



IMPACT REPORT

2022-2023

Dear Friends & Supporters,

We are excited to share this summary of The Ella Project's 2022-23 program year, highlighting the impact of our work with Louisiana artists and New Orleans's cultural community.

Pro Bono Legal Services: Our commitment to providing comprehensive legal services to artists, culture bearers, and grass roots nonprofits continues to be a cornerstone of our work. In the past year, we assisted 250+ artists and cultural entities, helping them navigate challenges, protect their creative content and grow as entrepreneurs, businesses, and organizations. This work empowers the creators who are part of the cultural fabric that makes our city so special.

Artist Business Development Services: Our dedication to supporting artists in developing sustainable careers is unwavering. This past year, we partnered with the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation to produce "I Can Do That," a web-based series primarily for visual artists considering expanding their businesses. This series increased the number of artists we were able to serve with the information and resources to support their professional goals.

Advocacy: Advocacy is at the core of our mission. We are committed to ensuring that the voices of our cultural community are heard by those making policy decisions that impact our creative industries and cultural ecosystem. New Orleans's music scene is at the heart of our advocacy conversations these days, and we are working intensely on issues involving the vulnerability of live performance spaces and the musicians that they employ. We are exchanging research and best practices to identify ways that the sector and city leadership can work together to prevent New Orleans from losing the people and businesses that distinguish us as an international treasure of authentic culture.

We are grateful to our supporters, partners, interns, volunteers, and artists that make The Ella Project's work possible, and we are excited to share more of our work with you as we enter our 20th year of serving our community.

Thank you for your support and belief in our mission.

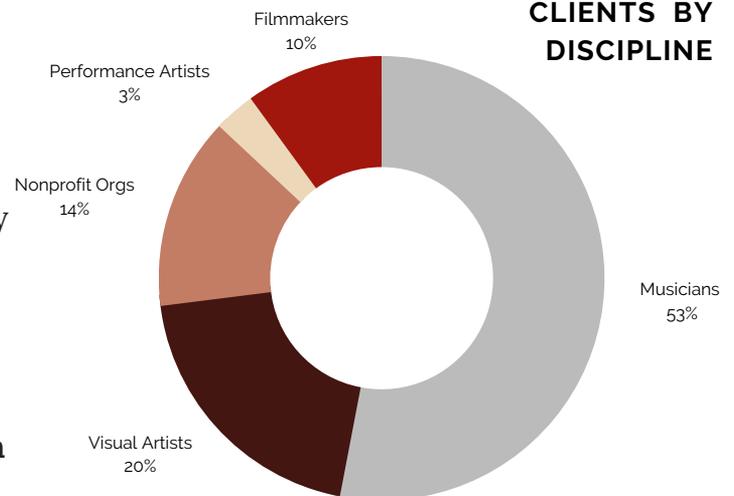
Sincerely,

Ashlye & Gene

Legal Services

The Ella Project delivered services to 256 clients between July 2022 and June 2023. The issues addressed included copyright protection and enforcement, trademark protection and enforcement, patent protection, contract drafting and review, misappropriation, publicity rights, small business and nonprofit incorporation and compliance, wills and successions, dispute resolution, and other matters germane to artist careers.

The Ella Project remains the only organization in Louisiana that provides these pro bono services specifically for artists.



100% OF LEGAL CLIENTS HAVE
LOW TO MODERATE INCOME

CLIENTS RESIDE IN
15 LOUISIANA PARISHES

“Your financial situation shouldn’t dictate how much help you can receive. The Ella Project bridges that gap.”

-New Orleans Illustrator
& The Ella Project Client

340: HOURS OF ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS WITH CLIENTS

97: % OF ARTISTS WHO SAID THEIR CASES WERE SOLVED TO THEIR SATISFACTION

INTERNS & VOLUNTEERS

Since its inception, The Ella Project has partnered with Tulane Law School as part of its mandate for public service. In 2022-23, The Ella Project **mentored 36 second- and third-year law students** who supported the delivery of legal services by attending weekly intake sessions and assisting with research under the supervision of co-founder Ashlye Keaton. Students receive credit for their pro bono work while gaining a better understanding of the legal constructs through tangible experience while helping individual artists and the cultural community protect and grow their creative work. Over the past five years alone, **154 students have interned with the program**. Many of these students remain committed to supporting the arts and to provide pro bono work as emerging lawyers in their communities.

Seventeen volunteer attorneys provided pro bono services to assist artists with matters such as family law, taxes, and housing disputes that fall outside of the legal issues related directly to the work we do in the arts, culture, and entertainment sectors.



In Practice

Be ready so you don't have to get ready.

In her 20+ year career, Cole Williams has frequently worked as a songwriter and studio musician. Early on she learned the importance of clear agreements before embarking on creative projects. Cole's belief that **being ready, so you don't have to get ready**, ensured that she always prioritized handling split sheets and formalizing other agreements before initiating any studio work.

Cole understands that a split sheet serves as a written agreement that comprehensively outlines the contributions of all collaborators to a song or a recording, along with their respective ownership percentages. Although these signed split sheets are legally binding instruments that ensure proper credits, Cole often encountered situations where fellow collaborators neglected the crucial business side of music before diving into the creative process, which sometimes resulted in musicians not getting their dues - or worse - music projects being shelved. Cole quickly took it upon herself to advocate, not only for herself, but for other members of her band and the entire music community, to make sure that everyone knew to get their share of the earnings due to them when it came time for licensing and publishing.



