
In November 2015, a resolution directing the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture to conduct “a constructive County-wide conversation about ways to improve diversity in cultural organizations” for all LA County residents was unanimously passed by the Board of Supervisors with a focus on five key target areas: Boards of Directors, Staffing, Audience/Participants, Programming, and Artists/Creators.

Thirteen actionable recommendations to improve cultural equity and inclusion in the arts emerged. These recommendations open the doors to resources and promote tools that can break down barriers of exclusion in a way that fosters and promotes arts and culture – as well as the benefits they provide – for all residents of LA County. The Los Angeles County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII) guiding principles are outlined below:

- Every individual participates in creative thinking and expression
- Every individual has the right to engage in arts and culture that celebrate their highest potential
- Our community’s diversity is an asset to our arts and cultural environment and our economy
- Including communities in arts and culture achieves our highest potential

ADVANCEMENT GRANT

In alignment with CEII, the Arts Ed Collective has updated the Advancement Grant Program to address issues of equity in arts education across LA County as outlined:

- Grant goals aim to direct resources and investments to historically underserved communities
- Applications address how projects support participation and culturally relevant experiences for historically underserved youth
- Additional points added to panel score based on the demographics of a school district
- Expanded project eligibility preserves student access to arts education and encourages the inclusion of community arts partners

Priority Point Areas provide increased funding to school districts with enrollment of 10,000 or greater, and school districts with more than 72% of their students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals, foster youth, or English language learners. These priority areas address key findings from the LA County [Arts Ed Profile Report](#).

The guidelines highlight the definitions of *Historically Excluded or Precluded*, *Historically Underserved*, *Scale*, *Equity*, and *Quality* as identified in [Arts for All Children, Youth, and Families: Los Angeles County’s New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education](#). By defining these terms in the guidelines, applicants will have a common language for how the Arts Ed Collective is measuring increases in arts education.

Criterion	Point Distribution
STRATEGIC DIRECTION	35
QUALITY OF PROJECT PLAN	30
QUALITY OF PROJECT EVALUATION	10
PERSONNEL CAPACITY	15
FISCAL CAPACITY	10
Subtotal of Panel Points	100
Priority Point Area 1: STUDENT POPULATION	
Enrollment of 10,000 – 19,999	8
Enrollment of 20,000 or greater	16
Priority Point Area 2: UNDUPLICATED PUPIL COUNT	
Unduplicated Pupil Count of 72 – 85.9%	8
Unduplicated Pupil Count of 86% or greater	16
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	132

DEFINITIONS

Diversity: The demographic mix of a specific collection of people, taking into account elements of human difference, but focusing particularly on race and ethnicity, LGBTQ populations, people with disabilities and women.

Equity: The promotion of justice, impartiality and fairness within procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the underlying or root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Inclusion: The degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes within an organization or group.

RESOURCES

These resources are provided to prompt thoughts and reflection on the values of CEI as it pertains to the LA County Department of Arts and Culture’s grant programs. We recommend reviewing one or more of the resources in preparation for the grant panel review meeting.

IMPLICIT BIAS AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY

[**Acknowledging and Managing Implicit Bias**](#) is a video presented by Dr. Bryant Marks, Associate Professor at Morehouse College, in which he guides viewers through the foundations of implicit bias, real-world examples, why it exists and its effects (especially on racial minorities), and how it can be measured.

[**Project Implicit**](#) is a nonprofit organization and international collaboration between researchers who are interested in implicit social cognition - thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control also known as *implicit bias*. The goal of the organization is to educate the public about hidden biases and to provide a “virtual laboratory” for collecting data on the Internet.

CULTURAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

[**Los Angeles County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative \(CEII\)**](#) details the 18-month public process, the 13 recommendations approved by the Board of Supervisors, the literature review and the full [CEII report](#).

[**State of the Work: Stories from the Movement to Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**](#) is the final report of a five year initiative led by the D5 coalition established to advance philanthropy’s diversity, equity, and inclusion. The report presents data on progress toward increased foundation staff and board diversity, and increased funding for diverse populations.

[**What Are the Paradigm Shifts Necessary for the Arts Sector to Nurture More Sustainable THRIVING Institutions of Color?**](#) is a report based on a survey of and focus groups with New York City-based organizations run by or serving African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American (ALAANA) communities and cultures and describes the challenges faced by these communities, articulates needs, and calls on funders to make changes in supporting true sustainability as a field-wide initiative.

[**Not Just Money: Equity Issues in Cultural Philanthropy**](#) summarizes the main findings of recent research, revisiting the reasons why addressing diversity and equity issues in the cultural sector matters more than ever initially discussed in a 2011 report. Foundational to this is the understanding that arts and culture are essential means by which people make sense of their lives, share their experiences, build bridges across divides, and realize their common humanity.

[**Real and Not Real: The History of Racialization in the United States**](#) is presented by Grantmakers in the Arts in partnership with Race Forward. This presentation provides a historical overview of race and its implications in arts grantmaking for arts funders and arts organizations.

[**Aesthetic Perspectives**](#) is a framework developed by Animating Democracy to enhance understanding and evaluation of Arts for Change—creative work at the intersection of arts and community/civic engagement, community development, and justice. Arts for Change projects often challenge the conventional terms by which creative work is described and assessed.