



City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

**POLICY AND FUNDING COMMITTEE**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**AGENDA**

Hyperlink to attend the meeting at its schedule time available [here](#)

**Friday, April 16, 2021**

**1:00–2:30pm**

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1:00 p.m.	I.	Call to Order	Ann Bossler, Chair
1:01 p.m.	II.	Non-agenda Public Comment	
1:05 p.m.	III.	Chair's Reports	Ann Bossler, Chair
		A. Commission Business	
		B. Other Reports	
1:20 p.m.	IV.	<b>ACTION</b> – Endorsement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Evaluation Findings and Next Steps	Jonathon Glus, Executive Director
2:15 p.m.	V.	Staff Reports	Jonathon Glus, Executive Director
2:20 p.m.	VI.	New Business for Future Agendas	Ann Bossler, Chair
2:30 p.m.	VII.	Adjourn	Ann Bossler, Chair

*VISION: Expanding our world by celebrating creativity in San Diego*

*PURPOSE: The City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council on promoting, encouraging and increasing support for the region's artistic and cultural assets, integrating arts and culture into community life and showcasing San Diego as an international tourist destination.*

Meeting will be live and recorded. PUBLIC COMMENT: Any member of the public may address the Commission on any subject in its area of responsibility on any matter not presently pending or previously discussed at the Commission. Pursuant to the provisions California Executive Order 29-20, Commission meetings will be held via teleconference until further notice. In lieu of in-person attendance, members of the public may submit their comments via a public comment [webform](#), or they may join the meeting as a "webinar attendee" at the link provided in the Commission or Committee meeting website. For members of the public wishing to address the Commission under Public Comment via the [webform](#) prior to the meeting, instructions for word limitations and deadlines will be noted on the [webform](#). Pursuant to open meeting laws, no discussion or action, other than a referral, shall be taken by the Committee on any issue brought forth under non-agenda public comment. As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), requests for agenda information to be made available in alternative formats, and any requests for disability-related modifications or accommodations required to facilitate meeting participation, including requests for alternatives to observing meetings and offering public comment as noted above, may be made by contacting the City Clerk at (619) 533-4000 or <mailto:cityclerk@sandiego.gov>. The City is committed to resolving accessibility requests swiftly in order to maximize accessibility.



# Commission for Arts and Culture

## STAFF REPORT

DATE ISSUED: April 16, 2021

ATTENTION: Policy & Funding Committee

SUBJECT: Attached Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Assessment and Proposed Next Steps in DEI Efforts

STAFF CONTACT: Jonathon Glus, Executive Director

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### **Staff Recommendation:**

Recommends that the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture endorses the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) evaluation findings and next steps as follows:

1) Acknowledge the attached assessment as submitted by RISE Research & Analytics; 2) endorse staff recommendations; and 3) recommend that the Commission and staff commence with phase 3.

**Background:** In early 2020, staff let an RFQ for an outside consultant(s) to conduct three phases of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) work with the office of the Commission for Arts & Culture. Those three phases included: 1) an assessment of the protocols, policies and procedures of the office of the Commission for Arts & Culture, including the funding and public art programs and procurement practices; 2) direct DEI training for staff and the members of the Commission for Arts & Culture; and 3) a community engagement component.

**Phase #1:** San Diego-based RISE Research & Analytics was contracted to conducted phase #1, which is attached. Below please see the core recommendations as submitted by RISE and accompanying staff comments.

- o **Recommendation 1:** Reformat contracts to view City funding as community investment and provide 80% of contract award up front. *Contingent on revisions to Council Policy and limitations of city procurement policy. Staff will research and respond by end of FY21.*
- o **Recommendation 2:** Re-envision funding criteria so that priority is given to organizations and events that are led by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and/or serve communities of color. *Prop 209 directs, and limits use of DEI and equity language. Staff will research and respond by end of FY21. (Note: FY22 funding criteria was embedded in the RFQ/RFP language issued in September '20, therefore, any adjustments to language would be applied to FY23).*
- o **Recommendation 3:** Create a new, unencumbered, equity-focused funding program designed to nurture new and emerging organizations and events, particularly those that are BIPOC led and serve communities of color. *Prop 209 directs, and limits use public funds. However, funds directed towards communities of concern, Promise Zone, or other guiding policy tools may be considered.*
- o **Recommendation 4:** Consider communities whose first language is not English (which comprise 40% of San Diego's population) and design funding guidelines that respond in culturally appropriate ways. *Possible and recommended by staff for FY23, for which RFQ/RFP will be announced in first quarter FY22. Additions could include:*
  - All materials in both Spanish and English,
  - Provide up to five hours per applicant for individual tech assistance, including application

*drafting by contracted consultant.*

- *Written application must be included. Video would not be adequate.*

o Recommendation 5: Gather demographic data from applicants. *Possible and recommended by staff for FY22 end of year report. May be included in FY23 RFQ/RFP as well.*

#### **Area of Assessment: Awards**

- o Recommendation 6: Permanently implement award caps on redistribute to smaller organizations, particularly those led by and serving BIPOC communities. *Must be reviewed by City Legal and would necessitate changes to policies*
- o Recommendation 7: Award at least 50% to organizations led by and serving low-income communities of color. *Must be reviewed by City Legal and would necessitate changes to policies by Commission for Arts & Culture and City Council.*

#### **Area of Assessment: Submittal Process and Online Platform**

- o Recommendation 8: Consider adding functionality to the existing GoSmart platform or move to a different platform to reduce administrative burden on organizations. *Recommended by staff.*
- o Recommendation 9: Conduct full user interface study to better understand applicants' experience and reduce discrimination against people with disabilities. *Possible as part of citywide equity assessment and will be advanced to ADA office and new Office of Racial Equity.*

#### **Area of Assessment: Technical Assistance**

- o Recommendation 10: Take advantage of democratized online platforms, such as Zoom, even in a post-COVID world to make workshops available on demand to a wider audience of applicants. *Staff implemented in FY20 and expanded in FY21, with expected continuation into FY22 and beyond, within citywide IT guidelines.*
- o Recommendation 11: Design multiple opportunities for technical assistance/education/coaching/office hours to cultivate relationships. *Staff began to implement in FY20 and increased for FY21 with the intent to further expand for FY22 and beyond.*
- o Recommendation 12: Implement language justice approach by making technical assistance available in multiple languages. *Staff implemented Spanish-language virtual technical assistance in FY20. In addition, office of arts and culture staff includes one paid bilingual speaker to consistently provide ongoing assistance in Spanish. May be forwarded to the new Office of Racial Equity.*

#### **Area of Assessment: Panel Process**

- o Recommendation 13: Offer compensation to panelists. *Implemented in FY21 and will continue in FY22.*
- o Recommendation 14: Embed a review process for panelists to see geographic reach of organizations before providing final rankings. *Staff will research viability or other strategies for FY23.*
- o Recommendation 15: Include racial equity as a weighted scoring criterion. *Staff recommends and will research for FY23.*

#### **Area of Assessment: Marketing & Outreach**

- o Recommendation 16: Establish social media presence that is specific to the Commission for Arts and Culture. *Staff understands this recommendation is to enhance access. Recommendation under consideration by City Communications.*
- o Recommendation 17: Invest in authentic relationships with communities of color and be accountable to their needs. *Staff understands that this recommendation encourages intentional and ongoing outreach to BIPOC communities,*

and in particular, communities that are historically less invested in by the Commission for Arts & Culture. Staff has engaged additional outreach, engagement and communications partners. For FY22, staff will prepare a communications/engagement plan centered in BIPOC communities. In addition, working with community leaders in BIPOC communities, staff will identify potential fiscal agents within that community to increase access through trusted agents.

- o Recommendation 18: Deepen collaborations with internal City departments and commissions to widen communication channels with the public. For FY21, staff invited all city council members to host a virtual community workshop for arts funding, with good success. For FY22, staff will also proactively disseminate information among relevant boards and commissions including Human Relations, International Affairs, Planning, Gang Prevention, Parks and Recreation Commissions, and Library Board.

- o Recommendation 19: Design and deliver culturally appropriate marketing materials reflective of San Diego's diverse communities, including creating materials in languages other than English. Implemented and ongoing.

#### **Area of Assessment: Public Art**

- o Recommendation 20: Research and publish for public review a five-year historical dashboard of public art commissions and acquisitions, including race/ethnicity data about the artists. Staff endorses and recommends for FY23.

Recommendation 21: Build from and expand the pilot Public Art: Public Sphere program through the establishment of a regular public artist advancement award program. Staff endorses and recommends for fourth quarter FY22.

- o Recommendation 22: Recruit BIPOC mid-career artists to serve on public art review and artist selection panels. Implemented and ongoing.

#### **Area of Assessment: Council Policy 100-03**

- o Recommendation 23: Design an intentional and accessible feedback process that includes both beneficiaries of funding and disinvested communities to collect recommendations and revisions that serve all San Diegans. Staff recommends an annual confidential survey of RFQ and RFP applicants for input beginning in FY21. This will not capture those who don't choose to apply to the RFQ process but will capture where in the existing process we have lost applicants.

#### **Commissioners' Nomination, Selection and Training Processes**

- o Recommendation 24: Intentionally diversify the Commission. Staff will forward recommendation to the Office of Boards & Commissions.

- o Recommendation 25: Create a community feedback mechanism to receive input on slate of Commissioners before they are appointed. Staff will forward recommendation to Office of Boards & Commissions.

- o Recommendation 26: Require in-depth DEI training for all Commissioners as part of onboarding and at a regular frequency (i.e. every two years). Staff endorses for immediate implementation with Commission for Arts & Culture and will forward recommendation to Office of Boards & Commissions.

- o Recommendation 27: Create authentic points of connection between the Commissioners and the arts and culture ecosystem in San Diego. Ongoing.

**Phase #2**: Dallas-based MJR & Associates was contracted to conduct phase #2. During this phase, MJR conducted four all-staff sessions, covering four components or chapters of DEI training. MJR also conducted one session with the Commission-as-a-whole on the topic of "gatekeeping". Finally, MJR created an original DEI training video that will be incorporated into all panel member orientations for the funding and public art program panels.

#### **Additional staff recommendations based on Phase #1 and Phase #2:**

- 1) By end of FY21, the Commission should create and adopt a DEI statement as a guiding policy tool.

- 2) By the September 2021, identify at least one qualified fiscal agent in each City Council district in anticipation of the FY22 RFQ. (Non-profit arts and culture organizations provide the backbone of the arts and culture ecosystem in San Diego. However, many innovative, timely and impactful arts and culture projects develop independently, through the work of individual artists, collectives or at the community level. Often, this work does not necessitate creation of a 501C3. In fact, the work may be short-term or ephemeral. To encourage greater geographic diversification of funding and to reduce barriers, *staff will work with Council offices in advance of the FY22 application period to identify potential fiscal agents*).
- 3) Integrate DEI as a weighted scoring priority in both CCSD and OSP by end of FY21. Research viability of integrating into FY22 scoring.
- 4) Revise Commission for Arts & Culture Policies & Procedures to include at a minimum these recommendations and an equity statement by the end of FY21.
- 5) Identify and consider additional funding categories for FY22 that could more easily adapt to and facilitate DEI goals and objectives. Implementation would be contingent on available funding.

**Phase #3:** This phase is intended to inform the larger community and key stakeholders the results of the initial two phases and gather additional input from community.

