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Theatre Communications Group Announces New Grant Program for Theatre Practitioners: Leadership U[niversity]

New York, NY –Theatre Communications Group (TCG) has received \$1 million from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to launch Leadership U[niversity], a grant program to support the development of theatre leaders at various points in their career. The overall intent of this program is to strengthen the field by developing the individuals who are the core and the future of theatre.

“Our long-standing partnership with The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation allows us to meet such a crucial need for our field—leadership development opportunities for practitioners from all areas of the theatre,” said Teresa Eyring, executive director of TCG. “Having thoughtful and hands-on mentorships as well as opportunities to observe professionals at the top of their craft, continues to shape the trajectory of theatre leaders for the better.”

For many early-career theatre professionals and recent graduates of advanced training programs, the combination of limited job openings in theatres, low compensation and student loan debt make a career in the not-for-profit theatre a questionable future. Leadership U[niversity] is not only designed to provide financial support for early-career leaders, but will also prepare recipients with greater leadership skills to enable a stable and a long-term career in the theatre.

Learning opportunities are also extended to mid-career professionals who could benefit from a short-term immersion outside of their organization and in their area of expertise. Observing the work of critical thinkers inside and outside the theatre field can help veteran leaders gain new perspectives on the opportunities and challenges within their own organizations as well as the field. Leadership U[niversity] provides practitioners with the rare time for reflection and inspiration to continue onward.

Leadership U[niversity] will award grants in two initiatives: **One-on-One** for early-career leaders and **Continuing Ed** for mid-career and veteran professionals.

- **One-on-One** grants of \$75,000 will be awarded to six exceptionally talented early-career leaders from all areas of the theatre for professional development via mentorships at a TCG Member Theatre, with an additional \$5,000 honorarium for their mentor. Up to an additional \$14,500 in supplemental funds may be used for student loan repayment, professional development or life needs (i.e. health care, child or elder care, or other medical expenses).
- **Continuing Ed** grants of up to \$6,000 will be awarded to eight mid-career to veteran professionals at TCG Member Theatres for learning opportunities to advance their leadership skills in areas that include artistic, administrative, educational and production. Grants will be awarded to the applicant’s home theatre on behalf of the theatre practitioner.

Online registration, applications and guidelines will be available in mid-October. One-on-One preliminary applications are due December 12, 2011. Continuing Ed applications are due April 9, 2012. For more information about the program, visit: <http://www.tcg.org/grants>.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is a private philanthropic institution that makes grants on a selective basis in five core program areas: higher education and scholarship; scholarly communications and information technology; museums and art conservation; conservation and the environment; and performing arts. The

Foundation's Performing Arts program focuses on achieving long-term results by providing multi-year grants to leading organizations in the disciplines of music, theater, and dance. Annual giving in the area of the performing arts has averaged approximately \$30 million per year since 2005. In 2004 The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was awarded a National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the United States government. www.mellon.org

For 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 13,000 individuals nationwide. TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research and communications; awards grants, approximately \$2 million per year, to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level; and serves as the US Center of the International Theatre Institute, connecting its constituents to the global theatre community. TCG is North America's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature, with 11 Pulitzer Prizes for Best Play on the TCG booklist. It also publishes the award-winning AMERICAN THEATRE magazine and ARTSEARCH®, the essential source for a career in the arts. In all of its endeavors, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre. For more information visit www.tcg.org

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