

# Core Competencies: Reflections on Integrating Arts and Culture in Community Development

Lyz Crane



## **Editor's Note**

For this final installment in the series of six briefs about the Community Development Investments Program (CDI), we turn with great appreciation to Lyz Crane, the former Deputy Director of ArtPlace America and the driving force behind the program. Over the years that the CDI program was underway, Lyz developed a systematic framework for understanding the skills, knowledge, and expertise that the participating organizations and their partners brought to this work, and how they evolved as a consequence of taking it on. This framework came together as a set of core competencies which were relevant in each of the six diverse communities where CDI was underway, and which are of great general value to the field. The framework was presented first at a conference on the pedagogy of creative placemaking held at Arizona State University in 2018 and refined over the next two years as the CDI sites completed the formal part of their journeys. As we complete this brief after the support from ArtPlace has concluded, these core competencies have become strengths of each organization and the foundation for their ongoing arts and culture strategies. This brief includes the framework and a first-hand account of how the capacity building and peer-to-peer learning was designed and undertaken to build those competencies and embed them in community development organizations.

**Victor Rubin**

Senior Fellow



# Introduction

What does it take for community development organizations to incorporate arts and culture into their core practice? What are the capacities—the knowledge and skills—that they need?

The Community Development Investments (CDI) program was launched in 2015 by ArtPlace America (ArtPlace) to investigate and support place-based organizations to sustainably incorporate arts and culture into their core work. This one-time program provided \$3 million to each of six community planning and development organizations over three years, along with significant technical assistance on conceiving, executing, and financing creative placemaking projects aimed at achieving their missions more effectively and bringing about positive outcomes for their communities.<sup>1</sup>

These investments have yielded valuable insights and lessons for a wide range of fields of practice, from affordable housing development to parks stewardship, from social practice art to youth development, and from community organizing to public health.

The participating organizations and their partners have taken on and struggled with some of the most pressing and complex issues of our time, including gentrification and displacement, racial health inequities, the isolation of immigrant newcomers, and the historical trauma resulting from racism and oppression. They have combined their expertise with the tools and ways of thinking, imagining, and acting of artists. As a result, they have helped residents to own and express the identity of their communities, build cultural resilience, and change the terms of engagement and the methods of neighborhood planning and placemaking.

Thought balloons with questions about building community were positioned to draw the interest of walkers in the Jackson Medical Mall. (*daniel johnson*)



The results and impacts of this program are well documented in the five previously published briefs authored by PolicyLink staff members, which cover:

- Working with artists to deepen impact
- How community development organizations change when they embrace arts and culture
- Moving from engaging to organizing with arts and culture
- Strengthening and connecting to the social fabric of communities
- How creative documentation enhances our understanding of community development<sup>2</sup>

This final entry in the series will cover reflections specifically on the technical assistance and capacity-building journeys of these organizations, providing a framework and observations for other technical assistance providers, educators, funders, and field builders interested in considering the support systems required for community development organizations to incorporate arts and cultural strategies. As the program manager for this program, my goal is to provide some of my own reflections, insights, and tools as a complement to the formal program products, broken up into three sections:

- The first section provides some basic background information on the learning journeys undertaken by the participating organizations in the CDI program.
- The second section features the Core Competencies for Integrating Arts and Culture framework, derived from the CDI program, which articulates the skills and knowledge needed for **transforming organizational practice for organizations who do not have an arts and culture-based history**. It is intended to be helpful to capacity builders, field builders, trainers, educators, and practitioners who want to advance their practice.
- The final section extracts some additional lessons and frameworks that may be useful for considering cross-sector practice more broadly, along with recommendations for how to support this kind of integrative practice.



# Learning Journeys in the Community Development Investments Program

As institutions embedded in a place and developing new visions and projects that will advance their goals, community planning and development organizations are some of the most lasting long-term stewards of places. They are also frequently the holders of deep community practices and relationships. ArtPlace America's broad mission was to build an effective and robust movement that brings the talents of artists, culture bearers, and designers to bear on driving equitable outcomes in community development processes. To do that, we felt that community development organizations were critical partners in this work and that for this movement to succeed, the long-term practices of these organizations needed to grow to include partnerships with artists. That was the premise of the CDI program—to invest in organizations to not only design projects in concert with artists, but also to transform the institutions themselves so that these projects became a continuous, embedded way of working. We provided six community development organizations with \$3 million each to enable these long-term changes.

Over three years, we worked closely with the organizations to determine at each phase of their journey the following: What did they need to understand to do this work? Where were the stumbling blocks? What kind of expertise could be taught, and what needed to be learned through lived experience? How might this work live long term within the organizational departments and structures? We held monthly coaching sessions and webinars, periodic site visits, convenings, and workshops. We worked closely with the Center for Performance and Civic Practice (CPCP)—a national team of artists who regularly design supportive processes for artists and non-arts partners to get to know each other and develop projects together. And we watched each organization develop an incredible body of work in partnership with artists that had meaningful outcomes for their communities, and also fundamentally changed their institutions. The amount of funding from ArtPlace America was certainly a factor in their ability to grow, and we cannot discount that. However, one of the benefits of providing the level of significant resources that we did was that it allowed us to also learn what happens when the funding availability is not the primary barrier to learning new skills.

The six community development organizations that were selected for this program out of a pool of 261 applicants were not selected randomly. Organizations were chosen through an external reviewer and panel process based on their track record in implementing cross-sector place-based projects, their stated values in working with communities, the opportunities in their community to incorporate arts and culture, and a genuine interest in learning to work in a new way. They did not all start from the same depth or experience, but all of them came into the program explicitly acknowledging equity as a current or aspirational lens for work. Organizations were discouraged from coming into the CDI program with pre-existing ideas for projects. This guidance was intended to allow them to focus on learning and planning first, and execution only after that process was completed. Both a core premise and a major lesson from this program was that some of the most transformational work begins with investing in relationships rather than in projects.

## **Technical assistance modalities took the following form between September 2015 and September 2018:**

- Monthly coaching and check-in phone calls with the program manager (Lyz Crane)
- Monthly two-hour webinars that featured experts/ external peers or cohort workshops and discussions
- Approximately three to five technical assistance visits and workshops on site with organizations during the program
- One off-site visit to a comparable community to visit with peer organizations doing similar work
- Annual dedicated CDI convenings and participation in annual ArtPlace Summits
- Connections via regular emails to resources, publications, conferences, and other technical assistance opportunities in the field
- Engagement by sites of outside consultants (who were not provided directly by ArtPlace) to help them develop their practice

The program had four key design principles with respect to support and expectations:

- **Rooted in Values:** The technical assistance I sought to arrange as program manager was rooted in ArtPlace America's values of driving equity, health, and sustainability. Therefore, who and what we highlighted in training materials and case studies and who was brought in to provide support to the organizations were strongly informed by a desire to share models and peers who reinforced these values and would drive toward these outcomes.
- **Resourcing Artists:** ArtPlace believed that artists must be compensated and provided the resources needed to do their work. Even though grant resources were disbursed to the participating organizations, there were multiple mechanisms in place to encourage and ensure that resources for the work produced through the program were provided to external arts partner groups and individual artists.
- **Be Adaptive:** We acknowledged that community development work is rarely a linear process. We anticipated that organizational activities would be subject to local politics, timelines, conditions, and disruptions. ArtPlace's goal was to interact closely enough with each participating organization to support their nimble responses to local conditions.
- **Honor Local Expertise:** We also acknowledged that each organization was an expert in its own work and should manage its own external relationships. Where useful, ArtPlace would seek to help make local and national connections, but not to serve as a long-term broker or to provide hard directives about how the organization might evolve.

