

# LA County Arts Internship Program



Los Angeles  
County  
Arts &  
Culture

## 2022 Program Highlights



With the support of the LA County Department of Arts and Culture, 223 college students had paid internships at 143 performing, presenting, film, media, literary, municipal arts, social service and social justice organizations in 2022.

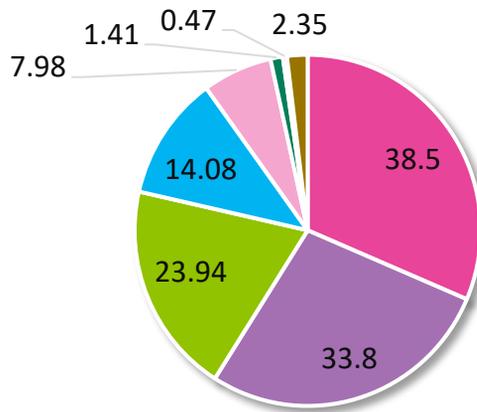
*“My supervisor was so supportive and helpful during my internship and it was such a great experience to work under them. I liked being able to work remotely and in person. I liked being able to have such a flexible schedule on top of being a full time student. The greatest barrier I felt before my internship was the idea of trying to get my foot in the door, but after completing my internship I feel confident with the people I met and the connections I made.”*  
— **intern at a municipal arts agency**

### What participants had to say:

*“This was basically the first job I ever had where I got paid so I am very grateful for this program. This program has really boosted my confidence...I feel I can get a job in the art field.”*  
— **intern at a film organization**

*“As two folks of color, it was a wonderful synergy to be paired with (the intern). I was able to have real talks with her about the challenges the field is facing in terms of equity, but also be inspired by the hope and expectations she has going into the workforce.”*  
— **supervisor at a contemporary performance organization**

## 2022 Interns by Race/Ethnicity\*



- |                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| ■ Hispanic or Latino        | ■ White           |
| ■ Asian or Pacific Islander | ■ Mixed Ethnicity |
| ■ Black or African American | ■ Native American |
| ■ Decline to State          | ■ Other           |

\*~88% identify as non-white. Note that students may identify with more than one race/ethnicity so total is over 100%.

### By Gender Identity:

- 70.75% Identify as Female
- 25% Identify as Male
- 4.25% Identify as Other

### Program Impact + Success:

- **88%** of supervisors report being “highly satisfied” with the program
- On a scale from 1 to 5, **94%** of interns and supervisors rated the quality of their relationship a 4 or higher.
- **96%** of interns reported that the remote internship format & part time hours worked well for them.
- **97%** of interns said they would recommend this program to a friend.

### Colleges with highest representation:

- UCLA
- USC
- Cal State Northridge
- Cal State Long Beach
- Santa Monica College
- Cal Poly Pomona
- Occidental College
- Los Angeles City College
- Pasadena City College

### Most valuable benefits from the internship, according to interns:

- 57% said increased understanding of careers in the arts
- 29% said paid work experience
- 10% said networking opportunities





**2022 Arts Internship Program**  
**Final Report**  
**June 2023**



*Interns and Arts and Culture staff attend 2022 'Intern Day Out' event at The Music Center*

## **Background and Program Overview**

The Los Angeles County Arts Internship Program (AIP) supports and strengthens the cultural sector of LA County by expanding access to high quality paid opportunities for college students of all backgrounds to gain experience, understanding, and transferable skills relevant to careers in the arts, the creative economy, and engagement in civic life.

Established in 2000 as a companion to the Getty Foundation's Marrow Undergraduate Internship Program, which funds 10-week, full-time internships in visual arts organizations and museums for college students, AIP allows students to develop a deeper understanding of the work involved in nonprofit arts administration across a variety of artistic disciplines and creative fields, learn about the role of the arts in communities, expand their networks, and develop skills that can be applied in their future careers.

The AIP program provides grants to nonprofit performing, presenting, film, media, literary, and municipal arts organizations to hire students to engage in specific projects over the course of a 400-hour internship that takes place from June - March. In 2020, social service and social justice organizations with dedicated arts programming that are grantees of the Community Impact Arts Grant (CIAG) program were also eligible to apply, further expanding the available opportunities for interns. The program also facilitates educational, peer learning, and networking opportunities for the interns to get a broader view of the arts ecosystem outside of the context of the day-to-day work within their organizations and provides a supervisor orientation for host organizations to integrate a lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and support for diverse students.

