Doubling Down on the Arts

Our Arts & Culture grantees threw themselves into the task of driving positive change in their communities throughout 2017, making progress toward the fusion of arts, culture and community-engaged design into local decision-making processes.

There were plenty of reasons 2017 could have been the year when arts and culture sector actors withdrew into a defensive crouch — among them, the erosion of civil civic discourse; constant threats to eliminate critical funding sources; and a federal government that is hostile or indifferent to the social justice and equity values so crucial to artists and their communities.

Yet the sector stood strong. Our allies and partners forged ahead with renewed vigor on the vital work of Creative Placemaking on streets, blocks and neighborhoods from Los Angeles to Philadelphia, and from New Orleans to Minneapolis. It was a resounding acknowledgement of the imperative to focus even more intently on leveraging arts and culture as a tool to enliven neighborhoods, more tightly bind the social fabric of community and empower residents with agency and purpose.

Kresge’s Arts & Culture team is incredibly proud of our partners’ dogged work that increasingly establishes “preconditions for change” on the streets of our great American cities: physical transformation of neighborhoods, a community narrative shifting toward the authentic and positive and a stronger sense of agency and social bonds between and among neighbors and institutions.

Our team partnered closely with those doing Creative Placemaking work on the ground, providing the resources, tools and support necessary to expand opportunity and build vibrancy in resurgent communities.

We also:

- Worked in close partnership with ArtPlace America to strengthen a network of national Creative Placemaking practitioners;
- Commissioned a series of case studies and reports highlighting innovative approaches to Creative Placemaking;
- Convened 10 national intermediaries to assess how to better embed Creative Placemaking in their operations and networks;
- Helped launch an exploration of how to infuse Creative Placemaking in community anchor institutions (cultural, medical, academic);
- Worked with Kresge’s Health Program to select 23 implementation partners for the Fresh, Local & Equitable (FreshLo) initiative; and
- Made new investments in Detroit, exploring closer alignment with the Detroit team’s neighborhood capacity-building initiative.

If there was any doubt that our community partners would rise to the challenges presented by a chaotic political and societal landscape, they were erased as 2017 progressed. We watched with pride and a touch of awe as they doubled down on the vital, affirming work of arts, culture and community-engaged design in their neighborhoods. To them we simply say, “Thank You!”
2017 Arts & Culture Program Grants

Seeking to build strong, healthy cities by promoting the integration of arts and culture in community revitalization.

Grants: 41  Total Committed: $21,228,100

Americans for the Arts, Inc.  Washington, D.C.  $150,000
ArtPlace America  Brooklyn, N.Y.  $5,000,000
Artspace Projects, Inc.  Minneapolis, Minn.  $1,200,000
AS220  Providence, R.I.  $500,000
Asian Economic Development Association*  St. Paul, Minn.  $200,000
Athens Land Trust*  Athens, Ga.  $200,000
Building Bridges Across the River  Washington, D.C.  $600,000
The Carnegie Hall Corp.*  New York, N.Y.  $50,000
Center for Community Progress*  Flint, Mich.  $894,000
Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington  Covington, Ky.  $380,000
Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington*  Covington, Ky.  $200,000
Center for Urban Pedagogy  Brooklyn, N.Y.  $250,000
Chinatown Community Development Center  San Francisco, Calif.  $400,000
City of Minneapolis  Minneapolis, Minn.  $1,125,000
City of Providence*  Providence, R.I.  $200,000
Community Arts Stabilization Trust  San Francisco, Calif.  $390,000
Community Science, Inc.  Gaithersburg, Md.  $42,000
Design Future*  Brooklyn, N.Y.  $50,000
Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.  Columbia, Md.  $100,000
Esperanza Community Housing Corp.  Los Angeles, Calif.  $250,000
Focus: HOPE*  Detroit, Mich.  $200,000
Fresno Metro Ministry*  Fresno, Calif.  $200,000
Grantmakers in the Arts  Bronx, N.Y.  $90,000
Green Opportunities, Inc.*  Asheville, N.C.  $200,000
Inner-City Muslim Action Network*  Chicago, Ill.  $200,000
Klondike Smokey City CDC  Memphis, Tenn.  $50,000
Local Initiatives Support Corp. – National Office  New York, N.Y.  $1,500,000
Memphis Library Foundation  Memphis, Tenn.  $132,100
Mixed Blood Theatre  Minneapolis, Minn.  $750,000
New Museum of Contemporary Art  New York, N.Y.  $150,000
Northeastern University  Boston, Mass.  $200,000
Philadelphia Mural Arts Advocates  Philadelphia, Pa.  $375,000
Pillsbury United Communities  Minneapolis, Minn.  $850,000
PolicyLink  Oakland, Calif.  $200,000
Rebuild Foundation  Chicago, Ill.  $1,200,000
Riverworks Development Corp.*  Milwaukee, Wis.  $200,000
Springboard for the Arts  St. Paul, Minn.  $675,000
St. Clair Superior Development Corp.*  Cleveland, Ohio  $500,000
Village of Arts and Humanities  Philadelphia, Pa.  $375,000
Voice of Calvary Ministries*  Jackson, Miss.  $200,000
World Business Chicago  Chicago, Ill.  $800,000

*Denotes cross-team grant

Rebuild Foundation
Kresge supports the Rebuild Foundation’s artist-driven community development and Creative Placemaking activities on Chicago’s South Side. Shown here, Rebuild’s Stony Island Arts Bank, a hybrid gallery, media archive, library and community center.