



FRACTURED ATLAS

August 31, 2015

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20054

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Re: WC Docket No. 11-42; WC Docket No. 09-197; WC Docket No. 10-90

Dear Ms. Dortch,

On behalf of the 49,000 member-strong community of Fractured Atlas artists, we write in wholehearted support of the Federal Communications Commission's proposal to modernize Lifeline by including broadband as an option for program participants.

As the largest arts services organization in the country, Fractured Atlas employs technology to eliminate practical barriers to artistic expression. In this comment we seek to demonstrate the specific beneficial impact of the Lifeline program on the lives of arts community members and illustrate the multi-dimensional role broadband plays in the creative process across a number of artistic disciplines.

LIFELINE'S CURRENT IMPACT ON ARTS COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Renee Beauvais worked as a professional dancer and choreographer in San Francisco for more than a decade before moving to Hawaii and getting diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2011. No longer healthy enough to practice her livelihood, she went on disability and fell into financial trouble, forced to exhaust her life's savings. Renee discovered the Lifeline program four years ago, and has relied on its subsidized phone service ever since.

Today, Renee is hard at work fulfilling her dream of starting a nonprofit dance organization, which is called Moving World Foundation. Internet access, however, is of the utmost importance for her to get the organization off the ground. Renee harnesses broadband to recruit board members, find volunteers to design the organization's logo, advertise and assess dancers' video auditions, and raise both money and awareness.

Since Renee is not located on the mainland, she invests heavily in the Internet: collaborating with volunteers and fellow artists over email; networking with likeminded local dancers and choreographers; and holding board meetings in online chatrooms, among others. As Moving World Foundation develops, Renee plans to turn to the Internet to seek inspiration from the choreography of other dance organizations, as large-scale ballet companies do not tend to showcase in Hawaii.

Renee hopes to develop the organization to a point where she no longer qualifies for Lifeline, but in the meantime, subsidized broadband would help her overcome her financial challenges and remain an active participant in the dance world in spite of her illness.

FRACTURED ATLAS SUPPORTS THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL

There are artists all across America who meet Lifeline's income-based qualifications - some like Renee take advantage of the program already, while others would enroll as a result of broadband being added as an option to participants. Although Fractured Atlas artists are geographically diverse, spanning all four hundred thirty-five Congressional districts, they are united and empowered by access to the Internet. We echo the direction of Congress that "[c]onsumers in all regions of the Nation, including low-income consumers . . . should have access to . . . advanced telecommunications and information services."

In recent years, the Commission has acknowledged the vital role that the Internet has played in the proliferation of voices on the Internet - particularly to those who face the biggest disenfranchisement in traditional media arenas. Artists harness the Internet in a number of capacities - including, but not limited to: displaying work, collaborating with other artists, seeking inspiration, educating young artists, marketing events and, of course, fundraising.

ACCESS TO BROADBAND IS INTRINSIC TO THE LIBERATION OF ARTISTS

Without the Internet, Fractured Atlas would be unable to fulfill its mission: to eliminate practical barriers to artistic expression so as to foster a more agile and resilient cultural ecosystem. We seek to paint a picture of the various "faces of Lifeline" within the arts community. The following Fractured Atlas artist members have provided details of the ways in which they rely on the Internet to fund, create and share their work:

➤ **DANCE: SYDNEY SKYBETTER**

“In the dance world, it’s common to be enriched by the work of others you see online. My ability to clip, link, download and ‘pin’ other people’s work has been built into my creative process. The Internet allows me to engage in a global dialogue with other artists and constituencies. It also gives us all a chance to radically reimagine what performance means. The Internet has been a major disruptor to how people consume creative or cultural content, and there’s no going back. As an artist I’m dedicating myself to exploring what that new terrain looks like.”

Sydney Skybetter is a dancer and choreographer who has been livestreaming his rehearsals online since 2007. Sydney’s dances are regularly performed throughout the country, most recently at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Boston Center for the Arts, Jacob’s Pillow and the Joyce Theater.

➤ **LITERATURE: ASYMPOTOTE**

“With more than 70 team members working in 27 countries, we’re really only able to exist because of the Internet: I’ve never even met another person from the organization in real life. Our editors and contributors are in constant contact to put together an issue—a process that takes place over chat and email—and we raise money with Fractured Atlas and Indiegogo, which means that the Internet is crucial to our survival. Additionally, by publicizing our quarterly issues through both social media and direct email solicitations, we spread the word as far and as wide as possible that Asymptote is a great place to encounter the best literature from around the world—for free.”

Sam Carter, Assistant Managing Editor.

Asymptote is an international literary journal dedicated to bringing the best in contemporary writing together in one place: online. With a focus on exploring encounters between languages, it has published works in 72 languages from 96 countries to date.

➤ **THEATRE: LUBDUB. THEATRE COMPANY**

“The Internet is vitally important to the life of LUBDUB. We engage, on a daily basis, an international community of artists and audience members online, which permits us extraordinary access to and exchange with fellow artists and theatre-goers from all walks of life. The Internet enables a seamless and efficient collaboration: Our resident playwright and dramaturg are able to remain fully engaged in the work while living in different states; the artistic team holds virtual meetings which are coordinated through an online scheduling tool; we are in the midst of an online, real-time script editing process; and our dramaturg curates an online library of resources and materials central to our artistic process.”

Caitlin Cassidy, Co-Artistic Director.

New York City-based LUBDUB. is a nonprofit physical theatre company dedicated to producing new works that feature a unique blend of circus, magic, dance, live music, and text. LUBDUB. offers a series of rigorous physical theatre workshops and believes that theatre is (or should be) fundamentally a hybrid art.

➤ **FILM: KARTEMQUIN FILMS**

“Kartemquin's mission has always been built on making and distributing documentary media that is social, builds communities, and inspires action. Over five decades, we've seen the tools with which do that evolve, to the point that now the Internet is essential to our organization today. We create films that will empower audiences and address inequality and we're able to engage a much wider and more diverse audience, more quickly, thanks to the Internet. We take pride in acting as a resource to the film community on issues like fair use, ethics, and civic discourse. This industry advocacy, collaboration and knowledge sharing would be severely limited if filmmakers couldn't interact with each other online.”

Gordon Quinn, Co-Founder and Artistic Director & Jim Morrissette, Technical Director.

Kartemquin Films is a Chicago-based nonprofit organization which seeks to spark democracy through documentary. Kartemquin will celebrate its 50th birthday in 2016.

These art forms are simply the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the vast array of disciplines that are practiced among the Fractured Atlas members, who take advantage of our four major programs: Fiscal Sponsorship, Insurance, Artful.ly and SpaceFinder, all of which are accessible online.

We at Fractured Atlas encourage the Commission to take prompt action to modernize the program to include broadband as an option. If the Commission seeks additional statements or clarifications, please contact Fractured Atlas founder and Executive Director Adam Huttler at 212-277-8020, or Fractured Atlas' Robert W. Deutsch Arts & Technology Policy Fellow Courtney Duffy at 202-861-0020, Extension 105.

Respectfully Submitted,

/S/ Courtney Duffy

Robert W. Deutsch Arts & Technology Policy Fellow
Fractured Atlas