Many of the onsite workshops and cohort conversations were developed in partnership with the Center for Performance and Civic Practice. The leaders of CPCP documented some of their key observations in an article for the 2019 special issue of the *Community Development Innovation Review* journal devoted to lessons from the CDI experience.<sup>3</sup>

Generally, the organizations implemented the following activities to build their knowledge and skills.

- Identifying staff members to participate in regular Community Development Investments Technical Assistance (TA) offerings (usually two or three staff identified by the organization, and sometimes including the executive director)
- Learning about what artists can do, how to work with them, and how to understand and engage with the cultural fabric of their community
- Developing cultural asset mapping projects that would help the organization to become more familiar with the local cultural scene and its producers, and inviting artists to help the organization understand and more effectively engage with its community
- Developing initial project ideas and often an ongoing advisory function with local artists and community members
- Beginning to execute projects—sometimes as stand-alone activities, and sometimes as stepping stones to deeper, ongoing engagements
- Seeing some successes and encountering some stumbling blocks—especially with respect to relationships with artists, the ways in which artists' projects were structured, and the depth of community engagement
- Determining how to broaden the work within the organization beyond the core staff participating in the CDI TA program—through technical assistance that extended beyond staff and also through embedding artists internally within the institution
- Experimenting with documenting and telling the story of their arts and culture strategies, and how that relates to the organization's core narrative about its own work and community
- Developing new strategic plans, staff positions, and plans for long-term processes and projects



# Core Competencies for Integrating Arts and Culture: The Framework

The Core Competencies for Integrating Arts and Culture derived from the Community Development Investments program serve as a map to design training and analyze strengths and weaknesses when an organization is adopting new arts-based practices. We regularly used them in the program as a tool for determining how an organization was progressing. Their highest and best use is two-fold: first, as a way for technical assistance **providers** to consider the many types of knowledge and skills needed for basic or advanced creative placemaking training opportunities; and second, as a way for **organizations or practitioners** to self-assess the strengths or weaknesses in their knowledge, and to help identify “unknown unknowns” in self-directed learning.

There are three critical assumptions that underlie this framework which are useful to understand the applicability of this framework.

- **We assumed a base level of community development knowledge:** We worked with community development organizations that, from our initial review, had a base level of understanding and competency in executing multisector, community-engaged work that advanced critical outcomes for their communities. Therefore, the core technical assistance provision did not focus on basic community development processes and concepts.
- **We used the organizations’ missions as a starting point for determining goals:** ArtPlace did not mandate a particular set of outcomes for the work itself, which we encouraged to be in service of the missions and mandates of the participating organizations. Our guidelines were, “if something helps achieve your mission, it’s in bounds.”
- **Projects were not the end goal of technical assistance; they were a means to the long-term practice shifts we were trying to encourage:** Our goal in providing technical assistance was not just to help the organizations learn how to do creative placemaking projects, but rather how to develop new ways of working that would contribute to creating mechanisms for this work to happen regularly and in different ways for the organizations in the long-term. The Competencies reflect this goal of focusing on integration, not just how to do the work.

The Competencies are presented through a narrative followed by a chart with four components each:

1. The first component of each chart is the description of the **Competency**: What is the thing we were hoping the organizations would be able to do by the end of this program? This is a set of behaviors that we believe help define success in sustainably incorporating arts-based work.
2. The second is the **Knowledge** that we sought to provide to the organizations to help with their development of the Competency. This frequently took the form of frameworks or theoretical concepts, but it could also develop from examples shared by peers, or lessons from research and case studies. As the field of creative placemaking continues to develop, we expect that there will be an increasing amount of “knowledge” that can be shared with practitioners who are just starting out in this work.
3. The third are the **Skills** that we hoped the organizations would learn by applying the knowledge and piloting work in their own communities. While creative placemaking involves a broad range of diverse skills in community planning and development, the skills described below are intended to focus on development areas unique to arts-based work. For example, cross-sector partnerships are critical for all community development work yet, in addition to general partnership skills, there are particular competencies that can facilitate when building successful cross-sector partnerships with artists.
4. The fourth is the **Evidence**: What will we see when an organization has successfully achieved the Competency? This is usually a list of attributes that one could measure to see if an organization had developed the Competency.

Each section also includes a chart with examples of the technical assistance we provided to the site teams. The technical assistance was far-ranging and often covered topics across various competencies, but we hope the examples are helpful in showing where core ideas were focused. Beyond the sample offerings listed here, additional topical knowledge, connections, and concepts were conveyed through on-site technical assistance, conversations at summits, and topics covered during monthly check-in calls.

# Core Competencies for Integrating Arts and Culture: A Summary

## 1. Conceive Arts-Based Opportunities:

Conceiving opportunities for arts-based work that are consistent with community context, needs, assets, organizational mission, and desired goals

## 2. Understand the Cultural Fabric of a Community:

Using arts and culture-based mapping, engagement, and organizing to gain new understanding of community culture, assets, needs, and desires

## 3. Align Internal Assets:

Aligning key internal organizational practices to support arts-based work in the short- and long-term

## 4. Secure External Capital:

Obtaining necessary external financial and/or political capital and partnerships to support arts-based work

## 5. Realize Partnerships:

Building and structuring effective relationships with artists and arts partners

## 6. Facilitate Community Processes:

Facilitating community-involved processes for arts-based work

## 7. Learn and Iterate:

Learning from prior and ongoing arts-based activities to inform, iterate, and adapt future projects and work

## 8. Communicate:

Communicating effectively to external stakeholders about arts-based work



# Core Competencies for Integrating Arts and Culture

## 1. Conceive Arts-Based Opportunities

Advancing new ideas in an existing field of practice often involves a combination of expanding imagination, making the work feel relevant, rooting it in shared values, and establishing core standards of practice.

In the case of arts and community development, one of the first big challenges is often expanding the imagination around what artists might do in the context of community development. Creative placemaking researcher Maria Rosario Jackson refers to this mindset as having an expansive lens on arts, culture, and design.<sup>4</sup> Many community development practitioners may be familiar with artists who have object- or performance-based practices, but may be less familiar with artists whose practices are more relational. The Center for Performance and Civic Practice also contrasts studio practice with social practice and civic practice as a way to help organizations understand how artists can center their vision and work *vis a vis* community partners.

The second challenge is to envision the full range of how arts and cultural strategies can be relevant and support key community planning and development outcomes. We made a concerted effort to identify pertinent stories, models, and practices that addressed three levels of variables among the participants:

- **Community contexts:** examples that relate to the diverse social and economic environments—rural, urban, tribal, growing, disinvested, hyperlocal, or regional, with a singular cultural identity or internally heterogeneous.
- **Organizational missions:** showcasing examples that relate broadly to the housing, health, or other missions pursued by these organizations, which often involve many different types of projects or activities.
- **Desired goals:** Even within a broad mission, it was important to offer a variety of project examples that could address different issues. For example, was the community prioritizing a fight around displacement? A need for building bridges between disparate populations? A lack of access to healthy food?

Thinking about these three levels of variables throughout the technical assistance process ensured that we could account for the variety of organizational cultures, sizes, relationships with communities, and potential areas of intervention to demonstrate that arts and cultural strategies had a role to play in all cases.

The third challenge within this first Competency was to also ensure the work was operating within a values-driven framework for creative placemaking, one that is directed toward a shared vision of equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities. Creative placemaking practices can offer a way to reverse the systemic harm that has been done to Black, Indigenous, and people-of-color communities, to “unwire” the bureaucracy that has kept communities from operating in a true democratic fashion, and to bring in new culturally informed modalities to understanding and enacting more just visions for how communities function and support their residents.

