



**Apollo Theater  
in Collaboration with  
125<sup>th</sup> St. Business Improvement District and  
Harlem Commonwealth Council  
Launches the  
Harlem Entrepreneurial  
Micro-Grant Initiative**

**Grants to be awarded to small independent Harlem  
businesses affected by the world health crisis**

Harlem, NY – June 3, 2020 – The **Apollo Theater**, in collaboration with **125<sup>th</sup> St. Business Improvement District (BID)** and the **Harlem Commonwealth Council (HCC)**, announced today that applications are open for the **Harlem Entrepreneurial Micro-Grant Initiative** to provide support to small and independent Harlem businesses in financial need. The fund has been created with resources from 125<sup>th</sup> St. BID and the HCC, as well as a portion of proceeds raised from the Apollo’s “[Let’s Stay \(In\) Together: A Benefit to Support the Apollo](#)” program on June 4. Through the initiative the organizations will distribute twenty \$1,000 micro-grants to local merchants that define the culture and the vitality of Harlem.

“As this health crisis continues to have a disparate impact on Black and Brown communities, it’s vital that we support one another. I’m honored to partner with the Harlem BID and the Harlem Commonwealth Council to give back directly to our vibrant neighborhood, and am incredibly grateful to the generous donors who have given their support to the Apollo Theater and the community at-large,” said **Apollo Theater President and CEO Jonelle Procope**.

“We are pleased that three of Harlem’s long-standing organizations on 125<sup>th</sup> Street were able to come together to provide funds for Harlem’s small businesses that can be applied to their urgent needs,” said **Barbara Askins, President and CEO of 125<sup>th</sup> Street BID**.

“Harlem Commonwealth Council is delighted to participate in this effort to support our community during this difficult time of COVID-19. HCC looks forward to continuing to provide Harlem businesses with capital and the essential financial tools to foster economic development for another 50 years,” said **Dr. Joseph L. Tait, President and CEO of Harlem Commonwealth Council**.

Independently owned and operated businesses in Harlem are encouraged to apply for the **Harlem Entrepreneurial Micro-Grant Initiative**. Applications will be open from June 3 to June 25, 2020, and recipients will be notified the week of July 6, 2020. To review the complete eligibility requirements and submit an application, please visit [here](#).

“Let’s Stay (In) Together: A Benefit to Support the Apollo” on Thursday, June 4 at 7:30p.m. EST, is a free special event that will stream live at [apollotheater.org](#). The benefit is part of the non-profit Theater’s campaign to raise \$4 million in critical support to safeguard the iconic institution’s future following the unprecedented cancellation of more than 100 programs. The full lineup may be found [here](#), and the event will also include special tributes, including a series of poems and performances dedicated to the memory

of those who have lost their lives due to COVID-19. The Theater's June 4 "Let's Stay (In) Together" benefit concert will also be available for free streaming by media partner, TIDAL.

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### **About the Apollo Theater**

The legendary Apollo Theater—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging artists and launching legends. Since its founding, the Apollo has served as a center of innovation and a creative catalyst for Harlem, the city of New York, and the world.

With music at its core, the Apollo's programming extends to dance, theater, spoken word, and more. This includes the world premiere of the theatrical adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* and the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*; special programs such as the blockbuster concert Bruno Mars Live at the Apollo; 100: The Apollo Celebrates Ella; and the annual Africa Now! Festival. The non-profit Apollo Theater is a performing arts presenter, commissioner, and collaborator that also produces festivals, largescale dance and musical works organized around a set of core initiatives that celebrate and extend the Apollo's legacy through a contemporary lens, including the Women of the World (WOW) Festival as well as other multidisciplinary collaborations with partner organizations.

Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo Theater has served as a testing ground for new artists working across a variety of art forms and has ushered in the emergence of many new musical genres—including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Among the countless legendary performers who launched their careers at the Apollo are Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, H.E.R., D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Machine Gun Kelly and Miri Ben Ari; and the Apollo's forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy. For more information about the Apollo, visit [www.ApolloTheater.org](http://www.ApolloTheater.org).

### **About 125th Street Business Improvement District**

125th Street Business Improvement District is one of New York's City's 76 BIDs. It's mission is to expand sustainable economic activity in the area including the creation or expansion of businesses and the development of jobs for community residents; to maximize the ability of local residents, businesses and institution to benefit from any and all opportunities created by commercial revitalization efforts and to improve the quality of life in the community.

### **About the Harlem Commonwealth Council**

Harlem Commonwealth Council (HCC) is a 501(C)(3) economic development organization delivering community-driven solutions in Harlem and surrounding communities since 1967. Our mission is to stimulate economic development through the creation and support of business enterprises, the generation and retention of jobs, and the education of residents. Harlem Entrepreneurial Fund (HEF) is our investment arm that provides access to capital and technical assistance to the Harlem community.

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