

RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST
60-74 Gansevoort Street

1. What makes your organization unique?

West Village Rehearsal Co-Op (WVRC) is a unique partnership between three of the leading non-profit performing arts organizations in the CB2 district (HERE, New Ohio Theatre, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), and IndieSpace, a nonprofit with extensive experience in real estate management for the performing artists. Combined, HERE, New Ohio, and Rattlestick develop, present, and produce hundreds of new works every year, providing support to a diverse cross section of the NYC independent theatre community, and supporting thousands of NYC artists every year. All from our home here in CB2. These three companies will share 50% of the time in the space (spread over the calendar year) making it available to all the artists and independent companies in our existing and future programs. IndieSpace, with its own expansive reach into the indie theatre community, further extends access to the rehearsal space, and will program the other 50% of the calendar year. Our organizations have existed for 20+ years and together the four leaders bring over 100 years of nonprofit performing arts experience to the table. We believe this unique partnership firmly anchors the rehearsal space here in CB2, while at the same time expanding its access to a vast, expansive network of NYC theatre-makers.

When we first heard about this opportunity and the desire to provide homes to the artists active in CB2, we were really thrilled. In our years working in the district, we have seen too many artists and organizations priced out. Additionally, there have been many rehearsal space closures during COVID-19, leaving a hole in the community for our artists to develop their work. This commitment of new space for our local artists and organizations is essential and we are hungry to be part of offering this support. We recognized that CB2 is also hoping to be inclusive of as many artists and organizations as possible, so we felt that it was ideal for us to join together to ensure many communities were made welcome and included. With our combined experience, we can provide an opportunity for any local artist to gain access to this much needed space. We have decided to apply together for the Master Tenant.

We have a decades-long history of collaborating amicably and productively with each other. We have been meeting regularly to develop the terms of a partnership and iron out how we would collaborate. We are working with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison to develop the legal structure of our general partnership: West Village Rehearsal Co-op (WVRC). It will detail our relationship, responsibilities to each other and ensure stability for the long term. One of us will serve as the representative for the group with the landlord.

Individual Organizational Overview

Rattlestick Playwrights Theater

Since 1994, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater has been steadfast in producing diverse, challenging, and provocative plays while fostering the future voices of the American theater. Our mission is to produce ambitious plays to inspire empathy and provoke conversation that will lead to positive social change. Rattlestick's work is rooted in social justice, community conversations, and artistic freedom.

New Ohio Theatre

New Ohio Theatre develops and presents bold, innovative new work from NYC's diverse independent theatre community, actively expanding the boundaries of what theatre is, how it's made, and who makes it. With a 28-year history, we have established ourselves as a pillar of the downtown independent theatre community. We are known for our eclectic, expansive sensibilities, our artist-centric philosophy, and for creating an environment of generosity and open access. We believe the best of NYC's diverse indie theatre community—the small, inspired, artist-driven ensembles and the daring producing companies who operate without a permanent theatrical home—are actively and aggressively reimagining the boundaries of the American theatre. We nurture, strengthen, and promote this community of independent theatre artists for NYC's most adventurous theater audiences

IndieSpace

IndieSpace (IS) creates permanent real estate solutions for the indie theater community. Founded by three individuals with experience in high-level real estate, theater management, and advocacy, IS works closely with companies who have spaces in jeopardy, and/or who are looking for space, and acts as a consultant and advocate in their discussions with real estate developers and owners. IndieSpace and The Indie Theater Fund are in the process of merging, adding funding and professional development workshops to the list of services IndieSpace provides to artists in NYC.

HERE

HERE has been one of New York's most prolific arts organizations since 1993. Today, it stands at the forefront of the city's cultural scene, producing and presenting daring, new, multidisciplinary award-winning performance experiences. HERE builds an inclusive community that nurtures artists of all backgrounds as they disrupt conventional expectations to create innovative performances. By providing these genre-blending artists with an adaptive, flexible home for developing and producing their work, we share a range of perspectives reflective of the complexity of our city. HERE welcomes curious audiences to witness groundbreaking performances, responsive to the world in which we live, at free and affordable prices.

