

ARTISTS UP: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Over the last two years, three Washington State arts funding organizations (4Culture, Artist Trust and the Office of Arts & Culture) have been working on **Artists Up**, a collaborative research project. The goal of this project is to support artists of color by building relationships and soliciting their input, by improving agency structures and procedures for greater accessibility, and by engaging artists and cultivating leaders of color in the creative sector.

Artists Up has convened and surveyed Latino/a artists in 2013; Asian, Asian-American /Pacific Islander; and African-Immigrant/African-American artists in 2014. In 2015, Native American artists will be invited to participate in a similar program that completes this research-based initiative.

Below are 7 key findings from our work to date:

1. Monetary Support is Important. It is equally as important as receiving non-monetary forms of support.
 - Financial assistance is very much needed, but other forms of non-monetary support are also very important.
 - Financial support for artists is key, but money is only one dimension of the support that artists need and want from Artists Up agencies.
 - There is interest in seeing more substantive ways to support full time professional artists who are benefiting the whole community.
2. Amount of Work for the Money: grant requirements or panel requirements require too much work for the money compensation.
 - Barriers to pursuing funding from agencies includes the investment of time and costs in preparing applications.
 - The time asked of artists to sit on selection panels is not realistic, and therefore limits the ability of artists of color to participate as panelists and further limits the possibilities of related impact on selection.
 - Grant opportunities are often seen as requiring too much effort for too little remuneration.
3. Selection Processes: critical barrier. Artists Up agencies need to use a new system for their selection processes.
 - Selection processes are a critical gateway function and there is the potential for new approaches that can result in greater equity and diversity of artist support.
 - Selection processes are perceived as the key barrier to the inclusion and participation of artists in programs and funding in Seattle and King County.

4. Building Relationships: there needs to be continued efforts to grow the relationships with artists.
 - Clear communication, consistent programs, personal relationships, and active opportunities for input are key for artist to gain knowledge and trust with arts agencies. Underserved communities have trouble jumping in and feeling welcome.
 - Committed efforts and resources are needed from agencies over time to build relationships with a broader group of artists.
 - Networks among artists – face-to-face and online – are of strong importance as ways of sharing information, building supportive community and encouraging artists to persevere.

5. What is Art: artists want to make their own art, and not have to mold to what the agencies are asking for the project.
 - There are a number of barriers to pursuing funding from agencies which includes trying to define appropriate outcomes that meet funder expectations.
 - Participants believe the power of art to create and reflect community values and legacy in the public realm is not being realized or supported in communities of color.

6. Public Art: there are perceived barriers to entering public art.
 - Public art is a world of its own and often requires different targeted strategies to reach a broader range of artists.
 - Public Art selection processes are seen as being particularly inappropriate to communities of color.

7. Need for Guidance
 - Provide advice for artist's who have never received a grant before. The one-on-one is critical because it has to do with attention. Have someone available for a set time every week to provide these services.