Therefore, throughout the program we sought to examine with the participants how arts and cultural practices allow for new kinds of conversations, approaches, and understanding of desired outcomes to help achieve their missions, and ultimately deliver on equity goals. It was as much about resetting the starting point of community development practices as it was about introducing a new toolset. ArtPlace has documented these core notions of what arts and culture can achieve within equitable development processes, and we regularly brought this research back to the participating organizations to inform their approaches.<sup>5</sup> There is also a great discussion on this in the brief by Jeremy Liu of PolicyLink, *Moving from Engaging to Organizing with Arts and Culture Strategies*,<sup>6</sup> which showcases how this work helped the organizations move closer to achieving their equity goals.

Finally, “conceptualization” is not just about imagining the ways this work might relate to the institutional mission and community goals; it also establishes basic tenets for practice. One of the most interesting tensions in the creative placemaking field is when projects are co-developed, and the possibilities and limitations of trying to replicate the tactics of earlier projects arise. On the one hand, you want the practitioners to be able to dream up where arts-based work might fit into their goals and structures, and one way to do that is to provide relevant examples of projects that have been done elsewhere. On the other hand, it is important to resist the temptation to copy those examples. To truly honor the intention of centering the imaginative capacity of artists, culture-bearers, and designers, when organizations develop a project, the goal is to always push the moment of project conception further upstream, in greater

dialogue with artists. Therefore, we focused on helping the organizations to believe that the artist could help with a particular challenge but encouraged them to not go so far as to prescribe the solution in a way that will inhibit the creativity that the artist brings to the table.

The Center for Performance and Civic Practice developed workshops to help model this process, focusing on inquiry-based techniques that would allow an artist and organization to learn about each other's work, and identify opportunities to match an artist's particular practice with an organization's specific need. However, some organizations still developed their own project ideas and then hired artists to execute them, while others created openings for artists to approach them with their own ideas. Community members who were involved in identifying and articulating challenges, and/or helping to co-develop the steps of the projects, also had significant influence over the work.

Well-known Zuni artist and member of the Ho'n A:w'an Community Park artists committee, Noreen Simplicio, working with Zuni youth during weekly art classes to create a signature art piece that highlights Zuni culture for youth and visitors. (Joe Claunch/Zuni Youth Enrichment Project)



## Technical Assistance Examples

### Webinars

<p><b>What Artists Can Do</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Calderon, ArtPlace America</li> <li>• Christine Licata, Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education</li> </ul>
<p><b>How Artists Can Do It</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Rohd, Center for Performance and Civic Practice</li> <li>• Caitlin Strokosch, Alliance of Artists Communities</li> <li>• Jun-Li Wang, Springboard for the Arts</li> </ul>
<p><b>Creative Placemaking Project Conceptualization— ArtPlace's Four Points of Creative Placemaking</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lyz Crane, ArtPlace America</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emerging Research Findings: Housing, Safety, Environment, and Health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamie Hand, ArtPlace America</li> <li>• Danya Sherman, Research Consultant</li> <li>• Alexis Frasz, Helicon Collaborative</li> </ul>

### Workshop Offering from the Center for Performance and Civic Practice

**Conceptualizing Projects and Programs:** How do you imagine ideas for work with artists that does not look like the product they usually make? How do you consider an artist's process tools as possible generators of output that could be useful to you? How do you make space for bold and surprising thinking?



## Competency: Conceive Arts-Based Opportunities

Conceiving opportunities for arts-based work that are consistent with community context, needs, assets, organizational mission, and desired goals

Knowledge	Skills	Evidence
<p>The role of artists and culture-bearers in various stages of community development and in the context of various community development sectors <sup>7</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative Placemaking Values <sup>8</sup></li> <li>• Peer lessons and case studies on the context, organizations, and goals of arts-based community development</li> <li>• Asset-based community development methodology</li> <li>• Design- and systems-thinking methodologies</li> <li>• Racial equity analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing opportunities where arts-based approaches can fix or broaden existing community development practice</li> <li>• Applying relevant arts-based approaches or practices from peers and case studies</li> <li>• Developing pathways for and facilitating community input into arts-based planning and development decisions</li> <li>• Matching opportunities for arts-based interventions and existing local arts and cultural assets to community needs, challenges, and goals</li> <li>• Designing arts-based interventions toward the goals of equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities</li> <li>• Identifying both intended and unintended consequences of arts-based work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization has developed arts-based work that is relevant to the community context, organizational mission, and desired goals in achieving equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities</li> <li>• Organization has developed arts-based work that conforms to Creative Placemaking Values and key principles (is place-based; community has determined the challenge and opportunity, applies the arts to the challenge, will result in intentional change, considers equity, health, and sustainability)</li> </ul>

## 2. Understand the Cultural Fabric of a Community

The second Competency is focused on how an organization understands its community and therefore what opportunities it may choose to invest in, or what relationships it may pursue. One of the first things we asked our CDI organizations to do was to conduct a cultural asset mapping process to identify local arts and cultural assets and understand their community's history, identity, and values, to potentially observe with a new lens. We believed this would achieve two goals—first, identify potential partners and resources that the organization could work with on new projects and, second, leverage the unique ability that arts-based engagement and organizing tactics contribute to understanding critical aspects of a community, factors which often are not integrated into planning processes. Ultimately, the goal was that as the organization learned about the community with a new perspective, this information could inform future planning and development strategies.

In training organizations about arts-based engagement and cultural asset mapping, I found it important to both establish this kind of work as a precursor to new projects, but also to

reinforce that the results cannot exist in a vacuum. Too often, asset mapping or other kinds of arts-based engagement is conducted, but the new knowledge does not enter the pipeline for organizational decision-making or broader community coalitions. It can be transformative when new knowledge informs, especially when it offers a cultural lens to work that has otherwise been of a largely technical nature. The Fairmount Park Conservancy spent a significant amount of time over a couple of years working with the artist collective Amber Art and Design, to host events and conversations about the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood of Philadelphia. This activity transformed into an “asset map” of playing cards featuring people and stories from the community. The same information then guided an RFP and community engagement process for the redevelopment of the Mander Recreation Center.<sup>9</sup>

This mapping and understanding of assets can be connected to broader conversations on the role and tactics of cultural organizing, and the ways in which artists and culture-bearers are able to carry community-wide engagement conversations that are rooted in a cultural lens and approach.<sup>10</sup>

### Technical Assistance Examples

#### Webinars

##### Cultural Asset Mapping

- Seth Beattie, Spire + Base
- Tom Borrup, Creative Community Builders
- Margaret Bruning and Erin Harkey, LA County Arts Commission
- Anne Gadwa Nicodemus, Metris Arts
- Hanmin Liu, Wildflowers Institute

##### Cultural Tactics and The Public

- Lori Lobenstine, Design Studio for Social Intervention

#### Handbook Developed for CDI Participants

*Mapping Out Cultural Asset Mapping* by Spire + Base. Available to download from [communitydevelopment.art/resources/publications](https://communitydevelopment.art/resources/publications).



## Competency: Understand the Cultural Fabric of a Community

Using arts and cultural-based mapping, engagement, and organizing to gain new understanding of community culture, assets, needs, and desires

### Knowledge

- Reasons for cultural asset mapping
- Options for cultural asset mapping
- Methods of deploying arts-based engagement and cultural organizing

### Skills

- Identifying gaps in knowledge about community and cultural assets and histories
- Conducting cultural asset mapping
- Deploying arts-based community engagement and cultural organizing
- Using results of arts and cultural-based mapping, engagement, and organizing to inform planning and development strategies

### Evidence

- Organization conducts cultural asset mapping, arts-based engagement, and/or cultural organizing activities
- Organization applies data/input from cultural mapping, arts-based engagement, and/or cultural organizing to inform work

Residents weave together their quilt of dreams for a solidarity, community-based economy at 341 FSN in Little Tokyo. (Scott Oshima)



### 3. Align Internal Assets

As noted, the CDI program was focused on long-term organizational change. This meant that the organizations engaging in arts-based work were also experimenting with the value of arts-based work to their missions in such a way that allowed for it to be embedded in more than an individual project. This commitment is both conceptual—how does the organization understand how it relates to arts-based work—and operational—how does the organization and individual staff enact this commitment on a day-to-day basis? This Competency is very different for each organization, because it is shaped by each group’s leadership, culture, and management processes. For organizations organically arriving at arts-based work, many of these aspects may come naturally. For organizations that are new to the idea, this alignment may require a lot of internal and board discussions, workshops, and capacity building.