2. What experience does your organization have as a small theater group or administrative service provider?

Our organizations have existed for decades and together the four leaders bring over 100 years of nonprofit performing arts experience to the table. We each have extensive experience running rehearsal and performing spaces, but have insufficient space for the needs of the artists we serve. Our regular business model as nonprofit arts organizations is based in partnerships - amongst individual artists and with other co-producing organizations and we see this opportunity as an extension of the work we already do, with success and critical acclaim.

Rattlestick Playwrights Theater

From our historic West Village theater, Rattlestick has produced the first plays and early works of some of today's leading voices, including Martyna Majok (*Ironbound*), Diana Oh (*mylingerieplay*), and Heidi Schreck (*There Are No More Big Secrets*). We are proud to make Rattlestick a place where some of our nation's most celebrated playwrights feel safe to test their boldest ideas, including Dael Orlandersmith (*Until the Flood*), José Rivera (*Massacre, Sing to Your Children*), and Sam Hunter (*Lewiston/Clarkston*, nominated for the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Play and the Outer Critics Circle Awards for Outstanding New Off-Broadway Play). Our work has won numerous awards and often lauded as a NY Times Critics Pick. When our

space is not in use with our own productions, we have a curated rental series for other smaller theater companies where we also act as an administrative resource to them.

New Ohio Theatre

New Ohio Theatre has a 28 year history of developing and presenting new work from New York's independent theatre community and has been recognized for its vision with two Obie Awards for Sustained Excellence. We are active 50 weeks a year with seven different programs.

IndieSpace has operated three rehearsal space programs, saved 7 theater spaces, assisted in the purchase of one venue, helped find and lease 16 new spaces, and supported 60+ nonprofit companies through their space challenges.

HERE has produced and presented over 1,200 original works; served over 15,000 artists; and welcomed over 1,000,000 audience members. HERE's work and artists have received 16 OBIE Awards, 2 OBIE Grants and a CUNY Booth Award for artistic achievement, 2 Berilla Kerr Awards, 4 NY Innovative Theatre Awards, 2 Bessie Awards, 2 Pulitzer Prizes, 1 Pulitzer nomination, 6 Drama Desk nominations, 2 MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowships and most recently, 7 Tony nominations. HERE remains on "Best Off-Off Broadway" theatre lists across New York City.

3. What services does your organization currently and/or historically offer in the CB2 Area?

While WVRC is a new entity created specifically in response to this opportunity, we have a long history of working together in the district, as individuals and as organizations. The three theatres collaborated with CB2 on the theatre crawl. Kristin (HERE) and Robert (New Ohio Theatre) first worked together in 1988 when her small theatre company rented his original theatre and then went on to collaborate artistically on numerous productions. Daniella (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater) was a resident artist at HERE and she and Kristin currently speak weekly as support to each other in their leadership roles. Kristin and Robert were among the first theatres to sign on to Randi's other organization, Indie Theater Fund, when it launched in 2012. Randi (IndieSpace) has also provided space over the years to artists working at our theatres. We trust each other and work well together.

Our organizations strive to create equitable, diverse, and inclusive homes in which all people have fair access to the resources they need to realize their visions. We acknowledge structural inequities that exclude individuals and communities from opportunities based on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, class, age, and geography, and seek to counter those inequities in our work.

Rattlestick Playwrights Theater has a long history of producing ambitious work with a dedicated focus on the impact it has on New York City communities, in particular the West Village. Our artistic programs service approximately 10,000 audience members and 400 artists each year. In fall 2019, we produced *Novenas for a Lost Hospital* about Saint Vincent's Hospital, in partnership with The Center, Village Preservation, St. John's in the Village, and the NYU AIDS Memorial Park @ St. Vincent's Triangle. This season, we collaborated with Village Preservation to present NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program's "Village Song", 17 songs written by 2nd year NYU students about the Village. We are currently working on an intergenerational theater program, GenSpeak, in collaboration with Greenwich House. We

actively seek out innovative ways to partner with local community groups to inspire artists to create works about the Village and its dynamic history.

