

LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION
CULTURAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVE
Literature Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Enriching Lives



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INTRODUCTION

In its motion passed on November 10, 2015, the LA County Board of Supervisors stated their goal as improving “diversity in cultural organizations, in the areas of their leadership, staffing, programming and audience composition.”¹ This literature review is intended to investigate and provide background information on how others have addressed this question, both through academic research and practitioner experience.

The literature lends these concepts into a division by slightly different categories, as follows:

- Boards of Directors in Arts and Culture Organizations
- The Arts and Culture Workforce
- Audiences and Programming

Audiences and programming are closely intertwined in the literature, and thus are combined in this report.

Culturally specific arts organizations and their potential contribution to diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts ecology emerged as a potentially powerful but not yet fully understood set of actors, so this topic was added as a fourth section in this report:

- Culturally Specific Arts Organizations

The report begins with a background discussion on diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in arts and culture, and it concludes with a series of broad lessons that emerged from the literature that apply to all four of the areas identified by the Board of Supervisors in their motion.

A reference list of all literature reviewed is available in the full report.

DIVERSITY, CULTURAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN ARTS AND CULTURE

Concerns about diversity, cultural equity and inclusion have been part of American arts policy since the early days of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in 1965. The term “cultural equity” appears as early as 1978 in an NEA audience study where it is defined as *a right to be both a producer and consumer of culture*. The NEA ultimately attempted to balance “populist” and “elitist” perspectives of the arts, with the understanding that “art for art’s sake” is not a sufficient rationale for government funding of the arts.

Since that time, ideas about the ways in which the public might engage with the arts have evolved. “Old” ideas about art such as limiting audience participation to a passive role have come to be seen as a barrier

¹ For the full text of the motion, see <http://file.lacounty.gov/bos/supdocs/99052.pdf>.

to discovering the roles art and cultural activities can play in bringing diverse people together through an artistic process that reveals cultural assets and strengthens communities.

In 2015, the discussion of diversity, cultural equity and inclusion taking place across America more broadly was embraced in the arts community as well. Research studies were released that found boards, employment, audiences and programming in the arts are less diverse than the population of the country, in fields from museums to publishing to theatre. Seeking to address this, several major entities took action. The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs collected diversity data from across museums and performing arts groups in the five boroughs. Grantmakers in the Arts adopted a statement of purpose for their work in racial equity in arts philanthropy. DataArts (formerly the Cultural Data Project) piloted a new tool to collect demographic data about boards and the workforce of arts nonprofits. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors passed a motion directing the LA County Arts Commission to establish an advisory group to come up with recommendations to “enhance the participation and leadership of individuals from underrepresented communities in the arts.” Their goal is to increase diversity in cultural organizations, specifically around leadership, staffing, programming and audience composition.

Depending on the initiative, study or context, “cultural equity,” “inclusion” and “diversity” are three terms that are often used interchangeably, though they mean subtly different things. These terms are also defined by how they are used in practice. For example, in its work to improve diversity in the arts sector, Arts Council England refers to race, ethnicity, faith, disability, age, gender, sexuality, class and economic disadvantage, and any social or institutional barriers that prevent people from creating, participating or enjoying the arts. In the US, a review of 21 initiatives to expand diversity in arts and culture nonprofits found many different aspects of diversity to be included, and that they varied by initiative. The top five elements of diversity across all 21 initiatives were age, race, culture, socioeconomic status and ethnicity. Most studies show that achieving diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in any organization is a long-term, iterative process that engages all parts and levels of the organization, no matter how big or small.

In order to measure change in diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts in LA County, the literature shows that terms must be defined, clear goals set and data collected over time. To establish baselines for improvement and benchmarks to achieve, standardized definitions as well as common data collection procedures are needed. This will allow for comparisons across organizations, disciplines and geographic regions. It is also important to establish the level(s) at which progress is to be measured. Should diversity be measured within individual institutions, within specific disciplines, across all organizations in Los Angeles County or at other levels? Qualitative studies are needed to complement quantitative research and go deeper to understand why people engage in the arts in the ways they do.

