



Innovation and Impact: When Arts Organizations Take Risks

Concluding Evaluation of the Exploring
Engagement Fund, 2012-2018



Foreword

From 2012 to 2018, more than 100 California arts nonprofits embarked on an even greater number of projects to engage new and diverse participants as part of the Exploring Engagement Fund.

The James Irvine Foundation provided the funding, and our goal was to promote arts engagement for all Californians, with the belief that arts provide a distinct, powerful, and public benefit that helps create a vibrant, inclusive, and compassionate society. We provided risk capital to nonprofit arts organizations to engage populations typically underrepresented as participants in the traditional arts, specifically people of color and low-income residents.

Evaluation of 119 projects over the course of this seven-year initiative confirms the hypothesis that arts nonprofits can be intentional and successful in engaging new and diverse participants.

Since creating this fund, Irvine has transitioned from investments in arts engagement (and the arts in general). The Foundation is now focused on supporting efforts that give all low-income workers in California the power to advance economically. As our journey to explore and support arts engagement nears its end, we are pleased to share what we've learned along the way.

We hope that the insights, best practices, and considerations that emerged from the Exploring Engagement Fund may inspire and guide nonprofits, funders, and consultants who value engagement, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We thank the many leaders who embraced new thinking and practices through the Exploring Engagement Fund, as well as Harder+Company Community Research and strategy consultant Diane Espaldon for conducting the evaluation, providing technical assistance, and reporting on this significant body of work.



Leslie Payne
Senior Program Officer
The James Irvine Foundation

ARTS ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

This concluding evaluation of the Exploring Engagement Fund affirms and expands upon lessons that emerged during the course of the initiative, underscoring several best practices for arts organizations pursuing arts engagement:

Invest Time



True engagement with new and diverse populations takes time, patience, and commitment.

Build Trust



Getting to know a community and building trust are vital to planning and implementing arts engagement.

Partner Well



Community partners are critical to accessing new and diverse participants.

Relate, Don't Sell



Engaging new and diverse participants requires different marketing and outreach.

Go to New Places



Non-arts venues can help reach new and diverse participants, and often bring unique challenges.

Try New Approaches



New methods and styles can reach participants who perceive art as “not for me.”

Align Your Team



Engagement calls for diverse capabilities, training, and practices for artists and staff.

EXPLORING ENGAGEMENT FUND RESOURCES

Find additional insights, tools, and practical tips for effective arts engagement at Irvine.org/EEF.



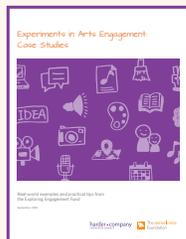
Executive Summary: Innovation and Impact

Key Takeaways from the Concluding Evaluation of the Exploring Engagement Fund, 2012–2018



Exploring Engagement Fund Grantee-Project Database

Quick Facts About All Participating Arts Nonprofits and their Projects, 2012–2016



Experiments in Arts Engagement: Case Studies

Real World Examples and Practical Tips from the Exploring Engagement Fund, 2016



Capturing Information on Arts Participants: Exploring Engagement Fund Toolkit

A Framework for Evaluation Planning and Implementation, 2015

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Introduction

Through the Exploring Engagement Fund, The James Irvine Foundation provided risk capital for California arts organizations with innovative ideas and a readiness to take bold steps to engage new and diverse populations.

The Exploring Engagement Fund was established with the belief that arts provide a distinct, powerful public benefit that helps create a vibrant, inclusive, and compassionate society. Indeed, many California arts organizations want their participants and artists to reflect the socioeconomic diversity of the state's population.

From 2012 to 2018, the Exploring Engagement Fund supported new approaches that these nonprofit arts organizations used to actively engage more diverse participants. Exploring Engagement Fund projects specifically focused on engaging people of color and low-income participants — two populations of particular interest to the Irvine Foundation because they are often underrepresented among typical nonprofit arts participants. Through project experiments, Irvine and its grantees saw and experienced important impacts while also learning valuable lessons about what it takes to engage diverse participants and the types of changes needed to do this work.

Irvine commissioned Harder+Company Community Research, in partnership with strategy consultant Diane Espaldon, to evaluate and report on the Exploring Engagement Fund throughout its duration, and to provide technical assistance to support grantee data gathering. This concluding report highlights the benefits experienced from the Exploring Engagement Fund projects, and builds on earlier initiative publications (see page 3). Together these resources provide insights and considerations for arts organizations and arts funders to reflect on as they begin or expand their work in arts engagement.

This report was informed by project data provided by grantees, interviews with grantees, and review of grant reports. In addition, the partners and project participants of some recent grantees were interviewed to learn more about the nature of partnerships and the benefit to those who participated in the arts programming.¹ Irvine and the consulting team greatly appreciate the willingness of these hundreds of individuals to share data and learning from their projects with other arts organizations across California and with the arts field overall. The consulting team also extends sincere thanks to members of the Irvine staff, past and present, who guided and supported this expansive, multiyear endeavor.

ABOUT THE EXPLORING ENGAGEMENT FUND GRANTEES

From 2012 to 2018, Irvine supported 113 nonprofit organizations in their pursuit of 119 Exploring Engagement Fund projects.² The total investment was \$20,763,000 with an average grant of \$175,000 and grant amounts ranging widely from \$10,000 to \$600,000 per project. Most grants were for a 24-month period. All organizations funded as part of this strategy were located in California, with most in Los Angeles (33 percent) and the San Francisco Bay Area (26 percent).³ Grantees had a range of annual organizational budget sizes, most having budgets less than \$1,000,000 (59 percent).⁴

1 Please see Appendix B of this report for more information about the evaluation methods and analysis approach, as well as Appendix A for evaluation lessons.

2 A total of 113 grantees were funded across six cohorts. Six grantees had multiple projects across different cohorts, thus received funding for two separate projects.

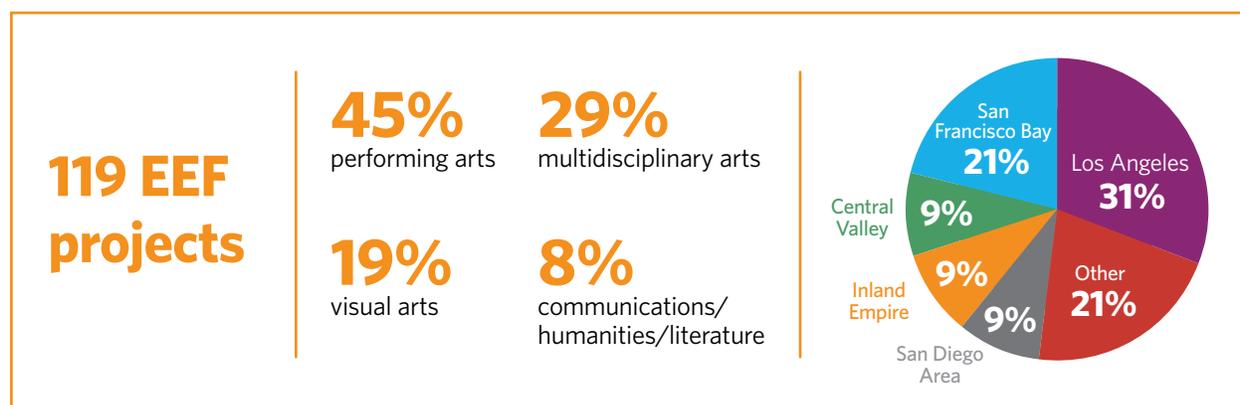
3 Geographic region is based on the location of the grantee's main office.

4 Other organizational budgets of the grantees included: Up to \$500,000 (33 percent), \$500,000–999,000 (26 percent), \$1 million–4.9 million (25 percent), and \$5 million or more (15 percent).

About the Engagement Projects

The Exploring Engagement Fund was intended to help organizations take greater risks than they normally would, with more ambitious and experimental projects. According to the grantees, it accomplished that goal. Many grantees shared that they would not have taken on these projects without the financial support from Irvine. Across the grantees, the main types of risk included pursuing a new strategy or approach, new event location or geography, new partnerships, and/or new participants.

Indeed, the 119 Exploring Engagement Fund projects featured a range of arts disciplines, event locations, and partnerships. Overall the projects were mainly focused on performing arts (45 percent), multidisciplinary arts (29 percent), and visual arts (19 percent).⁵ Projects took place primarily in Los Angeles (31 percent), the San Francisco Bay Area (21 percent), Central Valley (9 percent), Inland Empire (9 percent), and the San Diego Area (9 percent).⁶



Within those geographies, some events were held in spaces typically used by the grantees, such as their exhibit space, theater, or gallery. Other events took place in less-traditional spaces where grantees were not accustomed to engaging people, such as public parks, libraries, college campuses, city streets, or at a partner organization’s space. Partnership was a core component of most of the projects, whether simply for sharing a venue or integral to the planning and implementation of the project. Project partners ranged from other nonprofit arts organizations and city agencies to homeless shelters, low-income housing complexes, and youth service organizations.

Grantees said that their involvement enabled them to take risks, including pursuing a new strategy, engaging new participants and partners, and working in new locations.

⁵ The visual category includes visual arts. Performing arts includes music, dance, and theater. Communication/humanities/literature includes humanities, literature, media, and communications. Multidisciplinary includes at least two of the previous categories.

⁶ Other geographic areas where projects took place include: Central Coast (3 percent), Gold Country (4 percent), High Sierra and Desert (1 percent), Northern California (4 percent), Orange County (3 percent), and statewide (6 percent).

