



City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

SPECIAL MEETING

AGENDA

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

June 15, 2021

10:00a.m.-12:00p.m.

10:00 a.m.	I.	Call to Order	Janet Poutr�, Chair
10:01 a.m.	II.	Non-agenda Public Comment	
10:05 a.m.	III.	Chair's Reports	Janet Poutr�, Chair
		A. Commission Business	
		B. Other Reports	
10:15 a.m.	IV.	Equity Toolkit Short Review	Leah Goodwin, President & CEO, Leah Goodwin Creations
10:30 a.m.	V.	Creating a Racial Equity Statement	Leah Goodwin, President & CEO, Leah Goodwin Creations
11:50 a.m.	VI.	Staff Reports	Jonathon Glus, Executive Director
12:00 p.m.	VII.	Adjourn	Janet Poutr�, 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.



Tools for Building **EQUITY-FOCUSED** Cultural System

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Introduction

The journey toward achieving racial equity in the management and distribution of public resources designated to support the arts and cultural expression can sometimes feel like an overwhelming task. For many public sector staff at local or state arts councils, the pressure to meet the demands of accountability systems while remaining nimble enough to respond to the changing needs of the field can be daunting. But that is the work we sign up for when we take on the role of being an arts administrator within government agencies.

For many of us, we come to this work with varying academic degrees and experiences in the visual, performing and media arts. As public funding for the arts has increased, we have primarily focused our work as arts administrators on grant seekers - arts and cultural institutions, artists and organizations presenting cultural services. These service providers are indeed an important constituency but not the only one. Our other constituency is the public at large. As we prioritize equity, inclusion and diversity in doing this work, we find ourselves considering new ways to address these issues, which includes systemic and structural bias. As Grantmakers in the Arts frames the issue, "Recommended solutions of the past, which have focused on diversity rather than structural inequities, have not resulted in nationwide successful outcomes in equitable inclusion and/or grantmaking to ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab and Native American) artists and audiences."

This work will be difficult at times. It requires vulnerability and willingness to acknowledge the painful truth of racial discrimination and bias that has stifled the growth of culturally specific organizations and individual artists. It will require recognizing discrimination that grows from White culture being accepted as the majority and "approved" culture.

DE&I initiatives are not static, and an ongoing review of programs and a response to changing needs are necessary. These efforts will also require a personal reckoning. It is incumbent upon public sector employees, to reflect on attitudes, notions, perceptions and ideas about people with different abilities, across age groups and cultural and social groups to acknowledge when those biases appear.

This tool kit serves to frame the thinking about the way forward into more equitable and sustainable cultural experiences. It will challenge you to rethink the concepts of policy vs practice; engagement vs outreach; and indeed, about investment and the redistribution of public funding. The tools, resources and challenges contained in this document should stimulate a dialogue among staff, appointed commission members and most importantly help respectfully engage the public in ways that are equitable and meaningful.

Margie Johnson Reese



SECTION 1

Equity

REAL EQUALITY ISN'T
POSSIBLE, IF WE DON'T
CELEBRATE OUR DIFFERENCES.

FOR PEOPLE,
FOR PROFIT

GO
GIRL



The Concept of Equity

Issues of equity (and inequality) are not new in the arts and cultural sector. In recent years, Civic leaders, Commissions and Boards have expressed a renewed commitment to equity and inclusion and are working to establish strategies to actualize their aspirations. Generally, the conversations and policy language around achieving racial equity evokes fear from white-led institutions who are concerned with the idea of “redistribution grant funds”. In truth, open and honest discussions about equity and in particular racial equity, is critical in order to forge a meaningful public policy agenda for the arts and cultural sector. Redistribution is often viewed as “radical disruption” by those groups who have benefited from funding systems that have favored traditional arts organizations. Making room for inclusion is just not an easy transition to make, but must be fully explored if building equitable funding systems is the goal.

Equity is concerned with equality, fairness and social justice. Equity is based on the application of two basic principles: relevance and consistency. Relevance is about how we categorize people/cultural groups and organizations. It's about acknowledging the importance of cultural expression, which has a bearing on the way people are treated and in turn how decisions are made. Socio-cultural values, belief systems and cultural norms underpin the idea of relevance and result in inequalities based on identities such as race, religion, gender, ethnicity, and economic status.

Consistency is connected to the application of a shared set of expectations and norms (policies) whereby citizens hold local governments responsible for acting fairly in the distribution of public resources. The idea of peer review panels is only one way local arts agencies have responded to consistency. The cultural sector is finding however that 1) panels without representation of the applicant favors naturally the mainstream and have little tolerance for innovation or understanding the social order of immigrant or culturally specific applicants; and 2) that the “criteria” used by panels feature long-standing structures with measures that often discount non-traditional methods of producing cultural activity. This lack of acknowledgement has created white-centered practices and supported the development of arts institutions who feel entitled to receive public funding with little adherence to accountability for inclusion.



