions within the arts. Social sustainability within the arts entails tackling barriers to access, representation, and equity for people of color; cultural sustainability revolves around valuing and amplifying the diverse voices, traditions, and artistic expressions of communities

of color; and economic sustainability models the financial stability, advancement, and lived experiences of the artists and professionals an organization serves.

At the core of Harlem Stage's new sustainability mission is a commitment to 'artivism'—the fusion of art and activism to bring about social change. The organization now recognizes the interdependence of social and environmental factors and also acknowledges its responsibility to address the systemic injustices that disproportionately affect communities of color such as the Harlem community.

This capstone project aims to highlight how Harlem Stages' 40-year continuance and legacy provides the organization with the unique opportunity to redefine what sustainability means in the context of the arts, while also serving as a model for long-term sustainability efforts. As students supporting Harlem Stage to develop a sustainability framework that also addresses the organization's needs for the next 40 years, the first step was to reconcile the academic and corporate definition of sustainability with Harlem Stage's definition, one that emphasized community uplift, and service to the diverse inhabitants of Harlem.

Upon first meeting with the representatives of Harlem Stage, the Harlem Stage Capstone Group observed that the organization had a wide array of sustainability initiatives. However, these activities were not organized under a comprehensive sustainability framework. The Capstone Group then leveraged Harlem Stage's sustainability priorities, to develop recommendations for spotlighting key programming as well as partnering with other organizations to expand its reach in order to better utilize its resources.

# Background



Over the past 40 years, Harlem Stage has been a vital cultural hub for the community, fostering creativity, cultural celebration, and community engagement. The organization hosts performances ranging from music concerts, theatrical performances, dance performances, spoken word, and beyond.

Founded in 1983 as Aaron Davis Hall, Harlem Stage emerged as a result of a lack of inclusivity within the arts space for artists of color, including active censorship and under-resourcing of opportunities that showcased their talent. Since its origin, the organization has been devoted to a singular mission: “to perpetuate and celebrate the unique and diverse artistic legacy of Harlem and the indelible impression it has made on American culture”. Throughout its history, Harlem Stage has adapted to the evolving cultural landscape of Harlem and New York City by providing opportunities for artists of color, making

performances easily accessible to all audiences, and introducing children to the performing arts.

In recent decades, Harlem Stage has been more than a physical venue for its community but rather expanded its reach to become a true platform. The organization has partnered with local and national organizations, such as Sound Business, Inc., local schools, and more to connect with broader audiences and amplify underrepresented voices in the arts community. More recently, Harlem Stage has deepened their commitment to education by offering a range of programs that provide mentorship, resources, and networks for artists of all ages and educational levels. Some of these programs include after-school programs, residency programs, and the WaterWorks program for emerging artists.

As Harlem Stage enters its fifth decade, it continues to uphold its mission while also encouraging the broader arts industry to consider integrating sustainability principles into its operations, programming, and governance as it does. Harlem Stage exemplifies what sustainability can look like within this industry, and many of its peers and vendors lack this characteristic. Through the organization’s physical venue, The Gatehouse, Harlem Stage honors the history and culture of Harlem, while also maintaining its commitment to efficiency and environmental impact mitigation. Lastly, Harlem Stage proudly upholds principles of environmental justice as an arts-based organization that spotlights people of color in an underserved community and supports the well-being of the current and future generations of its community.



# 40 Years of Harlem Stage

**1980s**

Aaron Davis Hall, now known as Harlem Stage, is established as a performing arts center. Welcoming local artists of multiple disciplines, Harlem Stage becomes a cultural hub for the community.

**1990s**

The organization begins to attract artists and audiences from across New York City and beyond. It also expands their programming including launching residency programs to support emerging artists.

**2000s**

The organization rebrands from Aaron Davis Hall to Harlem Stage to better align with their Mission Statement. Harlem Stage then continues to expand its programming by introducing new artists and new forms of expression.

**2010s**

The WaterWorks residency program launches, which represents artists exploring themes of social justice. In 2013, Harlem Stage celebrated their 30th Anniversary with a year-long series of performances.

**2020s**

Harlem Stage showcased its resilience by maintaining its programming throughout the COVID-19 pandemic through virtual programming including performances and community engagement. In 2023, Harlem Stage celebrated its 40th Anniversary.

# Project Scope



## Objectives

In the beginning of this capstone project the Capstone Group sought to understand the level and type of support that Harlem Stage was requesting. Harlem Stage had previously engaged other consultants and also worked with a team from Columbia Business School. Harlem Stage and their staff were already implementing some of the suggested changes or activities the Capstone Group initially planned to recommend. This was not an organization that was averse to change, rather they were embracing ideas from all avenues and asked us to contemplate creative solutions to enhance the activities that they were already conducting. As such, the organization did not share explicit guidance on what support outside of these reports should look like. As a result, the Group sought out more in-depth feedback from Harlem Stage leaders on what success within the Capstone Group's role as student consultants should look like within each of the defined People, Planet, and Profit pillars.

During the feedback-gathering process, the

Harlem Stage leaders who were interviewed highlighted key priorities:

- Succession planning, as the organization's CEO and figurehead will seek to retire in the next few years
- Attracting new donors and funding sources to support the organization's operational needs
- Broadening Harlem Stage's Board of Directors and introducing a junior board
- Setting more quantifiable metrics for measuring community impact
- Maintaining a focus on energy efficiency at the Gatehouse

While still somewhat aligned with the initial project scope outlined for the Capstone Group in the Capstone Handbook, the scope shifted slightly as the Capstone Group gathered information and gained a better understanding of each of Harlem Stage's priorities and timelines, including what was achievable in the timeline of the semester. Centering the new definition of sustainability and creating tools for Harlem Stage to future-proof, or sustain, the legacy of the organization for another 40 years, became the overarching objectives throughout the capstone project.

The methodology section of this report outlines why the Capstone Group determined that three pillars (People, Planet, Profit) would provide the best framework for governing the project's deliverables and how the Capstone Group members determined how to organize the priorities across the People, Planet, and Profit pillars.