This literature review was conducted over a nine week period between December 9, 2015 and February 8, 2016. The research team reviewed academic, practitioner and journalistic writing on diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts related to boards, staff, audiences and programming through a wide lens in order to capture the broadest sense of the state of research and practice in the field. Culturally specific arts organization emerged as a critical part of the arts ecology, and this was added to the literature review. The research team discovered that much of the literature is emergent in nature. The problems are being identified from many different points of view. Consensus on the nature of the problem is less defined. Proven solutions are difficult to find. Even as this document went to press, new reports were published and new initiatives were being launched.

This literature review should be considered a first look at the issues covered here. The examples provided are not exhaustive. In seeking to understand how to improve diversity, cultural equity and inclusion and ensure that all have equal access to the benefits that arts and culture offer, there is much more to be discussed, debated and learned.

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS IN ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

Boards of directors of nonprofit organizations across the US have been found to be predominantly white, and this has remained true over time. Non-white nonprofit board members in the US only increased by two percent from 1993 to 2010, from 14 to 16 percent. Analysis of the subset of arts and culture nonprofits in these data show that their boards are similarly homogenous with respect to race and ethnicity, and smaller organizations are even more likely to have all white boards. Among arts nonprofit organizations, organizations that focus their mission on presenting non-white or multi-ethnic programming have been shown to have a better track record of maintaining a diverse board.

While many nonprofits express that they see the value and benefits of expanding diversity on their boards, there is limited evidence of effective action being taken by nonprofit boards to increase diversity. Moreover, recent research finds practices tried in the past to increase diversity have not always succeeded.

Board Structure and Culture Increasing diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the boards of directors at arts and culture organizations begins with stating the board’s commitment to diversity in its mission statement and includes the development of robust recruitment and leadership pipelines. The literature recommends this include making racial and ethnic diversity an explicit criterion when selecting new board members. However, statements of intent are not enough. Inclusive onboarding practices are needed to help new board members acquire the necessary information and skills to contribute and succeed. Alongside the board, the chief executive must also be committed to increasing diversity. It is further recommended that boards show their commitment by creating a plan of action and timeline that includes establishing steps to monitor progress and formalizing board diversity policies and practices.

Some nonprofit boards have created board-level task forces or executive committees to address diversity concerns, but this may in fact be counterproductive as it ultimately may excuse the full board from being committed to making change. In one survey of board members of color, 43 percent said that having a diversity or inclusion task force was not at all effective.

While term limits are touted as an effective tool for increasing board diversity by creating space for new board members, the evidence of their effectiveness is unclear, and they can have negative impacts. It takes time and commitment to become an inclusive board, and term limits introduce a danger of losing effective board members. Similarly, waiving fundraising requirements (“give or get policies”) for some or all board members is not proven to increase diversity. The impact of fundraising requirements on board diversity is not yet fully understood, and recommendations in this area are not one-size-fits-all.

Recruitment and Retention To find new board members from communities un- or underrepresented on a board, there are several potential places to look. Constituent groups and the donor base are one source.

Arts organizations can look to audience members. Corporate and foundation donors as well as government officials may have recommendations of potential candidates. Pipeline programs specifically designed to connect individuals of diverse backgrounds with nonprofit boards can be an effective tool for finding potential board members. The African American Board Leadership Institute, a project of Community Partners, is one such pipeline program based in South Los Angeles.

Research shows that board diversity does correlate with larger board size. In addition, research has found significant positive association between board diversity and interorganizational alliances, meaning that partnering with culturally specific organizations – including non-arts organizations – can be effective for identifying potential board members. Other leadership structures and advisory committees beyond the board can provide alternative ways of giving potential board members a voice in decision making at an arts nonprofit without making them subject to fundraising requirements.

In focus group research with nonprofit board members of color, board culture was reported as the greatest influence, both positive and negative, on board members' experiences. If major culture change is needed within an arts board of directors, new members can be added in groups of three or four to decrease the pressure to assimilate to the prevailing culture.

