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*Photo by Lawrence Sumulong /
Courtesy of Jazz at Lincoln Center*

Bending Art and Culture Towards Justice: The Ford Foundation's Creativity and Free Expression Arts and Culture Program Investments in Diverse Creative Communities

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SMU DataArts

“We believe art, film and journalism help us understand our world, find purpose and create meaningful connections. Yet the stories we hear or see the most still disproportionately represent a select few, often reinforcing stereotypes and discriminatory beliefs. We work to disrupt narratives that perpetuate inequality and lift up underrepresented voices across race, gender and ability, so the perspectives and experiences of these communities shape a more inclusive world.

... When a mix of storytellers has an opportunity to expand the landscape of ideas and imagery, their creativity can help drive long-lasting social change and disrupt inequality while introducing fresh, groundbreaking ideas and storytelling forms to new audiences to expand society’s definition of excellence.”

— FORD FOUNDATION¹

INTRODUCTION

What lessons can we learn about how change happens for arts organizations and networks that center People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders, especially those who have been further marginalized by sexism, heterosexism and xenophobia? What is the influence of a \$230 million investment in their stability, their ability to expand their base of support and their lasting impact on the artists whose voices and cultural contributions they lift up?

Since its launch in 2015, the Ford Foundation’s Creativity and Free Expression (CFE) program has worked collaboratively to invest in creative organizations and storytellers shaping a more inclusive, just world across three areas of focus: Arts and Culture, Journalism, and documentary filmmaking through its JustFilms initiative. To assess impact and alignment with the changing needs of the field, the foundation is conducting a series of evaluations around each area of focus under the CFE program. This evaluation report on Arts & Culture is one in a series of three evaluations to explore how arts and creative sectors can approach inequality thoughtfully.

The Ford Foundation’s Creativity and Free Expression Arts and Culture (CFE A&C) strategy discussion began in the Fall of 2015 and targeted goals of shifting “entrenched cultural narratives” that were embedded in and driving cultural norms. The early theory of change was to actually expand the scope of mainstream ideals to include content by underrepresented creators – shifting their status from the margins into the realm of being visible and seen in the mainstream. The ‘margins to the mainstream’ strategy has evolved over time to center the empowerment of People of Color creators and those with disabilities. The construct of ‘mainstream ideals’ has shifted from including content by these artists as part of the mainstream to influencing who has voice and who is widely recognized and valued as the mainstream.



This report, based on research conducted from December 2021 to April 2022, summarizes key observations and strategic considerations from an in-depth evaluation of the strategy implemented by the Ford Foundation to support CFE A&C grantees, a strategy set in motion pre-pandemic.² The purpose of Ford’s evaluations is not focused on holding individual grantees accountable for complex social change outcomes, and instead seeks to prioritize learning; and, more specifically, to learn about how change happens and share lessons externally. Part of that learning centers not only on whether current approaches are having the desired impact, but also on whether modifications to the approaches or other internal factors might yield even greater impact. For instance, does change happen best through a breadth approach, or through an approach that invests in pockets of excellence in select parts of the ecosystem? Given available resources, what underlying decision criteria should be prioritized in deciding what, whom and how to support?

The evaluation covers the period from 2018 to 2021 and encompasses the \$230 million investment Ford made through grants via the following initiatives: general CFE A&C, America’s Cultural Treasures, NYC Arts, Building Institutions and Networks (BUILD), Social Bond grants held by CFE A&C, and reserves (for a description of Ford CFE A&C grant and grantee characteristics, visit Web Appendix A).

METHODOLOGY & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research evolved as follows:

During the early, discovery phase of this project, **we conducted a review of over a dozen documents provided by Ford** to inform ourselves about the CFE A&C initiative, its history, goals and intended theory of change. In addition, we conducted a **literature review** on the topics of racial and disability justice in the arts, transformational capacity building, organizational resilience and decolonizing data collection (visit Web Appendix B for literature review references).

Then, through a series of **discovery conversations with Ford Foundation staff** in the CFE A&C and strategy and evaluation areas, **five key thematic clusters of research questions about CFE A&C participants emerged, which guided this evaluation:**

- 1. What was learned about how change happens?**
What are the factors that drive or inhibit change in disability-centered and People of Color arts and cultural organizations?
- 2. What goals and objectives did CFE A&C participants set for themselves as grantees?** What strategies did they employ? Did they measure progress towards goals and objectives and if so, how? What kind of progress did they make?
- 3. Did CFE A&C participants become well-resourced and increase both financial and operating stability?** Did they, in turn, increase organizational capacity and support to train and mentor emerging artists and storytellers?
- 4. Was there an increase in the production and visibility of art created by underrepresented artists and storytellers?**
- 5. What was Ford's contribution to progress made by CFE A&C grantees?**

A second set of questions drove **examination of the arts and culture field more broadly** to shed light on whether the societal change Ford seeks to influence is taking hold beyond its direct influence on grantees:

- 1. Have People of Color and disability-centered arts and storytelling organizations generally become more stable over time?**
- 2. Did funding increase for arts and cultural organizations grounded in the arts and storytelling of communities of color and disability?**
- 3. Is there equitable representation of People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders working in the field,** especially those who have been further marginalized by sexism, heterosexism and xenophobia? **Are they in leadership positions? Are they thriving?**

To answer these questions, we employed a variety of methods. We conducted **qualitative research** via in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Ford staff, individuals at peer grantmaking institutions and arts leaders of 20 CFE A&C grantee organizations.

The qualitative research informed creation of **two surveys:**

- One survey distributed to CFE A&C grantees.** This survey was designed to capture quantitative and qualitative data about current experiences, change since the start of the CFE A&C grant, perceptions and practices as they relate to progress on organizational goals that align with Ford's CFE A&C goals, the factors that drive or inhibit their ability to accomplish goals, perceptions of their impact on artists and perceptions of the Ford CFE A&C program's impact (see Web Appendix C for a copy of the grantee survey and survey results).
- A second survey was administered to artists** working at or supported by grantee organizations. This survey was designed to capture artist

perceptions about their personal state of thriving and the impact of working with or being supported by a Ford CFE A&C grantee (see Web Appendix D for a copy of the artist survey and survey results).

To answer the second set of questions that focused on the field of People of Color and disability-centered arts and storytelling organizations beyond CFE A&C grantees, we turned to external, **quantitative sources of demographic and financial data collected by SMU DataArts**, through its workforce demographics survey and the Cultural Data Profile.

We then conducted **analysis** of the quantitative and qualitative data, identified themes, synthesized findings, and created a report for discussion (for more detail on the various elements of this evaluation’s methodology, please see Web Appendix E).

Our intent was to allow participant voices to be loudest in the evaluation. Throughout the full report, available

upon request,³ we share strategies, insights and advice from arts leaders in their own words. In this report, select interview and survey participant quotes underscore concepts conveyed in the narrative. Over 600 artists provided their perspectives. Of 230 CFE A&C organizations invited to be part of this evaluation, 110 unique organizations participated, either through interviews, grantee surveys or artist survey administration. This amounts to a 48% participation rate among organizations.

The mix of research methods revealed the Ford CFE A&C theory of change, with its compelling goal clarity yet complex path of how CFE A&C is intended to influence who has voice and who is widely recognized and valued as part of a just society’s redefined mainstream; a macro framework for grantees’ theory of change, which is nested in Ford’s CFE A&C model; and in-depth findings on progress towards outcomes.



FORD'S CFE A&C MODEL OF HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

Discussions with Ford staff members and documentation about CFE A&C led to the formulation of a visual representation of the Foundation's mental model of how change happens, depicted in Figure 1 and described below.

VEHICLES OF CHANGE

The chain of events starts with **vehicles of change** – or what Ford does to disrupt inequality. Ford supports national arts and cultural organizations and networks to advance art and stories created by, told by and grounded in communities of color and disability. The CFE A&C program does so mainly through multi-year, general operating support to People of Color and disability-centered arts organizations and networks. It also provides targeted project support to large institutions for programming by artists who are disabled or People of Color. In addition, Ford convenes grantees and provides support for them to create networks and alliances among themselves and with others, activities intended to build more sustainable and thriving leadership among People of Color and disability entities and individuals. To further disrupt narratives

that perpetuate inequality, Ford takes a leadership position and leverages its influence by building alliances with other funders to broaden the base of support and expand funder commitment to lifting up the voices of marginalized artists and storytellers.