# Project Scope



## Deliverables

As previously mentioned, during the Capstone Group's conversations with Harlem Stage it became clear that the organization was already upholding high standards for sustainability internally. Harlem Stage shared with the Capstone Group that succession planning and evolving its board of directors were key focus areas for the organization. Donors also desired tangible ways to measure Harlem Stage's community impact, including how many people were reached through their educational and other local work. After gathering this information, the Capstone Group determined it would make sense to document all of this information. In order to consolidate all the work Harlem Stage is currently doing and has planned for the future, the Capstone Group determined that a key deliverable would be to create an impact report. Such a document could support communicating the key aspects of Harlem Stage's work to date, and how the organization can evolve moving forward.

report, two environmental resources were developed for the Director of Operations, including a GHG emissions calculator as well as an educational vendor waste management pamphlet. Similar to the Impact Report, both of these items can be updated annually by Harlem Stage and leveraged to not only support their long-term goals but also to encourage their vendors to consider their own impact as well. Additionally, the Capstone Group plans to present the documents and recommendations to Harlem Stage at their June staff meeting.

To supplement the Capstone Group's impact

# Methodology



The Capstone Group's methodology with respect to how to evaluate Harlem Stage's sustainability program developed over the course of several meetings. Upon initial conversation, the Capstone Group drew upon Sustainability Management expertise including the traditional corporate sustainability-based environmental, social, and governance approach to reviewing an organization's risks and opportunities. Using this experience the Capstone Group attempted to apply the traditional ESG frameworks to Harlem Stage for the Capstone Group's evaluation. However, upon discussion, the Capstone Group realized that due to Harlem Stage's role as a community-based organization in the arts, the typical environmental, social, and governance lenses might not take into consideration the historical and cultural factors that are integral aspects of the organization's business strategy. Once the Capstone Group determined neither the corporate nor academic definitions of sustainability would fit, the Capstone Group looked to comparable organizations, namely other playhouses

in major cities that specialize in productions centered around Black and Brown artists that simultaneously offer community initiatives.

After reviewing the programs of other comparable organizations the Capstone Group identified three guiding principles that categorize Harlem Stage's work: People, Planet, and Profit. Harlem Stage is first and foremost committed to its people, not only the artists who curate and conduct performances in its historic venue but also the community of Harlem. Harlem Stage currently operates numerous programs that may not relate to the arts, but provide support for the everyday needs of the people of Harlem, including a free laundry service, meal drives, and other beneficial community initiatives. This type of work defines Harlem Stage, demonstrates why it is so critical to the community it serves, and illuminates that this institution is far more than a playhouse.

The second pillar, Planet, was largely concentrated on Harlem Stage's actual environmental impact, specifically, the organization's emissions derived from its activities that occur at its historic gatehouse location. Harlem Stage also conducts activities throughout the city, including an outdoor theatrical experience annually held in Bryant Park. The Capstone Group intentionally excluded any activities that occur outside of the gatehouse for the purpose of this analysis in order to focus on specific impacts that Harlem Stage has direct control of. Moreover, by focusing on the activities that occur under their own roof, Harlem Stage can more tangibly mitigate its impact.

Finally, the Capstone Group contemplated opportunities to enhance Harlem Stage's financial security through increased revenue. Instead of solely looking at ticket sales, the Capstone Group also considered ways that Harlem Stage could generate significant returns from other activities in order to support the future of the organization and

community it serves. Furthermore, the Capstone Group also contemplated how targeted marketing activities, a revamped social media attack plan, and outreach to the younger generation might support Harlem Stage to solidify multiple financial bedrocks to better secure their future.

As the Capstone Group set about conducting interviews with Harlem Stage's stakeholders and key position holders, the Capstone Group came to realize that Harlem Stage's definition of sustainability contrasted with the traditional definition the Capstone Group had come to learn through the Sustainability Management program at Columbia University. Moreover, it became increasingly clear that Harlem Stage desired an improved sustainability framework that incorporated the organization's unique perspective on sustainability and how that definition applies to their commitment to their community.

Moreover, while the Capstone Group did attempt to do so initially, the reconciliation of the corporate definition of sustainability with Harlem Stage's viewpoint was a continuous process. It was only after extensive research and interviews that the Capstone Group felt confident enough to redefine sustainability in the context of Harlem Stage, with an expansive enough view to support the organization's priorities.

# Analysis & Recommendations



## Part I: People

Harlem, with its rich history and culture, serves as a source of inspiration and perseverance in the world of Black art. For decades, this iconic neighborhood has served as an epicenter for artistic expression, creativity, and activism, influencing the development of Black artists both nationally and globally. From the era of the 1920s Harlem Renaissance to the present day, Harlem has consistently reinvented what it means to be Black in America, laying the groundwork for Black art that transcends boundaries and strengthens communities. Harlem is the *blueprint* for artistic expression. And right in the heart of this neighborhood is Harlem Stage.

When founded in 1983, Harlem Stage, then known as Aaron Davis Hall, Inc., was set on a principle: **to confront the systemic censorship and inequity faced by artists of color, particularly Black artists**. At that time, despite their talent and creativity, Black artists were often marginalized,

denied, and deprived of the resources and platforms necessary to showcase their voices and visions. The founding of Harlem Stage represented a bold and visionary response to this injustice. Harlem Stage sought to challenge the status quo and redefine the narrative surrounding Black artistry. That means that for **four decades**, Harlem Stage has stood as a cornerstone of the neighborhood's cultural landscape, embodying the spirit of innovation and excellence that defines Harlem's artistic legacy. The mission is to provide access, resources, and enable audiences to witness the visionary work of excellence by artists of color that examine and critique the world, our world. Harlem Stage is more than just a venue for performances; *it is the catalyst for change and transformation*.

Understanding this legacy, the Capstone Group members leading the People pillar embarked on a journey to illuminate the work that Harlem Stage has been cultivating over the last few decades. In their mission lies this commitment to community–

a commitment that is shown in every facet of their organization and community-building efforts. As the Capstone Group tried to figure out the best approach, the Capstone Group also recognized the need for a more holistic understanding of the People pillar within the context of sustainability. For Harlem Stage, sustainability extends far beyond the environmental conservation of their historic building; it is social and cultural sustainability as well. Central to this vision is the notion of community building – the process of fostering connections, nurturing relationships, and creating spaces where all individuals can thrive and contribute meaningfully to the collective well-being. And behind this vision is **People**.

