



The Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts - *Creating Space for Creativity. Building Community for Generations.*

The William Penn Foundation's transformative \$2 million lead capital grant affirms the Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts as one of the region's most important shared cultural assets. The Foundation recognizes that high-quality arts facilities are not merely performance venues—they are civic spaces where artists create, students learn, communities gather, and organizations collaborate to strengthen the cultural vitality of Philadelphia and beyond.

The Philadelphia Clef Club has intentionally evolved into a regional cultural hub whose facilities are utilized by educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, artists, community ensembles, and civic partners throughout the year. These collaborations extend the impact of the building far beyond the Clef's own programming and ensure that the facility serves thousands of artists, educators, students, and audience members annually.

The Foundation describes this vision well:

"Well-designed, well-maintained spaces can play a central role in elevating new approaches to programming, engagement, and business models that can lead to greater resilience and growth in the arts and culture sector."

The Philadelphia Clef Club embodies that vision through an expanding network of partnerships that leverage the facility as shared cultural infrastructure.



Educational Partners

Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA)

The Clef maintains one of its longest-standing educational relationships with Philadelphia's High School for Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA).

This partnership includes:

- Professional artist residencies
- Jazz master classes
- Instrumental workshops
- Career mentoring
- Student performance opportunities
- Annual CAPA Senior Vocal Recitals hosted in the Clef's performance hall

By bringing internationally acclaimed musicians directly into the educational environment, the Clef helps bridge classroom instruction with professional artistic practice.

Girard College

The Clef collaborates with Girard College through educational performances, student engagement activities, and music enrichment opportunities that expose students to Philadelphia's rich jazz heritage while providing access to world-class professional musicians.

Philadelphia Public and Charter Schools

Through the Clef's educational outreach initiatives, students from schools throughout the region participate in:

- Interactive performances
- Jazz appreciation programs
- Artist demonstrations



- Student concerts
- School field trips
- Youth workshops

These activities introduce thousands of young people to jazz as America's original art form.

Higher Education Partners

Temple University

The Clef collaborates with Temple University through projects involving the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection and other educational initiatives that celebrate and preserve African American musical history and culture.

Faculty, researchers, students, and historians utilize the Clef as both a performance venue and an important center for historical preservation.

Drexel University

Working with Drexel University faculty and students, the Clef participates in educational programming, public conversations, and collaborative initiatives exploring music, culture, history, and community engagement.

These partnerships encourage interdisciplinary learning while connecting university students with Philadelphia's living jazz traditions.

Arts and Cultural Organizations

National Jazz Festival

The National Jazz Festival has partnered with the Clef for four consecutive years, utilizing the facility for:



- Student adjudications
- Concerts
- Educational clinics
- Master classes
- Festival activities

Together, the organizations provide one of the Mid-Atlantic region's premier educational jazz experiences for students and educators.

Jazz Philadelphia

As one of Philadelphia's leading jazz advocacy organizations, Jazz Philadelphia partners with the Clef on initiatives that celebrate and promote the city's internationally recognized jazz community.

Together the organizations strengthen Philadelphia's position as one of America's great jazz cities.

FringeArts

The Clef continues to support Philadelphia's vibrant experimental arts community through collaborations with Fringe artists, interdisciplinary performances, and creative development opportunities.

These partnerships encourage artistic innovation while welcoming new audiences into the Clef.



We Are the Seeds

The Clef collaborates with **We Are the Seeds**, Philadelphia's Indigenous arts and culture organization, on interdisciplinary artistic projects highlighting Indigenous perspectives through music, storytelling, visual arts, podcasts, and community engagement.

These collaborations broaden cultural representation while encouraging dialogue across communities.



Community and Civic Partners

Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse

As part of Philadelphia's 2026 Semiquincentennial celebration, Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse selected the Clef as its recording partner for:

Hear Us! The Children's Time Capsule

This citywide initiative preserves the voices, artwork, songs, and dreams of Philadelphia's children for reopening in 2076.

At the Clef:

- Children recorded spoken reflections.
- Young musicians performed.
- Vocal performances were captured.
- Resident artists from the Clef's nationally recognized **Soundscapes for Tomorrow** initiative recorded inspirational messages to future generations.

The project demonstrates how the Clef's recording capabilities extend beyond music production to civic storytelling and historical preservation.

Team Jamaica Bickle

The Clef partners with Team Jamaica Bickle, the nonprofit organization supporting Jamaican and Caribbean student-athletes participating in the Penn Relays.

The partnership celebrates Caribbean culture through music, education, and community programming while strengthening Philadelphia's international cultural connections.



Resident Artistic Programs

Soundscapes for Tomorrow

The Clef's nationally recognized residency program brings internationally acclaimed artists into extended creative engagement with Philadelphia audiences.

Resident artists include:

- Miguel Zenón
- Tia Fuller
- Derrick Hodge
- Papo Vázquez
- Nabaté Isles

Beyond concerts, these artists participate in:

- Public conversations
- Educational workshops
- Student engagement
- Community outreach
- Recording projects
- Civic initiatives such as the Children's Time Capsule

Community Music Ensembles

Radiance Community Big Band

The Clef's Radiance Community Big Band provides adult musicians with opportunities to:

- Rehearse regularly
- Perform publicly
- Continue lifelong music education
- Mentor emerging musicians
- Strengthen Philadelphia's jazz community

MWD Big Band

The Clef's newly established **MWD Big Band** honors three legendary Clef Club musicians:

- Leon Mitchell
- Don Wilson
- Nate Davenport

The ensemble preserves Philadelphia's jazz heritage while creating new opportunities for musicians across generations to perform together.

Professional Artists

Throughout the year, the Clef serves hundreds of professional musicians by providing:

- Concert facilities
- Recording opportunities
- Rehearsal space
- Artist development
- Educational residencies
- Public programming
- Community engagement

Professional artists frequently mentor students while contributing to Philadelphia's cultural economy.

The Clef Jazz Collection and Archive

The Philadelphia Clef Club is also developing one of the nation's most significant archives documenting African American jazz history.

Researchers, scholars, students, historians, and cultural organizations increasingly utilize the collection for:



- Historical research
- Docent Program
- Educational programming
- Documentary projects
- Publications
- Public interpretation

The capital improvements will include climate-controlled archival storage to preserve these nationally significant collections for future generations.

A Regional Anchor Institution

The Philadelphia Clef Club's partnerships illustrate that it functions as much more than a presenting organization.

It is:

- A performing arts center.
- An educational institution.
- A recording facility.
- A rehearsal center.
- A civic gathering place.
- A cultural heritage institution.
- A community music school.
- An archive.
- A collaborative workspace.
- A creative incubator.

Organizations across Philadelphia rely upon the Clef because it offers a unique combination of artistic excellence, educational programming, cultural authenticity, historical significance, and community accessibility.

The capital improvements supported by the William Penn Foundation will expand this capacity substantially by modernizing performance spaces, increasing educational facilities, improving accessibility, strengthening archival preservation, and creating a more flexible environment for collaborative programming.

The result will be a stronger cultural ecosystem in which artists, educators, nonprofit organizations, students, researchers, and community members share a facility designed



to inspire creativity, preserve history, foster civic engagement, and ensure that Philadelphia's jazz legacy continues to serve future generations.

In this way, the Philadelphia Clef Club directly advances the William Penn Foundation's vision of investing in cultural spaces that strengthen neighborhoods, expand access to the arts, encourage innovation, support collaboration, and contribute to the long-term resilience of the Greater Philadelphia arts and culture sector.