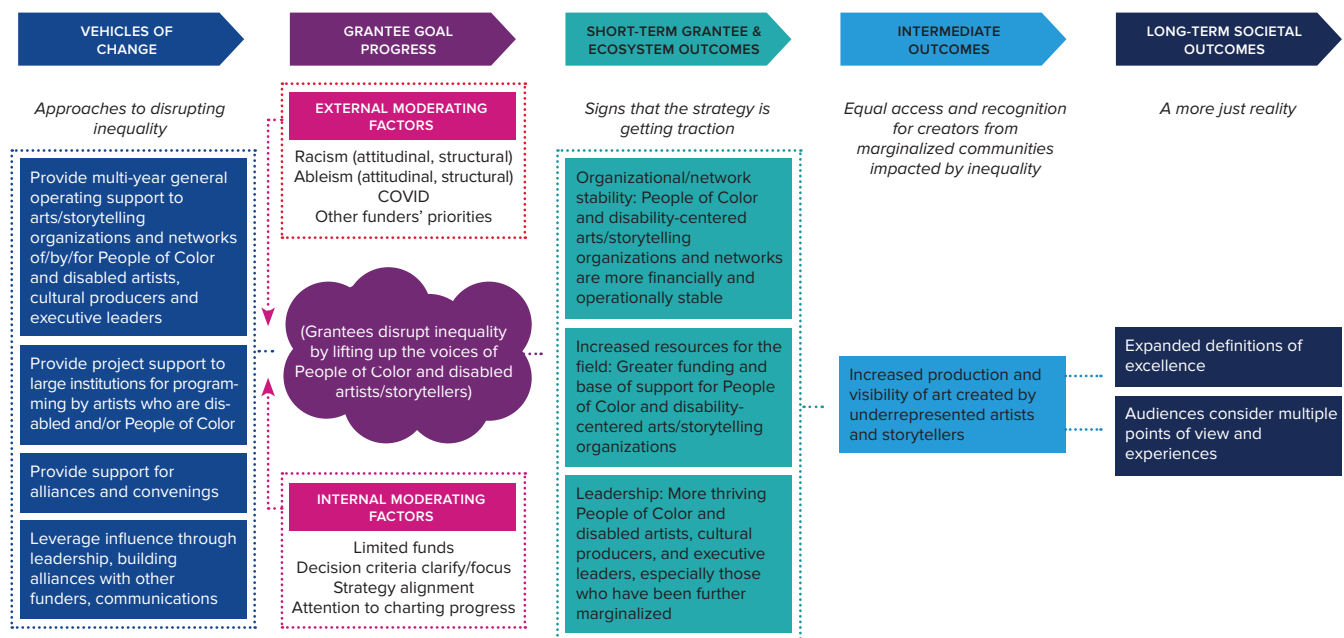
GRANTEE GOAL PROGRESS

When support is given for general operations, there is no clear mechanism for how it has direct impact on Ford's goals. **The work of the grantees themselves is what carries the effects of general operating support on the short-term outcomes related to organization/network stability, leadership and increased resources.** They disrupt inequality by lifting up the voices of People of Color and disabled artists and storytellers. They establish and interact in networks. They leverage resources and relationships.

"We build the capacity of artists to use their creativity to respond to the great social challenges of our time."

–Ford CFE A&C Grantee

FIGURE 1: Ford's CFE A&C Model of How Change Happens



SHORT-TERM GRANTEE AND ECOSYSTEM OUTCOMES

Three Ford CFE A&C program **short-term outcomes** can be assessed at two levels: the cohort of grantees and the larger ecology of arts and cultural organizations and networks of, by and for People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders. The three outcomes, as presented in Figure 1, are as follows:

1. **Organization/network stability:** People of Color and disability-centered arts and storytelling organizations and networks are more financially and operationally stable.
2. **Increased resources for the field:** Greater funding and base of support for People of Color and disability-centered arts and storytelling organizations.
3. **Leadership:** More thriving People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders, especially those who have been further marginalized.

INTERMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

As progress is made on these short-term goals, a solid foundation forms that leads to increased production and visibility of art by underrepresented artists and storytellers, both of which are intermediate outcomes. As articulated in documents and interviews, intermediate ecosystem outcomes related to growing access and recognition lead to the long-term societal outcome of a more just reality. Ford's public communications⁴ state:

“There will be an increase in the production and visibility of art created by underrepresented artists and storytellers and focused on the matters they deem most important and representative of their communities. These works will expand traditional definitions of excellence and spur audiences to consider multiple points of view and experiences.”

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MODERATING FACTORS

Factors from within and external to an organization can affect the direction and/or strength of the relationship between one element – e.g., an approach to disrupting inequality – and its impact on an outcome.

Pernicious structural and attitudinal racism and ableism are **external threats** to the grantees' and Ford's ability to advance towards a more fair and just society. In recent years, COVID-19 created considerable threat and turbulence to CFE A&C grantees and the diverse communities they serve. More than one person raised the fact that for Ford to be successful rallying a broader base of support for organizations and networks that lift up the voices of People of Color and disabled artists, other funders have to be willing to shift their priorities and allocate resources in this direction.

A number of interrelated **internal factors** were underscored as challenges by Ford staff and individuals who work for other grantmakers. Limited resources is at the top of the list. There is a perceived lack of alignment between the scope of the national arts and culture field, very large CFE A&C ambitions, and very limited CFE A&C arts and culture grant dollars. Demand for funding from organizations whose values and impact align with the CFE A&C program far exceeds the Ford CFE A&C program's ability to meet that demand. This is complicated by an internal sense that the funding decision criteria are not clear to all staff. What's also not clear is whether there is internal strategy alignment between the kinds of organizations and funding levels that are supported by CFE A&C directly – i.e., organizations created by and serving People of Color and disabled creatives – and those that emanate from the President's office, which are sometimes designated to larger organizations that are important to the broader ecosystem.

KEY OBSERVATIONS: WHAT WAS LEARNED ABOUT HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

Ford's CFE A&C program has clearly defined steps for how it intends to ultimately influence a more just society, where traditional definitions of excellence are expanded and audiences consider multiple points of view and experiences. Below we distill what was learned through this evaluation, both the assumptions that played out well and those that are less successful or have not yet been realized.



among People of Color and disabled artists that they are thriving as well as its intermediate goals of increasing production and visibility of historically marginalized artists align with three grantee goals: **To lift up the cultural contributions of artists and storytellers of color**, increase employment opportunities for artists and storytellers whose work has been historically marginalized, and support People of Color and/or disabled artists in their social justice work.

Importantly, grantees also seek to shift dominant narratives that perpetuate inequality, echoing Ford's long-term goal of a more fair and just society where traditional definitions of excellence are expanded and audiences consider multiple points of view and experiences.

Notably, the goal of improving the community – with the majority of arts leaders referencing their local community in describing this aim – does not reinforce an explicit Ford priority, but it emerges as a secondary or tertiary goal for nearly a quarter of respondents, and it was underscored repeatedly by interviewees.

It follows, then, that as grantees are successful reaching their goals, Ford advances its goals.

WHAT'S WORKING WELL

According to the CFE A&C model, ultimate societal change depends on the progress grantees make towards their goals that align with Ford's goals. There is a high level of match between the two and considerable progress being made, as evidenced through multiple methods of data collection that reinforce results.

1. Grantees and Ford Goal Alignment

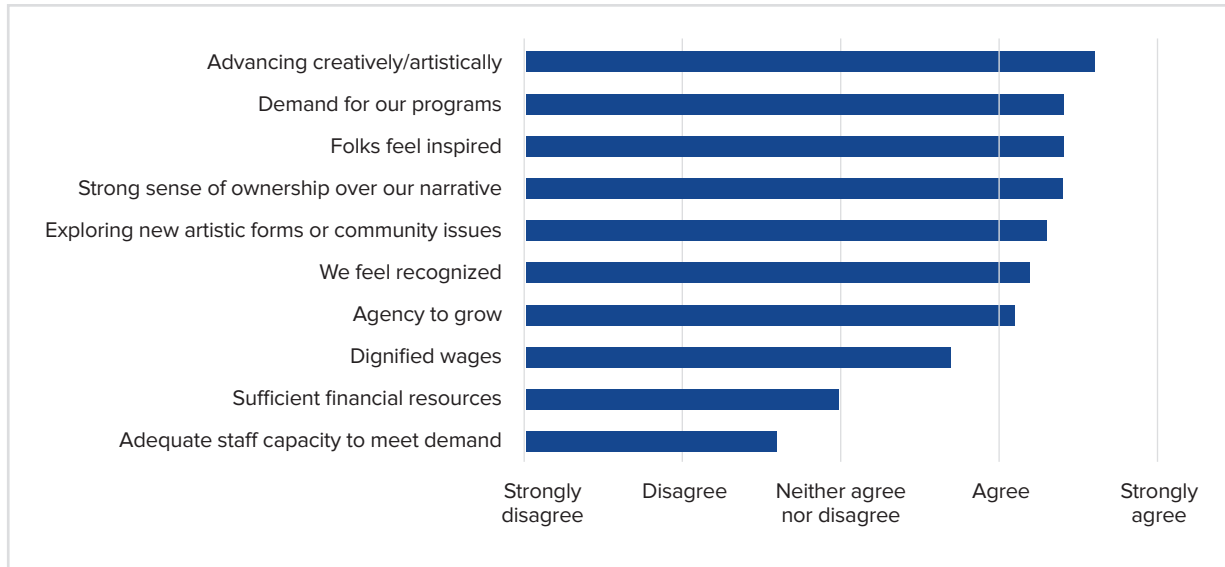
Overall, CFE A&C grantee goals very closely align with various elements of Ford's short-term, intermediate and long-term goals. These findings emerged in both the interviews and the grantee survey. Both Ford and grantees seek to build grantees' organizational capacity.

Ford's short-term goal of increasing the sense

2. Grantees Indicate They Are Thriving Overall and Advancing Goals

CFE A&C grantee leaders reported a remarkably strong sense that their organizations are advancing their goals and thriving: 87% report that they are absolutely making progress and the remaining 13% say they are making moderate progress. Just over half of the organizations are absolutely thriving according to arts leaders and another 36% say they are moderately thriving. They are thriving most by advancing creatively and artistically, with strong demand for their programs, whether from artists or the public (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2: Is your organization thriving along these different dimensions?
(average responses)



3. Artists and Leaders of Grantee Organizations Are Thriving in Key Ways

There is a sense of thriving among People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders, especially those who have been further marginalized by sexism, heterosexism and xenophobia.