Each grantee sought to engage people of color and/or low-income groups using different project approaches. To better understand the project strategies pursued, we characterized each project based on its intent to “expose,” “educate,” or “create,” — or achieve some “hybrid” combination of these strategies.⁷ Below (Exhibit 1), we describe each strategy and highlight specific project examples for each. Across projects most grantees utilized the “create” (28 percent) and “hybrid” (31 percent) strategies.⁸

EXHIBIT 1: PROJECT STRATEGIES & EXAMPLES

 <p>EXPOSE projects engaged participants through one-time large public events and/or short-term pop-up activities.</p> <p>The Pasadena Symphony curated performances of small classical music ensembles in unexpected public venues and facilitated opportunities for dialogue between performers and audiences.</p> <p>LA Freewaves commissioned media artists to create short videos about physical and mental health issues and the neighborhoods of Los Angeles and then screened them on public buses.</p> <p>Central West Ballet presented participatory dance performances for and with community members in public spaces.</p>	 <p>EDUCATE projects conducted ongoing activities to build skills and creative expression among the same group of participants over a certain period of time.</p> <p>The Bowers Museum created interactive tours, lectures, and art classes to engage Latinx⁹ and Vietnamese low-income seniors in Orange County to promote their creativity and improve their quality of life.</p> <p>Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project created filmmaking workshops for low-income and racially/ethnically diverse LGBTQ people of color community members in the Inland Empire and the San Joaquin Valley.</p> <p>YoloArts provided a 10-week multidisciplinary art workshop series for homeless adults.</p>
 <p>CREATE projects raised up participants’ voices, stories, and perspectives. Some also involved participants in performance or presentation.</p> <p>South Coast Repertory created “Dialogue/Dialogos” to engage people from Santa Ana to create their own multidimensional theater experiment telling stories about their neighborhood and experiences.</p> <p>Spector Dance created a multidisciplinary project about gang violence that actively engaged at-risk young adults and first-time offenders in storytelling and incorporated their stories into a live performance.</p> <p>Outfest added “Fusion Lab” to its existing film festival and incorporated micro-cinema, workshops, as well as workstations to invite LGBT communities to create film/media arts about their own experiences.</p>	
   <p>HYBRID projects utilized a combination of the three project strategies.</p>	

7 The categorization of each project’s strategy was informed by knowledge of the project from technical assistance contact with the grantee and review of grantees’ proposals and reports. Categories used to classify grantee projects were created for an early internal report based on the activities of 52 of the grantees.

8 The somewhat less commonly used strategies were “expose” (26 percent) and “educate” (15 percent).

9 Unless a direct quote, we use the term “Latinx” throughout this publication as a gender-neutral term that refers to Latinos and Latinas.

Impact

OVERVIEW

To understand the impact of the Exploring Engagement Fund projects, we gathered information and perspectives from the grantees, project partners, and project participants. The Exploring Engagement Fund was intended to provide risk capital. It was not originally intended to build long-term capacity or change the focus of the grantee partners' programs or missions, or to have long-term impact on community members or project partners. However, each of these stakeholders reported effects that suggest that the experience had an impact beyond its original goals and timeline.

- **For community members** (project participants), the Exploring Engagement Fund projects provided a cost-free opportunity to learn something new and engage with art in a new way. Project events were often described as fun and a way to actively interact with other community and family members. Through this interaction, participants were able to express themselves creatively and tell their stories. Some projects also had a cultural component, which allowed participants to connect with, and learn more about, their own and other cultures.
- **For project partners**, the Exploring Engagement Fund projects helped them meet the needs of their constituents. The partnership also helped them expand their own practices and offerings.
- **For the grantees**, the Exploring Engagement Fund provided the opportunity to engage with community members and project partners in a new way. Throughout their grant period, grantees increased their understanding of and relationships with both of these groups. Grantees also were able to use lessons learned from their projects to inform future programming and sometimes the future of their organizations. Some grantees made small but meaningful changes to their approach as a result of this learning (i.e., changing their communications and outreach approach), while others reconsidered and then adjusted their organization's mission to better align with, and support, active community engagement.

Across all of these perspectives, it is clear that the Exploring Engagement Fund had an impact beyond the original intended goal of making the arts more accessible to all Californians. This section provides detailed information about each of these findings to fully illustrate the impact of the Exploring Engagement Fund.

ENGAGING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

From 2012 to 2018, the Exploring Engagement Fund's 119 projects engaged 959,755 people through 4,631 events. The number of events per project ranged from one to 293 events. The projects specifically focused on engaging people of color and low-income people, and the projects were successful in engaging these groups of people. Specifically, the majority of events, 61 percent, were attended primarily by people of color (meaning 71 to 100 percent of total event participants were people of color); while 37 percent were attended primarily by low-income participants.

BENEFITS TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS

People are accustomed to engaging with the arts in more conventional ways, such as watching a concert or going to a museum. Aside from the associated costs, these types of engagement typically lack hands-on, participatory aspects and programmed opportunities for deep personal connections with the arts and the community. Conventional arts engagement also typically expects community members to travel to an arts venue. In contrast, many Exploring Engagement Fund projects brought the arts to community members and provided a space for them to connect with the arts in a new meaningful way that prompted the development of new skills, creative expression, and deeper connections to the community.

Access to the arts

Art for everyone. Prior to the Exploring Engagement Fund project, some community members misunderstood, resisted, mistrusted, or lacked interest in engaging in arts activities. People not typically involved in the arts perceived the arts as “not for them.” Artistic approaches that were inviting, reflective of the participants and audiences (i.e., they could recognize themselves in the art or see how the art related to them personally), and designed to draw participants in more deeply helped to break down these barriers. For many, simply being in a space that allowed them to express themselves artistically was a positive experience that helped shape their perception of the arts. One participant explained, “I came to the first event to find out what it was about. I don’t normally participate in these types of activities, but now I try to come to them all because I find them interesting.” Another participant said, “This event was beneficial because now I know I can do art. I am a coder every day and I don’t do art, so I never thought I could do it, but now I know I can.” Exploring Engagement Fund events helped participants recognize that no matter how simple the artistic activity, art can be an outlet for everyone to experience therapeutic and enriching benefits.

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Accessible locations and no cost. The location of arts events and the cost to attend them are common barriers that many people face when engaging with art in a more conventional manner. Exploring Engagement Fund projects helped mitigate these barriers and provided accessible spaces for the community to interact with quality art in a meaningful way. One grantee explained, “We had a bunch of people come to all 16 events. We heard frequently that people maybe don’t have the funds to go to a classical music concert because it’s out of their price range. With [project name], they had the ability to hear this stuff for free in incredible beautiful places like this and that is really important.” With cost-free events in unique community settings often not typically used for arts events, participants were able to more easily attend and participate in activities. One participant mentioned, “I liked that the event was participatory and was accessible to anyone regardless of their race or age.”

Many projects used community spaces and neighborhood settings to bring the arts to community members. For example, one grantee recognized that it may be difficult for some to participate in events that take place during the afternoon because many adults are working during that time of day. To address this barrier, the grantee used a mobile approach to bring the art exhibit to different neighborhoods during the evening, after people had returned home from work. Similarly, another grantee brought its art exhibit to a college campus to allow students to interact with art as they were walking around the campus. This approach of bringing the arts to the community members was well received and very much appreciated by participants. One participant said, “I like that the music came to me. I am able to still do what I need, but having the music in the background is a nice bonus.”

School of Performing Arts and Cultural Education (SPACE)

For its “Teatro en Llantas” (Theater on Wheels), SPACE produced two days of free workshops, created a mobile stage on the back of a truck, and produced performances in multiple locations as part of its Exploring Engagement Fund project. The objective of Teatro en Llantas was to provide Latinx community members the opportunity to learn new artistic skills, share their stories and opinions, and then perform for the community of the Ukiah Valley.



Photo credit: SPACE

When participants were asked what they liked most about Teatro en Llantas, they highlighted how they enjoyed the ability to participate in something different and new. Most people said they had never participated in theater before Teatro en Llantas, let alone something as creative as a theater on wheels. Most people knew of the history of theater on wheels, and appreciated the historical connection to early immigrants and farmworkers.

People also shared how they appreciated the opportunity to tell real-life stories unique to the Latinx immigrant experience. Many people highlighted that the performance was moving and spoke to their own personal experiences when immigrating. One person shared that performing immigrant-related stories made her realize the value of her life story and her unique experiences.

People also appreciated how Teatro en Llantas provided the space to work as a group and bring communities together. Given Ukiah’s growing Latinx community and the current political climate, many people felt that these performances were relevant to a broad audience. One person shared that recent performances have reached individuals outside Ukiah’s Latinx community. “Not only did Latinos come, but non-Latin folks, too. They understood the message [of the performance] and it was well received.”

Learning and creative expression opportunities

Learning something new. In experiencing hands-on and interactive activities with Exploring Engagement Fund grantees, participants reported learning something new, developing a new skill set, and refining existing skills. For example, some events allowed participants to interact with musical instruments and learn the basics of playing them, while others allowed participants to create a piece of visual art. Participants valued these opportunities to learn something new, especially as most typical opportunities to learn something new in the arts take place in a formal setting and are often associated with high costs. For many participants, Exploring Engagement Fund projects were the first time they were exposed to a specific art form or technique, and the opportunity to learn something new was invaluable for many. One participant said, “I first heard this event was a real opportunity for me to learn music. Growing up I did not have opportunities like this. I started coming and started learning to read music, to play music. It was a great experience and it is something that stays with you forever.” Another participant said, “[I appreciated] the liveliness, the community, and hearing people talk at the events. The ability to learn new things was very beneficial for me.”

Personal stories and creative expression. Participants were often able to incorporate their own work, created during the Exploring Engagement Fund project, into a final performance, exhibition, written collection, or other type of final artistic product. This helped participants become involved with and connected to the full artistic process. It also helped people see art as something that can be “for them,” reflecting their own lives, experiences, and perceptions. And it was a means for community members to feel the pride and connectivity of sharing their creations with the larger community.

People felt proud and empowered when participating in activities that allowed them to create a piece of art that had a personal component. Some project activities had a strong emotional component and those emotions often surfaced as part of the creation process and when sharing a final artistic product. One participant explained, “It was a big event and there was a huge amount of energy. This creates a great sense of personal satisfaction. I felt very proud at the end.” Another mentioned, “I got choked up and started to cry, the simplicity of something so massive being so easy was moving.”

Exploring Engagement Fund events allowed participants to reminisce about their childhood and remember how passionate they were about the arts.

