



## MEMORANDUM

Date: September 21, 2011  
To: CAC Board of Trustees  
From: Karen Gahl-Mills, executive director  
re: revisions to CAC Mission, Vision, Values

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### **Action Requested**

At the September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, we look to the board to approve a revised statement of Mission, Vision, and Values for CAC.

### **Background**

At the board retreat in June, staff introduced the idea of revising CAC's mission statement to better reflect our focus on public value and impact.

The existing mission statement reads:

*To sustain the excellence of Cuyahoga County's arts and cultural assets that enrich our lives and enhance our community's appeal.*

While this statement provided a foundation for our early grantmaking work, board and staff agreed that it is not clearly representative of our core purpose in several ways:

- “sustaining” implies supporting the status quo, rather than helping organizations evolve as community needs evolve.
- “excellence” implies subjective judgment, rather than objective demonstration of artistic value.
- “arts and cultural assets” could imply support only for large organizations, rather than the ecosystem of organizations of all sizes that we aim to support.

Most importantly, the mission as it currently reads does nothing to link the work of CAC – and its public funding source – to the community at large, beyond the community of arts and cultural organizations that receive CAC funding. We feel that a more direct link to the community is critically important for an organization with constituents that extend to all county residents.

### **Our Charge: Mission, Vision & Values**

The board challenged the staff to create a revised mission statement that addressed these issues while still maintaining an emphasis on economic & cultural vitality. Staff took the additional step of putting the mission in the context of a long term vision for our agency's work and the values and guiding principles that help guide all decision making.

The statements that we created reflect the core principles of our institution, namely:

- that our funds exist to benefit the public through investments in arts and culture
- that our stakeholders extend beyond the organizations that we fund to the community at large
- and that we intend public support to have a demonstrated impact on the arts and cultural landscape of our community.

Taken together, these statements of mission, vision, and values define who we are, what we strive for, and how we do our work. We present them for your consideration and approval.

### **CAC's Mission, Vision & Values**

**Mission:** To inspire and strengthen the community by investing in arts and culture.

**Vision:** At the end of the first ten years of public arts funding, CAC will have helped build stronger, more resilient arts and culture organizations, helped create vibrant and energetic neighborhoods infused with culture, and helped establish Cuyahoga County as a hub of creative activity and a destination for artists.

**Values:** We will ground our work in our values and guiding principles:

- *Accountability:* We will operate with integrity and always strive for excellence.
- *Impartiality:* We will act fairly, consistently, and without conflicts of interest.
- *Transparency:* We will operate openly and accessibly. We will be friendly and approachable.
- *Partnership:* We will nurture partnerships that improve our grantmaking work, including partnerships with other funders, with community organizations, and with CPAC.