WE-Making

How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being

Conceptual Framework

Call it neighbor, friend, teacher, or just community,
Now, a needed part of our happy.
So, our life long collecting of others begins

—from the poem "WE-Making" by Carol Bebelle

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Preface

by the working group of funders of this project

This evidence-informed resource came about in far different circumstances from the ones in which we, as a nation, now find ourselves in the early months of 2021. At a time when "social cohesion" is challenged in new ways by "social distancing," and when "place-based" art has come to mean arts participation with neighbors whom we only see at a distance or virtually, one well might ask whether resources of this nature are hopelessly obsolete. Far from it. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic fall-out and the protests related to racially motivated violence and discrimination have brought into national focus the persistent long-term threats to health equity. These crises have laid bare the ill effects of social isolation, social scarring, and social divides. These tools—and the lessons learned in their development—remain broadly applicable to those seeking to advance social cohesion, health equity, and community well-being.

In 2017, a group of funders with a mutual interest in supporting place-based arts and cultural practices to advance health equity and the well-being of communities began to ask: What can today's evidence tell us about the complex relationships between the arts, place, and social cohesion? How might this knowledge help funders and practitioners—in the arts, community development, and public health— set clearer goals and expectations for activities occurring at this nexus? How might these participants communicate more effectively with each other and with key decision-makers in their sectors about the relevance and utility of place-based arts practices to social cohesion, especially as one conduit to greater equity in health and well-being?

As with any large group enterprise, the parameters of this project changed as the partners got more deeply invested in it, questioning and even challenging the terms of discourse from their own fields of practice. From the beginning, the funders targeted the outcome "social cohesion" for particular study because previous

research had tagged it as a critical dynamic in population health and in solutions for responding to health inequities. Notably, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has identified this factor as part of its Culture of Health action [framework](#) (action area 1, "making health a shared value").

Similarly, in creative placemaking and the arts, the value of social cohesion has gained traction, though in practice and communications it often goes unexamined. The term, when mentioned at all, is largely indistinguishable from other perceived benefits of place-based arts participation, such as greater civic engagement, social capital, agency, and collective efficacy. The first order of business for a project of this scope was to define social cohesion, based on prior literature, and then to describe the state of evidence for a positive relationship between place-based arts practices and this outcome area.

The second of these tasks proved more difficult than expected. Although empirical evidence for the relationship is severely limited, the exercise showed how problematic it is to evaluate social cohesion as a general good without attending to structural inequalities or giving sufficient voice to the community members and artists affected by these inequalities. More qualitative research was needed, therefore, in the form of interviews, case studies, logic modeling, and—perhaps most catalytic— a two-day working group meeting in Lexington, Kentucky, with a range of artists, community organizers, researchers, and health practitioners to test the thinking.

The resulting tools include a conceptual framework document, a theory of change, and case study vignettes—all designed to help funders and practitioners in the arts, public health, and community development to articulate the shared benefits of their work. Throughout these materials, questions and issues of social justice and economic equity have come to the fore. As a recurring feature, the documents include guidance to amplify the voices of marginalized people in projects and policies seeking to leverage social cohesion through place-based arts practices. In addition to the tools represented by the components of this report, titled *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being* and authored by the staff of Metris Arts Consulting, other documents resulting from this phase of the project were produced by PolicyLink and the Center for Arts in Medicine at the University of Florida. Our hope is that these resources can inform thinking and action to center community voices and to change community conditions—social, economic, and physical—so that all people can thrive.

This endeavor was supported and guided by a collaboration of funders whose portfolios and commitments cut across the arts and health sectors and who contributed substantially to its direction. The names and roles of all the project's contributors, advisors, and supporters are included in the Acknowledgments, and the funders would like to thank everyone for their insights and efforts in bringing together and presenting these valuable ideas, experiences, and lessons.

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Introduction

Healthy, equitable communities are places that create the conditions for all people to reach their optimal well-being, such as access to safe neighborhoods, good jobs, homes, and schools.

Healthy, equitable communities are places with strong social cohesion.

Place-based arts and cultural strategies[1] can uniquely contribute to the formation of social cohesion.

A group of funders (The Kresge Foundation, Bush Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, ArtPlace America, and the National Endowment for the Arts) held these convictions in common. The funders group observed the need to explore how place-based arts and cultural strategies connect with social cohesion, and how that connection might be fostered or optimized. They also independently saw value in understanding the connection between place-based arts and cultural strategies and social cohesion because of the scope of each of their own portfolios. In addition, they recognized that stakeholders spanning artists to public health workers to community developers to academic researchers (from a variety of disciplines) to policymakers and philanthropic funders have vastly different and uneven understandings of what social cohesion is and how arts and cultural strategies intersect with it.

Driven by a shared interest in supporting practitioners working to build social cohesion through arts and cultural strategies, the funders group charged Metris Arts Consulting with exploring the questions: What is social cohesion? How does it relate to place-based arts and cultural strategies? Who works at this intersection and how? The funders group concurrently wished to model the principles of equitable research and evaluation[2] through this endeavor. Metris used this lens to inform our methods, the questions we investigated, and the analytical framework reflected in this document.

This document's primary task is to map the relationship between place-based arts and cultural strategies, social cohesion, and increased community health and well-being for all. When we talk about social cohesion, we mean when individuals feel and act as part of a group that is oriented toward working together. From dance class to murals, from storytelling to sharing traditional food, when we talk about culture and art, we mean not just the fine and performing arts, but also the design, aesthetics, traditions, values, and languages found in a given neighborhood, tribal land, town, city, or region. The funders group expressed specific interest in learning more about the ways that place-based arts and cultural strategies may be used to produce social cohesion for equitable community health and well-being outcomes. We started with the shared vision of the funders group and they had input into the documents we have produced. Nonetheless, where we landed is not the official viewpoint or strategy of any particular funder. We aimed to produce resources that a variety of stakeholders, including practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and funders find useful to strengthen and accelerate promising practices.

Metris sought to understand the relationship between place-based arts and cultural strategies, social cohesion, and positive community outcomes in two ways: by reviewing the existing literature that explores these relationships and through interviews and a convening with a diverse group of arts, public health, and community development practitioners; policymakers; and other key stakeholders. For an expanded discussion of our methodology and detailed research questions that drove our exploration, see the Appendices.

Metris completed the majority of the literature review and interview components of this research in the summer of 2018 and co-facilitated the convening in September 2019 in Lexington, Kentucky, with PolicyLink and the Center for Arts in Medicine at the University of Florida. We were still weaving the feedback from the convening into this Conceptual Framework document when the Covid-19 pandemic descended on the United States in early 2020. We were finalizing our revisions when the killing

of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer ignited the already simmering outrage and sparked renewed public attention around anti-Black racism in the United States. Both of these events underscored the roles of racism and collective trauma as barriers to community well-being for all. In response to our initial drafts of the Conceptual Framework and Theory of Change documents, both the funders group and the convening participants emphasized the need to understand the contributions of social cohesion within the context of anti-racism and other anti-oppression efforts. The events of 2020 helped us to further refine the framing of this theory of change in these terms.

Our goal is for the concepts and practices in this document to bolster efforts toward well-being alongside communities that experienced 2020 as more of the same entrenched inequality. Still, the examples and case studies in this document may also feel like they come from another world entirely, one where face-to-face engagement methods were paramount, for instance. Creative community-building efforts will undoubtably change in response to the global pandemic we faced in 2020, and we may end up with different tools at the end of this to amplify social cohesion through arts and cultural strategies. At the same time, we know from this research that community-based arts and cultural strategies can contribute to social cohesion, which provides a strong foundation for collective action for community well-being. Amplifying social cohesion will be even more crucial in the work of rebuilding and recovery that is to come. While we have not conducted new research to adapt this document to that work, we hope that this Conceptual Framework and other WE-Making documents serve as resources in those efforts.

What follows in this framing document is the result of a journey to understand a number of interrelated concepts and to theorize how they can be steps in a process of creating community well-being for all. Our mapping of the relationships between these concepts invites further research and exploration, especially into the causal relationships that we have only superficially explored. We draw the most heavily from academic literature and research in the part of the model that describes social cohesion itself. We also drew on some of the research literature that documents the relationship between arts and culture and concepts associated with social cohesion, like social capital and place attachment. To flesh out the theory of change in terms of promising practices and potential outcomes, we have woven in the insights that practitioners shared with us in interviews and during the convening. The result attempts to value different kinds of knowledge by combining them into one model, without claiming to be an exhaustive review of either sources.

This Conceptual Framework document contains the following content:

- It starts by discussing the contexts that surround the relationships between social cohesion, community well-being, and structural change.
- Next, it offers a synthesis of what we learned from the academic literature on social cohesion.
- It then maps the connections between place-based arts and cultural strategies and social cohesion through related concepts we call "drivers."
- Next, it connects the dots from social cohesion to equitable community well-being through coordinated organization and activity and discusses the well-being impacts of place-based arts and cultural strategies on this pathway.
- Finally, it concludes by discussing promising practices for arts and cultural strategies to improve community well-being for all.

This Conceptual Framework is one of a number of WE-Making resources. If you think of the suite of materials as layers of an onion, the document titled Theory of Change and Case Studies is on the outside, the most high-level and accessible. It uses three case studies to provide narrative-driven highlights. We envision practitioners as a key audience. The conceptual framework described in this document unpacks that theory of change. It draws both from literature and insights from interviewees and convening practitioners. We developed it for a variety of audiences: practitioners, funders, policymakers, and researchers. The Literature Review further expands upon the research that helped us develop the theory of change. It will be of particular interest to researchers and students wishing to familiarize themselves with different definitional constructs and evidence bases for social cohesion and the links between these constructs and evidence and place-based arts and cultural strategies.

PolicyLink has also produced two memos that provide recommendations for moving this work forward for practitioners and researchers, and the Center for Arts in Medicine produced a brief Thematic Analysis and lengthier Proceedings that summarize the convening in Lexington in September 2019.[3] Lastly, the Appendices detail our methodology, as well as discussion and preliminary recommendations that surfaced through the first phase of this research. These components serve different purposes. They may cater to different audiences. They also fit together as a whole that demonstrates the breadth of this project.

Connecting place-based arts and cultural strategies to social cohesion and equitable community well-being can sometimes feel like walking through a fog. If some of the theoretical support can feel murky at times, that's often because it *is* murky. Although individual linkages between these subject areas have been considered, we have had to rely on a lot of "connecting the dots" to navigate this entire concept. Researchers actively debate the definitions of many central terms— even social cohesion itself—which makes identifying the links between arts and cultural activities, place, social cohesion, and equitable community well-being an even "foggier" proposition. When the evidence-base is unclear or absent, we have had to add in additional intermediate "steps" that provide some of the evidence that direct relationships lack. In this document, we attempt to capture and synthesize many research disciplines and on-the-ground experience. However, the scope of this project did not allow us to turn over every stone—much opportunity remains to bring more research and experience into the fold. We hope that this project serves as a first step, to "light a path through the fog" and open up opportunity for others—practitioners, funders, researchers, community members—to clarify and solidify the path going forward.

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Key Takeaways

1. Place-based arts and cultural strategies can help grow and amplify social cohesion for community well-being for all. This is done particularly through strategies that:
   — build and share power through community ownership,
   — connect people across difference,
   — include all types of community members,
   — have a consistent presence in the community, and
   — align with community change goals to reinforce desired impacts.

2. Practitioners, policymakers, and funders may have an intuitive understanding of the relationship between place-based arts and cultural strategies, social cohesion, and equitable health and well-being, but not many researchers have collected direct evidence on this relationship. More research, however, has been done on the relationship between place-based arts and cultural strategies and *other* concepts that have deep ties to social cohesion like place attachment, social capital, civic engagement, and mindset.

3. Social cohesion is not a state of being, nor does it have an "on/off switch." A community or group can have more or less cohesion, and therefore social cohesion is continually (re)produced as an ongoing process rather than a destination. This work takes time. Social cohesion must be nurtured. Gains produced by even modest social cohesion can positively impact continued amplification of social cohesion, so that with care and consistency, even modest positive impacts can snowball to create more profound impacts over time.

4. Improving social cohesion can be part of the process of helping communities experiencing racism, oppression, and structural disinvestment—such as Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color, as well as low-income and rural communities—achieve better and more equitable community well-being.

To contribute to well-being outcomes, such strategies must be community-driven and part of anti-racist efforts that recognize and work to remove structural barriers to well-being.

5. Social cohesion *alone* does not lead a community all the way to well-being impacts. Social cohesion enables coordinated organization and activity. The development of shared values, collective efficacy, and collective action are the next "steps" of the process toward achieving equitable community well-being.