New Ohio Theatre is located on Christopher Street in the historic Archive Building. Our current artistic programs include: Archive Residency (two-year development & world premiere), Ice Factory (summer festival of new work in its 28th year), Producers Club (early work-in-progress), Theatre for Young Minds (cutting-edge family fare), NYC Indie Theatre FILM Festival (theatre artists working in digital media), Tomorrow the World (international), and New Ohio Host (curated rentals). We also have a free membership program, New Ohio Locals, that offers invitations to special events and discount tickets to New Ohio regulars in the CB2 community. Every year we invite more than 10,000 audience members into our space and support over 600 artists. We also collaborated for two years with CB2 theatres Rattlestick Theatre, Cherry Lane Theatre, and Axis Theatre on a coordinated programming initiative called the Theatre:Village Festival.

IndieSpace has provided rehearsal space, funding and free advisory and consulting services for hundreds of artists working and living in CB2. Typically IndieSpace serves 15-20 orgs/year with free one on one advisory services and 546 indie companies and venues and thousands of individual artists through each of our other programs.

HERE is a producer, presenter and venue of contemporary relevant new work, serving numerous CB2 artists and audiences. Our South Village/Hudson Square home includes two flexible black-box theatres, exhibition space and a lounge. Annually, we usually serve 30,000 people in person, but this past year during COVID, we reached over 300,000 online and outdoors. HERE develops and produces work by our resident artists, presents significant international and national work for NYC audiences and acts as a venue for other local NYC artists through our SubletSeries.

4. Do you have a case study we can review of your organization administering a rehearsal or small theater company?

Below are some interesting models that each organization has created, that reflect the kind of creative thinking coupled with can-do follow-thru, necessary to the success of this project:

Rattlestick Playwrights Theater was awarded a grant in 2018 by the New York State Council on the Arts for West Villager Cusi Cram to create a theatrical piece about Saint Vincent's Hospital. Starring former West Villager Kathleen Chalfant, we engaged a number of local community partners in the creation and production of the new piece. We engaged in an extensive workshop production followed by the world premiere production, both of which were sold-out nearly immediately with significant and meaningful press coverage. This example demonstrates our commitment to creating relevant works in partnership with community organizations with significant impact.

New Ohio Theatre's Archive Residency is our ongoing development and presenting program, providing a two-year commitment of time, space, and administrative, financial & artistic support to select independent theatre artists. Each residency culminates in a world premiere of a new work. In the first year, resident artists are provided space at IRT for development and a workshop presentation as part of our Ice Factory festival. The second year includes more time for development at IRT and a world premiere presentation in our mainstage season. To date we

have premiered 13 new works. With this program we provide independent theatre artists with that most elusive and invaluable resource of all: an artistic home.

IndieSpace has operated three rehearsal space programs, each unique to the real estate opportunity that was presented. We ran a 5,000 sf rehearsal space for two years at 712 Fifth Avenue, offering indie theater companies one month each of 24/7 access to a space. We built a rehearsal space program at The Times Center, operating their lower level space every weekend for four years, offering it in blocks of five hours to indie theater artists for only a share of our insurance cost. We also created a barter program between indie theater companies and local schools, placing a company in residence at the school. In exchange for free rehearsal space artists provided workshops to students in acting, voice and dance.

HERE Artist Residency Program is HERE's signature program and the foundation of our producing season. This multiyear \$100,000-per-artist residency program was created in 1998 and serves as a national model. HARP provides a commission, project development support, staff services, career planning, and a full production to 8-10 mid-career artists, all within a collaborative environment of genre-blending peers working across disciplines including theatre, dance, music, puppetry, visual art, and new media. HARP's extensive support to each artist includes more than \$50,000 in cash and \$50,000 in space, equipment, and services over 2 to 3 years.