Organizational structures to support the work have not been widely explored in the creative placemaking field, and our hope is that the CDI program briefs help contribute to this knowledge. In the meantime, we addressed these topics through regular coaching, conversations with leaders of other community development organizations known to have a sustained creative placemaking practice, and workshops designed for groups of internal staff, primarily run by the Center for Performance and Civic Practice. These workshops often involved articulating values and goals, basic training on artists’ capacities, and small-group work sessions to prototype project ideas and new directions. The organizations also often designed their own strategic planning sessions, or had artists-in-residence, embedded artists, or artist consultants help design processes, new job descriptions for staff, and programs. Others set up small funding pools that different departments could access to experiment with arts-based strategies in their work, outside of the core CDI projects.

Within the three years of the programs, most of the six organizations went through some sort of overall strategic planning process. These were prime opportunities to integrate arts and culture into the core organizational language, structures, and processes.

In my observation, the most powerful thing we did was to create internal champions for the work. We could not make everyone on staff an expert. But we could help to make sure that everyone on staff understood the work and its value proposition for that organization and community. This meant

creating an environment in which a procurement officer was more likely to say yes to something radically different from how they normally operated, than if they had no awareness of why the organization was engaging in this kind of work. Moreover, these internal champions were also constantly on the lookout to ask the question at every staff meeting: “How can arts and culture help us with \_\_\_?” Over time, their coworkers started asking them, “Is this something that an artist might help us with?”

Anecdotally, we heard that the site visits whereby each organization visited another community were also particularly helpful to this Competency. It highlighted to the organizations that there is no standard way for creative placemaking work to happen—sometimes artists are on staff, sometimes partners, sometimes the mandate is coming from leadership, other times it is a champion on staff; and every organization has different kinds of departments and functions and ways to advance this. Seeing a spectrum of these setups at other organizations often helped the Community Development Investments organizations take a closer look at their own structures to better understand where there were opportunities to be had, and then adapt them to their circumstances. In contrast to listening to a presentation at a conference or webinar, these visits gave more space for organizational leaders to share failures, resets, and details about programmatic structures. We also received feedback that the site visit participants later had a clearer understanding of the fabric of their own communities because of their exposure to places with different basic structures and built environments.

## Technical Assistance Examples

### Webinars

#### Organizational Evolution

- Michael Fleming, St. Clair Superior Development Corporation
- Eric Robertson, Community LIFT

#### Cross-Site Sharing

- All CDI Organizations

### Workshop Offering from the Center for Performance and Civic Practice

**Board Conversations:** How do you invite board members into appreciation for the value of arts and culture in your mission-focused work? How do you demonstrate creative practice to them in ways that help them recognize its potential contributions to what they care about? How do you move resistant board members from opposition to openness?

### Site Visits

- Cook Inlet Housing Authority (Anchorage, AK) to Philadelphia, PA (3 days, multiple organizations visited) and Seattle, WA (2 days, multiple organizations visited)
- Fairmount Park Conservancy (Philadelphia, PA) to the 11th Street Bridge Project (Washington, DC)
- Jackson Medical Mall Foundation (Jackson, MS) to Memphis, TN (3 days, multiple organizations visited)
- Little Tokyo Service Center (Los Angeles, CA) to Boston, MA (2 days, multiple organizations visited)
- Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership (Slayton, MN) to Western KY (4 days, multiple communities and organizations visited)
- Zuni Youth Enrichment Project (Zuni, NM) to Cheyenne River Youth Project (Eagle Butte, SD)



## Competency: Align Internal Assets

Aligning key internal aspects of the organization to support arts-based work in the short- and long-term

Knowledge	Skills	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Peer organization lessons and case studies</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Obtaining leadership vision and buy-in (CEO, board, staff) to support arts-based work</li><li>Articulating and aligning how arts-based work fits into core organizational principles and plans (values, mission, goals, strategic plans, programs)</li><li>Aligning processes and structures (decision-making, operations, departments, roles, budgets, onboarding) to support arts-based work</li><li>Developing capacities (training, staffing) to support arts-based work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Organization conducts cultural asset mapping, arts-based engagement, and/or cultural organizing activities</li><li>Organization applies data/input from cultural mapping, arts-based engagement, and/or cultural organizing to inform work</li></ul>

Staff and youth coaches of Zuni Youth Enrichment Project visit the Cheyenne River Youth Project in Eagle Butte, South Dakota, in a learning exchange coordinated by ArtPlace. (*Lyz Crane/ArtPlace America*)



## 4. Secure External Capital

Most community development projects require significant political and financial capital, and numerous partners and stakeholders to operate on a large scale. While there are some funders, government representatives, and potential partners who understand and support the role of arts-based work, there is often a need for organizations to make the case for this new way of working in the context of the projects that they hope to execute. This Competency focuses on building the knowledge and skills to make a case for capital and critical partnerships for arts-based work, which often requires effective translation of how the work fits into or responds to existing systems.

In many cases, this comes down to two key questions: Can you frame this venture in a compelling way to new partners or funders (another area where ArtPlace’s field scans<sup>11</sup> have been helpful), and do you sufficiently understand the broader ecosystem of potential supporters and partners who might be able to help you? Many of the CDI organizations were unfamiliar with their local arts ecosystems—arts councils,

foundations, artist collectives, cultural departments, etc. We regularly used our national position to help them make these connections whenever we could.

ArtPlace also dedicated time to each organization to help with “practice pitches.” For example, we had each organization pitch project ideas to experienced placemaking funders to solicit feedback, and experienced staff reviewed draft Letters of Intent to local and national funders and offered suggestions on framing. Some of the organizations had significant experience with this type of fundraising. Others historically relied upon community development financing, tenant payments, or other mechanisms to support their core work, and had less experience with fundraising. Most of the organizations needed some help with identifying potential funders—either arts-based, or those who were receptive to more innovative approaches to community building.