Funding and Funders The relationship between board diversity and nonprofit funders is complex. Concerns have been raised that diversity pushed from outside by a funder may create too shallow a change in an arts nonprofit. Some culturally specific arts organizations have emphasized the importance of funders themselves making a commitment to hire staff knowledgeable about cultural equity and to commit staff time to these efforts.

Arts organizations of color often rely more heavily on government and foundation income compared to mainstream arts organizations. There are arguments in the field as to whether this is simply an alternative but successful funding model or whether those organizations should make changes to their boards to increase their individual contributed income streams

One of the most significant barriers to increasing diversity an organization may face is the perception that its mission is not relevant to communities of color. This perception may be especially pervasive in arts and culture organizations. Increasing diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in arts nonprofit boards requires a commitment that permeates the entire organization, may require partnerships with organizations and people outside the arts, and will require a long-term commitment.

THE ARTS AND CULTURE WORKFORCE

Very few initiatives to increase diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts and culture workforce have been formally evaluated. Most of what is written is a mix of program, project and initiative descriptions, while some provide recommendations on how to improve diversity.

Arts Workforce The workforce of arts nonprofits is made up of paid staff, volunteers, contract workers, and interns and apprentices. Increasing cultural equity, inclusion and diversity in the arts workforce must include all aspects of the workforce, including artists. Analysis of data collected by DataArts (formerly the

Cultural Data Project) shows that in 2012 a total of 66,070 workers provided nearly 22.5 million hours of labor to 469 arts nonprofit in LA County. While they made up nearly 19 percent of all paid employees, they worked more than 52 percent of all labor hours.

By comparison, volunteers made up the largest number of workers in those arts nonprofits (nearly 55 percent) but worked a little more than 30 percent of all labor hours that year. CDP data also show that organizations with smaller budgets – many of which may serve culturally-specific communities – are more reliant on volunteers than paid staff, compared to organizations with larger budgets.

People doing the work of managing nonprofit arts organizations are often referred to as “arts administrators” or “arts managers.” A recent survey of 575 arts administrators across the US found they were predominantly white, female, heterosexual and without disability. Arts management is a hidden career option many people are unaware of.

Statistics on Diversity In 2015 the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) conducted its first survey of the staff and boards of their grantee organizations. They found that these organizations do not reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the city. At the same time, they did find their staff and board members are more diverse than those groups in arts organizations are nationwide. Their survey also found that more recent hires were more diverse than people hired a longer time ago. A recent survey funded by the Mellon Foundation that collected data from museum staff across the US found similar trends. They also found that museums with majority-minority staff were primarily found in culturally specific institutions. The report concluded that while there appears to be a “bench” or “pipeline” of women being prepared for leadership positions, the equivalent does not exist for people of color. Also in 2015 the Jerome Foundation in St. Paul, MN, and the McKnight Foundation in Minneapolis, MN, were the first two foundations to pilot DataArts’ new demographics module for staff and boards with their arts grantees

Artists play a unique role in the arts workforce. In LA County, analysis of data reported in 2012 by 469 nonprofit arts organizations to the CDP finds that artists made up 40 percent of the total workforce and worked 25 percent of the total labor hours. Artists make up about two percent of the workforce in California (363,430 artists), and the Los Angeles area is home to a particularly high concentration of independent artists, writers and performers. Among all US artists, while only 13 percent of writers and authors are from a minority race or ethnicity, fully 41 percent of dancers and choreographers are. Women make up 46 percent of artists, comparable to their share of the workforce, but this ranges from a high of 78 percent of dancers and choreographers to a low of 21 percent of announcers.

Staff Recruitment Increasing staff diversity in the arts requires tackling the problem at all stages, from increasing awareness of arts careers, to recruiting more diverse students into academic programs to looking outside traditional training programs for people and investing in them. Traditionally, entry into the arts and culture workforce begins with unpaid internships or volunteer work, and this serves as a financial barrier to individuals from disadvantaged communities. Personal networks are often key to getting ahead in the creative sector, which can serve as another barrier.