- a. Roughly **two of every three artists say they are thriving**. This finding holds true for the 100+ artist survey respondents who identify as a person with a disability as well as the more than 450 who identify as a Person of Color.

“This year we’re 100% thriving. A huge number of projects. We are thriving when our folks feel inspired and they can create. And now there’s a lot of creating and making. That’s how a lot of people are feeling in 2022.”

–Ford CFE A&C Grantee

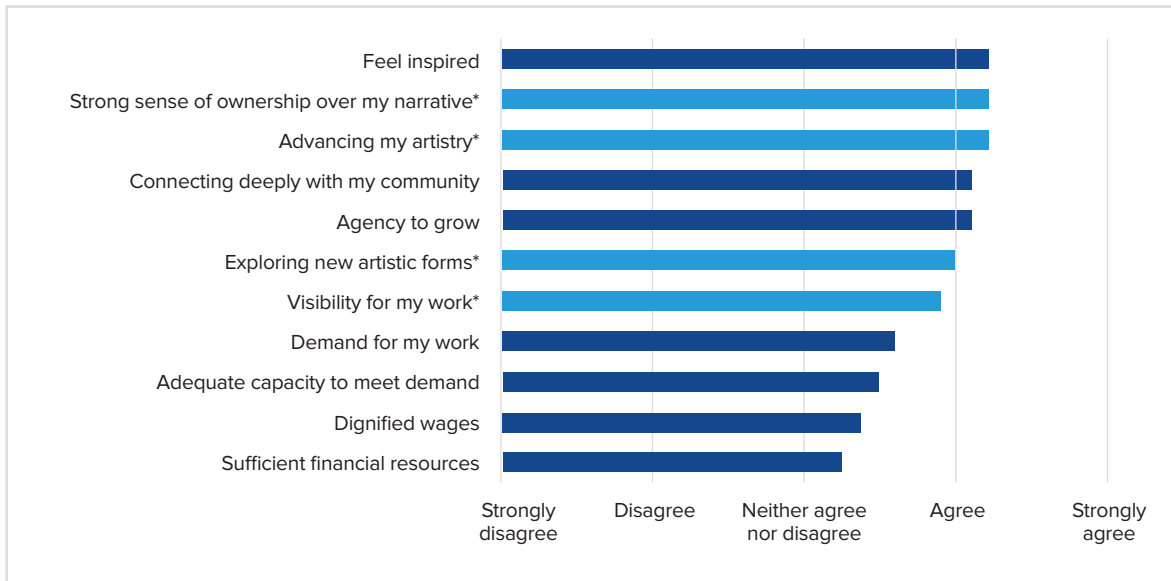
Ford’s particular sense of thriving centers on artists having a strong sense of ownership in their narrative,



Photo by Najib Joe Hakim /
Courtesy of Zawaya Aswat Ensemble,
San Mateo, CA

a sense that they are advancing their artistry, gaining visibility for their work, and exploring new artistic forms. **In the four ways that Ford defines successful support,⁵ as well as along other dimensions, People of Color and disabled artists are thriving, on average** (see Figure 3). Most robustly, artists feel inspired.

FIGURE 3: What is your assessment of whether you are thriving along these different dimensions?*
(average artist responses)

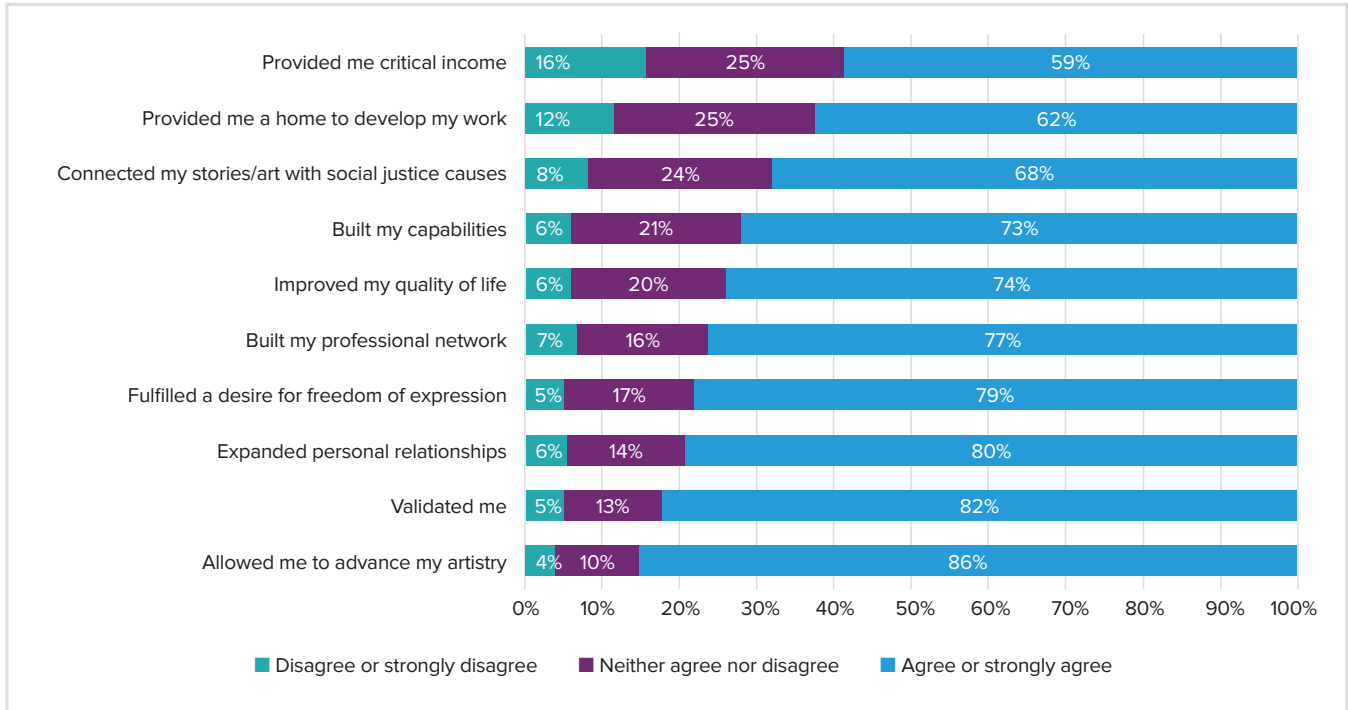


*The light blue bars represent responses that correspond to the four ways that Ford defines successful support

- b. Sentiments are similar for CFE A&C executive leaders and cultural producers, but to an even greater extent. **Three of every four organization leaders describe their personal state as either absolutely or moderately thriving.** All arts leaders interviewed and 93% of CFE A&C grantee survey respondents recognize the positive impact that participation in the Ford CFE A&C program has had on them personally.
- c. **Relatedly, People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers generally perceive that working with or receiving support from CFE A&C grantees has had lasting impact on them in multitude ways** (see Figure 4). Most notably the experience allowed 86% to advance their artistry and it made 82% of artists feel validated.
- d. In a study of nearly 1,800 artists, arts workers and board members in the broader arts and

culture ecology during the period of the CFE A&C program, **People of Color and people with a disability were just as likely to hold a supervisory role as a non-supervisory position in arts and cultural organizations.** Among survey respondents, people with a disability accounted for 18% of individuals in a supervisory position and 18% of people in a non-supervisory position. People of Color held 30% of supervisory positions and 31% of non-supervisory positions. **A substantial proportion of the arts and culture workforce in this study likely face multiple and intersecting forms of structural discrimination.** One of every three respondents who self-identify as a person with a disability also identifies as a Person of Color, and nearly one of every two people with a disability (48%) self-identify as being LGBTQ+. Forty percent of People of Color identify as LGBTQ+.

FIGURE 4: Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree that working with this organization had lasting impact on you in the following ways...



e. **There are indications of a more widespread sense of thriving among People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders working in the field, especially those who have been further marginalized by sexism, heterosexism and xenophobia.** Regardless of whether someone likely faces one or multiple and intersecting forms of structural discrimination, the average respondent to the broader workforce demographics survey, which was disseminated through the arts organizations at which they worked over the past four months, agrees that their experience working with the organization that took part in this data collection initiative provided well-being, psychological safety, support for risk-taking and both happiness and satisfaction.

4. Ford Grantmaking is Improving Financial Stability

Although grantees are on the fence about whether their organizations are thriving with respect to their financial resources, and generally disagree that they are thriving with respect to having adequate staff capacity to meet demand, **they are, on the whole, doing better now than they were prior to receiving CFE A&C support with respect to overall operating stability and overall financial stability,** denoting progress on another of Ford’s short-term goals related to increasing organization and network stability. Organizations with more longevity in the CFE A&C program report a stronger sense they are thriving along financial and operating measures.

a. During the period of CFE A&C funding, 90% of those who completed the grantee survey

KEY OBSERVATIONS: WHAT WAS LEARNED
ABOUT HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

engaged in strategies to advance the growth and sustainability of their organizations and networks. Of them, **nearly all (94%) focused on building organizational capacity.**

- b. At least two of every three organizations say that CFE A&C funding provided financial stability, was a catalyst for growth, inspired grants from other major funders and made multi-year planning possible.
- c. Overall, both CFE A&C grantees and the broader ecology of People of Color and disability-centered organizations bolstered their bottom lines from 2017 to 2020, albeit to different degrees. As a result, **People of Color and disability-centered arts and storytelling organizations generally have become more stable and resilient over time, especially by running surpluses and building working capital.** The group of CFE A&C grantees for which we have objective financial and operating data skewed large in terms of their average budget size. They added full-time staff members, and ended each year with a surplus, albeit to a lesser extent than their peers in the broader ecology. They did not, however, increase working capital.

