

2025 Program Proposal

Section 1. General Information

Proposal title: Creative Borders: Transforming Lives Through Arts Education in Gaborone

Total program cost: \$21,000

Total program duration: 14 days (February 15- March 1, 2025)

Teaching Artists: 4-6

Estimate number of participants: 235

Section 2. Contact Information

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Section 3. The Need in Gaborone, Botswana

As of 2021, Botswana grapples with a significant public health crisis, ranking third globally in adult HIV prevalence at 18.6% ([World Bank Open Data](#)). The profound implications of the HIV/AIDS epidemic have exacerbated societal disparities, particularly affecting the nation's children.

The toll on Botswana's younger generation is unmistakable, as 35% of children fall into the category of OVC (orphans and vulnerable children) ([Coordinating Comprehensive Care for Children \(4Children\), 2019](#)). This alarming statistic stands as a poignant testament to the epidemic's enduring impact on the vulnerable and impressionable segments of the population. Adding to the complexity, 33.3% of individuals in the lowest wealth quintile in Botswana are children. This underscores the intricate web of challenges faced by the most economically disadvantaged, where the burdens of both poverty and the HIV/AIDS epidemic converge.

These statistics underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions and comprehensive strategies to address the multifaceted impact of the epidemic on different segments of the population in Botswana. It is crucial not only to focus on medical interventions but also to address the socio-economic dimensions, ensuring that the nation's response is holistic, inclusive, and capable of alleviating the burdens imposed by HIV/AIDS on the most vulnerable. The call for concerted efforts to mitigate the broader societal implications of the epidemic is more pressing than ever.

By recognizing the transformative power inherent in creative expression, the arts can emerge as a powerful and multifaceted tool in addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Botswana. Leveraging this distinct power, we can foster community understanding, resilience, and positive change to address this intricate public health and economic challenge.

Section 4. Why The Arts?

As a form of communication, the arts can impact lives by evoking emotions, challenging perspectives, and inspiring profound cultural and societal shifts. The arts serve as a powerful conduit for creativity, self-expression, and exploration of human experiences.

People in Gaborone have few opportunities for creative exploration, social collaboration, and self-expression. Yet, many significant experiences and shared interests hold the potential to unite people, increase empathy, and ignite social empowerment.

The arts allow communities to tell stories, share their values and perspectives on the world, and insights into complex issues. The lack of opportunities in the arts is not just a problem today but a persistent and enduring injustice that will have intergenerational impacts. What people know of their history and priorities for centuries to come will be dictated by who is telling their story now.

Unfortunately, the people of Gaborone are unable to benefit from the arts due to factors such as (1) limited opportunities for people to explore their skills in the arts, exacerbated by poverty and a lack of access to arts education, and (2) a shortage of skilled educators to guide and support learners interested in the arts, hindering the development of their skills and limiting their opportunities.

The arts can transcend boundaries, bridge communities, and instill values, contributing to a more empathic and empowered society. Our programs seek to explore how the arts can be supported in community spaces, fostering psychosocial and educational outcomes for individual growth and societal enrichment.

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Section 5. Mission

Our mission is to cultivate a vibrant and inclusive arts community in Gaborone, Botswana, where the transformative power of arts education becomes a catalyst for individual growth and societal enrichment.

Committed to fostering creativity and self-expression, we provide accessible and diverse artistic opportunities for people of all ages. By emphasizing the intersection of the arts and life skills development, we seek to nurture critical skills such as leadership, collaboration, and resilience.

We aim to inspire a lifelong love for the arts, equipping individuals with the tools to explore and develop their unique talents. Through educational programs and community initiatives supported by local artists, we strive to break down barriers to participation and empower individuals to unlock their full potential.

At the heart of our mission, we create safe spaces where everyone, regardless of age, background, or ability, can find their voice, express their creativity, and engage in a lifelong journey of self-discovery. Through the transformative power of arts education, we envision a world where individuals are enriched by the arts and equipped with the essential life skills necessary for personal success and positive community impact.

Section 6. Creative Borders' Partnerships in Gaborone

Since 2016, Creative Borders has been building an extensive network of community partners, which empowers us to impact more than 1500 individuals annually in Gaborone. Our collaborative efforts span a broad spectrum, encompassing local primary and high schools, universities, and organizations that align with our mission.

Central to our initiatives is the commitment to maximizing our outreach by harnessing and guiding the local resources of our partner organizations. Whenever we deliver a workshop at one school, our dedicated approach ensures that we actively seek opportunities to extend these valuable experiences to other institutions, amplifying the reach and impact of our programs.