The literature recommends that organizations seeking to improve diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in their workforce need a clearly written diversity policy. Recruiting a pool of candidates that is more representative of the workforce at large should follow. Partnering with culturally specific community,

affinity and membership organizations, as well as hiring minority search firms, can help achieve this. Partnering with organizations serving disadvantaged or at-risk youth such as gang intervention groups or others is another approach.

Examples of successful early recruitment programs include the New York Hall of Science in Queens' "Explainers" program for high school and college students, the LA County Arts Internship Program to support college undergraduates working in arts nonprofits and the Multicultural Undergraduate Internship program funded by the Getty Foundation. When the Berkeley Repertory Theatre set out to diversify their staff, they started by recruiting from historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) with active theatre programs to fill their twelve month, stipended professional fellowship program.

Pipelines to Employment Overreliance on academic degree programs to fill arts management positions may be reducing diversity in terms of social class, race and ethnicity, and disability. Multiple studies have found students studying in arts management programs to be predominantly white, heterosexual, able-bodied women from upper-middle class backgrounds. Diversifying this student body could help build a more diverse pipeline. Changes to the structure of the pipeline itself can also help, such as developing entry routes into the field outside of academics that include apprenticeships and traineeships.

Redefining or restructuring jobs can play a role in diversifying the workforce, as can redefining merit to include new factors. At the Detroit Institute of Art, for example, the traditional chief curator or registrar position has been replaced with a team-oriented approach, where the most experienced registrar is a team leader. "Front line" staff, who often are younger and more diverse than managers, can be brought into decision making teams to provide a new perspective. Leadership development should be provided to help grow diverse staff from within. Mentors can be assigned to new staff from diverse backgrounds to help them settle into their new jobs and new organizations. Professional associations and support mechanisms specifically for diverse staff also exist, such as the SPARK Leadership Program at Theatre Communications Group (TCG), task forces at both the American Alliance of Museums and the Association of Art Museum Curators, and the Writers Guild of America East diversity coalition.

The pipeline to employment in arts and culture should begin at the earliest stages, and its benefits go beyond arts careers. Arts education is especially beneficial to students from disadvantaged communities. Low income students who have intensive coursework in the arts tend to have better grades and are more likely to attend college than low income students who have little or no coursework in the arts. As students get older there are other tools that can help them prepare for arts career. These include activities and opportunities that combine classroom education with work-based experience include Career Technical Education (see the California standards for Arts, Media and Entertainment, for example) and work-based learning such as internships offered by the LA County Arts Commission, City of New York, Steppenwolf Theatre and others. Youth apprenticeship has been used in the UK, where an apprenticeship framework has been created that offers an alternative entry route to working in the arts and culture sector. Apprentices receive college training, soft skills employment training, skills-specific training and on-the-job training. In the US, apprenticeships have been used successfully in other industries to help employees to move from working in less-skilled front-of-house positions into higher-skill back-of-house careers.

Sector Approaches Sector initiatives targeting underrepresented or disadvantaged communities by helping them prepare for jobs in a particular industry could play a role in the arts and culture sector. These programs could combine soft skills, job-specific skills, and the skills needed to manage a "portfolio

career” made up of contingent assignments. For example, the “Made in NY” Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting has developed two job training programs specifically designed to help unemployed and low income residents of New York City qualify for entry level positions in the entertainment industry, both administered by Brooklyn Workforce Innovations.

Each of the four major television networks (CBS, Disney-ABC, Fox, and NBCUniversal) has some kind of program focused on training or mentoring diverse writers, combining teaching, mentoring and networking assistance. The networks also have created the “diversity hire,” an entry-level staff writing position that is subsidized by the network. This model is not without its critics. A new movement with the literary community, “We Need Diverse Books,” has called for greater diversity in children’s books as well as more diverse agents, editors, book buyers, illustrators and executives at publishing houses.

Public Policy Public policy can play a role in increasing diversity in arts and culture employment. The New York City Mayor’s Task Force on Diversity in Film, Television and Commercial Production launched the “Made in NY” job training programs. Governance rules at the Detroit Institute of Art require that at least one-third of board members and two-thirds of employees must be residents of the City of Detroit. The New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark has a union agreement that ensures 47 percent of stage hand jobs at the facility are held by minorities.