6. Community well-being for all is not restricted to mental and physical health— it encompasses happiness and joy, the celebration and preservation of culture, creative responses to trauma and racism, and civic capacity for structural and policy change.

4

Social Cohesion and the Conditions that Create Community Well-Being

Part of the interest in how place-based arts and cultural strategies contribute to social cohesion derives from the role of social cohesion in literature around community health and well-being. Well-being is a broad concept that expands beyond traditional measures of physical and mental health and economic prosperity to include all aspects of how people in a community can thrive. The lens of well-being also considers social and emotional needs like a sense of purpose, safety, belonging and social connection, and life satisfaction.[4] From this viewpoint, it makes sense to explore social cohesion—which involves relationships, a sense of belonging, common goals, and a willingness to participate—as a key component of community well-being. Furthermore, this lens brings into greater focus the potential role of arts and cultural strategies in fostering community well-being.[5]

To understand how community well-being is nurtured and developed, we have to look at the structural conditions and root causes of the disparities in health and well-being across communities. These conditions can also be called social determinants of health, which the US government defines as "the conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks."[6] These conditions include both the material features of the "place" and how social engagement and people's own sense of well-being are influenced by where people live.

In the US, racism and other oppressive systems around gender, class, and geography are the root causes of the differences in these environments. Systems that value some bodies over other bodies will never produce well-being. *The World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development* notes that health inequality is tightly correlated with income inequality and inequality in educational attainment.[7] Racism and other forms of oppression can also produce collective trauma, which is associated with negative health and well-being outcomes. Creating health and

well-being for all requires removing obstacles such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.[8] Many of these entrenched disparities are connected to *where* people live, especially because US communities continue to be largely racially segregated. As a result, many funders and practitioners have taken up place-based strategies for removing the structural barriers that create unfair and unjust conditions around health and well-being.

Funders and practitioners have been interested in social cohesion because it is correlated with positive health outcomes. Research suggests that social cohesion may be a mediating or "protective" factor for low-income and racially/ethnically heterogeneous communities and positive health outcomes. Specifically, while low socioeconomic status communities and those with high racial/ethnic diversity have been found to be associated with lower overall physical and mental health outcomes compared to communities with more economic wealth and less racial/ethnic diversity, Rios et al. found that social cohesion is a "protective factor" for these positive health outcomes in neighborhoods that otherwise would be statistically less likely to be healthy.[9] On the other hand, lower measures of social cohesion and its interrelated measures like connectedness and trust align with negative health and well-being outcomes. Kawachi and Berkman link low social trust with higher rates of most major causes of death, and also note that social isolation is linked to poor health outcomes.[10] A 2015 Kaiser Permanente and Prevention Institute study highlighted "the erosion of social networks, trust, and the ability to take action for change" as one of the symptoms of collective trauma.[11]

As a result, practitioners have suggested that social cohesion might be one lever to combat this web of inequity, within or alongside structural approaches that remove barriers to health and well-being. Graham et al. theorized that social cohesion's role in generating equitable community well-being (in the "Culture of Health" context) is in providing opportunities for communities to coalesce around "health as a shared value."[12] The authors of the "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration" white paper note that well-being issues such as trauma, racism, and mental health will require collective action to address them, which, as we will describe, is nurtured by social cohesion.[13]

Throughout this report, we use the term "place-based arts and cultural strategies" to mean artists and arts organizations joining their neighbors in shaping their community's future, working together to creatively address community challenges and opportunities. We chose the shorthand of "place-based" to invoke a range of approaches shared by arts and cultural practitioners, public health professionals working toward health and well-being, and the community development field. These approaches highlight the role of environment and geography in producing and reinforcing well-being disparities. But we know that racism and other forms of oppression are the overarching reasons for the differences in well-being outcomes, including when that racism and other forms of oppression are expressed and experienced as structural inequalities within and beyond places. For this reason, our convening participants stressed the limits of "place-based" terminology and suggested "community-based" instead. We discuss the considerations in favor of "community-based" terminology in the section "'Place-based' vs. 'community-based'" later in this Conceptual Framework.

The project convening provided insights from practitioners on how to frame this approach in terms of anti-racism and anti-oppression work that repairs traumas, removes structural barriers, and fights discrimination. Building power and sharing power with historically marginalized groups is necessary to bring about structural change. That larger frame shows us that social cohesion can be both "a mediator and moderator" in relationship to equitable community well-being. In other words, social cohesion can contribute to well-being on its own, but it also can also enhance or diminish the impact of larger change efforts. Our theory of change highlights the ways that social cohesion can be a tool or stepping stone for meaningful equitable community well-being. As we explore in this document, place-based arts and cultural strategies that build social cohesion can amplify and contribute to these change efforts at every step of the way.

It may seem like an inopportune time to talk about the importance of social cohesion for health outcomes, since we are being forced to keep our physical distance and many of the activities and structures that can build social cohesion are being deferred, challenged, and tested. Yet as the crisis of Covid-19 has unfolded, we are also seeing and will continue to see the geographic, racial/ethnic, gender, and class disparities in well-being outcomes both in terms of mortality and economic impact. In addition to these immediate effects, the social ecology of all of our places is being suppressed and forced online, which means those who have access to virtual social spaces and strong existing social cohesion will be less vulnerable to social isolation. In essence, it is too late to foster the protective factor of social cohesion

that would have helped many communities bear the brunt of this "storm." It was the "natural" disaster of the Chicago heat wave and the differences in mortality rates between neighborhoods with differing levels of interaction among neighbors that made visible how a "place-specific social ecology and its effects on cultural practices" could intensify social isolation and lead to inequitable health outcomes.[14]

To address entrenched health and well-being disparities and counter the inequitable effects of the pandemic, we need the same approaches. Namely, we need sustained community-led efforts for policy interventions that can lead to structural change that counters the racism, other forms of oppression, and structural disinvestment that created the disparities in well-being in the first place. The rest of this Conceptual Framework explores the mechanisms by which place-based arts and cultural strategies that build social cohesion might contribute to those efforts.

5

Relationships between Place-Based Arts and Cultural Strategies and Social Cohesion

Social cohesion 101

What is social cohesion? Here are a few ways in which practitioners think about this term:

For me social cohesion is like, 'How much are people then willing to show up for other people outside of your own benefit?'
—Theresa Hwang, Department of Places

At Ashé, we call social cohesion "WE-making"....For it is in the "we" that we find our most definitive self, refracted exponentially through the eyes and hearts of our others.
—Carol Bebelle, Ashé Cultural Arts Center

The first piece of social cohesion is helping people see that they are capable of doing something together.
—Elizabeth Hamby, Artist

Theorists from a variety of disciplines—from sociology to folklore to community development—have been debating definitions of social cohesion for a century.

Essentially social cohesion is what we call it when individuals feel and act as part of a group that is oriented toward working together.

Social cohesion is made up of four facets, or "dimensions":

1. Group **relationships** or connections[15]
2. **Sense of belonging** to people and/or place[16]
3. **Orientation toward the common good**[17]
4. **Willingness to participate** or cooperate with each other

Social Cohesion

Relationships

Sense of belonging

Trust

Orientation toward the common good

Willingness to participate
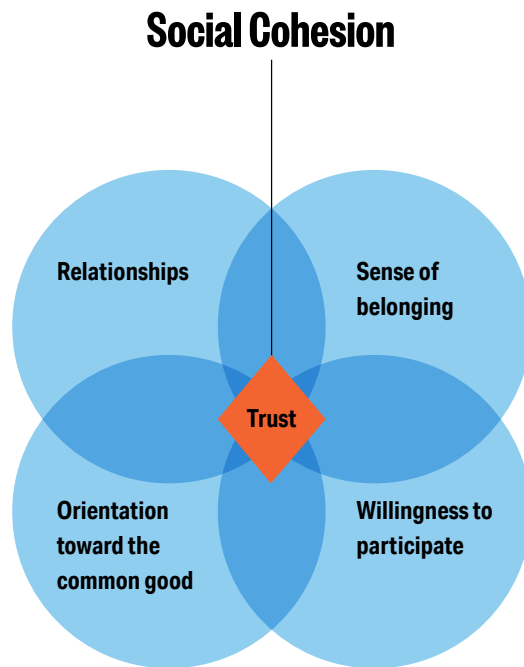
Trust is integral to all four dimensions of social cohesion.

What we call social cohesion is the presence of all of these dimensions. Think of social cohesion as a barbershop quartet or R&B group, harmonizing together. Each dimension is one of the singers. Without orientation toward the common good, relationships and networks may exclude people. Without willingness to participate, sense of belonging may be individualistic and passive. Without relationships and a sense of belonging, orientation toward the common good cannot be leveraged collectively. Social cohesion transforms individual feelings and orientations into collective feelings and orientations. The presence of social cohesion ensures that relationships and networks are poised for participation and action that will serve the common good of the group or community.

Practitioners, policymakers, and academics from different backgrounds understand the concept of social cohesion in a range of ways. Some understand social cohesion on a relatively small scale—the block or the neighborhood—and find that social cohesion does not really resonate in the same way at larger scales, while others suggest that social cohesion has an important role to play at the city, regional,

or even national scale. Social cohesion might be found among people who share a place, or among a group of people who share an identity or interest but not a place. A cohesive group may be similar or diverse, or similar in one way while diverse in others. A group's ability to form and leverage social cohesion may be influenced by contextual factors and structural biases.

Many studies consider **trust** a key facet of social cohesion,[18] and our convening participants emphatically agreed. We suggest that all four dimensions contain an element of trust. Furthermore, researchers sometimes describe some of the related concepts discussed in this document—social capital, civic engagement, and collective efficacy, for instance—in terms of trust. We acknowledge building trust as a key component of the process toward community well-being that this document seeks to describe. Trust both indicates, and is indicated by, the presence of social cohesion and related concepts. Trust is not exclusive to social cohesion in this process but is embedded throughout.

Social cohesion and equity

Empirical research indicates that some kinds of communities that have experienced targeted oppression, specifically low-income and racially/ethnically heterogeneous communities, face particular challenges in their ability to amplify and leverage social cohesion, likely due to factors such as lower trust and withdrawal from community.[19] An erosion of trust, social networks, and the ability to take action for change is one of the symptoms of intergenerational and collective trauma, which is a direct consequence of genocide, slavery, forced relocation/gentrification, poverty, housing insecurity, disinvestment, and abandonment.[20]

In contrast, other groups, such as communities of color with a shared cultural identity, may have strong and potentially underrecognized social cohesion. Scholars suggest that in these communities, key aspects of social cohesion, such as sense of belonging and norms of mutual aid and reciprocity, are protective characteristics that enable residents to cope with economic challenges and promote health.[21]

For communities, social cohesion has been linked to positive social, health, and well-being outcomes.[22] Better yet, social cohesion appears to be a major way for communities to achieve better health and well-being outcomes.[23] Cohesive communities possess higher levels of physical and mental well-being[24] and

community safety.[25] Social cohesion has also been shown to be a protective factor against the effects of low socioeconomic status and high racial/ethnic diversity, contributing to higher physical and mental health.[26]

Social cohesion, however, can be a tool of oppression when present in dominant groups. Structurally and historically *privileged* communities that are cohesive can hoard power, resources, and opportunity, and exclude other communities, as shown in residential segregation and unequal access to quality housing, schools, and other assets and services. Gangs, as another example, may effectively cultivate social cohesion, through offering a sense of identity and belonging to a group, but use this cohesion to enforce group norms harmful to the society as a whole, such as engagement in criminal activity.[27] In addition, cohesion at one scale may lead to discord at another, for instance, in the US Civil War.[28] This is why, as we note above and explore below, place-based arts and cultural strategies that build social cohesion will only lead to *equitable* community well-being if they are within anti-racist and anti-oppressive efforts for structural change.

(For more detailed discussion about definitions and research on social cohesion, see the Literature Review).

Now that we know what social cohesion is, two key questions present themselves:

1. What effect do place-based arts and cultural strategies have on generating and amplifying social cohesion?
2. If social cohesion leads to more equitable community health and well-being outcomes, how does that happen?

The role of place-based arts and cultural strategies in amplifying social cohesion

We might intuitively sense that place-based arts and cultural strategies would be powerful ways to amplify social cohesion in order for communities to pursue equitable well-being, but surprisingly not many researchers have collected direct evidence on this relationship. Matarasso's *Use or Ornament?* provides the most useful evidence of this connection. In this 1997 book, Matarasso collected surveys and interviews from participants in 60 community arts projects in England. Using self-reported feelings, his analysis links the effects of participation to increased

intercultural understanding, reduced social isolation, and the promotion of community safety.[29] Other researchers at the intersection of arts and cultural activities and social cohesion either cite Matarasso without providing new evidence, or else take an intuitive understanding of the term "social cohesion" that does not acknowledge the use of the term discussed in the section above. For an in-depth discussion of the research that does look directly at the relationship between arts and cultural activities and social cohesion, see the Literature Review.