For many participants, Exploring Engagement Fund events also allowed them to reminisce about their childhood, or a previous time in their life, and remember how passionate they were about the arts. The experience sparked an interest for some to pick up an old hobby and engage in arts activities once again. One participant said, “It’s been a long time, 15 years maybe, since I drew. It feels good to be doing it again.” Another participant mentioned, “I enjoyed the activity it was very fun. I learned to embroider. In China, where I’m from, I did embroidery, but with different string. It was nice to compare how I embroidered in China to how I did it today. It made me think of my childhood.”

Joy and fun

Grantees and community participants alike described Exploring Engagement Fund events as joyous, fun, stress-free, and relaxing. Regardless of the artistic discipline, participants found the Exploring Engagement Fund events to be fun because they were opportunities to experience something new in an interactive way, often with peers. For events that occurred on a pre-determined schedule, such as monthly classes, people described looking forward to participating in the events well ahead of time. They mentioned how these events were a great opportunity to de-stress, socialize, and take a meaningful break from their regular routine. One participant said, “You get out of your routine and instead of thinking about cooking and cleaning, now you do your homework and you practice.” Some events were pop-up in nature, and people participating in these explained how it was a nice surprise to be going about their day and stumble upon an opportunity to, for example, appreciate a piece of visual art or enjoy a musical performance. Reflecting on an Exploring Engagement Fund event that took place in a library, one participant shared how she was having a bad day, but heard about the event from a colleague and decided to spend her lunch break in the library enjoying the event’s music before returning to work. She said when she left she felt uplifted and energized. Another person explained, “The piano and the flute, the rhythm and sound of the symphony. It’s so soothing and beautiful, and I was able to take a break and close my eyes and meditate to the music.”

Grantees and community participants alike described Exploring Engagement Fund events as joyous, fun, stress-free, and relaxing.

Connection to the community

Bringing community and family together. Many Exploring Engagement Fund events created a space for community members to come together and interact with each other while engaging with the arts. Grantees reported particular success with inter-generational and family-friendly activities. Events that involved people of different generations helped people feel more connected to younger generations by sharing a common interest. This was especially evident for families. Exploring Engagement Fund activities were described as “family and kid friendly.” As a family, many participants were able to leverage the Exploring Engagement Fund events as a “family night out” and learn something new together. One participant stated, “[The events] keep us busy as a family and offers us the opportunity to learn more. I also love how the events here are always family friendly.” By learning something new together, family members are able to have a shared interest. For many participants this was extremely important for their parent-child relationship. One participant stated, “We have more communication with our children and understand each other; we have something in common to talk about. We open doors of communication at home with our children.” Another participant mentioned, “I find [these events] bring everybody together, I am able to take this outside the program and after class, and able to spend time with family and actually learn music and play with the family. It is something I really enjoy.”

Shifts in internal and external perceptions of the community. Connecting the community was particularly valuable for areas with a history with crime and violence. Many participants noted how Exploring Engagement Fund events in these communities were helpful in shifting a previously negative perception of a community or neighborhood into that of a positive one. For instance, participants from one community continuously spoke about the negative perception of their area and the prevalence of violence and crime on the streets. When asked how the Exploring Engagement Fund events impacted their community, they described the events as being, “a safe space to escape the streets.” Participants felt that Exploring Engagement Fund events helped to “raise up” the reputation of the community and promote the idea that there are great opportunities in their community that do not involve crime or violence. One person valued, “having the community be aware of issues, knowing that there is so much more they can see in their community, more things they can participate in. Many people think this area is bad, but if they knew of this place, they could see that it’s not that bad. But they’re afraid to go out.” The positive environment and inclusive nature of the Exploring Engagement Fund events helped create a safe space for quality arts experiences and a sense of belonging among community members who attended.

Youth engagement in positive social activities. Many participants also explained how the Exploring Engagement Fund events were an important opportunity for young people to learn something new and stay out of trouble. One participant explained, “[The event] helps give young people/young adults a distraction; it keeps them away from violence on the streets. It also keeps them away from destructive things.” Moreover, as young people today are frequently engaged by technology, the opportunity for them to interact with the community and different forms of art was greatly appreciated by parents. Many adult participants spoke about how art was a large part of their childhood, but due to shifting priorities, especially in schools, many of their children do not have opportunities to engage with art. Exploring Engagement Fund projects provided that opportunity and arts exposure for many kids in the communities where events took place. One mother explained, “When I was growing up, schools were able to teach us about music and we were exposed to that early on. Now that is not that case.” Another participant mentioned, “[These activities] give you more community time outside. I like seeing my kids getting involved in activities and hearing about new things.”

San Bernardino Symphony Association

For its Exploring Engagement Fund project, the San Bernardino Symphony Association created the “Fine Arts Lunch Break Concert Series” — 72 free arts events focused on music, storytelling, and painting for people who work, live, and do business in San Bernardino. The goal of these events was to engage ethnically diverse people across a broad socio-economic spectrum through the creation and presentation of these interdisciplinary events in highly accessible, but non-traditional, public spaces such as libraries and outside government buildings.



Photo credit: San Bernardino Symphony Association

The Lunch Break Series brought together members of the community to relax and embrace soulful and soothing music and other art forms. People said that it helped them feel that they had a place to go in the community to enjoy quality art.

When participants were asked how the concert series benefited them and their community, they shared how the events influenced their perception of the community. Participants spoke about historically negative perceptions about their area, even though the community has various assets to offer. One participant said, “I was disappointed when I first moved to San Bernardino, but things like this give you hope. I hardly hear positive things about San Bernardino and more people would benefit from events like this.”

Connection to culture

Expansion of cultural understanding. Many of the Exploring Engagement Fund projects helped further people’s connection to their own culture and/or build their understanding of other cultures. Participants were able to engage in an art experience, but also learn about different cultures in an interactive way. For example, some events focused on a culture’s music, such as Mariachi, while others exposed participants to cultural components through film or a theatrical performance. Regardless of the art discipline, many participants left these events with a new knowledge of their own culture or a different culture. One participant shared, “[The events were] beneficial because you learn new things about this community, things you didn’t know before. I’ve lived here for 15 years and there were some things I didn’t even know.” Another participant stated, “[I liked that] the events support and promote the Hispanic community. It is an opportunity to celebrate our culture and just to see the Hispanic community here is great.” Another participant spoke about how beneficial the Exploring Engagement Fund project was for educating community members on their culture, “If more non-Latinos are introduced to our culture, they are going to accept us more. We need to teach people that we are not violent... that we have something beautiful.”

Many participants left Exploring Engagement Fund events with a new knowledge of their own culture or a different culture.

Educating youth about cultural traditions. The Exploring Engagement Fund projects were particularly effective at helping to educate younger generations about specific cultural traditions. Many participants recognized that younger generations are, typically, more disconnected from their families' respective countries of origin and may not have in-depth knowledge of their cultural traditions. Youth's awareness of their culture and those of others was extremely important for many parents. Parents valued how the Exploring Engagement Fund projects promoted different aspects of cultural traditions to the younger generations. One adult said, "It's helping our kids develop a love for their culture and a deeper knowledge of their background. It's so important for us as a family to know our Hispanic culture and not to forget its value." Another person shared, "My daughter and I went to see a movie, and she turned to me and said 'Wow! I went to Mexico and back in an hour!' I love that she gets to see things from Mexico." One participant found the biggest benefit of the Exploring Engagement Fund project to be the investment in children; "You invest in the children so they do good things in the community."

Parents valued how the Exploring Engagement Fund projects promoted different aspects of cultural traditions to the younger generations.

Harmony Project

Through the Exploring Engagement Fund, Harmony Project created a music program for the parents, grandparents, and older siblings of the organization's youth students, as well as adult community members. The program took place across Los Angeles, especially serving South Los Angeles and the South Bay region of Los Angeles. The goal of the program was to engage low-income adults in the arts, increase opportunities for community building, reduce stress, enable healthier lives in the community, and examine the impact of increased adult participation on its program and community. Adults who participated in the program were loaned an instrument, participated in group classes, and also performed as a group.



Photo credit: Harmony Project

Participants appreciated how the program provided them with the opportunity to learn an instrument and explore the history and style of different genres of music, especially Mariachi music. They shared that they were able to identify with the music and that the program made them feel connected to Mexican culture. They also believed that the program promoted Mexican culture within their community, educating people who may not be familiar with Mariachi or Latinx culture more broadly. Lastly, the program helped participants feel more connected to their children by sharing a common interest in music. One participant said, "We have more communication with our children and understand each other; we have something in common to talk about. We opened doors of communication at home with our children."

BENEFITS TO SPECIFIC COMMUNITY GROUPS

Across the Exploring Engagement Fund grants, projects had a range of benefits to specific communities. Below are two examples that illustrate this range.

YoloArts provided 10 weeks of multidisciplinary workshops for **homeless adults** at various Yolo County public libraries. Through this project the grantee hoped to offer experimental arts programs in three cities and increase arts engagement with homeless and low-income individuals. The grantee partnered with the area's health and human services department to help connect the homeless adults participating in workshops to services, jobs, housing, transportation, and amenities. At the conclusion of the project, the grantee contact said, "The program provided dozens of individuals with a safe, supportive, and instructive environment for hands-on creative work, and positive interaction with other adults [for] both those experiencing homelessness, and allied community members, artists, and service providers."



Photo credit: YoloArts © Rik Keller

Cygnnet Theatre Company partnered with San Diego agencies to create workshops that addressed the needs and interests of **active military, veterans, and their families**, and put on performances at military bases and places where military families congregate. Through this project, the grantee hoped to increase participation in theater among military personnel and families. At the conclusion of the project, the grantee had increased the number of military personnel involved in theater from 290 in 2015 to 706 in 2017.

The grantee organization also greatly enhanced its expertise in engaging the military community and established a plan to continue this experience with training offered through various military outreach partners. The grantee organization retained partnerships that will help it continue to engage and create benefits for the military community long past the term of the Exploring Engagement Fund grant.