Staff is recommending the following:

- a) By end of FY21, the Commission will convene in a facilitated format to review recommendations and create DEI goals and objectives. Consider an annual review.
- b) By the end of FY21, through the leadership of the Commission for Arts & Culture Commissioner Engagement Committee, form an ad hoc DEI advisory committee to help inform implementation of DEI goals and objectives. Include representation from the Human Relations Commission.
- c) By the end of first quarter FY22, co-host with Rise San Diego a conversation with leaders from SE San Diego on ways to better support and sustain African-American arts and culture and the role of arts and culture in that quadrant of the city.
- d) In addition, through the Commission for Arts & Culture, the City has applied for a grant from the California Humanities Council to fund a series of community listening sessions that would be focused on historically Latinx, Black/African American and Asian-American communities. If funded, this work would commence in first quarter FY22.

**FY22 Funding Panel Review Process:** The FY22 funding program guidelines, including categories and scoring priorities, were drafted in summer 2021 and adopted by the Commission for Arts & Culture in September 2021. The City is obligated to adhere to the published information. Funding allocations must comply with the published guidelines.

However, for FY22, staff intentionally expanded our commitment to equity in the following manner:

- a) We worked with key partners such as Casa Familiar, the NAACP and the Chicano Federation to disseminate the call for panelists as well as the funding opportunity.
- b) The majority of City Council offices hosted application training sessions for us, which resulted in 18 new applications to the program.
- c) Three non-arts fiscal agents sponsored artist-driven projects in traditionally less-resourced-communities. We continued and deepened our commitment to diversity in panel composition, including by artistic discipline, professional expertise, gender, race and geography.
- d) Our commitment to equity was expanded in all panel training programs, including a newly-commissioned 15-minute DEI training video.



RISE Research & Evaluation

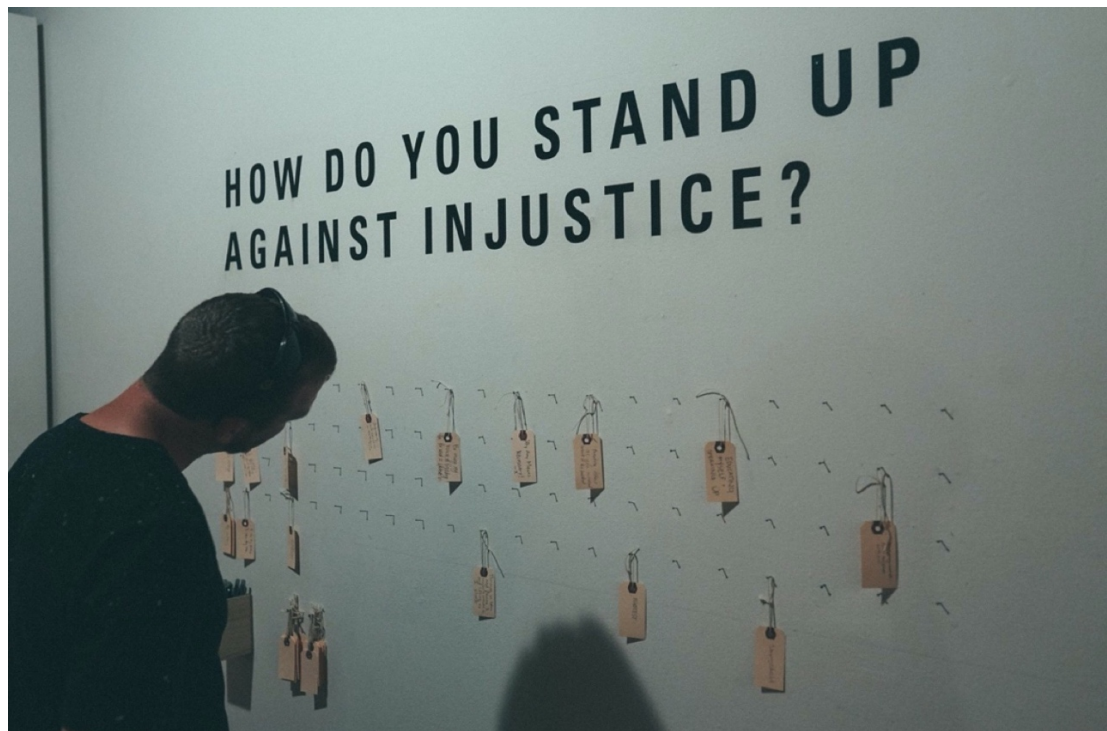
<http://riseresearch.io>

619.786.5657

**SAN DIEGO COMMISSION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE**

**Diversity Equity and Inclusion Study**

**November 2020**



*Civil Liberties* exhibition curated by The Aja Project  
Hosted by The FRONT Arte Cultura, San Ysidro, CA, 2018.

Photo Credit: Alejandro Martinez, Jr.

**Principal Investigator**, Julie Kendig  
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**Research Analyst**, Mariah Rankine-Landers  
**Contributing Editor**, Margie Johnson Reese

“May we not forget how we treat each other because we are each other.”

-Ron Salisbury, San Diego Inaugural Poet Laureate

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In July 2020 RISE Research & Evaluation began working with the City of San Diego's Commission for Arts and Culture (the Commission) to conduct an equity analysis of ten key areas that guide policy and practice. The central, guiding purpose of this analysis was to understand the effect of policies and practices of the Commission for Arts and Culture on the achievement of a diverse, inclusive and equitable landscape of funding for arts and culture in San Diego. This report is a comprehensive analysis of written materials, existing data and web-based resources from the Commission as well as original data collected by RISE Research & Evaluation during the project. The findings are intended to guide the City toward more equitable decision-making processes within arts and culture funding and shift resource allocation using criteria grounded in principles of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Equity work centered on arts and culture funding is not new, and the way forward is clear. We know this for two reasons. First, San Diego Municipal Code set forth the City's intent and purpose for establishing the Commission for Arts and Culture (added in 1989) for the purposes of "promoting, encouraging, and increasing support for the region's artistic and cultural assets, integrating arts and culture into community life and showcasing San Diego as an international tourist destination." This section of the City's Municipal Code set out umbrella policy language which was in synchronization with language and policies of city governments 30 to 40 years ago. Since that time, cities have shifted their concept of the local arts agency as primarily a funder supporting traditional cultural expression. Today cities see the arts as a community development tool, promoting cultural sustainability as a key component of place making and attracting visitors to their communities as cultural and heritage tourists. As guardians of the public trust, city governments are aware of their intertwined responsibilities for managing public resources and ensuring that all citizens and visitors can design and experience meaningful arts and culture activity.

Secondly, the diverse community of arts organizations, leaders, cultural workers and artists in San Diego have offered pathways to greater equity in prior reports, via public comments at official Commission business meetings, through independently organized panel discussions open to the public, and during individual dialogues with art and culture staff. Spurred by this input, the City of San Diego is determined to bring the arts to the people through direct allocations, management and professional development and by contributing to the aesthetics of the City through commissions of art in public places. As the City has experienced increased needs and demands from its growing and culturally diverse populations, it is on a quest to make the necessary adjustments to provide the highest levels of services to the public at large and to the creative sector.

This review of the City's policies and practices considered any and all underlying issues related to the allocation of funding and the management of public resources in fair and

equitable ways. This process has revealed a truer picture of the history of the distribution of public funding. As is the case in numerous cities of like-size, disparities exist, and this is an appropriate time to address those disparities.

The fact that the City has called for a diversity, equity and inclusion study demonstrates both effort and will for ameliorating these persistent and disproportionate trends in arts and culture funding. By changing the status quo and improving funding equity in arts and culture in San Diego, this work has the potential to be much greater than the sum of its parts. Redesigning policy and practice based on the recommendations provided in this report is likely to have positive impacts on measurable metrics such as the overall community health and economic advancement of San Diego, as well as important indicators like trust and relationship-building between the Commission and creative communities of color.

Not only is there an opportunity for the Commission to move into the deep work of overturning decades of inequity but doing so creates a win for everyone. The Los Angeles County Arts Commission's 2017 report on their cultural equity and inclusion effort echoes this rationale. "The aspiration for equity has galvanized communities, advocates, government leaders, organizers, scholars, business leaders and philanthropists to rethink priorities, refocus strategies, and forge new partnerships to create a more equitable nation. There is a growing consensus that equity is not a zero sum game, and it is essential for prosperity as America bolts toward becoming a majority people of color."

This study focuses on the policies, practices and norms within the City that were identified by art and culture staff in 2019 as areas that needed to be examined using a DEI lens. The intention, made clear in the RFP, was to search for barriers to access and identify systemic biases, whether intended or unintended. RISE Research & Evaluation analyzed the following key areas within the Organizational Support Program, Creative Communities San Diego, and the Public Art program:

- Funding guidelines from fiscal years (FY) 2017–2021
- Awards issued from FY2017–2021, including the geographic reach
- Public Art Program selection and contracting processes
- Process and online platform for submitting proposals
- Technical assistance for applicants
- Panel processes, including recruiting, selecting and training panelists
- Marketing and outreach efforts of the Commission

The RISE Research & Evaluation team also examined other key areas, including:

- Council Policy 100-03
- Commissioners' nomination, selection and training processes

We designed a robust methodology to conduct the work. We began with a literature review of field studies in arts and culture and nonprofit funding equity conducted over the last 20 years, and these sources can be found in Appendix A. From there we generated an overall project rubric that operates within six domains of equity. This rubric was applied to most areas of the work listed above and used as our grounding framework for analyzing each document presented to us by the Commission. The rubric can be found in Appendix B. Because of the rich and varied data sources in this study, we used a mixed-methods approach to the work, employing both quantitative and qualitative analyses based on appropriate match to the data source.

Since the project began in late July 2020, our five team members have examined the data, analyzed the material, and interpreted the results. We have arrived at two sets of recommendations for consideration. The first special recommendation projects into the short-term future of FY22 and offers immediate guidance to arts and culture staff to prepare for what is predicted to be an austerity year. The second set of recommendations reflects longer-term actions the Commission can take to improve policy and practice and be in alignment with its stated equity goals.

At the time our preliminary recommendations were made in September 2020, prior to submitting this final report and before the release of the FY22 funding guidelines, we had hoped more substantial changes would have been made to the FY22 funding guidelines to bring the City in deeper alignment with stated equity goals. However, there is still an opportunity for arts and culture staff to make administrative changes throughout FY21 that can impact the way funding is distributed. Therefore, we are putting forth the following special recommendation as it relates to our assessment of prior funding guidelines and presents the City with an avenue to equity.

### **Special Recommendation: Fiscal Year 2022**

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Given the external economic decline due to the pandemic and the resulting impact on transient occupancy tax (TOT) dollars generated in San Diego (e.g. the Commission for Arts and Culture's primary source of revenue), we felt it was important to consider implementing immediate changes in the Commission's funding programs for the upcoming fiscal year that will begin on July 1, 2021. Our team ran budget simulations using award distribution data for the FY21 funding cycle, which represents a 50% reduction in funding for the Commission from the FY20 cycle. We forecasted two scenarios in FY22.

- **Scenario A.** The Commission experiences a continuation of the 50% budget reduction based on FY20 levels. In this scenario, we found that if the Commission were to state that organizations with annual operating income of \$5 million or more would be

ineligible to apply for the Organizational Support Program, a total of \$2,036,113.00 would be available to redistribute.

