



Americans for the Arts

United Arts Fund Leadership Retreat Notes

Hosted by ArtsMemphis

Memphis, TN November 7-8, 2019

In Attendance: Jaye Baille (Marion Cultural Alliance, Ocala, FL), Nancy Barno Reynolds (Broome County Cultural Alliance, Binghamton, NY), Madison Cario (Regional Arts & Culture Council, Portland, OR), Sara Friedman (ArtsFund, Seattle, WA), Flora Maria Garcia (United Arts of Central FL, Orlando, FL), Kelley Gibson (Cultural Alliance of York County, York, PA), Tracy Lauritzen Wright (ArtsMemphis, Memphis, TN), Janie Martin (Fund for the Arts, Louisville, KY), Deborah McAuliffe Senner (Allied Arts, Oklahoma City, OK), Susan Mendenahll (Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne, IN), Lisa Midgett (Marion Cultural Alliance, Ocala, FL), Nicole Mullet (ArtsNow, Akron, OH), Elizabeth Rouse (ArtsMemphis, Memphis TN), Amanda Roy (Greater Hartford Arts Council, Hartford, CT), Rodney Van Valkenburg (ArtsBuild, Chattanooga, TN), Laura Way (ArtsGreensboro, Greensboro, NC), Lisa Wolter (ArtsWave, Cincinnati, OH), Liza Zenni (Arts & Cultural Alliance of Knoxville), Knoxville, TN).

Americans for the Arts Staff: Jessica Stern, Private Sector Initiatives Program Manager

Community Updates & Discussion

Major themes from community updates and discussion

- Shifts from general operating support to program support.
- Working with convention and visitors' bureaus, tourism and the challenge of securing public funding from these entities.
- Administering grants on behalf of a specific company, when to do it, the pros and cons.
- Centering the UAF in the advocacy, convener and leadership conversation in a community.

Breakouts by interest

- *Creating Productive Cross-Sector Partnerships*

Appetite and interest in how arts intersect with health and wellness. Partnerships are a way to work with other funders and community leaders without creating programming that competes with cultural partners. For example, UACF partners with other big funders. JP Morgan Chase funds workforce development – funded program in performing arts school even though they don't fund arts per say. ArtsMemphis has a child protection policy that every organization needs to sign before they get money, because child abuse is higher in Shelby county than other counties in the US.

What are good studies for cross-sector partnerships? York has infographic. Social Impact of the Arts from ArtsFund. Americans for the Arts Arts + Social Impact Explorer.

How to walk path with elected officials and understand what is important to them and support those areas, have to listen to what they're saying.

UAFs see themselves as community organizations that serves by supporting the arts.

- *Endowment Building and Resource Sharing on Behalf of the Community*
Do millennials know what an endowment is, and is it going to change? Will millennials care what an endowment is? Use different language such as venture capital and investment, wealth building and impact investing. Endowment building needs to respond to generational shifts.

Discussions included mentorship and leadership development programs such as neXt in Louisville, a 10-month program to learn about the arts, get partnered with arts organizations (business professionals); and Art of Leadership in Portland which has a co-created curriculum, 2 corporate sponsors, and offsets costs for people who can't pay.

- *Starting and/or Evolving a United Arts Fund Model within a Local Arts Agency – Things to Think About*
Everyone is evolving, on one side of the spectrum is the UAF model, one is the arts council; where is the sweet spot? Everyone is evolving into a hybrid organization. The club model isn't as effective. Switching it from what-can-we-do-for-the-arts to being community focused.

Americans for the Arts Updates

Jessica highlighted the relaunched pARTnership Movement campaign, new fact sheets, and poster as resources for the field. She is available to travel to communities to train on how arts organizations can build sustainable partnerships with businesses, as well as make connections with their local chamber of commerce and other business networks.

The Private Sector Initiatives team is also working on a new series of Arts+ Social Impact/Business papers which will take a segment of the Social Impact Explorer and look into how partnerships with businesses are creating social impact. Nominations for the Arts & Business Partnership Awards will open in January. Everyone is encouraged to nominate a company for their extraordinary partnerships with the arts.