Photo credit: Cygnnet Theatre Company

BENEFITS TO PARTNERS

Most Exploring Engagement Fund projects had at least one project partner. Partners included artists, nonprofit arts organizations, government agencies, and social service organizations, among others. Partnering was an important way grantees expanded their relationships and networks within the community, enabling them to engage people through an organization or space already trusted by community members. In general, grantees approached project partners about collaborating during the initial stages of the project. Some partners simply provided a venue at which project activities took place, while other partners were more deeply involved in planning and implementing the projects. Overall, the partners interviewed had a positive experience with the grantees. They found the grantees easy to work with, clear communicators, professional, and flexible. All of the partners interviewed reported that they would partner with that specific grantee again. The partners also shared that the partnership greatly benefited them. Specifically, the projects helped them meet their constituents' needs and also expand their practice as artists or their programmatic offerings as organizations.

Meeting community members' needs. Partners were open to collaboration with the grantees because the activities they proposed were intended to meet the needs and interests of the partners' own constituents. The relationship helped partners achieve their missions, while providing their constituents with new and engaging activities. As one partner shared, "When they approached us with this, I thought it was a perfect fit in terms of what we were trying to do." Another partner saw the relationship as a key way to help enhance existing offerings to community members. "Because [community members] work, [have] other responsibilities or obligations, [and] distance, they don't have access to [arts programs]... because we provided food, we provided [the arts program], all that coalescing made people feel like at home." The events also focused on key community groups that the partners wanted to better engage. These included families, low-income community members, and other groups within the specific geographic community. For example, one partner shared that the events helped community members see their organization differently — as a place for unique art programs. In addition, after participating, some of the community members were more open and communicative with the partner organizations' staff. The events helped them build relationships with their constituents, which was one of their goals. Several partners also shared that the high quality artistic experience helped engage people and build their enthusiasm about the arts.

Expanding practice/offerings. In addition to describing benefits to their constituents, the partners of Exploring Engagement Fund grantees highlighted how the collaboration expanded their services and offerings to the community. The partnership brought arts programming to the partnering organizations or expanded their own arts programs and offerings. For partnering artists, the collaboration also provided the opportunity, time, funding, and thought partnership to expand their artistic practice in new ways. As one artist shared, "It's been an incredible skill-building opportunity... I can talk through a lot of ideas, a lot of things that I want to try and do... So it's kind of like they're my sounding board, my think tank." Another artist noted, "I felt like it was beneficial because it allowed us to work with different aesthetic forms that we usually wouldn't play with because of not just the partnership with [the grantee] but the partnership with the [participant group of interest] specifically."

For partnering artists, the collaboration provided the opportunity, time, funding, and thought partnership to expand their artistic practice in new ways.

PARTNERSHIP LESSONS

In previous Exploring Engagement Fund reports, we highlight the importance of partnerships across grant-funded projects and related lessons and practical tips. Based on the grantees' and partners' more recent reflections, below we offer an expanded list of practical lessons for how to create effective community partnerships when planning and implementing arts engagement projects.

Select partners thoughtfully. Community partnerships should focus on identifying partners with shared values, gauging a potential partner's interest in the project and understanding the level of readiness to collaborate. Grantees that had the most successful partnerships had in-depth conversations with their partners before the project began. Some grantees created written agreements with partners to confirm shared expectations and commitment of all parties, while others had informal verbal agreements. Either way, it is important to clarify 1) the benefit of the project for each entity and 2) each entity's role and responsibilities.

Work collaboratively. Grantees with the most successful partnerships collaboratively planned and implemented their projects with their partners. This helped the grantee organization truly understand and meet the interests of the intended participants, about whom the partner typically brought deep knowledge and access. The partnership must be meaningful and beneficial for both entities. This requires the staff of both to be truly open to their partners' ideas and perspective. Collaborative partnerships should be supported by regular and ongoing communication to manage logistics and sort through successes and challenges.

Allow enough time. The engagement projects were experiments conducted over two years. The time allotted for planning and implementation was often condensed and rapid. Given their other priorities, partners need sufficient time to thoughtfully plan and implement activities that will successfully engage community members. Some partners plan their activities and related promotions many months or more ahead of time. To fully partner, grantee organizations should keep this in mind and plan accordingly.

Consider organizational capacity issues. The engagement projects were new. Most of the partnerships were also new. Both entities were also busy with other priorities and sometimes lacking the systems and structures to effectively support and partner together. For some partnerships this meant delays in paying artists, challenges coordinating programming, and issues with cross-promotions and outreach. Limited organizational capacity, sometimes on both sides, made it challenging, at times, to partner. It is important to regularly consider, discuss, and address capacity issues with respect to both entities.

BENEFITS TO GRANTEES

As described earlier in this report, the Exploring Engagement Fund provided risk capital to organizations to implement more ambitious and experimental projects with the ultimate goal of making arts accessible to all Californians. Many grantees shared that due to the underlying risk associated with these new engagement approaches, they would not have taken on these projects without the financial support from Irvine. At the conclusion of the grant period, grantees found their projects to be both successful and impactful in myriad ways. The experiences and lessons gained throughout these projects have led to numerous benefits for the organizations.

New relationships with community partners. Grantees reported that as a result of the Exploring Engagement Fund projects they have partnered with community organizations and worked with them in ways that, in some cases, were very new and different for the grantees. Just as participants were able to learn new skills from the Exploring Engagement Fund projects, grantees were able to experiment with new partnerships to expand their reach and engagement with diverse community members. Not only did these partnerships benefit the Exploring Engagement Fund projects, but grantees found that these new relationships could be leveraged in the future. One grantee organization that was working on bringing artistic workshops to a specific community found itself struggling to gain trust and buy-in from community members. After the grantee partnered with a trusted local community center, people were much more open to participating in the project's events, and the grantee was able to continue the relationship with the partner and host other events at the community center. The grantee contact at this organization said, "This project was a good catalyst to create relationships that we've actually been continuing."

Grantees also were able to learn and grow from their Exploring Engagement Fund partners. Many grantees partnered with a community organization to leverage the deep connection and relationships that partners had with community members. By working in tandem, some grantees were able to learn from partners how to best interact with community members and grow their network and relationships. One grantee explained, "If it hadn't been for [our partner's] involvement in the beginning I don't think that the project would have been anywhere [near] as successful. Because what they really did was so important. They helped us as an institution really commit to this approach to our community, and understand it well so that we could then be good stewards of that project." Another grantee said, "Once we expanded into the actual working group of partners, we were able to build relationships with those people and then that created an opportunity for us to develop a different level of relationship with their network of people."

Some grantees learned new and productive ways to interact with community members from their experiences with partner organizations.

Stronger relationships with community members. As a result of the Exploring Engagement Fund, many community members became more familiar with grantees and indicated a high likelihood of participating in future art events with grantees. Grantees reported how engaging with the community through their projects, they were able to bolster their participant base and showcase how they interact in more than just conventional ways. Grantees felt the Exploring Engagement Fund broadened participants' perspectives of their organizations and helped promote the feeling that there is space in their organization for those community members. As stated by one grantee, "We approached this project as not only a risky venture, but also an investment into building audiences for the future." Another grantee said, "Even if [participants] are not engaging in every single thing we do, they're paying attention to us, they're coming to more of our events, they're connected to us in social media, they're sharing the work what they do, or that we're putting out, and that's helping us get a much broader footprint in the community."

Grantees were able to bolster their participant base and showcase how they interact in more than just conventional ways.

Influence of future directions. Although a number of grantees said their organizations had already been committed to arts engagement, the Exploring Engagement Fund helped them pilot new programs, test different methodologies, take risks, and refine and confirm their future directions. Many grantees reported incorporating lessons learned from their projects into their other programs in order to continue reaching and engaging a diverse population of people in the arts. As stated by one grantee, "When we go out there with our mission statement talking about wanting to create dialogue and create a better society, we can point to this project and really show that engagement is happening in concrete, measurable ways." Specifically, grantees reported incorporating engagement practices into their other programmatic work by reconfiguring staff and internal infrastructure and systems, training artists and staff, nurturing community partnerships, becoming more skilled in grassroots and community-based marketing and public relations approaches, and integrating arts engagement into their strategic plans. For example, one grantee explained how the Exploring Engagement Fund has helped the organization think about ways to restructure its education department to ensure it is reaching a higher proportion of the Spanish-speaking community.

Other grantees described a more profound change in their organization's culture and/or mission as a direct result of this engagement work. One grantee said, "This [has led to] a way bigger organizational conversation that we're having. Today, for example, we had a staff meeting about the reality of the diversity of our program and who we want to reach and who we're not reaching. So it's part of this larger organizational conversation." As grantees connected to the community's need for, interest in, and response to arts engagement, some became true believers, integrating engagement values, strategies, goals, and lessons learned into different aspects of their organizations. As one grantee shared, "When you look at the projects we're doing now, you can actually see community engagement as a direct result of this funding that's been highly effective in comparison to what we were able to do two or three years ago." Grantees see arts engagement as an opportunity to experiment and enable a new focus for their organizations.

Many grantees described a profound change in their organization's culture and/or mission as a direct result of this engagement work.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Grantees recognize that the success of their projects, including the development of enhanced local relationships, leads to new levels of expectations held by communities and partner organizations. In many cases, grantees have concerns about their ability to meet these expectations as they move forward without funding from the Exploring Engagement Fund. Some also worry about backlash from community members and organizations as projects end. This was a challenge grantees grappled with throughout the Exploring Engagement Fund grant period, as they had to think about how to best balance existing priorities and goals with their new engagement work, new community perceptions, and new demands by their constituents, staff, and board.

To combat potential negative consequences, many grantees attempted to incorporate arts engagement and lessons learned through Exploring Engagement Fund projects into their other organizational programming or sought out other funding to continue with the engagement work. One grantee explained, “Now the funding is over, but we don’t want to abandon these communities if we can avoid that. We are trying our best to see how we can keep some of these programs active and explore other funding. Because [this population] is a huge part of the community that we really inherited, we can’t give up on them completely.” Another grantee stated, “We’re a small organization with limited resources and an overworked staff, so we’re trying [to continue]... We don’t want to abandon those partners. And we see a way that we can put in some effort that will help the outcome.”

“Initially the risk was doing something new... Then the risk was to figure out all of the logistics (rehearsal, different physical setting, and structural issues to sort out)... The risk now is about sustainability and relationships. It is not a good thing to start something new in a community if you can’t sustain it since it sets up expectation... We see and feel the push for something new from funders but then expectations and relationships are set [in the community]... Trying to engage people in the arts you cannot then drop them. You have to keep them involved. This is a continuing issue.”

