

Foo Foo Fest Grant Application

Fields marked with an * are required.

Name of Organization

The Choral Society of Pensacola

Organization Location

1000 College Boulevard, Room 803, Pensacola, FL 32054

Contact Name

Charlie Smoke

Contact Phone Number

(850) 484-1806

Contact Email

charlie@choralsocietyofpensacola.org

Name of Existing/Proposed Event

"Grease" Sing-Along

Date(s) of Existing/Proposed Event

11/10/2022

Additional Dates for Existing/Proposed Event (if needed)

Additional Event Date 1

Event Date

Website (If any)

<http://choralsocietyofpensacola.org/>

Funding Amount Requested

\$8,925.00

Please provide an overview for your vision and marketing plan to promote your event

"Grease is the word, is the word that you heard. It's got groove, it's got meaning..."

and it's the theme for the Choral Society of Pensacola's proposed Foo Foo Festival event, a "Grease" Sing-Along at 7 pm, Thursday, November 10 in the Rex Theatre (18 N. Palafox St.). We request \$8,925 to support the project.

Overview: We propose a screening, with emcee, of the classic movie musical "Grease," in a version that will display song lyrics, enabling the audience to sing along with John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John, Stockard Channing, Frankie Avalon, and the rest of the cast. Event staff dressed in 1950's style will greet moviegoers, and we'll encourage attendees to wear 50's outfits, as well, for a costume contest to be held before the movie begins. We'll also invite them to respond and interact throughout the film using items from their fun bags, like those that have become an essential element at showings of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show." To develop our event, we'll draw on the expertise of Sing-a-Long-a (<https://www.singalonga.net>), a company that has established itself as a successful producer of movie sing-alongs. They'll handle all the rights for the screening and supply us with an emcee script, fun bags, and production tips.

To set the mood for arriving moviegoers (and provide a show for anyone enjoying the evening in downtown Pensacola), an hour before the screening begins, we'll open "Thunder Road," a display of classic 1950's automobiles parked in front of the theatre, We'll close Palafox from Garden to Chase Streets, with security posted at each corner, and shine searchlights to attract the crowd. Rob Boothe of the Panhandle Cruisers Car Club will assist in organizing the show, and he'll DJ 50's hits to further enhance the period flavor. The car show will remain on display until 10 PM, about a half-hour after the screening ends.

Marketing: Because the Festival provides extensive marketing support with expertise on the regional and national levels, we'll focus primarily on free promotion, particularly within a 250-mile radius. We'll post information on our website and Facebook page; post the event on local, regional, and national online calendars; send e-bulletins to our subscribers; distribute flyers and posters; email press releases and pitch story ideas to print, broadcast, and online media; and place ads in other arts organizations' printed programs. We'll target high school and college theatre and music departments, theatrical and musical organizations, film clubs, classic car clubs, and other community organizations through email messages.

We'll invite area businesses with 50's themes to participate in cross-promotion; for instance, we'll contact restaurants such as Scenic 90 Café, Wayne's Family Diner, and the Sunliner Diner (Gulf Shores). We're exploring the possibility of ticket giveaways during 50's-style competitions, such as a hula hoop contest during Gallery Night.

Responses to scoring criteria:

1. Timing and content requirements

We plan to screen "Grease" on a Thursday evening, so it will serve as one of the events that can persuade out-of-towners to arrive before or linger after a weekend. Our event may not be of the scale required for an anchor event, but it offers an opportunity for attendees to actively participate rather than simply listen or observe, and it represents movies and musical theatre, which aren't regularly a part of the festival.

2. Program effect on success of festival mission

We're confident of the quality of the event and its support of the Festival's mission to showcase the arts and cultural community and to attract local and out-of-town audiences. The movie is acknowledged as a classic. Since its initial release in 1978, the film has received largely positive reactions from the critics, and, in 2020, the Library of Congress selected "Grease" for preservation in the United States National Film Registry as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant." And the movie has always been phenomenally popular, consistently drawing huge audiences whenever it's shown. The experience of Sing-a-Long-a and of the Panhandle Cruisers Car Club will ensure that we receive expert guidance from our partners.

3. Uniqueness, Innovation, Creativity & Expression

Our event is unusual because it relies on the participation of attendees, inviting them to play an indispensable role in creating the experience. Although the event involves pop music, which is often represented in the Festival schedule, our sing-along complements, rather than duplicates, other events, because of the participatory element and because the focus is film and musical theatre rather than concert performance. This event is a significant departure from the majority of the Choral Society's usual programs in its emphasis on non-classical music and on attendee participation. Based on the enthusiastic response to our previous sing-along event in 2019 ("Choir! Choir! Choir!"), we're confident that "Grease" will prove an asset to the Festival line-up.

4. Marketing & PR Plan of Activity

See marketing ideas above.

5 & 6. We believe "Grease" has appeal beyond the Pensacola area, evidenced by the film's continued popularity more than 40 years after its release, Although people can access the movie on home video and through streaming services, the communal experience of a sing-along and the fun of the costume contest and other interactions, as well as the appeal of seeing a movie on a big screen, will persuade people to participate. The car show is an added attraction. Our current audiences, especially those who participated in "Choir! Choir! Choir!", are likely to attend, and we'll attract a crowd with diverse interests, including singing, movies, musical theatre, the fifties, and classic cars.

7 & 8. Infrastructure and staff

For decades, CSoP has successfully produced three or four major concerts annually, along with additional events, including programs for five Foo Foo Festivals, with a small, dedicated staff, board, and volunteer corps. Also, for this event, we'll collaborate with the Rex Theatre staff, with whom we've worked on six previous events; one of them was our popular "Choir! Choir! Choir!" sing-along for Foo Foo Festival in 2019. We've demonstrated not only that we can deliver successful programming, but that we comply with Festival reporting requirements, punctually filing final reports with the necessary supporting documentation.

9. Measurements for validating return on investment or program success

We'll measure success quantitatively through event attendance, numbers of online interactions, and amount of media coverage. We'll measure it qualitatively by collecting participant comments at the event and, more importantly, through an online survey afterwards.

10. Use of funds

Our budget is realistic, based on actual quotes and carefully researched estimates, and contains only expenditures necessary to produce the event and to market it effectively. We plan to solicit sponsors and have access to organizational cash reserves, if needed.

11. COVID-19 Health and Safety

Because the threat of the pandemic has declined, attendees will feel comfortable and safe at the sing-along. However, we're prepared to implement mask and distancing requirements if the situation worsens, to restrict attendance numbers, and to consider a second, late-night screening, which our Sing-a-Long-a agreement would allow, to accommodate everyone who would like to enjoy the film.

Budget Requirements - Grant may not cover more than 85% of program budget. Budget amendments must be approved in advance. Please upload your budget and ANY other supporting documents.

Choral Society Budget Requirements.xlsx

Certification: Sign your name - By signing my name here, I certify that I have read and agree that all statements contained herein, and in the application submission, are true and complete to the best of my knowledge, and I agree to the terms of this grant program as outlined in the guidelines. I also certify that submission of this funding proposal is authorized by the applicant organization's Board of Directors.

Charles Sroka