Jessica shared AFTA's federal policy platform and initiatives with the group, and shared that Research is looking into the effect of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on individual giving as it pertains to the arts. The Profile of Local Arts Agencies is being compiled – over 630 local arts agencies completed the profile this year. The online dashboard allows you to create comparative data. Looking to launch the 2019 Profile results and dashboard next spring, just before we ask you to complete the profile again. New model is that there is a baseline survey every year with 2 rotating modules that will come up every 4 years to measure change over time. Last year it was DEI and Equitable Investment, this year it was partnerships and local option taxes, next year it will be public art and civic design, and arts education. AFTA is beginning the process for AEP 6. Signing community partners will happen now through 2020, the research will take place in 2021 with the data released in 2022.

The Diversity in Arts Leadership program moves into its second year as a national program, and 27th year in NYC. In addition, Americans for the Arts continues its second year of the new Arts & Culture Leaders of Colors Fellows program, and the Arts & Culture Leaders of Color network.

The Annual Convention is taking place in Washington, D.C., now as two concurrent conferences: The Annual Convention and Public Art & Civic Design Conference. It will feature two 4-hour Precon intensives, one on being a local arts advocate and one on public art and collective memory/history.

Friday, November 8
Metal Museum, Library & Resource Center
374 Metal Museum Dr
Memphis, TN 38106

Evolution of the United Arts Fund Field

Question to the group: what does it mean to be a united arts fund today? Is the definition¹ dated? What are the commonalities across all UAFs regardless of funding model and programming?

Leading, planner, promoter and funder of the arts. "United" word needs to go away – it's a stigma. Common words used for UAFs: Organizations that advocate, fundraise and grant. Leader, funder, planner, promoter of arts. Advocate. Raising funds for the arts to have an impact in the community. Arts is the vehicle. Local. Convener. Grantmaker. Trustworthy. Impartial and strong grantmaker. Collaborative initiatives, catalyst. Grantmaking, fundraising, tech assistance, advocacy, convener, collaborator, voice for the arts in non-arts conversations, arts education, fund programs in the schools (not all have this).

The AFTA definition is dated. More and more are becoming hybrids, of private fundraising and public funding. We're shifting. Big difference was that UAFs were a club that specific organizations got funding.

What was the purpose of separating UAFs from the rest of the LAA field? Historically, UAFs automatically gave funding to specific organizations rather than offered competitive grantmaking. One ask for all orgs was the selling point – but the UAF figures out the allocation. The evaluation part is really important to the funder and it offers a level of legitimacy. Private funders trust where a UAF grants because the UAF has done the due diligence on their behalf. Workplace giving is another differentiator. Half do workplace giving. Allied Arts Oklahoma workplace giving is in growth mode. Stamp of approval is really important to business funders. Some groups are so tiny and would go away if they didn't have the stabilized funding of Allied Arts.

Contracts for services are another differentiator between UAFs and LAAs. Groups that are sent into the schools are contracted, not receiving grant funding.

Funding diversification is the only way to survive when public funding is limited. Arts vs homelessness doesn't work as an argument, the 'arts' has to disappear and be integrated into public funding case making.

It's important to look at unusual suspects to partner with. Go to department of housing or transportation, health and wellness. Asking around other departments becomes another avenue to bring the arts into other partnerships. Who's got the money and can they bring the partnership to the table.

What would a new definition of a united arts fund be? Support and promote arts, advocacy, fundraising. Helping arts organizations stay in business. We're all local arts organizations, all sub-granting, providing technical assistance. Everyone is fundraising for the purpose of redistributing. We are all convening. It would be good to know what the financial health of the organizations were to be if UAFs went away? Their job is to support citizens through creative experiences, and arts organizations are primary vehicle. To create healthy ecosystem.

