Grantmakers in the Arts Racial Equity Case Studies 2017

Methodology

Grantmakers in the Arts selected for case studies organizations that shared intentional and explicit racial equity programs and policies. The case studies illustrate different strategies to address systemic racism and racial inequity through arts philanthropy. In addition, selected organizations also represent the diversity of the Grantmakers in the Arts membership in terms of structure and geography:

1. Alliance of California Traditional Arts: Living Culture Grants

3. National Performance Network: LANE program

4. San Francisco Arts Commission: Community Investment Program

5. South Carolina Arts Commission: The Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor Partnership Program

Lessons from Case Studies

Five cross-cutting practices and policies emerged across the case study organizations.

1.   Social Justice Lens

Case study organizations demonstrate an understanding that inequity in arts and culture does not exist in a vacuum but is connected to historical and systematic inequities in other sectors. There is a long history of racial justice movements with successful strategies in this country — in housing, education, labor, and so on. Successful racial equity policies and programs do not need to reinvent the wheel but rather seek to build partnership and learn from other sectors.

These organizations also demonstrate a willingness to learn from their African, Latinx, Arab, Asian, Native American (ALAANA) grantees/grantees of color. They understand that many arts organizations and artists have been on the forefront of the work against racial inequity and there are many things that funders can learn from this experience. This paradigm shift is especially important since it challenges the way we define leadership and the power dynamic between funder and grantee.

2.   Buy-In from Leadership

Although many successful strategies emerged from vocal constituencies and responsive staff, a supportive leadership was a key aspect of institutionalizing racial equity policies. When racial equity is a priority for the board and leadership, it becomes a core value of an organization's work with a proper long-term strategy and priority for funding.

A supportive board and engaged leadership team keep staff accountable and help push the work forward. It is important to note that current research shows that a policy approved by an entire board with leadership buy-in will have longer-lasting impact than a task force (BoardSource 2011; Walker and Davidson 2010; Love 2015).

3.   Intentional Policy

Intentional policies include grantmaking procedures, outreach strategies, and program missions. Racial equity outreach policies accounted for language barriers, limited administrative capacity, and varied institutional structures, for example, creating a pathway to fiscal sponsorship to allow organizations that are not designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to apply for funding.

These policies include methods for investing in ALAANA artists and organizations before they become grantees — methods like weaving capacity building into outreach efforts, and building relationships to encourage ALAANA artists and organizations to apply.

4. Community-Based Processes

Case study organizations develop, evaluate, and shift their racial equity policies and programs through ongoing feedback from their constituents. This includes having processes in place to learn from ALAANA applicants and grantees, to be responsive in addressing barriers to entry, and to implement effective funding strategies.

This community-based work often starts before a specific racial equity program is in place. It includes the process of defining the racial equity policy for the organization, and it is an opportunity to create a shared language, defined values, and mission for the board, staff, and constituency.

5. Accountability Measures

Accountability is paramount in racial equity philanthropy. The goal of the work is to provide effective racial equity funding and resources. Our case studies make clear that these efforts take time and that continued investigation and evaluation are necessary to move us toward an arts ecosystem where race is not a central determinant of an individual's or organization's access to resources.

A public and explicit policy that states that an organization values racial equity and has specific racial equity goals is an effective accountability anchor. The next piece is identifying appropriate performance metrics and implementing ongoing evaluation processes to report on these metrics.

Case Studies

Who: **Alliance for California Traditional Arts**

What: A range of programs to provide gateway funding for artists and nonprofit organizations in folk and traditional arts and cultural heritage

Where: Fresno, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, and Los Angeles

Interviewee: Amy Kitchener, Executive Director and cofounder

Program Description:

Through a range of programs including regranting, artist residencies, and apprenticeships, Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA) supports folk and traditional artists and nonprofit organizations in communities throughout California. By leveraging community networks and employing bilingual outreach, the organization succeeds in reaching a high number of Asian, Latino(a), African American, and Native American (ALAANA) artists and organizations, whether from newly arrived immigrant or refugee communities or historic California lineages, often acting as the gateway funder for their grantees (which demands a commitment to providing technical assistance where needed).

ACTA's apprenticeship program provides funding for a local, emerging artist to apprentice with a master-level artist. This program not only models a traditional method of artist development but also highlights and strengthens cultural leadership in those communities.

Other programs are focused on bridging communities and fortifying newly established organizations. The traditional artists residencies (Arts in Corrections program) in state prisons emphasize practicing art as central to community participation. ACTA's Living Culture Grant has been a long-standing vehicle to provide gateway funding to small and midsized nonprofits as well as community organizations that are not designated 501(c)(3), through fiscal sponsors.

Background:

When ACTA was founded in 1997, support for traditional arts in California was limited and seldom recognized by larger funding structures. ACTA sought to build an infrastructure in the state. To date, we have a presence in fifty of fifty-eight counties.

