



February 2, 2018

50 Liberty LLC  
c/o The Fallon Company LLC  
One Marina Park Drive, Suite 1400  
Boston, Massachusetts 02210  
Attention: Myrna Putziger

Chairman, Board of Directors  
Michael Armstrong

President & CEO  
Gregory Ruffer

Boston Planning and Development Agency  
One City Hall Plaza, 9th Floor  
Boston, Massachusetts 02201  
Attention: Richard McGuinness

Re: Response to RFI for Lease of 50 Liberty Civic/Cultural Space

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The undersigned, being duly authorized to represent and act on behalf of Boston Center for the Arts (the "Respondent"), and having reviewed and fully understood all of the requirements of that certain Request for Interest for Lease of 50 Liberty Civic/Cultural Space ("RFI") and information provide therein, hereby submits the attached Application and supporting materials and applies for the opportunity to lease and activate the 50 Liberty Civic/Cultural Space. Capitalized terms used herein but not otherwise defined shall have the meanings ascribed to such terms in the RFI.

The Developer, the BPDA and DEP are hereby authorized by the Respondent to conduct any inquiries and investigations to verify the statements, documents, and information submitted in connection with this Application, and to seek clarification from references and other third parties regarding the financial and operating capacity of the Respondent.

If the Developer, the BPDA or the DEP have any questions regarding this Application, please contact the following individual(s):

Gregory Ruffer  
President & CEO  
539 Tremont Street  
Boston, MA 02116  
617.426.5002  
[gruffer@bcaonline.org](mailto:gruffer@bcaonline.org)

The undersigned confirms and warrants that, except as set forth below, no officer, director, partner, member, manager, or employee of



Respondent, nor spouse of any of the foregoing categories of individuals, is:

- An elected official of the City of Boston or an employee of the City of Boston, the BPDA, DEP or the Developer; or
- Related to or has any business or family relationship with any elected official of the City of Boston, or any employee of the City of Boston, the BPDA, DEP or the Developer, such that there would be any conflict of interest or any appearance of conflict of interest in the evaluation or consideration of this Application by the Developer, the BPDA or DEP.

The undersigned declares that the statements made and the information provided in the duly completed Application are complete, true and correct in all respects.

Boston Center for the Arts



By:

Name: Gregory Ruffer

Title: President & CEO

Boston Center for the Arts, Inc.  
Incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
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### **Executive Summary**

Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) will transform the raw space at 50 Liberty into a vibrant, kinetic space dedicated to the artistic process, public engagement, and creative experimentation. We will create an arts venue, workshop, and collection of studios and project rooms, managed and programmed by BCA. The ground floor will be a new arts center, divided and used for two purposes: as a laboratory and exhibition venue for local and regional artists to create and present new, perhaps multidisciplinary, work; and the Maker Space, a workshop for artists and other creative that is equipped with cutting-edge tools and technology. The second floor will be a collection of 10+ project rooms and studios for temporary and short-term use, bringing a revolving group of artists and collectives to create new work and contribute to the growing cultural community in the Seaport. Additional space on the second floor will be designated for BCA support staff. Each of these uses serves our goal of providing spaces for artistic creation, dedicated to the artistic process and supporting the local creative community.

### **BCA at the Seaport - Project Plan**

Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) is a nonprofit visual and performing arts center that supports artists creating, performing, and exhibiting new work. Our model does not rely on ticket or art sales, enabling us to take risks in our artistic programs and collaborate with experimental artists and collectives. We have established ourselves as a leader in artistic innovation, from large-scale commissions in the Cyclorama to intermittent, temporary popup performances in our Mills Gallery.

Our vision for 50 Liberty on Fan Pier is to establish a new arts center driven by process, innovation, and experimentation: BCA at the Seaport. The ground floor will become a public art center, a hive of creative activity and audience engagement. We will create two spaces: a working exhibition space and a cutting-edge shared workshop. To build these two distinct but complimentary venues, we will divide the raw space into two rooms and connect each with a shared reception area and facilities (e.g. restrooms, industrial sinks, storage space).

Approximately half of the ground floor of BCA at the Seaport will be designated as a working space and lab for selected artists to create new works in a public setting. We will create a new multidisciplinary program that draws on elements from both BCA's successful existing residency programs and our innovative pop-up performance series, Run of the Mills. We expect to invite approximately ten (10) artists and/or collectives to utilize the space in the creation of a new piece, installation, or performance. The physical attributes of the raw space – the open floor plan and floor-to-ceiling windows – will be incorporated in the program design, with artists working in view of residents, visitors, and passersby. Each artist or collective will also develop interactive public and community programs, such as artist talks,

demonstrations, or open rehearsals, engaging neighborhood residents and art audiences. The design of this program will duplicate successful aspects of our existing residencies and take full advantage of the room's architecture, providing a literal window into the artistic process.

