



Support for Artists Planning Team Fact Sheet

Updated 5/4/17

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) is committed to funding and supporting artists in Cuyahoga County. In 2017, CAC is inviting local artists and community leaders to recommend new potential ways that CAC can provide funding and support to artists and creative people in Cuyahoga County.

What is the Support for Artists Planning Team?

The planning team is a group of Cuyahoga County residents (artists* and community leaders) who are volunteering their expertise and time to co-create new approaches to providing support for artists and creative people. When we say “co-create,” we mean that the planning team will be a working collaboration among team members, residents, CAC staff, and CAC board members. This collaboration will bring community voices to the table and will guide discussion, planning, interpretation of information, and ultimately result in recommendations to CAC’s board.

Quick Facts

- Purpose:** To recommend new potential approaches to support artists to CAC’s board
- Timeframe:** May 2017 – September 2017, approximately six meetings
- Who:** 11-13 Cuyahoga County residents, a majority of artists, plus community leaders, one CAC staff member, and one CAC board member
- Leadership:** Shared leadership, each team member has equal decision-making power/voice
- Facilitation:** A facilitator, separate from the planning team and CAC staff and board, will help guide discussion and process
- Payment:** Planning team members will receive an honorarium for their time/expertise

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture depends on experts from in and outside Cuyahoga County to help us do our work. Much like our annual grant panels, which bring experts to the table to make informed recommendations to CAC’s board of trustees, the planning team will be composed by CAC staff.

How to Get Involved

There is a role for anyone who wants to get involved in this work. To learn more, please contact Jake Sinatra, manager – special projects & communications at jsinatra@cacgrants.org or 216-515-8303 x103. To receive periodic updates and information about opportunities to support this work, please sign up for our e-mails at cacgrants.org.

*See “About CAC’s Definition of an Artist” on Page 3

Support for Artists Planning Team – The Details

What is the goal of the planning team?

In all, the goal is to recommend potential approaches to support artists and creative people in Cuyahoga County to CAC's board of trustees at its September 11, 2017 regular meeting. In addition, CAC hopes that that the planning team will:

- develop stronger trust, transparency, and shared communication with residents, artists, creatives and the general public;
- connect with, listen to, and empower artists to envision what support should entail; and,
- create inclusive spaces for artists to network and meet other artists and residents

What level of authority, power and decision-making will this team have?

The planning team is empowered and given authority to work collaboratively to:

- lead and create opportunities to connect CAC with residents, artists and creatives throughout the process (i.e. community discussions, town hall artist forms forums, etc.);
- synthesize and summarize the information collected from these connections; and,
- have full decision-making power in developing and recommending potential approaches to support Cuyahoga County artists for consideration by CAC's board of trustees

The planning team is not a formal advisory committee of CAC's board, and will not:

- approve recommendations presented to the CAC board;
- serve in a staff capacity or control how board-approved recommendations are implemented

What values will guide this work?

- **collaboration:** the team will work together and co-create
- **equity:** each voice on the team is valuable and decision-making power is shared
- **connection:** team members bring ideas and voices from the community to the table
- **discovery:** the team will approach the work with open minds
- **trust:** the team's work will be shared openly and transparently with the community
- **stewardship:** CAC invests public tax dollars on behalf of Cuyahoga County residents

Support for Artists Planning Team – The Team Member Role

What are the desired qualities of planning team members?

- a formal or informal leader connected to a strong network of residents and artists
- demonstrated interest in community engagement and connecting with residents
- open mind and collaborative spirit, ability to work on teams
- eagerness to learn and listen
- belief in and commitment to CAC's mission and broad definition of artists
- willingness to serve in the interest of the public (Cuyahoga County residents)

About CAC's Definition of an Artist

The majority of the planning team members will be working artists. In this case, we define working artists as those individuals for whom half of his/her total annual income is derived from artistic work. We expect all team members to commit to developing approaches to support artists—broadly defined, and in line with CAC's authorizing language in the [Ohio Revised Code Section 3381](#). That definition: "Arts or cultural heritage" includes, but is not limited to, literature, theater, music, dance, ballet, painting, sculpture, photography, motion pictures, architecture, archaeology, history, natural history, or the natural sciences." This definition opens the door for more residents to participate in individual artist support programs.

What is expected of team members?

All planning team members should be prepared to bring their expertise and:

- **show up:** miss no more than one of the approximately six scheduled meetings, and commit to participate actively; complete work outside of scheduled meetings as needed
- **connect with others:** actively seek out opinions from residents and artists to inform the work, understand who Cuyahoga County artists are and what they need
- **collaborate:** work productively with other committee members
- **embrace equity:** seek to understand the backgrounds, perspectives and lived experiences of Cuyahoga County residents and artists based on differences in age, color, ethnicity, ancestry, sex, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental disability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, citizenship status, artistic discipline, and other characteristics that make people unique.
- **drive to solutions:** at the end of the process, the planning team will recommend potential approaches for providing public support to artists and creative people who actively engage and impact the community through their work

Note: planning team members (with the exception of CAC staff or trustees) *will* be eligible to submit a proposal, receive funding from, or be involved in any other capacity with board-approved recommendations resulting from the work of the Support for Artists Planning Team.