These are hallmarks of the AIP program that demonstrate both longevity and responsiveness to the evolving needs and aspirations of the arts field.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors' investment in AIP began with a commitment to fund approximately 120 positions, on par with the Getty's program. Today, many intern alumni remain in the field and go on to supervise other interns, lead successful careers in the arts, and become leaders of nonprofit arts organizations. While the program's structure remained relatively unchanged over the years, Los Angeles County's [Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative](#) (CEII) highlighted the need to more intentionally support students of all backgrounds to be able to take advantage of internship opportunities and included a community college expansion to not only increase the total number of student positions in the program but provide intentional outreach and positions for them. To implement the expansion, staff member Martín Hernández was hired, and AIP staff strengthened relationships with local community colleges and encouraged grantee organizations to consider community college students in their hiring. As a result, the number of participating community college students has skyrocketed from 7 in 2017 to 48 in 2019, 38 in 2021 and 47 in 2022, an increase of 320% from 2017. In addition, a deeper equity lens has been championed across all the Department's programs by the Arts Commission and Department leadership, staff, and key partners. In 2020 the Department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a shift in focus to better reflect the changing needs of both organizations and students in the County that were well underway prior to the onset of the pandemic. Along the way, the Department also examined the AIP guidelines internally with an equity lens, bringing forward changes to better accommodate diverse community college students resulting in greater accessibility and inclusion.

The success and relevance of the program is reflected in continued demand for the program as well as the Board of Supervisors' championing of its growth over time. Despite reductions during the Great Recession, AIP has steadily expanded in the last few years and initial pandemic budget cuts were restored by the Board. In 2022, 228 positions were initially awarded to 146 organizations and of those, 223 positions at 143 organizations were successfully launched. An estimated 3300 applications were received for these positions.

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*"My supervisor really emphasized the importance of teamwork and communication. I never felt pressured to commit to an assignment I didn't feel ready for, nor was I ever asked to do more than I could handle. The level of respect I received throughout my internship worked well and kept my spirits high and my mind motivated."*

*-- Intern at music organization*

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## **Program Outreach**

For the fourth year in a row, AIP staff conducted "Info Sessions" at various institutions of higher education, with the goal of increasing awareness of the program specifically among community college students. These info sessions were comprised of a short overview of the program as well as Q&A with Arts & Culture staff. These presentations allowed the Department to demonstrate the countywide scope of the program, encourage students from the community colleges to apply, as well as provide some insight and advice for the application process. As in

2021, some of these sessions occurred in-person or on campus, but most remained virtual.

School	BOS	# of students attended
East Los Angeles College*	1	~ 50
Loyola Marymount University	2	~ 25
West Los Angeles College	2	~ 10
Santa Monica College	3	~ 40
Long Beach City College	4	~ 10
Antelope Valley College	5	~ 25
Cal State Northridge	5	~ 60
Pasadena City College	5	~ 25
<b>TOTAL</b>		~245

\*info session conducted in-person, not virtually.

### **Continued Program Flexibility**

Due to the overwhelmingly positive feedback and appreciation from grantees as well as ongoing hardships, staff kept in place much of the program flexibility that was introduced in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the program guidelines and application. They have also made small adjustments to program language to address the new stage of the pandemic.

These overall changes include:

1. *Expanded Timeline and Flexible Hours:* The internship work window has been extended from June through August to June through March 1 of the following year. Applicants were able to propose internships within the new timeframe, allowing them greater flexibility in proposed projects for the interns. To provide students with flexibility they would need to balance other work and class schedules during the school year, interns are now permitted to work a minimum of 15 hours per week over the longer period of time (rather than requiring full-time for 10 weeks).
2. *Remote/Virtual Work:* Applicants were asked to submit proposals that could be completed mostly onsite, with the option of up to 100 hours of the internship being worked remotely. Applicants seeking to have interns working remotely were asked to speak to how they planned to support interns in a remote environment.
3. *Virtual Educational/Peer Events:* To better serve a wide range of interns navigating remote internships, educational components like Peer Groups were offered as a mix of in-person and virtual opportunities.