In the adjoining room on the ground floor we will create the Maker Space, a flexible workshop for artists and other community members. The Maker Space will be an active, working space, providing artists with cutting edge tools and equipment, which could include 3-D printers, laser cutters, or woodworking tools. This will lend Boston artists the flexibility to experiment with new techniques and ideas without having to purchase expensive equipment. BCA's staff is working with our constituents to evaluate the design and resources of this facility. Shared workshops like the Maker Space have become increasingly rare in the city, especially outside of colleges and universities. A new hands-on public art workshop will be invaluable for artists seeking to push their practice with new processes and tools.

Artist studios have been an integral aspect of BCA's community since our founding in 1970. BCA's current Artist Studio Building (ASB) has work studios leased to more than 40 artists, providing some of the most affordable artistic workspaces in the city. Fostering a stable and affordable environment for artists to create and present new work is a critical part of our mission statement. We propose to divide the second floor into project rooms and working studios, with additional space for BCA at the Seaport support staff.

Creating a collection of project rooms and studios will serve a broad population of artists who may not require long-term leases like those in our South End location. This could include visiting professors at local universities, artists working on project-focused partnerships, or artists from abroad. Offering artists temporary and short-term spaces will allow us to be nimble and responsive to new opportunities and enable us to stay on the cutting edge of artistic practice and presentation. We will build 10+ rooms of varying sizes and provide common storage and cleaning amenities on the second floor. Space on the second floor will also be set aside for BCA support staff who will manage and maintain the programs and facility. We will cultivate a vast community of creators deeply engaged in contributing to the vibrancy of the Seaport.

These three distinct spaces all serve the same goal: to provide working artists in Boston opportunities to create, take risks, and experiment. BCA's programming is primarily focused on supporting local and regional artists and will compliment existing programs at ICA and the Society of Arts & Crafts. Our reputation as a presenter of cutting edge visual and performing arts will make BCA at the Seaport a destination for audiences across the city, and provide residents of Fort Point with space that vibrates creative energy. We have a long history in working with a rich mix of creatives and supporting the artistic pipeline, and are committed to Boston's unique artistic voices and perspectives. BCA at the Seaport will be dedicated to experimentation, risk taking, and pushing boundaries, elevating the Seaport's profile as a center for innovation.

### **Financial Strength and Capability**

BCA is a stable organization on a steady growth trajectory. After ending FY2013 with a deficit, BCA's leadership recognized that this was a pivotal moment in the organization's history, and in 2014 collaborated with The Development Corporation (TDC) to develop a strategic plan for

FY 2015 - 2019. The goal of this process was to identify the appropriate financial model to ensure stability and strength, moving the organization forward from a history of chronic under-capitalization. The strategic plan, approved by the Board of Directors in August 2014, centers on a long-term vision of a new, externally focused BCA that will continue our long-standing tradition of supporting working artists but will make the necessary changes to increase the organization's visibility and impact through the triple lenses of capitalization, financial modeling, and engagement of a more diverse audience.

After a two-year process in which BCA's leadership and staff developed a pathway to achieve those goals, we are implementing bold new strategies. These plans are not about tinkering with our existing model or making adjustments on a small scale; we created a new model of operations while retaining our vital and critical mission. BCA has also fortified our finances by creating new partnerships and expanding our rental business.

In December 2017 TDC presented a comprehensive analysis of BCA's financial model and status, affirming steady budget increase since 2010 (56%) and a trajectory of stable growth. BCA has implemented strategies to widen the donor base with the goal of driving surpluses to create stronger reserves for the future, and affirmed our long-term commitment to funding capital and operating reserves.

BCA is led by President & CEO Gregory Ruffer, and supported by an experienced team in senior management and a deeply committed Board of Directors. Ruffer brings years of management and executive experience to this position, as well as a bold vision of BCA as the nexus of the arts in Boston. Most recently he served as the President & CEO of the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, a nationally recognized nonprofit community school of music based in Milwaukee. There he created diverse programming that enabled the organization to operate on a 70% earned income business model. Through ambitious fundraising programs, strategic community partnerships and a renewed enthusiasm from staff and faculty, Mr. Ruffer reversed more than a decade of deficit spending to balance the budget within his first three years.

Guiding the artistic programming at 50 Liberty will be Chief Programming Officer, Wanda Strukus. Strukus joined BCA in January 2017 and has already made a profound impact on the scope and focus of our visual and performing programs. Under her leadership, BCA's artistic programs have expanded to include a greater variety of disciplines and perspectives. She has identified thematic commonalities in the artistic programs we produce, and created a cohesive, responsive season schedule. She holds a Ph.D. from Tufts University, where her research and practice centered on puppetry and masked performance, an M.A. with a playwriting focus from the University of Arizona, and a B.A. in film studies from Wesleyan University. As a cofounder of Two Roads Performance Projects, she coproduced and curated the award-winning site-specific dance festival, Dance in the Fells, and she produces, curates, and creates public art projects and community-engaged works across a wide range of media.