In essence, the Capstone Group's goal was to shine a spotlight on Harlem Stage's innovative approach to sustainability, one that places people and community at its core. The Capstone Group assessed the programs and initiatives the organization has, trying to figure out how to best amplify the voices and experiences of these different communities. Harlem Stage exemplifies what it means to build a sustainable future rooted in equity, justice, and resilience. During the Capstone Group's meetings with the Harlem Stage team, they offered insight into their vision for a comprehensive approach to sustainability, community engagement, and People:

**Jordan Carter**, Harlem Stage's Education & Community Engagement Manager, discussed how sustainability is integral to the organization's mission, highlighting their dedication to serving and uplifting the community. Initiatives like "Free Laundry Day" and residency programs at partner schools showcase Harlem Stage's commitment to providing impactful services that meet the ongoing needs of their community.

**Sarah McCaffery**, Harlem Stage's Programming Manager & Advocate Curator, provided insights into the cultural and economic dimensions of sustainability, emphasizing the organization's role in nurturing artists and broadening cultural horizons.

Programs like the "WaterWorks Initiative" and educational opportunities contribute to supporting the cultural landscape of Harlem and beyond.

**Eric Oberstein**, Harlem Stage's Managing Director, highlighted the organization's approach to sustainability, focusing on initiatives aimed at addressing pressing social issues such as mental health and gun violence.

In reviewing the programs, the Capstone Group conducted an in-depth assessment of Harlem Stage's capacity and impact within the Harlem community. Through careful analysis and evaluation, the Capstone Group sought to understand the depth of Harlem Stage's engagement, its effectiveness in addressing community needs, and its overall contribution to the cultural, social, and economic fabric of Harlem.

From the "WaterWorks Program" for artists of color to the "Frances Davis Arts Education Programs" for elementary and high school students to the "Dive Deeper Residency Program" for artists performing on Harlem Stage's presenting season, Harlem Stage offers a range of opportunities for individuals of all ages to engage with the arts, expand their horizons, and realize their full potential.

**WaterWorks Commissioning and Artist Development Program:** Harlem Stage's signature program, embodies its commitment to commissioning and nurturing the talents of established and emerging artists of color.

- **WaterWorks: Established Artists:** A prestigious two-year commission tailored for established artists of color. During the first year, artists focus on developing and refining their work, while the second year is dedicated to preparing for its premiere. Harlem Stage provides commissioning fees and project budgets to support the development of each artist's work. Over a five-year period, Harlem Stage will commission two artists annually, totaling ten artists.

## Current Program Structure

### **Music**

WaterWorks, Uptown Nights, Harlem Stride, Carnegie Hall Concerts, Fund for New Work, Harlem Stage Partners

### **Dance**

E-Moves, WaterWorks, Fund for New Work, The Frances Davis / Harlem Stage Arts Education Program

### **Film**

Harlem Stage Partners, Dive Deeper

### **Theater**

WaterWorks, Harlem Stage Partners, Fund for New Work

### **Dive Deeper**

Live and virtual theater activities related to performances

### **WaterWorks**

Commissions, residency, & humanity and educational activities / visionary artists / 1-3 year period

### **The Frances Davis / Harlem Stage Arts Education Program**

Commissions, opportunity, and support for artists / performances for children, all audiences

- **WaterWorks: Emerging Artists:** A significant one-year commission designed specifically for emerging artists of color. Throughout the year, artists immerse themselves in honing their artistic and business skills, refining their craft as musicians, playwrights, choreographers, and beyond. Harlem Stage offers commissioning, mentorship, and performance development opportunities to each artist. Over the course of five years, Harlem Stage will commission five artists annually, totaling twenty-five artists.

**Frances Davis Arts Education Programs:** At the forefront of Harlem Stage's community initiatives is its Frances Davis Arts Education Programs. Serving

elementary and high school students, this performing arts education program ignites young minds with the power of creativity and expression. It follows a **STRIVE 4 JOY** framework. Through this framework, we seek to reinforce six (6) core values:

- **S**peak out against racism and anti-blackness
- **T**est the limits of our creative comfort zones
- **R**espect ourselves and others
- **I**nspire self-confidence
- **V**isualize our perfect futures
- **E**xit toxic relationships

**Dive Deeper Residency Program:** Harlem Stage's Dive Deeper Residency Program offers artists a



unique platform to engage with the Harlem community on a deeper level. As artists participating in Harlem Stage's presenting season immerse themselves in residency activities, they provide insights into their artistic process and work. Each Dive Deeper session would be carefully aligned with Harlem Stage's **STRIVE 4 JOY** curriculum. Examples of residency activities include K-12 visits, university visits, community workshops, open rehearsals, master classes, film screenings, and listening sessions focused on an artist's influences.

**Community Engagement Program:** Harlem Stage's Community Engagement Program is a testament to its dedication to fostering meaningful connections with the Harlem community. From neighborhood block parties to community center volunteer efforts, this program ensures that Harlem Stage remains a vital hub for community engagement and empowerment

**Artists Circle Program:** Artist Circle Program brings together a select group of thirty to forty artists of color who have been commissioned or offered presenting opportunities by Harlem Stage throughout its history. Many of these artists view Harlem Stage as their "creative home," a space where their artistic visions are nurtured and celebrated.

**Early-Career Professional Training Programs:** Recognizing the importance of nurturing the next generation of performing arts professionals, Harlem Stage offers Early-Career Professional Training Programs for young adults of color; a fellowship, and an internship.

- Harlem Stage offers six (6) fellowships each year to candidates who demonstrate exceptional promise – including students of color who are enrolled in or have finished their graduate school studies as well as especially talented young people of color from communities throughout New York.

- Harlem Stage offers twelve (12) internships each year to talented undergraduate students and recent college graduates from institutions around the country. These students aspire to a professional career in performing arts management. The Internship offers programs that range from a six (6) week Summer experience to a four (4) month-long Fall or Spring immersion in one of several administrative departments at Harlem Stage.

Due to this organization's commitment to education, engagement, and professional development, Harlem Stage has had a profound and positive impact on countless individuals, enriching the cultural fabric of the neighborhood and beyond. The organization's dedication to diverse artistic expressions has already led to remarkable achievements within the organization and the community.

However, as the Capstone Group went deeper into the Capstone Group's assessment, there were a few hurdles in figuring out the best support. As a result, the Group felt inspired to gain insights directly from one of Harlem Stage's emerging artists from the 2024 WaterWorks cohort, Marie Thomas. Marie's involvement in the program demonstrated an opportunity to gain valuable insights about Harlem Stage's influence on both the artistic community and the neighborhood of Harlem.