“We’ve tripled our budget. In 2020 we started the year with three full-time people and grew our staff. In 2020 our program costs went down due to no in-person programming so we were able to grow the staff. From volunteer to paid staff with dedicated roles and expertise. We are 10+ people now.”

–Ford CFE A&C Grantee

5. Ford Grantmaking is Leading to Increased Resources

A particularly bright spot relates to **greater funding and a base of support.**

- a. 83% of grantees report that their organization did increase its base of support over the grant period, aside from CFE A&C funding.
- b. Among them, two out of three attribute Ford CFE A&C funding as a strong or very strong influence on their ability to attract new resources.

“In the 35 years of our existence, this has never happened before. Ford’s effect has been profound because other foundations have followed in their lead. We weren’t funded before by major foundations.”

–Ford CFE A&C Grantee

- c. From all sources of funding except foundations, organizations tended to experience growth in support of 50% of their pre-CFE A&C levels. Given the tough external environment over the past few years, it is heartening to see such robust increases from every contributed source. In the case of foundation funding, 63% of CFE A&C organizations doubled or more than doubled their pre-CFE A&C levels and another 17% had growth in foundation giving under 50%.
- d. **Resoundingly, funding increased for People of Color and disability-centered organizations over time.** The CFE A&C organizations for which we have objective financial data raised considerably more over time from foundations, government agencies, and trustees, with particular spikes in giving from these sources in 2020. CFE A&C organizations’ growth in funding from these areas exceed that of their peer organizations in the broader ecology. For instance, **from 2017 to 2020, growth in foundation support rose 24% above inflation for the CFE A&C grantees and 10% for their peers in the broader ecology, which coincides with Ford’s intentional investments in them and its advocacy for them with other funders.**

6. Increased Access and Recognition for Artists from Marginalized Communities Impacted by Inequality

The Ford Foundation, alongside CFE A&C grantees, is making **solid progress on the intermediate outcome related to increasing the production and visibility of underrepresented artists.**

- a. Three of every four artists surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that working with this organization had lasting impact on them in terms of increased visibility for their work and opened doors to new opportunities elsewhere.

“This organization has changed my life. The plays that I worked on there have won national competitions and gone on to other opportunities.”

–Artist Survey Respondent

- b. CFE A&C funding allowed more than half of the grantees to increase employment of People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers, and to increase their compensation.
- c. Three out of four of grantees say they now provide either more or far more programmatic offerings by People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers than they did pre-CFE A&C, and 60% attribute this expansion to CFE A&C funding.
- d. **CFE A&C grantees perceived that their greatest impact area was increasing artists’ visibility, although they overestimate their impact in this area relative to artists’ perceptions.** Two of every three grantees say the CFE A&C program helped them increase visibility for People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers with whom they worked. This was true for organizations across every budget size.

“The financial support enabled me to expand my work not only locally, but internationally. It allowed me to rent a work studio and complete a massive project that was exhibited. I also gained helpful feedback and invaluable training in outreach and marketing, leading to more visibility for my work and practice.”

–Artist Survey Respondent

7. Early Signs of Social Change

There are early indications that Ford’s CFE A&C strategy is getting traction on its long-term goals focused on influencing a more fair and just society. Ninety percent of grantee survey respondents say they have heard community members talk about how their experience with the work of People of Color artists and/or artists with a disability changed their perspective in some way or opened their thinking. It is too early to tell whether there is widespread societal change, or if community members would report the same level of change in their thinking as CFE A&C grantees purport. Ford leveraging its influence with other funders alongside continued commitment to supporting organizations and networks centered on People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers may ultimately result in a more fair and just society.

“The content, for instance, ignorance with the gay or transgender community – how that generates the conversation among theatrogoers who just didn’t know that these issues are relevant to their lives, too. They see it raw on the stage and it spurs a new way of thinking because of the way the stories are told. This changes the mindset of people. Each story told changes the conceptions of individuals.”

–Ford CFE A&C Grantee

WHAT ARE THE GAPS

As detailed in the preceding section, there is a lot to celebrate about progress being made towards ultimately disrupting narratives that perpetuate inequality and lift up underrepresented voices across race, gender, and ability, so the perspectives and experiences of these communities shape a more inclusive world. There remain gaps, however, as evidenced through multiple methods of data collection. If not addressed, these gaps will limit the CFE A&C’s potential to be catalytic.

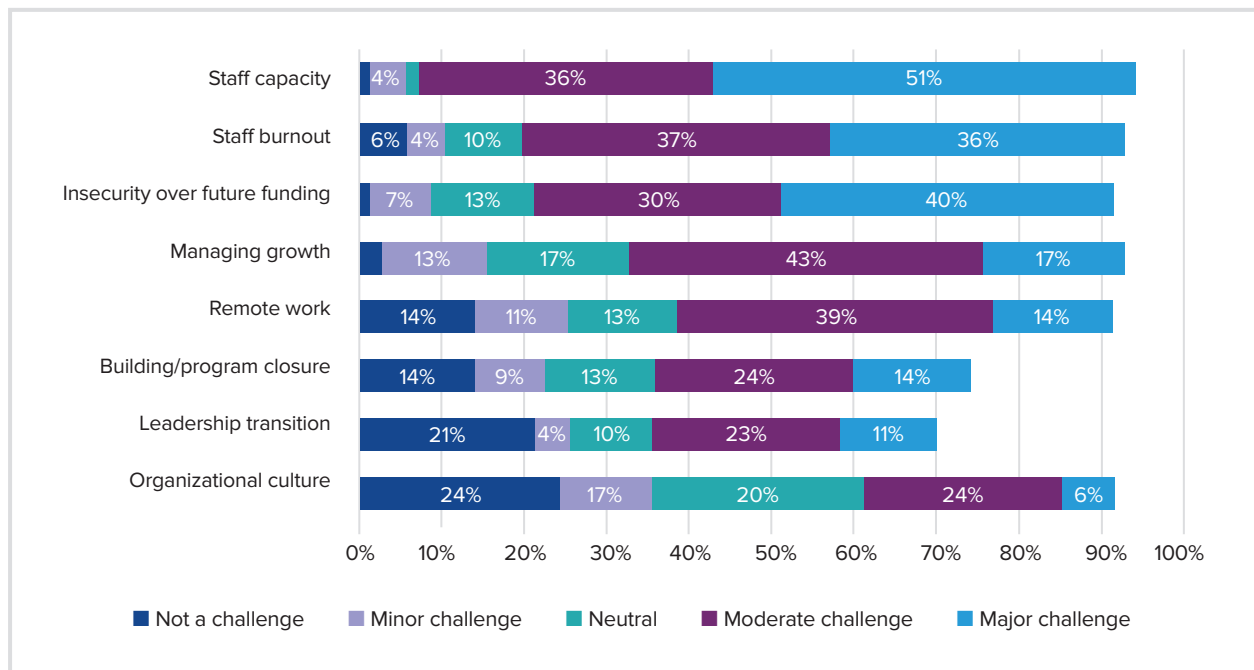
1. Organizational Capacity Remains an Area of Concern

Generally speaking, the arts and culture sector is undercapitalized and organizations that center historically marginalized communities are especially challenged by insufficient organizational capacity.⁶ Similarly, **grantees are generally not thriving in the**

area of adequate staff capacity to meet demand (see Figure 2, page 9). The creative and artistic programmatic growth and increased demand for programs has generally not been met with sufficient growth in organizational capacity. This stressor is most prevalent for the smallest and largest organizations, and the smallest of organizations also have less of a sense they are thriving with respect to paying dignified wages.

- a. Eighty-seven percent of grantees see inadequate staff capacity as a major or moderate challenge (see Figure 5).
- b. Relatedly, and a cousin of the strength of the ability to align ambition with staff capacity, is staff burnout. Three of every four grantees perceive this to be a major or moderate challenge.
- c. “Increases in staff pay” was the only organizational

FIGURE 5: What internal challenges have you faced during the period of CFE A&C support?



capacity area that was recognized as being directly impacted by Ford CFE A&C funding by fewer than 50% of organizations. Even with revenue growth and operational growth in other areas, **it appears that arts leaders still feel like the funding level is insufficient to increase staff pay** alongside increased compensation to People of Color and/or disabled artists. This is especially true for organizations with less longevity in the CFE A&C program.