Emily Foster Day has served as BCA's Chief Advancement Officer since 2014, leading BCA's fundraising, marketing, and community engagement. Day has extensive development experience in creative nonprofits, bringing a deep understanding of the unique needs of art centers to her role at BCA. Day was instrumental in conceiving the strategies that have propelled the organization's steady growth trajectory, increasing individual and institutional

giving each year. She has also directed BCA's community engagement strategy, cultivating deep and productive relationships with key individuals, businesses, and organizations in the South End and throughout the city.

The Board of Directors at BCA is a dedicated group of leaders from across all sectors that impact BCA's work and management, from artists and educators to financial planners and architects. Chaired by Michael Armstrong, Managing Director at Deloitte Consulting, BCA's Board of Directors has provided keen oversight over several integral initiatives, including the 2014 parallel process of developing a Strategic Plan to guide our work and a Master Plan to address the needs of our campus and buildings. An ad-hoc committee comprised of key BCA Board members with expertise in architecture, construction, and finance will oversee and advise the plans for the new spaces. They will help guide the conceptual, physical, and financial considerations of transforming the available space into BCA at the Seaport.

The plan BCA is proposing for 50 Liberty includes revenue generation through rentals of studios, project rooms, and the Maker Space along with traditional contributed income. In our current facility, our successful revenue model is comprised of a combination of earned and contributed expenses. Our financial modeling predicts that the rental income will help offset occupancy costs, providing a stable funding stream.

### **Organization Mission – Program and Services**

Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) is a not-for-profit visual and performing arts complex that supports working artists to create, perform, and exhibit new works; develops new audiences; and connects the art to community. Established through grassroots activism in 1970, BCA has restored a once neglected city block, transforming the 19th century buildings into a vibrant epicenter for art of all disciplines and revitalizing the surrounding South End community.

BCA was founded on the belief that the arts contribute to the economic and social well being of neighborhoods and citizens, and for nearly five decades has fostered a stable, supportive, and affordable environment for working and emerging artists to create, exhibit, and perform new work. We are one of the most prolific art institutions in the city, presenting four major visual art exhibitions, more than 30 theatre and dance productions, several pop-up performances and open rehearsals, and major new commissions. We also hold dozens of free community events throughout the year, including artist talks and workshops, a public discussion series, networking events, and neighborhood celebrations on the outdoor Plaza, including large Pride and holiday season events.

BCA programs are infused with the principles of responsiveness, inclusion, and innovation. Our programs focus on process rather than product, and traverse every stage of artistic practice, from Residency programs for emerging artists to major commissions that bring an artist's mature vision to fruition. For the 2017/18 artistic season, we will support two (2) Visual Art Residents, one (1) Public Visual Art Resident, ten (10) companies in our Performing Arts Residency, one (1) company in our Choreography Residency, and one (1) Music Ensemble in Residence. Adhering to our organizational goals of connecting art to community, all resident artists and companies create public programs to enhance and accompany their work, such as participatory artist talks or open rehearsals.

One of our most successful recent programs, Run of the Mills, is a series of temporary popup exhibitions in our critically acclaimed Mills Gallery, where artists and other collaborators are encouraged to take over the space. Featured projects are experimental works in progress, art that challenges and defies categorization. This program has opened doors for artists working across visual, performance, and sonic art - performers and artists massaging their process who use the Mills Gallery as a lab to launch radical new ideas. The programming we propose in the space at 50 Liberty draw from the successes of this program.

BCA has begun to pilot large-scale new events like the Boston Art Book Fair and develop strategies for funding and commissioning new works by Boston artists and collectives. In March 2017, with support from the Barr-Klarman Foundations Artistic Risk Fund, BCA commissioned *Know, No.* a major, site-specific installation and performance piece from local art group Masary Studios. This piece utilized the unique architecture and history of the Cyclorama in the creation of a new performance and music piece accompanied by light projection and spoken word. BCA collaborated with Masary Studios through all stages of the piece, from concept and design to marketing and documentation, helping to realize their vision and advance our own mission. *Know, No.* was performed on March 2, 3, and 4, 2017, and drew an audience of more than 700 people from across the city. This pilot project laid the foundation and framework for BCA's commissioning program, which provides artists with the opportunity to elevate their practice and career by creating a major, original new work supported by BCA's resources and network. Our next major commissioned piece, *Conference of the Birds*, is an evening-long movement theater piece from ANIKAYA Dance Theater inspired by the experiences of the Muslim, refugee, and immigrant communities in the city. *Conference of the Birds* is funded by a Building Bridges grant from the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, and will premiere in April 2018.