### **Program Highlights**

#### *Supervisor Orientation*

The Department and The Getty Foundation agreed that the annual Supervisor Orientation should once again be held in a virtual format to accommodate a wide range of supervisors. With

the success of its implementation last year, staff once again utilized the two-part format to offer a more substantive experience for the supervisors participating in both programs.

Day one focused on the mechanics of both programs; reviewing supervisor responsibilities, intern approval, required surveys and other technical pieces. To highlight the internal wealth of knowledge within this program, Getty and Department staff moderated a panel of former interns and current supervisors to share their thoughts and experiences. The panelists touched on themes of mentorship, intergenerational communication styles and more. These individuals were:

- **Olivian Cha** – Collections Manager and Curator, Corita Art Center
- **Jonathan Muñoz-Proulx** - Director of Cultural Programming, A Noise Within and LA County Arts Internship Program Alumni
- **Joseph Daniel Valencia** - Exhibitions and Programs Manager, Vincent Price Art Museum, and Getty Marrow Internship Program Alumni
- **Felicia Vann** - Founder and Executive Director, Precision Dance Company

At the end of day one, supervisors from both programs were given the opportunity to network with one another in Zoom breakout rooms, sharing thoughts and reflections from the panel discussion and anything else related to their experience as supervisors. These conversations are extremely valuable as this is one of the few times supervisors from both programs get to share space with one another.

Day two of supervisor orientation enlisted the help of outside consultants to provide professional development for supervisors around three different topics. These topics were agreed upon by both the Department and The Getty as areas of need identified in feedback from supervisors in both programs. New supervisors were required to attend at least one session but could choose to attend all three if interested.

- Session 1: **Effective Mentoring in these Challenging Times** with Mutima Imani
- Session 2: **Trans & Nonbinary 101** with Addison Rose Vincent
- Session 3: **Embracing Inclusive Workforce Development for Early Career Professionals** with Elena Muslar

The themes of these sessions were culled directly from supervisor feedback about topics they would find most useful and marked the first time both programs dedicated resources to discussing ways supervisors could support trans and nonbinary interns. Overall, feedback about the new format of the event was very positive. Supervisors were extremely engaged in each session and took advantage of being able to network with colleagues in The Getty's program.

#### *Educational Components – Peer Groups*

For the first time since the onset of the pandemic, Peer Groups were offered in a mostly virtual format, with a few options for in-person events. We engaged 10 arts and culture professionals as peer group leaders who were tasked with planning and executing these events – staff worked closely with these peer group leaders to accommodate in-person versus virtual events and coordination of logistics. Peer group leaders were a mix of new and returning individuals.

Below is a list of the 2022 peer group leaders as well as the events they hosted – Peer Groups with an in-person component are marked with an asterisk:

- \*Getting Hired: Navigating Employment in Entertainment presented by **Larry Laboe**, Executive Director of New Filmmakers Los Angeles
- Why Art Matters presented by **Sayon Syprasoeuth**, Program Manager at United Cambodian Community
- \*Indigenous Cultura in MacArthur Park & Beyond presented by **Allegra Padilla**, Director of Community Relations & Partnerships with Levitt Pavilion Los Angeles
- \*Theatre vs. TV/Film: What's the Reality in LA? presented by **Brian Elerding**, Executive Director of Lineage Performing Arts Center
- Mujer: Ayer, Hoy, Y Siempre / Woman: Yesterday, Today & Always presented by **Christie Rios**, Director of Programs with The Floricanto Center for the Performing Arts
- Take This Job and Love It: Creative Career Building presented by **Charles Jensen**, Program Director of UCLA Extension Writers' Program
- The Multi-Hyphenate Artist presented by **Elisa Bocanegra**, Founder of Hero Theatre
- A Virtual Networking Roundtable with The Wallis presented by **Debra Pasquerette**, Manager of Community Engagement at The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
- Creating the Next LA: How to Start Your Own Artist Organization presented by **Karen Mack**, Founder & Executive Director of LA Commons
- Artist Opportunities 101: How Do I Make the Best Impression? Presented by **Jennifer Fukutomi Jones**, Arts and Culture Administrator with the City of Glendale