# Harlem Stage and a Dream: Marie Thomas



Marie's reflections on her experience with the WaterWorks program provided the Capstone Group with further insight into Harlem Stage's impact on artistic growth and the meaning of true sustainability. As a key stakeholder, Marie mentioned her journey to New York began with a dream and a leap of faith. She met Eric Oberstein through her mentor, Autumn Angeletti. Eric recognized Marie's potential and offered her an invitation to apply for the prestigious WaterWorks program, which proved to be a turning point in her career.

In the Capstone Group's discussions with Marie, it became clear why social sustainability is such an important focal point for the organization, especially related to this project.

Marie's participation in the Waterworks program helped to change the trajectory of her career. She not only received guidance and mentorship but also became part of a community of artists who shared her passion and drive. Marie received a \$10,000

grant from the organization, exemplifying the tangible impact of the program, and of Harlem Stage. This financial support allowed her to continue to produce a short film, providing her with the resources necessary to bring her artistic vision to life and advance her career. The grant not only empowered Marie with some of the resources required to support her artistry, but also contributed to Harlem Stage's mission of promoting artistic growth and development within the community.

Through grants and programmings such as the "WaterWorks Program", Harlem Stage continues to empower artists, foster creativity, and promote social sustainability within the arts. And they will continue to do so for the **next** 40 years.

## **Beyond Harlem's Stage**

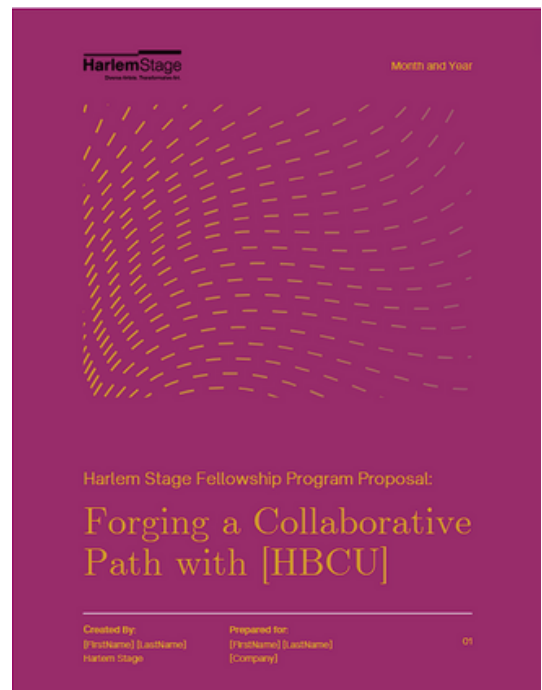
Many individuals who have participated in Harlem Stage programs, like Marie Thomas, share a deep connection with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), making them a natural partner for further collaboration. After conducting a thorough analysis of Harlem Stage's existing partnerships, community connections, and the demographics of program participants, the Capstone Group formulated a recommendation for Harlem Stage to establish an academic linkage between prestigious institutions such as Columbia University and an HBCU. Specifically, the Capstone Group recommends the organization establish an academic linkage between Columbia University and an HBCU, i.e. Howard University, the schools located in the Atlanta University Center, or Delaware State University.

The landscape of arts education in historically black colleges and universities is changing, with a rising acknowledgment of the value of incorporating arts and culture within the curriculum. Many HBCUs are currently investing in expanding their arts programs to attract students with creative minds who want to work in non-traditional professions. This trend reflects a greater recognition of the importance of arts education in cultivating creativity, critical thinking, and cultural expression among students of color, and is a great reflection on the generational changes to come for future professionals.

There are now federal incentives established to support this development, such as the HBCU Arts Act and the National Endowment for the Arts, which increase funding for HBCU arts education. These efforts seek to guarantee that students of color have access to affordable arts and culture programs that support the conservation, research, and validity of Black artists' publications. By giving funding and resources, these initiatives permit HBCUs to expand their arts education programs and provide opportunities for students to maximize their creative potential.

It is essential that Harlem Stage, as an established organization in the arts community, actively engages in this movement and uses its influence to contribute to HBCUs' efforts to advance arts education. Harlem Stage can strengthen its impact on the community and the overall cultural landscape by collaborating with HBCUs to promote arts programs. This recommendation allows Harlem Stage to nurture a new generation of artists, researchers, and cultural leaders capable of making substantial contributions to society through partnerships, outreach, and educational programs.

In the appendix we have provided a sample funding proposal to get Harlem Stage started on this legacy.



*Pitch Framework Cover Page*

# Analysis & Recommendations



## Part II: Planet

The Capstone Group initially assessed Harlem Stage's physical assets via NYC Oasis Maps, the NYC Department of Buildings, the organization's website, and other public information. The original plan was to audit the Harlem Stage Gatehouse and report on energy usage, material selection, carbon emissions, and waste generation, and offer solutions to increase sustainability within these categories. The Capstone Group aimed to identify areas of improvement and effective strategies to help Harlem Stage meet their sustainability goals.

On Tuesday, February 20th, 2024, the Capstone Group traveled to the Harlem Stage Gatehouse for a tour led by Eric Oberstein, Managing Director, and Rodney Bissessar, Director Of Operations. Upon touring the facility it became clear that the operations team at Harlem Stage is extremely sustainably minded and environmentally conscious. Waste reduction, proper recycling, and energy

efficiency are high priorities within the operations of the organization. Since the initial in-person walkthrough demonstrated that Harlem Stage was already prioritizing sustainable initiatives, it was critical to think creatively in ways to help the organization while being aware of the limitations, such as budget, staff to maintain projects, and skills around more technical sustainability work. It was paramount to the Capstone Group to recommend changes that fell within the scope and resource availability of the organization.

### The Gatehouse

The Harlem Stage playhouse was originally built in 1890 as a gatehouse of the Croton Aqueduct system to supply fresh drinking water to Central Park, Bryant Park, and other parts of the city. The Harlem location was chosen due to its elevation of 124 feet, one of the highest points in Manhattan, allowing water to flow downtown without the added use of pumps. In 1986, the building was

decommissioned and remained vacant for two decades. The Gatehouse remained under the ownership of New York City, and was rented to Harlem Stage in 2006. The conversion to a theater, designed by architecture firm Ohlhaufen DuBois, took place between 2002-2007, in collaboration with NYC's Department of Design and Construction, and in late 2006, Harlem Stage launched their inaugural season in the new Harlem Stage Gatehouse.

The renovated Gatehouse is a landmarked building, and many of the original 1890 materials were reused and restored, including stained glass windows and elaborate steel doors. Because of its landmark status, the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission must approve all alterations and improvements. This approval process added time and complications to the renovations. Upgrades and additions were held to a high standard by the Landmarks Commission and all new stone and slate were required to match the original in the building.