### Technical Assistance Examples

#### Webinars

##### **Federal Opportunities in Creative Placemaking**

- Jen Hughes, National Endowment for the Arts

##### **Storytelling Module: Building Story for and with Multiple Stakeholders**

- Michael Rohd, Center for Performance and Civic Practice
- Shannon Scrofano, Center for Performance and Civic Practice

##### **Storytelling Module: Pitching the Funder**

- Javier Torres, ArtPlace America
- Leila Tamari, ArtPlace America

##### **Storytelling Module: Narrative Feedback**

- Adam Erickson, ArtPlace America
- Jamie Hand, ArtPlace America
- Sarah Westlake, ArtPlace America



## Competency: Secure External Capital

Obtaining necessary external financial and/or political capital and partnerships to support arts-based work

Knowledge	Skills	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Options/opportunities for funding arts-based work</li><li>• Data and/or talking points on the value of arts-based work</li><li>• Common trends, language, barriers, and goals in the funding, investment, and political landscape around arts-based work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Making the case for the value of arts-based work</li><li>• Analyzing local power structures and stakeholders relevant to arts-based work</li><li>• Working with local government on arts-based work</li><li>• Applying public and private funding or financing to arts-based work</li><li>• Forming relevant cross-sector partnerships for arts-based work</li><li>• Managing existing relationships (core stakeholders, partners, and community) to support arts-based work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arts-based work has the necessary financial and/or political capital or key partners to be sustained</li></ul>

The Historic Hatfield House in Fairmount Park that was home for the Amber Art & Design Community Catalyst Residency. (Chris Johnson/Corduroy Media)





## 5. Realize Partnerships

Cross-sector partnerships are a core part of comprehensive community planning and development. There are many frameworks that exist for building effective values-driven partnerships that are useful for organizations to internalize. This Competency focuses on additional knowledge and skills that organizations need to understand to work effectively with artists and arts partners in particular. For example, many community development organizations may not understand how the arts sector is structured, the nuances of different artistic practices and processes, or how to structure payment to meaningfully support both the seen and unseen work an artist does during a project. Organizations also must learn to build effective invitation strategies for artists and arts partners that result in productive relationships and useful systems of accountability. The outputs and expectations of process-based arts work may require very different conversations and contracts when a project launches than a community development organization is

used to. Communication and trust are key to these processes, and they were core parts of the support provided by the Center for Performance and Civic Practice.

There is an increasing breadth of resources to support the execution of these types of partnerships. We held three webinars that focused on the mechanisms of such arrangements—one on artists-in-residence, with a focus on artists embedded in non-arts settings; another on crafting Artist Opportunities/Calls for Artists, and a third on Artist Contracts and MOUs.<sup>12</sup>

We also encouraged each site to develop its own artist committees and arrange for “midwives”—arts organizations or individuals who could do critical translational work and step in to disrupt power dynamics, clarify expectations, and advocate for resources. These lessons are documented in the brief by Alexis Stephens of PolicyLink, *Working with Artists to Deepen Impact*.

### Technical Assistance Examples

#### Webinars

##### **Artist Opportunities: Calls, Grants, and Commissions**

- Sarah Allan and Shannon Ratterman, Center for Great Neighborhoods
- Aviva Kapust, Village of Arts and Humanities
- Caroline Vincent, Metro Nashville Arts Commission

##### **Artist Relationships: Contracts and MOUs**

- Stephanie Fortunato and Adrienne Southgate, City of Providence, RI

##### **Artists-in-Residence: What Works and What Doesn't**

- Lisa Hoffman, Alliance for Artists Communities
- Gayle Isa, Asian Arts Initiative
- Anula Shetty, Artist

#### Workshop Offering from the Center for Performance and Civic Practice

**Partnership Practice with Artists:** How can you and local artists determine if a collaboration would be appropriate and effective between you and an artist? How can you set up a process to communicate successfully from the beginning of the partnership? Which types of questions are important to ask a potential collaborator?

## Competency: Realize Partnerships

### Building and structuring effective relationships with artists and arts partners

Knowledge	Skills	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts sector ecosystem</li> <li>• Spectrum of artistic practice</li> <li>• Array of potential relationship types with artists (partners, calls, grants, commissions, residencies, embedding)</li> <li>• Considerations for selecting artists and arts partners</li> <li>• Considerations for arts-related contracts, insurance, and budgets</li> <li>• Economic realities artists face in making a living</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing sources for arts expertise and knowledge (committees, consultants, and partners)</li> <li>• Finding artists and arts partners</li> <li>• Selecting appropriate options from a range of approaches for working with artists (partners, calls, grants, commissions, residencies, embedding)</li> <li>• Inviting artists and arts partners to collaborate</li> <li>• Vetting artists and arts partners</li> <li>• Building trust to allow for exploratory processes and unexpected outcomes</li> <li>• Allocating resources for arts-based work (budgets, insurance, expectations)</li> <li>• Executing effective contracts and MOUs with artists and arts partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization can access relevant artists and arts partners for arts-based work</li> <li>• Organization can maintain good working relationships with artists and arts partners</li> <li>• Artist and arts partners and the organization develop a mutual respect and understanding of each other's work, process, and needs</li> <li>• Artists and arts partners have what they need to execute activities and projects</li> <li>• Artists and arts partners deliver on the intentions of activities and projects</li> </ul>

## 6. Facilitate Community Processes

As with cross-sector partnerships, there are many frameworks for successful community engagement and co-design processes. These often focus on the relationship between an organization seeking input and guidance, and community members and organizations providing their input, feedback, and ideas. This Competency focuses on the relationships that often develop among three parties—the host organization, the artist(s) or arts partners, and the broader community.

We sought to help organizations learn how to conceptualize, design, and enact community development activities that were driven and informed by their partnerships with artists, and their relationships to the broader community. Many of the organizations had deep experience in community engagement, but often were surprised by the complexities of inviting artists to represent their organization and serve as advocates for community members. Learning how to develop shared expectations, frameworks, and trust among the organization, the artists, and the community was critical to success. Where the organizations had their own relationships with the community, they needed to introduce the artists and nurture

those connections. When the artists were developing or bringing existing relationships with the community to the project, they had to be careful not to serve as proxies for the direct relationships which the organizations needed to develop with community members for themselves.

The Center for Performance and Civic Practice implemented this in-depth work with all of the Community Development Investments groups. CPCP designed cohort-wide conversations during webinars and in-person convenings to explore each organization's listening practices and accountability mechanisms in their community engagement. This was an area of particular emphasis during the CDI organizations' site visits to other projects and in their peer learning overall. The key to effective peer learning was to create situations where staff felt comfortable sharing failures and lessons learned from engagements that were unsuccessful. We also designed customized on-site TA visits to address these needs. For example, we brought DAISA Enterprises, a national group providing technical assistance on equitable food systems work, to Jackson to support dialogues on developing key project visions, goals, and processes between the Jackson Medical Mall, an artist/chef partner, and community representatives.

### Technical Assistance Examples

#### Workshop Offerings from the Center for Performance and Civic Practice

**Public Engagement Strategies:** How do you build invitations so that you can listen to your stakeholders? How do you listen well? How do you hold onto what you heard? How do you bring what you heard into decision-making processes?

**Annual Summit Agenda:** CPCP-designed workshops, including:

- Developing Invitation Strategies
- Authentic Listening
- Re-booting/Re-framing (how folks see your work)
- Sustainable Integration

## Competency: Facilitate Community Processes

### Facilitating community-involved processes for arts-based work

Knowledge	Skills	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Models for effective external collaborative processes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating shared language and expectations with organizations, community, and artists/arts partners</li><li>• Forming and managing relationships between community and artists/arts partners</li><li>• Facilitating shared space for authentic listening and co-creation</li><li>• Developing effective arts-related project flow (timelines, roles, inputs, outputs)</li><li>• Maintaining accountability on values and goals for all partners and stakeholders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Artists/arts partners and community maintain positive working relationship</li><li>• Artists/arts partners and community are honoring the values, input, talents, and time the other is providing to shared activities</li></ul>



## 7. Learn and Iterate

This Competency reflects a belief that integrating arts-based work sustainably over the long-term requires an iterative, reflective practice. Arts-based projects often do not scale or are not replicable in the same ways that conventional community development activities can be. We recommended beginning with small experiments, strengthening relationships that can develop into larger ongoing programs and activities, identifying collaborations with local artist partners, finding support to help the community overcome challenges, and identifying opportunities.

Measuring and evaluating this work may appear radically different than the other activities community developers are accustomed to tracking. Community development organizations often need to learn new frameworks for thinking about how arts-based activity can add to or contribute to desired outcomes and goals, and also may need to experiment with new forms of documentation and reflection that can refine, deepen, and communicate the ongoing impact of this activity over time.

