



Equity Challenges in California's Arts Ecosystem

Report to the California Arts Council

Prepared by John Carnwath
August 5, 2022
[Revised November 30, 2022]



Table of Contents

Prologue.....	3
Acknowledgments.....	5
Introduction	6
Scope of Inquiry	7
Our Focus on Equity.....	7
Summary of Findings.....	8
Implications for CAC.....	10
Discussions of Key Findings.....	12
1. The network of Arts Nonprofits is uneven across California.....	12
2. The nonprofit arts are only one portion of the non-commercial arts and culture ecology	15
3. Access to the arts can vary substantially at the hyper-local level (i.e., within a town, school district, or neighborhood).....	17
4. Resources for the arts are distributed inequitably.....	18
5. CAC’s grants are more equitably distributed than other sources of contributed income	22
6. Most arts nonprofits in California are very small volunteer-led organizations that aren’t supported by grants	24
7. The vast majority of resources available to California’s arts nonprofits are concentrated in a small number of very large organizations.....	26
8. Communities require different levels of investment to build relationships and trust.....	29
Methodology	31
How does this report identify BIPOC-centered organizations?.....	31
How does this report define urban and rural areas?	32
Quantitative Analysis	32
Qualitative Research.....	33
A Note on Qualitative Research	34
Appendix I: List of Interviewees	35
Fresno.....	35
Imperial County	35
South Los Angeles	36



A Prologue, from the California Arts Council Chair and Executive Director

August 2023

Dear Colleagues,

As your state arts agency, a primary role of the California Arts Council is to steward public funds to support the work of artists and arts organizations for the benefit of a better California for all. In order to fulfill this mission, a full, detailed picture of the state arts ecosystem - one with a specific focus on equitable distribution of resources - is crucial.

It had been well over a decade since a research study of this kind had taken place when, in 2020, the CAC commissioned a field scan of the California arts and culture funding landscape as part of our comprehensive external grantmaking evaluation. While a primary outcome of the field scan was to help our agency understand our own impact towards equitable arts funding and to identify gaps to which we need to attend, we also recognized the need for policy makers, arts advocates, community organizers, and other funders to have clear, thorough data on what arts organizations exist in the state, who they serve, and to what kinds of financial resources they have access (or not).

We are therefore deeply grateful to be able to share with you the findings of *Equity Challenges in California's Arts Ecosystem: A Report to the California Arts Council*. Prepared by John Carnwath in collaboration with the evaluation team from Scansion and WolfBrown, the field scan weaves together multiple statewide and national data sets to analyze arts organization funding around the state through the foundational lenses of racial and geographic equity.

In addition to the quantitative data sets, the evaluation team also conducted community deep dives in three locations across the state: Fresno, Imperial County, and South LA. The deep dives were driven by community-based Connectors who convened individuals reflecting the diversity of their various communities to engage in interviews and in-person site visits with the evaluation team. The deep dive reports are all available as individual documents on the evaluation page of the CAC website, and they also deeply inform the broader takeaways of the field scan overall.

Equity Challenges in California's Arts Ecosystem offers data-driven findings, root cause analyses, and recommendations for a field in which the vast majority of financial resources go to a tiny percentage of organizations, and in which BIPOC-centered and rural organizations are still significantly underrepresented in access to those resources. Far more than a set of numeric data and individual stories, this report is a call to action for all of us that are committed to elevating equity in the arts sector for the benefit of all Californians.



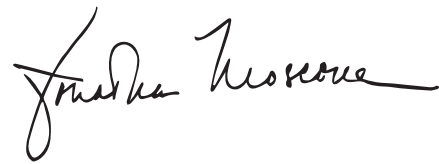
On behalf of the entire staff and Council of the CAC, we offer our profound gratitude to the artists and cultural workers, elders and culture bearers, and community members that took time to contribute their wisdom and knowledge to this study; and to Salvador Acevedo, Shalini Agrawal, Alan Brown, John Carnwath, Anh Thang Dao-Shah, and the entire evaluation team for their diligence, care, rigor, and committed truth-telling throughout this research and evaluation process.

We invite you to read, deeply consider, and share this report, as we all work towards a genuinely better California for all.

With gratitude and respect,



Consuelo Montoya, Council Chair



Jonathan Moscone, Executive Director



Acknowledgments

To start, I'd like to thank the California Arts Council for the opportunity to dive deeply into the important question of equity in arts funding in our state. Our work on this multi-year project has been overseen by a committed Task Force, which at various times included Council members Lilia González Chávez, Vicki Estrada, Kathleen Gallegos, the late Larry Baza, and Nashormeh Lindo, as well as Jonathan Moscone, Ayanna Kiburi, Katherin Canton, Qiana Moore, Anne Bown-Crawford, and Roman Sanchez from the agency's staff. I am deeply grateful for their pointed questions and thought partnership, which indisputably improved our work.

Our project manager on CAC's side has been Josy Miller, whom I can't thank enough for her guidance, thoughtfulness, and steadfast positivity.

This Field Scan and the wider evaluation project it is a part of has been a deeply collaborative undertaking. I've had the pleasure of working with a superb group of colleagues, to whom I owe a huge debt of gratitude. My thanks go to Anh Thang Dao-Shah, Shalini Agrawal, Salvador Acevedo, and Alan Brown.

The research team at the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, consisting of Ryan Stubbs, Kelly Liu, and Mohja Rhoads, took on the data stitching, cleaning, and statistical analysis for this project. I greatly appreciate their flexibility and persistence in plugging into this complex project.

I'd also like to highlight the important role our local Connectors played in shaping the three ecosystem portraits that informed this report. We couldn't have done this work without the committed artists and community leaders Sarina Guerra, Peter J. Harris, Anne Irigoyen, and Nikiko Masumoto who served in that role. In the process of selecting communities to consult with, I held exploratory conversations with Pimm and Alme Allen, Tayshu Bommelyn, Brittany Britton, Lyn Risling, Devi Peacock, and Ed Landler who were both generous and patient in educating me about their work and their communities.

Of course, I am hugely indebted to the many artists and arts leaders who agreed to share their experiences and perspectives through a number of online and in-person interviews and group meetings. You're the reason we do this work, and I am honored that you entrusted me with your stories. A full list of research participants is available in [Appendix 1](#).

I'd like to thank Kala Kowtha from CAC, Rebecca Johnson from SMU/DataArts, and Reina Mukai from Candid for their assistance with the data acquisition. I'm also grateful to Amy Kitchener of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA) and Anne Huang of World Arts West for generously sharing data that helped us test and validate our coding of BIPOC-centered organizations.

This work wouldn't have been possible without these community leaders.



Introduction

This report highlights key findings from a multicomponent Field Scan of equity in California's non-commercial arts ecosystem. It was commissioned by the California Arts Council (CAC) as part of an evaluation of the agency's grantmaking. The Field Scan was intended to assess how well CAC is serving the diverse communities across the state, and inform the agency's strategies going forward by painting a picture of the distribution of resources within the non-commercial arts ecosystem and highlighting what CAC contributes to that ecosystem.

The core questions driving the Field Scan were:

1. How does the infrastructure of nonprofit arts organizations (in terms of overall distribution, budget sizes, etc.) relate to the demography of California?
2. How equitable is access to government support, foundation grants and private philanthropy (e.g., gifts from individuals) across arts organizations serving different populations and geographic areas?
3. What role does CAC currently play in the arts funding ecosystem?

To answer those questions, we combined statistical analysis of the available data on nonprofit arts organizations in California with qualitative research on how the arts are supported in three local communities.

The Field Scan consists of four components, which can be downloaded for free on CAC's website and can be made available in other formats upon request:

- [*An Analysis of Equity in Nonprofit Arts Funding in California*](#), prepared by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, complemented by a [Technical Report](#)
- [*Portrait of an Arts Ecosystem: Fresno*](#), by Salvador Acevedo and Nikiko Masumoto
- [*Portrait of an Arts Ecosystem: Imperial County*](#), by John Carnwath and Sarina Guerra
- [*Portrait of an Arts Ecosystem: South Los Angeles*](#), by John Carnwath and Anh Thang Dao-Shah (with a foreword by Peter J. Harris)

The methodology section at the end of this report provides an overview of the rationale behind the case study selection, sources of data, and research methodologies used in this work.



Scope of Inquiry

According to the [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports](#), arts and cultural production accounts for \$225 billion (7.5%) of the California economy and contributes 681,221 jobs. The present report focuses on the portion of the arts and cultural sector that has traditionally been the focus of the California Arts Council's activities. We use "non-commercial arts" to distinguish this portion of the sector from the profit-oriented entertainment and creative industries. Much of the work in the "non-commercial arts" is accomplished by nonprofits, but CAC also supports arts programs at schools, after school programs, parks departments, social service organizations, prisons, and other types of entities that aren't "arts nonprofits." In our analysis, we refer to those organizations as "other arts grant recipients." We did not include individual artists in our analysis, since, at the time this research was commissioned in conjunction with a review of CAC's grantmaking strategies, the agency hadn't funded individual artists for almost 20 years (i.e., since 2002). CAC resumed funding individual artists through emergency relief grant during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and then through its Individual Artists Fellowship program beginning in 2021.