UAF's Role in Cultural Planning & Community Development

UAFs are aligning their mission or grantmaking around city cultural plan? Generally arts councils lead cultural planning and offer priorities around what's important. Whether the city focus is on economic development, diversity, education; the planning process can talk about the role that the arts play in those efforts. Arts is a problem-solving entity. Stay relevant and talk with leadership.

¹ Americans for the Arts currently defines a united arts fund as a local arts agencies whose main function is to raise money from local individuals, businesses, and foundations to regrant to local arts institutions and provide support to the cultural community. UAFs seek to raise money to provide ongoing support to arts groups by consolidating cultural fundraising efforts in one organization, and use their knowledge of the cultural community to disperse the funds accordingly. (<https://www.americansforthearts.org>)

Don't just have arts people doing cultural planning. Understand timeline, and how much it is going to cost, and what the expectation of the UAF/LAA will be.

Broome County partnered on specific program with chamber and the restaurant association. The Arts Council took over the First Friday brochures and listed restaurants for shared marketing. Chamber gave money to take over the program and connect calendars. Easy cross-over that lifted up local businesses and tourism.

Finding ways to intersect with the chamber is an effective way to mobilize the business voice for advocacy, shared purpose, networking or even accessing businesses for workplace giving outside of one's immediate network.

Leveraging Matching Grants, New Donors & Facilities Subsidies – *Facilitated by Flora Maria Garcia*

UACF secured \$2 million in additional funding, and \$500k is a challenge grant that has to come from new donors. Have to raise the same amount of money as the previous year before the match goes in effect. What are your thoughts about the messaging issue, timing, strategic issue? County is prioritizing new donors, what are the success stories around this? How do we pitch a 1-to-1 match before the money is raised?

Suggestion to frame the campaign as a \$3 million total campaign. Make the message simpler. \$2.5 million is the campaign and then we get an extra \$500k. Every new dollar helps us get to the \$3million.

The group discussed point of sale campaigns with local businesses such as retail stores and convenience/gas stations. Donor information isn't collected, but a nominal amount of money per item (such as a soft drink) could be donated to the UAF. With a franchise, stores can be incentivized to compete against one another.

Other successful campaigns have included social media campaigns through birthdays or partnerships with sports teams (example: give 10% more than before and get tickets to a sporting event).

Tax-based Revenue Models – *Facilitated by Kelley Gibson*

Kelley has list of all the communities that have a public-option tax.

Allegheny county is a real estate rebate tax. Salt Lake passed tax in partnership with parks and rec and was supported by families who wanted to use the parks space for youth sports. The state of MN passed a tax for entire state by partnering with hunters and fishermen. It's important to understand who the broader audience is and tap into those interests.

Have to have statewide enabling legislation that allows for local referendum, but tourism body has local authority to determine where money can be allocated. Who has the local authority? It's a political campaign. Important to have a good relationship with city or county people – they can give you information about what revenue streams are there that you can leverage, such as a menu of options and what's going to work in this city – provide menu of examples from across the country around what is possible.

Attend the city budget sessions or listen to what's going on – who's jockeying for what money, who are the unlikely partners.

How can AFTA supporting the evolving field?

What information would be useful to you in the annual UAF Report: Look at number of orgs getting operating support year after year. Who has successful models of capacity building? Who's done multi-year investment in this? Who's funding innovation and providing start-up funds, who's funding individuals? Tracking audience demographics served by those organizations and the audiences, only collect what grantees can report – data is not consistent.

UAFs get questions about what does it cost to make a dollar? What is the cost of fundraising? Cost of fundraising by type of program? So many myths about the cost of fundraising. Would help to have a study to point to when your percentage is high. Help explain why general admin and fundraising costs are high.

What would you like to see out of this annual convening? Potential 2-day convening with the first day being just for UAFs and the second day being for non-arts partners, with the USUAF, creative economy folks etc. AFTA is open to suggestions

Update the feasibility study for those hoping to start a new UAF-style program in their LAA. Have a session or specific time on gathering those who are new to the field. Needs session on different fundraising tactics. Employee engagement. Exiting leaders and institutional knowledge, new strategies for keeping institutional data.