### **Environmental Sustainability at Harlem Stage**

To date Harlem Stage has fostered numerous projects to amplify sustainability and energy efficiency within their facilities. Exterior lighting, which was faulty when originally installed, was replaced in 2009, and interior fluorescent lighting in common areas and offices was entirely retrofitted to LED lighting in 2019. ConEdison rebate programs were utilized to fund these projects. The theater lighting, which includes large, energy-intensive fixtures, is projected to be replaced over the next year with all LED fixtures. In 2019, Harlem Stage received \$9.6 million from the City of New York to replace the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system, however, the COVID-19 pandemic paused the project. Bissessar is currently in discussion with NYC's Department of Design and Construction to make fuel-efficient and practical upgrades based on the lessons learned from the original HVAC system. The 2006 design included an oversized boiler and exhaust fans suboptimally located near the performance stage, which required sound

mitigation. These inadequacies will be addressed by replacing the boiler with a smaller model, potentially an electric system, and transferring ventilation fans to more ideal locations, so as to not disturb the performers or audience during shows. The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs is requiring that the system be as energy efficient as possible to reduce environmental impact; construction is slated to start in 2025.

In addition to minimizing the organization's environmental impact through energy efficiency, the operations team at Harlem Stage prioritizes waste management. Multiple waste receptacles and informative signage can be seen throughout the facilities, encouraging proper recycling. After an event, such as a gala or a wedding, the Harlem Stage operations team works hard to sort trash and recycle glass, plastic, and metal items. Paper and cardboard from packaging are always recycled as per NYC regulations. However, Harlem Stage's vendors who contribute to events do not always prioritize waste mitigation in similar ways.

After an initial analysis of Harlem Stage's environmental impact as it relates to its facility's operations, the Capstone Group had subsequent virtual meetings with Bissessar to identify other areas where environmental sustainability could be further integrated into the organization's operations. The Capstone Group asked Bissessar to provide utility bills from the past year to conduct a greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) analysis. Conducting a GHG analysis from previous years can establish a baseline for their emissions to fully understand their environmental footprint. It can also prove beneficial if information could be collected year over year as they undergo major sustainability improvements with LED lights and their new HVAC system. This can help communicate to stakeholders the benefits of their donations to building improvements, especially as many donors choose to limit their donations to specific works or projects.

In order to create the waste vendor pamphlet, a variety of different scorecards and frameworks

were analyzed to understand best practices in vendor and event management. Different aspects from all of these were used to create the let. Certifications, such as TRUE, EIC, and ISO, were utilized to put together a best practice pamphlet. The recommendations chosen were based on what is most feasible with Harlem Stage's current resources. Information on sustainability framework criteria, such as having an environmental policy, was largely excluded and instead focused on what could be done at specific one-time events.

### **Sustainability Tools**

To create the GHG inventory, 2023 utility bills were requested from Harlem Stage and analyzed to determine emissions for that year. In addition, the Capstone Group created an easy-to-use template for Harlem Stage to use on their own. This will

prove beneficial for Harlem Stage to use in the future for year-over-year comparison.

The GHG analysis and template were built out using the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Emissions Factors for 2024. The Capstone Group noted that the Gatehouse runs on natural gas and electricity, so the tools analyze these two categories. Natural gas was included in Scope 1, while purchased electricity was included in Scope 2, and the NYCW regional emissions factors were used to calculate emissions for Scope 2. The tools were also built out by pulling data with the same format as the U.S. EPA Emissions Hub data. This way, Harlem Stage should be able to easily copy and paste data as it becomes available on the U.S. EPA website in future years in order to get the most updated emissions factors. With the template,



Vendor Waste Management Pamphlet

the Capstone Group also provided a step-by-step instruction guide on how to use the template with additional information on the importance of measuring and reporting GHG data and how Harlem Stage can begin including even more within their inventory, such as any Scope 3 categories.

Over the course of the Planet conversations, the Capstone Group and Bissassar discussed potential areas where the Capstone Group could help on both a large and small scale. The Capstone Group recommended Harlem Stage conduct updated energy audits, since the last audit took place in 2019. This can be especially useful when making decisions regarding the modification of the new HVAC system. The Capstone Group also provided government resources that could help with funding energy audits as well as other sustainability improvements. Although these recommendations were not included within the final scope of work, it helped the Capstone Group understand Harlem Stage's current sustainable landscape and provided Harlem Stage with resources that could be used for projects with a larger timeline than Columbia's semester capstone.

To support the education of vendors on the importance of waste reduction and recycling, the Capstone Group has put together an educational waste management pamphlet that Harlem Stage can share with its vendors that outlines practical strategies to implement during special events.

The Capstone Group provided Harlem Stage with a user-friendly GHG calculator so it can track and measure its emissions going forward. Tracking this data before and after the HVAC upgrades will be paramount to reporting on how the upgrades support mitigating the organization's GHG emissions. To further support Harlem Stage's sustainability journey, the Capstone Group provided a list of incentive and rebate programs for future projects.

GHG Emissions Calculations											
<b>Description:</b> This worksheet will automatically calculate the associated GHG emissions with data inputted in the previous sheet.											
<b>Instructions:</b> No inputs are necessary.											
Scope 1				Emissions Factors			GHG Emissions				
Activity	Fuel Type	Value	Units	kg CO2e per unit	g CO2e CH4 per unit	g CO2e N2O per unit	CO2 (MtCO2e)	CH4 (MtCO2e)	N2O (MtCO2e)	Total CO2e	
Gaseous Fuels	Natural Gas	394.2	mmBtu	53.06	1	0.10	20.92	0.0110376	0.01	20.94	
Scope 2				Emissions Factors			GHG Emissions				
Type	Activity	Value	Units	CO2 Factor (lb CO2 / MWh)	CH4 Factor (lb CO2 / MWh)	N2O Factor (lb CO2 / MWh)	CO2 (MtCO2e)	CH4 (MtCO2e)	N2O (MtCO2e)	Total CO2e	
Location-Based	Electricity Generation	136.795	MWh	885.233	0.023	0.003	54.92889532	0.03996034	0.0493299	55.02	
									2023 Total Scope 1 & 2 Emissions (MtCO2e)	75.96	

GHG Emissions Calculator

# Analysis & Recommendations



## Part II: Profit

Harlem Stage is a nonprofit organization that relies heavily on donations gathered through fundraising efforts to sustain its operations and programs. These contributions are vital for enabling the organization to continue its mission of supporting artists of color, providing educational programs, and enriching the Harlem community with diverse cultural offerings. Fundraising allows Harlem Stage to maintain and expand its innovative projects, ensuring that it can keep fostering artistic expression and cultural dialogue in an inclusive environment.