Racial Equity

Engaging in conversations about race evokes different levels of discomfort for white people vs people of color. Individuals who identify as white don't have to consider their racial identity as they navigate established funding systems. On the other hand, people of color must always consider ways to successfully enter those same systems where their racial identities are intentionally or unintentionally met with attitudes grounded in bias, hostility, or internalized dominance.

As we consider the journey toward achieving racial equity in the field of arts administration, it's important to consider our personal understanding of individual racism vs institutional racism; or structural racism. Arts administrators are required to make lots of choices on behalf of the public, who are often the underwriters of publicly funded arts programming. Those choices require constant check-in's on personal assumptions and a commitment to awareness building and reflection.

This toolkit is developed as a guide to establish and measure your progress toward building a more equitable cultural system by analyzing policies, considering multiple perspectives and engaging diverse voices in the process.

How do we talk about this work?

Grant Makers in the Arts provides wise definitions for some basic relevant terms that are used in inclusion, equity and diversity conversations:

Equity:

The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Diversity:

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

Inclusion:

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

Racial Equity:

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

Philanthropic Racial Equity:

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

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

Resources:

Grantmakers in the Arts - Statement of Purpose and Recommendations for Action

<https://www.giarts.org/racial-equity-arts-funding-statement-purpose>

Action Step 1:

How do you understand and use these words within the context of equity? Talk with your colleagues about each of these terms and develop a shared understanding of how this language is used in your agency:

Accessibility

Preparedness

Accountability

Privilege

Authentic

Process

Bias/Confirmation Bias

Professional

Bystander

Racism

Code switching

Relevance

Contract

Responsibility

Criteria

Responsive

Cultural identity

Risk

Gatekeeper

Sustainability

Inclusion

Synergy

Leadership

Tradition

Legislation

Minority

Action Step 2.

Take a look at the resource below adapted from Sue Derald Wing. Share it with your staff, board and commission and schedule a series of conversations to discuss your thoughts and impulses. Pledge to be clear, pledge to listen to each other, pledge to be intentional about your behavior.

[*Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation, Wiley & Sons, 2010.*](#)

Tool: Recognizing Microaggressions and the Messages They Send

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership (*from Diversity in the Classroom, UCLA Diversity & Faculty Development, 2014*). **The first step in addressing microaggressions is to recognize when a microaggression has occurred and what message it may be sending. The context of the relationship and situation is critical.** Below are common themes to which microaggressions attach.

THEMES	MICROAGGRESSION EXAMPLES	MESSAGE
Alien in One's Own Land When Asian Americans, Latino Americans and others who look different or are named differently from the dominant culture are assumed to be foreign-born	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Where are you from or where were you born?" • "You speak English very well." • "What are you? You're so interesting looking!" • A person asking an Asian American or Latino American to teach them words in their native language. • Continuing to mispronounce the names of students after students have corrected the person time and time again. Not willing to listen closely and learn the pronunciation of a non-English based name. 	You are not a true American. You are a perpetual foreigner in your own country. Your ethnic/racial identity makes you exotic.
Ascription of Intelligence Assigning intelligence to a person of color or a woman based on his/her race/gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You are a credit to your race." • "Wow! How did you become so good in math?" • To an Asian person, "You must be good in math, can you help me with this problem?" • To a woman of color: "I would have never guessed that you were a scientist." 	People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. All Asians are intelligent and good in math/science. It is unusual for a woman to have strong mathematical skills.
Color Blindness Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to or need to acknowledge race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "When I look at you, I don't see color." • "There is only one race, the human race." • "America is a melting pot." • "I don't believe in race." • Denying the experiences of students by questioning the credibility /validity of their stories. 	Assimilate to the dominant culture. Denying the significance of a person of color's racial/ethnic experience and history. Denying the individual as a racial/cultural being.
Criminality/Assumption of Criminal Status A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant based on his/her race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A White man or woman clutches his/her purse or checks wallet as a Black or Latino person approaches. • A store owner following a customer of color around the store. • Someone crosses to the other side of the street to avoid a person of color. • While walking through the halls of the Chemistry building, a professor approaches a post-doctoral student of color to ask if she/he is lost, making the assumption that the person is trying to break into one of the labs. 	You are a criminal. You are going to steal/you are poor, you do not belong. You are dangerous.
Denial of Individual Racism/Sexism/Heterosexism A statement made when bias is denied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'm not racist. I have several Black friends." • "As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority." • To a person of color: "Are you sure you were being followed in the store? I can't believe it." 	I could never be racist because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can't be a racist. I'm like you. Denying the personal experience of individuals who experience bias.