Our Focus on Equity

This report highlights key takeaways from an analysis of California's non-commercial arts infrastructure and funding through the lens of equity. Following PolicyLink, we think of "equity" as the just and fair inclusion in an arts ecosystem in which all can prosper and reach their full potential.¹

Building on the [Racial Equity Statement in CAC's Strategic Framework](#),² we intentionally prioritize race in our analysis with the awareness that racial identities intersect with many other identities that are systemically disadvantaged (e.g., based on gender, sexuality, disability, language, veteran status). We recognize the importance of allowing individuals and communities to self-identify and acknowledge many distinct racial histories and experiences are conflated when diverse populations are combined under the term "people of color." While certainly not perfect, we follow Grantmakers in the Arts, The BIPOC Project, and Race Forward in using "Black, Indigenous, and People of Color" (BIPOC), which calls attention to the histories of Indigenous and Black people that "shape[.] the experiences of and relationship to white supremacy for all people of color within a U.S. context."³

.....

- 1 <https://www.policylink.org/about-us/equity-manifesto>
- 2 <https://view.publitas.com/ca-arts-council/california-arts-council-strategic-framework/page/36-37>
- 3 <https://www.thebipocproject.org>. See also Nayantara Sen & Terry Keleher, *Creating Cultures and Practices for Racial Equity: A Toolbox for Advancing Racial Equity for Arts and Cultural Organizations*, Race Forward (2021), p.7. https://www.raceforward.org/system/files/Creating%20Cultures%20and%20Practices%20For%20Racial%20Equity_7.pdf



In addition to race, our analysis examines inequities based on geography as a second lens through which to view equity. We compare the distribution of arts nonprofits and financial resources between regions based on their degree of urbanicity and demographic composition of their populations.

Summary of Findings

1. The network of Arts Nonprofits is uneven across California

Arts nonprofits tend to be located in census tracts that have above average education and median income levels, and below average representation of BIPOC communities. The San Francisco Bay Area and the Central Coast have roughly three times as many arts nonprofits per capita than the Inland Empire and the Central Valley and Eastern Central region. The census tracts in which BIPOC-centered organizations are located are more reflective of the state's overall demographics in terms of the representation of BIPOC communities, but they're still above average in terms of education and income level. BIPOC communities in rural areas have far less access to BIPOC-centered arts nonprofits than their counterparts in urban areas.

2. The nonprofit arts are only one portion of the non-commercial arts and culture ecology

23% of all grants that foundations distribute in support of the arts go to organizations that don't have the arts as their primary focus. Recipients include universities, school districts, after school programs, churches, parks departments, social service organizations, tribal governments, environmental groups, municipalities, historical societies, and many other types of organizations that include arts or cultural programming among their services. Beyond the organizations that are supported by grants, there are informal artist collectives, small businesses, and community enterprises that ground arts and culture in local communities.

3. Access to the arts can vary substantially at the hyper-local level

It is difficult to define who has access to arts programs and arts organizations using statistical data alone. Even if one only focusses on geographic proximity – setting aside the very real and consequential barriers of cost, language, mobility, culture, etc. – it is difficult to say how close is close enough to have access to an opportunity. We know that many museum visitors and concert attendees will routinely travel an hour or more to fill their appetite for the arts, yet for school-aged children, arts programs at other schools, afterschool programs, and community-based organizations may be entirely inaccessible, even if they're just a few miles away. Through our qualitative research, we learned that people who live just a few blocks from each other can have very different experiences of how accessible the arts are within their community.



4. Resources for the arts are distributed inequitably

BIPOC-centered and rural organizations are smaller, in terms of their annual budgets, and have fewer assets than non-BIPOC-centered and urban organizations. Only 11% of the total dollar amount that private foundations award to arts nonprofits go to BIPOC-centered organizations, although they represent 18% of all arts nonprofits. Rural organizations receive just 3.5% of all foundation grant dollars, although they make up 9% of the arts nonprofits. There are considerable regional discrepancies in the distribution of foundation grants: Los Angeles County, Orange County, and the eight Bay Area counties receive 84% of all foundation funding for the arts.

Individual giving is even less equitable in terms of the proportion of donations that goes to BIPOC-centered arts organizations. BIPOC-centered organizations in rural areas face compounded inequities both for individual donations and foundation support.

Support from county and city governments also varies greatly, with Bay Area arts organizations receiving 70% of the municipal funds available statewide (San Francisco alone provides 58% of the municipal funds) and 87% of county-level arts funding being distributed within L.A. County. In some areas, neither counties nor municipalities provide any support for the arts.

5. CAC's grants are more equitably distributed than other sources of contributed income

Through its portfolio of grant programs, CAC works towards offsetting inequities that BIPOC-centered⁴ and rural nonprofits face in accessing support from private sources like foundations, trustees, and individual donors. Whereas BIPOC-centered organizations represent 18% of the arts nonprofits in California, they receive 30% of the funds that CAC distributes in the form of grants. For rural organizations, the difference is far smaller, but they still receive slightly more than their proportionate share of CAC funds: 9% of California's arts nonprofits are based in rural areas, yet those organizations receive 11% of CAC's grant funds.

6. Most arts nonprofits in California are very small volunteer-led organizations that aren't supported by grants at all

67% of all arts nonprofits in California have annual budgets under \$50,000. Of those, 92% have no record of receiving any grants from either public or private sources in the dataset that was compiled for this study. While there isn't much statistical information available about these organizations, their small budgets and lack of grant support suggests they're largely community-supported organizations that are run by volunteers.

.....

4 We use "non-BIPOC-centered organization" to refer to organizations that are not specifically dedicated to serving or representing BIPOC communities. This does **not** mean that they intentionally center White populations and perspectives, or that they exclude BIPOC populations.



7. The vast majority of resources available to California’s arts nonprofits are concentrated in a small number of very large organizations

There are 108 arts nonprofits with budgets over \$10 million in California. These institutions constitute less than 1% of the nonprofit arts organizations in the state, yet they receive 70% of the available resources. 50% of all arts grants from private foundations flow to those organizations, as do 73% of all donations from individuals. There is nothing inherently negative about having well-resourced large institutions that serve large numbers of people. However, the concentration of resources among these organizations drives a substantial part—though not all—of the inequity in the ecosystem, particularly in terms of BIPOC-centered organizations. Only 6 of the 108 arts nonprofits with budgets over \$10 million are located in rural census tracts, and just 4 are BIPOC-centered organizations.

8. Communities require different levels of investment to build relationships and trust

Local arts ecosystems have varying levels of the formal and informal organizational infrastructure that support the arts, as well as varying degrees of familiarity with and trust of grantmaking processes. To engage with communities equitably, one must accept that the conditions in the communities vary—including factors such as pre-existing relationships, social structures, geography, cultural norms, and language proficiencies—and as a result different levels of resources (including time) and outreach are needed to engage with them. It’s important to approach communities on their own terms, with a tangible commitment to better supporting their needs, and then follow through on that commitment.

Implications for CAC

- Overall, the portfolio of grant programs offered by CAC during the period under review (2017-2019) yielded outcomes that are broadly consistent with the agency’s commitment to racial equity. During this period, the agency’s grants filled in gaps and counteracted inequities that exist elsewhere in the arts funding ecosystem. Nonetheless, significant systemic inequities persist.
- CAC cannot expect to rectify the inequities in the wider ecosystem with the limited resources it is able to distribute through its grants. Private foundations distribute \$670 million in a single year, and (extrapolating from DataArts data) California arts nonprofits may receive twice that amount from individual donors. With between half and three-quarters of all private philanthropy (from individuals and foundations) going to the 108 largest organizations, CAC’s current general fund allocation of \$26 million is much too small to influence the overall distribution of resources. Even the one-time appropriation of \$100 million that CAC received in 2021 pales in comparison to the private funding flowing into the arts. CAC therefore needs to calibrate its expectations for influencing the overall distribution of resources in the arts ecosystem, or consider ways in which it can indirectly influence the flow of private funding.