ACTA uses a community-based program development model, taking cues from the community about how they conceptualize arts and culture. Employing ethnographic listening is a core concept in creating an inclusive organization. Bilingual field queries, application materials, and webinars are used when needed.

Role of Board and Staff:

ACTA's board includes practitioners and traditional artists, individuals deeply invested in the community. The role of the board is not necessarily fund-raising but to represent the diversity of the state's culture and population. Board members work closely with staff in both program development and outreach to new communities. ACTA is a relatively small organization with six program staff and

four offices, in Fresno, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. The office locations reflect their desire to meet artists and nonprofit organizations in their communities.

Challenges:

ACTA contends with the structural racism that is embedded in the arts field. As an ALAANA organization they are confronted with the sector's bias against racially specific organizations, which are often perceived as serving only one specific community with limited relevance to a broader audience.

Measuring Outcomes:

ACTA often acts as a gateway funder for many artists and smaller organizations, and a key measure of impact is the number of first-time grantees. Site visits provide the organization with important qualitative data to complement quantitative data and allow staff to reach out to new artists and develop relationships.

Advice from ACTA:

For non–racially specific organizations, antiracism training is important to give you the tools to talk about race and racism. A lot of work needs to get done on the individual, organizational, and field level. You need to start with yourself. And don't be afraid that your current way of doing things may need to change radically!

— Amy Kitchener

Who: **National Performance Network and Visual Artists Network**

What: Leveraging a Network for Equity (LANE)

Where: National

Interviewees: Caitlin Strokosch, President and CEO; Stanlyn Breve, Director of National Programs; and Sage Crump, LANE Program Specialist

Program Description:

Leveraging a Network for Equity (LANE) addresses systemic financial inequities in the nonprofit arts sector by delivering methodology and resources to strengthen the financial and organizational health of NPN/VAN Network Partners. The LANE model uses a mix of convening, consultancy, and financial capital to remediate years of divestment. The program specifically focuses on organizations of color, and geographically isolated and/or small- to mid-sized community groups. LANE is grounded in the idea that we are stronger as a network and field when we can learn from the resourcefulness and adaptability exhibited by these organizations. LANE positions these skills as necessary for all arts organization to create an infrastructure where all participants are able to thrive.

A collaboration between NPN/VAN, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), and the participating organizations, LANE is a ten-year initiative with three phases.

Phase 1 (2015–16) involved diagnostics, education, and planning.

Phases 2 and 3 (2016–24) engage cohorts of six organizations each in a process of convening together and designing individual road maps for sustainability.

Each organizational participant receives:

• up to $100,000 in recovery capital

• up to $500,000 in change/risk capital

• access to an intentional community of peers strategically considering similar questions, through ongoing and in-person convenings

• a customized plan outlining potential shifts in their business model and infrastructure

• continued professional development and culturally competent consulting

• general operating funds to increase capacity while they undertake this initiative

By 2024, NPN/VAN's intent through LANE is to infuse twenty-four of the most vulnerable members of its network with up to $15M in total capital, and to develop new business models that can adapt to changing landscapes, ensuring cultural diversity within the network and growing leadership in the field.

Background:

NPN/VAN supports performing and visual artists in the creation and touring of new work, through an intentional network of presenting organizations engaged in risk-taking, community engagement, and the sharing of ideas and knowledge. Begun in 1985 as a program of Dance Theatre Workshop in New York City, NPN/VAN was founded to address issues of artist isolation as well as the economic constraints of moving art around the country and the sharing of artist and community voices. The organization's commitment to cultural equity and social justice has been fundamental and evolving throughout its more than thirty-year history, advocating for artists, arts leaders, and organizations historically marginalized, and building the visibility, skills, learning environments, and resources for a more diverse and equitable sector.

Role of Board and Staff:

NPN/VAN's Board of Directors, comprised of a majority of constituency representatives, fully supports LANE. LANE is staffed at NPN/VAN by a dedicated program specialist, under the department of National Programs and a part-time program assistant, and receives support from additional staff. LANE also engages a curated pool of consultants who work directly with the participating organizations. As a collaborator, NFF staff provide financial expertise as well as the analytical base, requisite data, training, and planning to better address the financial capacity and capitalization needs for the long-term durability of these critical arts organizations. Finally, staff from the Mellon Foundation are deeply engaged in the process, not merely as funders but as thought partners as well as participants in many of the convenings and trainings with the LANE cohort.

Challenges:

Over the past decade, the number of organizations of color leaving NPN/VAN's network and/or closing their doors has increased dramatically. There are many contributing factors, but financial instability and organizational capacity are the primary reasons for their departure, and financial challenges of these organizations represent decades of marginalization by the arts-funding infrastructure in this country. This lack of investment mirrors the field's underlying racist assumptions about the value of these organizations of color and their work. NPN/VAN recognizes that the significant loss of these organizations weakens the network and the field's ability to provide relevant and inspiring cultural content to a significant number of communities. As a result, voices are silenced, and the hegemonic picture of art and culture in America is maintained.