THEMES	MICROAGGRESSION EXAMPLES	MESSAGE
Myth of Meritocracy Statements which assert that race or gender does not play a role in life successes, for example in issues like faculty demographics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I believe the most qualified person should get the job.” “Of course he’ll get tenure, even though he hasn’t published much—he’s Black!” “Men and women have equal opportunities for achievement.” “Gender plays no part in who we hire.” “America is the land of opportunity.” “Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough.” “Affirmative action is racist.” 	People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race. The playing field is even so if women cannot make it, the problem is with them. People of color are lazy and/or incompetent and need to work harder.
Pathologizing Cultural Values/Communication Styles The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/White culture are ideal/“normal”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To an Asian, Latino or Native American: “Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal.” “Speak up more.” Asking a Black person: “Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down.” “Why are you always angry?” anytime race is brought up in the classroom discussion. Dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work/school setting. 	Assimilate to dominant culture. Leave your cultural baggage outside. There is no room for difference.
Second-Class Citizen Occurs when a target group member receives differential treatment from the power group; for example, being given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty of color mistaken for a service worker. Not wanting to sit by someone because of his/her color. Female doctor mistaken for a nurse. Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer. Saying “You people...” An advisor assigns a Black post-doctoral student to escort a visiting scientist of the same race even though there are other non-Black scientists in this person’s specific area of research. An advisor sends an email to another work colleague describing another individual as a “good Black scientist.” Raising your voice or speaking slowly when addressing a blind student. In class, an instructor tends to call on male students more frequently than female ones. 	People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn’t possibly occupy high status positions. Women occupy nurturing positions. Whites are more valued customers than people of color. You don’t belong. You are a lesser being. A person with a disability is defined as lesser in all aspects of physical and mental functioning. The contributions of female students are less worthy than the contributions of male students.
Sexist/Heterosexist Language Terms that exclude or degrade women and LGBT persons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of the pronoun “he” to refer to all people. Being constantly reminded by a coworker that “we are only women.” Being forced to choose Male or Female when completing basic forms. Two options for relationship status: married or single. A heterosexual man who often hangs out with his female friends more than his male friends is labeled as gay. 	Male experience is universal. Female experience is invisible. LGBT categories are not recognized. LGBT partnerships are invisible. Men who do not fit male stereotypes are inferior.
Traditional Gender Role Prejudicing and Stereotyping Occurs when expectations of traditional roles or stereotypes are conveyed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a female student asks a male professor for extra help on an engineering assignment, he asks “What do you need to work on this for anyway?” “You’re a girl, you don’t have to be good at math.” A person asks a woman her age and, upon hearing she is 31, looks quickly at her ring finger. An advisor asks a female student if she is planning on having children while in postdoctoral training. Shows surprise when a feminine woman turns out to be a lesbian. Labeling an assertive female committee chair/dean as a “b____,” while describing a male counterpart as a “forceful leader.” 	Women are less capable in math and science. Women should be married during child-bearing ages because that is their primary purpose. Women are out of line when they are aggressive.

Resources

National Museum of African American History

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race>

Grantmakers in the arts

<https://www.giarts.org/racial-equity-arts-funding-statement-purpose>

The Washington Post: Resources to understand America's long history of injustice and inequality

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/06/08/understanding-racism-inequality-america/?arc404=true>

Grantmaking With a Racial Equity Lens

<https://grantcraft.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/equity.pdf>



SECTION 2

Know Your Constituents



Culture is epistemological. It fundamentally informs the how, what, and why of what we know and believe as humans.

One key component in accomplishing an equitable cultural system is having the open and honest ability to name the constituents and stakeholders impacted by this system. The word “minority” for example is non-descriptive language. Name the constituent group or community you are actually referencing. It’s really an honor to have one’s cultural identity recognized.

Take this opportunity to reflect on and expand your current knowledge of your constituents. Some of this information will be generated internally and some may require external research. It is important to remember that the public is the primary constituent group – the arts organizations and artists are part of that group – but not the only part! Your constituents are all the people in your service area—the multiple-layered communities whose interest, participation, and advocacy make important contributions to the sustainability of your agency. The journey toward building equitable cultural systems involves moving beyond transactions, deadlines and final reports. Equity is based on understanding and relationships.

It is critical engage with residents to learn what they care about, what moves them, what aspects of their cultural expression they seek to preserve and present, how they prefer to be communicated with, and what your value to them is—or could be.

Action Step 1:

To generate a more complete picture of your current constituents, make sure you know answers to the following questions:

- Who lives here now? Historically, who previously occupied the space that we now claim as your own?
- What are the demographics of our service area and what trends are projected for the next 5 to 10 years?
- How are we accessing this information? Is it capturing the full picture of your “public”?
- What resources are we consulting, or tools have we developed to document who our constituents are?
- What are the economic trends in our service area? What jobs are predicted to be created and filled in the next 5 to 10 years?

Action Step 2:

Who do we currently service?

Now that you have a clearer picture of who your constituents are, who is benefiting the most from your services? Complete this chart to create a sharable visual of how public dollars for the arts have been distributed over the past three years. Talk with your colleagues about your level of satisfaction with this picture.