Ambitious artistic and public programs like our major commissions and temporary experimental installations have established BCA as a premier producer of innovative work. Our experience, vision, and capacity make BCA the ideal organization to create a new civic and cultural space at 50 Liberty.

### **Contribution to Community**

BCA's mission is to serve working artists and our primary audience is the artistic community that we serve. Through our public-facing exhibitions and performances, we have also developed a broad, diverse audience of cultural consumers throughout the region.

Artists access BCA for a range of support, resources, networking and inspiration. Our programs are designed to focus on the artistic process, nurturing growth and risk-taking for artists at multiple points in their careers. Other art professionals, including curators, collectors, and writers are also a large segment of our audience and a valuable resource, serving as content experts, panelists and speakers in our artistic and public programs. We host a vibrant community that encourages collaboration and critique, helping artists push themselves to continually improve and evolve their practice and vision. Establishing a new arts center at 50 Liberty will extend new opportunities to working artists and drive more creative individuals to the Seaport, further cementing the neighborhood's reputation as a vibrant art community.

BCA has a strong history of creating and leading coalitions of local organizations and businesses. As a part of our FY2015 organization-wide community engagement initiative, we met with local organizations, businesses, and neighborhood associations to identify how we could be a better partner and neighbor. We are using those connections to build a network of stakeholders, from neighborhood associations and businesses to other arts organizations and nonprofits.

Our 2.2-acre South End campus hosts a dynamic group of organizations, including Boston Ballet, the Community Music Center of Boston, the Boston Gay Men's Chorus, ArtMorpheus, Company One, SpeakEasy Stage Company, and the Huntington Theater Company, as well as two of the most popular restaurants in the South End, The Beehive and Banyan Bar + Refuge. Over the past year, we have worked to engage these organizations and businesses through our "campus cohort," holding bi-monthly meetings to create dialogue with the organizations that contribute to the vibrancy of our campus. We are also building a coalition of arts organizations of all sizes to help understand the needs of working artists in the region and create consensus around solutions to those needs. Our leadership and staff will bring our extensive experience in community building to the Seaport, collaborating with other organizations and businesses to foster growth.

BCA at the Seaport will compliment the innovative artistic programming of the ICA, providing a bridge between ICA's focus on mid- and late-career artists and the emerging and early artists we have historically supported. Our exhibition and working venue will be where artists experiment with new ideas and themes, an incubator and stepping stool for larger projects.

BCA has always been a place for artists and audiences to access new work, ideas, and community. Through our extensive public programs, we strive to create an environment that is inclusive to all audience members, regardless of their experience with contemporary and modern art. Our community programs – from intimate artistic talks to large neighborhood celebrations -- help build bridges between creators and audiences, facilitating a dialogue about art making, social issues, and community. We will bring our experience, expertise, and passion to a new venue in the Seaport.

### **Budget Rationale**

BCA at the Seaport will be built and managed by Boston Center for the Arts (BCA), an organization with a rich history of rehabilitating and repurposing existing spaces for artistic use. Our experience in managing both programs and facilities makes BCA an ideal organization to help transform 50 Liberty on Fan Pier into a vibrant arts destination.

This facility will generate income through two primary methods: rentals and membership. Project rooms and studios on the second floor will be rented at an estimated \$20/sf. This is an extremely competitive rate for an in-demand neighborhood, which will ensure consistent rental income throughout the year. The Maker Space will produce income through rentals and a membership program. Membership for the Maker Space will begin at \$25 per month with basic benefits, which is similar to other shared workspaces in Boston and throughout the country. Nonmembers would also be able to rent equipment in the space (pending safety training) for \$20 per hour.



Similar to the existing rental program at our South End campus, BCA at the Seaport will also rent shared space to local artists, performers, and community groups. Rental rates are on a sliding scale for individual artists, performing arts companies, nonprofits, and corporate clients. This enables us to subsidize organizations like Medicine Wheel to rent the Cyclorama for their annual installation for World AIDS Day. BCA will develop a rental program that ensures broad access to this unique space.

This proposed financial model is similar to our existing operating budget, with a combination of earned and contributed revenue. Costs to operate in this space include the base rent, condo fees, communications, insurance, and site-specific staff. New staff members must include a Maker Space Manager, with expertise in hands-on equipment use and maintenance, and a Venue Manager to assist rental clients and the public. Existing Programs staff at BCA will develop and manage the programs in the exhibition space.

At this stage, BCA is still developing a plan for the build-out of the raw space. We have developed a framework of the requirements for the construction and finishing a two floor mixed use space. The next step in this process is to collaborate with our advisors in architecture and engineering, including members of our Board of Directors, to develop a realistic series of projected costs for building out these aspects of the space.