Support for Artists Planning Team – Appendix A

About Cuyahoga Arts & Culture

CAC is a regional arts and cultural district and a political subdivision of the state of Ohio. Established by voters in 2006, CAC is the public funder for arts and culture events and, to date, has awarded over 1,400 grants, representing over \$158M in tax dollars, to more than 300 organizations serving County residents. CAC is authorized by the [Ohio Revised Code](#), chapter 3381.

About CAC's Support for Artists

Since 2009, CAC has invested \$4,083,850 to provide fellowships to individual artists in Cuyahoga County. This program awarded 172 fellowships or alternate awards to 161 individual artists. This program ended on December 31, 2016, providing an opportunity for the board to revisit, and potentially reimagine, CAC's commitment to supporting artists to ensure that any future investment is aligned with CAC's mission, reflective of what CAC heard in our planning process and responsive to County residents.

As outlined in the Ohio Revised Code, chapter 3381, CAC may only make grants to 501c3 nonprofit organizations. Because individual artists and creative people are an important part of Cuyahoga County's artistic ecosystem, we plan to continue to leverage a partnership with a nonprofit organization to re-grant flexible dollars to individual artists and creative people working and living in Cuyahoga County.

Role of CAC Board of Trustees and CAC Staff

CAC is governed by a [board of trustees](#) comprised of five members who are appointed by the County Executive and subject to confirmation by County Council. All power and authority granted to CAC is vested in and exercised by its board of trustees. [ORC 3381.07](#) outlines the authority granted to the regional arts and cultural district, which includes (but is not limited to) creating bylaws and policies, making grants to qualified organizations, levying taxes and issuing bonds, employing personnel, and receiving gifts, grants, or bequests.

CAC's board meets in public and is subject to Ohio's sunshine laws. Minutes of all prior meetings are available [here](#) for reference. CAC's board does not: evaluate grant applications, evaluate cultural organizations and their readiness for CAC support, determine individual grant award amounts, or direct the work of the staff, except for the CEO & executive director.

CAC staff will work to implement the recommendations of the Support for Artists Planning Team, in line with CAC's stated mission, vision, and values, the CAC board's [initial framework](#), and CAC's budget.

One CAC trustee and one CAC staff member will participate in the planning team.

Support for Artists Planning Team – Appendix B

Framework for Support for Artists

In December 2016, CAC's Board affirmed key elements that future support for artists will include, in addition to CAC's stated mission, vision, and values, and budget. Key elements of our future support for artists will include:

1. Providing **flexible funds** that enable artists to create, just as we've done since 2009. We aren't interested in forcing artists into project grants.
2. Using a **broad definition of "artist"** that is in line with CAC's authorizing language in the [Ohio Revised Code Section 3381](#), which aligns with our primary grant programs, operating support and project support. That definition is: "Arts or cultural heritage" includes, but is not limited to, literature, theater, music, dance, ballet, painting, sculpture, photography, motion pictures, architecture, archaeology, history, natural history, or the natural sciences. This definition opens the door for more residents to participate in individual artist support programs.
3. **Striving for equity** by supporting those who are often underrepresented and/or marginalized, and intentionally seeking out and supporting artists of color and emerging artists. This element comes directly from feedback from the community and is not meant to exclude one group at the expense of including others. All will be welcome.
4. Supporting **excellent art that actively engages and impacts the community**. At CAC, we believe that art can be both excellent and in service of the community. Because we're using public dollars, it's imperative that there is community impact in all of our grantmaking.
5. Offering a **supportive cohort model** where artists have the opportunity to learn from each other and collaborate. As we've heard from local partners and from many artists, people want to grow their networks and share their work. We want to support this.
6. Offering **learning opportunities** and tools that support artists in the difficult, but important work of using their art to impact their community. Many artists do this, but for those who want to learn more, we want to offer support and tools. As a past fellow told us, "Many artists have something they want to say, they just want help amplifying their voice."

Building on these initial frameworks, the planning team has the authority to co-create recommendations for ways to fund artists and creative people in Cuyahoga County.

Support for Artists Planning Team – Appendix C

Resources Available to Support for Artists Planning Team

CAC staff will make a number of resources available to the Support for Artists Planning Team, to enhance their work and to enable them to be successful. These include:

- **Project Manager:** A part-time CAC staff member who can support the administrative and logistical needs of the planning team, including meeting scheduling and logistics, communications support, and other needs, as determined by the planning team.
- **Facilitator:** Separate from the planning team or CAC, an independent facilitator will be made available to the planning team to help guide discussion and process. The facilitator will not be a part of the decision-making team, but will be present at all meetings to encourage active participation, help build trust and transparency, and to help guide the process.
- **Data:** CAC will provide access to any historical data or information about past work to support and fund artists in Cuyahoga County. In addition CAC will provide the results of two studies, that may support the work of the planning team:
 - Community Survey: A statistically significant survey of 600 likely voters in Cuyahoga County, describing awareness and participation in arts and cultural activities in the community, as well as community perceptions around CAC's support.
 - National Support for Artists Scan: Research by the Americans for the Arts Research Services Team that assesses local public funding for artists. The research provides a scan of the mechanisms that local arts agencies employ to support artists in communities across the nation.
- **Connection to Local and National Experts:** CAC will facilitate connections and schedule informational interviews with leaders of arts agencies, foundations, public funders and other organizations working to provide support to artists in communities across the nation.
- **Budget:** CAC will allocate the appropriate financial resources to support the work of the planning team, in line with its spending policies, mission, and role as a public funder.