- Exploring Engagement Fund Grantee Organization

Overall, the impact of the Exploring Engagement Fund on the grantees, project partners, and project participants went further than increasing arts engagement opportunities for community members. Participants were able to learn new skills, connect with their community, and express themselves in new and different ways. Partners were able to meet their constituents’ needs in new ways and expand their practices. The grantees were able to expand their organizational connections, build stronger relationships in communities, and, for some, inform the future direction of their organization. While increasing arts access for Californians was the goal of the Exploring Engagement Fund, this initiative had more impact than initially anticipated.

Best Practices

To achieve the important impacts described in the last section, the Exploring Engagement Fund grantees approached their projects thoughtfully and refined their approaches over time. In previous publications, we shared key lessons and related practical tips to consider when pursuing arts engagement work. These lessons were identified through interviews with grantees and review of their grant reports. Over time, these lessons have remained consistent for all 119 projects. Therefore, with this large number of projects varying by geography, arts discipline, and strategy, these lessons may be considered best practices that arts organizations and funders should carefully consider when pursuing arts engagement work.

Now that all of the Exploring Engagement Fund projects are complete, four new elements have surfaced in support of the practice we call “Try New Approaches.” These additions (see sidebar and below) are informed by final analysis of “engagement grids” designed by the research team and completed by grantees to describe their grant-funded activities in a number of dimensions.¹⁰

Consider community perceptions. Grantees with smaller annual organizational budgets (less than \$500,000) were most likely to reach primarily low-income participants. This finding and other information from grantee interviews suggest that smaller-budget organizations may be more community-based and have existing partnerships with other organizations that serve low-income populations. In addition, compared to large-budget organizations, smaller-budget organizations may offer greater accessibility or may be perceived as being more accessible to potential low-income participants. Together these factors may have helped make smaller-budget organizations more likely to reach a larger proportion of low-income participants. However, grantees with the largest annual budgets (more than \$5 million) were two times more likely than those with smaller budgets to engage primarily people of color. Large-budget organizations may have been more successful than small-budget organizations in reaching people of color due to the large scale of their projects as well as staff capacity and resources available to try to engage potential participants.

ARTS ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

For project examples and practical tips supporting these best practices, please see the published [case studies](#).



Invest Time: True engagement with new and diverse populations takes time, patience, and commitment



Build Trust: Getting to know a community and building trust are vital to planning and implementing arts engagement



Partner Well: Community partners are critical to accessing new and diverse participants



Relate, Don't Sell: Engaging new and diverse participants requires different marketing and outreach



Go to New Places: Non-arts venues can help reach new and diverse participants, and often bring unique challenges



Try New Approaches: New methods and styles can reach participants who perceive art as “not for me”

Additions to this practice:

- Consider community perceptions
- Intentionally focus on engaging diverse participants
- Incorporate multiple artistic disciplines and project strategies
- Actively engage people



Align Your Team: Engagement calls for diverse capabilities, training, and practices for artists and staff

¹⁰ Exploring Engagement Fund grantees completed a spreadsheet called an engagement grid to capture their grant-funded activities and events, the characteristics of participants, and the types of participant engagement. The development of the engagement grid was informed by existing research on community and arts engagement, discussions with The James Irvine Foundation Arts team, and testing with grantees. It was refined over time to best meet the evaluation's needs and to be clear to and usable by the grantees. Please see Appendix B for more information about the evaluation methods and analysis approach.

Intentionally focus on engaging diverse participants. In line with the intent of the Exploring Engagement Fund, almost all of the projects (86 percent) focused on engaging people of color while a smaller proportion (63 percent) focused on low-income participants. Projects that sought to engage people of color or low-income participants were significantly more successful in reaching those people than those that did not intentionally focus on engaging these groups. Specifically, projects that sought out low-income participants were two times more likely to engage primarily low-income participants and people of color than those that did not seek out low-income participants. In addition, projects that focused on a specific race/ethnicity were four times more likely to primarily engage low-income and people of color than those that did not focus on engaging participants of a specific race/ethnicity. This evidence suggests that either approach makes an important difference in who participates in events. However, engaging low-income participants proved to be more challenging than engaging people of color, even for those grantees intentionally focused on reaching low-income participants.

ENGAGING LOW-INCOME COMMUNITY MEMBERS

To help address the challenge of engaging low-income participants, we asked recent grantees and several project partners who serve primarily low-income people what they believe are the most effective ways to engage low-income community members.

Develop trust. Personally connecting with people and building their trust before the activities will make people more open to engagement. Genuinely connecting with people during the activities will help make them want to return.

Create unique experiences. Providing unique, fun, and active engagement activities will help make them more appealing. To successfully compete for people's limited time, it is also important to be clear how the activities are different than something they already have access to.

Cost free. To be accessible to people that are low-income, activities need to be free of charge.

Provide food and childcare. People appreciate free food. Food can also make it more festive and encourage community building as people eat together and socialize. If the activities do not directly engage children, free, high quality childcare should be provided.

Ensure accessible location. Transportation is a major issue and public transportation is sometimes people's only means. Transportation to the activities should be provided free of charge or activities should be brought to them.

Incorporate multiple artistic disciplines and project strategies. Projects with “create” and “hybrid” strategies were almost two times more likely to reach a higher proportion of low-income participants than those with only the “expose” strategy.¹¹ This finding is particularly striking for people of color — the “create” strategy was twice as likely to reach people of color and the “hybrid” strategy was nearly three times as likely.¹² Projects with the “expose” strategy were the least successful in reaching people of color and low-income participants. These were typically one-time events that generally had less focus on and control over who participated. Moreover, compared to the other project strategies, “expose” projects also had fewer opportunities to build a relationship with participants over time to help develop rapport and engagement.

¹¹ During the analysis process, we took steps to ensure that the frequency in which the strategies occurred did not influence these results. See Appendix B for more information.

¹² The “create” strategy was also used significantly more among projects that focused on and successfully engaged a higher proportion of both low-income participants and people of color.

Multidisciplinary and communications/humanities/literature-focused projects were significantly more likely to reach a higher proportion of both low-income participants and people of color than projects focused on visual or performing arts. Specifically, these projects were two times more likely to reach a higher proportion of low-income participants and people of color.

Overall, projects with a “hybrid” project strategy and multiple artistic disciplines had an increased likelihood to engage a higher proportion of both low-income participants and people of color. A potential reason for their success may be that both provide participants multiple options for how they can engage with a project and its events. For example, if only visual arts activities are offered, some people may not be interested in participating. However, when people have the option of engaging with multiple artistic disciplines, our results suggest they will be more likely to find something that activates their participation.

Actively engage people. The engagement grid asked grantees to list the number of participants engaged for each event by five different modes of participation. People could be engaged through multiple modes, ranging from observing an arts activity (traditional observation) to being extremely active and hands-on in an arts activity (participant-driven). Across all projects, people were engaged using a variety of modes with the most common mode being participant-driven (Exhibit 2).

Projects that offered more active modes of participation (co-presentation, co-creation, and participant-driven) were significantly more likely to reach higher proportions of low-income participants and people of color. In particular, “participant-driven” was the mode that best reached both low-income participants and people of color.¹³ These results confirm the original hypothesis of the Exploring Engagement Fund: Diverse participants are more likely to take part in more active forms of engagement.

EXHIBIT 2: EVENTS BY MODES OF PARTICIPATION

MODE	DESCRIPTION	PERCENT OF EVENTS THAT USED MODE
Traditional Observation	Participants receive finished work presented by arts professionals	39%
Observational Learning	Participants receive finished work with explicit learning or enrichment component	34%
Co-Presentation	Participants share in presentation of artistic work	26%
Co-Creation	Participants share in creation of new artistic work	33%
Participant-Driven	Participants engage directly in the creative process, with or without involvement of arts professionals	56%

¹³ During the analysis process, we took steps to ensure that the frequency in which the modes occurred did not influence these results. Please see Appendix B for more information.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Before the Exploring Engagement Fund began in 2012, the arts field was mainly focused on expanding arts participation through strategies intended to broaden a relatively homogeneous audience, deepen the participant experience, and diversify who participates.¹⁴ The arts field recognized that participants in mainstream arts were overwhelmingly White and older. In response, these strategies aimed to ensure arts organizations have participants and supporters for years to come. Early on, tactics supporting these strategies focused more on “who” to reach with the arts and were less about “how” to connect with them once an organization reaches them. The arts experiences offered were largely conventional, such as people watching a concert or going to a museum, and expected community members to travel to an arts venue.

The Exploring Engagement Fund was innovative in its focus, scale, and funding approach. Its focus on actively engaging people with the arts was relatively new for the arts field at the time. A gradual shift from audience development, to audience participation, and then to arts engagement was just beginning. Some nonprofits, including arts organizations, already deeply engaged and connected with community members as a core part of their work. For example, community-based arts organizations and many arts organizations rooted in communities of color regularly practiced arts engagement for decades. However, many arts organizations were still focused on broaden/deepen/diversity strategies and reaching people more passively. The Exploring Engagement Fund dedicated support to a large group of arts organizations across a very diverse state to experiment with active community engagement. The Fund focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion before that focus and value became prominent across funders and nonprofits. It also encouraged nonprofit arts organizations to test out new methodologies and allowed them to decide how they wanted to experiment and innovate to engage atypical participants. With more than 100 grantees and a seven-year time horizon, the Exploring Engagement Fund allowed for tremendous experimentation and learning across arts disciplines, organizational sizes, geographies, types of organizations, and different communities and populations. It took the concepts of community engagement and audience participation to scale in the nonprofit arts environment. Finally, the funding approach was unique. The Exploring Engagement Fund did not provide a project or operating grant, but rather short-term funding purposely focused on encouraging arts organizations to take risks, experiment, adjust along the way, and innovate.

The Exploring Engagement Fund allowed for experimentation and learning across arts disciplines, organizations, geographies, and populations.