So, if scant evidence exists linking place-based arts and cultural strategies to social cohesion, how can we draw this connection, beyond just intuitively believing it to be the case that these strategies generate and amplify social cohesion? As it turns out, quite a bit of research has been done on the relationship between place-based arts and cultural strategies and *other* concepts that have deep ties to social cohesion. In some cases, these concepts are simply different terms for the dimensions of social cohesion.

We have identified four concepts that link place-based arts and cultural strategies to social cohesion:
- Place attachment
- Social capital
- Civic Engagement
- Mindset
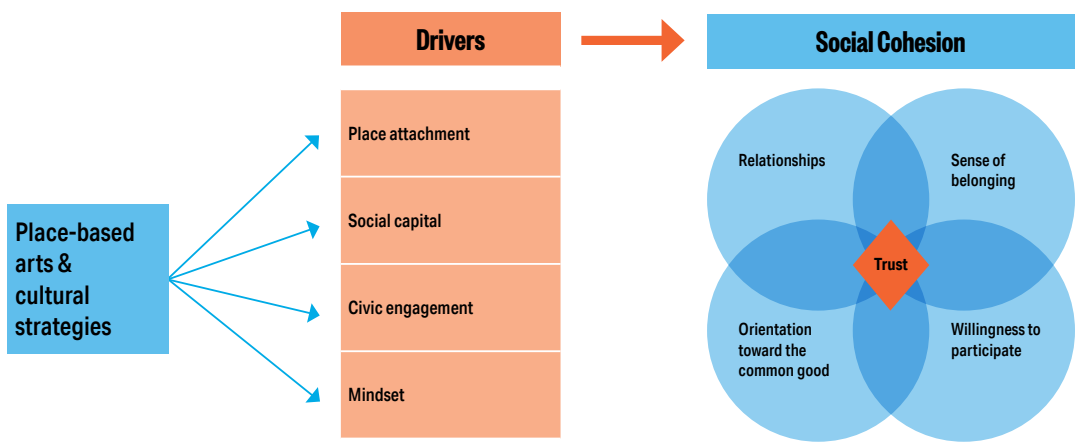
Place-based arts and cultural strategies "drive the drivers" of social cohesion.

In mapping the relationships between these concepts, we find "driver"—as in "driver of/toward social cohesion"—to be a useful and succinct term, especially in the way it allows us to link related constructs to *dimensions* of social cohesion.[30] We rely on published research and integrate insights from practitioner interviews and our convening to support these relationships. In this section, we discuss how place-based arts and cultural strategies drive each of these concepts and how each is linked to social cohesion.

Place attachment

Place-based arts and cultural strategies can help develop or deepen people's place attachment.[31] This fosters a sense of belonging, a dimension of social cohesion. Place attachment also mutually reinforces social capital (discussed below). This suggests not only does place attachment contribute to a sense of belonging to place, it also contributes to developing relationships and a sense of belonging to a community.

Driver

Social Cohesion

Place-based arts & cultural strategies

Place attachment

Relationships

Sense of belonging

Trust

Orientation toward the common good

Willingness to participate
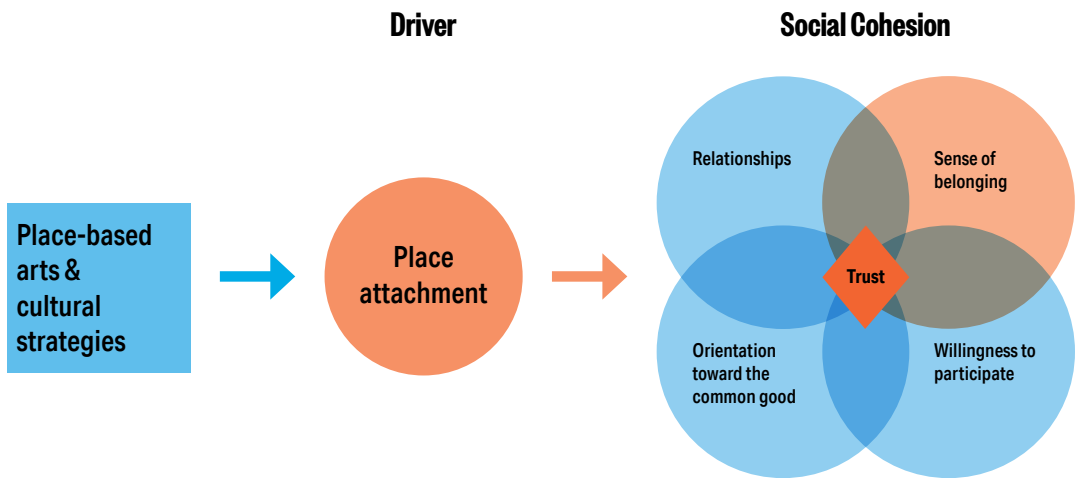
Place-based arts and cultural strategies appear to foster social cohesion through place attachment.

Place-based arts and cultural strategies appear to help foster place attachment for two main reasons. First, participating in arts and cultural activities creates rewarding experiences within community places. This creates and sustains place attachment and feeds a sense of belonging to place (a dimension of social cohesion). Surveys point to the importance of community spaces in cultural participation, where "attendance at arts and cultural events is often an encounter with some aspect of civic and community life... Community venues are places where two experiences can occur: people with important social and civic objectives

encounter arts and cultural experiences, and people interested in arts and cultural activities become acquainted with the institutions that help structure our common life."[32]

Second, place-based arts and cultural participation typically works with the same raw material used to develop and strengthen place attachment: family stories, narratives about people and events, and appeals to personal and social connections to the past. Participants most commonly identify social and emotional reward as the major reason why they participate in arts and cultural activities, according to a survey by Ostrower.[33] This survey also found that a desire to celebrate cultural heritage was equally important for African American and Hispanic respondents.[34]
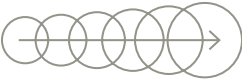
Social and emotional rewards and links between place and cultural heritage, not only incentivize participation in arts and cultural activities, they also lead to place attachment. In both of these ways, place-based arts and cultural strategies can foster place attachment and a sense of belonging to place *and* group. Satisfying group experiences that are specifically tied to particular places should produce both types of attachment simultaneously.[35]

Interviewee WF Umi Hsu, former digital strategist at the L.A. Department of Cultural Affairs, recounts an initiative that acted in effect as if this presumption were true. Promise Zone Arts, part of the federally designated Los Angeles Promise Zone, worked with the community to identify and amplify "cultural treasures," gathering information on the places that members of different communities felt a cultural attachment to. As part of the project, Promise Zone Arts targeted events in places where attachment overlapped. One desired outcome was to foster inter-group cohesion among these overlapping communities.

Place-based arts and cultural participation can also create entirely new places within communities that create place attachment and provide opportunities for social cohesion to flourish. Interviewee Barbara Schaffer Bacon, co-director of Americans for the Arts' *Animating Democracy* program, points to a recent mural created on a Vietnamese restaurant by Boston-based artist Ngoc-Tran Vu with over 100 community collaborators, reflecting Boston's Vietnamese community. Before the mural, no visual artistic representation of the community existed in the city and the mural "literally created a gathering space in the neighborhood that didn't exist before."

In sum, arts and cultural activities contribute to place attachment by opening up the opportunity for rewarding experiences tied to place and community. This contributes to social cohesion by increasing a sense of belonging to place, and also as an opportunity to build relationships and sense of belonging to a social community.

Those who wish to leverage place-based arts and cultural strategies to optimize place attachment and social cohesion should consider projects and organizations that:

	Have a consistent presence in the community.
	Include all types of community members. Encourage participation from community members who might not typically participate, especially those who have been actively excluded because of their race/ethnicity, gender, class, or age.

Social capital

Place-based arts and cultural strategies generate social capital,[36] networks, and ties, which are tied to the "relationships" and "sense of belonging" dimensions of social cohesion.
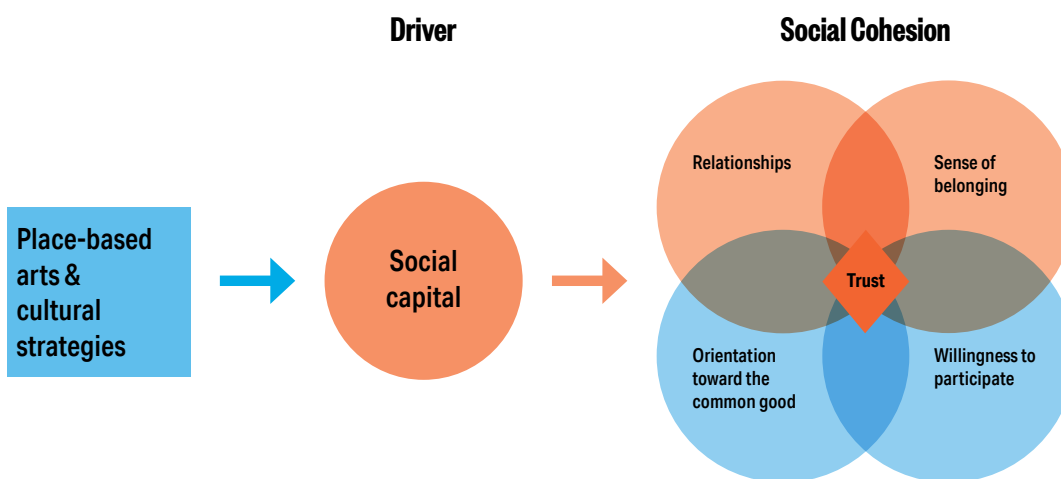
Place-based arts and cultural strategies generate social capital, which feeds social cohesion.

Some researchers indicate that arts and cultural expression simply *is* social capital. Stern and Seifert note that, "at its simplest, culture is itself a form of social capital. When a community comes together to share cultural life, through celebration, rites and intercultural dialogue, it is enhancing its relationships, partnerships and networks."[37] Folklorist Titon confirms that "social capital includes 'folklore' as a resource that is traded among people who possess said capital."[38]

Research also points to the effectiveness of place-based arts and cultural activities in fostering connections, networks, and understanding among community members. Matarasso finds that participatory arts projects "bring people together, ... provide neutral spaces in which friendships can develop ..., [and] encourage partnership and co-operation."[39] Metris' "Adding It Up" report found that participants in place-based arts and cultural projects in four South Minneapolis neighborhoods reported feeling more connected to their neighbors.[40]

Our interviews confirmed that place-based arts and cultural strategies bring people together, form relationships, and build a sense of community. Through singing, artist interviewee Ron Ragin creates "a container for people to have a collective experience that increases bonding or feelings of belonging, or a feeling that I too can contribute whatever it is that I'm bringing to this circle, or whatever this collective needs to happen." Interviewee Theresa Hwang, of the participatory architecture, design, and community engagement firm Dept of Places, reports facilitating community events with arts and cultural activities in order to help foster relationships and alignment among diverse communities.

Researchers have identified two types of social capital: *bonding*, which refers to strong ties among a close knit network, and *bridging*, which refers to weaker ties among a more dispersed network.[41] Both bonding and bridging social capital are important—one researcher famously wrote that bonding social capital is good for "getting by" while bridging is good for getting ahead,[42] while another called bonding capital social superglue and bridging capital social WD-40.[43] Bridging capital does not necessarily mean diversity, and bonding capital does not necessarily mean lack of diversity, although certainly examples of bonding capital can be found in tight-knit ethnic communities, for example.[44]

Convening participants highlighted the power of place-based arts and cultural strategies to build bonding social capital in and by communities that have been historically oppressed and carry the resulting collective trauma. Trauma-informed community building can use arts-based organizing strategies and story circles to

rebuild trust and heal community networks.[45] Bonding capital is also important for fostering a community's ability to tell their own community stories and determine their own agenda for change. In fact, bonding capital may be a pre-condition for developing effective bridging capital. Gursky of the Tamaqua Area Community Partnership stressed the importance of building your own community capacity first before trying to build partnerships, stating "You have to be taking care of your own work, goals, and strategies first. And then partner when it makes sense for you and for whomever you are partnering with."