Funding and Funders Foundations have provided some support to diversifying the arts workforce. The New York State Council on the Arts offers Special Arts Services grants to culturally specific arts organizations for professional training for underserved artists. The Joyce Foundation recently announced a grant program to help artists of color achieve viable careers, strengthen the pipeline of diverse arts administrators and enhance grantees’ long-term financial stability.

Improving diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts and culture workforce requires changes within organizations. It also requires changes to the systems that prepare young people for the workforce, and the pipelines that lead to arts careers.

AUDIENCES AND PROGRAMMING

Evolving ideas about the relationship between art and audiences have changed the way artists and arts administrators think about diversity, cultural equity and inclusion for both audiences and programming. The National Endowment for the Arts’ **Survey of Public Participation in the Arts** has found a declining audience for the arts nationally since 2003. In contrast, research by the Irvine Foundation that focuses on informal arts participation suggests that participation in the arts is not only robust but is, in fact, expanding among Californians. Their research finds that many more Californians make art than attend traditional arts activities as a passive recipient.

Audience versus Participant While the idea of “audience” connotes the passive consumption of benchmark arts in the European tradition, the expanded notion of “arts participation” accounts for many forms of engagement and multiple levels of involvement, from performing, appreciating and managing the arts to teaching, learning and supporting them. Participatory arts activities are often informal, taking place in a variety of spaces outside the theatre, concert hall, and gallery. Programming geared towards a

wider participatory public shows promise of building greater cultural equity and inclusion in arts audiences and programming. By loosening the conceptual boundaries between audience and public, and by employing cultural equity as a motivating principle, arts organizations can learn to see themselves as part of a larger community,

Measurement Measuring and understanding diversity in arts participation can be extremely challenging. In the literature, how it is measured varies by type of organizations, programs and partnerships involved, as well as by funder mandates and the socioeconomic makeup of target populations. Data on audiences and programming might best be disaggregated by income, education, age, race/ethnicity and sex/gender to determine if access to an organization's programs is distributed across socioeconomic categories in a manner representative of the larger population.

Theatre Bay Area (TBA) has measured local theatres using an Arts Diversity Index, a mathematical tool for assessing the diversity of an organization relative to the larger population in which it exists. Six different types of diversity – household income, education level, age, marital status, gender, race, and political affiliation – were measured at each organization and compared against the general population. Their study found Bay Area theatergoers were significantly less diverse than the general population. They also found that among theatergoers increased household income diversity was correlated with increased race/ethnicity, gender, marital status and educational diversity. They further found that the oldest and largest theatre companies demonstrated the most racial/ethnic diversity in audience composition.

Methods for collecting data matter, and adherence to best practices is needed for an organization to get accurate data about its audiences. Staff at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre have collected audience data for several years, primarily through the use of intercept paper surveys combined with email surveys administered at select shows. Data from their 2014 summer season showed their audience to be 36 percent Hispanic or Latino, 29 percent white, 19 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, eight percent Black or African American, seven percent of mixed ethnicity and one percent Native American. Data from their survey administered to people who had bought tickets online showed a less diverse audience, which demonstrated an important difference between audience members who purchase tickets online compared to those who purchase them elsewhere.

Measuring demographic characteristics alone, the literature states, is not enough. Understanding audiences and participants requires understanding a complex of factors that include psychographic traits such as preferences for challenging experiences, active participation, and learning new things; personal history of arts attendance, or lack thereof, with one's family; and environmental factors like exhibit and membership costs, as well as the presence of active word-of-mouth networks, which account for more visits than does marketing. Moreover, ethnic groups are not homogenous and should not be treated as such in terms of audiences or programming. Education and income levels can vary within ethnic/racial groups. Within ethnic groups as well, and within immigrant and refugee populations, the length of time lived in the US makes for differing perspectives and values.