Today, the ideas championed by the Exploring Engagement Fund are no longer new or fringe. Across the United States, arts organizations and art funders see the need to develop and maintain deep engagement with the community. It is not about providing the arts “to” the community but instead “with” the community. Deep and active engagement with community members is essential to the ways more arts organizations operate in today’s environment. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are also a core focus and value of a growing number of funders and nonprofits seeking to serve the full community, whether connected to or separate from the arts. Finally, the arts are now more accepted as a vital part of healthy communities. Other national initiatives and movements, such as the growth in creative placemaking, have also demonstrated The James Irvine Foundation’s conviction that the arts provide a powerful public benefit that helps create a vibrant, inclusive, and compassionate society.

¹⁴ See RAND’s landmark 2005 study “A New Framework for Building Participation in the Arts,” https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2005/MR1323.pdf

With its 119 projects, the Exploring Engagement Fund offers comprehensive examples and lessons about arts engagement. This report describes how these types of projects are beneficial to community members, partners, and arts organizations themselves. This and past publications also share key lessons for arts organizations interested in doing arts engagement and funders interested in supporting their work. However, each organization, project, and community is unique. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Based on lessons learned from this seven-year initiative, we believe there are several important considerations for arts organizations and arts funders alike to reflect on as they begin or expand their work in arts engagement.

There are several considerations for arts organizations and arts funders to reflect on when beginning or expanding work in arts engagement.

Address community perceptions. For arts organizations, it is important to consider how the community and specific groups within it perceive the organization and its staff. Developing genuine partnerships, building trust and relationships with community members, conducting grassroots outreach approaches, and utilizing spaces and locations where people already congregate will help break down barriers. In addition, ongoing self-reflection and discussion will help address barriers as they arise. Trust is key to arts engagement and it takes time to develop. For funders, it is important to carefully consider the organizations funded to do arts engagement work, including how they are perceived by the community and how they are addressing any barriers of perception.

Consider engagement approach. An organization's approach to engagement matters. It is important for arts organizations to be purposeful about who they are trying to engage within the community and how they engage them. Actively engaging people using multiple strategies and multiple arts disciplines are the most effective approach. A varied approach helps gain and maintain people's interests and provides opportunities for them to learn, self-reflect, and connect with others. For funders, it is important to consider the type and variety of approaches organizations will be using to engage with people and whether they are likely to meet the needs and interests of the intended community.

Build organizational capacity. Active arts engagement is new for many arts organizations. For this reason it is important for arts organizations to consider how the organization and staff can build capacity to do this work. It often requires hiring new staff, facilitating focused discussions, building new partnerships, establishing advisor groups, and creating new internal systems to support the work. Sufficient financial support and time are needed to effectively build this capacity and develop the organizational culture needed to do this work. Pursuing arts engagement often requires a more open mindset about experimentation and change than does offering conventional arts programs. And while conventional arts activities are typically controlled by an arts organization and its staff, arts engagement involves partners and community members, which requires collaboration and sharing control of the process and final product. It is important for funders to provide enough funding and time for an organization to build its capacity and do the proposed arts engagement. It may also be helpful for funders to provide peer learning opportunities in which arts organizations come together to share and learn from each other.

Measure diversity thoughtfully. As documented in more detail in the Appendices, the Exploring Engagement Fund asked grantees to report race/ethnicity and income information about project participants. This effort required additional training and technical assistance for the grantees. Collecting participants' demographic information is new for many arts organizations. For arts organizations, it is important to consider how and if they are willing to collect such information if requested by a funder. Collecting data should never hurt arts engagement. It is important for funders to determine the focus of any arts engagement initiative and whether that includes engaging diverse participants. If so, funders need to decide and clearly communicate what they mean by diversity — e.g., race/ethnicity, gender identify, income, etc. — and how they intend to track progress toward diversity goals. Ideally, this intent would be discussed with funded arts organizations and community groups of focus to ensure the aims of the overall initiative and the information that will be gathered will be mutually beneficial. Recently, some funders are reconsidering what kind of information they ask their grantees to report about their staff and participants. For example, one major funder is moving toward asking its grantees to report only certain types of staff demographic information, specifically information that the funder also asks its own staff to report.¹⁵ Overall, it is important that evaluation and data collection methods are in line with the funder's values and needs. Measuring diversity requires deep initial discussion, ongoing support to ensure information is collected using respectful and inclusive practices, and iterative reflection to ensure the information will be useful and meaningful to all involved.

Measuring diversity requires deep initial discussion, ongoing support, and iterative reflection.

Communicate and plan with intent. The Exploring Engagement Fund projects had meaningful impact, but they also created new expectations among participating community members, partners, and grantees. These risk capital projects often took on a life of their own and completely changed the focus of some organizations. It is important for arts organizations to consider community expectations and potential sustainability before beginning arts engagement work. Funders should also consider how arts organizations will balance and meet new community expectations. Related, funders should consider how or if a risk capital approach is desired. If so, they could take lessons from this initiative and create a similar risk capital initiative. Or funders may take these lessons and support fewer arts nonprofits in to developing and maintaining their organizational capacity around arts engagement for the long-term. Funders pursuing the risk capital avenue should carefully consider what they will do if an experiment is successful and what that means for additional or ongoing support for the arts organization conducting that experiment in the future. Most nonprofits will not be able to fully maintain early arts engagement work without additional external funding.

In its scope and diversity, the Exploring Engagement Fund was an ambitious undertaking. It challenged nonprofits arts organizations to adapt their orientation to the community and grow their relationships for the future, and many achieved this aim in some or multiple respects. Equally as valuable, this work generated insights, lessons, and practices that may continue to expand who engages with the arts, and where, and how.

¹⁵ <https://cep.org/making-it-count-the-evolution-of-the-ford-foundations-diversity-data-collection>

Appendix A: Lessons in Evaluation and Technical Assistance

What began as a one-year contract to evaluate the Exploring Engagement Fund expanded to a seven-year partnership involving Harder+Company, Irvine, and more than 100 nonprofit arts organizations across California. The lessons learned through the evaluation that are included in this appendix are intended to inform other funders and evaluators conducting similar evaluation and technical assistance efforts.

Embrace the relationship between evaluation and program design. The Exploring Engagement Fund was an innovative grantmaking program. Across California and the United States, it has been rare for nonprofit organizations to receive risk capital to experiment with arts engagement strategies. The evaluation planning process helped clarify key aspects of the program design. For example, initially grant-funded projects were broadly focused on engaging non-traditional participants. Non-traditional was not fully defined and could be interpreted by the grantees broadly. For the evaluation, there was a need to clarify this meaning. Through facilitated discussions with the Foundation, participants of focus were defined as people of color and/or people that are low-income. This clarity helped refine the Exploring Engagement Fund's program design and subsequent grantmaking. It also allowed Harder+Company to design the evaluation process to best understand and track progress toward that goal. In addition, it uncovered the need for Harder+Company to provide data collection technical assistance to the grantees to support their tracking of participant demographics. Ongoing reporting of evaluation results to Irvine also informed the refinement of the Foundation's grant application and selection processes. Evaluation results helped Irvine clarify goals and expectations of the Exploring Engagement Fund and determine which grantees were most likely to be ready for funding.

Allow evaluation approaches and deliverables to evolve. From the beginning, the Exploring Engagement Fund evaluation approach included analysis and reporting of data from engagement grids,¹⁶ narrative grant reports, and phone interviews. Given the short-term nature of the initial evaluation contract and uncertainty about the number of grantee cohorts that would be selected over time, Harder+Company began analyzing and reporting results by cohorts of grantees. As the number of grantee cohorts grew and common themes across grantees emerged, we shifted this approach and conducted cross-cohort analysis and reporting. We also were explicit about the main audience and intention for each report so that the analyses and results were targeted and framed appropriately to be most useful. Some deliverables were tailored for Irvine staff and highlighted how the evaluation results could impact the Foundation's ongoing grantmaking and work with the grantees. Other deliverables were intended for nonprofit arts organizations, for example, evaluation results shared through specific grantee examples and tactical tips that nonprofit staff could apply to their own arts engagement work in the future.

¹⁶ Exploring Engagement Fund grantees completed a spreadsheet called an engagement grid to capture their grant-funded activities and events, the characteristics of participants, and the types of participant engagement.

Overall, we let the evaluation questions, approaches, and deliverables evolve based on the available data and Irvine's information needs. At first, the analysis and results were exploratory and descriptive. As the number of grantees grew, qualitative themes were confirmed. In addition, as more data became available, we were able to conduct more sophisticated analysis of the engagement grid data. For example, we initially conducted bivariate analyses, comparing two variables at a time (e.g., the proportion of low-income participants by project strategy). However, we hypothesized that these bivariate relationships were complicated by additional factors. With a larger sample, we were later able to conduct multivariate analyses to understand how the bivariate results changed when the impact of additional variables was incorporated. For example, multivariate analysis allowed us to evaluate the effect of project strategy on the proportion of low-income participants, independent of the effect of project discipline. This refined analysis approach allowed us to better understand the data and confirm our findings.

Be clear and flexible with grantee technical assistance. Irvine recognized that some of the grantees potentially needed help with the data collection requirements of their grants and asked Harder+Company to provide up to eight hours of data collection technical assistance to each Exploring Engagement Fund grantee by phone and email. The technical assistance was intended to help grantees complete the engagement grid consistently and accurately. Lessons learned specific to technical assistance include:

- **Clearly introduce report requirements and scope of the technical assistance:** At the beginning of each grant period, we had an introductory phone call with each Exploring Engagement Fund grantee to get to know the organization, learn more about its grant-funded project, and review the evaluation methods. We shared an overview of the engagement grid and discussed how the organization planned to collect the necessary data. This led into some immediate technical assistance and plans for any subsequent technical assistance. Each grantee was assigned a specific evaluation team member so that it was clear who to turn to for assistance.
- **Meet grantees where they are:** Exploring Engagement Fund grantees included organizations across California with a wide range of staff sizes, organizational budgets, and evaluation and data collection capacity. Harder+Company focused on providing technical assistance that was flexible and best fit each individual grantee's needs, including what was realistic and possible for an organization to implement.
- **Create resource documents to address common questions and needs:** Before providing technical assistance, we created initial resource documents for the grantees. These documents included information about different data collection methods and specific advice about how to collect information about participants' race/ethnicity and low-income status through primary or secondary data collection efforts. After providing technical assistance to the first three grantee cohorts, we created an additional resource document that addressed the common questions we received across grantees. We vetted that document with several grantees to ensure it was clear and would be helpful. We shared this resource document with subsequent grantees after their introductory phone call. Overall, the updated resource document decreased the need for ongoing technical assistance.

