# NOAH | Program Concept Summary

An emotionally engaging, arts-based platform for learning, connection and therapeutic support

## The human purpose behind NOAH

At its heart, NOAH is built on a simple but powerful belief: people connect through stories. A child who struggles to communicate, a veteran carrying the weight of trauma, an older adult experiencing memory loss, or a student who has begun to believe that reading is beyond their reach may not respond immediately to conventional instruction or unfamiliar environments. But a character they recognize, a story that reflects their feelings, a familiar melody, or an invitation to create can open a door. NOAH is designed to help open that door—with warmth, imagination, dignity and human connection.

Through compelling, emotionally resonant stories, NOAH seeks to create meaningful connections with children, families, veterans, seniors, educators and K–12 communities. Its characters give audiences a way to recognize emotions, explore difficult experiences, express themselves and participate without feeling judged or singled out. The intention is not simply to entertain. It is to make people feel seen, welcomed and willing to take part.

## A creative language built around seven arts

NOAH brings together seven complementary creative modalities: music, dance and movement, theater, literature, poetry, storytelling, and visual arts. Folklore, mythology, puppetry and imaginative characters enrich these experiences, giving difficult subjects a familiar and approachable form. A story can help a child name a feeling; music can invite participation; movement can encourage expression; theater can let someone explore another point of view; poetry and literature can give language to experiences that are hard to explain; and visual art can offer another way to communicate.

These modalities are woven into character-driven stories and activities intended to support engagement, learning, emotional expression and social connection. NOAH's approach is designed to complement the work of families, teachers, caregivers and qualified professionals—not to replace clinical care. Where a program involves treatment or makes clinical claims, it must be developed, delivered and evaluated with appropriately qualified professionals.

## One platform serving interconnected needs

NOAH's proposed program spans five connected funding and service sections: pediatric and developmental services; behavioral health and recovery; veterans and trauma; healthy aging and dementia; and K–12 reading and literacy. Across these areas, the initiative addresses needs that touch real lives: early childhood development, autism, ADHD, dyslexia, emotional and behavioral challenges, substance-use recovery, depression, PTSD, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, caregiver support, reading and comprehension.

The needs are different, but the human purpose is shared: to create an inviting point of connection and a meaningful reason to participate. Through its evolving library of therapeutic puppet characters, stories, physical materials, family activities and digital learning resources, NOAH aims to extend engagement beyond a single performance or lesson and into homes, schools, community settings and qualified care environments.

## A national platform with a history of execution

NOAH is being developed through the experience and infrastructure of Talmi Entertainment and the Cultural Resource Foundation. Nutcracker.com has more than 33 years of national touring experience, with annual planning across approximately 100 U.S. cities. For this concept summary, the operating scale is described as reaching roughly 200,000 people annually and generating approximately $12 million in gross receipts. The organization's proposals document a long-running national production platform and the ability to coordinate artists, venues, audiences, marketing and community relationships across the country. This infrastructure gives NOAH a foundation from which to develop demonstrations, partnerships and broader distribution rather than starting from nothing.

The organization's history also includes public and institutional support associated with education, employment and cultural programming, including ESAA, CETA and U.S. Department of Labor-related initiatives, as well as more recent emergency support connected with the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) and Save Our Stages. Its professional history includes projects and relationships involving General Motors, IBM and Campbell Soup Company, among other corporate and institutional partners. These experiences reflect a record of working across public, private and cultural sectors.

## Leadership, cultural legacy and public engagement

The leadership behind NOAH brings decades of experience in producing, presenting and developing arts and educational programs. Akiva Talmi, a Juilliard graduate with both Bachelor's and Master's degrees, is a producer, composer, conductor and arts entrepreneur whose recognitions include the Leonard Bernstein Award, the Richard Rodgers Award and recognition associated with the Metropolitan Opera Guild. His work has involved distinguished artists and institutions, including educational television and puppetry projects developed with Professor Frank Ballard of the University of Connecticut.

The organization's civic and cultural history includes the national Just Say No tour, for which First Lady Nancy Reagan served as honorary chair, and a children's hospital benefit chaired by First Lady Rosalynn Carter. The leadership also cites a dinner hosted by President Ronald Reagan in support of the Just Say No tour. These projects demonstrate a longstanding commitment to bringing the performing arts into public initiatives and causes larger than the stage.

## From live engagement to lasting participation

NOAH brings its creative platform together through live demonstrations, puppet-based materials, family and educator resources, and a planned digital academy. Live performances can introduce characters and stories; families, schools and community partners can then continue the experience through guided activities, lessons and other resources. The long-term plan includes licensing and earned-income channels intended to help sustain access and expansion. The goal is continuity: not a moment of inspiration that ends when the curtain closes, but an invitation to keep learning, creating and connecting.

NOAH is a proposed initiative, and its clinical effectiveness, outcomes, partnerships, reimbursement eligibility and national expansion must be established through qualified implementation, independent evaluation and documented results. Its promise begins with a deeply human idea: when people feel connected, they are more willing to engage—and engagement can create the opening for learning, expression, support and growth.

Prepared for discussion with Dr. Steve and the consulting team | Cultural Resource Foundation (CRF)