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# Using Geography for Arts and Culture Narrative Building and Advocacy



Los Angeles  
County

Arts &  
Culture

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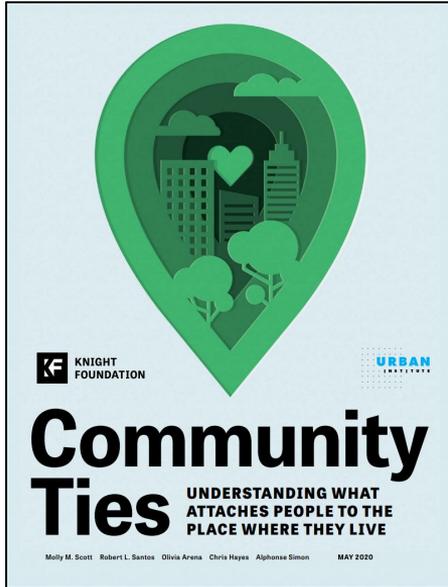
Matthew Agustin

# Agenda

- Icebreaker
- Why are we showing data about arts investments geographically?
- What is your Personal Narrative?
- Diving into the Needs Assessment
- Wrap Up

# Icebreaker

- Name
- Title/Affiliation OR Area of interest
- PICK ONE:
  - What did you put on the map?
  - What is something that upsets you about your area?
  - What is something that excites you about your area?



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## A 2020 Report by the Urban Institute found that:

- People who have more access to local arts and culture are...
    - More satisfied where they live, invest more time and resources in their community, than those with less access
  
  - However, arts and culture is one of the top four most difficult amenities to access
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# County Investments for Arts and Culture Programs...

Includes:

- Free Concerts at county parks,
- Civic/public art
- Grants for arts nonprofits and school districts
- A variety of cultural programs and arts experiences

The Needs Assessment now provides community members a resource to know how County investments and programs are distributed across the region.

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## Just a reminder that this data...

- Does NOT speak to ALL arts and culture happenings or investments or programming happening across the county.
  - This project focuses specifically on County of Los Angeles investments in across the county.
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## **For arts and culture advocates, the Needs Assessment data may reveal:**

- Disparities in access to county arts programs.
  - These maps and data can show if your area of interest has more or less access to county arts programming than other areas across the county.
  - This data may suggest larger issues of overall access to arts programs and experiences in a community.
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# What is Your Personal Narrative?

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## Story of Self



Tells us why you are called to serve.

- Events in life
- Overcoming **challenges**
- Values

Questions to ask yourself:

- Why are you called to your current work?
  - What experiences and values led you to this point?
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## Story of Us



Tells us why our community in particular is called to act and why we in particular have the capacity to lead.

- Connect personal values to collective values
- Specific people and moments that shaped your community
- Invites others to join you in this community

Questions to ask yourself:

- Who are your people?
  - What is their collective story?
  - What are the values and experiences they share with you?
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## Story of Now



The change you want to make in the world.

- Communicates urgency
- Focuses on the challenge that requires action with hope
- Calls others to join you and the community in action

Questions to ask yourself:

- What is the urgent challenge we collectively face?
  - What is the motivating vision for change?
  - What is the **SPECIFIC COMMITMENT** we can make towards that change?
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# Building your narrative begins with an **ORGANIZING SENTENCE**

1. Who are my people?  
*Identify your **constituency** - their concerns, values, resources, interests.*
1. Why is this important?  
*Articulate the broader **purpose** of the organizing campaign.*
1. What change are you seeking?  
*Identify your **goal** - What is the solution that addresses the urgent problem they are facing.*

# ORGANIZING SENTENCE

I am organizing my community to fight for better healthcare.

I am organizing **100 part-time administrators** at the SoCal School of Art & Culture to pursue **socio-economic and gender equity in the workplace** by securing affordable **healthcare plans that cover child dependents**.

# ORGANIZING SENTENCE

I am organizing my fellow arts and culture workers to fight for more career opportunities in the creative sector.

I am organizing **1,000 recent college graduates** in Los Angeles to address a **lack of racial & economic diversity in the creative sector** by advocating for the **creation of CA statewide arts & culture loan-forgiveness program.**

# ORGANIZING SENTENCE

I am organizing for equitable arts education.

I am organizing **500 middle and high school students** in Los Angeles to address a **lack of racial & economic diversity in the creative sector** by advocating for the **creation of CA statewide arts & culture loan-forgiveness program.**

# ORGANIZING SENTENCE

I am organizing \_\_\_\_\_ (who /  
*constituency*) \_\_\_\_\_

to pursue \_\_\_\_\_ (why /  
*purpose*) \_\_\_\_\_

by achieving \_\_\_\_\_ (what / *strategic*  
*goal*) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Take 10 minutes to work on your  
organizing statement.**