The donations received by Harlem Stage have a profound impact on their beneficiaries. As touched on previously, Marie Thomas, a member of the 2024 WaterWorks cohort, received a transformative \$10,000 grant. This funding gave her the freedom to pursue an independent short film project, assembling a diverse team of 24,

including 14 women and 18 individuals from Black and Latino backgrounds. This financial support not only allowed fair compensation for all involved in the short film but also demonstrated the vital role that such contributions play in advancing diversity and creativity in the arts.

### 40th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign

Harlem Stage celebrated its 40th anniversary by announcing a bold \$25 million fundraising campaign. With \$15.2 million already pledged, this endeavor is designed to ensure Harlem Stage's sustainability and growth.

The campaign's strategy is two-pronged, focusing on both major gifts and annual giving, which are expected to bolster various facets of Harlem Stage's work. Co-chaired by luminaries such as Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Lupita Nyong'o, and Wendell Pierce, the campaign targets the underwriting of new creative endeavors, notably through the WaterWorks commissioning program,



as well as the expansion of the institution's educational and community engagement activities in Harlem. This effort will empower the next generation of artists and reinforce Harlem Stage's commitment to racial and social justice.

The institution's history of supporting artists of color, combined with its commitment to innovation, positions Harlem Stage to attract significant philanthropic investment. The major gifts program is designed to strengthen and expand program offerings, focusing on the commissioning of new works and the delivery of both live and digital performances. Meanwhile, the annual giving program is slated to reinforce day-to-day operations, maintaining Harlem Stage's role in the arts sector.

Harlem Stage aims to revolutionize fundraising by exploring new avenues, including the monetization of digital content and collaborations with regional and national partners, which could serve as new templates for revenue generation. The campaign's goal is to construct a sustainable financial model that supports the institution's core activities and facilities, ensuring that it remains a dynamic cultural force.

### **Social Media Fundraising**

Harlem Stage can redefine its fundraising paradigm by embracing digital platforms. Social media presents an effective landscape for crowdfunding campaigns, awareness initiatives, and corporate matching gift opportunities, enabling Harlem Stage to connect with a broader audience and generate funds on a scale previously unattainable. By leveraging these platforms, Harlem Stage can share powerful stories, showcase artistic endeavors, and mobilize a global community to contribute through micro-donations, amplifying their mission across a network that transcends geographical boundaries.

The Capstone Group recommends Harlem Stage use Meta for Non-Profits. For Meta's nonprofit resources, the platform provides best practices and tips for nonprofits looking to leverage Facebook's vast platform for fundraising and outreach. These include strategies for creating engaging content, organizing fundraising campaigns, utilizing advertising credits, and making the most of tools designed for nonprofits to connect with their audience and receive donations.

#### **Campaign Goals**

<b>Tier I – The Major Gift Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Commissioning and Artist Development Fund	\$3,700,000
Program Development and Innovation Fund	\$1,000,000
Capacity Building Initiatives Fund	\$1,500,000
Facility Care and Enhancements Fund	\$2,750,000
Reserves and Special Purpose Funds	\$1,050,000
<b>Total – Tier I: The Major Gift Program</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>
<b>Tier II – The Annual Giving Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Current Support Program and Operations	\$15,000,000
<b>Total – Tier II: The Annual Giving Program</b>	<b>\$15,000,000</b>
<b>Total – The Campaign for Harlem Stage</b>	<b>\$25,000,000</b>

*Harlem Stage's Campaign Goals*

How Harlem Stage can effectively utilize the platform:

- Facebook Fundraisers:
  - Harlem Stage can create and share fundraisers directly on their Facebook page, allowing followers to donate without leaving the platform. These fundraisers can be tied to specific projects or campaigns, such as raising funds for new productions or educational initiatives.
- Instagram Donations:
  - By utilizing donation stickers in Instagram stories, Harlem Stage can encourage instant giving during live events or performances, harnessing the power of real-time engagement.
- Social Storytelling:
  - Regular posts that tell the stories of artists, performances, and community impacts can build emotional connections with the audience, encouraging them to support Harlem Stage's cause.
- Facebook Live and IGTV:
  - Live broadcasts of events, behind-the-scenes footage, and artist Q&A sessions can engage viewers, and with the donate button enabled, viewers can contribute in the moment of highest engagement.
- Leveraging Moments:
  - Participating in global movements such as #GivingTuesday on social media can capitalize on widespread charitable giving and attention.

*Source: (Facebook, n.d.)*

The second platform the Capstone Group recommends Harlem Stage use is YouTube's Nonprofit Program by Google. This website offers various tools and programs designed to empower nonprofit organizations. These resources can include access to Google's suite of apps like G Suite for collaboration, Ad Grants for extending outreach, YouTube's Nonprofit Program for engaging storytelling, and special versions of Google Workspace. These offerings aim to help nonprofits work more efficiently, reach wider audiences, and drive impact through increased

visibility and improved productivity.

How Harlem Stage can effectively utilize the platform:

- Google Ad Grants:
  - Harlem Stage can use in-kind advertising through Google AdWords to drive traffic to fundraising pages, increase event attendance, and raise awareness about their programs.
- YouTube Nonprofit Program:
  - Harlem Stage can share captivating video content that showcases their impact, and utilize YouTube's built-in fundraising tools to encourage donations directly through the platform.
- G Suite for Collaboration:
  - Utilizing G Suite, Harlem Stage can improve internal communication and planning for social media campaigns, ensuring that the team is aligned and effective in their digital fundraising efforts.

*Source: (Google, n.d.)*

When using social media for fundraising, it's crucial to engage the audience with compelling content that resonates on a personal level.

Some overall best practices for social media fundraising include:

- Engaging Content:
  - Consistently produce high-quality, engaging content that resonates with the audience, from artist spotlights to success stories of community impact.
- Multi-Platform Strategy:
  - Tailor fundraising campaigns to the unique features and audiences of different social media platforms for wider reach and engagement.
- Transparency and Reporting:
  - Provide regular updates on how funds are being used and the difference they're making, which can help build trust and encourage repeat donations.

