



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 29, 2017

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FUNDING APPROVED FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY CULTURAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVE

Funding will Support the Creation of a First-of-its-Kind County Cultural Policy, Embedding of Creative Strategists in County Departments and the Development of Teen Arts Pathways

Five recommendations included in the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII) report released by the Arts Commission in April 2017 have received funding by the LA County Board of Supervisors as part of the approved budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18.

“This FY 2017-2018 budget prioritizes the Arts Commission and County arts programming. I’m glad we are able to showcase our arts potential and highlight our artistic jewels within the County,” states Supervisor Hilda L. Solis.

The CEII report was the culmination of an 18-month public process that led to the development of recommendations to the Board of Supervisors to ensure that everyone in LA County has equitable access to arts and culture, and to improve inclusion in the wider arts ecology for all residents in every community. **The executive summary and full report are available at LACountyArts.org/CEII-report.**

“This is an important moment for arts and culture in LA County,” shares Pamela Bright-Moon, President of the Arts Commission. “I am confident our neighborhoods and communities will see substantive results from the work of CEII.”

On Monday, June 26, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved funding for the following CEII recommendations:

- Development of a Los Angeles County Cultural Policy (\$50,000 one-time);
- Requirement for cultural organizations that contract with the County to include statements, policies or plans for cultural equity (\$50,000 ongoing);
- Expansion of college arts pathways through paid arts internships for community college students (\$448,000 ongoing);
- Development of teen arts pathways to create access to work-based learning opportunities for teens (\$230,000 ongoing);
- Placement of artists to work cross-sector to address social problems (\$235,000 ongoing).

Additionally, on March 14, 2017, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a motion to implement a private developer requirement for civic art in the unincorporated areas which is an additional CEII recommendation.

“The Board of Supervisors has clearly demonstrated its commitment to equity across LA County, and I am especially grateful to Supervisor Solis for her leadership in starting this process over 18-months ago,” states Helen Hernandez, CEII Co-chair, President and Founder of The Imagen Foundation, and executive producer of the Imagen Awards. “These efforts will create opportunities for our youth, to help them build self-confidence, critical thinking and awareness of what they could achieve. We are daring to dream, to bring new pathways so that we can build bridges for our communities today for a better tomorrow.”

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The CEII process included an Advisory Committee made up of a wide range of local experts and led by three Co-Chairs. Perspectives, opinions and ideas were collected from the public through a series of Town Halls and Working Groups. A set of 13 recommendations for how to improve diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts emerged and are outlined in the report.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to participate in this initiative," shares Maria Rosario Jackson, CEII Co-Chair and Institute Professor, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, Arizona State University. "The recommendations from the CEII ultimately are about helping to create a greater, more inclusive and equitable County in which everyone can thrive and reach their full potential. Full engagement in the arts and lifting up and advancing the diverse cultural assets and creativity of the region are certainly central to that."

"Arts and culture enrich our lives by giving us all a voice," states Tim Dang, CEII Co-chair and former Producing Artist Director at East West Players. "They empower us to tell and share stories of a robust, dynamic and diverse group of people, making each and every community visible and vital. The Board of Supervisor's leadership enables us to move the needle and to set a movement that is going to be a model for the country."

Los Angeles County Arts Commission fosters excellence, diversity, vitality, understanding and accessibility of the arts in Los Angeles County. The Arts Commission provides leadership in cultural services for the County, encompassing 88 municipalities and nearly 140 unincorporated areas, including funding and job opportunities, professional development and general resources. lacountyarts.org.

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