While LANE engages a limited number of organizations in its cohorts, the program is designed to develop knowledge, experience, processes, and models that support NPN/VAN's entire network and other marginalized arts organizations through the field. By partnering with NFF, LANE not only intends to shape how arts philanthropy can more responsibly support such organizations but to influence NFF's practices nationwide throughout the nonprofit sector, by reshaping frameworks and resources through an equity lens.

Advice from NPN:

The first step in addressing historical inequities is individual work: how do you personally walk through the world as an antiracist? Meaning, what are you actively doing to question the norms and hidden biases in your life and work? Step two: get out of this field. People in other sectors have been doing social justice work for a long time, and there are all these frames and theories that should be

applied to our field. We do not need to reinvent the wheel; we need to engage with folks who have been doing it better and longer. Cross-sector collaborations are essential to the development of a just and equitable world.

— Sage Crump

Who: **San Francisco Arts Commission**

What: Community Investment Program

Where: San Francisco

Interviewee: Tom DeCaigny, Director of Cultural Affairs

Program Description:

The San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC) has demonstrated the effectiveness of official policy in advancing equity as well as the important role of the community in keeping funders accountable for their grantmaking outcomes. Under their current strategic plan, the SFAC merged all grant programs under the Community Investment (CI) umbrella and adopted cultural equity as a primary organizational value in an effort to ensure that Asian, Latino(a), African American, and Native American (ALAANA) artists and organizations are served not only through the agency's historic Cultural Equity Endowment but across all programs.

Background:

The Community Investment program was created in 2013 with the goal of strategically promoting cultural equity through explicit grant policies. Through six grant categories, CI provides project and capitalization funding to individual artists and arts organizations. More than 50 percent of the grants portfolio goes to ALAANA, LGBTQ, and disabled individuals and organizations as well as women. CI also provides rent-free facilities and funding for capital improvement, general operating, and programming to six organizations to maintain four cultural centers in San Francisco's historically underserved neighborhoods.

In 2000, Proposition 209 amended the California Constitution to prohibit public institutions from discriminating on the basis of race, sex, or ethnicity. In an effort to ensure the grants continue to serve historically underserved communities effectively, the agency overhauled its grantmaking strategy in 2014 to simplify the applications, update application guidelines and scoring criteria to intentionally address equity, and increase outreach to historically underserved communities thr ough an open call for panelists.

Role of Commission and Staff:

By institutionalizing the commitment to equity in the SFAC's current strategic plan, both staff and commissioners are equally responsible for advancing it in their day-to-day work. After identifying the need for tools and a common language to effectively tackle equity work, the SFAC provided racial equity training for all staff and established a cultural equity working group to propose ongoing equity strategies for the agency and keep abreast of developments in the arts and culture field.

Challenges:

As a public funder, one of the main challenges has been making equity visible in public policy and processes when the law and public opinion often require that city departments serve the public with parity. The SFAC faces ongoing struggles responding to members of the public who confuse equality and parity with equity.

Measuring Outcomes:

SFAC measures the demographic composition of the commission, staff, artists, audiences, and the panelists who make funding recommendations. From 2004 to 2014, 446 grants totaling $35,171,784 (approximately 85 percent of total grant funding) were awarded to ALAANA organizations and individuals. In FY 2015/16, 76 percent of the fifty-three grant panelists were ALAANA individuals.

Advice from SFAC:

It is important to get buy-in at every level of staff and leadership. In our case, the entire agency is holding leadership accountable. It is equally important to select partners with a shared value of cultural equity.

— Tom DeCaigny

Who: **South Carolina Arts Commission**

What: The Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor Partnership Program

Where: Columbia

Interviewee: Ken May, Executive Director

Program Description:

The Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor Partnership Program (GGHCP) aims to increase the number of African American grantees in South Carolina Arts Commission's grantee roster by building new relationships with community leaders and investing in capacity building with artists and nonprofit organizations before they become grantees.

Background:

The GGHCP is a unique opportunity to collaborate with a predominately rural, African American community that has been underrepresented in the South Carolina Arts Commission's grantee roster. In 2012, the commission did an evaluation of the program and found that only 2 percent of the roster of their largest grant category was Asian, Latino/a, African American, or Native American (ALAANA) organizations. Working with the Heritage Corridor, the commission organized meetings with the community and artists that informed a series of capacity and grants application workshops for local artists.

