



For Immediate Release
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Contact: Meg Harris, Interim Executive Director
(216) 515-8303

New Collaborative Adds to Arts and Culture in Ohio Communities

September 1, 2009 (Cleveland, Ohio) – Hundreds of Ohio arts organizations now have access to new technology to strengthen their management capacity and evaluate impact in communities, thanks to the Ohio Cultural Data Project, a new online statewide system that launches today.

The collaborative, which features the first comprehensive information collection tool of its kind, gives organizations across the state the resources to easily report on their progress. The initiative will provide information that nonprofits need to focus on increasing access to and participation in the arts, and respond to the cultural demands of people who live across the state.

These investments in arts pay off because when creative activity is happening in large and small ways across the state, it creates a ripple effect of benefits, even for those who don't participate directly.

Senator Bill Harris, President of the Ohio Senate, said, "The arts enrich our communities and encourage individuals to interact in new ways. Ohio has so many creative and talented people. Collaboration will ensure that more of us have the chance to see all that our great state has to offer."

Arts and cultural organizations of every size routinely face challenges associated with collecting and reorganizing information for supporters. The Ohio Cultural Data Project helps streamline the funding process for organizations by giving them the technology to organize their financial data to match each participating funder's requirements. Groups will save time in the grant-application process by completing one online form each year that will supply information for the financial portion of many grant applications.

In addition, groups will be able to track and analyze their data and compare how they operate relative to their peers.

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“The Cultural Data Project helps groups spend less time on the process of collecting and organizing their data and allows them to focus instead on benefits to the community,” said Neville Vakharia, Director, Cultural Data Project, The Pew Charitable Trusts.

The Ohio Cultural Data Project is the result of a statewide collaborative partnership of public and private funders and organizations, including the Ohio Arts Council and coordinated locally by Cuyahoga Arts and Culture, the Cleveland Foundation, the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture, GAR Foundation, and the George Gund Foundation. The Ohio Cultural Data Project is committed to benefitting communities by streamlining the process for cultural organizations. As many as 1,000 organizations in Ohio will be participating in the project by 2011.

Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, Armond Budish said, “In today’s economy this project is an example of how partnership and collaboration build the arts within Ohio’s communities and statewide.”

The Cultural Data Project was developed in Pennsylvania in 2004 and is overseen by a funder collaboration, led by The Pew Charitable Trusts which houses and administers the project for each state, helping to ensure comparable, standardized data across regions.

The Cultural Data Project is quickly becoming a national model and has expanded across the country with systems currently in place in California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New York.

For more information about the Ohio Cultural Data Project visit www.ohculturaldata.org.

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Cuyahoga Arts and Culture makes grants using public funds to support Cuyahoga County’s arts and cultural sector and the valuable contribution arts and culture makes to children’s learning experiences as well as to the county’s appeal and economic vitality. CAC revenues are generated by a levy approved by Cuyahoga County voters in November 2006. Meetings of CAC’s five-member Board of Trustees are regularly held the second Tuesday of each month and are open to the public.

For additional information, visit <http://www.cacgrants.org>.

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