Several researchers point to the effectiveness of place-based arts and cultural strategies in fostering bridging social capital, specifically among diverse communities.[46] In "Toward Diversity That Works," Jackson points to the power of arts and cultural activities for "building bridges among diverse racial [and] ethnic groups."[47] Jackson suggests that arts and cultural activities might facilitate or embody "a cultural commons where diverse groups can showcase what they have to offer and also sample what others bring, where diversity is publicly validated."[48] Matarasso corroborates this idea with survey responses to community arts activity participation in England. He found that 54% of participants reported having learned about other people's cultures.[49] He reports that many case study projects "succeed in bringing together people from different cultural groups on a one-to-one basis," and that arts and cultural projects and participation "successfully [bring] many of the town's different community groups together, in celebration of their cultures and values."[50] Wali et al.'s ethnographic study of informal arts participation in Chicago found that informal arts activities bridged differences between participants, leading to trust and solidarity among participants and promoting "greater understanding and respect for diversity."[51]

Interviewees described a desire to bring different kinds of people together through arts and cultural activities, as well. For instance. several years ago, Florida's Division of Cultural Affairs asked interviewee Jill Sonke, of the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, to work with the state's rural communities facing critical health concerns and underserved by the arts. One community, Franklin County, began holding Zumba classes that "drew in a particularly broad spectrum of community members who had typically been polarized," people of different races, income levels, and ages. This coastal community often faces hurricanes that affect the town's major industry, oyster harvesting. Sonke recently spoke with the town's mayor, who reported that Zumba makes his job easier: "[It's the] best thing that had happened in terms of helping people learn how to cooperate with one another... that's what [the mayor] needs from people when disasters happen and that's usually one of his

biggest challenges." Sonke reflects, "something as simple as dancing together was really changing the way people across really significant divides in that community had begun to relate."

Place-based arts and cultural strategies can themselves be an aspect of social capital. More generally, these strategies foster social capital by bringing people—especially diverse groups of people—together. As interviewee Ragin puts it, arts and cultural activities act as a "container" for shared experiences and relationship building. These relationships are the building blocks of social capital and also social cohesion. The sense of belonging to a group that comes with social capital also reinforces social cohesion.

To leverage place-based arts and cultural strategies in order to amplify social capital and social cohesion, practitioners and supporters should prioritize projects and organizations that:
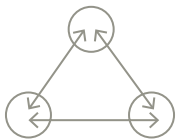
	Connect people across difference. Build bridges between different groups and community members by inviting participants to collaborate and share experiences.
	Include all types of community members. Encourage participation from community members who might not typically participate, especially those have been actively excluded because of their race/ethnicity, gender, class, or age.

Civic engagement

Place-based arts and cultural strategies contribute to civic engagement,[52] and civic engagement relates to community members' willingness to participate and often their orientation toward the common good, dimensions of social cohesion.[53] Arts and cultural activities provide a low barrier to entry for community members who might feel intimidated or isolated by other social or civic engagement, and can cultivate a willingness to participate in other civic activities. For those who have been actively excluded from civic life—unhoused populations, individuals with substance abuse disorders, sex workers, and incarcerated individuals—arts and cultural activities can offer civic participation when other avenues might be closed and amplify their voices in policy discussions.

Driver   **Social Cohesion**
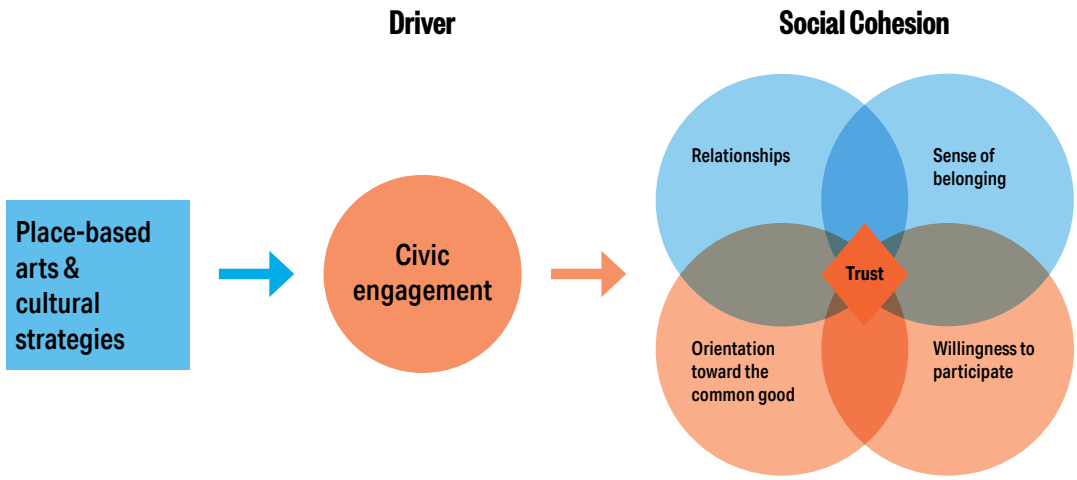
Place-based arts and cultural strategies contribute to civic engagement and build social cohesion.

Place-based arts & cultural strategies → Civic engagement →

Relationships

Sense of belonging

Trust

Orientation toward the common good

Willingness to participate

The NEA's "Art-Goers and Their Communities" report found a correlation between arts and cultural participation and civic engagement even when controlling for education, gender, age, parental status, and other demographic factors.[54] Metris' "Adding It Up" report found that survey respondents living on blocks where place-based arts and cultural activities and programs occurred were 1.8 times likelier than non-participants to state that it was very important to them to be civically engaged in their neighborhood. The survey responses showed that these effects were even stronger for project leaders: "Their experiences seemed to whet their appetites for more hyper-local civic engagement."[55] And in "Hearts and Minds: The Arts and Civic Engagement," Rabkin notes a substantial and consistent relationship between arts participation and civic engagement. He finds that adolescent experiences with the arts are particularly influential, and that "people who have built identities around civic engagement often credit arts experiences as significant to their development."[56]

Stern and Seifert, however, warn that other factors such as personal and family characteristics and early socialization have such a strong pull that the effect of "exposure to new ideas through the arts" will "likely be quite modest."[57] Overall, this body of research would seem to indicate that while place-based arts and cultural activities encourage civic engagement, in general, in communities, these activities will be particularly effective in generating civic engagement among youth.

Place-based arts and cultural strategies provide an accessible way for community members to engage with one another. Our interviewees provided several examples of how such activities help cultivate willingness to participate. Some interviewees perceive arts and cultural participation as having a lower bar to entry compared to other community outreach strategies. The interviewee Micah Gursky, of the Tamaqua

Area Community Partnership, says, "We purposely used the arts because it's a people-friendly way of engaging people who might not otherwise engage or participate. ... [Arts and cultural activities give] people an alternate way of expressing themselves and a specific way to engage in their community in a way that's not really a formal process and that's not really heavy." Interviewee Jennifer Ybarra, of The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities site in the Boyle Heights community of Los Angeles, says that residents, especially those whom organizations have struggled to reach, might find a panel presentation on a policy issue or a community forum unengaging, but may show up for a songwriting workshop that addresses similar topics.

Place-based arts and cultural strategies provide high opportunity and low barriers to entry for civic engagement, especially among community members who may not otherwise participate in civic activity. This has an especially profound effect on youth, for whom participation in community may become a lifelong inclination. Civic engagement also indicates the presence of the "willingness to participate" dimension of social cohesion, and often also the "orientation toward the common good" dimension.

Place-based arts and cultural strategies with the following elements appear most suited to increase opportunities for civic engagement and amplify willingness to participate. Activities that:

	Build and share power through community ownership. Prioritize building leadership and co-designing/creating with community members.
	Include all types of community members. Encourage participation from community members who might not otherwise participate, especially those have been actively excluded because of their race/ethnicity, gender, class, or age.

Mindset

Place-based arts and cultural strategies can be used to affect individuals' mindsets toward the "orientation toward the common good" dimension of social cohesion. Graham et al. write that "one's mindset includes the thoughts, beliefs, and expectations an individual has."[58] They suggest that mindset formation involves a process of development, transmission, perception, and acceptance, for instance from parent to child.[59] We have the least evidence out of any of the drivers of this relationship between place-based arts and cultural strategies and mindset in the literature, which is not to say that this evidence does not exist. Place-based arts and cultural strategies could be used for this mindset development process, leading to the social cohesion dimension "orientation toward the common good." We suggest that rather than the top-down "transmission" and "acceptance" that Graham et al.'s process would seem to indicate, place-based arts and cultural strategies are well-suited to provide space and opportunity for communities to articulate and come to consensus on their own mindset and develop *emergent* orientation toward their common good. Convening participants highlighted the fact that changing people's mindset, especially for structural change efforts, can actually be a disruptive and violent process, but artists are particularly good at easing people into radically different ways of thinking.[60]
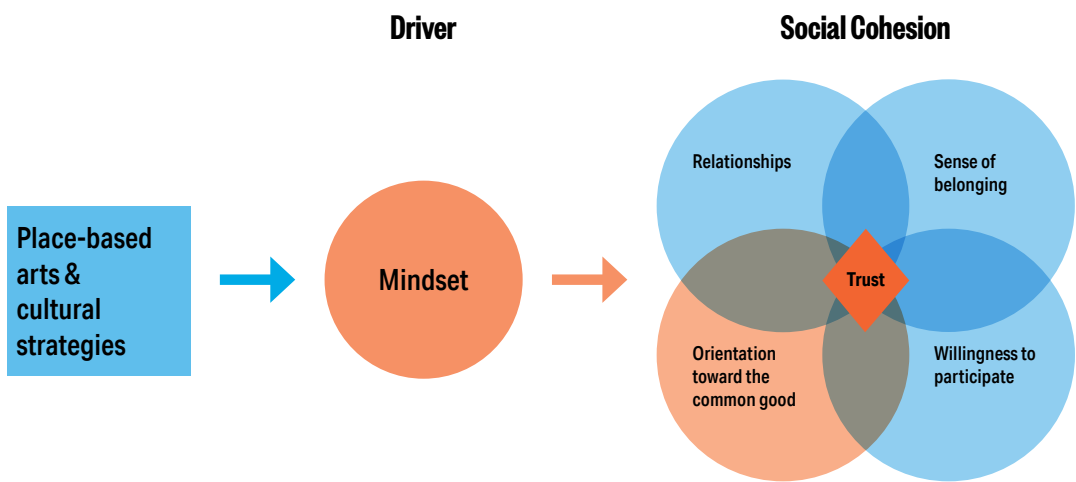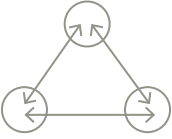
Place-based arts and cultural strategies can affect mindsets and shift perspectives.

Interviewees describe how place-based arts and cultural strategies can affect people's mindsets. Gursky describes "Dear Tamaqua," an art project that aimed to address "lingering pessimism about the future [of the town]." "Dear Tamaqua" asked residents to create a letter, song, or drawing for the town. Project organizers then took the responses and created artwork that they shared back with the

community as a way to shift the story from the past to a collective future. They provided an opportunity for community members to "see" each other and what their values were. In another example, interviewee Ybarra points to community songwriting workshops that engaged residents in dialogue about street vending and how the existing policy impacts undocumented residents of the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles. The songwriting workshops provided a "natural way for people to think and talk about issues that are impacting their lives." Researchers Jackson and Chávez documented the songwriting workshops, among other Boyle Heights projects that were part of The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities Initiative: "Embedded in collectively singing these verses in a call and response fashion is a reinforcement of values (cultural, social, political) and a deeper understanding and appreciation for street vending as something that is culturally important and essential to the general health of the Boyle Heights community."[61]

Those seeking to foster a common mindset oriented toward the common good via place-based arts and cultural strategies should:

	Build and share power through community ownership. Prioritize building leadership and co-designing/creating with community members.
	Connect people across difference. Open up opportunities for community members to collaborate and share experiences, especially across different groups and community segments.
	Include all types of people. Encourage participation from community members who might not typically participate, especially those who have been actively excluded because of their race/ethnicity, gender, class, or age.

6

Social Cohesion to What End? Outcomes

In this section, we explore the *effects* that place-based arts and cultural strategies have on generating and amplifying social cohesion. Research shows how place-based arts and cultural strategies can effectively influence and grow related concepts— what we call "drivers": place attachment, social capital, civic engagement, and mindset. These drivers are linked to dimensions of social cohesion. But, why should we care about that? What does social cohesion do for communities, and how does it do it?