- The uneven distribution of arts nonprofits across California poses a problem for funders who are seeking to increase equity by making grants to the existing network of nonprofit arts organizations. A proportional allocation of resources across these organizations will perpetuate inequities as long as the underlying distribution of organizations is biased. One solution would be to support the development of a more robust nonprofit infrastructure within communities that have historically been marginalized in arts funding decisions. Alternatively, greater flexibility in awarding grants to individuals and different types of organization might allow funders to grow their applicant pool and increase support to the people and groups that are already doing good work in those communities, without burdening them with the bureaucracy of fiscal sponsorship or obtaining 501(c)(3) status.
- Given the large number of small nonprofits and community-based enterprises that aren't applying for or receiving grants, it may be necessary to consider alternative methods of providing support and infusing resources, beyond grantmaking. Many of these organizations aren't seeking resources beyond their own communities either due to lack of awareness or because they prefer to be self-sufficient. In order to support the work they do, it may therefore be necessary to put additional resources into the hands of community-based organizations that local artists and arts catalyzers can readily avail themselves of, rather than requiring them to bring those resources in from the outside.
- Convincing arts communities that have little nonprofit arts infrastructure and no prior relationship with CAC to engage with the agency – whether by subscribing to an e-newsletter or attending a meeting, not to mention navigating the complexities of a grant application – requires an entirely different level of investment than engaging portions of the arts ecosystem that already see CAC as a valued source of support. The difficult work that needs to be done is that of building relationships and building trust.
- Until trust-based relationships exist, it may be unreasonable to expect communities to engage with CAC on the uncertain premise that support may be forthcoming at some time in the future. The situation would be fundamentally different if CAC were to allocate resources to aid communities that have historically been underrepresented in its grantmaking, and then approach those communities to seek input on how best to distribute the funds.



Discussions of Key Findings

1. The network of Arts Nonprofits is uneven across California

Nonprofit arts organizations constitute the lion’s share of the non-commercial arts activity in California that can be assessed with existing data sources. By our calculations, there are almost 14,000 nonprofit arts organizations in California, which collectively contribute \$9 billion to the economy. That’s 4% of the state’s entire creative economy (which also includes the commercial film, music, and fashion industries). However, nonprofit arts organizations have more to offer than revenue and jobs; they bring people together, celebrate our stories, inspire us, and foster creativity.⁵

Arts nonprofits serve California residents in many ways, but they’re unevenly distributed across the state. As Table 1 shows, there are 56 arts organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area per 100,000 residents—far above the statewide average—and the Central Coast region also has a disproportionately large number of arts nonprofits. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Inland Empire east of LA has just 15 organizations per 100,000 inhabitants, and the Central Valley and Eastern Central region has 17.

Total Arts Nonprofits, by Region					
	Population (2019)	Share of California Population	Total Arts Nonprofits	Share of Arts Nonprofits	Arts Nonprofits per 100,000
Bay Area	7,268,197	19%	4,100	30%	56.4
Central Coast	2,342,005	6%	971	7%	41.5
South	13,249,614	34%	4,843	35%	36.6
Upstate	1,608,043	4%	560	4%	34.8
Far South	3,496,774	9%	1,097	8%	31.4
Capitol	2,372,297	6%	734	5%	30.9
Central Valley & Eastern Central	4,386,097	11%	756	5%	17.2
Inland Empire	4,560,470	12%	701	5%	15.4
California	39,283,497	100%	13,774	100%	35.1

Table 1: Total Arts Nonprofits, by Region⁶

5 Beacon Economics. *The Creative Economy: 2020 Otis Report on the Creative Economy*. Otis College of Art and Design, 2020, p.66. <https://www.otis.edu/creative-economy/2020>

6 CAC groups counties into the following regions: Bay Area (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Sonoma), Capitol (El Dorado, Sacramento, Solano, Yolo), Central Coast (Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Ventura), Central Valley & Eastern Central (Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne), Far South (Imperial, San Diego), Inland Empire



There are, however, some noteworthy statistics on the role that BIPOC-Centered organizations play in the state’s arts ecosystem:

- BIPOC-centered organizations, like non-BIPOC-centered organizations, tend to be located in census tracts that have above-average levels of educational attainment and household income, but BIPOC-centered organizations are located in census tracts that have larger BIPOC populations. On average, 62% of the population is BIPOC in census tracts where BIPOC-centered organizations are located, which is roughly on par with the statewide demographics (61% BIPOC). By contrast, the population in census tracts where non-BIPOC-centered organizations are based are only 50% BIPOC.
- In urban areas, 18% of all arts organizations are BIPOC-centered; but only 8% of the arts organizations in rural areas are BIPOC-centered. In part, this is driven by the fact that the rural census tracts have smaller BIPOC populations overall (47% BIPOC vs. 65% BIPOC in urban census tracts), but the disparity persists when examined on a per capita basis. Overall, the number of arts organizations per capita is only slightly lower in rural census tracts than in urban areas. As Table 2 shows, however, BIPOC communities in rural areas have far less access to BIPOC-centered arts nonprofits than their counterparts in urban areas (5.6 vs. 10.1 BIPOC-centered organizations per 100,000 BIPOC residents).

	Total Arts Nonprofits per 100,000 Inhabitants	BIPOC Arts Nonprofits per 100,000 BIPOC Inhabitants
Urban	35.4	10.1
Rural	32.0	5.6

Table 2: BIPOC-Centered Arts Nonprofits in Urban and Rural Census Tracts, per 100,000 inhabitants.

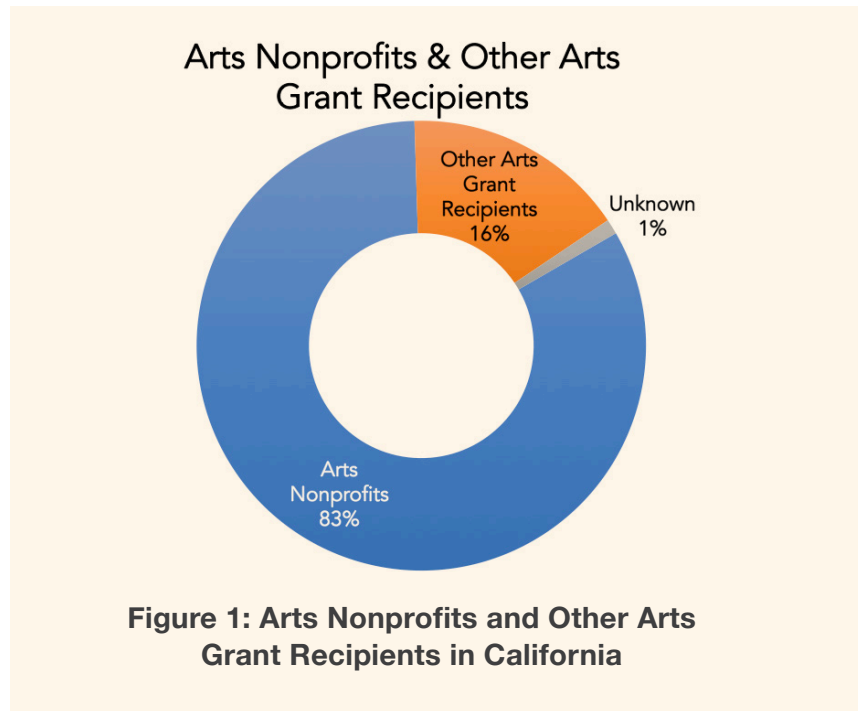
The uneven distribution of arts nonprofits across California poses a problem for funders who are seeking to increase equity by making grants to the existing network of non-profit arts organizations. A proportional distribution of resources across these organizations will always perpetuate inequities, so long as the underlying distribution of organizations is biased.



2. The nonprofit arts are only one portion of the non-commercial arts and culture ecology

While the data clearly shows inequities in the distribution of arts nonprofits across California, that doesn't mean that those living in underserved areas don't have rich cultural lives and access to the arts. It does, however, mean that supporting arts and culture in underserved communities may require new strategies.

Our database of organizations in California includes 13,774 arts organizations, but 23% of all arts grants awarded by foundations go to organizations that don't have the arts as their primary focus. They include universities and colleges, school districts, after school programs, parks departments, environmental groups, municipalities, churches, tribal governments, historical societies, social service organizations and many other types of organization that include arts or cultural programming among their services. Collectively, those organizations constitute 16% of our database.



Beyond those organizations—which are readily identifiable based on foundations’ grant reporting—our consultations in Fresno, Imperial County, and South LA brought to light intricate webs of individual artists, small businesses, informal networks and collectives that ground arts and culture in communities. Many of these operate as “community-centered enterprises” that are committed to serving the needs of specific communities rather than the practice or presentation of a specific art form (*see Portrait of a Local Arts Ecosystem: Fresno, p.5*). These enterprises are constantly evolving, and they’re difficult to monitor through standard statistical measures due to their often informal nature. Prior research has documented that these types of organizations play a particularly important role in the cultural lives of BIPOC communities.⁸

8 Anh Thang Dao-Shah and Kate Faust, Mapping Small Arts & Culture Organizations of Color in Oakland, Akonadi Foundation/Kenneth Rainin Foundation, 2018. <http://mapartscultureoakland.org/>



Our qualitative research on local arts ecosystems also highlighted the role that “catalyzers” play in their communities. These people play a significant role in their local arts ecosystems, whether through their leadership, organizing, or fundraising, but they may not identify as artists or arts administrators. Through our consultations we met and heard about several people who see their role in their communities primarily as “organizers,” yet they are central to the vitality of the local arts ecosystem.

