

NIVA EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND AWARDS \$3M IN CRITICAL GRANTS, PROVIDING SHORT-TERM AID TO SOME OF THE MOST VULNERABLE INDEPENDENT VENUES AS THE INDUSTRY WAITS FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF FROM THE SAVE OUR STAGES ACT

Jan 6, 2020 – The National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) Emergency Relief Fund is awarding its first grants in hopes of enabling some of the most distressed independent venues to hold on until the emergency relief funds begin to flow from the just-passed COVID Relief law, which includes the provisions of the Save Our Stages Act. Donations from music fans, artists, and corporations to the NIVA Emergency Relief Fund have provided \$3 million in critical short-term assistance for 153 independent venues and promoters throughout the U.S., allowing these small businesses to hold on as all of NIVA's 3,000 members anxiously await funding from the new relief package. Unfortunately, the need is still dire, as the NIVA Emergency Relief Fund received four times the requests for aid as it had funds to award. Donations to the [NIVA Emergency Relief Fund](#) are still being accepted. An additional \$11 million is required to provide essential business-saving relief to all who have applied for emergency relief so far.

Already, hundreds of venues have shuttered permanently since COVID-19 forced the industry to a standstill in March. As more time passes before federal emergency relief is received, venues could continue to disappear.

"This aid would not have been possible without the help of everyone who has supported NIVA. Thank you especially to the NIVA Emergency Relief Fund Committee co-chairs, Lisa Gedgaudas, Chris Zacher, and Carl Swanson, who dedicated endless hours to making sure this program could assist as many venues and promoters as possible; we're immensely grateful to them," said NIVA Executive Director Rev. Moose. "But the NIVA Emergency Relief Fund is just a temporary life raft for these small businesses. With a maximum grant amount of \$25,000, this is only short-term help. And we are pained that we can't provide grants to all who applied, because our industry's need far exceeds the donations we've collected so far. We're grateful that Congress passed the latest COVID Relief law, but it will likely take months before the grants are received. We're trying to help those most at risk of going under while they wait."

The NIVA Emergency Relief Fund is administered by The Giving Back Fund through a diverse panel of impartial, third party industry experts. "It's hard to imagine our futures without the lively spirit and culture of independent music venues," said Marc Pollick, president of the Giving Back Fund. "They are where we go to elevate our lives. It's one of the many reasons why The Giving Back Fund is so proud to be partnering with NIVA to facilitate their Emergency Relief Fund. We received hundreds of applications from venues across the country, each with their own unique history and each in dire need of support – far more worthy applications than we can fulfill given the current resources. Grants are set to go out to the first round of recipients this week and we hope to continue our efforts to find the necessary funding to save every last venue."

The NIVA Emergency Relief Fund is a tax-deductible way for individuals, companies, and foundations to contribute. The NIVA ERF directly supports the preservation of the independent live entertainment ecosystem that presents music, comedy, and the performing arts, helping these critical spaces survive through the Coronavirus pandemic. Individuals, foundations, businesses, and organizations that are interested in contributing to the NIVA Emergency Relief Fund should visit nivassoc.org/erf.

About NIVA

Formed at the onset of the COVID-19 shutdown, National Independent Venue Association (NIVA), now represents more than 3,000 members in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. These independent venues and promoters were the first to close and will be the last to fully reopen. NIVA's mission is to preserve and nurture the ecosystem of independent live venues, promoters and festivals throughout the United States. To learn more about NIVA's quest to gain federal funding for independent venues, visit <https://www.nivassoc.org/take-action>. The [National Independent Venue Foundation](#) has been created to focus on separate, supplemental initiatives, such as the Emergency Relief Fund.