- **Scenario B.** A year of austerity where the Commission has a budget that is only 25% of FY20 levels. In this case, using the same restriction for preventing Organizational Support Program applicants with annual budgets of more than \$5 million from applying, \$1,018,056.50 would be available to redistribute.

It is important for the reader to note that in both of these scenarios, the organizations with annual operating income of \$5 million or more in FY21 relied on no more than 2.5% of their total revenue from the Commission. This means that the redistribution of those dollars away from large institutions is unlikely to be the cause for insolvency or closure for those organizations.

However, the opposite is true for the small arts and culture organizations. Using data from the US Chamber of Commerce Small Business Impact Poll conducted in July 2020, we know that 58% of small businesses are worried about permanent closure. We can imagine that the picture of small nonprofit organizations in the San Diego area might be similar. In fact, we now have data from the study conducted by the University of San Diego and reported at a public City meeting in September 2020 that substantiates this kind of future. Through their survey data of 165 organizations funded by the Commission in FY20, they found that smaller organizations with budgets under \$1 million are more likely to only partially reopen or have no plans to reopen following COVID-19 pandemic. We also know due to historic inequities in access to funding for organizations of color, BIPOC-led arts and culture organizations have smaller budgets than predominately White institutions. **Therefore, we strongly recommend that the Commission put in place new, responsive decision-making processes in FY22 that prioritize small organizations, particularly small organizations that are led by and predominantly serve people of color.**

## Key Recommendations

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Moving into the key recommendations for ongoing operations at the Commission for Arts and Culture, the section below briefly summarizes the collection of recommendations RISE Research & Evaluation generated. These recommendations represent the confluence of information and expertise from our own thorough analysis of all data sources provided by the Commission, the best practices presented in the literature, and community input from RISE Research & Evaluation's listening sessions. A more comprehensive explanation of these areas is offered in the body of the report.

- **Area of Assessment: Funding Guidelines**

- Recommendation 1: Reformat contracts to view City funding as community investment and provide 80% of contract award up front.
- Recommendation 2: Re-envision funding criteria so that priority is given to organizations and events that are led by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and/or serve communities of color.
- Recommendation 3: Create a new, unencumbered, equity-focused funding program designed to nurture new and emerging organizations and events, particularly those that are BIPOC led and serve communities of color.
- Recommendation 4: Consider communities whose first language is not English (which comprise 40% of San Diego's population) and design funding guidelines that respond in culturally appropriate ways.
- Recommendation 5: Gather demographic data from applicants.
- **Area of Assessment: Awards**
  - Recommendation 6: Related to the special recommendation presented above for FY22, permanently implement caps and redistribute awards to smaller organizations, particularly those led by and/or serving BIPOC.
  - Recommendation 7: Award at least 50% to organizations led by and serving low-income communities of color.
- **Area of Assessment: Submittal Process and Online Platform**
  - Recommendation 8: Consider adding functionality to the existing GoSmart platform or move to a different platform to reduce administrative burden on organizations.
  - Recommendation 9: Conduct full user interface study to better understand applicants' experience and reduce discrimination against people with disabilities.
- **Area of Assessment: Technical Assistance**
  - Recommendation 10: Take advantage of democratized online platforms, such as Zoom, even in a post-COVID world to make workshops available on demand to a wider audience of applicants.
  - Recommendation 11: Design multiple opportunities for technical assistance/education/coaching/office hours to cultivate relationships.
  - Recommendation 12: Implement language justice approach by making technical assistance available in multiple languages.
- **Area of Assessment: Panel Process**
  - Recommendation 13: Offer compensation to panelists.
  - Recommendation 14: Embed a review process for panelists to see geographic reach of organizations before providing final rankings.
  - Recommendation 15: Include racial equity as a weighted scoring criterion.
- **Area of Assessment: Marketing & Outreach**
  - Recommendation 16: Establish social media presence that is specific to the Commission for Arts and Culture.

- Recommendation 17: Invest in authentic relationships with communities of color and be accountable to their needs.
- Recommendation 18: Deepen collaborations with internal City departments and commissions to widen communication channels with the public.
- Recommendation 19: Design and deliver culturally appropriate marketing materials reflective of San Diego's diverse communities, including creating materials in languages other than English.
- **Area of Assessment: Public Art**
  - Recommendation 20: Research and publish for public review a five-year historical dashboard of public art commissions and acquisitions, including race/ethnicity data about the artists.
  - Recommendation 21: Build from and expand the pilot *Public Art: Public Sphere* program through the establishment of a regular public artist advancement award program.
  - Recommendation 22: Recruit BIPOC mid-career artists to serve on public art review and artist selection panels.
- **Area of Assessment: Council Policy 100-03**
  - Recommendation 23: Design an intentional and accessible feedback process that includes both beneficiaries of funding and disinvested communities to collect recommendations and revisions that serve all San Diegans.
- **Commissioners' Nomination, Selection and Training Processes**
  - Recommendation 24: Intentionally diversify the Commission.
  - Recommendation 25: Create a community feedback mechanism to receive input on slate of Commissioners before they are appointed.
  - Recommendation 26: Require in-depth DEI training for all Commissioners as part of onboarding and at a regular frequency (i.e. every two years).
  - Recommendation 27: Create authentic points of connection between the Commissioners and the arts and culture ecosystem in San Diego.

In addition to these recommendations, which are directly related to the scope of work, we found a number of other key areas that the Commission may decide to address. These areas represent the collective wisdom of outside resources (including community conversations and best practices shared in the literature), and they are primed to become the road map for work in the years ahead.

- Create a statement of equity that is reflected in all public-facing materials
- Commit to annual equity goals that are measurable and share them with the public
- Undergo a power analysis to understand the strength and impact of decisions made by the Commission in its role as a gatekeeper
- Expand revenue for the Commission to be used for equity-focused arts and culture investments beyond TOT through cross-departmental collaborations with City

agencies, such as transportation, housing, economic development, parks & libraries, and public health

- Create pathways for racially equitable representation within decision-making bodies

Further details explaining how we coalesced around these recommendations is provided in the body of the full report. We also explain the rationale, based on the data provided by the Commission, for why we landed on these recommendations, and we share demonstrated ways from the research literature for how the Commission can move forward. We sincerely hope this report, its findings and conclusions are useful for the Commission as you continue to bring into action your commitment to the journey of achieving equity.

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## INTRODUCTION

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The San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture has embarked on a massive and significant effort to examine multiple levels of policy, practice and norms within the City using an equity lens. To our knowledge this is the most comprehensive equity effort undertaken by the Commission in its 32-year history. This diversity, equity and inclusion study represents only one element of the equity efforts currently underway. Simultaneously, arts and culture staff and Commissioners are participating in DEI training by Margie Johnson Reese Partners.

This effort comes at an historic time of reckoning with racism in the U.S. While many companies and organizations are using this moment as nothing more than a marketing ploy, we have seen an earnestness on the part of the Commission to do well and do right by communities of color. Art and culture staff have been tirelessly pushing the work of equity forward over the last few years. Perhaps it is serendipitous that the moment the equity work at the Commission began in a public way—evidenced through contracting with outside equity consultants—solidarity among BIPOC and White people due to the Black Lives Matter uprising was strong, even reminiscent of the Black Liberation and American Indian Movements (a.k.a. Civil Rights Movement) in the 1960s. The openness of individuals—particularly White, privileged people—to do the hard work is at a peak right now. And so, we move forward in this work together, trusting that everyone involved is willing to reflect, learn and build a more equitable future for the people who make arts and culture possible in San Diego.

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## Why Equity

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To focus on why this work is important we want to remind readers of the multitude of benefits of equity—that equity work in arts and culture has the potential to impact far beyond the sector itself. Here we will describe key areas of impact we found in the literature and that we ourselves—the RISE Research & Evaluation team made up of a majority Black and Indigenous womxn—have experienced first-hand. The elements featured immediately below represent general evidence-based arguments for the function and impact of equity. Further in this section we will specifically address deep and systemic issues of equity within arts and culture at the local government level.

### **Equity strengthens democracy.**

- In their 2009 report *Criteria for Philanthropy at Its Best*, the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy states that, "By intentionally elevating vulnerable populations in their grantmaking, foundations benefit society and strengthen our democracy. Prioritizing marginalized communities brings about positive benefits for the public good," (pp. 2).



- California Tomorrow's work *Leading by Example: Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Community Foundations* recaps the changing demographics in the U.S. at the time of their 2004 report. "No longer the province of major urban centers, diversity is now a reality in every area of the United States. Three states, the District of Columbia, and nearly half the country's one hundred largest cities no longer have majority White populations. Over the past thirty years, the percentage of the U.S. population comprised of racial and ethnic minority groups has nearly doubled, and the percentage that is foreign born has more than doubled," (Scharf, 2004, pp. 5).
- *Not Just Money: Equity Issues in Cultural Philanthropy* authored by the Surdna Foundation offers equity in the arts as a way to bridge political divides. "If arts and culture are primary ways that we empathize with, understand and communicate with other people—including people different than ourselves—then enabling a broad spectrum of cultural voices is fundamental to creating a sense of the commonwealth and overcoming the pronounced socio-political divides we face today," (Surdna Foundation, 2017, pp. 2).

#### **Equity rights historic injustices.**

- The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation issued a report titled *What Are the Paradigm Shifts Necessary for the Arts Sector to Nurture More Sustainable Thriving Institutions of Color*, in which the authors remind us of the opportunity to correct a yawning gap in equitable funding. "There exists a pregnant consciousness around equity within the arts and culture sector from local to national funders. Yet the distribution of funding that should reflect the evolving diversity of our cultural landscape continues to trend in the wrong direction," (Yancey Consulting, 2018, pp. 7).
- California Tomorrow's work presents clear statistics on disproportionality. "Despite a civil rights movement that established legal protections against discrimination and advanced the vision of a society of equal opportunity and access, widespread disparities between groups persist and indeed are growing in the United States. Disproportionately it is families of color who are most impoverished in our communities. Disproportionately children from low-income neighborhoods attend schools with undertrained teachers and inadequate facilities. Families of color are two to three times as likely to lack health insurance as their White counterparts. And African Americans and Latinx have suffered consistently and significantly higher unemployment rates than Whites for decades," (Scharf, 2004, pp. 5).

#### **Equity increases economic opportunity.**

- The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy states, "Social inclusion is based on the belief that we all fare better when no one is left to fall too far behind, and the economy works for everyone. Social inclusion simultaneously incorporates multiple dimensions of well-being. It is achieved when we all have the opportunity and

resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural activities which are considered the societal norm," (Jagpal, 2009, pp. 3).

- The PolicyLink report titled *Creating Change Through Arts, Culture, and Equitable Development: A Policy and Practice Primer* provides hope regarding the role of the arts in economic opportunity. "Public sector investments in arts and culture across the United States can play a foundational and catalytic role in delivering racial and economic equity in community development," (Rose et.al., 2017, pp. 10).
- The same report provides clear statistics on the benefits of a creative economy, which echoes the San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture's own economic impact study. "Public arts and culture investments have significant place-making, economic and social impacts. A survey by Americans for the Arts found that the nation's arts and culture sector received about \$4 billion in public investment in 2010. The sector generated \$135.2 billion in economic activity, supported 4.13 million full-time jobs, and generated \$22.3 billion in revenue," (Rose et.al., 2017, pp. 10).
- Furthermore, when the arts are a part of the ongoing K—12 curriculum, children fare better economically in adulthood. "The infusion of arts and culture processes in communities and school curriculum can be a powerful countervailing force for the disproportionate number of young people of color who grew up in failing schools, run-down neighborhoods, poor health, inadequate support, and limited job opportunities. Several recent studies show that increased funding in arts education for vulnerable young people help them complete more schooling and earn higher incomes," (Rose et.al., 2017, pp. 39).
- "[Arts in schools] promotes economic growth. And analysis from the Washington Center for Equitable Growth calculated that the U.S. economy could be 10% larger by 2050 if students from low-income backgrounds had the same educational achievement as more advantaged students," (Rose et.al., 2017, pp. 39).