The effect of place-based arts and cultural strategies on coordinated organization and activity

We have discussed how ongoing structural disinvestment has led to well-being disparities in American communities. Social cohesion can work to alleviate disparities in these communities within the context of anti-racist and anti-oppressive efforts for structural change.[62] Social cohesion helps communities reach a variety of interrelated positive outcomes, including improved physical and mental health, celebration and preservation of culture, community resilience and creative responses to trauma and racism, and civic capacity for structural change; we argue that these all fall under the umbrella of community well-being.

| Drivers | — | Social Cohesion | → | Coordinated organization & activity | → | Equitable community well-being |

Through coordinated organization and activity, social cohesion can feed equitable community well-being.

However, social cohesion *alone* does not lead a community all the way to these impacts. Social cohesion enables coordinated organization and activity. The development of shared values, collective efficacy, and collective action are the next "steps" of the process toward achieving equitable community well-being.[63]
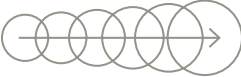
Collective efficacy
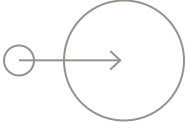
Collective efficacy is the capacity and capability of a group to achieve collective action. Sampson's classic definition of collective efficacy indicates that it consists of social cohesion and the expectation for social control (a community's ability to self-regulate its members according to shared values, principles, or norms for the general well-being of the community).[64] We argue, below, that both social cohesion and the expectation for social control are affected by place-based arts and cultural activity. Sampson also found that collective efficacy is correlated with increased public safety[65] and some public health outcomes, such as lower rates of teen pregnancy.[66] He suggests that the reason for this correlation is that collective efficacy suggests a community's overall willingness to step in for the common good.[67] Rios notes that this allows community members to "increase their expectations that together they can achieve common goals."[68]

The "social control" element of collective efficacy does not imply "policing" or externally controlling a community in any way, but rather indicates a community's ability to self-regulate its members according to shared values, principles, or norms for the general well-being of the community. Folklorist Dundes argues that one of several primary purposes of folklore is social control.[69] Another folklorist, Bascom, observes that, "some forms of folklore are important as means of applying social pressure and exercising social control" and describes folkloric expression's effectiveness in "maintaining conformity to the accepted patterns of behavior" of a community.[70]

Place-based arts and cultural strategies can increase collective efficacy by generating and amplifying social cohesion and by acting as a vessel for social control and community self-regulation. Interviewee Sharon Day, executive director of the Indigenous Peoples Task Force, reflects on how the organization's Ikidowin Peer Educators and Acting Ensemble—a health-related peer education through theater program—helps urban Native youth participants establish cultural values. The program provides "structure" and "discipline" because, she says, "if you don't show up, you're hurting the team." She continues that the youth arrive to rehearsal at

8 a.m., far earlier than their friends might wake up, because they feel a responsibility to show up for one another. Tebes et al.'s evaluation of Philadelphia's "Porch Light" community mural project found that the project—which provides opportunities for community participation in the development and creation of murals—produced an increase in collective efficacy for participants and non-participant residents.[71]
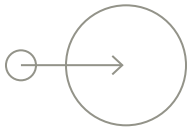
To increase collective efficacy via place-based arts and cultural strategies, practitioners and supporters should prioritize projects that:

	Build and share power through community ownership. Prioritize community co-design and co-creation. Provide the space for community members to guide this process themselves.
	Have a consistent presence in the community.
	Align with community change goals for equitable well-being to reinforce desired impacts.

Collective action

Multiple interviewees reported that artistic and cultural expression is a powerful tool for communities taking collective social action. Dundes notes folklore's capability for "serving as a vehicle for social protest."[72] "We know that art and culture have always been a part of movement work," says interviewee Sandra Davis, of The California Endowment, specifically calling out Oakland as a place where arts and cultural strategies have "been ongoing, integral, a critical piece of how changes have happened in this city." In another example, interviewee Ybarra points to how community members' participation in arts activities designed to facilitate dialogue about social issues—a songwriting workshop about street vending, for example—can lead to "deeper engagement," such as advocating for policy and system changes.

To maximize place-based arts and cultural strategies' contributions to collective action, practitioners and supporters should emphasize projects that:
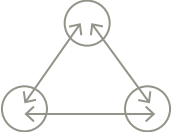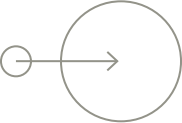
	Align with community change goals for equitable well-being to reinforce desired impacts.
	Build and share power through community ownership. Prioritize building leadership and co-designing/creating with community members.

Self-determination of shared values

Place-based arts and cultural strategies can be incredible tools for communities to develop shared values. Seifert and Stern discuss how facilitators use arts and cultural activities to "provide settings in which people can discuss issues, form connections, and take action."[73] This allows for "bottom-up," community-driven value generation and agenda setting. Matarosso confirms this relationship, noting that place-based arts and cultural strategies facilitate "building local capacity for... self-determination."[74]

Several interviewees point to the effectiveness of using arts and cultural strategies to facilitate shared value deliberation and expression in communities. Interviewee Hwang discusses the participatory planning she facilitates as a way for neighbors from different backgrounds to recognize that they may share similar goals. Interviewee Davis notes that poster-making and murals in East Oakland have affirmed and reaffirmed the message that their campaigns center around equity and justice.

To most effectively leverage the potential of place-based arts and cultural strategies to help communities develop shared values, practitioners and supporters should prioritize projects that:

	Build and share power through community leadership. Prioritize building leadership and co-designing/creating with community members.
	Connect people across difference. Build bridges between different groups and community members by inviting participants to collaborate and share experiences.
	Include all types of people. Encourage participation from community members who might not typically participate, especially those who have been actively excluded because of their race/ethnicity, gender, class, or age.
	Align with community change goals for equitable well-being to reinforce desired impacts.

Place-based arts and cultural strategies support equitable community well-being

We have discussed the ways that place-based arts and cultural strategies can generate and amplify social cohesion. Next we discuss how communities leverage social cohesion to realize equitable community well-being outcomes and impacts. While we have argued, up to this point, that place-based arts and cultural strategies are well-suited to generating and amplifying social cohesion, we also find evidence in the literature and our discussions with practitioners that place-based arts and cultural strategies "move the dial" toward equitable community well-being in unique ways.
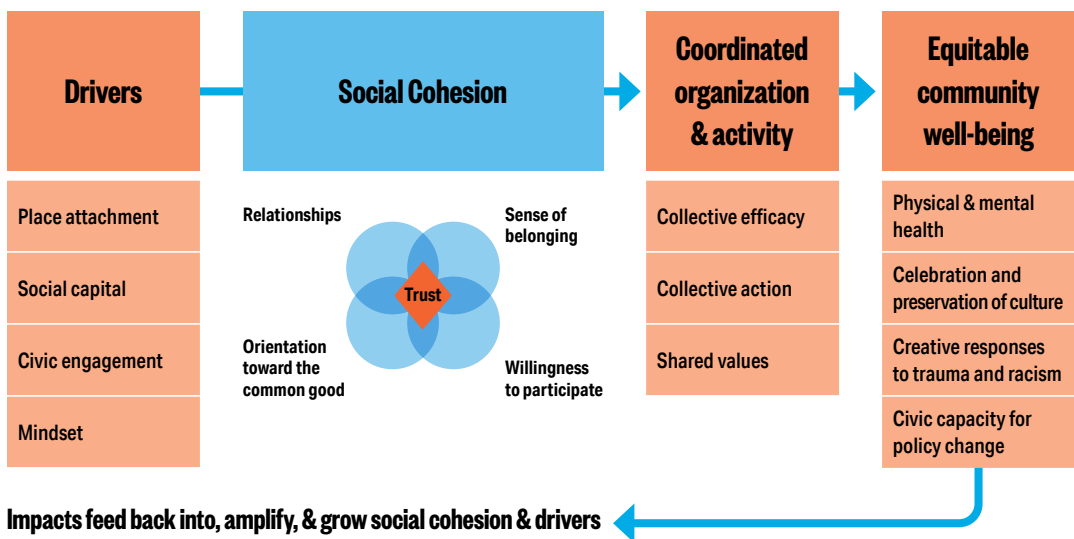
Place-based arts and cultural strategies contribute to and amplify a feedback loop that builds equitable community well-being.

In addition to the many ways that place-based arts and cultural strategies contribute to increasing equitable community well-being by fostering social cohesion itself, we also find these strategies potentially offer their own well-being *impacts*. Stern and Seifert talk about the ecological/"spillover" effects of arts and cultural activities, that simply the *presence* of arts and cultural activities in a community can be associated with positive community health and well-being impacts.[75] As we delved into these connections, we kept in mind the broad concept of well-being that goes beyond health and economic prosperity to more social and subjective dimensions. We therefore suggest that the impacts discussed below—physical and mental health, celebration and preservation of culture, community resilience and creative responses to trauma and racism, and civic capacity for policy change—all belong under the umbrella of community well-being.

Below, we briefly discuss connections between a variety of well-being impacts and place-based arts and cultural strategies that nurture social cohesion. We draw from both literature and discussion findings. Some of the research that points to these connections does not draw a line *through* social cohesion, but nevertheless links place-based arts and cultural strategies to these impacts.

Mental and physical health

Place-based arts and cultural strategies that build social cohesion may amplify the health benefits of social connection. Social capital, social support, collective efficacy, and social networks are linked to lower levels of depression and anxiety.[76] Ferris points to research that links social connectedness to lower blood pressure, better immune responses, and lower levels of stress hormones, which all lead to the prevention of chronic disease.[77] The health benefits for socially excluded populations (unhoused populations, individuals with substance use disorders, sex workers, and incarcerated individuals) may be even more significant, considering that the mortality rate for these excluded men is nearly eight times higher than average. The mortality rate for these excluded women is nearly 12 times higher than average, underlining the role of gender-based oppression in contributing to health disparities.[78]

It is also worth noting that arts and cultural strategies have an immense capacity to produce joy and happiness through the experience of beauty in a community setting. Our convening participants urged us to consider these experiences part of health and well-being outcomes. In Matarasso's case studies, 52% of participants in community arts events across England reported feeling better or healthier, and 73% reported that they had been happier since being involved.[79]

Some arts and cultural activities, such as dance, contribute to addressing chronic disease by increasing participants' healthy behaviors in fun and engaging ways. Interviewee Sonke speaks about the Zumba class initiative in rural Florida as first and foremost being a way to improve community health. Other activities address chronic disease by reducing stress and addressing trauma. Interviewee Ragin works to create a needed "space for healing;" he focuses on collective singing because he believes "people carry so much trauma around their singing voices."

Social cohesion developed through place-based arts and cultural efforts can also reduce community violence and increase perceptions of safety.[80] Increasing night-time programming, including concerts, at parks in Los Angeles County has been linked to a marked reduction in violent crime around those parks.[81] Matarasso's research indicates that arts and cultural participation leads to reduced fear and sense of danger from others, especially reduction in older community members' fear of younger community members when these activities bridged these groups.[82] Interviewee Kelly Cornett, a public health consultant, mentioned two projects— the Downtown Greenway in Greensboro, NC and Passageways in Chattanooga, TN— that use artistic lighting to activate underpasses and alleyways that have had the "added benefit" of increasing people's perception of safety on these pedestrian routes.

Celebration and preservation of culture

At the same time that place-based arts and cultural strategies build social cohesion, they sometimes use and exalt arts and cultural forms that have not been valued in the dominant culture. These strategies can be powerful conduits for building, restoring, and preserving community identity among communities who have experienced racist and anti-cultural oppression. In this context, celebrating and increasing the visibility of cultures that have been denigrated and suppressed is a significant well-being outcome. While discussing the development of a Black Cultural Zone in Oakland, CA, interviewee Davis indicated that arts and cultural activities act as critical components of community preservation; they are records and expression of culture. In "Toward Diversity That Works," Jackson also notes the idea that arts and cultural activities affirm and preserve cultural identity, pointing to cultural enrichment programs, ethnic parades and annual events, and arts organizations focused on a particular ethnic group.[83] In *How Racism Takes Place*, Lipsitz suggests that the community organization Project Row Houses fosters cultural memory for Houston's historically African American Third Ward, as the city rapidly changes.[84] Intergenerational place-based arts and cultural strategies like the Zuni Youth Enrichment Project, which produced a culturally rooted park and community center catering to youth, can be important for sharing and preserving a cultural sense of belonging and community identity.[85]

Creative responses to collective trauma and racism

One of the symptoms of collective trauma is "the erosion of social networks, trust, and the ability to take action for change."[86] It stands to reason, then, that place-based arts and cultural strategies that build social cohesion can also be used to directly counter the effects of collective trauma and racism. In particular, arts and cultural efforts can reflect on, clarify, reveal, and name a community's history and collective experiences of trauma and racism. These strategies can also build new community narratives that stimulate imagination and hope. Hannah Drake's "One Poem at a Time" project in the Smoketown neighborhood of Louisville, Kentucky, illustrates a strategy that changed the narrative of an African American community and created collective action against racist corporate practices. "This initiative replaced dozens of predatory billboard advertisements in Smoketown with beautiful photographs of its residents, and each featured a different powerful six-word poem written by community members."[87] The project led to several changes in the community including preventing a new liquor store from opening, a city-wide policy change on notice of new store openings, an agreement from a large advertiser to feature art on un-leased billboards, and a community mural derived from one of the featured poems.