Find address or place



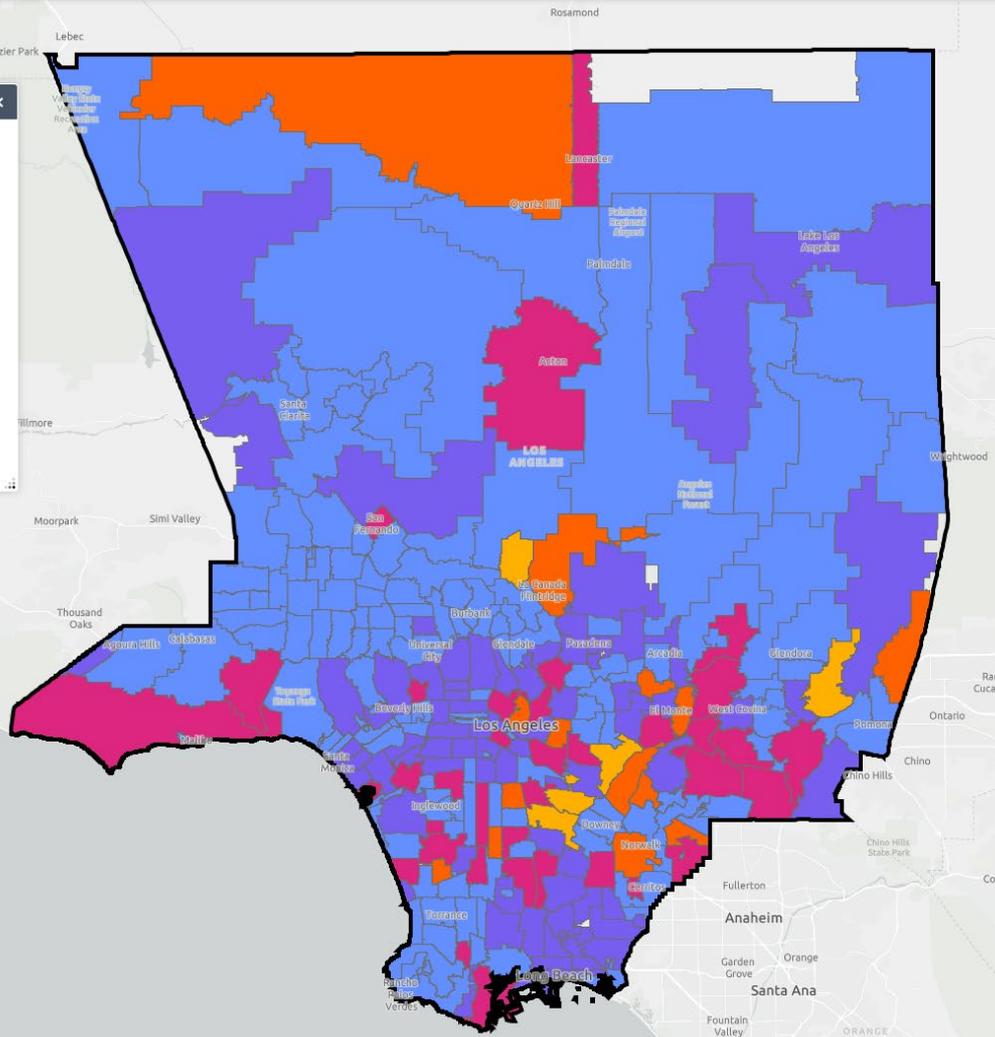
**Legend**

LA County Boundary

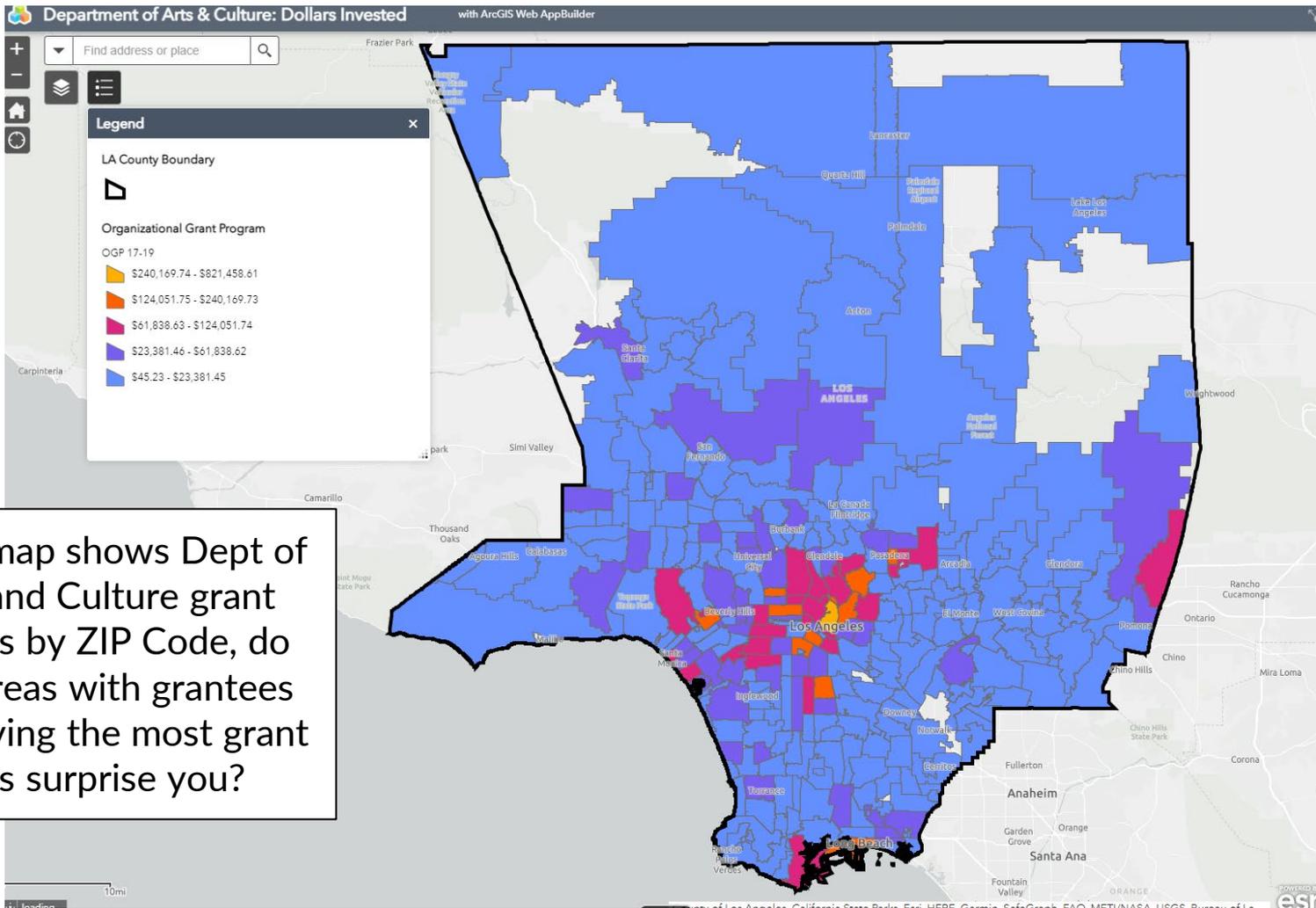
All County Arts Investments

Total Count of Investments

- 122 - 235
- 75 - 121
- 42 - 74
- 19 - 41
- 1 - 18

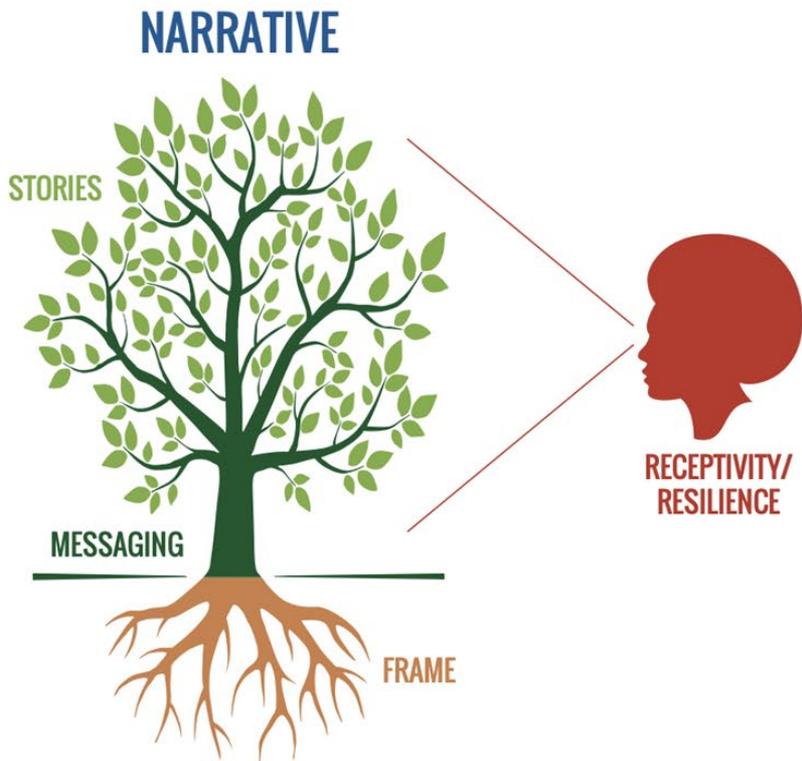


What upsets or excites you about this map?



# Using the Data

- Based on your identified gaps and narrative, create an aligned group.
  - Grants/Govt. Investments, Arts Education, # of Programs, Civic Art, Equity, or Other?
- Focus on one map. Use the filters to explore your region and your priorities.
  - It's easy to rely only on lived experience, passion, and recent observations. BUT how can you use data to support your advocacy goals? Use the three "I's" - individual, interpersonal, **institutional**



**NARRATIVE:** A way of seeing that shapes what we think, believe and do.

**STORIES:** What we see, hear and experience over time that aggregates to create or reinforce narrative.

**MESSAGING:** The articulation of the narrative frame that serves as the strategic foundation for storytelling.

**FRAME:**

- Core values
- Definition of the problem
- Identification of the solution
- Assignment of blame or responsibility

**RECEPTIVITY/RESILIENCE:**

- Lived experience
- Environment
- Echo chamber(s)