Relationships The Bonfils-Stanton Foundation, an arts funder in Denver, conducted an audience diversity study to examine audience diversification efforts at several area large arts presenters. They concluded that building diverse audiences at large mainstream institutions requires arts presenters to strategize in multiple areas simultaneously including marketing to target audiences, establishing one-to-one

relationships with patrons, developing programming content that is “authentic” and “relevant,” forming meaningful connections with community members, and investing in organizational and institutional change.

Programming Museums that have made notable efforts toward diversity, cultural equity and inclusion among their audiences and programming have focused on community engagement initiatives, created cultural advisory committees, dedicated staffing to reaching a diverse audience, co-curated exhibits with the public, transitioned an English-only western-oriented internal culture to create a fully bicultural museum, and collaborated with community members to preserve intangible heritage. Performing arts organizations that have made notable efforts in these areas have participated in a city-wide equity plan, developed deep partnerships with a particular community they sought to reach, and partnered with non-arts organizations.

Moreover, the literature finds that diversity and equity should be considered both within individual programs and across an organization’s programmatic roster. Isolated “one-shot” programs and pilots without follow-up plans tend to fail at meaningful, long-term change.

Funding and Funders Arts and culture funders can play critical roles in changing the arts ecology by supporting research on diversity and equitable practice. Two leaders in this regard have been the National Endowment for the Arts and the James Irvine Foundation. The NEA’s Expansion Arts Program (EAP) was founded in 1971 to “assist professionally directed arts organizations of high artistic quality that are deeply rooted in and reflective of the culture of a minority, inner city, rural, or tribal community.” EAP sought to reach people of color, poor rural white communities, and otherwise marginalized and underserved artists and arts organizations. Though it ended in 1995, EAP led to several innovative national projects, including the Community Foundation Initiative, which ran from 1985-1994 and had a lasting impact on the communities in which it granted seed money to local philanthropic foundations.

For a decade the James Irvine Foundation took the lead in sponsoring innovative research on arts engagement in California and supporting organizations committed to making the state’s arts ecology more diverse and equitable. Through their Exploring Engagement Fund (EEF) Irvine encouraged grantees to invest time in building trust with their constituents, partnering strategically with community organizations, making the arts more appealing and accessible to “nontraditional” audiences, and to program for community spaces rather than traditional venues. Through their New California Arts Fund (NCAF) the James Irvine Foundation has provided support for organization capacity building and for arts engagement programming designed to encourage and expand participation in the arts among California’s growing and diverse communities.

More recently, in 2016 the California Arts Council launched the Cultural Pathways grant program specifically for “small and emerging organizations rooted in communities of color, recent immigrant and refugee communities, or tribal groups.”

In the arts, audiences and programming are intertwined. Efforts to increase diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in one can improve the other. To do this organizations must look beyond benchmark arts disciplines, passive audiences and formal arts venues. Studies that investigate arts participation beyond those measures find engagement and participation in the arts is flourishing.

CULTURALLY SPECIFIC ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

While the arts and culture ecology in the US is dominated economically by large institutions primarily working in benchmark arts in the European tradition, the landscape is replete with organizations both formal and informal that draw upon ethnic, folk and religious traditions in their work. The leadership, staff, audiences and programming of these organizations is often filled by people who have been marginalized in mainstream arts and culture organizations. When considering the role and function of arts organizations staffed by and primarily serving non-European Americans in the larger arts ecology, it is worth noting they are often subject to larger structural forces like racism and poverty that impede success for both organizations and individuals.

Role in the Arts Ecology In the literature on arts organizations outside of the European tradition and benchmark art forms, several different terms are used to refer to it and recent attempts to quantify how many organizations make up this sector have used significantly different definitions. For example, the report *Cultural Centers of Color* from the National Endowment for the Arts uses the term “ethnically specific arts organizations of color” to designate organizations that included more than 51 percent of one ethnic group among their staffs, boards, artists, and audiences and uses “multi-ethnic” to designate organizations with approximately equal groups of at least two communities of color totaling 51 or more of the organization’s participants. This literature review utilizes a term that is also commonly found in the literature, “culturally specific arts organization.”