Historically White Led Organizations

	2017	2018	2019
Number of Operating Grants Awarded			
Number of Program Grants Awarded			
Management Assistance Opportunities			
Public Art Commissions			
Total Dollars Awarded			

BIPOC (Program, Community Based Orgs)

	2017	2018	2019
Number of Operating Grants Awarded			
Number of Program Grants Awarded			
Management Assistance Opportunities			
Public Art Commissions			
Total Dollars Awarded			

Individual Artists of Color

	2017	2018	2019
Number of Operating Grants Awarded			
Number of Program Grants Awarded			
Management Assistance Opportunities			
Public Art Commissions			
Total Dollars Awarded			

Individual Artists (White)

	2017	2018	2019
Number of Operating Grants Awarded			
Number of Program Grants Awarded			
Management Assistance Opportunities			
Public Art Commissions			
Total Dollars Awarded			

Fiscal Sponsorship

	2017	2018	2019
Number of Operating Grants Awarded			
Number of Program Grants Awarded			
Management Assistance Opportunities			
Public Art Commissions			
Total Dollars Awarded			

How many international artists are being contracted?

What does this overview tell us about our spending priorities, whether intentional or not?

How does spending reflect our constituents?

Action Step 3:

What stories do these funding trends tell about the cultural system? How do we want to shift the trends we see from this chart? Use this data to inform strategic directions for achieving racial equity? (Use this opportunity to engage the language and terms presented in Section 1.)

Resources:

Census/Demographic data

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045219>

NCES (National Center for Education Statistics)

<https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Home>

The Browning of America

<https://www.milkenreview.org/articles/charticle-3>

Minority Women Are Winning the Jobs Race in a Record Economic Expansion

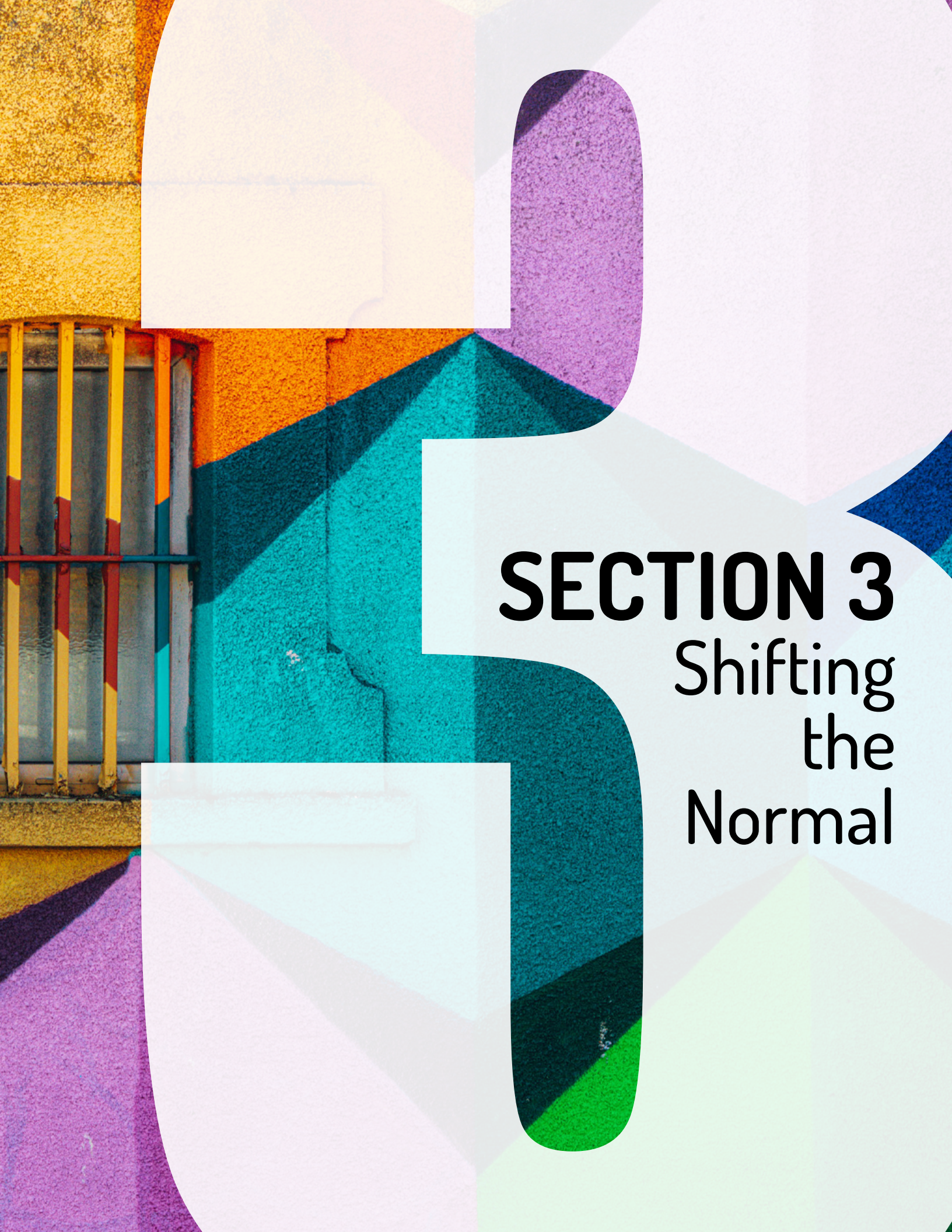
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/01/business/economy/minority-women-hispanics-jobs.html>

Resistance and resilience

<https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/nea-history-1965-2008.pdf>

Diversity and Equity in New York City's Cultural Workforce

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/diversity/index.page>

The background is a complex collage. On the left, a window with yellow and red vertical bars is visible. The rest of the image is filled with large, overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various colors: yellow, orange, purple, teal, blue, green, and pink. The shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth and movement.