The Gullah Geechee are the descendants of enslaved Africans who have lived in coastal areas of the Carolinas, Georgia, and North Florida since emancipation. These communities have retained significant elements of African culture, language, and traditions. The corridor is a federally designated area designed to highlight this unique cultural group. Many counties in the corridor have few formal arts organizations. In response, the commission adopted a fieldwork approach comprised of two parts: (1) actively looking for key community contacts in non-arts organizations, identifying possible working groups, and working with applicants to design projects that reflect community concerns; and (2) interviewing artists in lieu of a written application.

Role of Commission and Staff:

The program is a staff-driven initiative. Nonetheless, the commissioners are supportive of the effort and keep staff accountable to the goals of equity and reaching underserved communities. The commission has dedicated funding in the budget to continue the GGHCP and fund their work in other predominantly African American counties.

Challenges:

The main challenge is staff capacity. Since the process involves building personal relationships with artists and communities, it is time consuming and costly to scale. The commission has only one staff member dedicated to the program.

Measuring Outcomes:

The commission's ultimate goal is to have grants in every county and every community. Staff monitor the General Operating Support grant category to see if their fieldwork approach is bringing new ALAANA organizations onto the grantee roster. So far the collaboration has led to six new ALAANA organization grantees, which are all small, grassroots organizations in the corridor. In FY 2013, 2 percent (three) of Operating Support grantees were ALAANA organizations. In FY 2017, 6 percent (nine) of Operating Support grantees are ALAANA organizations. From 2012 to 2017, twenty-one grants, totaling $84,964, were awarded to Gullah artists. In addition the commission is working with a number of community committees in these counties that can become organizations that can qualify for grants in the future.

Advice from SCAC:

Equity work requires a lot of time and attention. The key to success is making new relationships in communities we want to reach and getting to know people we don't know.

— Ken May

Definitions (Grantmakers in the Arts' definitions are adapted from Change Philanthropy's, RacialEquityTools.org's, and Independent Sector's, which are based on language from the D5 Coalition, the Racial Equity Tools Glossary, and University of California Berkeley)

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. We recognize that individuals affiliate with multiple identities.

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. It's important to note that while an inclusive group is by definition diverse, a diverse group isn't always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or 'implicit bias' helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.

Racial Equity: Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. Racial equity is one part of racial justice – which includes impacted parties in addressing the root causes of inequities. Therefore, we also include work that addresses root causes of inequities and not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

Philanthropic Racial Equity: Racial equity in philanthropy is the investment of social and financial resources in policies, practices, and actions that produce equitable access, power, and outcomes for African, Latinx, Arab, Asian, Native-American (ALAANA) communities/communities of color.

An **ALAANA organization/organization of color** is one whose primary intentions, practices, and mission are by, for, and about ALAANA/people of color (poc) artists, cultures, and communities. (The word "for" refers to the intention of the organization to perpetuate, promote, and present art that is representative of an ALAANA/poc culture and people and/or is given form by ALAANA artists.)

Indicators may include but are not limited to, the presence of some combination of:

- Organizational mission
- Executive, artistic, and governance leadership
- Programmatic content
- Artists

For more information on racial equity in philanthropy, you may consider:

- Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity www.racialequity.org/publications.html
- Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity's Short-Changed: Foundation Giving in Communities of Color www.racialequity.org/catalytic-change.html
- Helicon Collaborative's Not Just Money: Equity Issues in Cultural Philanthropy http://heliconcollab.net/our_work/not-just-money/
- Racial Equity Tools www.racialequitytools.org
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Racial Equity Resource Guide www.racialequityresourceguide.org

- Annie E. Casey Foundation's Race Matters www.aecf.org/resources/race-matters-toolkit-users-guide/
- The Racial Equity section of Grantmakers in the Arts' website www.giarts.org/racial-equity-arts-philanthropy-statement-purpose
- Unite4Equity's self-assessment: https://unite4equity.org/
- Western States Center's Moving a Racial Justice Agenda: Organizational Assessment: Are You Ready?: www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/westernstates3.pdf
- Race Matters' Organizational Self-Assessment tool: www.aecf.org/resources/race-matters-organizational-self-assessment/
- Race Matters' How to Talk About Race: www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-racemattershowtotalkaboutrace-2006.pdf
- Race Matters' powerpoint presentation: www.aecf.org/resources/race-matters-powerpoint-presentation/

Please contact Grantmakers in the Arts' president & CEO, Eddie Torres at Eddie@GIArts.org to discuss scheduling a **Racial Equity in Arts Funding** workshop for your grantmaking community.

The Racial Equity in Arts Funding workshop has been developed by Grantmakers in the Arts and Race Forward as a way to support funders with nuts-and-bolts guidance on how to better serve African, Latinx, Arab, Asian, Native-American (ALAANA) communities/communities of color through their grantmaking. The workshop will include information on the history of racialization in the United States, the history of cultural funding and real-world examples of racial equity funding, strategies and resources you may bring with you back to your organizations.