5. Who will work on this project? Please provide bios for team, if known.

Daniella Topol (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater) has been the Artistic Director of Rattlestick since 2016, where she has been a passionate advocate for the production and development of adventuresome and urgent new work and for thoughtful partnerships with community organizations and other theaters. As a director, her world premiere productions include: Cusi Cram's *Novenas for a Lost Hospital* (Rattlestick), Martyna Majok's *Ironbound* (Rattlestick; Roundhouse; Steppenwolf's First Look, NY Times Critics' Pick), Jessica Dickey's *Charles Ives Take Me Home* (Rattlestick) and *Row After Row* (Women's Project), Cori Thomas' *When January Feels Like Summer* (Ensemble Studio Theatre/P73/Women's Proj; NY Times Critics' Pick), Catherine Treischmann's *How the World Began* (South Coast Rep and Women's Project), and Lloyd Suh's *Jesus in India* (MaYi and Magic). Topol has been the Artistic Program Director of the Lark Play Development Center, New Works Program Director of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, and Associate Producing Director of City Theatre. She is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon's Directing Program where she also has a Masters in Arts Management. She has been a grant review panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NY State Council on the Arts and Theatre Communications Group.

Robert Lyons (New Ohio Theatre) is the founding Artistic Director of the New Ohio Theatre, where he has developed, presented, and produced innumerable productions since 1994. Productions developed and presented by the New Ohio have gone on to garner multiple Drama Desk awards and nominations, OBIE Awards, Audience First Awards in Edinburgh, Off-Broadway productions, commercial runs, and national and international tours. Under Robert's leadership, the New Ohio Theatre has garnered two OBIE Awards for sustained artistic achievement, and has become widely recognized as an indispensable pillar of the downtown theatre community. Robert is also a playwright/director with more than twenty New York premieres to his credit; most recently *YOVO* (NYC/Poland/Cuba), *Idiot* (adapted from Dostoevsky) and *Death of the Liberal Class* ("Essential theatre for the next generation" – Huff Post). Other original productions include: *Red-Haired Thomas* ("a sweetly fractured fairy tale" –

New York Times) and *Doorman's Double Duty* ("A gem!" – New York Times). Other plays include, *PR Man* (featured in American Theatre Magazine), and *No Meat No Irony* ("Ralph Nader channeling Preston Sturges" – TimeOut/NY). Robert's work has been developed in residencies at Space at Ryder Farm, NACL, the Orchard Project, The Playwright's Center of Minneapolis, MASS MoCA, the Bogliasco Foundation, and MacDowell Colony.

Randi Berry (IndieSpace) has an arts advocacy, theater and real estate background that spans over 20 years. She is a founding member and co-Artistic Director of Wreckio Ensemble, a collective theater company that began producing original work in New York City in 2000. Randi was Director of Operations for CBRE's Investment Sales team for five years and then ran her own consulting business working on many of the largest commercial real estate transactions in the city's history. Randi's real estate work parlayed into Wreckio receiving free rehearsal for over a decade and she has since created that same opportunity for other artists in the community. Randi is the founder and Executive Director of [The Indie Theater Fund](#) and [IndieSpace](#), two organizations, who are merging, that provide support to indie theater makers with funding, professional development, real estate programs and advocacy. Randi has operated three rehearsal space programs and has piloted a program pairing theater companies with schools that exchanges free rehearsal space for educational theater workshops during her time as the Real Estate Chair on the League of Independent Theater Board. Randi was named an Indie Theater Person of the Year in 2013, An Indie Theater Hero and Influencer and was inducted into the Indie Theater Hall of Fame in 2014. Randi was an Indie Theater Leading Light in 2015 and was given a citation for Service to her community by the NY City Council in 2018.