It goes without saying that there are thousands of artists across California who contribute to the cultural lives of their communities in important ways, which, however, were not a central focus of our Field Scan.

By shining a light on the diverse individuals, informal groups, and non-arts organizations that contribute much to California’s arts ecosystem, we by no means intend to belittle the important work of the many committed arts nonprofits in the state. Rather we want to emphasize that if the grantmaking focus is only on nonprofits (even if that definition is expanded to other entities that seek grants through fiscal sponsorships), large portions of the ecosystem that enriches the lives of Californians with meaningful artistic and cultural activities is overlooked.

In some communities, community-centered enterprises and catalyzers work closely and collaboratively with nonprofits; in some, they fill the void where no formal arts nonprofits exist. In some instances, there is a degree of competition with established nonprofits. In our consultations, we also found that that among some catalyzers and leaders of community-centered enterprises there is distrust of the nonprofit system, or the “nonprofit industrial complex,”⁹ as one community member called it. Some believe that incorporating as a nonprofit puts organizations in a position of weakness, where they are dependent on the generosity of others. They perceive nonprofits as beholden to wealthy donors, foundations, and the government, and therefore unable to act independently. For these reasons, some individual artists, unincorporated groups and small businesses owners we spoke with prefer to finance their community programs and artistic practices with resources that are available within their own communities, rather than seeking grants or other types of support externally. They self-finance their work, or support it through the patronage of local residents, engaging volunteers, small financial and in-kind donations, and other forms of “community capital.” (This is described in the [Fresno report](#), though it’s certainly not limited to that community).

9 Popularized by the book *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex (2009)*, ed. INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, the term “nonprofit industrial complex” has been used to describe the set of relationships between the government, foundations, wealthy individuals, and nonprofits that reinforce the status quo rather than create change that might threaten their existence.

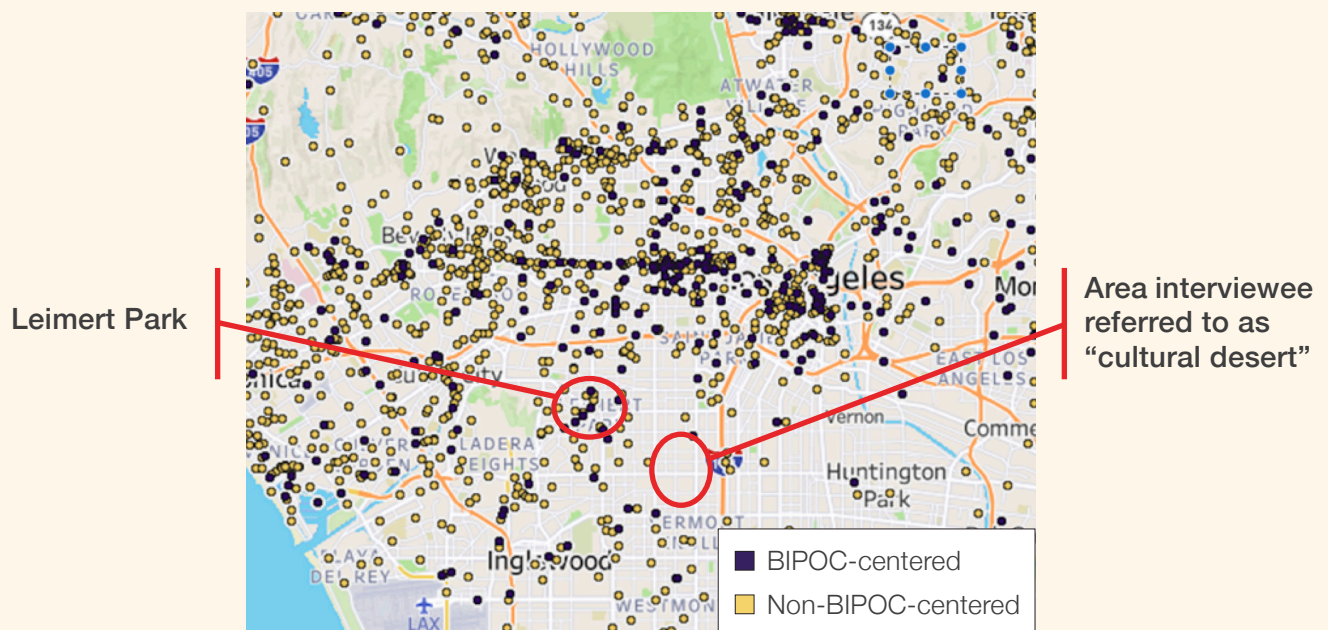
3. Access to the arts can vary substantially at the hyper-local level (i.e., within a town, school district, or neighborhood).

The combination of statistical analysis and qualitative research in specific communities highlighted another fundamental challenge in considering equity the arts ecosystem. NASAA analyzed the available quantitative data by census tract to gain a granular understanding of the distribution of arts nonprofits and financial resources in California. Census tracts are geographic areas that encompass between 1,200 and 8,000 inhabitants. They can be thought of as neighborhoods. Yet even at that level, we found it is difficult to clearly define who has access to arts programs and who doesn't. Even if one only focuses on geographic proximity – setting aside the very real and consequential barriers of cost, language, mobility, culture, etc. – it is difficult to say how close is close enough to have access to an opportunity.

We know many museum visitors and concert attendees will routinely travel an hour or more to fill their appetite for the arts, yet our research in Fresno, Imperial County and South LA highlighted that for a student enrolled in one high school, the arts programs at another high school just a few miles away may be entirely inaccessible.

In many instances we heard of hyper-local discrepancies in the availability of the arts. For instance, while most of the artists we interviewed in South LA spoke of the rich cultural history and artistic vibrancy of communities such as Leimert Park and Watts, one interviewee posed a remarkable contrast, referring to South Central (the historic name for South LA) as a “cultural desert.” She was speaking of the “core of South Central” that is now predominantly Hispanic, where she grew up with no access or awareness of arts programs or cultural organizations. The map below (Figure 2) confirms her impression of the lack of cultural opportunities in that part of South LA.

Figure 2: Map of Arts Nonprofits in Los Angeles



This finding, on its own, only tells us that BIPOC-centered and rural organizations are smaller, in terms of their budgets and assets, than non-BIPOC-centered and urban organizations. However, they also receive a smaller proportion of the available funding from private foundations and individual donors. Only 11% of the grants that private foundations award to arts nonprofits go to BIPOC-centered organizations. For rural organizations, that figure is just 3.5%.

Viewed through a regional lens the disparities are even more striking. Los Angeles County and Orange County (which, together, constitute the “South” region) and the eight counties in the Bay Area receive 84% of all foundation funding for the arts (Table 3). Of course, those counties also account for a large portion of the state’s population. Even on a per capita basis (shown in Figure 5), however, the disparities are striking, with private foundations awarding over \$50 to the arts for every resident in the Bay Area, compared to just \$1.13 in the Central Valley and Eastern Central region.

Foundation Support for the Arts, by Region			
	Total Foundation Grant Dollars	Share of California Population	Share of Foundation Grant Dollars
South	373,883,275	34%	42.2%
Bay Area	367,780,453	19%	41.5%
Far South	53,294,327	9%	6.0%
Central Coast	49,255,525	6%	5.6%
Capitol	16,009,265	6%	1.8%
Inland Empire	15,219,766	12%	1.7%
Upstate	5,695,988	4%	0.6%
Central Valley & Eastern Central	4,958,146	11%	0.6%
California	886,537,028	100%	100.0%

Table 3: Foundation Support for the Arts, by Region

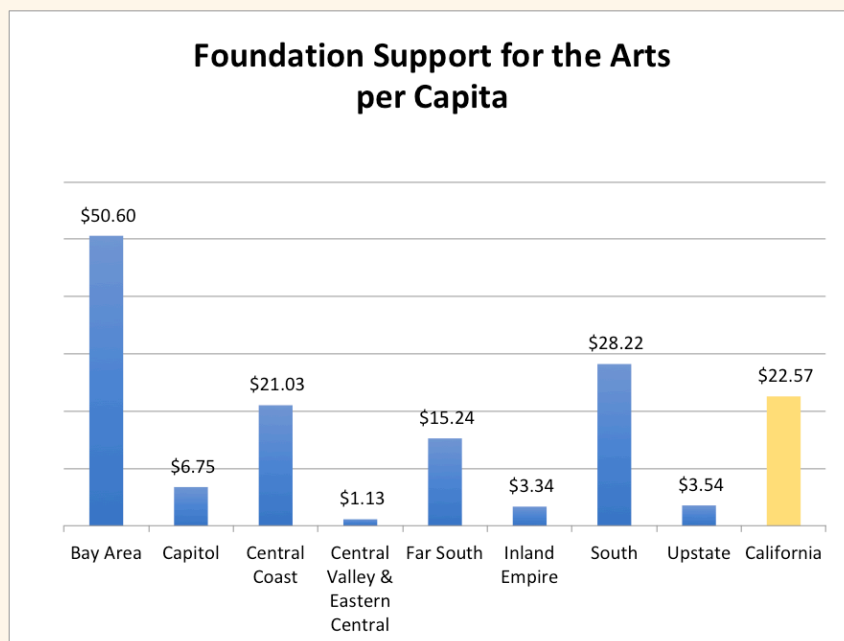


Figure 5: Foundation Support for the Arts per Capita, by Region



Individual giving is even less equitable in terms of the proportion of donations that goes to BIPOC-centered arts organizations. The data on individual donations comes from DataArts, and it's only available for 2,369 organizations (14% of the full dataset). The organizations that share their financial information with DataArts skew towards larger budget size categories when compared to the full dataset of California arts nonprofits, but for those organizations that are captured, DataArts provides a detailed financial profile. Among the arts organizations that have DataArts profiles, only 5.9% of individual giving (including donations from trustees) goes to BIPOC-centered organizations even though BIPOC-centered organizations make up 20% of the DataArts dataset. Rural arts nonprofits receive just 4.4% of the donations from individuals.¹¹