- Community Building:
  - Foster a sense of community among followers, encouraging dialogue, sharing, and collective support for Harlem Stage's vision.
- Peer-to-Peer Campaigns:
  - These campaigns tap into the power of individual networks, with supporters creating personal fundraisers that call upon their friends, family, and alumni to contribute, thus extending the organization's reach.
- Social Challenges and Viral Campaigns:
  - Utilizing the spread of social media challenges, Harlem Stage can create engaging content that spurs widespread participation and potential donations.
- Influencer Partnerships:
  - Aligning with influencers who share Harlem Stage's values can exponentially increase visibility and support, as these individuals use their platforms to promote fundraising efforts and encourage contributions from their audience.

Outside of leveraging these resources and best practices to expand Harlem Stage's funding channels, the Capstone Group recommends the creation of a junior board. A junior board is composed of young professionals who offer a unique opportunity to infuse the fundraising strategy with innovative ideas and expansive networks. These emerging leaders can orchestrate events and engagements tailored to a younger demographic, such as interactive art mixers or educational workshops, which not only raise funds but also cultivate long-term relationships with future patrons of the arts. The junior board's fresh approach can usher in inventive fundraising avenues, including digital partnerships with influencers and content creators, subscription-based membership models that provide exclusive benefits, and technology-driven campaigns that resonate with a tech-savvy constituency.

In addition, creating a partnership between Harlem Stage's Junior Board and Historically Black

Colleges and Universities can significantly enhance the diversity and vibrancy of the board. HBCUs can serve as a vital resource for recruiting talented, culturally aware young leaders who are passionate about the arts. These students often bring unique perspectives that can drive innovative strategies and help Harlem Stage more effectively connect with broader and more diverse audiences. Furthermore, involving HBCU students can provide them with invaluable real-world experience in arts administration, networking opportunities, and the chance to influence the cultural dialogue in meaningful ways. This collaboration could involve joint events, mentorship programs, and targeted recruitment initiatives that help to bridge the gap between academic learning and professional arts management.

To create a junior board, Harlem Stage can follow this comprehensive guide:

- Define the Purpose and Objectives
  - Clarify the Junior Board's Role: Determine how the junior board will support the main board and the organization's mission. Will their focus be on fundraising, community engagement, advocacy, or all of the above?
  - Set Clear Objectives: Establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives for the junior board to strive towards. (BoardAssist, n.d.)
- Establish Guidelines and Structure
  - Create Bylaws and a Charter: Outline the governance structure, roles, and responsibilities of the junior board members. Include terms of service, meeting schedules, and any membership dues or fundraising commitments.
  - Determine Membership Criteria: Define the criteria for junior board membership, including age range, professional background, and skills. Consider diversity and inclusion as key factors in building a board that represents a wide range of perspectives.

- Recruitment and Selection
  - Identify Potential Members: Look for young professionals with a passion for the arts, community service, or a specific interest in Harlem Stage's mission. Utilize social media, professional networks, and partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions to find candidates.
  - Implement a Selection Process: Develop an application and interview process to assess candidates' fit with the junior board's objectives and Harlem Stage's overall mission. (BoardAssist, n.d.)
- Onboarding and Training
  - Orientation Sessions: Provide new members with information about Harlem Stage, its mission, current projects, and how the junior board contributes to these efforts.
  - Mentorship: Pair junior board members with senior board members to foster mentorship, share institutional knowledge, and integrate the junior board's activities with the broader strategic goals of the organization. (SQLServerCentral, n.d.)
- Engagement and Activities
  - Define Key Initiatives: Based on the objectives, identify specific projects or initiatives the junior board will lead or support. These could include fundraising events, community outreach programs, or advocacy campaigns.
  - Encourage Leadership: Offer opportunities for junior board members to take on leadership roles within the board such as chairing committees or leading projects.
- Evaluation and Feedback
  - Set up Review Mechanisms: Establish regular review sessions to assess the junior board's performance against its objectives and the organization's broader goals.
  - Solicit Feedback: Regularly gather feedback from junior board members on their experience, the support they receive, and how the structure or objectives of the junior board might be improved.
- Foster a Sense of Community
  - Build Team Cohesion: Organize retreats, team-building activities, and social events to strengthen bonds among junior board members and between the junior and senior boards.
  - Highlight Achievements: Recognize the contributions and achievements of junior board members through public acknowledgments, awards, or feature stories in organizational communications.

# Conclusion



In sharing the overview and analysis outlined throughout this document, the Capstone Group aimed to provide real-life proof points to contextualize the potential to redefine sustainability in reference to the arts industry or in relation to the community. In this context, the measurement of a community- or arts-based organization's sustainable practices would include how the organization's operational practices, programming, and governance structure support the cultural expression and well-being of the community. This would naturally include providing a healthy physical environment as well. The Capstone Group has determined that, unlike corporations that may base their sustainability programs on strategies for long-term profit, organizations such as Harlem Stage do not fit this mold and their sustainability journeys must be measured differently. Harlem Stage not only represents the potential for what long-term sustainability can look like outside of the corporate context for sustainability but also how community-based organizations can support a society in which creatives are considered activists or artists and artists are creating a sustainable future where people of all income classes, ethnicities, and talents

contribute to maintaining the balance between a healthy planet and the well-being of its people.

The power of artists lies in their imagination and ability to think beyond everyday reality and societal norms. Specifically for Black and Brown creatives in the United States, who may carry transgenerational trauma in their very DNA, art can be a method to benefit from talents passed down through generations or simply to express deep emotions that feel biological. Given the current state of our planet and the impending climate catastrophe, that level of creativity and imagination might just be what many communities need for their people and the environment to survive and thrive. With the tools and strategies outlined in this report, the Capstone Group believes Harlem Stage has the capacity to redefine sustainability in the arts and lead the industry towards a sustainable future.

Harlem Stage Fellowship Program Proposal:

# Forging a Collaborative Path with [HBCU]

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**Created By:**

[FirstName] [LastName]

Harlem Stage

**Prepared for:**

[FirstName] [LastName]

[Company]

01

## Introduction and Background

Dear (Mr/Ms) [Client.LastName],

Thank you for considering our proposal to secure funding for an innovative arts fellowship program. The organization is excited about the opportunity to create a transformative educational experience for students from [HBCU] and are seeking your support to make this vision a reality.