This literature review did not identify any research on strategies for drawing upon traditional, folk, and religious arts communities in order to increase diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the larger arts ecology. However, national research on arts organizations of color and some local analysis of new immigrant and refugee arts activity can inform the field. There is widespread acknowledgment that communities of color engage in arts activities not captured in traditional statistics on arts engagement. Many people of color and immigrants participate in the arts in community organizations like churches and community centers and more informal settings like at home. Additionally, looking at the arts activity of organizations alone fails to capture the work of folk artists and other individual artists.

Data to measure the size, scope and contribution of culturally specific arts organization is incomplete. IRS Form 990 filings have been used as one measure. This approach includes White ethnocultural organizations (for example, the Alliance Française) but this may be the best way to capture cultural organizations outside of benchmark artistic disciplines. Data collected by DataArts (formerly the Cultural Data Project) suggests that many organizations rooted in, staffed by and with programming focused on specific communities may still report themselves as having a “general” audience. Some artists of color may wish to be evaluated on their general artistic merit and not their cultural origins. Nonetheless, DataArts data suggest LA County may be home to a larger share of these organizations compared to the rest of the US.

Models of Support Research suggests that the tools, methods and practices used to strengthen arts organizations in general may not be as effective for culturally specific arts organizations. One evaluation of the Canadian Council for the Arts’ programs for Aboriginal art reported that there was significant support from artists for dedicated programs for Aboriginal artists and organizations but also that these

groups were not well served by a discipline based approach. Customary disciplinary boundaries in the arts and culture sector may not apply to these organizations, and efforts to pigeonhole those organizations into those customary boundaries may limit the support that flows to them.

A standard nonprofit life-cycle approach to capacity building for nonprofit arts organizations may not match the needs of culturally specific arts organizations. Some organizations may have significant maturity in artistic programming while remaining small organizationally, making them look like “emerging” organizations but making capacity building support for emerging organizations inappropriate. Many of these organizations have been chronically under-resourced and cannot be expected to operate similarly to mainstream organizations that have been consistently supported over long periods of time. Long-standing culturally specific arts organizations may need to focus on more support for advocacy and pipelines for staff and leadership. At this stage they need less specific administrative and programming resources and more attention to leadership in their own organizations and in the field.

Similarly, it has been argued that if barriers to success, such as the lack of resources and opportunity, are removed, arts organizations of color would be as successful as their mainstream counterparts. Others counter that traditional measures of organizational health are not relevant to these organizations. “Health” may look different for culturally specific arts organizations, and therefore they need different supports than mainstream arts organizations to be successful.

Other practices and recommendations have been made to support culturally specific arts organizations. Direct funding for folk artists and informal folk art associations that exist outside the scope of nonprofit organizations is one approach to supporting their work. Multidisciplinary folk art organizations in particular can play an important role. State level apprenticeships have been a popular approach to funding folk arts and these may be especially effective in diversifying the arts and culture sector since a majority of those funded have been people of color. For example, the Alliance for California Traditional Arts funds apprenticeships with master folk artists in California, as well as grants to nonprofit and community organizations for California-based community programs in the traditional arts. Some art forms benefit from support for occasional meetings, for instance mariachi conferences and festivals where students go to workshops and perform. Developing and encouraging the growth of locally focused but nationally networked ethnocultural arts service organizations is another potential model of support.

Cross Sector Approaches Partnerships with non-arts organizations may be a fruitful strategy for nurturing arts activities in community organizations that fall outside the nonprofit arts and culture sector. Educational, religious, youth development, human services and community development organizations have been shown to help with the production of programs or events, arranging group attendance, developing programs and providing spaces where exhibits or performances could take place. Given that arts activity in communities of color often happens in religious communities, research into arts activity in religious communities would appear to be helpful in developing strategies for nurturing the arts in communities of color.

In immigrant communities, arts activities often happen in multi-service and non-arts sector organizations. Many of the recommendations and analyses of immigrant arts activity found in the literature focus on the twin needs for bonding or building community within immigrant groups and bridging to outside or native

populations. Communities must have ethnic-specific spaces for nurturing identity as well as spaces that are permeable to outsiders.