2. Insufficient Financial Resources Despite Growth

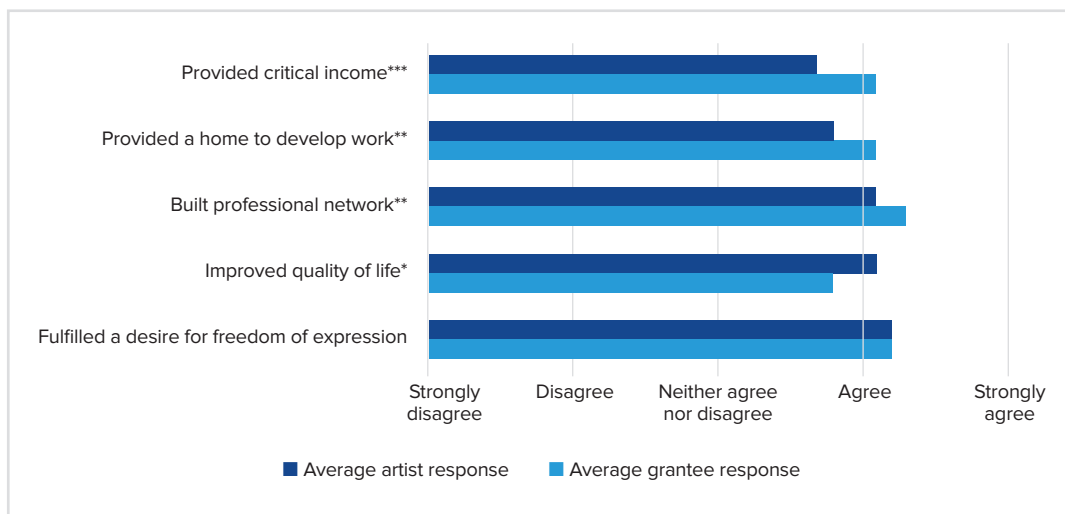
On the whole, grantees are also not thriving in the area of sufficient financial resources (see Figure 2, page 9). Despite modest revenue growth from every major source for most grantees, and significant growth in foundation support for many, 86% still perceive access to equitable funding as a moderate or major challenge.

3. Compensation Represents a Barrier to Thriving for Some Artists

Even though more than half of the grantees say that CFE A&C funding had direct impact on their ability to increase compensation for People of Color and disabled artists, **dignified wages and sufficient financial resources remain more of a challenge to artists’ ability to thrive than do other indicators of overall prosperity** (see Figure 3, page 10).

- a. Two of every three artists say they received adequate financial compensation from the CFE A&C grantees for their work. Less than 10% of artists feel they were inadequately compensated by the CFE A&C grantee for their work. Nevertheless, 16% disagreed that working with the CFE grantee had lasting impact by providing them with critical income, the dimension of impact that artists scored lowest overall (see Figure 4, page 11). **Notably, CFE A&C grantees particularly overestimate the extent to which they have had lasting impact on artists by providing them critical income** (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6: Comparison of average artist and CFE A&C grantee perceptions of lasting impact on artists of the work/support with the grantee



*** highly significant difference (p < .01) ** significant difference (p < .05) * weak significant difference (p < .10)

KEY OBSERVATIONS: WHAT WAS LEARNED ABOUT HOW CHANGE HAPPENS



Photo by Brian Halbach /
Courtesy of Yvonne Montoya &
Dance in the Desert.

b. **On average, artists agree they are thriving along every dimension except the two related to finances** – i.e., dignified wages and sufficient financial resources – where they are on the fence about whether they agree or disagree. One might infer that artists perceive a gap between ‘adequate’ and ‘thriving.’ This represents an area that might be targeted in the future to move the dial on the nation having more thriving People of Color and disabled artists, as discussed below.

4. Field Analysis Points to Gaps in Representation of People of Color and People With a Disability

While there is certainly some good news found in an open study of the broader arts and culture workforce in terms of representation of People of Color and people with a disability, there is disequilibrium with respect to power and influence.

a. Among the nearly 1,800 artists, arts workers and

board members affiliated with arts and cultural organizations that self-selected to participate in an open workforce demographics study, 15% self-identified as a person with a disability, a percentage similar to that of working-age U.S. adults with a disability in the general population. They were as likely to hold a supervisory position as a non-supervisory staff position. However, they **are underrepresented among the ranks of board members.**

b. **The arts and culture workforce in this open field study underrepresents People of Color, particularly individuals who self-identify as Black or Hispanic/Latinx.** People of Color are much more likely to be hired as an independent contractor than they are to be hired on staff or serve as a board member; this is key to note since many organizations hire artists in particular on a contract, rather than staff, basis.

KEY OBSERVATIONS: WHAT WAS LEARNED
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- c. **It appears that there is not equitable access to power and decision-making at the board level for those who face multiple and intersecting forms of structural discrimination:** People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders who have been further marginalized by heterosexism. **Equity in leadership presents an opportunity for future strategic focus by leveraging Ford's influence.**

- d. **Although signs are positive, there is work needed to further improve the workplace climate for people with a disability working in**

the broader arts and culture sector. While their overall level of experience working with the organization has been positive, they rated their experience slightly lower than their peers well-being, psychological safety, support for risk-taking and happiness.



Photo by Rachel Neville / Courtesy of Dance Theatre of Harlem Ensemble

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

Ford's CFE A&C program has the potential to be catalytic, particularly through substantial multi-year general operating support to small and mid-sized organizations and networks that are of, by and for People of Color and disabled artists and storytellers. Given positive findings that emerged in this evaluation, it would be counter-productive to redirect resources away from the current CFE A&C strategy, which is getting solid traction, and towards a new strategy that may or may not yield similar impact on marginalized artists. This point is underscored by the fact that arts leaders' sense of whether the organization is thriving rose with longevity of participation in the CFE A&C program, as did the sense that the CFE A&C program had direct impact on their ability to increase People of Color and/or disabled artist and storyteller compensation.

Yet internal factors at Ford currently inhibit the level of potential impact that the CFE A&C program might eventually achieve. Demand for funding from organizations whose values and impact align with the CFE A&C program far exceeds the Ford CFE A&C program's ability to meet that demand. There are also notable differences between the kinds of arts and cultural organizations and funding levels that are supported by CFE A&C directly and those that emanate from the President's office. While CFE A&C is more narrowly focused on smaller, disability- and People of Color-centered organizations who have historically been denied access to resources, the President's office includes support for large institutions taking on specific projects. Internally, these parallel funding strategies hold important distinctions that have implications for financial resources and staff time. To the outside world, however, the distinction is largely lost as most of the arts and culture field is unaware of the internal strategic differentiation. The various grant programs that emanate from Ford are all simply seen as coming from Ford, not one office as opposed to another. Internal alignment is a point that Ford may want to consider discussing and as it enters its next phase of strategy.



There is a lot to be proud of and a lot that is working well. As detailed in the section above, there is significant progress being made towards Ford's CFE A&C short-term and intermediate outcomes, as relayed by grantees and artists. Funding is not spread too thin for it to have significant direct impact on grantees and ultimately impact on artists in a multitude of ways.

“We’re working to diversify our funds and funders. Money that was in checking accounts are now in investment accounts. We received a big grant [from] MacKenzie Scott that has set us up well for a number of years. We’re set up to be more sustainable.”

–Ford CFE A&C Grantee

Availability of multi-year general operating support on a consistent basis is at the top of the list of what grantees perceive has to be true about the world for them to be successful reaching their goals.

At the same time, there is genuine stress that the majority of organization leaders feel with respect to staff capacity, staff burnout, inability to increase staff pay, as well as the perceptions by nearly 40% of artists that the CFE A&C grantee did not provide them critical income. This is the point at which funding is spread too thin and the theory of change breaks down. Overall, organization leaders seem to feel they're doing their best and are providing artists with critical income, yet they overestimate their impact relative to artists' perceptions. It may be the case that some grantees underestimate the level of compensation that represents

adequate remuneration and would benefit from guidance provided by W.A.G.E. recommendations.⁷ Some are lacking the organizational capacity and financial resources to manage growth in a way that takes care of their staff members' and artists' financial well-being. Given that the majority of artists surveyed are either People of Color, people with a disability, or both, this works against Ford's vision.

CFE A&C grantees are doing better than they were before receiving Ford funding. Taking impact and progress towards goals to the next level would require focusing higher funding levels on a subset of grantees that would allow them to add organizational capacity – i.e., much-needed staff capacity and sustaining compensation levels for staff and artists. Staff capacity is a major issue for grantees of every budget size and funding program. Alignment between mission, capital structure and organizational capacity is well-recognized as essential to organizational success, with deficiency in any one of the three areas creating imbalance.⁸ Grantees recognize this: ability to align ambition with staff capacity is seen as a key strength needed to be successful when lifting up the work of artists whose work has been historically marginalized.

If capacity does not increase, progress on mission-related ambitions will plateau. One grantee commented,

“These grants, while crucial and vital, still don’t allow us to cover basic needs for our people.”

This statement is reinforced by existing research showing People of Color-centered organizations are hampered by funding levels that keep them going but keep them small.⁹ This constrains them with comparatively low compensation levels and insufficient organizational capacity, which leads to difficulty recruiting high-caliber talent and burnout for those who stay.

Absent the ability to increase the overall level of CFE A&C resources that can be granted, there are strategic trade-offs to consider related to narrowing the scope of grantee support and ambitions to align with current resource levels and address the key gaps described above.

TRADE-OFF CONSIDERATIONS

There are a number of criteria that Ford might consider in deciding whether and how to focus the scope of its CFE A&C grantmaking: budget size, primary mission focus and geographic equity.

BUDGET SIZE

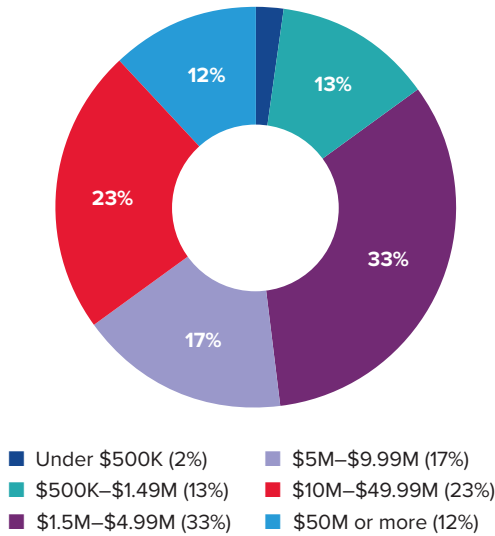
Ford may want to consider concentrating its grantmaking on smaller organizations that were founded to do this work and doing so through a trade-off in funding of larger organizations. Figure 7's two panels show the percentage of aggregate Ford A&C¹⁰ funds distributed to organizations in each budget group and the distribution of grantees by annual operating budget size.