### **Equity increases well-being.**

- Once again, the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy offers a rationale for equity in the arts that is based in well-being. "Human development and social inclusion provide compelling reasons for institutional grantmakers to contribute to the public good by supporting policies that seek to create a more level playing field. By prioritizing the marginalized communities in grantmaking, philanthropy has the opportunity to maximize the impact of its giving by looking beyond economic indicators to assess the health of people and society on multiple dimensions of well-being," (Jagpal, 2009, pp. 7).
- In *What Are the Paradigm Shifts Necessary for the Arts Sector to Nurture More Sustainable Thriving Institutions of Color*, we are reminded that community need drives organizations of color, and often these needs are centered on health and well-being. "African, Latin American, Asian and Native American (ALAANA) organizations primarily grow from need. A community or group of people have a need and usually

people from that community rise up to meet it. The stability of the fabric of American societies depends on the health of ALANA organizations to serve their constituencies," (Yancey Consulting, 2018, pp. 9).

### **Equity leads us to understand each other.**

- "The arts and culture are an essential means by which people make sense of their lives, share their experiences, build bridges across divides, and realize their common humanity. The arts enable us to reflect on our own circumstances, understand one another, and imagine different futures," (Surdna Foundtion, 2017, pp. 1).
- The D5 Coalition's report, *Analysis of Policies, Practices and Programs for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*, clearly tells us, "Equity-focused philanthropy will expand opportunity, support leaders from marginalized groups, and close gaps in indicators of well-being," (Dressel, et.al., 2013, pp. 5).
- The author of *Leading by Example: Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Community Foundations* shares that simply working from the demographic changes in this country is not enough reason to focus on equity. There is a deeper, more compelling reason. "We have both a moral and social imperative to move forward our efforts if we are to reflect not just the racial and ethnic makeup of our communities, but also the differing ways in which our communities are 'experienced,'" (Scharf, 2004, pp. 17).

### **Equity Within Arts and Culture at the Local Government Level**

In recent years, local government, through direct cash allocations or indirectly through the development of public venues where arts program occur, has become a stabilizing source of funding for the arts. Advanced by the creation of the Locals Program at the National Endowment for the Arts in 1982, city governments began to significantly increase their direct support for the arts from local tax-based sources. The four for primary sources of revenue for the arts at the local government level are:

- general fund revenue
- general county tax revenue
- designated or a percentage of dedicated taxes such as hotel occupancy or entertainment/sports tax and
- special taxation districts.

In all cases, these public resources are considered to be in place to benefit the full range of public interests.

What recent research has shown however, is that those "public" resources have benefited traditional "White-led" institutions, whose budgets and assets have grown to build multi-million-dollar budgets, and for many, at the exclusion of the interests and cultural expression

of the broader community. As the nation's workforce has become increasingly diverse, the artists, leadership and programming focus of these publicly funded organizations has remained predominately White.

The City of New York for example, recently surveyed the staff and boards of the 987 arts organizations which received funding from the Department of Cultural Affairs. Of the City's cultural workforce, 61.8% were White, non-Hispanic, and 35.4% were persons of color. Also, diversity in boards and staff decreased by organizational size, and leadership was less diverse, on average, in upper management than lower and midlevel management.

In 2016, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission administered the DataArts Workforce Demographic survey with 3,175 arts organization staff, board members, volunteer, and contractors in Los Angeles County. Results of note were: The arts and culture workforce is more homogenous (60% White, non-Hispanic) than the county's population (27% White, non-Hispanic); board members are the least diverse of the workforce cohorts; and younger workforce members are more racially diverse than are older members of the workforce.

New York City and Los Angeles findings show how different arts communities reflect (or do not reflect) the racial diversity of their area's population. These kinds of findings, while interesting, do not directly help answer questions of distributive justice in the dissemination of grants funds. Trends in arts funding from the private sector, including foundation and philanthropic funders, shows that bias has also contributed to lower capacities of arts organizations of color. Overall, their ability to generate earned and contributed income to meet the match requirements mandated by many public sector funding agencies, including the City of San Diego, is diminished. The result, over time, is that organizations of color and smaller community-based arts groups have lower capacities to access grants of substantial size, to build and sustain cash reserves and endowments, and to hire and retain full-time staff.

Conversations around equity must consider how historic policies and practices have largely favored European-based cultural norms. Cities and local arts agencies across the country are responding to the data that points out these unbalanced and biased systems and calling for more than the development of an equity statement to address this uneven picture.

Two interesting definitions of equity taken from cities with like-size arts budgets are shared for your consideration.

*Equity is the state, quality or ideal of being just, impartial and fair. The concept of equity is synonymous with fairness and justice. It needs to be thought of as a structural and systemic concept.* Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council

*Racial equity is the condition when race no longer predicts a person's quality of life outcomes in our community. The City recognizes that race is the primary determinant of social equity and therefore we begin the journey toward social equity with this definition. The City of Austin recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of these wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity. City of Austin, Texas*

Equity is a complex combination of interrelated elements intentionally designed to create, support and sustain social justice. It is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power relations, resources, strategies, conditions, habits and outcomes. Local arts agencies in cities like San Francisco, Nashville and Seattle provide studies in how municipal governments have taken seriously the work to achieve greater inclusion and equity in the distribution of public funds for the arts. Several of the tenants of this work have included moving away from the basic grant-making programs that essentially gave money to a limited number of entitled cultural organizations, to considering ways to:

- Develop funding initiatives focused on community-based programs.
- Fund cooperative ventures for leadership development specifically for organizations of color.
- Increase public attention to the city's cultural groups as important community assets.
- Provide greater political and financial support for elevating organizations reflective of residents.
- Prepare organizations and communities of color to participate in a robust way in cultural tourism campaigns.

## Evaluation Framework

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We began this work by building a framework for evaluation that was flexible enough to be used across a multitude of data sources yet firm enough to hold principles of equity as the core feature. For the purpose of this study, we refer to the definition of equity presented in Putnam-Walkerly and Russell's 2016 study funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and titled *The Road to Achieving Equity: Findings and Lessons from a Field Scan of Foundations That Are Embracing Equity as a Primary Focus*. The authors define equity as, "the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fared. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, 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," (pp. 2).

Before we looked at the data sources, we (1) conducted a literature review of related material no older than 20 years, (2) created a set of guiding questions on which to center the work, and (3) built an accompanying rubric by which we could evaluate the materials shared with us by the City. Seeking answers to the following guiding questions motivated and guided this work:

- What are the greatest opportunities for creating equitable change from both short-term and the long-term outlooks?
- How can the viability and sustainability of equity efforts of the Commission endure over time?
- What is the level of decision-making transparency in the policies, protocols, and practices at the Commission?
- What barriers exist in policy and practice that prevent or discourage equitable funding?
- Do organizations and individuals that benefit from the Commission for Arts and Culture funding programs reflect the diversity of San Diego?
- What elements of accountability to the community exist within the policies, practices and norms of the Commission?
- How are opportunities communicated to the community and are these in alignment with equity goals?

From here we built a rubric that examines six domains of equity. We set the rubric on a five-point scale and generated the criteria and pieces of evidence needed for each point across the six domains. The full rubric can be found in Appendix B, and here we will share the domains and the evidence within each domain we were seeking in order to evaluate.

- **Accessibility.** To what degree are organizations and individuals able to access the help and assistance of the Commission? Are there plentiful opportunities throughout the year and at various times of the day and week for people to connect with the Commission? How open is the communication process?
- **Accountability.** To whom are the Commission and the City accountable to, and how are they held accountable, especially to diverse neighborhoods, communities, and people?
- **Inclusion.** How are diverse communities and perspectives included and what are the barriers to inclusion? To what degree do diverse people have the ability to raise their voices and affect decisions within majority-group settings?
- **Language.** To what degree are the tone and usage of language equitable and inclusive? Are there instances of “othering” or microaggressions within the language? Who is at the center of communication and is the language inclusive of the perspectives and experiences of communities of color?

- **Power.** What are the power dynamics among the Commission, the City, and the community, and to what degree are there power imbalances within those relationships?
- **Transparency.** To what degree are the Commission and the City clear and transparent in expectations, communications, and decision-making?

In the findings section of this report, readers will see how the rubric scores panned out across various areas of analysis and what average changes within each domain occurred over time.

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## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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This study included analysis of nine key areas covering a multitude of functions within the Commission for Arts and Culture from policy to practice. We examined the funding guidelines from FY17–FY21 and scored them based on the 5-point equity rubric described earlier. We also looked at a five-year history of awards made through the Organizational Support Program and Creative Communities San Diego. We analyzed administrative areas, such as the submittal process and online system for managing proposals, technical assistance available to new and returning applicants, the process for recruiting, selecting, and training panelists, and the marketing and outreach efforts of the Commission. Furthermore, we analyzed Council Policy 100-03 (which determines the usage of the Commission’s current primary source of income), the Public Art program, and the nomination, selection and training processes for the Commissioners.

The following sections of the report detail the methodologies we used specific to each area, the results we found, and the recommendations we offer for the Commission’s consideration. Across the areas, we used research-level exactitude where possible, meaning that much of the work represented here is elevated above the standards of evaluation and approaches the rigor of a research project. We employed standards of practice in research that helped to ensure reliability and validity of the process. For example, in each analysis area we had more than one researcher examining the data, and we referred to the literature to converge upon and substantiate our recommendations.

### **Funding Guidelines**

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We conducted an analysis of the funding guidelines from the last five years for both the Operational Support Program (OSP) and the Creative Communities San Diego (CCSD) funding opportunities. Our team conducted a thorough reading of all the published guidelines and scored them, line by line, using the equity rubric. While changes from year to year were incremental, we are able to see a greater picture of improvements over time when we compared the scores of FY17 to FY21 in both OSP and CCSD.

### **Creative Communities San Diego Guidelines**

Table 1 below shows the results across the equity domains for FY17 and FY21 Creative Communities San Diego funding guidelines. Most areas improved over time, and the strongest improvements were in the areas of language and inclusion. Save for accountability (which showed no improvement because the score was high to begin with), the area with the least improvement was transparency. Also, in general, the score for power in both FY17 and FY21 is comparatively low.



Table 1. *FY17 and FY21 Comparison of Equity Scores on Scale of 1–5 for Funding Guidelines, Creative Communities San Diego*

Equity Domain	FY17	FY21	Δ
Accessibility	2.5	3.1	+0.6
Accountability	4	4	0
Inclusion	2.4	3.6	+1.2
Language	2.3	4	+1.7
Power	2	2.5	+0.5
Transparency	3	3.2	+0.2

Regarding the area of transparency, there was only slight improvement from FY17 to FY21, and this is mostly due to the black box of the appeal process. While it is commendable that the appeal process exists for applicants who were not recommended for funding, there is very little information on how decisions are made, whether past appeals have been won or declined and on what basis, and what criteria are used during consideration.