BIPOC-centered organizations are few and far between in rural areas, representing just 0.8% of the organizations in the NASAA data, and less than half a percent (0.4%) of the DataArts organizations. The BIPOC-centered organizations that do exist in rural areas face compounded inequities both for individual donations and foundation support.

Foundation Support for Rural and BIPOC-Centered Organizations		
	Proportion of Organizations	Proportion of Foundation Grant Dollars Received
Urban Non-BIPOC-Centered	74.00%	85.69%
Urban BIPOC-Centered	16.79%	10.75%
Rural Non-BIPOC Centered	8.37%	3.45%
Rural BIPOC-Centered	0.75%	0.09%

Table 4a: Foundation Support for Rural and BIPOC-Centered Organizations

Individual Donations (incl. Trustees) for Rural and BIPOC-Centered Organizations*		
	Proportion of Organizations	Proportion of Individual Donations Received
Urban Non-BIPOC-Centered	74.8%	89.8%
Urban BIPOC-Centered	19.1%	5.9%
Rural Non-BIPOC Centered	5.6%	4.4%
Rural BIPOC-Centered**	0.4%	0.02%

Table 4b: Individual Donations (incl. Trustees) for Rural and BIPOC-Centered Organizations

* Only organizations that have DataArts profiles are included.

** The number of Rural BIPOC-centered Organizations is very small (n=9), so the sample may not be stable.

11 These figures differ slightly from the ones cited in NASAA's reports ([Executive Summary, p.15](#); [Technical Report, p.19](#)), because NASAA didn't include contributions from trustees.



According to DataArts, access to county and municipal arts support also varies greatly within California. Bay Area arts organizations receive 70% of the available municipal arts funding, with 58% of the statewide funding coming from, and benefitting, San Francisco. Meanwhile, 87% of county-level arts funding is distributed by and within L.A. County. Many cities and counties don't contribute any financial resources to the arts.¹²

Municipal and County Arts Support, by Region*				
	Total Municipal Support (in dollars)	Share of Municipal Support	Total County Support (in dollars)	Share of Municipal Support
Bay Area	66,722,648	70%	6,144,304	6%
Capitol	1,495,963	2%	971,446	1%
Central Coast	2,328,170	2%	2,337,580	2%
Central Valley & East Central	850,689	1%	644,858	1%
Far South	9,412,335	10%	1,552,268	2%
Inland Empire	1,880,358	2%	48,666	0%
South	11,853,309	13%	83,606,524	87%
Upstate	115,994	0%	743,110	1%
California	94,659,466	100%	96,048,756	100%

Table 5: Municipal and County Arts Support, by Region

* Based on DataArts profiles.

12 California Arts Council. *California County Local Arts Agency: Impact & Local Government Funding Report*. 2020. <https://view.publitas.com/ca-arts-council/2020-cac-slp-report/page/1>



5. CAC’s grants are more equitably distributed than other sources of contributed income

Through its portfolio of grant programs, CAC works to offset the inequities that BIPOC-centered and rural nonprofits face in accessing support from private sources like foundations, trustees, and individual donors.

Whereas BIPOC-centered organizations represent 18% of the arts nonprofits in California, they receive 30% of the funds that CAC distributes in the form of grants.

For rural organizations, the difference is far smaller, but they still receive slightly more than their proportionate share of CAC funds: 9% of California’s arts nonprofits are based in rural areas, yet those organizations receive 11% of CAC’s grant funds.