Civic capacity for structural and policy change

Equitable community well-being requires structural change to oppressive policies that have created inequitable community conditions. Place-based arts and cultural strategies that build social cohesion through participant ownership and that align with structural change goals are particularly good at creating the "people power" (or collective efficacy) needed to make broad changes in community well-being. These structural changes could be oriented toward promoting collective efforts to protect safe public spaces, clean and safe housing, and availability of nutritional foods. Or, as we saw with "One Poem at a Time," arts and cultural strategies can also be oriented toward shifting power to communities to counter oppressive practices.

For "Islands of Milwaukee," artists designed cards with questions to stimulate conversation and sent them with in-home deliveries to aging residents. The project built connections between aging residents and artists and generated new community-driven programs for increasing relationships such as "in-home visits from artists, dances and painting sessions, and phone conversations."[88] The responses collected from residents were elevated through public performances and an exhibition in City Hall. This amplified the voices of the aging residents, who had not been heard or well-served by the existing local policymaking processes. Some of the policy changes highlighted through public performance happened quickly, such as changing the timing of traffic stops.

Ongoing place-based arts and cultural efforts can create platforms for continued organizing among socially excluded groups. Cox conducted eight years of ethnographic research in one shelter for women in Detroit where the Move Experiment was born. Operating primarily out of the shelter's common room, Move Experiment's peer educators—young Black women who lived in the shelter—planned and facilitated a variety of creative activities (writing, dance, and meditation) to address interpersonal tensions among people who lived and worked in the shelter. "The Move Experiment had become another type of "home space" for the peer educators in that it was a place where they could extend the tradition of public talk by working through their concerns and contemplating the choices they could make to address them," Cox writes. This public talk, she continues, was "seen operating in the shelter as a form of solidarity building and self-healing therapy."[89]

Interviewee Sandra Davis reflected holistically on arts and cultural activities as both tools in pursuit of community empowerment and efficacy, but also as manifestations of it. She describes Oakland's EastSide Arts Alliance as an "anchor," which has operated for decades in the community. The organization has provided technical assistance to help others nearby to learn from and build on their work. She says the organization has been central in building a healthy and engaged community. They are currently working on developing the Black Cultural Zone, to "affirm who the community is, who it has been." In 2020, these arts-driven community-building efforts resulted in a sizable state grant by which the Black Cultural Zone can now build its capacity to link cultural preservation with support for new and existing Black businesses.

Interviewee Ann Heard, an artisan and small business owner from Natchez, MS, reflects on her participation in HEAL Community Natchez events, noting that it provided an opportunity for young black women who participated to see that it was possible to own their own business. The events also created the relationships and social network for participants to work together again, notably when the public health department conducted a participatory health impact assessment process to inform the creation of a Civil Rights Trail in the community.

Further thoughts on social cohesion

Impacts on well-being feed back into producing more social cohesion

Social cohesion is not a state of being, or an "on/off switch." A community or group can have more or less cohesion, and therefore social cohesion is continually (re)produced as an ongoing process rather than a destination. A community must tend to social cohesion in order to sustain it. Positive well-being impacts that are achieved by the process of amplifying and leveraging social cohesion become wrapped up in a feedback loop[90] and continue to positively impact the drivers and dimension of social cohesion. In this sense, place-based arts and cultural activities as an element of well-being may function both as a "spillover" effect, and *also* productively reproduce, sustain, and amplify the steps in the process.

Social cohesion (and structural change) takes time

Social cohesion must be nurtured. It takes time. Interviewee Hwang approaches this work "very slowly," and she tries to be realistic about how building social cohesion takes "time and investment in relationships." She notes that it may take "generations to build social cohesion in an authentic and kind of deep way." Social cohesion requires trust and communities cannot manufacture trust overnight. "You have to be in it for the long haul because there is no quick and easy way to do this," says interviewee Day. Interviewee Sonke agrees and adds, "expect small steps moving forward."

Interviewees warn that the element of time is important to keep in mind especially when attempting to build social cohesion where it does not occur organically— for instance, in some communities that are heterogeneous in terms of race/ethnicity, generational makeup, or values. However, as discussed above, both practice and research suggest that gains produced by even modest social cohesion feedback and positively impact continued amplification of social cohesion. With care and consistency, even modest positive impacts can snowball to create more profound impacts over time.

One of the prominent themes that emerged from our convening was the idea that "change moves at the speed of trust." Like social cohesion, structural change requires steady work and investments over time. "Pop-up" events and one-time project-based strategies can be extremely effective for engagement and very generative for new ideas, but if they are not embedded in long-term strategies, the progress will be temporary and will not lead to structural change. Intergenerational arts and cultural approaches can help transmit ideas and build capacity among a new generation of leaders to carry on current efforts.

"Place-based" versus "community-based"

Where one lives has a significant effect on individual and community well-being outcomes. Nonetheless, place-based strategies can miss some of the complexities of the underlying systems of racism and other oppressions that hinder well-being. Our convening participants and interviewees highlighted the disruption to social cohesion that occurs in communities experiencing gentrification. Gentrification can separate local organizations from the people they exist to serve. People may have a sense of belonging to their racial/ethnic community in their city, but perhaps not in a particular neighborhood. Geographic and racial/ethnic communities that experience high levels of incarceration experience the effects of displacement on social cohesion. The incarcerated individuals are "trans-local," but the dynamics that led to, and stem from, their incarceration are both place-based and go beyond place.

To work toward structural change, convening participants and interviewees emphasized the importance of an expansive understanding of how "community-based" arts and cultural strategies contribute to social cohesion. Social cohesion is not an exclusively place-based phenomenon; researchers have observed cohesion among mobile or temporary groups. Activities that bring people together from different places to coalesce around a shared identity can foster a powerful sense of belonging, such as cultural festivals or queer open mic nights. Digital spaces can help people connect and create safe space (and as we will discuss below, the limitations brought on by the coronavirus pandemic may by necessity generate new and broader sophistication about the potential of digital spaces). "Place-based" funding paradigms do not always have space for these kinds of strategies or distinctions, making it harder to find resources that foster social cohesion for collective action in these communities.

Therefore, considering how to foster social cohesion among non-geographically based communities is crucial for anti-racist and anti-oppressive change efforts. Who feels the effects of place-based arts and cultural strategies and who they are intended for are lingering questions that are starkly illuminated when considering trans-local communities. How social cohesion impacts trans-local communities is an important consideration. For instance, how can immigrant communities that experience high levels of residential mobility or communities displaced by gentrification and incarceration be reached and empowered by these approaches? This also raises another question: Do place-based arts and cultural strategies have an effect on cohesion beyond the place itself? In other words, do place-based interventions effect cohesion for people in that place only? The research is inconclusive on this point, but convening participants and interviewees argued that place-based arts and cultural strategies can have an impact on communities beyond the geographical area where the activities occur.

Role of virtual arts and cultural strategies

We developed the promising practices discussed in the next section based on projects that relied on many face-to-face engagement strategies implemented before the Covid-19 crisis. They include some creative approaches—such as the "Islands of Milwaukee" project—that connected people who were physically distant from each other. Still, we expect that we will see a flourishing of creative responses to this crisis that re-imagine ways to build social cohesion using virtual arts and cultural strategies. These practices will pose and answer a whole new set of questions about social cohesion and equitable community well-being. For instance, how do virtual arts and cultural strategies contribute to building social cohesion? How are communities adapting to and addressing the "digital divide" and other structural inequities that will exacerbate the unequal impacts of the need to stay at home? In our post-Covid-19 frameworks, we should be interested not only in how virtual strategies might be different than traditional face-to-face engagement, but also in how, and if, virtual strategies translate those gains in social cohesion and social connection into ongoing structural change efforts, place-based or not. Our research did not focus on these dimensions of arts and cultural strategies, but efforts that connect physically isolated and socially excluded populations, such as senior citizens or incarcerated populations, would be an excellent place to start.

7

Promising Practices for the Field

This Conceptual Framework attempts to illuminate a path between research and practice. We walk this path as we consider how place-based arts and cultural strategies amplify social cohesion and help communities work toward more equitable community well-being. Interested practitioners, funders, and policymakers have opportunities (1) to strengthen their work by articulating social cohesion for whom, at what scale, toward what specific goals, and (2) to understand that social cohesion takes a long time to grow.

If place-based arts and cultural strategies amplify social cohesion, what factors or approaches help or hinder these processes? Through this project, we also sought to answer the question, "are certain place-based arts and cultural practices, policies, mechanisms, and/or approaches specifically ripe to influence the social cohesion model?" Our literature review and interviews illuminate five:

• Build and share power through community ownership
• Connect people across difference
• Include all types of community members
• Have a consistent presence in the community
• Align with community change goals

We stress again that while these place-based arts and cultural strategies hold potential for building social cohesion toward community well-being, they do not necessarily lead to *equitable* community well-being on their own. These strategies must begin with a community-driven understanding of and reflection on the histories and processes that have led to disparities in well-being outcomes across communities. In addition, these strategies will only be effective within the context of long-term efforts to remove barriers to well-being, combat discrimination, and repair traumas that are the result of racism and other oppressions.

Build and share power through community ownership

It is important that projects be community-driven in terms of decision-making and intentionality. This does not necessarily mean using participatory approaches or exclusively local artists, but it does mean that community members should drive the decisions about what approaches to use. Funding agencies and other institutional partners often bring a professionalized, privileged approach to their work, and they must figure out how to share power and control with community members, if social cohesion is to be built for structural change. For the HEAL Community Natchez project, community members chose both to work with both local cultural workers and to select an international artist as a collaborator. Even if local artisans had not been hired to collaborate in fabrication, the fact that the community selected the artists was key to the project's success. Community ownership can take many forms throughout the implementation process. In a recent evaluation of public art in Los Angeles County's Creative Graffiti Abatement Project, Laramee Kidd lifted up activities that enhanced "attachment and a sense of ownership through engagement."[91] By involving community members in the artwork's design or fabrication, project organizers fostered a sense of ownership.[92] Laramee Kidd noted that a sense of ownership can also develop when community members communicate and interact with the artist during an artwork's development, even when they do not directly contribute to the artist's design.[93]

Place-based arts and cultural strategies that do prioritize community member co-design and co-creation can also effectively help move the dial on social cohesion, if communities choose this approach. "Active arts engagement," Stern and Seifert write, likely helps to produce social capital and more expansive social networks.[94] And in his literature review on arts and civic engagement, Rabkin drills in on narrower categories of arts and cultural activities and effectiveness, noting that "*making* experiences [emphasis added] appear to encourage civic engagement more so than experiences as an audience member."[95] Active creation can build a sense of empowerment that can shift a person's mindset. Sharing the process of making an artwork is not part of every artist's process and approach, but it can be a strong tool for arts and cultural strategies that foster social cohesion.

Interviewees also emphasized the importance of place-based arts and cultural strategies that offer opportunities for residents to learn and hone skills and catapult into new leadership roles. Artist interviewee Elizabeth Hamby reflected on the "Boogie on the Boulevard" community street takeover and biking event series in the South Bronx: "I'm stepping away and turning it over to the people who have kind of grown through the project into new leadership roles. … ["Boogie on the Boulevard" has] grown, matured, and now it's standing on its own two feet for the for the first time, which, I have to tell you, was terrifying, but is also really wonderful." Building capacity and making sure that people can carry on working together in the *next* project is how you build social cohesion. It is also how you build the "people power" necessary to organize for social change.
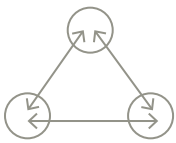
Connect people across difference

The literature and interviewees suggest that it is not just the act of artmaking itself that influences social cohesion, it is the act of collaborating and sharing experiences with others. Multiple researchers, such as Matarasso and Wali et al.,[96] have found that arts and cultural strategies have deepened ties among people who are different from one another. Wali et al. write that participation in "hands-on" informal arts activities such as singing in a choir allow people to acquire skills and develop "collaborative work habits, the use of innovation and creativity to solve problems, the nurturing of tolerance, the capacity to imagine social change, and the willingness to devote time and resources to achieving it." The act of creating art together, they argue, "requires people to listen to each other, creating momentary spaces of trust, and opening the way for collaboration."[97] This is especially important for building social cohesion across difference. Laramee Kidd's evaluation of the Creative Graffiti Abatement Project in Los Angeles County found that "artistic engagement that provides space for social interaction among participants can foster bonds important for social cohesion and civic engagement."[98] One of the artworks in that project created opportunities for community leaders from different racial and ethnic backgrounds to come together as park leaders, not just leaders of their particular activities.[99] Several artists involved in a creative place-making project in Minneapolis relied on their neighbors' participation to create creative outputs, such as a cookbook, portraits, and a film; neighbors who participated in these projects connected to previously unfamiliar people or places.[100]

Several interviewees understand arts and cultural activities as ways to connect people and foster collaboration. Ragin does so through song, creating a "container" for multiple voices to come together. Arts and cultural strategies, from food to storytelling, spark conversation among diverse participants about the past and future in the Tamaqua and East Oakland communities. Our convening participants also noted that connecting people across difference is necessary to build strong coalitions for structural change.