Along numerous fronts, Ford's direct funding had greatest perceived impact on organizations in the \$1.5 million to \$3.99 million range (a subset of those in the \$1.5 million to \$4.99 million range noted in the charts¹¹). They accounted for 20% of all Ford A&C grants and 25% of grant funds, or \$56.2 million in support, and tend to be of, by and for marginalized communities. Ford funding accounted for 15% of their total operating expenses, on average. Compared with other groups, those in the \$1.5 million to \$3.99 million range are more likely to report that CFE A&C funding made multi-year planning possible, gave resources to increase staff pay, improved their community, inspired grants from other major funders, was a catalyst for organizational growth and allowed them to expand the number of programmatic offerings by People of Color and/or disabled artists. They are also more likely to see CFE A&C's professional development as giving them the capacity to sustain themselves. As one arts leader remarked:

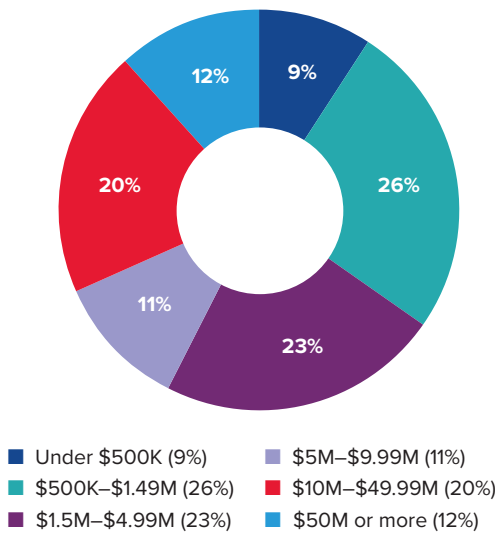
“WE need to be the best tellers of our own stories. And to do that, we must have an equal chance to dream, plan and produce, and to grow institutional capacity, so that the centering of our artists, stories and culture can be ensured in this country for generations to come.”

FIGURE 7:

Percentage of Aggregate Ford A&C Funds Distributed to Organizations in Each Budget Group



Distribution of Ford A&C Grantees, by Annual Operating Budget Size



A number of artists echoed the sentiment with comments such as,

“Start looking deeply for grassroots people or organizations that have been doing good work in the community and reward them.”

Organizations in the \$1.5 million to \$3.99 million range might be considered as a primary focus of future funding, alongside continued funding of those in the \$500,000 to \$1.49 million range. This latter group accounted for 26% of grants and 13% of grant funds (see Figure 7) or \$31.1 million in support. Their responses in virtually every area tended to align with overall average responses among survey participants. Ford CFE A&C funds supported 26% of their total operating expenses, on average.

Among larger organizations, there are differences to consider in terms of impact and performance for organizations with a budget of \$5 million or more. Organizations in the \$5 million to \$49.9 million budget range, which have received 39% of total Ford A&C funding (see Figure 7) or \$91.3 million in support, generally report a more positive experience as Ford grantees. Among this budget group:

- Upwards of 80% perceive a sense of direct impact of Ford funding on their ability to do multi-year planning, on their ability to innovate programmatically and on the number of People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers they served.
- Arts leaders of these organizations report a strong sense that their organizations are thriving with sufficient financial resources and adequate capacity to meet demand, significantly more so than organizations of other budget sizes.
- Four out of every five report that their organization increased its base of support over the grant period, aside from Ford funding.
- Compared to organizations with a budget under

\$5 million, fewer report doing somewhat or much better now than they were prior to receiving Ford support. On the other hand, they are more likely than organizations with a budget of \$50 million or more to report doing somewhat or much better.

- They have struggled most with organizational culture as an internal challenge.

For organizations in the \$5 million to \$49.9 million budget range, Ford A&C funding accounts for 3.0% of total operating expenses, on average. They demonstrate progress towards CFE A&C short-term goals: financial and operating stability, greater funding and base of support, a strong sense they are thriving. As for advancing CFE A&C intermediate goals, two of every three say that Ford funding allowed them to expand the number of programmatic offerings by People of Color and/or disabled artists and 91% say they attracted a lot of visibility for these works.

Ford might consider whether continued support of these organizations is merited because of their close alignment with advancement of CFE A&C goals, or whether they have already attained a level of performance and impact that is now self-sustaining, so Ford can reallocate funding to smaller-budget organizations that show high potential for extension of the CFE A&C program's success. We note that their issues with organizational culture merit deeper exploration, particularly if their workforce members are predominantly people with a disability and/or People of Color. Having diversity and even equity can only go so far if the organization fails to create a positive climate of psychological safety and inclusion.

Ford has least impact on the largest of its A&C grantees: those with a budget of \$50 million or more, which have collectively received \$28.74 million, or 12% of aggregate A&C funding, and represent 12% of grantees (see Figure 7, page 19). Among the largest budget-group:

- Only one-quarter to one-third of the organizations agreed that Ford funding had a direct impact on

their financial stability or that funding was a catalyst for organizational growth.

- Along every financial and operating dimension, these organizations are least likely to say that they are doing somewhat or much better than they were before receiving Ford support.
- Very few reported any kind of revenue growth, only three claimed that funding had an impact on their ability to attract new resources, and few increased their base of support over the grant period aside from Ford A&C funding.
- Only one indicated that Ford support allowed them to lead from a place of abundance, and only a quarter saw the funding as something that empowered them or grew them as a leader.

Ford A&C funding accounts for only 0.3% of total operating expenses for organizations with a budget of \$50 million or more, on average. It may be the case that they are so large that even a somewhat large grant from Ford is not enough to make a marked difference. The most common ways these organizations report that they've had an impact on People of Color and/or disabled artists are through financial support, showcasing their work and training. All say they increased visibility for these artists' work and built their professional network. If Ford's funding had little influence on them, perhaps they would continue to support these artists and have impact on them in the absence of Ford's support.

PRIMARY MISSION FOCUS

As noted early on in this report, the 'margins to the mainstream' strategy has evolved over time as notions of the use of the word 'mainstream' have evolved. However, internal ambiguity persists at Ford around a commonly-held definition of 'mainstream.' This issue deserves consideration because it has significant implications for resource allocations.

In grappling with the question of whether to focus its

A&C funding exclusively on organizations that are of, by and for marginalized communities, Ford will want to consider trade-offs as they relate to long-term CFE A&C goals.¹² Creating a more just reality by expanding traditional definitions of excellence and spurring audiences to consider multiple points of view and experiences infers that ‘traditional’ means Eurocentric, and ‘audiences’ are those who perhaps have not had the opportunity to consider the viewpoints of artists who are People of Color and/or disabled. They are the mainstream whose perspectives Ford seeks to change. If this inference is true, then funding very large, historically Eurocentric arts and cultural organizations to produce and present more works by People of Color and disabled artists makes sense since the audiences of these organizations are predominantly white and/or represent middle-to-upper income households.¹³ These organizations are positioned to give substantial visibility to the artists’ work. Audiences of organizations that are of, by and for People of Color tend to already have tremendous relevance to the communities of color they serve. Their constituencies already consider the points of view and experiences presented by these artists and accept them on their own terms of excellence.

On the other hand, if the long-term goal is to influence who has voice as the ‘mainstream,’ then Ford will want to consider diverting all A&C support to the organizations that exist to lift up communities and artists that have been historically marginalized, to such an extent that they are widely recognized and heard as the mainstream and have the same level of agency as their large, Eurocentric peers. By doing so, Ford makes a significant statement about who and what is valued as mainstream in society. One CFE A&C organization leader expressed this perspective:

“I think ‘mainstream’ needs to be changed. People of color are the majority. We are the mainstream. The reality is to keep advocating and pushing that artists get their fair share. Talk out loud about racism. Identify the problem. Be honest.”

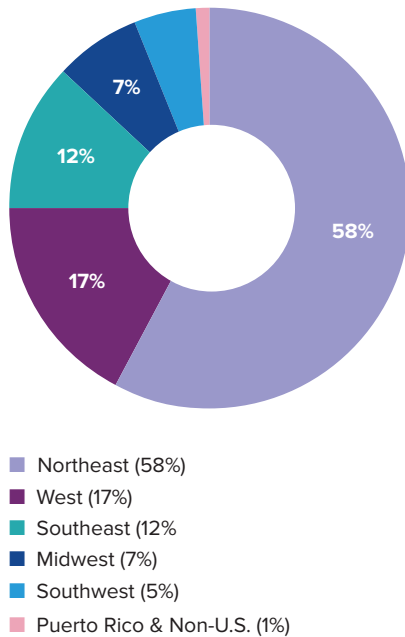
In influencing the mainstream this way, Ford’s CFE A&C program has the potential to be catalytic and alter the nation’s A&C organizational ecology.¹⁴ It is already on this path and seeing progress in this direction but lacking full concentration of A&C resources. This would mean that disability- and People of Color-centered organizations’ profound relevance would reach broader swaths of their communities who come together to celebrate the work of artists at the core of their existence, not on the margins of their programming. In doing so, they increase visibility. Their staffing levels and compensation would grow to alleviate organizational capacity limitations that keep them small, especially in the areas of revenue generation. In this more just reality, they would be able to pay marginalized artists at a level that would allow them to thrive financially.