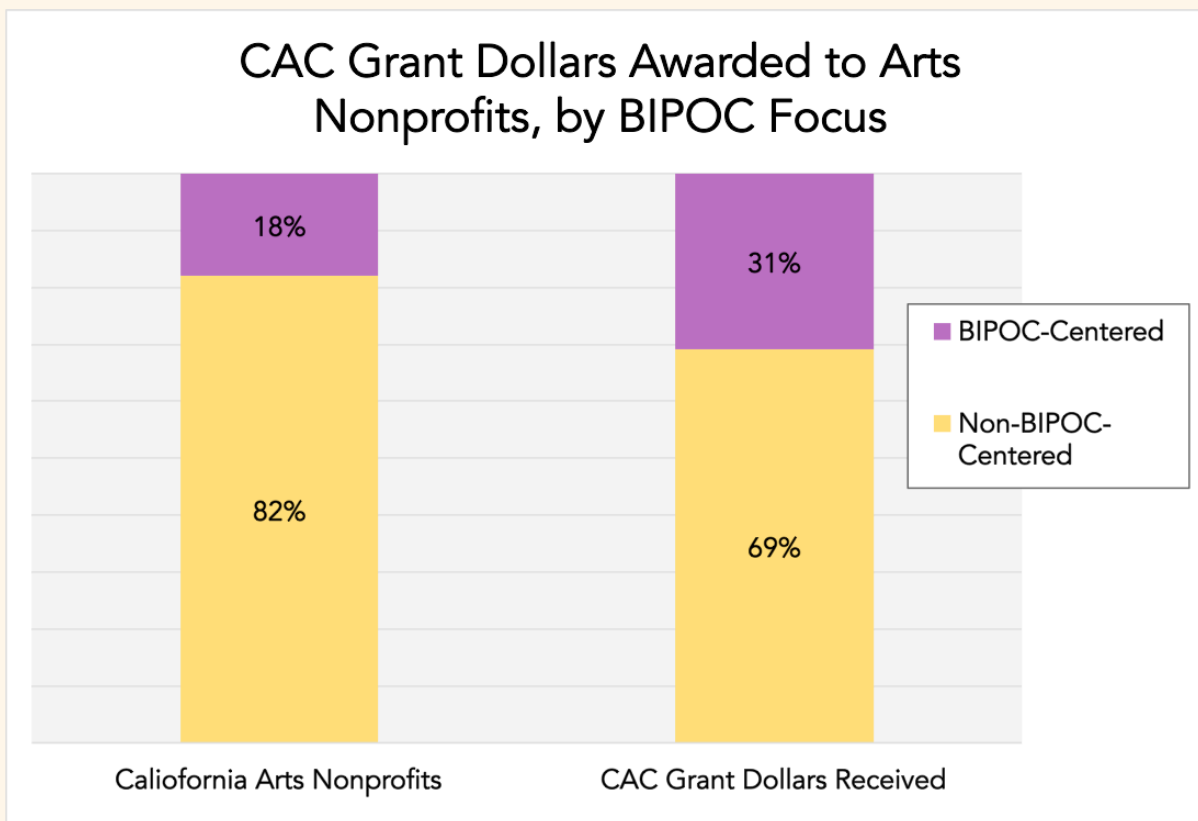


Figure 6: CAC Grant Dollars Awarded to Arts Nonprofits, by BIPOC Focus



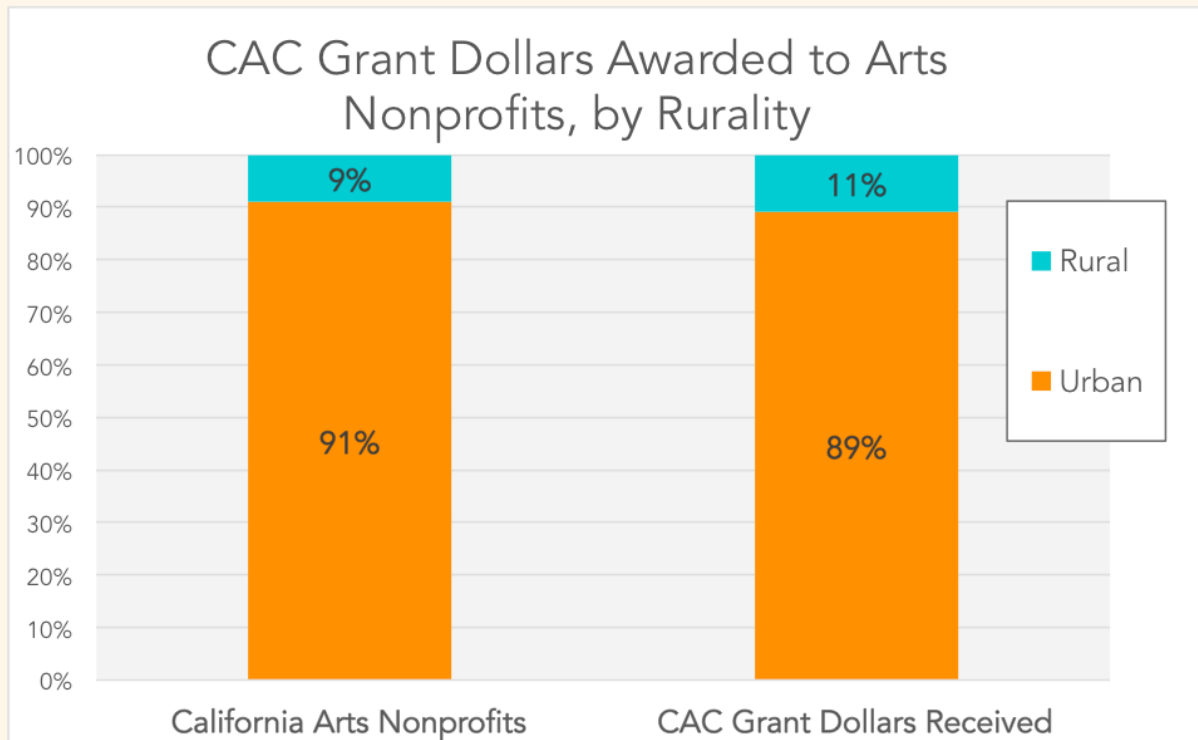


Figure 7: CAC Grant Dollars Awarded to Arts Nonprofits, by Rurality

There are a few mechanisms through which this happens:

1. While BIPOC-centered organizations make up 18% of the arts nonprofits in California, they constitute 26% of the applicants to CAC. That is, BIPOC-centered arts nonprofits are relatively more likely to apply to CAC for funding than their non-BIPOC-centered peers.
2. As Table 5 indicates, BIPOC-centered applicants have higher success rates (i.e., their applications are more likely to be successful) than non-BIPOC-centered applicants.¹³ As a result, 30% of all recipients of CAC grants are BIPOC-centered, whereas those organizations only represent 26% of applicants.
3. The success rate for rural organizations is very similar to that for urban organizations and rural organizations are slightly less likely to apply to CAC than ones in urban areas. In terms of the number of grant recipients, rural organizations are slightly underrepresented. However, on average, successful applicants in rural areas receive larger grants than those in urban areas, so that they receive a slightly higher proportion (11%) of the total grant dollars available.

.....

¹³ It should be noted that grant decisions are not based on race of the applicants or the demographics of the community served.



Success Rates for CAC Grant Applicants, by BIPOC-Focus and Rurality	
% of CAC Applicants BIPOC-Centered	26%
% of CAC Grant Recipients BIPOC-Centered	30%
<i>Success Rate of BIPOC-Centered Applicants</i>	<i>79%</i>
<i>Success Rate of Non-BIPOC-Centered Applicants</i>	<i>64%</i>
% of CAC Applicants in Rural Census Tracts	8%
% of Grant Recipients in Rural Census Tracts	8%
<i>Success Rate of Rural Applicants</i>	<i>70%</i>
<i>Success Rate of Urban Applicants</i>	<i>68%</i>

Table 6: Success Rates of CAC Grant Applicants, by BIPOC-Focus and Rurality

6. Most arts nonprofits in California are very small volunteer-led organizations that aren't supported by grants

There are over 9,000 arts nonprofits in California with annual budgets under \$50,000. Those organizations make up 67% of all arts nonprofits in California. Organizations with gross receipts under \$50,000 can fulfill their reporting requirement to the IRS with an abbreviated 990-N “postcard” that only collects the most basic information about the organization. As a result, there is very little data available about these organizations. The IRS doesn't even track their precise budgets—all that is known is that they fall below \$50,000.

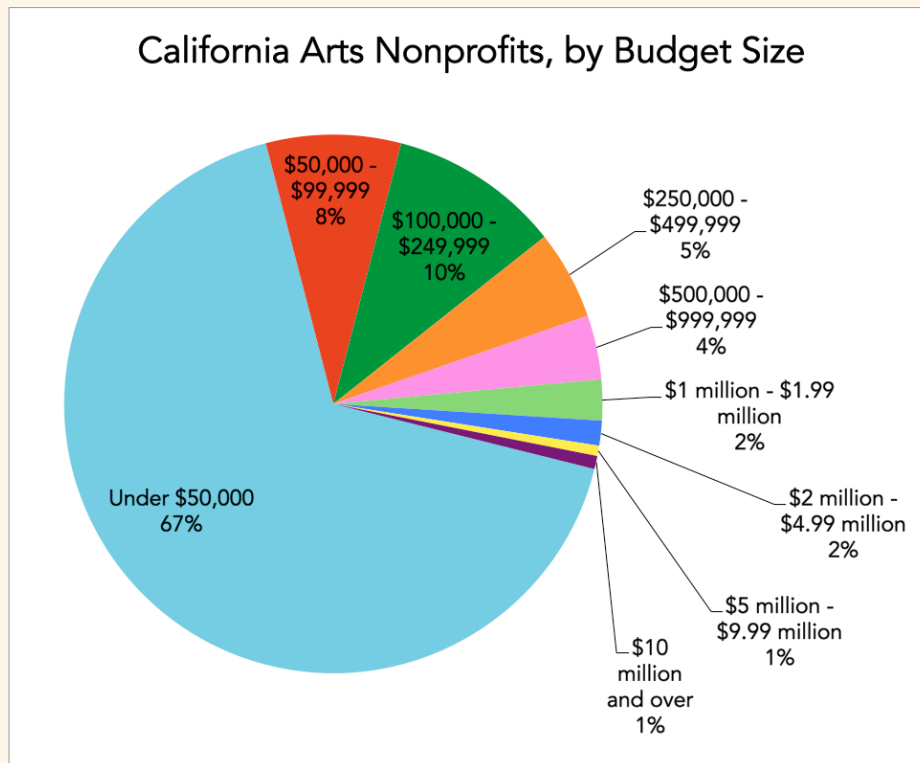


Figure 8: California Arts Nonprofits, by Budget Size



The large number of very small organizations may seem surprising, in part because so little is known about these organizations and they are so seldom discussed; however, their substantial footprint in California’s nonprofit arts ecosystem has been noted in previous research.¹⁴

Given that lack of detailed information about these organizations, it is difficult to know whether they’re active, and, if so, how they operate, and what type of work they do. We can definitively say, however, that of the arts nonprofits with budgets under \$50,000, 92% have no record of receiving any grants from either public or private sources in the dataset that was compiled for this study (drawing on three years of CAC data, one year of Candid data, and three years of DataArts profiles). The small budgets and lack of grant support suggest they’re largely community-supported organizations that are run by volunteers (which is consistent with the qualitative portrayal provided by Kitchener and Markusen).

To better understand how to interpret this large number of very small arts nonprofits in California, NASAA conducted online research on a sample of 60 organizations with budgets under \$50,000.¹⁵ Their review suggests approximately 70% are active organizations. If one were to remove 30% of the organizations with budgets under \$50,000 from the analysis under the assumption that they’re inactive, there would still be 6,466 active arts nonprofits with annual budgets that fall below the IRS filing threshold, representing 58% of all arts nonprofits in California.

Data from the IRS, Candid, and DataArts only includes nonprofits and fiscally sponsored entities; however, as noted under point 2, above, there are many other types of organization that contribute to California’s arts ecosystem, such as small businesses and unincorporated artist collectives and community organizations. While there is no comprehensive statewide data on these organizations, our qualitative research in Fresno, South LA, and Imperial County suggests that many of these likely operate on a scale similar to the smallest nonprofits. That is, in addition to the 9,238 arts nonprofits there are likely thousands more organizations that haven’t incorporated or applied for 501(c)(3) tax exemption.

While the investigation of a small sample nonprofits with budgets below \$50,000 gives us some indication of the activities of small arts organizations in California, focused research would be helpful in understanding this vast number of organizations that largely go unnoticed by arts funders.

14 Ann Markusen, Anne Gadwa, Elisa Barbour, and William Beyers, *California’s Arts and Cultural Ecology*. The James Irvine Foundation, 2011. https://www.irvine.org/wp-content/uploads/CA_Arts_Ecology_2011Sept20.pdf. For a more focused look at small organizations and their importance in the ecosystem that includes qualitative description of some such organizations, see Amy Kitchener and Ann Markusen, “Working with Small Arts Organizations: How and Why It Matters,” in *GIA Reader*, Vol 23, No 2 (Summer 2012) <https://www.giarts.org/article/working-small-arts-organizations>

15 See NASAA’s Technical Report for sampling details.



According to organizations that report the contributions they receive from individual donors to DataArts, individual giving is even more highly skewed, with 73% of all donations going to organizations with annual budgets over \$10 million. Trustees play a particularly important role in sustaining arts nonprofits, and the major institutions clearly have access to the trustees with the deepest pockets. Of all contributions from trustees statewide, 80% go to organizations with budgets over \$10 million.