The Adaptive Leadership webinar, led by Richard Evans of EmcArts, was held at the early stage of the project. Many of the organizations did not have a rigorous approach to incorporating new skills or ways of working, in part a consequence of needing to concentrate mainly on numerous more urgent issues and challenges. Historically, this lack of structured change processes has been a big hurdle for the creative placemaking field, given that many institutions do not come naturally to this work. The Adaptive Leadership framework can be useful in this respect, because the idea of

piloting a smaller version of the project, while developing new relationships and project models, and determining how to translate them more broadly, is a core strength of arts-based practices.

We asked the organizations to think about how they wanted to build their scaffold for a long-term learning journey—that is, to think about which kinds of projects they may want to try first, what they might learn from them, and how that would inform larger projects. Sometimes, formal processes or program evaluations were useful and incorporated. However, most organizations do not have the time or human resources to support robust evaluation. ArtPlace prioritized ongoing reflection and feedback loops in the support structures to help spur this thinking even without formal evaluations along the way. These included monthly check-in calls with me and PolicyLink staff, a developmental evaluation approach of PolicyLink, and time dedicated to monthly webinars for the CDI cohort members to share with each other or reflect on prompts. Through this Competency and the Aligning Internal Assets Competency, we also encouraged staff to regularly share their project outcomes and lessons with their coworkers, and to be rigorous about building templates—whether for an artist contract, a project process, or a community engagement event—that could become knowledge assets for their institution.

More about the approach to documentation taken by PolicyLink is recounted in their essay on Research Methods,<sup>13</sup> and their brief on Creative Documentation, which examines arts-based alternatives to familiar social science analytical techniques, and which led to a valuable collection of videos based on the reflections of the CDI leaders.<sup>14</sup>

### Technical Assistance Examples

#### Webinars

##### Approaches to Adaptive Change

- Richard Evans, EmcArts

##### Introducing the CDI Core Competencies: Self-Assessment

- Lyz Crane, ArtPlace America

##### Reflective Practice, Peer Learning, and Documentation: Planning for What Comes Next

- Michael Rohd, Center for Performance and Civic Practice
- Shannon Scrofano, Center for Performance and Civic Practice

##### CDI Program Reflections

- Lyz Crane, ArtPlace America

## Competency: Learn And Iterate

Learning from prior and ongoing arts-based activities to inform/iterate/adapt future projects/work

Knowledge	Skills	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Models of Adaptive Leadership</li><li>• Approaches to learning and evaluation in arts-based work</li><li>• Appropriate metrics and data sources for arts-based work</li><li>• Approaches and options for documenting arts-based work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sequencing arts-based undertakings in a strategic way</li><li>• Clarifying intended and potential lessons of arts-based work</li><li>• Documenting relevant aspects of arts-based work</li><li>• Applying relevant indicators for organizational learning</li><li>• Sharing relevant lessons with organizations, community, and partners</li><li>• Incorporating lessons from arts-based activities into future work</li><li>• Iterating and adapting arts-based approaches over time</li><li>• Building in sustainability for arts-based work where desired or relevant</li><li>• Leveraging successful arts-based work to attract new external resources</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organization can clearly articulate what it wants to learn from arts-based activities</li><li>• Organization has the data and information it needs to inform future work and obtain needed external resources</li><li>• More recent projects reflect lessons from earlier work</li><li>• Organization continues to develop new arts-based work over time</li></ul>

## 8. Communicate

Communicating about arts-based work is not just something that happens at the end of a project, but it is also a critical input to many of the other Competencies. Arts and cultural strategies in a community development context can often be quite nuanced. They are often not well-understood by the general public, or even sometimes by other community development practitioners, and yet they can often attract new interest by the press and public when an organization is intentionally doing something clearly new and different. For organizations for whom this work was not a legible part of their mission, it was critical to spend time constructing, reconstructing, and internalizing the narrative of arts-based work. Story-listening and storytelling are often key inputs into these narratives, as is the ongoing learning the organization is undertaking.

For some organizations for whom this work is natural, it is almost invisible. Because it is a way of working, it can be implicit and not something the organization necessarily needs to talk about. However, the ability to make this work legible by articulating these programs, approaches, and values, is fundamental to being able to advance arts and culture as a long-term institutional practice. We helped the organizations to think about where and how this work lived on their websites, in the stories they pitched to the press, and in the way they

told their story to visitors or partners. For example, with respect to their websites, we challenged them to think about whether it was a separate initiative such as Little Tokyo Service Center’s +Lab, a page of projects, such as Fairmount Park Conservancy’s Arts and Culture section on their website, or even a separate site—for example, Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership’s “Partnership Art” initiative. Or was it something that was woven throughout existing forms of communications? Is it referenced in the mission? How did messaging around this work impact the organization’s ability to attract the right kind of partners, capital, community buy-in, and political support? What does a vulnerable, reflective institution look like, and how can it share its learning journey to deepen trust with all of those entities?

We saw an interesting shift throughout the program from an early stage of organizations talking about their discrete “CDI work” to later being able to tell an authentic story about why working with artists was an important part of who they were, how they functioned, and what they were seeking to achieve in their places.

For some of the organizations, this communication was not just a meta-exercise, it became the work itself. For example, Cook Inlet Housing Authority worked with organizations Storytellers for Change and Ping Chong Company to further embed storytelling as a core institutional methodology.

