



Cultural Strategists-in-Government

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



APPLICATION PROCESS

Q: Am I eligible to apply if I have worked in Oakland for many years, but do not live there.

A: No. Only Oakland residents are eligible to apply.

Q: Can I apply to be a cultural strategist for more than one of the City projects?

A: No. You must pick the project that you believe is the strongest fit for your skills and knowledge.

Q: Can applicants apply as a group or collaborative?

A: Contracts will only be awarded to individuals. However, if that person wishes to subcontract with collaborators as part of their project design that is up to them and their City partners.

Q: Why was the deadline extended for these projects?

A: Very few or no applications were received for these projects, so the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) call was reopened.

Q: Is there anything new about these projects?

A: There is one opportunity that was not available in the original RFQ at the end of last year—that is, a project from the Office of the President of City Council.

Q: Can I apply for a new project if I was not chosen to be a CSIG for the project I originally applied for?

A: Yes.

Q: Can I submit the same application for a new project?

A: This is not advised. Each City entity has a different project that addresses different issues. It is better to read the relevant Case Statement and tailor your application to that particular project.

Q: If I have a pending application in for one of the projects that has an extended deadline, is my application still being considered?

A: Yes, previously submitted applications to these projects are still in play, but you are allowed to revise your application if you wish up until the new deadline of Monday, Feb. 28 at 5PM.

AWARDS

Q: How many contracts will be awarded?

A: There is funding for up to six one-year contracts in this round. How many contracts to be awarded depends on each City project's receiving competitive applications.

Q: Can contracts be awarded for more than one year?

A: There is a possibility that a couple of projects will be extended into a second year. But we will not know which ones until we see how the first year proceeds.

Q: Are the awards for \$40,000 or \$48,000?

A: Cultural strategists will be contracted for up to \$40,000 in professional fees. That is, strategists will be compensated based on how many hours of service are provided, up to a maximum of \$40,000. \$8,000 is available for materials, supplies, equipment, etc. associated with each project. These are both "up to" amounts, that is, it depends how much is needed for the project. For example, it's possible that not all \$8,000 will be needed for expenses. But a maximum of \$8,000 is available for each project.

PROGRAM FEATURES

Q: Will I have a chance to meet the other cultural strategists in the program if I am accepted?

A: Because this program is experimental and a learning opportunity for both City workers and community members, cultural strategists and their City partners will be convened across the program to discuss their advances and stumbling blocks. They will be onboarded together (to the extent possible), they will have opportunities to share insights, and they will be debriefed at the end of their project.

Q: Will there be opportunities for inter-project collaboration?

A: There may be. It will depend on who gets contracted to work on the different projects and participants' appetite and capacity to collaborate. Participants will be free to suggest ideas for collaboration.

PROGRAM HISTORY

Q: How many contracts were awarded in the pilot year?

A: Five different City entities participated in the pilot year of the program—Human Services, the Mayor's Office for Housing Security, Planning & Building, Race & Equity, and Transportation—and six contracts were awarded, two to Transportation and one to each of the others.

Q: How much were the contracts valued at in the pilot year?

A: \$10,000 for cultural strategist fees.

Q: How many applications were received in the pilot year?

A: 51

Q: Can people who applied to be or were cultural strategists in the pilot year apply in this new round of the program?

A: Yes.

Q: Who were the cultural strategists in the pilot round of the program and what did they do?

A: **Human Services:** Michelle “Mush” Lee worked with HS to help develop a departmental narrative to make their purpose and services clearer to communities. As part of her research, she implemented a “Talk to Your Neighbor” activity as part of Life is Living Festival with community portraits and facilitated conversations on humanity, belonging, and service. She worked with program and management staff on internal and external communications practices.

Mayor’s Office for Housing Security: Originally tasked with developing a way to promote the building of ADUs (accessory dwelling units) to help ease the housing crisis, Sabereh Kashi evolved the project with the MOHS to create a short film that tells the story of one woman in Oakland, her desire to create an ADU, the barriers she encounters in the process, and her view of the changing character of her neighborhood.

Planning & Building: Chelsea Burton focused on community engagement activities in the late stages of the development of the Downtown Specific Plan; presented a suite of ideas for community engagement activities (sidewalk listening station/photo scavenger hunt/noticing tour) for future use; developed a toolkit for the photo scavenger hunt; and created a framework for evaluating engagement activities. This work has been passed along to the General Plan team.

Race & Equity: Candice Wicks-Davis explored effective ways to communicate the results of R&E’s Equity Indicator Report. She and her collaborators composed songs centered on underlying realities of the report’s findings on racial equity. The music was intended to be presented at a concert at City Hall for City representatives and the community.

Transportation: Hodari Davis & Elena Serrano, with their years of experience in producing the Life is Living and Malcolm X Jazz festivals, respectively, advised Transportation staff on working with communities in Deep East Oakland to produce the East Oakland Futures Festival and other civic space activations. (The Festival was postponed due to the pandemic.)

RESOURCES

There are a number of resources about the interface of arts and cultures with community development, racial equity, and local government. One guide with lots of practical information about partnerships between artists and municipal government, along with examples from across the country is [“Municipal—Artist Partnerships”](#) created by A Blade of Grass and Animating Democracy, a program of

Americans for the Arts. Though the examples may not have exactly the same purpose as the CSIG program, there are a great many rich lessons and useful tips in the guide.

The [Creative-Strategists-Artists in Residence program](#) of the Los Angeles County Department of Arts & Culture takes a broader stance than a typical artist-in-residence program and has placed creatives in eight different county entities. A pilot [program evaluation](#) was recently released and has valuable lessons and recommendations.

The [ArtPlace America website](#) resources page also has a lot of example of how art is being harnessed to address a range of issues (for artists, local government, neighborhood development, health, transportation, gentrification, etc.) Here are a few resources from their site:

Goldbard, Arlene, *Art & Well-Being: Toward a Culture of Health*, U.S. Department of Arts and Culture, 2018.

https://actionnetwork.org/user_files/user_files/000/023/624/original/Art_Well-Being_final_small_6-13-18.pdf

Crane, Liz, "Building Worlds Together: The Many Functions and Forms of Arts and Community Development," *Animating Democracy/Americans for the Arts*, 2011.

<http://animatingdemocracy.org/sites/default/files/LCrane%20Trend%20Paper.pdf>

Sherman, Danya, *Exploring the Ways Arts and Culture Intersects with Housing: Emerging Practices and Implications for Further Action*, ArtPlace America, 2016.

https://www.artplaceamerica.org/view/pdf?f=public%3A//pictures/artplace_field_scan_housing_sherman_apr_2016.pdf

Stephens, Alexis, *Working with Artists to Deepen Impact: Lesson from ArtPlace America's Community Development Investments*, PolicyLink, 2019.

<https://communitydevelopment.art/resources-tools/working-with-artists>

Stone, Ben; Nezam, Mallory, *Arts, Culture and Transportation: A Creative Placemaking Field Scan*, Smart Growth America-Transportation for America/ArtPlace America, 2017.

<http://t4america.org/maps-tools/creative-placemaking-field-scan/>