By contrast, just 6% of CAC’s grants go to organizations in that budget category.

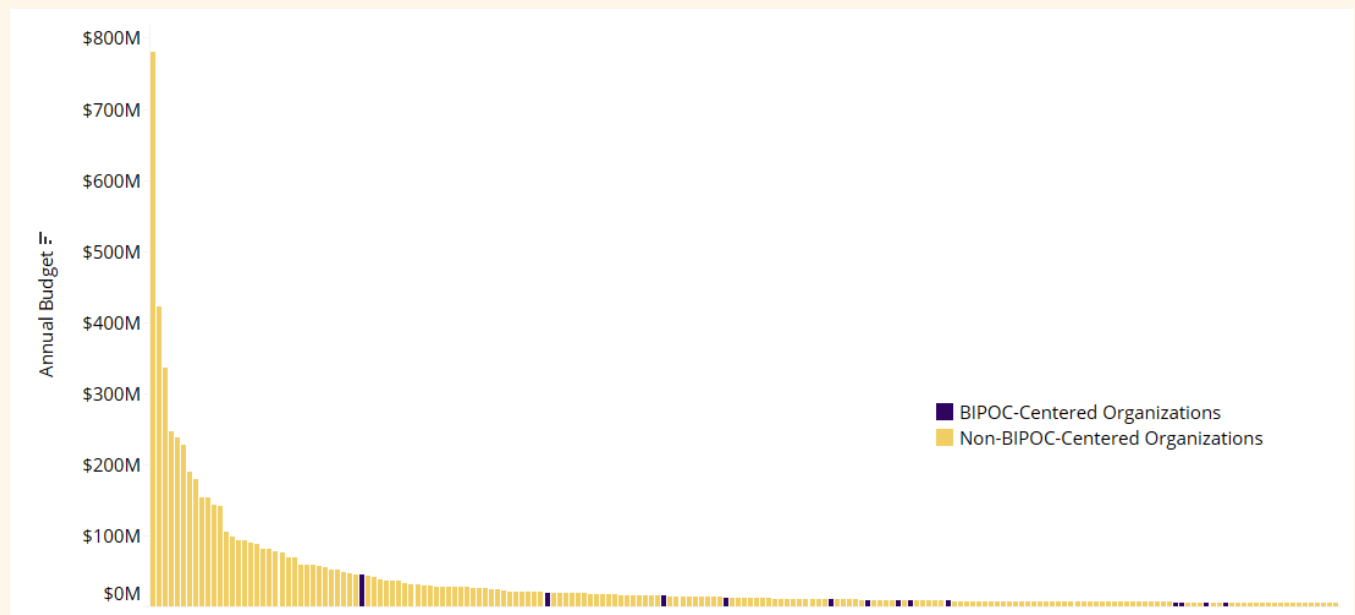


Figure 10: Annual Budgets of Arts Nonprofits with Budgets over \$5 million, by Organization

There is nothing inherently negative about having well-resourced large institutions that serve large numbers of people. However, the concentration of resources within this small number of organizations creates an equity conundrum.

Only 6 of the 108 arts nonprofits with budgets over \$10 million are located in rural census tracts, and just 4 are BIPOC-centered organizations (Figure 10). Given the large attendance figures that major arts institutions seek, it isn’t surprising that most are located in urban population centers and that they position themselves as serving a general audience, rather than specific communities. However, the concentration of resources among these organizations drives a substantial part—though not all—of the inequity in the ecosystem, particularly in terms of BIPOC-centered organizations.



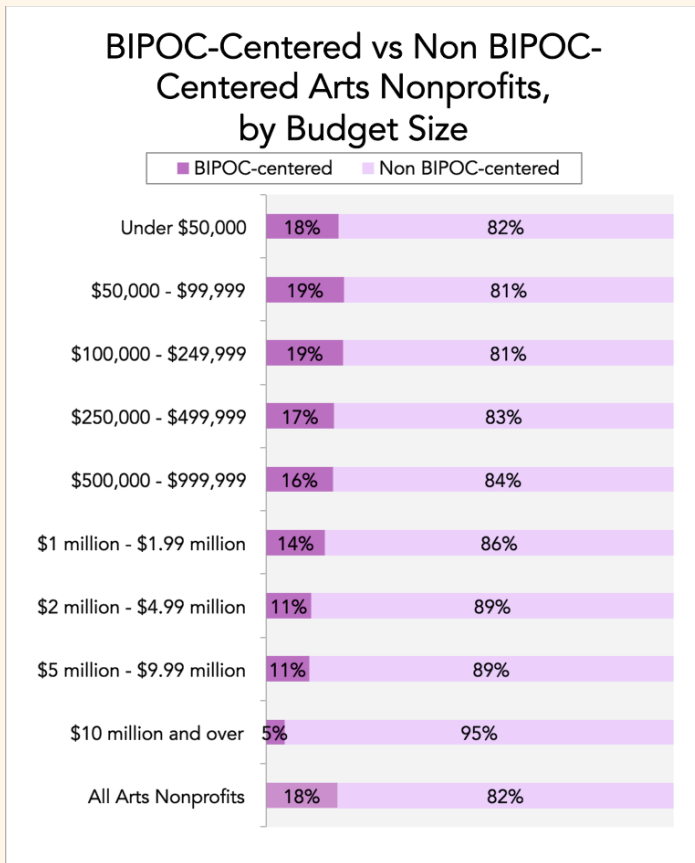


Figure 11a: BIPOC-Centered and Non-BIPOC-Centered Arts Nonprofits, by Budget Size

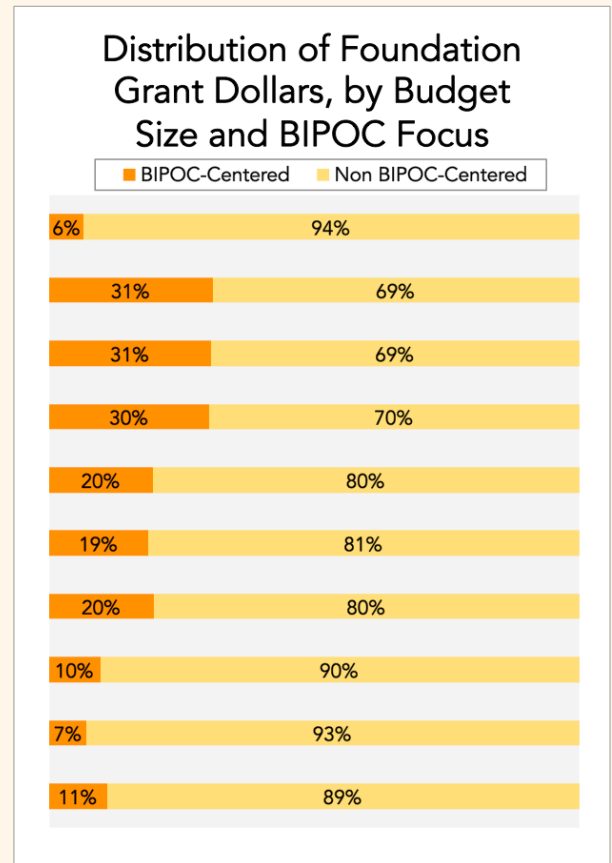


Figure 11b: Distribution of Foundation Grant Dollars, by Budget Size and BIPOC Focus

If we compare the distribution of foundation grants between BIPOC-centered and non-BIPOC-centered organizations broken down by budget size (Figure 11b), we see that it either closely matches or exceeds the proportion of BIPOC-centered organizations in each budget category except organizations with budgets above \$10 million and below \$50,000. The overall inequity in the distribution of foundation grants (BIPOC-centered organizations only receive 11% of foundation dollars, although they represent 18% of all organizations) results from the fact that most foundation grants go to the largest institutions, of which few are BIPOC-centered.

It is unclear what specific biases drive the underinvestment in BIPOC-centered organizations in the smallest budget category.

Another important takeaway from this analysis is that CAC cannot expect to rectify the inequities in the wider ecosystem with the limited resources it is able to distribute through its grants. Private foundations distribute \$670 million in a single year, and (extrapolating from the organizations that file with DataArts) California arts nonprofits may receive more than twice that amount from individual donors. With between half and three-quarters of all private philanthropy (from individuals and foundations) going to the largest institutions, CAC's current budget is much too small to influence the overall distribution of resources through direct grantmaking.