- **Be flexible with participant demographic data collection methods:** From the beginning, Irvine knew that it might be challenging and frustrating for some nonprofit arts organizations to collect and share participants' demographic information. Therefore, Harder+Company made it clear to grantees that informed estimates of participant demographics were acceptable. We also highlighted how to use reliable secondary data, such as census data, to make these estimates. During the introductory calls and in the resource documents, we explicitly discouraged grantees from using visual observation to determine participants' race/ethnicity and low-income status, as demographic characteristics can be accurately known only by how a person self-identifies. Unfortunately, some grantees used an observation method. This points to a broader challenge, underscoring that further education is needed about appropriate and accurate ways to determine race/ethnicity and income status, not just in the arts.
- **Assess technical assistance efforts and refine as needed:** For the first few cohorts we closely tracked technical assistance use to understand what was needed and valued. We also surveyed grantees to gauge their satisfaction and gather any comments on the technical assistance. We believe it is important for evaluators and technical assistance providers to continually ask for feedback and assess themselves. This feedback helped us refine the ongoing technical assistance and create new resource documents.

Consider how shifts in a foundation's overall focus may influence the ongoing program evaluation.

In 2016, The James Irvine Foundation adopted a new focus: "expanding economic and political opportunity for California families and young adults who are working but struggling with poverty." In line with this shift, some of Irvine's existing programs changed or concluded. Final Exploring Engagement Fund grants were awarded in the summer of 2016. As the initiative entered its concluding phase, there were transitions in the Irvine Arts program team. These transitions resulted in Harder+Company holding the longest history and deepest relationship with many Exploring Engagement Fund grantees. In evaluation conversations, some grantees expressed disappointment over the shift in Irvine priorities. Some also reported having little contact with Foundation staff during their grant period, representing a shift from earlier phases of the initiative that were marked by active communication between grantees and Irvine staff. While Harder+Company encouraged grantees to connect with Irvine staff regarding these comments, we also realized that our role and relationship with grantees was evolving based on the changes at the Foundation. Related, we experienced an evolution in the primary uses of evaluation results. Early on, Exploring Engagement Fund evaluation results informed active programmatic work at Irvine. As the initiative approached its end, the priority audiences for evaluation findings were external, with an intent to help other funders and nonprofits learn from the experiences and results of grantees.

Appendix B: Evaluation Technical Overview

Purpose and Evaluation Questions

The core purpose of the Exploring Engagement Fund evaluation and learning process was to document the experiences of all participating grantees, identify lessons learned, and use those findings to inform the arts engagement field — specifically arts organizations and funders. The evaluation team used the following questions to guide the overall evaluation framework and evaluation activities:

- What types of projects did the grantees pursue as part of the Exploring Engagement Fund?
- What did grantees learn about arts engagement from implementing these projects?
- What are key lessons and promising practices for the arts engagement field?
- What was the experience of and benefit to project partners?
- Who were the project participants? How were these participants different from the grantees' typical participants?
- What were the participants' experiences? How did they benefit from participating in the projects?
- What types of activities, strategies, and grantees were most successful in reaching low-income and non-White participants?
- What was the impact of non-traditional space in reaching low-income and non-White participants?
- What were key evaluation lessons learned?

Evaluation Activities

The evaluation was designed to be multitiered, exploratory, and inclusive of multiple perspectives. Therefore, various evaluation activities were used to capture the different viewpoints.

Grant proposals and reports: Grant proposals were reviewed to understand grantees' planned engagement activities and strategies. To understand the actual engagement activities, a grant report template was created in which grantees reported information about (1) the project progress and lessons learned, (2) financial information, and (3) qualitative and quantitative data, via the engagement grid, on events, participant characteristics, and modes of participation. For two-year grants, reports were submitted to the Foundation after one year and at the close of the grant. Both proposals and grant reports were used to understand engagement activities, strategies, challenges, and project learning.

Grantee interviews: Grantees participated in two phone interviews: one after submitting their interim grant report and another after submitting their final grant report. The interviews were conducted on a rolling basis, one to two months after each grantee submitted its report. Interviews were used to probe further on areas included in each organization's grant report and to gather more insight into emerging findings. Please see Appendix C for the list of grantees interviewed.

Partner interviews: To gain additional perspective, nine phone interviews were conducted with a selection of partners who worked with Exploring Engagement Fund grantees on their engagement projects. The grantees whose partners were consulted were identified in collaboration with the Irvine team and represented a range of project strategies, project arts disciplines, organization budget sizes, and organization locations. The partners interviewed also represented a range of sectors (e.g., other arts organizations, government entities, social services organizations, and individual artists) and had varying types of relationships with the grantee as determined by grantee interviews and reports. Phone interviews were conducted on a rolling basis toward the end of the grant period. During the interviews, partners were asked to discuss their partnership experience including challenges, lessons learned, and benefits, to further contextualize the findings that emerged across the various data sources. Interviews were conducted with the following project partners, listed here in alphabetical order by the Exploring Engagement Fund grantee partner appearing in parentheses:

- Amy Kitchener, Alliance for California Traditional Arts (18th Street Arts Center)
- Alberto Retana, Community Coalition (CONTRA-TIEMPO)
- Jon Rios, San Diego Armed Services YMCA (Cygnet Theatre Company)
- Sue Mark, marksearch (Kala Institute)
- Lupita Mena, Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Orange Coast (Laguna Art Museum)
- Anna Hamre, Fresno Master Chorale (Los Angeles Master Chorale Association)
- Misael Diaz and Amy Sanchez, Cognate Collective (Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego)
- María Irene Muñoz Argueta, Consulado de Guatemala en San Bernardino (Redlands Community Music Association/Redlands Bowl)
- Ana Landeros, Arthur F. Turner Community Library, Yolo County (YoloArts)

Participant focus groups: To gain the perspective of participants in the engagement activities conducted by Exploring Engagement Fund grantees, seven in-person focus groups or intercept interview sessions were conducted with participants in seven different grant-funded projects on a rolling basis toward the end of the grant period. In total, 59 people participated. During the focus groups/interviews, participants were asked about their experience with the organization and the project. Specifically, they were asked to discuss the benefit of the activity, what they liked, and what could have been improved. The focus groups/interviews were conducted with participants from the following Exploring Engagement Fund grantees:

- EngAGE
- Harmony Project
- Los Angeles Master Chorale Association
- Near & Arnold's School of Performing Arts & Cultural Education (SPACE)
- San Bernardino Symphony Association
- San Jose Museum of Art Association
- School of Arts and Culture at Mexican Heritage Plaza

Engagement grids: As part of Exploring Engagement Fund reporting requirements, grantees completed a spreadsheet called an engagement grid to document each of their project events, characteristics of participants, and types of participant engagement. To support grantees' data collection efforts and reporting, each grantee organization had an introductory phone conversation with Harder+Company at the beginning of its project and the offer to use optional data collection technical assistance throughout the project. This was intended to help build consistent and accurate reporting across the grantees. One hundred eighteen of the 119 grantees submitted engagement grids in time to be included in this analysis.¹⁷

Analysis and Reporting

Analysis: Qualitative data from the interviews and focus groups were analyzed using a content analysis method. Content analysis is a technique for organizing, analyzing, and interpreting narrative data. To more closely examine the interview data, the evaluation team developed a codebook based on the key research questions of the evaluation. Interview data were coded using ATLAS.ti software. Data were then exported for key codes and reviewed, interpreted, and summarized to identify trends. Key findings and themes from the qualitative data were used to further support findings across other data sources.

Before analyzing the engagement grid data, the evaluation team implemented quality assurance processes to verify data counts across multiple data sets, examine the data for discrepancies or abnormalities, and standardize data across cohorts. The engagement grid data was then analyzed in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software using multivariate modeling. We incorporated multivariate analysis to evaluate the effects of specific variables, independent of other confounding variables. For example, multivariate analysis allowed us to evaluate the effect of project strategy on the proportion of low-income participants, independent of the effect of project discipline. Results of this multivariate analysis are described in this report as variables increasing or decreasing the likelihood of achieving a higher proportion of low-income and/or non-White participants.

Finally, because of the large variation in number of events per grantee project, we weighted data for the multivariate analysis. For these models, the unit of analysis was an event — that is, the outcome was the proportion of low-income or non-White participants *at an event*. Events, however, are not independent, but rather occur as part of a project. Due to this “nesting” of events within projects, each event that is part of the same project has the same project-level and organizational-level variables. Because there were characteristics of projects and the organizations that we hypothesized would influence the outcomes (e.g., project strategy, organizational budget), we wanted to “even out” the number of events per project so that we did not mistake characteristics of projects with many events as important simply because they occurred more often. The effect is that, rather than allowing some projects to contribute more events (i.e., data points) to the pool of information than others, the data are adjusted (weighted) so that each project contributes an equal number of events.

Reporting: Throughout the six-year engagement with Irvine, the evaluation team produced multiple internal and public reports that highlighted the emerging findings and lessons learned from Exploring Engagement Fund grantees. For example, a series of case studies highlighted lessons from nine grantees. The findings from earlier reports were built upon throughout the evaluation and used to inform this report.

¹⁷ The cutoff date for engagement grid data to be included in this report's analysis was September 19, 2018. For the sixth cohort, 17 grantees had not yet submitted a final engagement grid by that date. Therefore, only their year-one data were included.

Limitations

The engagement grids and our evaluation approach overall have several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

New reporting approach: The engagement grid was a new approach used to assess participant characteristics and engagement across Exploring Engagement Fund projects. This approach allowed grantees to collect data for their events, using multiple data collection methods. To support these self-led data collection efforts, each grantee had an introductory phone conversation with Harder+Company at the beginning of its project and the offer to use optional data collection technical assistance throughout the project. This was intended to help build consistent and accurate reporting across the cohorts.