The prescriptive course of action to improve the power differential is to redesign the contract conditions between the City and the organizations so that organizations of color with limited access to capital do not continue to be disproportionately and negatively impacted by the distribution of resources. The current transactional relationship often creates inequitable barriers for small budget organizations, and many organizations of color find themselves strapped by funding released on a reimbursement basis.

City governments must seek the most effective and economical use of public dollars and resources in the provision of cultural services to its citizens, and they have the responsibility for demonstrating return on investment to the public. Many municipal tax codes do not allow for grant-making using the private sector definition of a grant as simply a “reward for excellence,” and therefore must administer the award in alignment with City procurement practices. Historically, the City’s primary role is that of contracting for the services of cultural organizations and individual artists, and those awards are granted on a competitive basis.

Progressive cities are responding to these barriers by working with their legal departments to find ways to lower these barriers and create accountability and reporting measures that satisfy accountability requirements. Of course, each city will have unique municipal tax code requirements, but where possible cities are reformatting contracts that view city funding as community investment opportunities rather than punitive and restrictive reimbursement agreements. For example, cities like Dallas, TX makes available up to 80% of the grant award up front against a series of incremental deliverables as an investment in the delivery of

cultural services to the public, with the balance of the contract made available upon receipt of a final project report to the sponsoring agency.

### Organizational Support Program Guidelines

Moving into the analysis for the Organizational Support Program, Table 2 below shows the results across the equity domains for FY17 and FY21 OSP funding guidelines. All areas improved over time, and the strongest improvements were in the areas of accountability, inclusion and language. The areas where improvement is most needed are transparency, power, and accessibility respectively.

Table 2. *FY17 and FY21 Comparison of Equity Scores on Scale of 1–5 for Funding Guidelines, Organizational Support Program*

Equity Domain	FY17	FY21	Δ
Accessibility	2.2	3.1	+0.9
Accountability	3	4	+1
Inclusion	2.6	3.6	+1
Language	2.4	4	+1.6
Power	2	2.5	+0.5
Transparency	3	3.2	+0.2

Once again, the issue of contract conditions is creating inequitable barriers for organizations. The burden of setting up contracts on a reimbursement basis, as opposed to a payment schedule with a significant portion of funding available up front, prevents many small and BIPOC-led organizations with limited resources from even considering applying for OSP. We found that organizations have to wait, sometimes up to nine months, before receiving reimbursement. Simply put, this is not a plausible scenario for BIPOC-led organizations that already struggle with access to capital.

To improve in the area of transparency, we recommend the same actions as in the above CCSD analysis. There was little information with respect to how the decision-making process for approving or denying appeals worked. Additionally, we noticed an area of concern regarding the “cut-off” point for all ranked OSP applicants. While we understand that the Commission operates within a given budget each year and funding distribution decisions need to be made somehow, there is no rationale provided for how the “cut-off” decision is made. We advise a communication strategy to the broader public, a feedback system with organizations that were “cut off,” and a plan for engaging with them throughout the year to offer support for improvement.

Specifically, we recommend adding clear language to future funding guidelines that illuminates how the “cut-off” decision is made. Furthermore, we advise the expansion of technical assistance opportunities, which are further explained later in this report. We also recommend establishing a mentoring program, reaching out specifically and consistently to check in on organizations that did not make the cut and guide them throughout the year, while encouraging staff at these organizations to enroll in the highly popular, successful, and award-winning “City of San Diego Nonprofit Academy” hosted by the School of Leadership and Educational Sciences at the University of San Diego.

Our analysis of the existing conditions embedded within the funding guidelines for OSP and CCSD, combined with wisdom from the research literature (which advise actions and ideas not currently present in the guidelines) leads us to the following recommendations:

- Reformat contracts that view City funding as community investment and offer up-front payments at 80% of the award.
- Re-envision funding criteria so that priority is given to organizations and events that are led by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and/or serve communities of color in order to right historic inequities in access to funding for BIPOC.
- Create a new, unencumbered, equity-focused funding program designed to nurture new and emerging organizations and events, particularly those that are BIPOC led and serve communities of color
- Consider communities whose first language is not English (which comprise 40% of San Diego’s population) and design funding guidelines that respond in culturally appropriate ways, such as making guidelines available in multiple languages (reference the City of Seattle, which has translation available for 18 languages), allowing more word count in the narrative responses, or allowing other formats for submitting responses, such as videos.
- Gather demographic data from applicants

## **Organizational Support Program Awards**

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For the Organizational Support Program (OSP) we looked at five years of funding, starting with FY17 and moving up through the FY21 award year. For this data we used a purely quantitative approach, and we ran both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. We wanted to understand which organizations received the lion’s share of funding year over year and what the magnitude and direction of the relationship between organization size and funding amount is. We will report out these findings year by year in the tables below with a special report for FY19, the only year for which data on the geographic reach of organizations is available.

Table 3. List of Top Ten Funded Organizations, FY17

Organization	Award	AOI	% of AOI
San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association	\$ 543,245.00	\$ 23,598,447.00	2.30%
San Diego Society of Natural History Balboa Park	\$ 542,819.00	\$ 24,773,783.00	2.19%
Old Globe Theatre	\$ 542,761.00	\$ 22,784,840.00	2.38%
La Jolla Playhouse	\$ 501,560.00	\$ 15,107,506.00	3.32%
San Diego Opera	\$ 428,318.00	\$ 11,636,713.00	3.68%
San Diego Museum of Art	\$ 413,486.00	\$ 9,381,903.00	4.41%
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego	\$ 368,399.00	\$ 7,482,242.00	4.92%
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center	\$ 366,559.00	\$ 7,412,835.00	4.94%
San Diego Air & Space Museum	\$ 347,724.00	\$ 7,539,975.00	4.61%
San Diego Museum of Man	\$ 285,113.00	\$ 4,804,004.00	5.93%
<b>Total Sum</b>	<b>\$ 4,339,984.00</b>		

Table 4. List of Top Ten Funded Organizations, FY18

Organization	Award	AOI	% of AOI
La Jolla Music Society	\$ 523,488.00	\$ 19,100,093.00	2.74%
La Jolla Playhouse	\$ 514,537.00	\$ 17,574,263.00	2.93%
San Diego Natural History Museum	\$ 483,505.00	\$ 10,955,113.00	4.41%
Old Globe Theatre	\$ 470,522.00	\$ 23,707,187.00	1.98%
San Diego Symphony Orchestra	\$ 469,902.00	\$ 22,587,760.00	2.08%
San Diego Opera	\$ 433,750.00	\$ 11,892,487.00	3.65%
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego	\$ 427,047.00	\$ 12,008,245.00	3.56%
San Diego Museum of Art	\$ 394,518.00	\$ 10,000,000.00	3.95%
Maritime Museum	\$ 379,194.00	\$ 10,609,563.00	3.57%
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center	\$ 371,133.00	\$ 7,817,511.00	4.75%
<b>Total Sum</b>	<b>\$ 4,467,596.00</b>		

Table 5. List of Top Ten Funded Organizations, FY19

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>AOI</b>	<b>% of AOI</b>
Old Globe Theatre	\$ 491,017.00	\$ 22,349,576.00	2.20%
San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association	\$ 490,787.00	\$ 22,182,748.00	2.21%
San Diego Comic Convention	\$ 489,802.00	\$ 21,611,777.00	2.27%
County	\$ 454,036.00	\$ 15,091,433.00	3.01%
San Diego Society of Natural History	\$ 426,696.00	\$ 12,648,056.00	3.37%
San Diego Opera Association	\$ 397,566.00	\$ 10,675,879.00	3.72%
San Diego Museum of Art	\$ 366,448.00	\$ 10,221,790.00	3.58%
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center	\$ 352,986.00	\$ 8,332,886.00	4.24%
San Diego Air & Space Museum	\$ 294,897.00	\$ 6,688,677.00	4.41%
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego	\$ 267,441.00	\$ 5,643,337.00	4.74%
<b>Total Sum</b>	<b>\$ 4,031,676.00</b>		

Table 6. List of Top Ten Funded Organizations, FY20

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>AOI</b>	<b>% of AOI</b>
Old Globe Theatre	\$ 459,050.00	\$ 25,568,968.00	1.80%
San Diego Symphony Orchestra	\$ 458,799.00	\$ 25,742,603.00	1.78%
La Jolla Playhouse	\$ 457,525.00	\$ 21,243,550.00	2.15%
San Diego Museum of Art	\$ 392,310.00	\$ 14,292,154.00	2.74%
San Diego Natural History Museum	\$ 392,101.00	\$ 12,085,081.00	3.24%
San Diego Opera	\$ 392,006.00	\$ 12,077,828.00	3.25%
San Diego Comic Convention	\$ 370,237.00	\$ 10,564,497.00	3.50%
San Diego Theatres Inc	\$ 340,741.00	\$ 10,084,934.00	3.38%
San Diego Air & Space Museum	\$ 296,615.00	\$ 7,636,311.00	3.88%
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center	\$ 293,786.00	\$ 6,699,248.00	4.39%
<b>Total Sum</b>	<b>\$ 3,853,170.00</b>		

Table 7. List of Top Ten Funded Organizations, FY21

Organization	Award	AOI	% of AOI
San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association	\$ 235,509.00	\$ 24,993,236.00	0.94%
Old Globe Theatre	\$ 231,414.00	\$ 28,538,993.00	0.81%
Theater and Arts Foundation of San Diego DBA San I	\$ 229,027.00	\$ 18,330,983.00	1.25%
San Diego Comic Convention	\$ 219,058.00	\$ 33,319,507.00	0.66%
San Diego Museum of Art	\$ 189,854.00	\$ 10,587,666.00	1.79%
San Diego Society of Natural History DBA San I	\$ 188,097.00	\$ 10,371,522.00	1.81%
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center	\$ 178,101.00	\$ 9,234,716.00	1.93%
San Diego Opera Association	\$ 159,369.00	\$ 7,436,024.00	2.14%
San Diego Air & Space Museum	\$ 146,374.00	\$ 7,124,865.00	2.05%
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego	\$ 130,766.00	\$ 5,838,000.00	2.24%
<b>Total Sum</b>	<b>\$ 1,907,569.00</b>		

Interpreting this data using an equity lens requires us to ask questions that we do not yet have the data to answer. There is nothing inherently wrong from an equity perspective with funding large institutions. But what we must know before being able to make a judgement is whether or not these organizations are governed, staffed and/or serve predominately White populations. Trends across the country and the local popular narrative suggest that this is highly likely to be true—that the large organizations listed in these tables are predominately White. Therefore, we advise the Commission to begin collecting the data in order to have a robust understanding of the demographic statistics of these organizations. What is the compositional diversity of people who work at these organizations? Does the highest rate of diversity occur within the lowest paying positions? What is the ethnic composition of the boards of directors? What are the demographics of the population served by each institution? These questions would be wonderful areas of inquiry for a future study, and this is a major impetus for why we strongly recommended collecting demographic information in the funding guidelines section of this report.