Our valued partners include the Maru-a-Pula School, Ambrose Academy, Botswana Teen Club, SOS Village, Mebala Youth Studios, Moselewapula, Northside Primary School, and Thornhill Primary School. Over the years, Creative Borders has experienced exponential growth in its impact, establishing safe spaces that cater to individuals of all ages. Our initiatives are pivotal in bridging vital connections and resources within Gaborone, contributing to its people's overall well-being and development.

Section 7. 2024 Program Description

Building on the impact of our 2023 program, we are thrilled to announce our fifth outreach program in Gaborone, Botswana. For two weeks in February 2025, a team of four to six Teaching Artists will lead daily dance and drama workshops at (A) the Maru-a-Pula School and (B) the Ambrose Academy.

This year, Creative Borders is partnering with Arts Ignite, another global arts education organization, to inaugurate a groundbreaking professional development program for local artists (C). This revolutionary initiative will support the next generation of arts educators, further fostering artistic growth and sustainability of future arts education in Gaborone.

A. Maru-a-Pula School (35 program hours total — 3.5 hours/day; 180 students)

As a leader in Gaborone, the Maru-a-Pula School (MaP) has been critical to our success and growth. In 2025, we are excited to continue extending opportunities to the students at MaP through daily workshops.

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These three-and-a-half-hour daily sessions, using drama and dance as catalysts, will serve as a nurturing ground for students' artistic expression while simultaneously fostering the development of essential life skills, including leadership, collaboration, and resilience.

Founded on the principles of service and equality, Maru-a-Pula has dedicated itself to the betterment of the nation of Botswana. In 2005, in response to the pressing challenges posed by HIV/AIDS and poverty, the school initiated the Maru-a-Pula OVC Scholarship Program. This program is a beacon of hope, offering opportunities to local children affected by Botswana's most prominent social and economic challenges.

At Maru-a-Pula, the student community (ages 13-18) is a testament to the school's inclusive mission and commitment to addressing Botswana's broader issues. Maru-a-Pula strives to create a positive impact by empowering the younger generation and fostering a future marked by equality and shared prosperity.

B. Ambrose Academy (9 program hours total — 4.5 hours/week; 50 students)

Since our inaugural 2016 program, Creative Borders has forged a transformative partnership with the Ambrose Academy, a pioneering organization for children with special needs. The Academy provides children with disabilities (ages 6-15) with access to quality education and therapeutic services, empowering them to envision a better future and become self-reliant contributors to the nation.

Our collaborative efforts have created specialized 30-minute lessons that leverage movement, music, and storytelling to enhance mind-body connections, coordination, and communication for the students. Over the years, our approach has proven instrumental in providing students with new outlets to express emotions and frustrations positively. Our dance and drama-based lessons continue to translate into improvements in the students' overall social behavior, life skills training, and academic achievements.

The Ambrose Academy has experienced substantial growth since 2016, culminating in a new facility equipped with modern learning technologies. This advancement has enabled us to continue our lessons remotely, maintaining our commitment to students' development. In late 2023, we launched our first pre-recorded lesson facilitated by the Ambrose teachers, building on our work earlier in the year. This milestone marks a pivotal moment in our ongoing partnership, setting the stage for continued collaboration and impactful contributions to students' social and educational journeys.

C. Teaching Artist Training (40 program hours total — 4 hours/day; 5 students)

In 2024, our new partner, Arts Ignite, will lead a groundbreaking Teaching Artist training program designed to empower local artists to become educators and leaders within the community of Gaborone. This meticulously crafted 40-hour training program will be guided by the Teaching Artist team. It will unfold alongside the workshops for younger students, ensuring a holistic and immersive learning experience that will be supported by virtual check-ins after the program concludes.

We will select four to five participants for this inaugural opportunity through an application process. Aimed at nurturing the future leaders of Gaborone's artistic community, this training will equip candidates with the skills and resources essential for educational excellence and community leadership.

We will compensate for their active participation to recognize the dedication and support the commitment of the selected candidates. We remain committed to fostering a dynamic and supportive environment that propels local artists toward success in both their artistic endeavors and educational leadership roles.

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Section 8. Program Schedule

See attachment (A).

Section 9. Program Budget

See attachment (B) for a detailed budget breakdown, including travel, accommodation, food, program, and Teaching Artist compensation expenses. It costs approximately \$3,400 per artist per program. Creative Borders staff and the Board of Directors do not receive any form of compensation.

Section 10. Expected Outcomes

Our commitment to arts education has yielded transformative results in Gaborone, Botswana. Our programs have empowered individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to unleash their creative potential, fostering personal growth and community enrichment.