Varying information about how grantees collected data: During introductory calls with grantees and in the reporting instructions, we encouraged grantees to share in their narrative reports any details about how they collected or determined the information reported on the engagement grid. While the grantees reported using many different methods, it was often unclear from their reports which participant characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, low-income status) were collected with each method. In addition, the quality of the methods was often not clear; there may have been cases where methods used did not provide sufficiently accurate estimates. For example, an observation may provide an adequate count of who is at the events, but is less appropriate for assessing participant race/ethnicity or income level. Lastly, there was no standardized way to interpret modes of participation categories, thus grantees may have had differing perspectives when it came to recording modes of participation.

Exploratory analysis: Given this new grantee reporting approach and the initial exploratory nature of this quantitative analysis, the analytical approach evolved over time. We also refined our approach to account for differences across Exploring Engagement Fund projects over time. For example, as described earlier, we began to weight the analysis by project. In addition, when reviewing findings, it should be noted that there were no baseline data on participant characteristics with which to compare these estimates and findings. And while the engagement grid provides insight into how grantees are engaging diverse participants, the data presented in this document should be considered approximations of participant characteristics and modes of participation rather than precise counts. For this reason, the engagement grid data were used in combination with interviews and narrative grant reports to understand project participants and any relationship with grantee characteristics and project approaches. Finally, the Exploring Engagement Fund was intended to provide risk capital. It was not intended to build long-term capacity or change the focus of the grantee partners' programs or missions, or to have long-term impact on community members or project partners. Therefore, we collected and analyzed limited information about long-term impact.

Appendix C: Grantee Projects

In this appendix, we showcase the range of Exploring Engagement Fund grantees and projects from June 2012 to November 2018. A more comprehensive [database describes grantees and projects](#) in additional detail. Information is drawn from participants' grant proposals and reports and therefore reflects primarily grantee perspectives.

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
18th Street Arts Center	Create	Media/communications	Los Angeles
24th Street Theatre Company	Create	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
AJA Project	Create	Multidisciplinary	San Diego Area
American Conservatory Theater	Expose	Performing arts: Theater	San Francisco Bay Area
Anaheim Ballet	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Dance	Orange County
Arte Américas	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Multidisciplinary	Central Valley
Arts Visalia	Expose	Visual arts	Central Valley
Association for the Advancement of Filipino American Arts & Culture	Create	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
Bay Area Video Coalition	Create	Media/communications	San Francisco Bay Area
California Indian Basketweavers Association	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Visual arts	Statewide
Cantare Con Vivo	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area Region; Central Valley
Center for Music National Service	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Music	Los Angeles
Center for the Study of Political Graphics	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Visual arts	Central Valley; Inland Empire

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
Center Theatre Group	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Theater	Los Angeles
Central West Ballet	Expose	Performing arts: Dance	Central Valley
Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño	Create	Multidisciplinary	Central Valley
Charles W. Bowers Museum Corporation	Educate	Multidisciplinary	Orange County
Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco	Hybrid: Create/Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area
Coachella Valley Symphony	Expose	Performing arts: Music	Inland Empire
Company of Angels, Inc.	Create	Performing arts: Theater	Los Angeles
CONTRA-TIEMPO	Create	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
CounterPulse	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Multidisciplinary	Statewide; Bay Area Region; Central Coast Region
Craft and Folk Art Museum	Expose	Visual arts	Los Angeles
Crocker Art Museum Association	Hybrid: Create/Expose	Multidisciplinary	Gold Country
Cygnnet Theatre	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Theater	San Diego Area
Cypress Performing Arts Association	Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area
Dance Camera West	Expose	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
DIAVOLO Architecture in Motion	Educate	Performing arts: Dance	Los Angeles
DIAVOLO Architecture in Motion	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Dance	Los Angeles

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
East Bay Center for the Performing Arts	Create	Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area
EastSide Arts Alliance & Cultural Center	Hybrid: Create/Educate/Expose	Visual arts	San Francisco Bay Area
EngAGE	Create	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
EngAGE	Expose	Multidisciplinary	Statewide
Fresh Meat Productions	Create	Multidisciplinary	Statewide
Fresno Art Museum	Hybrid: Create/Expose	Visual arts	Central Valley
Fresno Grand Opera	Expose	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Central Valley
Gamelan Sekar Jaya	Hybrid: Create/Expose	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area
Grand Vision Foundation	Educate	Performing arts: Music	Los Angeles
Hammer Museum at UCLA	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Visual arts	Los Angeles
Harmony Project	Educate	Performing arts: Music	Los Angeles
Healdsburg Jazz Festival, Inc.	Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area
Heidi Duckler Dance	Expose	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles; Inland Empire
Heidi Duckler Dance	Create	Performing arts: Dance	Los Angeles
Highways Performance Space and Gallery	Expose	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
Idris Ackamoor and Cultural Odyssey	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
Instituto Mazatlán Bellas Artes De Sacramento	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Gold Country
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (formerly Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice)	Create	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Inland Empire
Kala Institute	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Visual arts	San Francisco Bay Area
Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Dance	Los Angeles
KITKA Inc.	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Music	Statewide
Knights of Indulgence Theatre United States (The Imaginists)	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Theater	San Francisco Bay Area
Kulintang Arts Inc. (KULARTS)	Hybrid: Create/Expose	Visual arts	San Francisco Bay Area
LA Commons (Community Partners fiscal sponsor)	Educate	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
LA Freewaves	Expose	Media/communications	Los Angeles
Laguna Art Museum	Educate	Visual arts	Orange County
Latino Center of Art and Culture (formerly La Raza Galeria Posada)	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Multidisciplinary	Gold Country
Long Beach Opera	Expose	Performing arts: Music	Los Angeles
Los Angeles Master Chorale Association	Educate	Performing arts: Music	Statewide
Los Angeles Nomadic Division	Educate	Visual arts	Los Angeles
Los Angeles Opera Company	Educate	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
Los Angeles Philharmonic Association	Expose	Performing arts: Music	Los Angeles
Mainly Mozart Inc.	Educate	Performing arts: Music	San Diego Area
Mammoth Art Guild Inc.	Educate	Multidisciplinary	High Sierra & Desert
McCallum Theatre/ Friends of the Cultural Center, Inc.	Create	Multidisciplinary	Inland Empire
Memoir Journal	Create	Humanities/literature	Central Valley; Inland Empire
Museum Associates, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)	Expose	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego	Hybrid: Create/Educate/ Expose	Visual arts	San Diego Area
Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara	Expose	Visual arts	Central Coast
Museum of the African Diaspora	Create	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area
Near & Arnold's School of Performing Arts & Cultural Education (SPACE)	Create	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Northern California
Near & Arnold's School of Performing Arts & Cultural Education (SPACE)	Create	Multidisciplinary	Northern California
Northern California Center for the Arts	Educate	Performing arts: Music	Northern California
Oakland Museum of California	Expose	Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
Oceanside Museum of Art	Create	Visual arts	San Diego Area
Other Minds	Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area
Outfest	Create	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
Pacific Arts Movement (formerly San Diego Asian Film Foundation)	Expose	Media/communications	San Diego Area
Palm Springs International Film Festival	Expose	Media/communications	Inland Empire
Pasadena Symphony Association	Expose	Performing arts: Music	Los Angeles
Playhouse Arts	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Multidisciplinary	Northern California
Playwrights Project	Create	Performing arts: Theater	San Diego Area
Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project	Educate	Media/communications	Statewide
Redlands Bowl Performing Arts	Expose	Performing arts: Music	Inland Empire
Redlands Bowl Performing Arts	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Multidisciplinary	Inland Empire
Rhythmix Cultural Works	Educate	Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area
Riverside Art Museum	Create	Visual arts	Inland Empire
Ryman Carroll Foundation	Expose	Visual arts	Los Angeles
San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Inland Empire
San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra	Expose	Multidisciplinary	Inland Empire

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
San Diego Museum of Art	Other	Visual arts	San Diego Area
San Diego Symphony Orchestra	Create	Multidisciplinary	San Diego Area
San Diego Watercolor Society	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Visual arts	San Diego Area
San Francisco Contemporary Music Players	Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area
San José Museum of Art Association	Expose	Visual arts	San Francisco Bay Area
San Jose Taiko Group, Inc.	Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area
San Luis Obispo Museum of Art	Expose	Visual arts	Central Coast
Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History	Create	Multidisciplinary	Central Coast
School of Arts and Culture at Mexican Heritage Plaza	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area
Self-Help Graphics and Arts, Inc.	Create	Visual arts	Inland Empire
Shakespeare San Francisco	Educate	Performing arts: Theater	Central Valley
Sonoma County Museum Foundation	Create	Visual arts	San Francisco Bay Area
South Coast Repertory, Inc.	Create	Performing arts: Theater	Los Angeles
Spector Dance	Create	Performing arts: Dance	Central Coast
State Street Ballet	Educate	Performing arts: Dance	Statewide

GRANTEE NAME	PROJECT STRATEGY	PROJECT DISCIPLINE	PROJECT LOCATION
Stern Grove Festival Association	Expose	Performing arts: Music	San Francisco Bay Area
Street Poets, Inc.	Hybrid: Create/Educate/Expose	Humanities/literature	Los Angeles
Teada Productions	Expose	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
The New Children's Museum	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Visual arts	San Diego Area
The Pasadena Playhouse	Create	Performing arts: Theater	Los Angeles
The Robey Theatre Company	Create	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
Theatre of Hearts, Inc.	Create	Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
University of the Pacific	Educate	Performing arts: Theater	Central Valley
Valley Public Television, Inc.	Create	Media/communications	Central Valley
Venice Arts	Create	Performing arts: Multidisciplinary	Los Angeles
Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum	Hybrid: Educate/Expose	Performing arts: Theater	Los Angeles
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts	Other	Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area
YoloArts	Hybrid: Other/Create/Expose	Multidisciplinary	Gold Country
YoloArts	Educate	Multidisciplinary	Gold Country
YR Media (formerly Youth Radio)	Expose	Multidisciplinary	San Francisco Bay Area



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