*Panelists for the 'Indigenous Cultura in MacArthur Park & Beyond' Peer Group Event*

## *Educational Components – Arts and Government*



*Arts Commissioners joined by Supervisor Mitchell for the 2022 Arts and Government Event*

To highlight and uplift the work of the Department and the Commission, the program offered its first ever “Arts and Government” event as an additional Peer Group event option for interns, exploring the unique position government occupies in its support of arts and culture. The panel was comprised of representatives from the LA County Arts Commission and was moderated by LA County Supervisor for the Second Supervisorial District, **Holly J. Mitchell** with welcome by Arts Commission President Eisenberg and introductory remarks by Department Director Kristin Sakoda. Below is a full list of speakers who participated in the panel:

- **Anji Gaspar-Milanovic**, Division Director, Grants and Professional Development – LA County Department of Arts and Culture
- **Kristin Sakoda**, Director – LA County Department of Arts and Culture
- **Eric Eisenberg**, President & 4<sup>th</sup> District Commissioner – LA County Arts Commission
- **Leticia Buckley**, 1<sup>st</sup> District Commissioner – LA County Arts Commission
- **Patrisse Cullors**, 2<sup>nd</sup> District Commissioner – LA County Arts Commission
- **Jennifer Price-Letscher**, 5<sup>th</sup> District Commissioner – LA County Arts Commission

Interns were extremely appreciative of the time spent with Supervisor Mitchell – under her facilitation, our Arts Commissioners shared how they were appointed to the commission and how they view their role on it. Commissioners also shared how they stay close to the communities they represent, what skills they are most grateful for in their careers, as well as their 10-to-20-year vision for the region. Interns were engaged throughout the entire session and were able to ask questions of both the Supervisor and Commissioners at the end of the event. A recording was shared with the full class of interns for those unable to attend live.

### *Educational Components – Intern Day Out*

With the return of in-person events, Department staff coordinated the first ever “Intern Day Out” on September 11, 2022. The goal of the event was twofold; (1) to give interns an opportunity to network with one another as well as staff and (2) to provide interns with a chance to experience the wonderful art opportunities LA County has to offer. Department staff held the event on a weekend to not conflict with other work or school commitments.

Interns were welcomed to the LA Times Courtyard at The Music Center with remarks from Kristin Sakoda and other department staff. During lunch, interns were encouraged to network with one another and department staff floated around different tables to share about their work in the department and encourage discussion. After lunch, interns and staff were treated to the closing performance of *The Prom* at the Ahmanson Theatre, presented by our grantee Center Theatre Group. A group photo from the event is included in the first half of this report.

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*“Although my internship is ending, I am pleased to say that I am being promoted to Events and Marketing Assistant. My organization was extremely understanding of my school schedule and since I am a music major, they understood that I had a lot of required performances and such that I had to attend. They were great about allowing me to work my schedule around my school schedule.”*

*-Intern at a performing arts organization*

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### **Looking Ahead**

#### *The Upcoming 2023 Cycle*

While much of Los Angeles has reopened under Department of Public Health guidelines and COVID-19 related health orders have been rescinded, continued flexibility in the program is necessary to adapt to larger shifts in workplace culture and to meet the needs of grantees and interns alike. As such, many measures instituted in 2020 will remain in place for the 2023 cycle including the longer program timeline, flexible remote work parameters, and some virtual educational components. While we anticipate that many interns will be working onsite for most of their internships, we have introduced additional parameters on remote work to ensure that students working remotely have the best experience possible and that the program can accommodate the new work reality. In acknowledgement of this reopening phase of the pandemic, staff plans to continue to offer a handful of in-person events for the 2023 cycle to continue to gauge intern readiness and comfortability. This information will be used to continue to adjust future cycles of programming and educational components.

We are also pleased to note that the department recently hired Samantha Avitia as the Arts Internship Program Specialist in the Grants and Professional Development division to assist Arts Internship Program Manager Martín Hernández with administration of the Arts Internship Program. This marks both the promotion of Martín and a return to having two dedicated staff to support AIP, since the 2020 loss of an outgoing staff – an exciting and welcome development.

A full list of the schools represented by the interns and participating arts organizations that launched internships in 2022 is attached.