Funding and Funders There is evidence that arts organizations of color are significantly underserved by the philanthropic community. Funding available for culturally specific art forms in the traditional or folk categories is often much smaller than for the benchmark European disciplines. For foundations seeking to work with new immigrant and refugee arts communities, several recommendations have been made. First, ensure grant panelists are culturally informed in order to properly evaluate new immigrant communities. Second, be flexible about art forms, funding models, and application processes. Third, be conscious of the extra burden placed on new communities in asking them to serve on review panels and in other roles.

Culturally specific arts organizations play a unique and important role in the larger arts ecology. Support for these organizations may require new models and development of new resources. These organizations, their boards and workforce often face challenges of underfunding as well as systemic issues of racism and marginalization. Leaders in these organizations can play an important role in the effort to increase diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts in LA County. However, their participation must be authentic and integrated. Care should be taken not to ask a small number of individuals or organizations to represent entire communities, which can overburden and marginalize them in the larger discussion.

CONCLUSION

The current status of the literature on how to increase diversity, cultural equity and inclusion in the arts and culture ecology is emerging. Much has been written in recent years that identifies and measures the problem; solutions – especially ones that are proven to have a measurable impact – are less manifest. Looking back to previous eras when diversity was raised as a concern in the arts, most recently the mid-1990s, may provide some evidence of what works. However, the concept of “diversity” has evolved into the terms “cultural equity” and “inclusion,” reflecting the ways in which both the nature of the challenge and tools to address it have changed over time. As a result, lessons learned from earlier eras should be investigated before being implemented to determine whether they answer today’s questions.

That said, the lessons of successful diversity efforts at mainstream American museums have been summarized by Kamegai-Cocita (1997) in three key processes that can apply to all arts organizations and are relevant across all four areas identified by the Board of Supervisors. First is **communication**, which involves the museum getting to know its surrounding communities as well as inviting local leadership to get involved in an advisory capacity. Second is **collaboration**, which may include co-producing programs with the community to cross-promoting events with local nonprofits and businesses. Third is **consistency**, meaning that relationships must be built to be durable and programs designed to be sustainable.

In the arts, the concept of “audiences” and “programming” have changed over time and today include not only passive observation of art but also active participation in art-making. There is an increasing acknowledgement of the role of informal art-making outside of nonprofit structures. These new ways of

looking at the arts and culture ecology suggests new ways of thinking about how to increase cultural equity and inclusion for boards, staff, audiences and programming.

Across the four areas analyzed in this literature review, the following key lessons appear to be universal:

1. **Be explicit about goals for cultural equity and inclusion** in all of the organization's materials, including its mission statement, job descriptions, board recruitment materials, grant requirements, casting and programming. If participation and engagement with a particular community is desired, state explicitly who that community is and how they will be engaged.
2. The meaning of diversity, cultural equity and inclusion goes **beyond race and ethnicity, and must be defined for each organization**. Depending on the context, this may include the homeless, the incarcerated, the disabled, the poor, veterans, the elderly and the LGBTQ community. It may also include psychographic traits related to personal opinions, fears and aspirations.
3. **Partner with organizations serving the communities** you wish to serve. This includes both arts organizations and non-arts organizations, and even non-organizations.
4. **Define terms, set clear goals and measure progress**, then celebrate victories while also identifying the barriers that are preventing success. Share all of this information publicly, as part of being explicit about what you want to achieve.
5. To achieve full **cultural equity and inclusion will take a long time**. Plan for the long haul, and be prepared for hard work.
6. **Include culturally specific organizations** and understand their place in the larger arts and culture ecology of the region. This includes recognizing their leadership and role in serving the communities you also wish to serve.
7. **Your institution may change** as a result of all this work. In fact, it must. These changes may challenge staff, board members, audiences and other stakeholders, so plans will be needed to manage change. There is a robust body of literature on this from practitioners from both the nonprofits and business sectors which may be useful.
8. **One size does not fit all**, and this must be considered in board recruitment, hiring, grantmaking and building partnerships. Organizations and artists differ by discipline, size, life cycle placement, community served, type of programming and mission, and those differences should be recognized in organizational processes.



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