SECTION 3

Shifting
the
Normal

Does separate mean equal?

The field of Arts Administration is actively looking for ways to respond to the equity conversation. This instinct could benefit from considering the civil rights and educational leaders who fought to make equal educational opportunity a reality for Black students in the United States in the early 1950's. Their efforts helped to dismantle American systems of allocating resources according to assigned or assumed "racial" classifications. The 1954 Supreme Court concluded that the doctrine of "separate but equal", had no place in public education.

Creating separate funding categories designated for artists and organizations of color may offer immediate and short-term access to funding opportunities, however those initiatives do not fully address structural inequality.

Long term equity strategies may mean dismantling systems that "favor" white-led institutions and the inherent entitlement that those organizations have come expect. Offering short term "community grants", where organizations of color compete against each other for a fraction of the total pool of dollars does not solve the problem of equity. White-led organizations have benefited from consistent investment by public and private sector donors and still fail to serve a broad and diverse audience.

Equity means leveling the playing field by redesigning grant making programs that allow organizations of color to compete for funding in the most resourced grant categories. These are categories that provide staffing, facility, marketing, and programming dollars to support year-round operations.

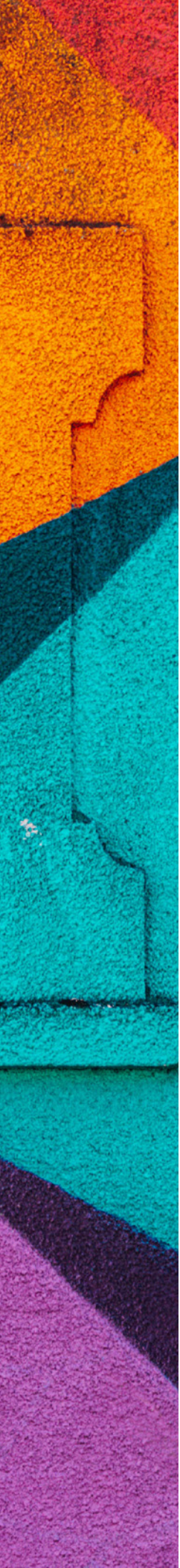
Shifting the paradigm

This work can be accomplished incrementally, iteratively working through problematic components that have accumulated to form systems that favor certain populations. Before solutions become clear, we need to take an honest look in the mirror to assess each of our individual and organizational contributions to the current flawed system, an audit of routine practices, language used in communicating goals and processes, and organizational gatekeeping practices that uphold the current paradigm. One bite at a time we can develop and instill the conditions that systematically foster equity, a new normal, a new paradigm, where systems are recalibrated to not serve anyone, but everyone.

A paradigm is a standard, perspective, or set of ideas; a way of looking at something. A paradigm shift is when there is a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions about those previously held standards. It creates a new reality that becomes the new normal.

Thomas Khun argued that every breakthrough is first a break with tradition, a break from the usual way of seeing and perceiving things. You view things in a new and different way. A paradigm shift means that suddenly everything takes on a new different interpretation.

A paradigm example: "In the Middle Ages, the Western world viewed bloodletting as one of the best means of healing the sick. Because physicians believed that illnesses existed in "bad blood", they systematically bled people to rid them of illness. If the patient's condition didn't improve, the logic of bloodletting simply dictated that they should do more - they just had to do it better this time. This way of thinking persisted even into the early twentieth century. Thankfully, empirical science lead to the germ theory. A new revolutionary paradigm shifted their thinking. The age of bloodletting was forever gone, and a new, life-saving paradigm of science replaced the old paradigm". - Stephen R Covey



Did you know George Washington died while going through a bloodletting treatment where nearly 40% of his blood was drained in efforts to treat his throat infection? We found a better way to treat illness, and it quickly changed the paradigm to the new normal.

Many of these issues around equity and inclusion seem to feel like they refuse to go away. Even after years of doing things to try to address them, they seem to always return, perhaps in another form. Stubborn or recurrent problems have likely never been addressed at their root. Previous attempts to fix the issue may have seemed fitting, but they often solve only the surface issues and waste resources that could otherwise be used to tackle the real cause.

Shifting the paradigm means finding a “new way” that is so obviously superior that it needs to supersede a previous way of doing things. It becomes “the way” and shifts the paradigm into a new way of doing things, but how do we make that leap?