Since 2016, we have witnessed the following impactful outcomes:

Individual Empowerment: 97% of participants reported gaining newfound confidence and a sense of empowerment in expressing themselves.

Life Skills Development: Our programs focus on building critical life skills in leadership, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Community Partnerships: We have established 14 partnerships with local organizations, schools, and businesses, amplifying the reach and impact of our arts education initiatives. Our initiatives promote inclusivity, understanding, and collaboration among diverse groups.

Cultural Enrichment: Our events and programs have contributed to a vibrant cultural landscape, celebrating local artistic talent and preserving Gaborone's rich cultural heritage.

Access to Arts Education: Through strategic partnerships and accessibility initiatives, we have increased access to arts education, reducing barriers and reaching underserved populations.

Positive Social Change: Our programs have produced community-led projects and initiatives, creating a ripple effect of positive social change and community betterment.

Reflecting on our impact, we remain dedicated to fostering a community where the arts can lead to personal development, cultural enrichment, and positive societal change. Together, we continue to create space for creativity, empowerment, and inclusivity in Gaborone.

Section 11. Participant Testimonials

"Creative Borders helped me regain confidence. It became a safe space to be myself again and not worry about what others think of me, and I will carry this experience for the rest of my life."

"Creative Borders taught me about the freedom of expression, knowing that I have it in me to move and share my light with others."

"Creative Borders taught me about the process. It wasn't about being perfect but being in touch with ourselves, making everything worthwhile, and making bold choices."

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“It was the best time I have ever had.”

“Every day, I looked forward to the workshop because I knew we were going to do something that’s out of the box, that’s going to expand and challenge our creative minds, and having to do that as a group made it more fun.”

“It was a beautiful exchange, learning from the team. I am truly grateful to have been part of it.”

“Thank you for taking your time and visiting us. You will inspire lots of people just like you inspired us!”

“It was a collective safe space that allowed me to rediscover myself.”

“Thanks for the lesson. It really opened my eyes!”

“I am really grateful that I got to share an amazing experience.”

“It opened my mind to a lot more than just moving my body to music aimlessly but the emotion and intention behind it.”

“It helped me build my confidence, make connections, and discover new ways to create.”

“The way you communicated with the students, made everybody feel welcomed, and motivated and encouraged others in the group was all just beautiful.”

“I enjoyed the expertise, skills, professionalism, energy, and joy you brought to our schools. I enjoyed listening to our students’ feedback, saying it was the best day of their life, enjoying the workshops, their smiles, and their engagement.”

Section 12. Cultural Exchange

Creative Borders has been profoundly transformative for everyone involved, including the Teaching Artists. This program transcends conventional conservatory training by exposing artists to the endless possibilities that unfold when one shares their dedication and passion beyond the confines of gilded concert halls and traditional artistic pursuits. As artists, we look for ways to forge connections, reflect the zeitgeist, and, ultimately, instigate change in society. The essence of this program lies in distilling one’s art to its purest form—communication.

For all 16 Teaching Artists who have actively engaged in and contributed to this program, it has been a pinnacle moment in their journeys. This experience goes beyond the artistic realm, extending to the profound impact of sharing novel ideas, broadening perspectives, and cultivating a deeper empathic connection with people worldwide. Creative Borders has become a crucible for personal and artistic growth, where the power of communication transcends boundaries and leaves an indelible mark on both artists and participants alike.

Section 13. Arts Conservatory Enrichment

It is vital to reach back and extend these kinds of opportunities to the emerging generation of artists nearing the conclusion of their conservatory training. Our goal is to provide them with a firsthand experience that illuminates the transformative power of their art in nontraditional spaces. This commitment underscores our unwavering dedication to nurturing and empowering the artistic talents of

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the future. By doing so, we ensure that the influential impact of our program continues to echo through the corridors of arts institutions.

Through this effort, we aim to inspire and mold the creative journeys of emerging artists who are now as we once were. This opportunity goes beyond imparting technical skills; it is a chance to instill a profound understanding of the real-world impact their art can wield on individuals and communities. By bridging the gap between traditional training and unconventional spaces, we seek to broaden perspectives and cultivate artists who recognize the potential of their craft to enact positive change in diverse and unexpected contexts.

In 2023, we proudly welcomed our inaugural Teaching Artist fellow, a recent graduate of The Juilliard School. Their transformative journey to Gaborone with Creative Borders was made possible through the generous sponsorship of a Juilliard benefactor and the full support of Juilliard's President, Mr. Damian Woetzel. Their sponsorship exemplified the critical connection between fostering cross-cultural exchange and artistic enrichment.