As mentioned before, we also ran descriptive and inferential statistics for the award amounts across four fiscal years.<sup>1</sup> We present Table 6 below, which shares the results of the average award amount, the average annual operating income (AOI), the total number of organizations that received awards (noted as N), and the correlation between mean award and mean AOI (notated as *r*). What may be interesting for the reader to note is the strength of the

<sup>1</sup> Fiscal year 2018 had data irregularities across the 88 awarded organizations, and we did not include it in this particular analysis. However, we were able to run the analysis presented in Table 2 because the data was accurate for those organizations, based on the triangulation of multiple data sources.

correlations between the budget size of organizations and the amount of funding they receive. The correlations are very strong, meaning that the more money an organization has, the more likely it will be to receive a large amount from the Commission. Given the design of the algorithm, these results are not surprising. Dollar-for-dollar, the algorithm favors large-revenue organizations. From an equity lens, this is highly problematic, especially if the large organizations are not diverse.

Table 8. Descriptive and Inferential Statistics per Award Year

Award Year	Average Award	Average AOI	N	<i>r</i>
FY17	\$113,007.19	\$2,180,056.76	98	.92
FY19	\$205,420.92	\$2,273,877.76	98	.94
FY20	\$95,863.10	\$2,310,222.22	105	.92
FY21	\$44,836.92	\$2,261,957.54	113	.74

We also present findings from the interesting data in FY19 we had to work with. In FY19 the Commission released data on the geographic reach of organizations throughout San Diego. The *Arts and Culture Citywide Impact* project, which can be found from the landing page of the Commission's website, is a visually stunning presentation of data in map format. Visitors can clearly see which City Council districts receive the most funding, the "hot" areas within each district where funded organizations are clustered, and the types of outreach sites where arts and culture organizations are offering programming. Art and culture staff invested a tremendous amount of work, in collaboration with the City's IT department, to generate these data visualizations, and it is our expert opinion that this work should continue and even expand in future years. We recommend adding the collection of in-reach statistics from organizations with bricks and mortar, including number of people and their residential zip codes.

We analyzed raw data from the map and found some interesting results. For the most part, the small organizations are doing the most outreach work and are engaging with more diverse communities than their counterparts in the San Diego arts and culture ecosystem that qualify as large organizations. The Reuben H. Fleet Science Center and La Jolla Playhouse are exceptions. Table 7 shows the results of the top ten organizations that had the most amount of outreach during FY19.

Table 9. *Analysis of FY19 OSP Awardees Based on Outreach Efforts*

Organization	# of Outreach Sites	AOI
Artreach	31	\$37,905
Classics for Kids, Inc	59	\$370,619

Fern Street Community Arts, Inc.	34	\$190,945
Playwrights Project	32	\$401,510
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center	51	\$8,332,886
San Diego Guild of Puppetry, Inc.	42	\$78,487
La Jolla Playhouse	31	\$15,091,433
Write Out Loud	61	\$90,299
Young Audiences of San Diego	87	\$2,084,061

### Creative Communities San Diego Awards

In general, the Creative Communities San Diego program has been the more accessible and inclusive funding avenue for arts and culture in San Diego, as compared to the Operational Support Program. We found evidence to support this claim in areas such as the short-form questions, the option to renew for returning applicants, expanding technical assistance opportunities and allowing cure periods for both the RFQ and RFP phases, the improvements in the panel process (including expanding the slate of peer reviewed panelists' areas of expertise and the change in the panel deliberation process to allow a representative from the applicant organization to appear and present in person), and the scoring sheet (including clear, specific criteria and examples of what is considered a "strong" proposal).

We also conducted a special analysis of data from FY19 for CCSD awards based on the map data available, described earlier in this report. We examined the number of outreach sites served in comparison to the total project budget, and we found a more balanced picture, in comparison to OSP awardees. Table 10 below shows this in further detail.

Table 10. *Analysis of FY19 CCSD Awardees Based on Outreach Efforts*

Organization	# of Outreach Sites	Total Project Budget
Biocom Institute	33	\$832,603
San Diego LGBT Pride	28	\$1,830,700
Speed of Change, Inc	26	\$100,000
San Diego Performing Arts League	24	\$30,000
San Diego Film Foundation	14	\$808,000
La Maestra Family Clinic	13	\$29,950
Linda Vista Multi-Cultural Fair	13	\$60,110
Karen Organization of San Diego	9	\$20,000
Mariachi Scholarship Foundation	7	\$139,000
Bodhi Tree Concerts	7	\$30,000



Furthermore, there was a moderately strong correlation between the amount of funding received and the number of outreach sites ( $r = 0.55$ ), which was not present in the OSP data. This indicates that, taken together, dollar for dollar the festivals and events funded through CCSD are making a greater effort at outreach than most legacy institutions. This might be the case because the festivals, in their pop-up nature, need to conduct greater outreach efforts in order to drive audiences to their annual big events. However, using an equity lens, we cannot ignore that even as the bricks and mortar organizations benefit from a permanent locale, they are still less strong in their outreach efforts across San Diego.

While CCSD is the best existing program as analyzed through diversity, equity and inclusion criteria, there is still room for improvement. Many of the same recommendations we have made for OSP apply here as well, such as reducing the matching requirement, and implementing a more rapid funds distribution process (as opposed to the existing reimbursement model).

### **Submittal Process and Online Platform**

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We conducted a cursory review of the submittal process and online platform. Admittedly, our area of expertise does not include analyzing digital platforms, but there are opportunities we believe the Commission can take advantage of to understand a more comprehensive picture of how these areas are either supporting or preventing equity. We offer recommendations below that will lead to a more inclusive and less burdensome process.

- Conduct a User Design/User Interface (UX/UI) study to better understand applicants' experience with the platform and reduce discrimination against people with disabilities.
- Consider adding functionality to the existing GoSmart platform or moving to a different platform, such as SmartSimple, that allows all activities related to applications and contracting to be stored and managed in the same place in order to reduce logistical burden of organizations, especially smaller organizations without the benefit of full-time development and/or operations employees.
- Fix the document upload function to accommodate multiple files types, such as .jpgs and .docs for organizations that do not have access to Adobe Creative Suite.

### **Technical Assistance**

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We conducted interviews with some art and culture staff to understand the technical assistance offerings available to the arts and culture community. We found an eagerness on the part of staff to be in communication with applicants and ameliorate their struggles. One

staff member went so far as to check the online application portal to examine which applicants had begun their applications but had not progressed, and she took it upon herself to reach out to those organizations and offer assistance. This individual also reported the ways she encouraged applicants to take full advantage of the Commission's resources and almost operated as a public educator, making sure community organizations understood the process clearly, including what does and does not qualify under the guidelines. This kind of personal commitment to connecting, building relationships, and offering support, particularly to organizations that are new to the application process, is a key step toward fully implementing equity. When staff care about community and show commitment through their day-to-day actions, trust is earned and barriers are overcome.

Further improvements in the area of technical assistance made by arts and culture staff in FY20 highlight the commitment to greater equity. For the first time to our knowledge, technical assistance workshops were offered in every City Council district, in partnership with and hosted by each Councilmember's office. Members of the public had many more opportunities to connect directly with arts and culture staff and received specific guidance and coaching in submitting their applications.

Even with the stellar service currently being offered, we saw areas of improvement. Therefore, we offer the following recommendations in order to improve the access to technical support.

- Take advantage of democratized online platforms, such as Zoom, even in a post-COVID world, to make workshops available on demand to a wider audience of applicants.
- Design multiple opportunities throughout the year for technical assistance/education/coaching/office hours to cultivate relationships, including offering technical assistance on evenings and weekends and in accessible locations throughout the City, such as libraries and community centers.
- Promote the Nonprofit Academy to new and emerging arts organizations as an additional/parallel opportunity for assistance.
- Implement language justice approach by making all forms of technical assistance available in multiple languages.

## **Panel Process**

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We conducted an analysis of the panel process ranging from FY17—FY21. Similar to our process for evaluating the funding guidelines, our team conducted an in-depth analysis of all the panel-related materials, including the call for panelists and the panel training materials. We applied the project equity rubric and scored these materials according to the six domains and respective scoring criteria described in Appendix B.

Table 11 below shows the results across the equity domains for FY17 and FY21 panel materials. Three of the areas improved over time: accountability, inclusion, and language, with accountability showing the strongest improvement. The areas of power and transparency showed no movement. And finally, the average score for accessibility actually slightly declined in FY21 from FY17, but the negative difference across the years was not enough to be statistically significant. In other words, there is no need to be alarmed.

Table 11. *FY17 and FY21 Comparison of Equity Scores on Scale of 1–5 for Panel Process*

Equity Domain	FY17	FY21	Δ
Accessibility	4	3.67	-0.33
Accountability	2	3.33	+1.33
Inclusion	3	3.25	+0.25
Language	2.2	3.13	+0.90
Power	1	1	0
Transparency	2.8	2.8	0

Taking a deeper look at the gains across time, we want to commend the art and culture staff for their hard work to improve these specific areas:

- Increasing panel training to three hours. This promotes a greater depth of understanding, more opportunities to ensure inter-rater reliability among panelists (a standard of rigor in multi-rater evaluation settings)
- Panels by discipline. Good improvement in the way panels are organized so that panelist feedback is more specific and relates directly to the discipline areas.
- Equity training. Embedding equity training within the overall panel training curriculum is an excellent practice, and over the years the City’s material and the amount of time spent in this area has improved.
- Panel composition. We strongly encourage the City to continue the practice of collecting demographic information of the panelists and reporting that out to the public. Likewise, eliminating the participation by Commissioners as panelists is a good step toward reducing possible bias and should continue to be implemented as a practice moving forward.
- Panelist pool. The City made a good improvement in FY21 when it opened the pool of panelists to a wider geographic area, up to a 100-mile radius. Inevitably this will lead to more diversity, not just racially and ethnically but with respect to perspectives as well.
- Conflict of interest policy. Reducing the timeframe to 12 months is commendable. This allows for greater participation from the local arts and culture community.

- Fairness and transparency. The verbiage in this section of the operating procedures is clearer than in prior years and includes specific examples of what is meant by these subjective terms.

The areas of further improvement we recommend to the City are the following:

- Offer compensation to panelists. It is inequitable to ask for free labor from the arts community, and it prevents many BIPOC artists and cultural workers, who are already disproportionately economically affected, from participating.
- Embed a review process for panelists to see geographic reach of organizations before providing final rankings. Between rounds one and two of scoring, there is no opportunity for the panelists to understand the geographic distribution of their rankings. We recommend that the art and culture staff prepare an analysis for panelists between rounds one and two that shows: organization name, round one rank, geographic service area of returning applicants (based on map data) and anticipated geographic service area for new applicants. This would clearly show panelists which areas across the City are being underserved and allow an opportunity to reconsider rankings to ensure equitable distribution of funding across all Council Districts.
- Include racial equity as a weighted scoring criterion. By collecting demographic data of applicants, as recommended earlier in this report, panelists will have new data to consider when ranking organizations. By including a scoring criterion for racial equity, the City will ensure a structural process for awarding organizations that have committed to equity work.

## **Marketing and Outreach**

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There was a dearth of data to examine in the areas of marketing and outreach, which indicates how much improvement can be made in this area. We examined emails sent through the MailChimp platform over the last five years, and we even looked at social media posts made by individual staff members on their personal pages. One of the major problems is that there are very few marketing channels art and culture staff have control of and can use on a regular basis. There is an email list that individuals can sign up to receive, but there is not a clear opportunity on the City website to sign up.