GEOGRAPHIC EQUITY

An alternative approach to narrowing the scope of those funded by budget size is to consider geographic equity. To date, 58% of Ford’s CFE A&C grantees are located in the Northeast, driven largely by a \$4 million annual commitment to NYC Arts grantees (see Figure 8).

Nearly 70% of grantee survey respondents located outside of the Northeast listed “shift dominant narratives that perpetuate inequality” as a top goal, which directly aligns with Ford’s long-term goal for CFE A&C, whereas this was the case for only 26% of Northeast grantee respondents. Moving forward, Ford might consider focusing more support on organizations and artists outside of the Northeast. It has already headed in this direction, with 77% of funding going to organizations in the Northeast in 2018, 60% in 2019, and 53% in both 2020 and 2021. Directing new grants to other regions would open up new opportunities for influencing a more fair and just society where needs are greatest. There are regions of the country where racism and ableism are comparatively higher and tolerance for diversity is comparatively lower than in the Northeast. There are regions with high social

FIGURE 8: Distribution of Ford CFE A&C Grants by Region



fragmentation and polarization, where marginalized artists are most vulnerable. The CFE A&C team has identified the American South as a region that lacks funding.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ford is inspiring other funders to concentrate more funding on CFE A&C organizations and others like them. Perhaps enough seeds have been planted to diminish inequities in access to funding for disability-centered and People of Color organizations in the future, but it will take time for those seeds to fully take root. In the meantime, there is an opportunity for Ford to maximize strategic investments that have already been made. One way to do so might be to couple substantial multi-year operating support for small and mid-sized organizations that center People of Color and/or disabled artists, with targeted funds for investing in staff and artist compensation and staff infrastructure, alongside executive education or

coaching for managing growth. Numerous open-ended grantee comments were made recommending that Ford offer resources for capacity-building consulting.

Ford may want to consider strategies for increasing artist support, including the following: 1) support research and advocacy for dignified wages; 2) track expenditures on artist compensation by grantees; 3) message its priority for artist wages; and 4) support consultants to do wage assessments for CFE A&C grantees. Artists offered their own counsel along similar lines:

“Ensure the institutions funded have outlined sufficient distribution of funds directly to artists as compensation and not simply provided a space for exposure,”

“Require that living wages are paid for this creative and diverse work,”

“Make a dignified wage or base percentage of Ford money a requirement.”

This evaluation included organizations that showcase works by artists as well as those that serve as funding intermediaries, providing support to artists. Artists who worked with or were supported by grantees during the period of CFE A&C funding felt lasting impact in numerous ways. There is no indication that shifting the balance of funding in favor of intermediaries will have a marked difference on Ford’s achievement of its goals.

At the start of this section, we noted that there is an opportunity to build on the positive findings that emerged in this evaluation, and that it would be counter-productive to redirect resources away from the current CFE A&C strategy, which is getting solid traction, and towards a new strategy that may or may not yield similar impact on marginalized artists. Ford made a strategic decision in 2018 to narrow its CFE A&C support as follows: 1) focus on groups and networks grounded in communities of color and disability (pushing back against racism and ableism); 2)

prioritize intersectional equity; 3) focus national dollars outside of New York; and 4) prioritize smaller groups.

A strategic consideration, however, is the ultimate impact of this strategy on changing who and what gets valued in society, which was identified as the long-term goal. There are early signs that Ford’s theory of change is getting traction on long-term outcomes, as described in that section of this report. However, there is not a solid measurement mechanism in place to track whether a more just reality is being realized along the two dimensions articulated: expanded definitions of excellence, and audiences consider multiple viewpoints and experiences. Attention to charting long-term progress is an internal challenge that Ford may want to consider addressing, taking into account the fact that very limited CFE A&C resources are already constrained. Consideration might be given to how such an initiative to chart progress might occur by leveraging partnerships with local public arts agencies, service organizations and/or other funders who share interest in social change.

An area where Ford might consider targeting impact is on the internal factors that drive or inhibit change in People of Color and disability-centered cultural organizations. Leaders of grantee organizations were clear about the factors they see as necessary conditions that have to be in place before advancing work by People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers, as well as the top strengths needed to drive change. The top three antecedents and strengths identified by grantees might become focal topics in Ford’s series of convenings, especially in a peer-to-peer format. Among interviewees and survey respondents, “infrastructure to nurture talent within the staff” and “time spent in conversation with the community you will serve” are most frequently viewed as precursors to advancing work by People of Color and/or disabled artists and storytellers. The top two internal strengths identified were “centering the community” and “ability to align ambition with staff capacity.”



Photo by Jen Diaz /
Courtesy of HI-ARTS

Another potential area of influence for Ford is boards of trustees. It appears that there is not equitable access to power and decision-making at the board level for People of Color and disabled artists, cultural producers, and executive leaders who have been further marginalized by heterosexism. With other funders, Ford can bring visibility to this issue and motivate change to dismantle the structural racism that can fester in boards that lack diversity.

“There’s a direct line between Ford and some of our programs...We’re lifting up those artists. Changing lives.”

–Ford CFE A&C Grantee

Overall, grantees are thrilled with Ford’s CFE A&C program. The only recommendation made by many of them is to keep up the amazing work and prioritize multi-year general operating support over project funding so they can plan and execute on what they do best. Other **CFE A&C grantees offered their recommendations for ways that the Ford Foundation can have even greater impact. These generally fell into four themes:**

- 1. More transparency in decision criteria, how decisions are made and who gets to apply.**

There is a widespread perception that Ford’s grant-making is driven by personal relationships and lacks transparency. This communicates to the field that access to funding is not equitable, and, therefore, access to the opportunities for impact on artists is not equitable. Numerous grantees suggested that Ford move to an open process where any organization can submit a letter of intent (LOI), with vetted LOI’s invited to apply. Databases such as that compiled by SMU DataArts can identify a broader population of People of Color and disability-centered organizations, as was the case in the trend analysis of the broader ecology provided in this report. To get the word out, one arts leader suggested that every current grantee could be asked to name three organizations that do not receive Ford funding but should. A significant consideration in addressing this recommendation is that it would exacerbate the problem identified above: Demand for funding from organizations whose values and impact align with the CFE A&C program already far exceeds the Ford CFE A&C program’s ability to meet that demand, both in terms of available dollars to grant and staff capacity.

2. Increase the visibility of grantees and their artists.

Put more effort into communicating about Ford’s model for what it looks like to make reparations to organizations, artists and communities that have been left out of the system historically. Share the learnings that emerged from this evaluation, including the strengths of grantees, the progress they have made towards their own goals and the impact they have had on artists. Create a strategic marketing plan and leverage Ford’s megaphone to publicly feature grantees and their artists on an ongoing basis. Artists avidly joined grantees in voicing this recommendation.

3. Launch more initiatives along the lines of the ACT model

where Ford funding is leveraged alongside regional and local funders in ways that align with Ford’s racial and disability justice goals. Create more partnerships with public and private funders throughout the country and hold one another accountable. Doing so leverages dollars and raises local visibility for the marginalized organizations and artists who are there, and positions them with recognition of their strengths. Expand the pool and work not only with funders of arts and culture, but also with those fighting for social justice.

4. Increase the funding period and peg the amounts to inflation to keep in step

with the ever-mounting costs of healthcare, childcare, eldercare and housing. One person commented, “We need a 10-year commitment because there’s been a 100-year history of oppression for these communities.” It is not unreasonable to expect that if it takes Ford ten years for its theory of change to realize its full potential of impact, it likely takes its grantees a similar length of time to achieve the transformative growth and impact they seek. Realistically, making 10-year funding commitments in the absence of an increase in grant dollars that CFE A&C can provide would basically exclude new organizations from receiving support and new initiatives from being launched. Once Ford decides whether and how it wants to narrow its distribution of funding given trade-offs discussed above, it might consider striking a balance between slightly more extended terms for multi-year grants to fewer organizations and flexibility to continue supporting new organizations.

CONCLUSION

This in-depth evaluation of Ford's CFE A&C program sheds light on progress made along the plan for disrupting narratives that perpetuate inequality and lifting up underrepresented voices across race, gender and ability, so the perspectives and experiences of these communities shape a more inclusive world. We acknowledge that the external challenges of recent years are unprecedented and had an impact on CFE A&C grantee organizations, the artists who work with or are supported by them, and the broader field of arts and cultural organizations that center People of Color and disabled artists.

Despite these challenges, the majority of CFE A&C grantee organizations, arts leaders and artists are thriving, and arts leaders partially attribute progress to participation in the CFE A&C program. They defy the societal obstacles they face related to racism, ableism, inequitable access to funding, and gentrification, and have something to teach the rest of the field. Grantees lift up the voices and cultural contributions of artists and storytellers who are disabled and/or People of Color – those who hold the power to shift narratives that perpetuate inequality.

The organizations have come far during the period of CFE A&C funding. Their progress is the mechanism by which Ford progresses on its goals; it is how change happens. In a multitude of ways, the Ford CFE A&C program is realizing its intended impact. The triangulation of methodologies used in this evaluation reveal, however, that there are organizations whose continued progress is stunted by a lack of staff capacity and the ability to provide staff and artists dignified wages. They have increased their impact on artists in other ways and increased demand for their work, but in doing so they have stretched their limits of growth to the point of burning out those who deliver and support the organization's mission-related work. Moving forward, Ford will be faced with strategic considerations for how to narrow its focus of funding where it perceives there is greatest potential for impact.