One great way to make fundamental change is to look at problems that persist and dig deeper to identify a new approach to solving it by working to identify its root cause. The “5 Whys” is a great tool to help you identify how to better address problems that seem hard to tackle. Sakichi Toyoda, the Japanese industrialist, inventor, and founder of Toyota Industries, developed the 5 Whys technique and the company still uses it to this day. Toyota’s “go and see” philosophy is based on relying on honest observation and questioning, rather than assumptions. The 5 Whys technique is most effective when the answers come from a group of people who have hands-on experience of the process or problem in question, making it an effective strategy for internal identification and reflection on solving repeating problems.

The method is remarkably simple: when a problem occurs, drill down to its root cause by asking “Why?” until a strategy becomes apparent to prevent the issue from recurring. It can come in less or more than 5 whys, but keep repeating until a root cause begins to reveal itself. The 5 Whys is a tool for cutting quickly through the outward symptoms of a problem to reveal its underlying causes, so that you can deal with it once and for all, thus shifting the paradigm.

How to Use the 5 Whys

1. Put our heads together

Identify a problem to workshop and gather a team people who are familiar with the specifics of the problem, and with the process that you're trying to fix.

2. Write it down, say it like you mean it

As a team, find a succinct wording for your problem and write it in a place visible to the entire team. It is important that the team simplify the issue to a succinct and specific phrasing for a singular problem. Complex problems are often a convergence of issues, using the 5 Whys you can work through one at a time, and you may find breaking it out illuminates issues you wouldn't have identified focusing on the whole.

3. Ask your first "Why?"

Ask your team the first "why", why is this problem is occurring? Challenge everyone to state answers grounded in fact, any answer must be based on things that have actually happened, no guesses. Always double check that statements aren't steeped in assumption. Work together with your team to establish at least one obvious reason why, or several plausible ones. Write these down as simple, succinct, phrases. Choose one as a group to focus on, and you can go back and work through the others as well.

4. "Why, Why, Why"

For each the chosen answer from the previous step, continue to dig deeper, asking "why" and recording responses in succession. Each time, frame the question in response to the answer you've just recorded. As you work through your questions, you may find that someone has failed to take a necessary action. The point of this exercise is not to assign blame, but just to ask why that happened. This can help identify operational issues or areas where processes need to be improved.

5. Look for root cause

Your team will know it has found the root cause once asking "why" produces no more useful responses and strategy will become more evident than another "why". If your initial process revealed other areas of inquiry, you can always go back and run the exercise again. Resist the urge to feel this analysis is not an effective use of time. The time invested in dissecting issues can have significant benefits, allowing you to get in front of problems down the line you now have a better understanding of. Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

6. Try something out, measure it

Once you've identified a suspected root cause, work with the team to devise a strategy aimed specifically at preventing the identified problem from recurring and give it a try! Track how effectively your solution eliminates or minimizes the target problem. Finding the problem doesn't mean any solution will do, but the ability to focus on a specific problem will help you more quickly iterate as you work to best address the issue. Or, if on your tracking outcomes you begin to suspect you are not addressing the root problem after-all, simple repeat the 5 Whys process.

Here's an example of what this can look like in action

Problem

Our holiday program is open to everyone in the community, but the makeup of our audience never reflects our community's diversity. We want to keep our holiday program tradition alive but provide an experience that will attract an audience representative of our entire community. Why have we struggled to attract a diverse audience to our holiday program?

1

Why?

Though invited to attend, many community members do not know about the program and/or feel they are the target audience and/or do not feel they know the rules of participation. In short, there is no genuine connection between them and the program.

2

Why?

Because the invitations do not reach their communities and/or don't feel it is for them. The artist, art forms, and stories told are consistently representative of a different culture and/or demographic.

3

Why?

The show is always well attended and celebrated, so the presentation of the annual holiday festival has continued in its current state in the spirit of popular tradition.

4

Why?

The traditions of this annual program have brought about co-dependent, unwritten, partnerships where select magnet schools and academies have program preparation built into annual curricula, and have traditionally provided a disproportionate percentage of talent to cast the show.

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Why?

With opportunities for the public to audition we need to ensure a level of quality at the caliber required to appease the patrons who have supported this event year in and year out.

Solution: Fundamentally alter the mission of the program to celebrate the assets, cultures, and talents across the city while maintaining program components to continue the spirit of tradition. Distribute auditions and roles across the city to ensure the cast reflects the community at large. Highlight other cultures and art forms within the traditional program, not fundamentally changing it, but shining a light on the diverse cultures of the community.

Action Steps:

Choose a few of these topic areas and plan group discussions with staff, volunteers, constituents and Commission and Board members:

Changing the lens – the old rules/tools don't apply – what results might we expect if we examine guidelines, reporting requirements toward opening greater access to our resources?

Power dynamic – what does power look like to our constituent groups who are the least successful in competing for public funding to support cultural expression? How might we acknowledge, identify, and move toward a shift in power?

The new normal – what do we want normal to look like for the cultural sector in our service area? Who belongs? Are we prepared to propose systems that lead to redistribution of available funding and resources? Is our Commission ready to advocate for change?