Since its founding in 1983, Harlem Stage has been driven by a mission to confront systemic inequity faced by artists of color, particularly Black artists. The organization was established in response to the marginalization experienced by talented Black artists, who were often denied the resources and platforms needed to amplify their voices and visions. In the spirit of our founding principles, Harlem Stage is eager to join forces with [HBCU] to challenge the status quo and redefine the narrative surrounding Black artistry within theater education.

The organization's proposed collaboration includes a multifaceted approach to curriculum design, scholarship, academic credit alignment, promotion and recruitment strategies, streamlined application processes, program logistics, and ongoing evaluation for continuous improvement.

Working hand in hand with [HBCU] faculty, Harlem Stage will co-create a dynamic curriculum that seamlessly integrates theater arts with academic coursework relevant to [HBCU]'s thematic areas. Through this collaborative effort, the organization aims to offer students a comprehensive learning experience that nurtures their artistic talents while promoting academic growth and cultural awareness. In alignment with our commitment to equity and access, Harlem Stage will endeavor to secure scholarships aimed at supporting students from diverse backgrounds in attending the program. Through targeted fundraising efforts and community engagement, the organization will gather resources to ensure that financial barriers do not hinder participation.

The organization's commitment to excellence extends to program logistics, including housing, scheduling, support services, and transportation, to provide an amazing experience for all participants.

**Key components of the fellowship program include:**

- *Curriculum Development:* Working closely with faculty from [HBCU], the organization will develop a comprehensive curriculum that integrates theater arts with academic coursework, exploring themes relevant to [HBCU]'s cultural heritage and artistic expression.
- *Housing and Support Services:* Harlem Stage will provide housing accommodations for participating students, ensuring their comfort and convenience throughout the program. Additionally, the organization will offer support services to assist students in navigating their summer experience in New York City.
- *Scholarships and Financial Assistance:* The organization is also seeking funding to provide scholarships and financial assistance to selected students from [HBCU], enabling them to participate in the fellowship program without financial constraints. Your support will help ensure equitable access to this transformative opportunity.
- *Promotion and Outreach:* The organization will allocate additional resources towards promoting the fellowship program to potential applicants from [HBCU], as well as engaging with donors, sponsors, and supporters who share our commitment to advancing arts education and cultural equity.
- *Evaluation and Assessment:* The organization recognizes the importance of ongoing evaluation and assessment to measure the impact and effectiveness of the fellowship program. Funding will also be used to conduct evaluations, gather feedback from participants, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement and success.

In closing, the organization believes that this fellowship program has the potential to make a meaningful and lasting impact on the lives of students from [HBCU], as well as the broader arts community. With your generous support, the organization can turn this vision into reality and create a transformative educational experience that empowers future generations of artists and leaders.

Thank you for considering the organization's funding proposal. The organization is excited about the opportunity to partner with you in advancing arts education and promoting cultural diversity. Warm regards,

[Your Name]  
[Your Position]  
Harlem Stage



## Why Us

Harlem Stage stands as a beacon of empowerment and cultural enrichment, with a legacy spanning over three decades. The organization's commitment to confronting systemic inequities and nurturing artistic talent, particularly within communities of color, makes us an ideal partner for this funding opportunity. The organization offers a vibrant cultural hub in the heart of Harlem, providing students with a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a rich tapestry of artistic expression. With a dedicated team possessing expertise in program development and curriculum design, the organization is hoping to co-create a transformative fellowship program tailored to the needs and aspirations of [HBCU] students.

*Include some of the following:*

1. [Highlight a specific example or case study that illustrates Harlem Stage's impact and effectiveness in arts education]
2. [Outline measurable KPIs that demonstrate Harlem Stage's track record of success and effectiveness in delivering educational programs]

## Our Team

At Harlem Stage, our dedicated team brings together a wealth of experience, expertise, and passion for arts education and cultural empowerment. Committed to our mission of fostering artistic excellence and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, each member of our team plays a vital role in delivering impactful programs and initiatives.

*[Include Team Here]*

## Executive Summary

Harlem Stage, in collaboration with [HBCU], presents a transformative fellowship program aimed at empowering aspiring artists and leaders through immersive arts education and cultural exchange. With a legacy rooted in confronting systemic inequities and promoting artistic excellence, Harlem Stage is uniquely positioned to spearhead this innovative initiative, offering students from [HBCU] a transformative summer experience in the heart of Harlem.

This fellowship program represents a convergence of shared values, expertise, and resources, bringing together Harlem Stage's rich cultural heritage and [HBCU]'s commitment to academic excellence.

*[Continue Executive Summary]*

## Project Overview

This innovative initiative will provide students from [HBCU] with a unique opportunity to spend a transformative summer in the vibrant cultural landscape of Harlem, where they will engage in a dynamic blend of theater arts and academic coursework.

### Goals and Objectives

The proposal submitted by Harlem Stage outlines a visionary fellowship program designed to empower aspiring artists through immersive arts education and cultural exchange.

### Goals

Harlem Stage's goal is to cultivate a vibrant educational environment that celebrates diversity, fosters inclusivity, and empowers aspiring artists to realize their full potential. The project is guided by the following goals:

- Develop a fellowship program that offers participants a comprehensive learning experience that integrates theater arts with academic coursework relevant to [HBCU]'s cultural heritage and artistic expression.
- Goal 2
- Goal 3
- Goal 4

## Objectives

To achieve these goals, Harlem Stage has established the following objectives for the fellowship program:

- Objective 1
- Objective 2
- Objective 3

## Activities

To execute its transformative fellowship program, Harlem Stage will have the following activities:

Activity	Goal	Objective
Activity 1	Goal 1	Objective 1
Activity 2	Goal 2	Objective 2
Activity 3	Goal 3	Objective 3

## Evaluation and Monitoring

Harlem Stage has implemented a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the effectiveness of our endeavors. Here are the metrics utilized to evaluate our team's long-term performance:

- KPI 1
- KPI 2
- KPI 3

## Project Budget

Completing the client's project will incur the following expenses:

Description	Price	QTY	Subtotal
	\$0.00	1	\$0.00
	\$0.00	1	\$0.00
	\$0.00	1	\$0.00
	\$0.00	1	\$0.00

## Closing Remarks and Acceptance

In closing, Harlem Stage is honored to present this proposal for a transformative fellowship program in collaboration with [HBCU]. We are deeply committed to advancing arts education, fostering cultural exchange, and empowering aspiring artists and leaders.

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# Thank You



## The Capstone Group