Kristin Marting (HERE) is HERE's Founding Artistic Director and a director of hybrid work based in NYC. As Artistic Director, she cultivates artists and programs all events for two performance spaces for an annual audience of 30,000. She co-created and co-curates HARP, HERE's Artist Residency Program. She has constructed 30 works for the stage (9 original hybrid works, 7 opera-theatre and music-theatre works, 9 adaptations of novels & short stories and 5 classic plays), most recently *Only You Will Recognize the Signal* with Kamala Sankaram and Rob Handel. Other recent projects include *Silent Voices* at BAM, *IDIOT* with Robert Lyons; *Bombay Rickey*, an opera cabaret also in Prototype; *Trade Practices*, an immersive theatrical experience where the audience determines value. She also directed *Sounding* and *Dead Tech* (collaborative works adapted from Ibsen), both of which received prestigious MAP Fund awards. She was named a nytheatre.com Person of the Decade for outstanding contribution, a Leader to Watch by Art Table and honored with a BAX10 Award. Kristin is also co-director of PROTOTYPE: opera theatre now, an annual festival of contemporary opera-theatre and music theatre works, which she co-founded with Beth Morrison and Kim Whitener.

6. What experience does your organization have that is most representative of what you would do as the MT of this space?

We have outlined our individual and organizational experience above and would like to share our vision for the space:

WVRC will provide an affordable, welcoming home for artists based in or working in CB2 to share, create and work together. WVRC will serve artists in all performing arts disciplines: theatre, dance, music, puppetry, and media arts. We will provide short term and longer term low and no cost space for artists to develop their work, including the opportunity to install fully and use the space exclusively for a period of time.

The three CB2 based theatres will program the space for a total of six months over the course of the year, providing free and low cost space to their affiliated artists, who will then perform the work created in their CB2 theatres. Each theatre has multiple programs supporting hundreds of artists annually in a variety of ways including artist fees (commissions, development fees, production fees, box office splits), producing support, presenting support, marketing/press, performing space, and equipment.

IndieSpace will program the space for a total of six months over the course of the year, providing space to local artists from within and around the CB2 area with short term and long term development space. Priority will be given to indie theater and dance artists living or working in CB2 who have historically had less access to resources.

We will create the programming calendar collaboratively each year, starting with the theatres' planned seasons and then opening up to the artists IndieSpace will serve. We envision a lively space full of art making and activity seven days a week.

7. What risks, problems, or hurdles do you feel are present that have not been addressed as part of this IR?

Of utmost concern to the feasibility of the space for rehearsal is HVAC. HVAC will need to be installed by the landlord throughout the space to bring it to union standard, a necessary condition for any professional artists to work in the space. There must be at least six (6) air changes per hour (ACH) and the minimum efficiency reporting value (MERV) should be 13 with 17 (HEPA) being ideal. When relying upon MERV and HPEA filters, Actors Equity Association recommends the following ratio of Outside Air (OA) vs. Recirculated Air:

<u>HVAC Filter</u>	<u>Minimum % of Outside Air</u>
MERV 17 (HEPA)	20%
MERV 16	25%
MERV 15	30%
MERV 14	35%
MERV 13	40%
Any filter less than MERV 13	100% outside air (no recirculated)

The existing concrete floor will not work for dance and theatre artists. We are pleased to learn that the landlord recently agreed to install a wooden floor, but encourage the installation of a "poor man's sprung floor". It is not that significant a cost increase and is absolutely necessary to make the space feasible for dance and theatre artists. We believe this would be only a difference of \$2-3 square foot.

The room also needs additional electrical outlets distributed throughout and additional lighting installed by a licensed electrician.

We have developed our plan for a single space, but are interested in discussing whether it might make sense to divide the room in two and create two active spaces serving double the number of artists.

8. A financial overview of your resources (which will be confidential.)

Our combined organizational budgets approach \$5 million and include a diverse array of contributed sources (government, foundation, corporate and individuals) as well as earned revenues (box office, space rentals and concessions). We are happy to provide our individual 2021 budgets and most recent organizational 990s, if desired.

We plan to share the costs for setting up, cleaning and managing the space. The financial responsibility will be divided based on the proportional use of the space for each partner. All four companies currently have dedicated resources in our annual budgets for rehearsal and plan to allocate those resources to offset the costs associated with this project.