Resources:

Becoming Anti-Racist:

https://chicagobeyond.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Toolkit_-Becoming-Anti-Racist-CB.pdf

<https://www.californiansforthearts.org/anti-racism-resources>

Structural Racism

<https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/structural-racism-definition/>



SECTION 4

Cultural Sustainability

SECTION 4: Cultural Sustainability

Sustainability is about creating programming that can endure over time and that nourishes and supports the capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to engage in activities that have meaning for them. Applying the principle of sustainability in relation to communities may entail sustaining a longer-term commitment to the community through on-going and evolving relationships, funding, programming or projects.

Equity and inclusion are the appropriate lens for achieving cultural sustainability – preserving the true and authentic heritage of a community and honoring stories of new residents. Equality implies that everyone should be treated the same way and assumes that therefore they will have equal opportunities; however, this concept does not recognize existing and historical structures in social, political, and environmental contexts that reinforce unequal status based on difference. These structures have privileged and continue to privilege certain groups and oppress others. Sameness does not equal fairness and sameness is certainly a descriptor for the thriving cultural sector that cities aspire to present to the visiting public. Inclusion means ensuring that the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human difference is honored with judgement.

Sustainability focuses on imagining just and equitable long-term conditions. This feature is informed by the knowledge of backlash and retrenchment—or backsliding—that often comes after preliminary shifts in narrative and culture. Sustaining communities is central to long term change and it is most certainly an on-going challenge. Sustainability is an equity principle because it requires a holistic perspective on arts and communities. A holistic approach takes into consideration the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of the people, communities, and organizations involved in arts processes all around the city. Rather than seeing a particular initiative as an isolated endeavor, it should be considered in relation to the impact it will have over time. How does the project contribute to the well-being of the community? What social, cultural, economic or environmental benefit will the community achieve?

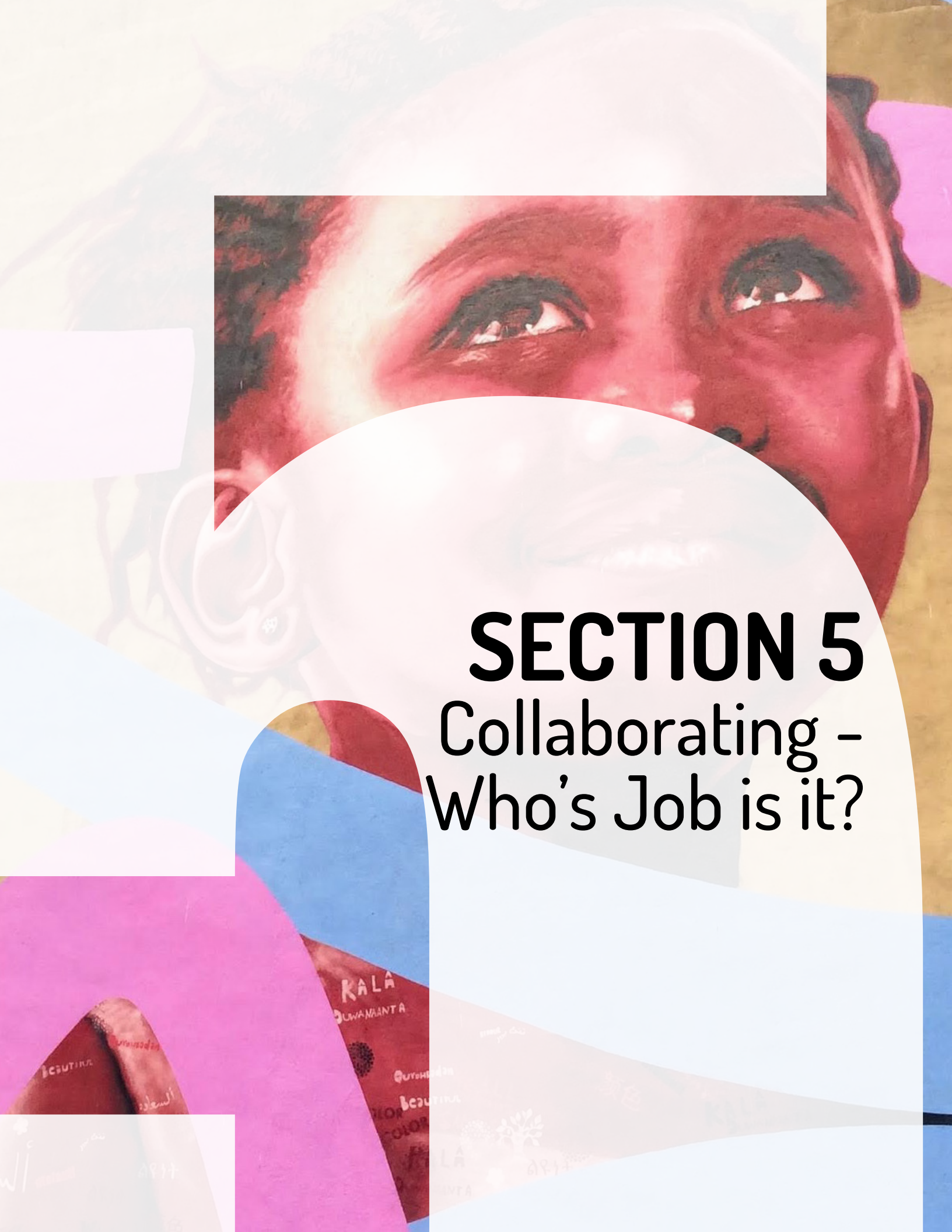
Resources:

Equity in grantmaking:

<https://www.philanthropy.com/article/nonprofits-led-by-people-of-color-win-less-grant-money-with-more-strings-study/>

Racism in Grantmaking

<https://www.giarts.org/racial-equity-arts-funding-statement-purpose>



SECTION 5

Collaborating - Who's Job is it?