Include all types of community members

Place-based arts and cultural strategies that encourage participation from all types of community members, especially those who might not otherwise participate, can help build social cohesion toward equitable community well-being. As we noted in our section on well-being impacts, including socially isolated and excluded community members in arts and cultural strategies can "move the dial" significantly in addressing health disparities for these populations. "Islands of Milwaukee" is a notable example that used arts-based strategies to connect with aging residents in their homes. Each week, artists included cards with deliveries that asked questions like, "What is your safe harbor?," and answers came in as written cards and voicemails.[101] Rehabilitation Through the Arts in Purchase, NY, supports successful reintegration for prisoners by creating opportunities for mentorship, skill development, and connection with other prisoners, family, and community members through theater, dance, singing, writing, and the visual arts.[102]

We also see evidence in our interviews. To provide opportunities for "people who don't normally participate," "Dear Tamaqua..." organizers held events in playgrounds and even engaged people in bars using coasters as blank canvases for phrases or pictures. As mentioned above, regular Zumba classes, part of Sonke's art and wellness program in rural Florida, attracted a "remarkably broad spectrum of community members;" she calls the classes "a real game changer, ... a really significant contributor to the bridge building at the community level." And also discussed above by Ybarra, songwriting workshops that address social issues in Boyle Heights have attracted people who might find a panel presentation or community forum on those same issues unengaging.

Several interviewees mentioned youth involvement. "Young people are at the leading edge" of responding to community trauma and violence through arts and cultural strategies, Davis says; she envisions East Oakland's future Black Cultural Zone, therefore, as a place for youth to build and share their "true stories and legacies."
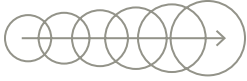
Consistent presence in the community

Long-standing community arts and cultural anchor spaces and organizations that offer consistent programming and work to build the leadership capacity of local artists and arts organizations are seen by our interviewees as avenues for building social cohesion and as valuable for their consistent, reliable presence. The Tamaqua Community Arts Center has followed up on the "Dear Tamaqua" project with yearly art projects that promote public engagement and continue to connect residents and youth to community initiatives in which they might not otherwise engage. In this rural community, the very existence of the community center has surfaced artists who previously thought they were the only artists in town.

Schaffer Bacon points to long-standing community-based cultural institutions—such as Seattle's Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience and Minneapolis' Intermedia Arts—as vehicles for consistent arts and cultural programming that builds audience appetite and community capacity within a specific geography. Intermedia had operated out of South Minneapolis for decades: "It created cohesion in and between constituent by groups and communities by consistently offering its physical space and creative assets to support and amplify creative expression and cultural organizing for often marginalized groups. They evolved this work by developing leaders and then the next set of leaders, building community trust over time," says Schaffer Bacon.[103] Similarly, Davis describes Oakland's EastSide Arts Alliance organization as an "anchor," which has operated for decades in the community. They have provided technical assistance to help others nearby to learn from and build upon EastSide Arts Alliance's work.

As we noted earlier, social cohesion grows slowly. But, cultural institutions that consistently invest in building relationships and community capacity can have an impact over time. This is especially important for structural and social policy change. "Anchor" cultural institutions can serve as a base for organizing and can cultivate the cross-sector partnerships necessary for long-term impact.
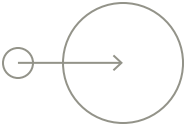
Align with community change goals

Arts and cultural strategies that align with community well-being goals can help foster social cohesion. We see this play out in our interviews. Take "Dear Tamaqua," a project that asked residents to reflect on their relationship with their town. Gursky explained that the project purposefully used art to improve connectedness to ongoing community development efforts and to build social cohesion toward addressing issues in the community, such as a lack of hope for the future. In another example, Day reflects on the Ikidowin Peer Educators and Acting Ensemble that provides an avenue for primarily Native youth to create theater based on health issues directly affecting them and their community. Through this process of creatively communicating community challenges, she says, "youth see themselves as being a solution."

While place-based arts and cultural strategies that build social cohesion can have significant impacts on community well-being, social cohesion and arts and cultural strategies alone cannot address the deep structural inequalities that lead to health disparities. Therefore, the strategies and practices we highlight work best in the context of larger community change efforts that start with a community-driven analysis of structural conditions and barriers to well-being. Our interviewees and convening participants agreed that cross-sector partnerships between arts and cultural practitioners, public health professionals, and the community development field offer immense potential to make progress toward equitable community well-being.[104] Place-based arts and cultural strategies to build social cohesion offer opportunities to align efforts across these sectors.

Practitioners, policymakers, funders, and community members find value in the idea that social cohesion transforms a group of individuals responding to their individual impulses into a community that recognizes their collective identity and is primed to act on its behalf. In this discussion, we distilled and synthesized existing research and practitioner experience on the relationships and pathways between place-based arts and cultural strategies, social cohesion, and equitable community well-being. There is still much work to be done illuminating, clarifying, and simplifying these pathways. In the Appendices, we share discussions that surfaced in our review of the literature and interviews with practitioners. These include discussions and

recommendations about funding and partnerships and about equitable measurement strategies. Two PolicyLink memos written for this project take up these discussions and incorporate the feedback from the convening and other sources to make recommendations for further research and for a variety of practitioners working toward equitable community well-being.

Recommendations

For those who want to build social cohesion toward equitable community well-being through place-based arts and cultural strategies...

- Realize that communities can leverage social cohesion to produce a variety of equitable community well-being impacts.

- If the entity doing this work is external to a community, make sure that community ownership and capacity building drives the work.

- Involve community members as co-designers and co-creators.

- Reach and work with isolated community members and those from socially excluded communities. Consider youth as key partners.

- Create projects that align with community change goals to reinforce desired impacts.

- Understand that building social cohesion takes time. Gains through place-based arts and cultural strategies might be modest, but that does not mean they are not important. If a community consistently practices this work, they will be poised to build off of small gains.

- Recognize community organizations interested in achieving equitable community well-being as partners; these partnerships can result in pooled resources and stronger collective capacity.

8
Conclusion

In this Conceptual Framework, we first explored social cohesion as a concept in relationship to community well-being, how place-based arts and cultural strategies can grow and amplify social cohesion, and how arts and culture-driven social cohesion can contribute to community well-being for all. We relied on evidence supporting the impact of place-based arts and cultural strategies to other related factors to social cohesion, or "drivers," to suggest that these strategies will also be well-poised to amplify and grow social cohesion. We then outlined how social cohesion lays the groundwork for collective organization and activity in communities, enabling communities to develop shared values and efficacy and to take collective action. Via these processes, communities that experience racism and other forms of oppression can leverage social cohesion as a key ingredient in change strategies to reach greater and more equitable community well-being. Finally we presented promising practices for those looking to operationalize this work. Further consider-ations and recommendations for funding and partnerships, as well as for researchers seeking equitable measurement strategies can be found in the Appendices and the accompanying memos authored by PolicyLink.

The concept of social cohesion has a rich multidisciplinary history. Researchers still actively debate the definition of social cohesion, how it is developed and amplified, what it produces, and for whom. For this report, we relied most heavily on the sociology literature but also read from the fields of community psychology, African American/Black studies, folklore, community health, criminology, and others. We acknowledge that our review was not exhaustive and see opportunities for continued exploration of a variety of fields, including those that focus on disasters/resilience.

In the process of researching this project, we were constantly struck by practitioners' enthusiasm and intuitive understanding of the value of social cohesion in communities. Drawing a line from place-based arts and cultural strategies through social cohesion to community well-being for all has required making connections— and sometimes taking leaps—between bodies of evidence, lived experience, and ways of understanding. Through this document we strive to "light a path through the fog," illuminating connections, practices, and possibilities. It suggests ways forward for further research and, most importantly, for growing and amplifying equitable well-being in communities.

9
Notes

1   We define this as when artists and arts organizations join their neighbors in shaping their community's future, working together to creatively address community challenges and opportunities. See the section titled "'Place-based' versus 'Community-based'" under "Social cohesion to what end? Outcomes" in this report for a discussion of the limits of this terminology. We have chosen to retain the language of "place-based" throughout this report to reflect the framing of our original research questions.

2   See Luminare Group, Center for Evaluation Innovation, and Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy, "Equitable Evaluation Project Framing Paper," July 2017, https://www.equitableeval.org/ee-framework. Core principles of equitable evaluation: (1) Evaluation and evaluative work should be in service of equity. (2) Evaluative work can and should answer critical questions about the ways in which historical and structural decisions have contributed to the condition to be addressed, effect of a strategy on different populations, effect of a strategy on the underlying systemic drivers of inequity, and ways in which cultural context is tangled up in both the structural conditions and the change initiative itself. (3) Evaluative work should be designed and implemented commensurate with the values underlying equity work, e.g. multi-culturally valid, oriented toward participant ownership.

3   "Social Cohesion, the Arts, and Health Equity," Working Group Proceedings, Creating Healthy Communities: Arts + Public Health in America (Lexington, KY: Center for Arts in Medicine in partnership with ArtPlace America, September 9, 2019), https://arts.ufl.edu/site/assets/files/156673/lexingtonfinal.pdf. The Thematic Analysis is reproduced as Appendix B and PolicyLink's memos are available at www.communitydevelopment.art.

4   For a more thorough discussion on different definitions of well-being, see Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "Advancing Well-Being in an Inequitable World: Moving from Measurement to Action," Summary of Insights from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Global Conference on Well-Being (Rockfeller Foundation Conference Center, Bellagio, Italy, September 10, 2018), https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2019/01/advancing-well-being-in-an-inequitable-world.html.

5   For research on arts and culture and community well-being extending beyond what we explore in this conceptual framework or the Literature Review, refer to the ongoing research of the Social Impact of the Arts Project at the University of Pennsylvania. For example, Mark J. Stern and Susan C. Seifert. "The Social Wellbeing of New York City's Neighborhoods: The Contribution of Culture and the Arts." *Culture and Social Well-being in New York City,* 2014–16, no. 1 (2017).

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7   The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, "Equity and Development," *The World Development Report 2006* (Washington DC: The World Bank, Oxford University Press, 2005), 73.

8   Paula Braveman et al., "What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make?" (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, May 2017), https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2017/05/what-is-health-equity-.html.

9   Rebecca Rios, Leona S. Aiken, and Alex J. Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents," *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* 43, no. 1 (2012): 58.

10 Ichiro Kawachi and Lisa Berkman, "Social Cohesion, Social Capital, and Health," in *Social Epidemiology* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 181.

11 H. Pinderhughes, R. Davis, and M. Williams, "Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience: A Framework for Addressing and Preventing Trauma" (Oakland, CA: Prevention Institute, 2015). As cited in, Jill Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration [White Paper]" (University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine / ArtPlace America, September 2019), 18, https://arts.ufl.edu/sites/creating-healthy-communities/resources/white-paper.

12 Phillip W. Graham et al., "The Role of Social Cohesion in Making Health a Shared Value" (RTI International, December 2016), section 5, page 2.

13 Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 5.

14   Eric Klinenberg, *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 91.

15   Kawachi and Berkman, "Social Cohesion, Social Capital, and Health"; Durkheim cited in ibid.; Phillip W. Graham et al., "The Role of Social Cohesion in Making Health a Shared Value" (RTI International, December 2016); James Moody and Douglas R. White, "Structural Cohesion and Embeddedness: A Hierarchical Concept of Social Groups," *American Sociological Review* 68, no. 1 (2003): 103–28; Kenneth Prewitt and Christopher D. Mackie, *Civic Engagement and Social Cohesion: Measuring Dimensions of Social Capital to Inform Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2014), https://www.nap.edu/login.php?record_id=18831; David Schiefer and Jolanda Van der Noll, "The Essentials of Social Cohesion: A Literature Review," *Social Indicators Research* 132, no. 2 (April 2016); Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents."