### Technical Assistance Examples

#### Webinars

##### Strategic Messaging and Storytelling

- RJ Bee and Eliana Reyes, Hattaway Communications

##### Communicating Your Work with Artists

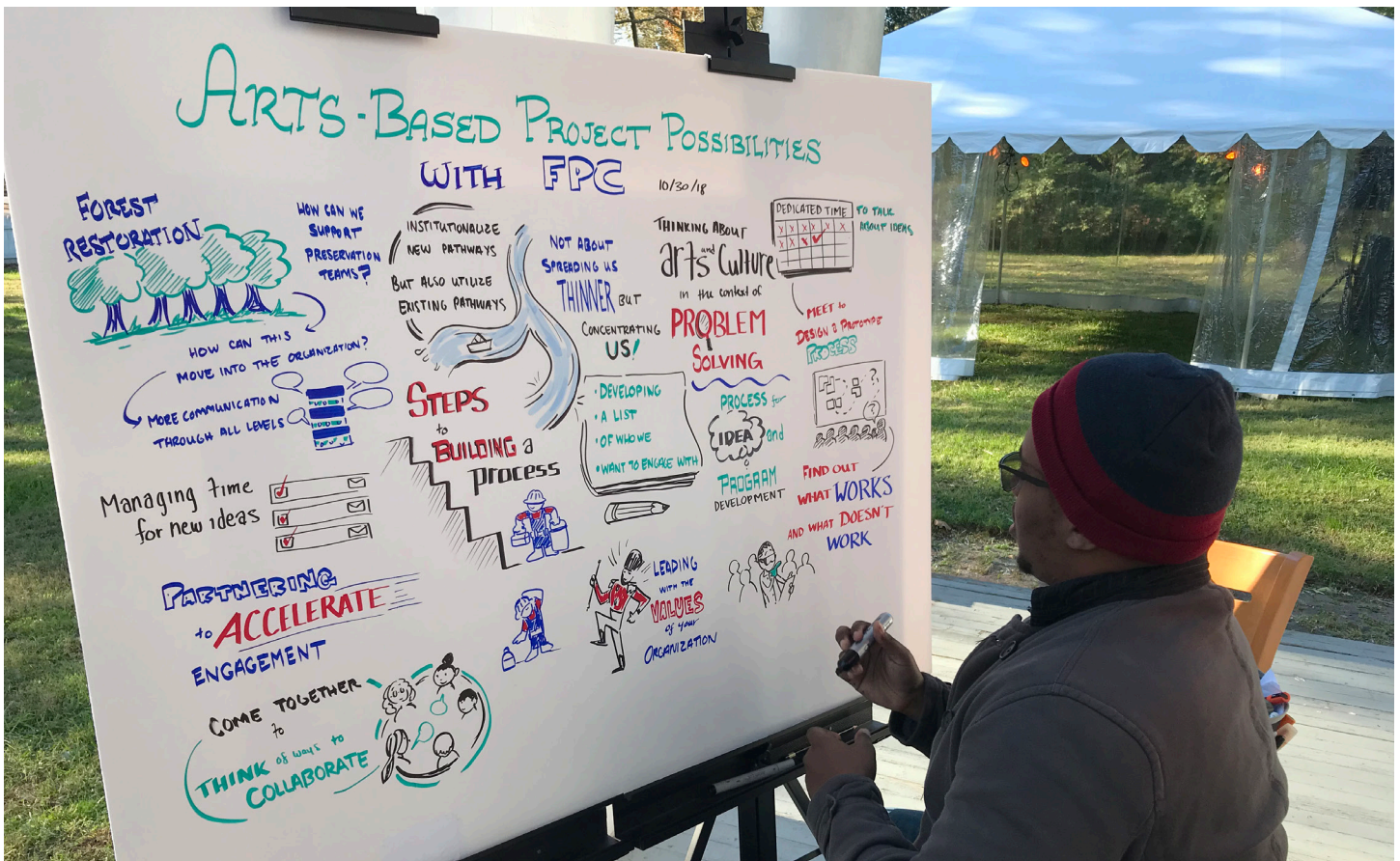
- Margy Waller, Topos Partnership

# Competency: Communicate

## Communicating effectively externally about arts-based work

Knowledge	Skills	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research on how to talk about the arts in a community development context</li> <li>• Storytelling tools and techniques for arts-based work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documenting and extracting critical stories from arts-based work</li> <li>• Developing coherent narrative(s) about the organization's relationship to arts-based work</li> <li>• Rebooting/reframing as the story around arts-based work evolves</li> <li>• Identifying and segmenting relevant audiences for arts-based work</li> <li>• Executing coherent strategies for amplifying relevant stories around arts-based work to specific audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization can tell a coherent story about why they are doing this work</li> <li>• Information about the organization's relationship to this work exists (website, articles, etc.)</li> <li>• Community, partners, field, and the media associate this work with the organization</li> </ul>

Graphic artist Trevor Fraley illustrates conversations at Fairmount Park Conservancy around long-term integration of arts and culture. (*PolicyLink*)





# Sequencing Ideas in Technical Assistance for Cross-Sector Work

The Competencies are a mechanism to organize and map knowledge and skills in buckets that allow for intentionality in design and self-reflection, but they do not need to happen linearly. As the Competencies emerged and I reflected on the CDI program and the broader field-building work that ArtPlace was accomplishing, I found it helpful to name the linear steps we often implicitly went through in either a basic presentation or a more robust technical assistance program. These steps are particularly true for arts, culture, and community development, but the basic approach is useful in designing any approach to advancing new ideas across disciplines and fields of practice.

- **Inspire practitioners to think differently about the potential of the cross-sector practice.** In the case of arts and culture, this meant expanding notions about arts and cultural practice and the kind of transformative impacts it can have as a way to get the organizations excited to learn new ways of working.
- **Help them to align creative placemaking goals with the context of a place and the broader mission of their sector.** For example, creative placemaking practices happen in a wide variety of ways in different market conditions, with varying demographics, and in service of diverse community challenges and opportunities. For many practitioners, an understanding of how this work applies to them begins with seeing how it has been done in similar contexts. At ArtPlace, we often turned to our field scans that have analyzed the intersection of arts and culture with other key sectors to help frame relevant possibilities for particular audiences. But this might also encompass a careful look at mission alignment from an organizational standpoint, or an articulation of how arts and cultural strategies can respond to community-identified goals.
- **Provide key support for tactics and implementation.** Most community development organizations do not have specialized knowledge about contracts for artists, project timelines, and expectations, or translating the results of arts-based engagement into new decisions and investments in communities. Many practitioners or training providers often tend to want to dive quickly into these mechanics, but this is

also a case where form follows function, and challenges with the mechanics can only be addressed once the challenges with conceptualizing a project have been overcome.

- **Expand capacity around reflection, measurement, and iteration toward increasingly sophisticated work.** Reflection and iteration are generally a challenge for many organizations, but this kind of work can face specific obstacles to being legible, measurable, and replicable. As ArtPlace Director of Research Strategies Jamie Hand has documented, sometimes creative placemaking work can be measured in standard community development terms, but other times it requires new models and approaches that bridge the gap.<sup>15</sup>
- **Co-design structures and processes that generate new ongoing work.** As documented in other briefs, many Community Development Investments organizations have expanded their work from an external practice into one that was more woven into internal operations, including through internal artists-in-residence and embedded artists, expanded strategic plans and new hires, and pools of internal funds dedicated to deploying creative problem-solving across the institution.

This basic framework—inspiration, alignment, tactics, learning, iteration, and structure—is one that I hope the field will continue to build on as it considers future pedagogical approaches to advancing creative placemaking practices.

## Additional reflections and field-level recommendations

Given how quickly the sophistication of trainings and resources focused on creative placemaking has evolved, many of ArtPlace's resources and webinars are, as of mid-2021, out of date, even though many of the presenters are still active leaders in the field.<sup>16</sup> There are also many more resources available than at the beginning of the program. However, there is still the need to continue to invest in robust capacity-building. The eight competencies represent a launching point to building new capacity-building structures, but I believe that there are also overarching opportunities and lessons from this endeavor for field builders and funders who are interested in supporting this kind of work.

### 1. Relational Space and Learning Should Be Supported

Too often, innovations in communities only happen when someone creates a project idea and secures funding for it. This may result in a good project, but it does not always translate to long-term shifts in practice at the institutional level. For this purpose, greater attention and resources must be focused on how the work is conceptualized between organizations, artists, and community members and the long-term structures within the organization that will support this as an ongoing dialogue, rather than a one-off mobilization.

**Recommendation:** Funders, technical assistance providers, policymakers, and intermediary organizations should continue to advocate for program structures that provide more time, space, support, and resources for building relationships and shared practices, rather than, or as a complement to, concentrating resources to support project ideas and the replication of project models. This is the best way to center artists, culture-bearers, and designers in the work, and also to advance work that will be adaptive and responsive to community needs and changing contexts.

### 2. Coaches, Peers, and Processes Are More Valuable than Templates

This is worth stating explicitly. The six organizations in this cohort were vastly different, tackling dissimilar issues, in very diverse community contexts. The abstract content we provided about this work was not universally useful or used. Instead, we received the most positive feedback for discussion and discovery processes that emphasized self-revelation and adaptation over adoption. These included the monthly phone calls, convenings, cohort webinars, and availability of staff to review content, project ideas, and language.

**Recommendation:** While there is clearly still a need for the field to continue investing in building out the basic knowledge mapped here, there is an even greater need to support the development and resourcing of more coaches at the field level who can help to orient and support new practitioners, provide context-specific models and connections for deep exchange, and support reflective space to advance deep institutional change rather than surface-level wins.

### 3. Sustainability Is People AND Structure

The knowledge, guidance, and examples we provided to the organizations could provide a foundation, but each organization had to develop the templates and tools, project structures, visions, documentation, and approaches that were relevant to their own context. Many of the skills listed above as topics for technical assistance emerged from the trial and error of pulling together the support while the program was underway and in an exploratory mode. The danger of this is that often this knowledge lives with individuals, and as these individuals transition out the organization is unable to carry the knowledge forward. Organizations that created templates, playbooks, and found ways to reflect regularly with the rest of the staff were better able to disperse the knowledge throughout the institution for the long-term.