"The bystander effect occurs when the presence of others discourages an individual from intervening in an emergency situation... The greater the number of bystanders, the less likely it is for any one of them to provide help to a person in distress." (Psychology Today, nd.)

Why are so many sectors and institutions now having the same conversation? We have all been witnessing the same imbalances and inequities for some time but for some reason, it appears that there is only now a collective call to action to respond. What happened? Why did everyone stand by witnessing the same occurrences but saying nothing? Why is so much of our data similar across the board? Why are the same communities being left out from city to city and we are just now collectively talking about it?

According to Doctor of Psychology Melissa Burkley's article in Psychology Today, there are two phenomena that occur to induce this bystander effect. The first is "Pluralistic Ignorance." This occurs when we collectively see the same thing happening and privately believe one thing, however, our bias prompts us to incorrectly assume that all others believe the opposite.

When we see that our local demographics do not reflect our current audience or we see that our rooms are too homogenous, we believe this to be problematic but assume our counterparts must think something different. Thus, we allow pluralistic ignorance to make us bystanders in addressing these situations. We do not speak up in these rooms to call out what we all see happening in front of us. We assume that our instincts must be wrong and therefore default to silence, ultimately relenting to the second phenomena of "Diffusion of Responsibility."

According to this same article, "The more bystanders there are, the less responsible we feel." We feel less responsible if everyone is seeing the same thing as us and not taking action. It is this psychological occurrence that moves us to inaction to change much of the imbalances we see around us. Because, everyone is seeing the same thing, so if no one else moves, it must either not be as bad I believe it to be or we don't feel personally responsible enough to move.

There must be a conscious acknowledgment of the biases that paralyze us, and a subsequent removal of assumptions that someone will do the work or that inaction is an option. The work is to answer the call to action happening in front of us.

Take Action:

To start this work, use the following the prompts to reflect on how you can move from a bias bystander to a person or institution poised to promote the necessary action to build an equitable cultural system:

Consensus building

Reflect on what methods you have used in the past to build consensus among your constituents.

- What has worked?
- What has been counterproductive?
- What biases have been at work impeding productivity?

New Ways of Working

In what new ways can you seek the voices of all of your constituents to build a healthy consensus of solutions that work for your entire constituency?

Use this space to brainstorm and document possible new methods of building a consensus

Shared Responsibility Model

With a healthy consensus, brainstorm new methods of generating a system of shared responsibility. The goal of this model is to not only promote collaboration across your constituency base but to create a space of inclusiveness for all voices to determine the best course of action for the collective good.

“Productivity” - The New Meaning

This is now an invitation to re-evaluate your definition of productivity. Think about how your priorities must shift to determine this new meaning. Use this space to set new priorities for building an equitable system and document how these priorities are impacting your definition of “productivity.”

Personal reflection

What do you feel is your personal charge and responsibility in moving the work of equity forward?

What actions are you planning to take?

Someone is present but does not take part in the action in front of them. In this context we can think of bystanders as those who have consciously been witness to the social inequities plaguing cultural systems but have taken no action to address and ultimately correct them.

Consensus

Seeking wide-spread agreement for the good of all voices represented in a space. In the context of this work, a consensus should entail having the representation of constituent voices present in the conversation of building a healthy and equitable cultural system.

Bias

50 Cognitive Biases - Infographic

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/50-cognitive-biases-in-the-modern-world/>

"Why Do Less People Help When There is a Crowd?" -

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-social-thinker/200911/why-do-we-help-less-when-there-is-crowd>



Reflection questions to consider as a staff team:

1. Have we developed a set of guiding principles to monitor our commitment to equity?
2. Are these guiding principles made clear to our grantees and contractors?
3. How do we engage with elected officials and keep them apprised of our journey toward equity?
4. Do our grant panelists understand our agency's commitment to diversity, diversity and access?
5. Do we regularly discuss our diversity and equity goals with our staff and commission members?
6. Are we as a staff team open to new perspectives?
7. Do we, on an annual basis, review our grant guidelines?
8. Are we satisfied with our recruitment processes to guarantee that our staff, panel members and advisors reflect our constituents?
9. Do we regularly ask ourselves "whose voice is missing", "who is not being served"?
10. The cultural sector and the educational sector are closely connected. How are we tracking and responding to educational trends?