16   Kenneth A. Bollen and Rick H. Hoyle, "Perceived Cohesion: A Conceptual and Empirical Examination," *Social Forces* 69, no. 2 (1990): 479–504, https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/69.2.479; Maria Elena Figueroa, Manju Rani, and Gary Lewis, *Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes*, Communication for Social Change Working Paper Series 1 (Rockefeller Foundation and Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs, 2002); Joseph Chan, Ho-Pong To, and Elaine Chan, "Reconsidering Social Cohesion: Developing a Definition and Analytical Framework for Empirical Research," *Social Indicators Research* 75 (2006): 273–302, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-005-2118-1; Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents"; Schiefer and Van der Noll, "The Essentials of Social Cohesion: A Literature Review"; Prewitt and Mackie, *Civic Engagement and Social Cohesion: Measuring Dimensions of Social Capital to Inform Policy*.

17   Schiefer and Van der Noll, "The Essentials of Social Cohesion: A Literature Review"; Ray Forrest and Ade Kearns, "Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighbourhood," *Urban Studies* 38, no. 12 (November 2001): 2125–43, https://doi.org/10.1080/00420980120087081; Prewitt and Mackie, *Civic Engagement and Social Cohesion: Measuring Dimensions of Social Capital to Inform Policy*; Figueroa, Rani, and Lewis, *Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes*.

18   Chan, To, and Chan, "Reconsidering Social Cohesion: Developing a Definition and Analytical Framework for Empirical Research"; Maria Lewicka, "Place Attachment: How Far Have We Come in the Last 40 Years?," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 31, no. 3 (2011): 207–30, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2010.10.001; Schiefer and Van der Noll, "The Essentials of Social Cohesion: A Literature Review"; Robert J. Sampson, Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton Earls, "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy," *Science* 277, no. 5328 (August 15, 1997): 918–24.

19   Robert Sampson and Byron Groves, "Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social Disorganization Theory," *The American Journal of Sociology* 94, no. 4 (January 1989): 774–802; Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents," 60; Robert Putnam, "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-First Century. The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30, no. 2 (2007): 137–74, cited in Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents," 59.

20   Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 18.

21   Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents," 51.

22   Ibid.

23   Ibid.; Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy."

24   Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents," 51.

25   Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy," 918. These community safety outcomes are correlated to collective efficacy, of which social cohesion is a component.

26   Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents," 51.

27   Jane L. Wood, "Understanding Gang Membership: The Significance of Group Processes," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 17, no. 6 (September 29, 2014): 710–29.

28   Prewitt and Mackie, *Civic Engagement and Social Cohesion: Measuring Dimensions of Social Capital to Inform Policy*.

29   François Matarasso,   Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts." (Stroud, England: Comedia, 1997), 7–8.

30   The term "drivers" appears in the "Culture of Health action framework" literature and is adapted here for more general use. For a detailed discussion of the "drivers" concept, see the Literature Review.

31   Place attachment is the emotional bond people develop with a geographic place. As we discuss, place attachment can contribute to social cohesion. Social cohesion differs from place attachment because place attachment does not necessarily relate to an orientation toward the common good or willingness to participate. Plus, social cohesion can occur in groups that do not share a geographic place. For an expanded discussion of place attachment, see the Literature Review.

32   Chris Walker, Stephanie Scott-Melnyk, and Kay Sherwood, "Reggae to Rachmaninoff: How and Why People Participate in Arts and Culture" (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, November 30, 2002), 57, http://webarchive.urban.org/UploadedPDF/310595_ReggaetoRach.pdf.

33   Francie Ostrower, "The Diversity of Cultural Participation." (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 2005), https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/51736/311251-The-Diversity-of-Cultural-Participation.PDF.

34   Ibid.

35   Leila Scannell and Robert Gifford, "Defining Place Attachment: A Tripartite Organizing Framework," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 30 (2010): 1–10.

36   Social capital refers to "connections among individuals, social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them." Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000). Social capital can be a contributor to social cohesion. Social cohesion differs from social capital and networks because social capital does not inherently include a sense of belonging or orientation toward collective good. For an expanded discussion, see the Literature Review.

37   Mark J. Stern and Susan Seifert, "Civic Engagement and the Arts: Issues of Conceptualization and Measurement," Arts and Civic Engagement Impact Initiative (Philadelphia, PA: Animating Democracy, January 2009), 23, http://animatingdemocracy.org/resource/civic-engagement-and-arts-issues-conceptualization-and-measurement.

38   Jeff Todd Titon, "Orality, Commonality, Commons, Sustainability, and Resilience," *Journal of American Folklore* 129, no. 514 (2016): 489–90.

39   Matarasso, "Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts.," 7–8.

40   Anne Gadwa Nicodemus, Rachel Engh, and Christopher Mascaro, "Adding It Up: 52 Projects by 30+ Artists in 4 Neighborhoods" (Minneapolis, MN: Pillsbury House + Theatre, January 2016), 6, http://metrisarts.com/evaluations/#AddingItUp.

41   Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*; Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *The University of Chicago Press* 78, no. 6 (May 1973): 1360–80.

42   Xavier de Souza Briggs quoted in Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 23.

43   Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 23.

44   Ibid., 22–23.

45   Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 18.

46   This is not meant to indicate that bridging social capital can *only* occur in and between diverse communities, but just that in this case, researchers find evidence that place-based arts and cultural activities affect this sort of relationship.

47   Maria Rosario Jackson, "Toward Diversity That Works: Building Communities through Arts and Culture," in *Twenty-First Century Color Lines: Multiracial Change in Contemporary America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 223.

48   Ibid.

49   Matarasso, "Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts.," 7–8.

50   Ibid., 40–42.

51   Alaka Wali, Rebecca Severson, and Mario Longoni, "Informal Arts: Finding Cohesion, Capacity, and Other Cultural Benefits in Unexpected Places" (Chicago, IL: Chicago Center for Arts Policy: Columbia College Chicago, May 2002), x.

52   Civic engagement is undertaking activities with the goal of making a difference in public life.

53   The causal relationship between civic engagement and social cohesion is unclear, as we discuss in detail in the Literature Review. However, the presence of civic engagement occurs in tandem with the presence of the "willingness to participate" and "orientation toward the common good" dimensions of social cohesion. Because the research indicated in this section discusses evidence linking place-based arts and cultural strategies to civic engagement, we draw the indirect link between place-based arts and cultural strategies and social cohesion *through* civic engagement.

54   "Art-Goers in Their Communities: Patterns of Civic and Social Engagement" (National Endowment for the Arts, October 2009), 2, 10, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/98.pdf.

55   Gadwa Nicodemus, Engh, and Mascaro, "Adding It Up: 52 Projects by 30+ Artists in 4 Neighborhoods," 7.

56   Nick Rabkin, "Hearts and Minds: The Arts and Civic Engagement" (The James Irvine Foundation, April 2017), 5, https://irvine-dot-org.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/241/attachments/Nick_Rabkin_Civic_Engagement_Report_April_2017.pdf?1490741969.

57   Stern and Seifert, "Civic Engagement and the Arts: Issues of Conceptualization and Measurement," 9.

58   A. J. Crum et al., "Mind over Milkshakes: Mindsets, Not Just Nutrients, Determine Ghrelin Response," *Health Psychology* 30, no. 4 (2011): 424–29, cited in Graham et al., "The Role of Social Cohesion in Making Health a Shared Value", section 3, page 5.

59   Graham et al., "The Role of Social Cohesion in Making Health a Shared Value," section 3, page 5.

60   For more information on "disruption" as a feature in arts for change, see John Borstel et al., "Aesthetic Perspectives: Attributes of Excellence in Arts for Change" (Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts, May 2017), http://www.animatingdemocracy.org/aesthetic-perspectives.

61   Maria Rosario Jackson and Citlalli Chávez, Building Healthy Communities: Approaching Community Health Through Heritage and Culture in Boyle Heights   (The California Endowment, August 2017), 11, https://www.actaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/bh_cultural_report_aug_2017_v9_web.pdf.

62   Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents."

63   For an expanded discussion on these related "steps," see the Literature Review.

64 Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy."

65 Ibid.

66 Robert Sampson, *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect* (Chicago, IL: The University Chicago Press, 2011), 230.

67 Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy."

68 Rios, Alken, and Zautra, "Neighborhood Contexts and the Mediating Role of Neighborhood Social Cohesion on Health and Psychological Distress Among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Residents," 59.

69 Alan Dundes, "The Functions of Folklore," in *The Study of Folklore* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 277–78.

70 William R. Bascom, "Four Functions of Folklore," in *The Study of Folklore* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 294.

71 Jacob Kraemer Tebes, et al., "Porch Light Program: Final Evaluation Report" (Yale School of Medicine, June 2015), 17, https://dbhids.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Community_Mural-Arts_Porch-Light-Evaluation.pdf.

72 Dundes, "The Functions of Folklore," 277.

73 Stern and Seifert, "Civic Engagement and the Arts: Issues of Conceptualization and Measurement," 17.

74 Matarasso, "Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts.," Front matter.

75 Stern and Seifert, "Civic Engagement and the Arts: Issues of Conceptualization and Measurement," i–5.

76 Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 30.

77 Melanie Ferris, "Social Connectedness and Health" (Wilder Research, March 2012), 1, https://www.issuelab.org/resources/14111/14111.pdf.

78 Robert W Aldridge et al., "Morbidity and Mortality in Homeless Individuals, Prisoners, Sex Workers, and Individuals with Substance Use Disorders in High-Income Countries: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," *The Lancet*, 391, no. 10117 (January 2018): 241–50, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)31869-X., cited in Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 26.

79 Matarasso, "Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts.," 9.

80 For more research on this topic, one could look to Caroline Ross, "Exploring the Ways Arts and Culture Intersect with Public Safety: Identifying Current Practice and Opportunities for Further Inquiry" (Urban Institute/Art Place America, LLC., April 2016), https://www.artplaceamerica.org/view/pdf?f=/sites/default/files/public/pictures/artplace_field_scan_safety_ross_apr_2016_updated.pdf.

81 Nadereh Pourat et al., "Parks After Dark: Final Evaluation Report" (Los Angeles: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, May 2017), https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/publications/search/pages/detail.aspx?PubID=1656.

82 Matarasso, "Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts.," 44–45.

83 Jackson, "Toward Diversity That Works: Building Communities through Arts and Culture," 222–24.

84 George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011), 165.

85 Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 21.

86 H. Pinderhughes, et al., "Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience: A Framework for Addressing and Preventing Trauma." As cited in, Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 18.

87 Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 23.

88 Ibid., 27.

89 Aimee Meredith Cox, *Shapeshifters: Black Girls and the Choreography of Citizenship* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2015), 219.

90 Schiefer and Van der Noll, "The Essentials of Social Cohesion: A Literature Review."

91 Susannah Laramee Kidd, "Art as Infrastructure: An Evaluation of Civic Art and Public Engagement in Four Communities in South Los Angeles County" (Los Angeles County Arts Commission, May 9, 2018), 3, https://www.lacountyarts.org/civic-art-four-stories.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Stern and Seifert, "Civic Engagement and the Arts: Issues of Conceptualization and Measurement," 21.

95 Rabkin, "Hearts and Minds: The Arts and Civic Engagement," 5.

96 Matarasso, "Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts."; Wali, Severson, and Longoni, "Informal Arts: Finding Cohesion, Capacity, and Other Cultural Benefits in Unexpected Places."

97 Wali, Severson, and Longoni, "Informal Arts: Finding Cohesion, Capacity, and Other Cultural Benefits in Unexpected Places," xx.

98 Laramee Kidd, "Art as Infrastructure: An Evaluation of Civic Art and Public Engagement in Four Communities in South Los Angeles County," 3.

99 Ibid., 31.

100 Gadwa Nicodemus, Engh, and Mascaro, "Adding It Up: 52 Projects by 30+ Artists in 4 Neighborhoods."

101 Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration," 26-27.

102 Ibid., 29.

103 Intermedia Arts operated out of a space on Lyndale Avenue from 1994 to 2018. Intermedia Arts faced a financial crisis in 2018 and the board decided to lay off all staff and sell the building to overcome that crisis. The board has embarked on an exploratory process to invest the proceeds of the sale of the building in a way that continues to fulfill its mission and meets the needs of the arts community it traditionally served.

104 For more recommendations for cross-sector partnerships, see Sonke et al., "Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration."

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