COLE WILLIAMS
singer/songwriter, composer,
producer, multi-instrumentalist
& The Ella Project Client

Cole's knowledge of this essential aspect of the music industry has been instrumental in quickly resolving cases that she's brought to The Ella Project, particularly when her rights as a creator have been compromised. Thanks to her diligent approach in securing agreements prior to songwriting and recording, along with her support from The Ella Project, she has quickly received favorable outcomes ensuring she gets the payments she's entitled to when challenging those infringing on her rights and violating her contracts around royalties and other revenue.

With pro bono legal assistance from The Ella Project, Cole not only finds resolution for issues encountered as a performer and recording artist, but she also continually enhances her knowledge around the business side of music. This ongoing education has broadened her opportunities for success in the industry.

In Cole's words, **“Ashlye makes me feel like I'm the only person she speaks to. I'm so grateful and appreciate the long-term, quality advice I continue to receive working with The Ella Project. This support extends beyond individual projects; it's about long-term education and growth.”**

A significant part of The Ella Project's mission centers around helping musicians and artists to identify and document their interests as rights holders so they can organize, manage, and control the use of their creative work in the marketplace and beyond.

The Ella Project offers comprehensive support, from assisting artists in obtaining split sheets as part of their workflow to ensuring proper recourse when their work is published and licensed so that when their rights are at risk of compromise **they don't have to get ready - they are ready.**



Advocacy

Artists thrive in a community that understands their needs and supports their work. The Ella Project advocates for policies, practices, infrastructure, funding, and other resources that support a thriving creative industry and cultural ecosystem where artists can live and work.

In 2022, The Ella Project experienced some of its work coming to fruition with the establishment of the Mayor's Office of Nighttime Economy. Going back to 2018, The Ella Project paved the way for New Orleans to adopt a model, which had proven successful in other cities, to establish a single point of contact in city government for artists, musicians, culture bearers and creative businesses to address policies and regulations that affect culture. For years, visual artists, public performances, and private venues were faced with constant adversity dealing with multiple agencies and their varying interpretation and enforcement of city regulations. Visual artists in Jackson Square called upon us regularly for help with the 5+ agencies that enforced permitting rules in different ways which often resulted in visual artists shutting down their businesses when they should have been able to continue working and earning. Musicians were getting arrested for playing in the streets after dark – ironic considering that the iconic imagery of brass bands playing at night is marketed to tourists en masse. Some neighborhood venues were in a state of vulnerability due to lack of clarity and cohesion around standards for sound levels.

In response, **The Ella Project looked for a proactive solution.** In 2019, The Ella Project was selected by the Mayor's Office and City Council to curate a learning expedition for New Orleans political leadership order to exchange with similar leaders on site visits to Seattle and San Francisco, followed by introductions among these local officials to leaders and networks across North America and parts of Europe working in the same sector. This curated communications furthered not simply the idea of an Office of Nighttime Economy, but also on successful implementation, how to avoid missteps, and how to create a long term plan for continued success. These convenings continued during the pandemic, specifically through The Ella Project's key work in *Reopening Every Venue Safely*, which brought policy ideas and solutions from stakeholders and city leaders across America grappling with how to support their performance spaces during an impossible time.

The Ella Project continues to provide New Orleans leadership with resources around developing best practices in arts and cultural policy development and ideas on how to maximize opportunities to learn from successful models in similar communities, with the overarching focus on **benefiting our community and promoting a thriving creative industries and cultural ecosystem.**

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

With a mayoral election just around the corner, The Ella Project is once again taking a lead role in convening small group conversations and public forums among candidates, cultural-stakeholders, and members of the community with the goal of educating candidates on the needs of the cultural community in support of making better informed policy decisions while also providing a forum for community members to understand how candidates will address these needs.

When it comes to advocacy, the road to results can be long, but artist-centric policy has a significant, long-lasting impact on all members of the cultural community.



Arts Business Development

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: TETE A TETE

In 2022, The Ella Project launched Tete-a-Tete as an artist consultancy network to provide valuable business development resources to early-and mid-career artists by facilitating mentoring sessions with experienced, well-established artists on a variety of topics ranging from music touring to creating a press kit to fundraising. **15 industry professionals** are currently available to consult in the areas of **Media, Music, Arts Admin, & Visual Arts.**



2022-23 WORKSHOPS & WEBINARS

Crescendo

8-week Music Business Intensive

I Can Do That

Series for Visual Artists

All About Sampling

Copyright & Royalties for Musicians

Applying for Patent Protections

The CASE Act & Copyright Small Claims Court

All About Intellectual Property

The Allen Toussaint Legacy Act

Business Development Webinars

"There's more to it than performing live. There's the side of getting your copyrights together, getting your syncs together, getting your songs connected to a PRO. Those things seem daunting if you're just trying to put it together yourself. But The Ella Project – having that community – creates a road map and support system on how to do that."

Joy Clark, Singer/Songwriter

2019 Crescendo Attendee & The Ella Project Client

196: # of Musicians who
Participated in Crescendo 2022

279: # of Artists who participated
in other Business Development
Webinars & Workshops

17: # of Artists who received
consultations from veteran artists
through Tete A Tete



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NEW ORLEANS, LA
70116



The Ella Project Programming is made possible by generous supporters.



Clayton Royer Family Fund

MISSION

We believe in the importance of the culture of New Orleans and Louisiana. We empower the creators of their culture in a way that is just, equitable, and serves the artists, patrons, and our diverse community.



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