In summary, Ford's CFE A&C program has the potential to be catalytic, particularly through substantial multi-year general operating support to small and mid-sized organizations and networks that are of, by and for People of Color and disabled artists and storytellers. There is a lot to be proud of and a lot that is working well. To be catalytic, however, decisions will need to be made moving forward related to strategy trade-offs and their implications for resource allocations and impact.

There has been considerable upheaval and turbulence in the world since 2018, which includes the period of CFE A&C funding. We recognize the serious impact of racism, ableism, COVID-19, gentrification and inequitable access to funding on CFE A&C grantee organizations, the artists who work with or are supported by them, and the broader field of arts and cultural organizations that center People of Color and disabled artists. Despite these challenges, Ford's CFE A&C program has had profound direct and indirect impact on sustainability, ability to thrive and advancement of marginalized artist voices as part of a just society's redefined mainstream.

RECOGNITION OF PARTICIPANTS

Findings in this report emerged from the voices of the leaders of CFE A&C grantee organizations and the artists and storytellers who worked with or were supported by them during the grant period. To all who spoke with us and responded to the grantee survey, we are deeply appreciative for your candor, reflections and time. The artist survey was anonymous, so while we cannot acknowledge individuals and thank them for sharing their perspectives, we can publicly extend our debt of gratitude for their participation. The full report contains a considerable level of detail on grantees' theory of change, how they measure progress towards goals and objectives, and their progress and impact. It is infused with arts leaders' first-hand accounts of their strategies and insights.

Tables 1 and 2 below recognize the participants in the interviews and the CFE A&C grantee survey.

TABLE 1: CFE A&C Grantee Organization Interview Participant List

CFE A&C Grantee Interview Organization	Location
Alternate Roots	Atlanta, GA
Chicago Latino Theater Alliance	Chicago, IL
Dance/NYC	New York, NY
Esperanza Peace and Justice Center	San Antonio, TX
First Peoples Fund	Rapid City, SD
For Freedoms	Brooklyn, NY
Harness/ CCF Community Initiatives Fund	Los Angeles, CA
International African American Museum	Charleston, SC
Kinetic Light/ Disability Dance Works, LLC	Los Altos, CA
The Laundromat Project, Inc.	Brooklyn, NY
National Disability Theatre	Seattle, WA
National Museum of Mexican Art	Chicago, IL
PA'I Foundation	Honolulu, HI
Santa Fe Art Institute	Santa Fe, NM
Self-Help Graphics and Art, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA
Sins Invalid	San Francisco, CA
Sipp Culture (Mississippi Center for Cultural Production)	Utica, MS
The Underground Museum	Los Angeles, CA
United States Artists	Chicago, IL
Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience	Seattle, WA

TABLE 2: CFE A&C Grantee Organization Survey Participant List

CFE A&C Grantee Survey Organization	Location
3Arts, Inc.	Chicago, IL
Abraham In Motion, Inc.	Brooklyn, NY
Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc.	New York, NY
Ananya Dance Theatre	Saint Paul, MN
Apollo	Bronx, NY
Art Beyond Sight	New York, NY
Art+Feminism	Baltimore, MD
Art21, Inc.	New York, NY
Art2Action, Inc.	New York, NY
Artspace Projects Inc.	Minneapolis, MN
Axis Dance Company	Oakland, CA
Bronx Documentary Center Inc.	Kingston, NY
California Community Foundation	Los Angeles, CA
Camargo Foundation	Cassis, France
Carnegie Hall	New York, NY
Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History	Detroit, MI
China Residencies, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA
City of Asylum Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh, PA
Creative Justice Initiative, Inc.	Bronx, NY
Crossroads Incorporated	New Brunswick, NJ
Crux, LCA	Albuquerque, NM
CultureSource	Grand Blanc, MI
Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Inc.	Dallas, TX
DNAWORKS LLC	Fort Worth, TX
East-West Players, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA
Efforts of Grace, Inc.	Brooklyn, NY
En Foco, Inc.	Bronx, NY
Harlem Stage Inc.	New York, NY
Hip-Hop Theater Festival Inc.	New York, NY
IDEAS xLab	Denver, CO
Institute of American Indian Arts	Santa Fe, NM
Japanese American National Museum	Los Angeles, CA
Jazz at Lincoln Center, Inc.	New York, NY
Joyce Theater Foundation Inc.	New York, NY
Kennedy Center	Washington, DC
Latino Cultural Arts Center	Denver, CO
LatinX Playwrights Circle	New York, NY
Lincoln Center Theater	New York, NY

CFE A&C Grantee Survey Organization	Location
Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana de San Jose	San Jose, CA
Museo De Arte Contemporaneo De Puerto Rico, Inc.	San Juan, PR
Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, Inc.	San Juan, PR
Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts	Brooklyn, NY
National Gallery of Art	Washington, DC
National Hispanic Cultural Center Foundation	Barelas, NM
Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, Inc.	Vancouver, WA
New Americans Immigration Museum and Learning Center, Inc.	San Diego, CA
New Venture Fund	Minneapolis, MN
New York City Center	New York, NY
New York Live Arts Inc.	New York, NY
New York Public Library	New York, NY
Perez Art Museum Miami	Miami, FL
Performance Space 122, Inc.	Brooklyn, NY
Phamaly Theatre Company	Denver, CO
Philanthropy New York, Inc.	New York, NY
Ping Chong and Co., Inc.	New York, NY
Poise Foundation	Pittsburgh, PA
Press Street	New Orleans, LA
Prospect New Orleans	New Orleans, LA
Safos Dance Theatre	Tucson, AZ
Self Help Graphics and Art, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA
Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs Inc	Calabasas, CA
SoHarlem, Inc.	New York, NY
Studio Museum in Harlem/Center for Curatorial Leadership Inc.	New York, NY
The Center for Cultural Power	Oakland, CA
The Clemente Soto Véllez Cultural and Educational Center Inc.	Bronx, NY
The Museum of Chinese in America	New York, NY
The National Association of Latino Arts and Culture	San Antonio, TX
The National Black Theatre Workshop, Inc.	New York, NY
Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience	Seattle, WA
Zoeglossia Inc.	Las Cruces, NM

¹ <https://www.fordfoundation.org/work/challenging-inequality/creativity-and-free-expression/strategy>

² To request a copy of the full report, please contact fordcfe@fordfoundation.org.

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://www.fordfoundation.org/work/challenging-inequality/creativity-and-free-expression/strategy>

⁵ In considering its definition of what it means for individuals in the CFE A&C arts and culture grantee cohort to thrive, Ford considers successful support in four ways: 1) Advance their artistry 2) Expand practice, and explore new forms and issues (innovation) 3) Feel recognized (Artist-centered approach to support/partnership) 4) Strong sense of ownership over their narrative.

⁶ Voss, Z. G. and G. B. Voss (2021), *The Alchemy of High Performing Arts Organizations, Part II: A Spotlight on Organizations of Color*, SMU DataArts, Retrieved from <https://culturaldata.org/pages/the-alchemy-of-high-performing-arts-organizations-a-spotlight-on-organizations-of-color>.

⁷ <https://wageforwork.com/fee-calculator>

⁸ See:

Kim, W. C. and R. Mauborgne (2009), "How Strategy Shapes Structure," *Harvard Business Review*, Sept., 73-80.

Miller, C. (2001), *Linking Mission and Money*, Nonprofit Finance Fund, retrieved from <https://nff.org/report/linking-mission-and-money-introduction-nonprofit-capitalization>.

⁹ See:

Voss, Z. G. and G. B. Voss (2021), *The Alchemy of High Performing Arts Organizations, Part II: A Spotlight on Organizations of Color*, SMU DataArts, retrieved from <https://culturaldata.org/pages/the-alchemy-of-high-performing-arts-organizations-a-spotlight-on-organizations-of-color>.

Thomas, Rebecca and Zannie Giraud Voss (2021), *Buffering Against Uncertainty: Working Capital and the Resiliency of BIPOC-Serving Organizations*, white paper published by SMU DataArts (March), https://culturaldata.org/media/2345/dataartsbufferingagainstuncertainty_35.pdf.

¹⁰ Ford A&C grantmaking represents all grants that originate in the CFE office as well as A&C grants that originate in the President's office. Please refer to the discussion above about the various and distinct funding streams within Ford.

¹¹ It is interesting to note that these findings no longer hold when the budget range is expanded to include organizations with budgets between \$4 million and \$4.99 million.

¹² Official documents on the CFE program identify intermediary and long-term goals as follows: "There will be an increase in the production and visibility of art, film, and journalism created by underrepresented artists and storytellers and focused on the matters they deem most important and representative of their communities. These works will expand traditional definitions of excellence and spur audiences to consider multiple points of view and experiences."

¹³ See, for example: Z. G. Voss, G. B. Voss, and Park, Y. W. (2021), *The Intersection of Funding, Marketing, and Audience Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*, SMU DataArts. Retrieved from https://culturaldata.org/media/2388/dataarts_intersectionmadei_final.pdf.

¹⁴ For a discussion of funder influence on People of Color arts organizations and the nation's organizational ecology, see: Voss, Z.G. et al. (2016), *Does 'Strong and Effective' Look Different for Culturally Specific Arts Organizations?* SMU DataArts, pp. 3-4. Retrieved from <https://culturaldata.org/media/2318/ncarwhitepaperdiversityreport.pdf>.

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