We are actively pursuing additional institutional sponsors to pave the way for future fellowship opportunities. By securing support from organizations that share our vision and commitment to fostering artistic growth and cross-cultural exchange, we aim to expand the scope of opportunities for emerging talents and further enhance the transformative impact of our programs.

Section 14. Conclusion

This proposed program represents a unique opportunity to continue elevating arts education in Gaborone, fostering cross-cultural exchange, enhancing the skills of local artists and educators, and leaving a lasting impact on the community.

We are enthusiastic about the prospect of implementing this program and would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further. Thank you for considering our proposal, and we look forward to the possibility of collaborating to make this transformative vision a reality.

Section 15. Appendix

To Learn More:

Creative Borders Inc. 501(c)(3)

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Section 16. Citations

World Bank Open Data. (n.d.). World Bank Open Data.

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DYN.AIDS.ZS>

Coordinating Comprehensive Care for Children (4Children). (2019). [National Situation Analysis on Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Botswana – Summary Report](#). OVC Support.

Creative Borders 2025 Schedule Week 2 (February 23- March 1)							
	SUNDAY, 2/23	MONDAY, 2/24	TUESDAY, 2/25	WEDNESDAY, 2/26	THURSDAY, 2/27	FRIDAY, 2/28	SATURDAY, 3/1
6:00 AM			Breakfast / Flexible @ Flat	Breakfast / Flexible @ Flat	Breakfast / Flexible @ Flat	Breakfast / Flexible @ Flat	
6:30 AM							
7:00 AM							
7:30 AM							Breakfast / Flexible @ Flat
8:00 AM							
8:30 AM	Breakfast @ Flat	Breakfast @ Flat		Travel		Travel	
9:00 AM				Ambrose Academy		Ambrose Academy	Teaching Artists Depart TBD
9:30 AM							
10:00 AM	Teaching Artist Team Planning Session — Part 1	Maru-a-Pula School Staff Meet & Greet		Travel		Travel	
10:30 AM				Teaching Artist Team Meeting		Teaching Artist Team Meeting	
11:00 AM							
11:30 AM		Teaching Artist Team Meeting					
12:00 PM		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
12:30 PM							
1:00 PM		Student Attendance	Student Attendance	Student Attendance	Student Attendance	Student Attendance	
1:30 PM	Lunch/ Grocery Shopping	Maru-a-pula Session	Maru-a-pula Session	Maru-a-pula Session	Maru-a-pula Session	Maru-a-pula Session	
2:00 PM							
2:30 PM							
3:00 PM							
3:30 PM							
4:00 PM							
4:30 PM							
5:00 PM							
5:30 PM							
6:00 PM	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
6:30 PM							
7:00 PM		Evening Community Session	Teaching Artist Training Session	Teaching Artist Training Session	Community Celebration / Final Sharing		
7:30 PM							
8:00 PM							
8:30 PM							
9:00 PM							

Creative Borders 2025 Budget
Gaborone, Botswana
 3 Teaching Artists — 14-Day Program
 (Updated March 2024)

Expenses	Amount	Notes
Travel		
Round-trip airfare for Teaching Artists to Gaborone, Botswana	\$ 6,750.00	\$2250 per roundtrip ticket x 3 Teaching Artists
Ground transportation (Taxi) for Teaching Artists to/from airport/home	\$ 750.00	\$250 x 3 Teaching Artists
Ground transportation (Maru-a-Pula Vans) for Teaching Artist in Gaborone	\$ 450.00	\$150 x 3 Teaching Artists
Accomodation		
Overnight Hotel in Johannesburg for Teaching Artists during travel	\$ 750.00	\$250 x 3 Teaching Artists
Food		
Food and Grocery Stipend for Teaching Artists	\$ 1,500.00	\$500 x 3 Teaching Artists (\$35.50/day)
Program		
Insurance	\$ 1,000.00	Travel and liability insurance for Teaching Artists
Marketing and Documentation	\$ 1,000.00	Advertising, promotion, documentation of the program (supporting local artists)
Administrative Costs	\$ 550.00	Miscellaneous fees & materials
Contigency	\$ 2,000.00	Unexpected expenses
Compensation		
Teaching Artist Training Program	\$ 250.00	TA Training Program \$25/week/artist (based on 40 hour week at standard min.) — 5 artists
Teaching Artist Compensation	\$ 6,000.00	\$1000/week/Teaching Artist/3
Total Expenses	\$ 21,000.00	

Cost per artist (2023) = \$3,400