Also, the Commission for Arts and Culture does not have its own social media channels and, according to staff, it is prevented from establishing these channels due to City policy. Because social media is a critical space for organizing, galvanizing, and communicating for social change—for supporting evidence, one need look no further than #blacklivesmatter that began after the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the shooting death of Trayvon Martin in 2016—moving to allow the Commission to have its own social media channels could have

deep impact on its ability to swiftly, effectively and directly communicate, engage, and connect with communities of color across San Diego.

With respect to outreach, there seem to be opportunities to increase engagement with communities, even during the pandemic, that the City is not fully taking advantage of. Now is the time for staff to hold office hours or listening sessions via Zoom and other online platforms that require fewer resources for community members to participate. In the past, coming to public meetings of the Commission for Arts and Culture required being able to travel either via inconvenient and unreliable public transit or pay for hourly parking at downtown peak rates. These barriers are eliminated right now as folx are convening online. In our expert opinion, this is a great opportunity for building community relationships and trust, particularly with communities of color.

Another area of opportunity is for arts and culture staff to forge deeper connections with other Boards and Commissions at the City, such as the Human Relations Commission and International Affairs, as well as develop and strengthen interdepartmental relationships with City Communications, Immigrant Affairs, and especially the new Office of Race and Equity. Connecting and collaborating with these internal “partners” should open significantly wider channels for communicating and marketing the programs and opportunities of the Commission for Arts and Culture.

Our recommendations in the areas of marketing and outreach include:

- Establish social media presence that is specific to the Commission for Arts and Culture, including:
  - establishing Commission-specific accounts on popular channels, such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter,
  - having a regular schedule of posts related to opportunities, and
  - developing a process to invite and include submissions from organizations (refer to California Humanities social media as a model).
- Invest in authentic relationships with communities of color and be accountable to their needs through the arts and culture’s outreach efforts.
- Deepen collaborations with internal City departments and commissions to widen communication channels with the public.
- Shift the language of existing communications.
  - In general, the approach for communications would be better situated as invitations, rather than directives. For example, instead of “I am currently having one-on-one office hours,” perhaps ask organizations about their availability or use a tool like Calendly where outsiders can choose when to meet with you. Recommendation to provide options for engagement with various times and processes.

- Be responsive not directive. For example, instead of language that excludes, use instead, “The City is committed to uplifting arts and culture organizations, events and happenings throughout all communities of San Diego. If your organization was not able to submit an RFQ or did not advance to the RFP stage, we have other opportunities coming up, such as \_\_\_\_, and...”
- Design and deliver culturally appropriate marketing materials reflective of San Diego’s diverse communities, including creating materials in languages other than English and conducting an image audit to center BIPOC.

## Public Art

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Given the findings and observations from our review of the Commission’s Public Art programs and policies, it will be necessary for the agency to exert strong leadership and institutional will to make inclusive practices a reality in the area of public art. Staff, panels and other individuals in decision making roles must have adequate knowledge of what inclusive practices entail and how to mobilize resources so those practices are effectively implemented.

Advancing inclusive practices in the area of public art, with all the restrictive requirements of municipal public art policies, requires that agency staff adopt a proactive stance to broaden participation by artists of color. Embracing the philosophy of ‘inclusion’ calls for a paradigm shift in how guidelines are written, how artists are identified, and the understanding of the multiple ways that artists reflect cultural expression.

Analysis of the City’s Public Art Programs focused primarily on intersectional systemic barriers, which are addressed in many of the following key findings and recommendations. Many of these barriers are not limited in scope or unique to the City’s Public Art program, but rather include historic and contemporary limitations in access to extended resources by BIPOC, female-identified, non-gender conforming, LGBTQIA+ identified, disabled, migrant/undocumented or English as a second language artists.

The following recommendations are offered as pioneering ways to restructure the identification of BIPOC artists for the purposes of increased inclusion in selecting and designing successful competition for large scale public art opportunities by artists who are traditionally underrepresented. Successful implementation of these ideas should be considered as case studies and documented to inform the public art field of aggressive methods that lower barriers for artists of color.

- **Research and publish for public review a five year historical dashboard showing (1) the number of capital improvement projects, (2) the number of temporary public art**

**interventions, (3) the permanent collection acquisitions, (4) the dollar value of each public art commission that has been awarded or acquisition selected, and (5) corresponding data showing the percentage of awards made to artists of color.**

Reflecting the County's recent move to do the same through the declaration of racism as a public health crisis, this data will be helpful both for the Commission to set its own benchmarks for measuring progress in this area and make a public commitment to addressing inequities in the commissioning process. This level of transparency and accountability will help increase trust and demonstrate the seriousness of the City for focusing on being more equitable in awarding public art commissions.

With respect to resource distribution, although there is a current lack of demographic data on the selected artists/firms to analyze, we are concerned about the possibility of an historic pattern in public art funding that may have supported predominantly White artists/firms and may have overlooked artist bidders of color. In this particular study we cannot comment definitively on this due to the dearth of data, and so we encourage the City to take up more work in this area. There are opportunities to look back, possibly via the City's workforce reports with outside contractors, in order to inquire about racial equity within public art funds distribution.

- **Build from and expand the pilot *Public Art: Public Sphere* program through the establishment of a regular public artist advancement award program.** The proposed incentive-based program would invest in a selected cohort of BIPOC artists and engage with them through a series of experiences over a 12–18 month period to gain depth of expertise by responding to scalable project scopes as design competitions, build their portfolios and increase exposure to national opportunities. The selected cohort members should represent artists working at varying levels as practicing artists and should be nominated by community stakeholders, local artists or be self-nominated.

Selected artists should receive a stipend for participating in the program and their work should be exhibited publicly, allowing and encouraging critical response through public discourse. Over the course of the program, artists receive regular coaching from City architects and engineers to emphasize the collaborative nature of public art project development. Successful completion of the program results in a stronger portfolio of conceivable design concepts, increased capacities, possible commission awards, addition to the Commission's pre-approved artist roster, and, over time, a stronger cohort of San Diego artists capable of competing locally, nationally and internationally. Note: *It is understood that funding for this initiative may not be eligible use of Public Art funds and would therefore need to be funded from other sources available to the Arts Commission.*

- **Engage community stakeholders, neighborhood councils, and BIPOC arts and culture leaders to recruit BIPOC mid-career artists to serve on public art review and artist selection panels.** Artists competing for and participating in Recommendation 1, are natural candidates for participating in public art review and artist selection processes. This experience positions participating artists to view public art implementation from all points of the decision-making process.

The current practice of relying on staff recommendations and volunteerism to form panels inadvertently and invariably leads to biases and limitations in representation, even with best intent in place. Having open calls for panelists, including clear, published criteria for panelists, and offering an opportunity for public input on the slate of panelists would help the City be more transparent in the panel selection process. As an asset to equitable outcomes, we also recommend increasing the number of seats for community members on each panel and ensuring demographic representation within those seats.

BIPOC artists should also be invited to serve as thought partners in designing innovative methodologies for evaluating quality, merit and professionalism of artists' statements, portfolios and references. This direction intends to break the cycle of prevailing formulaic industry standards which are overwhelmingly and systemically biased and often exclusive.

Finally, as a leader on both on the selection committee and working with the artists, the Project Designer holds a key role in determining the professional qualifications and expertise of bidders, as well as determining the collaborative process and working conditions with and for the artists selected. From evidence in the documentation this is potentially a pivotal role for ensuring DEI goals are met. Therefore, we strongly recommend that Project Designers participate in DEI trainings, with the intention of building equitable collaboration in support of the selected artist's vision.

- **Prioritize equity and inclusion in developing the Commission's annual public art workplan.** Public art projects can recognize and acknowledge the contributions of residents and communities whose histories are an important but often overlooked part of the multiple layers of a city's past and future. Artists play a role in helping communities of color validate their histories and traditions, help them find their voice, and sustain cultural identity. On a parallel track then, it is critical to employ artists who can facilitate participation conversations with community leaders and develop authentic artistic responses that represent community intent.

As the annual workplan process is an existing practice of the commission, it is a natural opportunity to invite multi-sector conversations about the current and future



desired metrics for increasing commissions to artists of color, leaning in to focus on the aesthetics of San Diego neighborhoods, and building cultural competency measures for decision makers across the system of awarding large scale public art commissions.

### **Public Art Program Strengths**

We found a strong, equitable practices within the Public Art program in two areas. The usage of a request for qualifications process, as opposed to a request for proposals process demonstrates that the City places economic value on the contributions of artists and clearly avoids asking for free creative labor. This is a commendable practice and should be continued in the future. Additionally, the pilot program for professional development of public artists, called *Public Art/Public Sphere*, in our assessment is a successful model that deserves further resources. The intentionality of the extension of technical assistance and professional learning cohorts is in alignment with DEI goals around inclusion and access.

### **Council Policy 100-03**

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The broad recommendation for Council Policy 100-03 is for arts and culture staff to use the remaining time in FY21 to engage the community in a process of collective input and work collaboratively with the City's Economic Development department and the new Office of Race and Equity to lift up the revisions to the City Council before the next fiscal year. The public input process for revising Council Policy 100-03 is key to building trust among San Diegans, particularly from BIPOC communities who historically have been marginalized and excluded from such processes. While we will offer recommendations to policy changes, we do not wish to supplant the very important work of gathering wide community input.

We put forth recommendations for improving the language throughout the policy to more clearly signify the City's commitment to equity. The stated mission of supporting the City's "cultural amenities" as a revenue generating side-note should be redirected to embrace the people who make cultural diversity possible and support the authentic artistic expressions of San Diegans. Furthermore, adding language that elaborates on the idea of cultural amenities by specifically referencing neighborhood contributions to the arts and culture landscape of San Diego would indicate an understanding on the City's part of the plurality of art and culture being created throughout the City. From our community dialogue session as part of the data collection process for this study, we found the general interpretation of the policy's purpose is to support areas where tourism is already high, such as Balboa Park, rather than

uplift other communities where arts and culture thrives, such as San Ysidro, Barrio Logan, City Heights and South East.

Furthermore, the purpose statement of the policy is an opportunity to explicitly support the empowerment of culture-bearers and culture-makers from historically marginalized communities. Specifically item 3, which states that the purpose of the policy is to, “provide a set of uniform guidelines, conditions and criteria governing the application for and granting of funds to private non-profit organizations for the purpose of supporting their ongoing operational expenses,” could be elaborated to ensure the equitable distribution of funding and eliminate funding disparities. An example of this language shift could be, “provide a set of uniform guidelines, conditions and criteria governing the application for and granting of funds to private non-profit organizations *in an equitable manner* for the purpose of supporting their ongoing operational expenses.”

Within section 2 of the policy, there is a clear order of importance that places the current predominately White arts and culture institutions in San Diego at the top of the hierarchy. The policy states, “To enhance the economy and contribute to San Diego’s reputation as a cultural destination by nurturing and maintaining art and culture institutions of national and international reputation; by supporting programs and projects that provide access to excellence in culture and the arts for residents and visitors; and by funding programs and events which enrich the lives of the people of San Diego and build healthy, vital neighborhoods.” Whether intended or unintended, the result of the policy as it is currently written is that, over time, the City has invested in institution-building and permanence for predominantly White organizations, while organizations of color receive programming dollars. A way to flip this paradigm is to re-order the language in the policy and instead state, “To enhance the economy and contribute to San Diego’s cultural richness by nurturing and maintaining organizations that enrich the lives of the people of San Diego and build healthy, vital neighborhoods; by supporting programs and projects that provide access to the arts for residents and visitors; and by funding arts and culture institutions of national and international reputation.”