**Recommendation:** Investing in leadership development in the field is one way to advance knowledge and champions. However, funders, program designers, and technical assistance providers should also consider bringing in more organizational development expertise into the field including in knowledge management, change management, and adaptive leadership to ensure that the sustainability of the work is not solely dependent on the organizations' staff who had the opportunity to go through intensive training.

Designing and executing this program was an incredible opportunity to identify gaps, frameworks, and lessons in advancing a cross-sector body of practice. The Core Competencies for Arts and Culture Integration have a variety of uses and are also intended to be the starting point for other capacity builders in the field to begin adding to them or mapping out their own versions.

These lessons emerged from our model of integrating arts and cultural practices into community development organizations. However, there are also useful takeaways for thinking about all the mechanisms through which ideas, models, approaches, and practices can be advanced authentically, and in a context-specific manner, to any program seeking to promote new practices at the organizational level. Cross-sector work is always about learning new languages and ways of doing work—and the more we invest in building out transferrable lessons, the easier it is to help community development work become both more comprehensive and equitable.

In a graphic timeline of their CDI journey, Little Tokyo Service Center notes a critical pivot in their journey toward bringing an artist on staff. (*PolicyLink*)



## Notes

- 1 ArtPlace America was a collaboration among a number of foundations, federal agencies, and financial institutions that began in 2011 and concluded operations in December 2020. Our mission was to position arts and culture as a core sector of community planning and development toward a goal of equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities. To that end, we invested more than \$150 million over our lifespan to grow the field of creative placemaking through demonstration projects, in-depth investments in organizational change, and ongoing support for research and field-building.
- 2 All five briefs can be accessed on this website page: <https://www.communitydevelopment.art/strategies>.
- 3 Michael Rohd et al., Center for Performance and Civic Practice, “Creating Process for Change,” Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, 2019. “Transforming Community Development through Arts and Culture,” *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Community Development Innovation Review* 2019-2, pp.121-130, <https://sffed.us/sffedarts>.
- 4 Maria Rosario Jackson, *Creative Placemaking and Expansion of Opportunity: Observations and Reflections*, The Kresge Foundation, 2018, accessible at [https://kresge.org/sites/default/files/library/cp\\_white\\_paper\\_2\\_for\\_posting.pdf](https://kresge.org/sites/default/files/library/cp_white_paper_2_for_posting.pdf).
- 5 The findings of the research scans commissioned by ArtPlace of various sectors (e.g., health, environment, immigration, and transportation) for their contributions to creative placemaking were shared with the CDI grantees as they were completed between 2016 and 2019. At the conclusion of the operation of ArtPlace in December 2020, a new website was released that collected all these reports and presented an integrated framework of themes that cut across the sector scans: <https://creativeplacemakingresearch.org/>.
- 6 This brief can be found at <https://www.communitydevelopment.art/strategies/community-engagement>.
- 7 The scans of arts and culture strategies in various sectors are summarized on the website released by ArtPlace in December 2020: <https://creativeplacemakingresearch.org/>.
- 8 ArtPlace America, *Creative Placemaking Values: A Guide for Practitioners, Funders, and Evaluators*, 2019, [https://www.artplaceamerica.org/sites/default/files/public/pictures/creative\\_placemaking\\_values\\_final\\_for\\_upload\\_11\\_15\\_19.pdf](https://www.artplaceamerica.org/sites/default/files/public/pictures/creative_placemaking_values_final_for_upload_11_15_19.pdf). This guide was developed after the CDI program concluded. During the program, we referred to ArtPlace’s four points of creative placemaking and ArtPlace’s National Creative Placemaking Fund evaluation rubric, the core ideas of which have been incorporated into this updated guide.
- 9 Martha O’Connell et al, “The Connection between Public Space and Cultural Resources: Reflections on Our Work in Strawberry Mansion.” Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. 2019.
- 10 “Transforming Community Development through Arts and Culture,” *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Community Development Innovation Review* 2019-2, pp. 65-68, <https://sffed.us/sffedarts>.
- 11 The previously cited PolicyLink briefs on Strengthening Social Fabric (Chang and Rubin, 2020) and Community Organizing (Liu, 2020) provide case studies of these approaches. An introductory page for these and the other briefs is accessible at <https://www.communitydevelopment.art/strategies>.
- 12 For more information, see <https://creativeplacemakingresearch.org/>.
- 13 LISC and the National Endowment for the Arts repeated these webinars as a part of their technical assistance offerings and have made webinars and additional information available on these topics here: <https://www.lisc.org/our-initiatives/creative-placemaking/main/creative-placemaking-toolkit/>.
- 14 Victor Rubin, “CDI Research and Documentation: An Account of the Approach, Framework, and Methods,” PolicyLink, 2020, accessible at <https://www.communitydevelopment.art/resources/cdi-research-methods>.
- 15 Jeremy Liu, *Making Sense of Meaning: How Creative Documentation Enhances Our Understanding of Community Development*, PolicyLink, 2020, accessible at <https://www.communitydevelopment.art/resources/making-sense-of-meaning>.
- 16 Jamie Hand, “Multiple Ways of Knowing: Translating Outcomes between the Arts and Community Development,” “Transforming Community Development through Arts and Culture,” *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Community Development Innovation Review*, 2019-2, pp. 151-155, <https://sffed.us/sffedarts>.
- 17 Since the CDI program began, there has been a massive increase in the number of programs and volume of resources moving through the field to improve practice. LISC, NeighborWorks, and Enterprise Community Partners, national community development intermediaries, have all developed their own capacity-building programs and curricula. The NeighborWorks Training Institute has a course on “Leveraging Arts and Culture for Affordable Housing and Equitable Community Development.” Authors from each of these three intermediary organizations have essays in the special journal issue devoted to lessons from CDI: “Transforming Community Development through Arts and Culture,” *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Community Development Innovation Review* 2019-2. Groups such as Transportation for America, US Water Alliance, and Welcoming America have developed programs for their members that are designed to build their capacity to work with artists over time. The Kresge Foundation has also created a learning cohort specifically for community development organizations integrating arts and culture—Building and Supporting Equitable Development (BASED). Moreover, as more higher education institutions take up creative placemaking as a part of their curricula, there is an increasing level of sophistication around the dimensions of learning that provide a strong foundation for arts-based community transformation.



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**Main cover photo:** Cook Inlet Housing Authority.

**Small cover photos top to bottom:** Lyz Crane, Jackson Medical Mall Foundation; Zuni Youth Enrichment Project; Ashley Hanson, Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership; Rudy Espinoza, Little Tokyo Service Center; Albert Yee, Fairmount Park Conservancy.

PolicyLink is a national research and action institute advancing racial and economic equity by **Lifting Up What Works®**.

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## Author Biography

**Lyz Crane** works at the intersection of comprehensive community development, philanthropy, and systems change. Most recently, Crane was the Deputy Director for ArtPlace America, where she led grantmaking, capacity-building, and knowledge-building strategies focused on advancing the role of arts and culture within community development practices. She has held previous roles at ArtHome and Partners for Livable Communities, was a 2009 Next City Vanguard, and has an MPA in policy analysis from the Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service at New York University.



Lifting Up What Works®

**Headquarters**

1438 Webster Street  
Suite 303  
Oakland, CA 94612  
t 510 663-2333  
f 510 663-9684

**Communications**

75 Broad Street  
Suite 701  
New York, NY 10004  
t 212 629-9570

**[policylink.org](http://policylink.org)**

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