Section 3 of the policy includes guidance on funding a program, that to our knowledge has not been included in the Commission’s annual budget. From our assessment, the Neighborhood Arts Program, as it is described in Council Policy 100-03, represents the most inclusive and intentionally diverse areas of funding under the aegis of the Commission for Arts and Culture. Therefore, we recommend adding language to the policy that would require the enactment of this funding program, as well as the Organizational Support Program and the Festivals and Celebrations Program, at the administrative level.

And finally, congruent with prior recommendations to provide a strong percentage of funding up-front (as opposed to a reimbursement model), we strongly urge the City to update the

language in section B.1 of the policy to reflect that recommendation. It currently states, “expenses must be both incurred and paid by an organization before the City will release funding to the organization, except as otherwise may be provided.” Codifying the up-front funding as standard, rather than relying on exceptions to allow it will move the City in a more equitable direction.

## **Commissioners**

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In our Commissioner analysis, we reviewed a collection of data sources to gain clarity about the selection and onboarding process, past and current Commissioners, and Commissioner responsibilities. One of the first materials we viewed was a list of past and present Commissioner biographies. These biographies contained a Commissioner’s educational background, work experience, professional affiliations, other volunteer positions, and hobbies. Furthermore, current Commissioner biographies are listed on the Commission website with a headshot. After reading past and present Commissioner biographies, our team has concluded that Commissioners visibly and narratively represent a diversity of backgrounds including, but not limited to gender, age, socio-economic class, geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, skills and abilities, ethnicity, political affiliation and/or professional background as stated in the San Diego Municipal Code Article 6: Board and Commissions, Division 7: Commission for Arts and Culture.

### **Selection and Appointment Process**

However, when we looked at the selection and appointment process to see how these Commissioners were selected, the process was lacking transparency. The City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture is composed of fifteen volunteers appointed by the Mayor. The Mayor appoints six members and the Mayor appoints the remaining nine members, one each from a list of three nominations submitted by each Councilmember. We understand that Commissioners are recruited in a variety of ways, including informally via connections with City Council offices and through a self-nomination process. Yet, the process for selecting each Commissioner and the vetting conducted by the Mayor is unclear, so we cannot determine how extensive recruitment and selection was based on diverse backgrounds and representation of individual arts and culture patrons, artists, educators, the business and professional community, those with professional qualifications and experience or knowledge of a particular arts and culture field, and the general public.

We acknowledge that the current Commissioners represent aspects of the diversity laid out in the Municipal Code, however we want to bring attention to the lack of transparency around the selection and appointment process. We recommend that the Councilmembers and the Mayor intentionally diversify the Commissioners in a transparent process that takes into

consideration those with the diversity of perspectives and experiences that will bring the Commission closer to its accountability statement committing to evaluate their role as a Commission, and pledge to change policies or procedures that contribute to systemic racism and further marginalization. Including Commissioners that are community organizers, grassroots leaders, changemakers, and thought leaders in the community are examples. To foster transparency in the appointment process, we further recommend that the City create a community feedback mechanism to receive input on the slate of Commissioners before they are appointed. The arts and culture community at large knows who is an advocate for the arts in San Diego, and moreover, who is implementing that advocacy through practice to create positive change in the community.

### **Onboarding Process**

Another area our team reviewed was the onboarding process for Commissioners. The onboarding process includes a powerpoint presentation and a Rule and Regulations packet that explains Commissioner roles and responsibilities within the Commission, plus processes and protocols for internal operations--meetings, advisory panels, conflicts of interest, off-site visits, etc. The onboarding is comprehensive and includes the language from the Municipal Code. But, the onboarding does not include any DEI training or examination of the bias that can surface when holding a board position. For some Commissioners, the Commission may be their first entry into municipal board service. They are responsible for advising, advocating, and overseeing Commission processes that affect the public policy, legislation, and funding to the arts and culture community through an impartial process. To be impartial, Commissioners must know what biases they are bringing to their position of power. Therefore, we recommend that all Commissioners participate in required in-depth DEI training as part of the onboarding process and continue that training at a regular frequency (i.e. every two years).

### **Goodwill Visits**

Within the Rules and Regulations packet, there is a section outlining Commissioner Visits to City-Funded Non-Profits. These visits are called “Goodwill Visits” and function as a way for Commissioners’ to gain awareness of San Diego’s arts and culture sector in context. Commissioners are tasked with visiting city-funded non-profit organizations and experiencing the programs and services produced by these organizations. The Goodwill Visits are intended to achieve four main goals:

- Enhance Commissioners’ familiarization with the City-funded nonprofits that produce San Diego’s arts and culture offerings;
- Provide the City-funded non-profits with face-to-face opportunities to communicate directly with Commissioners;

- Facilitate educational exchanges between Commissioners and the boards and staffs of City-funded non-profits; and
- Visit each City-funded non-profit organization once every three years

During these visits, Commissioners experience a program or service that the organization provides and then have a conversation with key leaders in the organization (e.g. Executive Director, Artistic Director, Chief Operating Officer, Board President, etc.). Vetted questions include:

- What the Commission should know about the City-funded organization today.
- How is the City-funded non-profit organization succeeding?
- How could the City-funded non-profit organization improve?
- What the City-funded non-profit organization should know about the Commission today.
- How does the City-funded non-profit organization think the Commission is succeeding?
- How does the City-funded non-profit organization think the Commission could improve?

These questions may vary in practice during Goodwill Visits, but the tone of the questions perpetuate the Commission's funding power over the organization, rather than an exploratory dialogue with the organization. Although Goodwill Visits are not framed as inspections, organizations may perceive and respond to the visits as inspections that will affect whether they receive further funding from the Commission.

It is important to point out that Goodwill Visits are only for organizations who received funding from the Commission. To help fulfill the duty and function of the Commission to advise the Mayor and City Council on equity, transparency, diversity, participation and access, Commissioners' should gain awareness of San Diego's arts and culture sector beyond city-funded organizations. Our team recommends that the Commission creates authentic points of connection between the Commissioners and the arts and culture ecosystem in San Diego. Seek out non-city funded arts and culture organizations to better understand community, small, and mid-sized organizations that tend to be overlooked in the Guidelines and Funding processes.

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## CONCLUSION

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RISE Research & Evaluation is honored to have contributed to the important diversity, equity and inclusion efforts the City of San Diego. The recommendations in this report represent the confluence of (a) the body of literature covering diversity, equity and inclusion work in arts and culture in the U.S., (b) our original analysis and findings from the San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture's data, (c) expertise from inside the Commission, and (d) voices of arts and culture workers across affected communities in San Diego. This moment of strength in the alignment of vision, ideology, policy, practice, and community has the potential to transform into a movement of substantial change.

In addition to the changes recommended in this report, as per the scope of work, we strongly encourage arts and culture staff to follow-through on other efforts to ensure the sustainability and durability of systemic change toward equity. The list below reiterates these areas of recommendation.

- Create a statement of equity that is reflected in all public-facing materials
- Commit to annual equity goals that are measurable and share them with the public
- Undergo a power analysis to understand the strength and impact of decisions made by arts and culture staff in their roles as gatekeepers
- Expand revenue to be used for equity-focused arts and culture investments beyond TOT through cross-departmental collaborations with City agencies, such as transportation, housing, economic development, parks & libraries, and public health
- Create pathways for racially equitable representation within decision-making bodies

Improvements in equity are happening already, as evidenced by the more immediate shifts in funding guidelines, through the acknowledgement of the labor of panelists and the subsequent stipends offered, and through the public statement declaring long-term commitment by leadership at the Commission for Arts and Culture on the heels of the Black Lives Matter summer uprisings. The evolution of the City's journey to be in alignment with equity goals already has been a long road, particularly for individual champions on staff who have been holding the mantle for years. Our hope is that the work we have presented here will encourage and guide the City in deepening its commitment to the journey and will serve as a model in the San Diego region for other municipalities and private philanthropies.



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**APPENDIX B: EQUITY RUBRIC**


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Equity Domain	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Transparency.</b> to what degree is the Commission and the City clear and transparent in expectations and decision-making	No transparency evident. No details on how decisions are made. No illumination of processes or procedures handled by Commission or City. No examples of rubrics or other decision-making tools or criteria.		Emerging degree of transparency. Some details provided on decision-making and other process and procedures, but others are kept hidden.		Excellent degree of transparency in how decisions are made, who is the decider is, and what opportunities for appeal exist. Clear illumination of processes and procedures, including criteria for decision-making. Tangible examples provided to demonstrate decision-making process.
<b>Accountability.</b> to whom is the Commission and the City accountable, how are they held accountable to communities and neighborhoods	No evidence of accountability to community, public, organizations, or neighborhoods. No effort or interest in accountability to any entity external to the City and the Commission.		Emerging evidence of accountability to community, public, organizations, artists or neighborhoods. Some effort shown that demonstrates accountability to others outside the City and Commission.		Excellent degree of accountability to community, public, organizations, artists and neighborhoods, with a clear demonstration of accountability to communities that have been marginalized, unheard unseen or unacknowledged by the City and Commission.

<b>Power.</b> what are the power dynamics and where are there imbalances	Evidence of significant power imbalance in relationships between City and non-City entities. Decision-making and other processes and procedures show strong power dynamic with little to no power shared with non-City entities. Relationship are transactional.	Emerging evidence that power imbalances are recognized, and attempts are made to equalize the imbalance.	Power balance clearly demonstrates equity by placing communities and people who have been marginalized in positions of power and authority and does not tokenize individuals. City and Commission share power equally with impacted communities and non-City entities. Relationship are transformative.
<b>Language.</b> is the tone and usage of language equitable and inclusive, check for usage of othering language and who is at the center.	Language has tone that is demeaning, or otherwise is exclusive, blind or biased. Language shows discrimination and deep misunderstanding of equity.	Language shows some understanding of inclusivity and has supportive tone.	Language is inclusive, decolonized, and anti-racist. Language demonstrates deep equity—including understanding cultural nuances, eliminating microaggressions, is not ableist and does not discriminate. Tone is affirmative.

<p><b>Accessibility.</b> what is the degree of accessibility of organizations to the Commission</p>	<p>Access to the Commission and the City does not exist. Applicants and organizations are left on their own to decipher instructions. Also accessibility standards for all types of communications coming from the City and Commission are not ADA compliant.</p>	<p>Access to the Commission is somewhat accessible. ADA guidelines are followed.</p>	<p>Commission makes a clear and concerted effort to make all materials and opportunities accessible to all communities across San Diego. Priority is placed on communities that have been left out of funding opportunities in prior years and barriers to access, especially for those communities, are eliminated. Plenty of opportunities to meet with art and culture staff and hear all public meetings, including on evenings and weekends. All materials and opportunities exceed standard ADA compliance.</p>
<p><b>Inclusion.</b> how are diverse communities and perspectives included and what are the barriers to inclusion. Check for Inclusion of multiple ways of knowing, such as Indigenous wisdom, artistic ways</p>	<p>No inclusion of diverse perspectives. Single point of view dominates policies, procedures, decision-making and communications.</p>	<p>Some evidence of inclusion efforts in power structure and decision-making.</p>	<p>Clear demonstration of equal participation across demographics. Perspectives of diverse populations are represented in power structures and decision-making practices.</p>

of knowing, and more.					
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