8. Communities require different levels of investment to build relationships and trust

Our qualitative research in three communities across California clearly demonstrated how differently the local arts ecosystems are structured and the varying levels of formal and informal organizational infrastructure that support the arts. In South LA, we found a highly interconnected but informally structured community arts movement in which artists support each other across artistic disciplines and across generations. In Fresno, we found a “network of networks” in which artists are rooted in particular cultural communities. While they may be aware of other local networks and occasionally collaborate with peers in other communities, the support systems don’t function as an integrated whole. In Imperial County, there is very little infrastructure to support artists, and we didn’t find much communication or mutual support among artists (although the latter may be changing).

The differences had a significant impact on the level of effort required to identify potential partners, build relationships, spread information about the study, and recruit interviewees. Some communities have organizations or individuals who function as leaders, and may even have people whose job it is to advocate on behalf of local artists, facilitate communications with the arts community, convene artists, and generally support the arts locally. In those instances, it is relatively easy for researchers like us, or funders like CAC, to develop and maintain relationships with a few key figures and institutions, through whom they’re able to access and stay connected with the whole community. However, where the infrastructure, resources, and/or trust doesn’t exist, it takes a lot of effort and persistence to build the connections that are necessary to support a collaborative relationship.

This is fundamentally an equity issue. Devoting an even amount of time and effort towards serving all communities will not achieve equity. To engage with communities equitably, one must accept the fact that the conditions in the communities vary, including factors such as pre-existing relationships, social structures, geography, cultural norms, language diversity, and socio-economic status. As a result, different levels of dedicated resources and outreach, as well as different cultural competencies are needed to engage with them.

This was clearly demonstrated in two instances in which we, as consultants and researchers, were unable to bring the necessary time, resources, cultural competence, and commitment to long-term partnership to successfully engage with communities we reached out to. We initially planned to conduct qualitative research in four communities across the state and considered engaging with the BIPOC trans community in the San Francisco Bay Area or the Indigenous communities of Humboldt and Del Norte Counties as the fourth research site. Though our experiences in each community were quite different, in both instances the leaders we sought to engage are stretched between their day jobs, artistic work and familial and community responsibilities. We were asking for a considerable time commitment and also asking them to entrust us with telling their stories. As we learned, both communities had previously been part of research studies that did not result in lasting positive changes for their communities,



and therefore questioned the value of investing their scarce time in such exercises. While our interviewees didn't cite CAC specifically in this regard, it is worth mentioning that CAC convened California Native artists from across the state in 2019 to assess the challenges they face and develop plans to better support them, but so far hasn't followed through on the next steps that were identified at the convening.¹⁷

Similar concerns were also voiced by some African American artists we sought to engage in South LA. One distinguished artist—a pillar in South LA's artist community—noted that CAC should hire him to tell its staff what's going on in his community rather than hiring researchers to interview him. In response to the concerns we heard, we explored opportunities for Indigenous artists to self-direct the research design and data collection in their communities, which seems like a step in the right direction.

Yet, after several decades working in the field, largely overlooked by the powers that be, some artists we reached out to expect little to change as a result of our information gathering exercise. One interviewee noted, "When they [CAC] say, we're going to do this study to find out who we're reaching and who we're not, we're all like: 'They know! They know who they get. They know who they're not reaching. They know!'"

Convincing under-resourced arts communities that have no relationship with CAC (and possibly even had negative experiences with grant proposals in the past) to engage with the agency – whether by subscribing to an e-newsletter, attending a meeting, or applying for a grant – requires an entirely different level of investment than engaging portions of the arts ecosystem that already see CAC as a trusted partner and valuable source of support. The difficult work that needs to be done is that of building relationships, trust, and bridges of mutual support, which requires financial resources, time, and commitment.

Through our experiences conducting this field scan we have come to realize that it may be unreasonable to expect communities to participate in research on the vague possibility that their input may lead to improvements for their community at some time in the future. The situation would be fundamentally different if CAC were to allocate resources to aid communities that have historically been underrepresented in its grantmaking in advance, and then approach those communities to seek input on how best to distribute the funds. To build trusting relationships, it's important to approach communities on their own terms (and on their own timeline), with a tangible commitment to better supporting their needs, and then follow through on that commitment.

.....
17 California Arts Council, *California Native Artists Community-Led Meeting: Identifying Challenges, the Role of State Government, and Planning a Future Statewide Convening*, 2019.

Methodology

How does this report identify BIPOC-centered organizations?

Given our objective of examining racial inequities in California’s arts ecosystem, identifying organizations that serve and/or represent BIPOC communities is of vital importance, but it also raises many definitional and methodological questions. Prior research indicates that arts organizations serving or representing BIPOC communities face barriers in accessing philanthropic support,¹⁸ but there are no national or statewide lists of such organizations. While self-identification would be preferable, we developed a methodology to identify organizations that have the primary mission of serving and/or representing BIPOC communities. Of course, many other organizations also serve BIPOC communities, present artists of color and feature diverse forms of cultural expression; but in exploring racial inequities in access to resources, it makes sense to focus on organizations that are most likely to face discrimination and systemic oppression.

Through a systematic review, NASAA built a list of more than 300 unique search terms describing cultural identities, ethnicities and culturally relevant terms to tag in organizations’ names and mission statements. This initial tagging then went through several validity checks and refinements. First, lists of organizations tagged by name were reviewed for accuracy and to refine the search over time. Where mission statements are available in the datasets (within DataArts and California Arts Council data), NASAA reviewed all coding discrepancies between those coded by name and those coded by mission. Additionally, foundation data from Candid and association data from service organizations helped code and verify organizations serving or representing BIPOC communities.

Validation processes also entailed manual checks of 80 randomly sampled organizations coded as BIPOC-centered and 80 that were coded as non-BIPOC-centered. Results of this analysis suggest a coding accuracy between 87% and 92%. While the accuracy rate of the sample is encouraging, there are several limitations to this method:

- This method only identifies organizations whose commitment to serving and/or representing a specific community or cultural practice is explicitly stated in racial, ethnic, or cultural terms. (An organization committed to “serving the population of Boyle

.....

18 Helicon Collaborative, Not Just Money: Equity Issues in Cultural Philanthropy, 2017; SMU/DataArts, The Alchemy of High-Performing Arts Organizations: A Spotlight on Organizations of Color, 2020, p.10: <https://culturaldata.org/pages/the-alchemy-of-high-performing-arts-organizations-a-spotlight-on-organizations-of-color/>; Latino Arts Network, California Cultura: Trends, Funding Challenges, and Opportunities for Latino Arts Organizations in California, 2013, p.2. <http://www.latinoarts.net/wp-content/uploads/LAN-CaliCultura-Rpt-2013.pdf>.



Heights” will not be identified as being BIPOC-Centered, even if the population of Boyle Heights is primarily Latinx, unless terms such as “Latinx/a/o” or “Hispanic” are used its name or mission statement).

- This method is focused on stated organization missions that focus on serving non-White cultural communities or promote a particular culture that is predominantly composed of people of color. It is not able to verify the actual work of organizations in terms of the composition of staff, or the identities of people participating in the services of the organization.
- This method, while useful for research purposes to describe a large number of organizations with reasonable accuracy, should not be used to identify individual organizations for the purposes of funding allocations or anything else. Information about individual organizations should be gathered on a case-by-case basis.

With these caveats in mind, the coding is very useful for describing larger structural inequities that exist across the state.

How does this report define urban and rural areas?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service has developed the Rural-Urban Commuting Area Codes (RUCA) as a detailed and flexible measure for sub-county urban classification.¹⁹ The RUCA system uses U.S. Office of Management and Budget concepts to classify census tract rurality through population, urbanization, and daily commuting rates. The RUCA code system offers a detailed and disaggregate classification at the census tract level from most urban (code 1) to most rural (code 10). For this analysis, RUCA code 1 is classified as urban, and codes 2 through 10 (which, together account for 10% of California’s population) are considered rural. A more detailed discussion of RUCA codes and how they were used in the analysis is available in [NASAA’s Technical Report](#).

Quantitative Analysis

To gain an overview of the extent of the non-commercial arts ecosystem in California and the flows of funding that support it, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies created a unified database of nonprofit arts and culture organizations in California drawing from six unique data source:

- IRS Business Master File, pulled in August 2020
- National Center for Charitable Statistics Core Files, 2017
- DataArts Cultural Data Profiles, 2015-2019

19 <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes/documentation/>



- Candid data files describing all reported foundation grants, 2018
- California Arts Council application and final report data, fiscal years 2018-2020
- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) direct grantees, FY2018-2020

Using these sources, there are three mechanisms through which organizations entered the dataset: either they report to the IRA and have an arts-specific NTEE (“National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities”) code, they submitted a DataArts profile, or they have received an arts grant. While NTEE codes were used to pull arts organizations from the IRS’s Business Master File, organizations with missions outside of the arts were able to enter the dataset if they received an arts grant. These organizations are referred to as “other arts grant recipients” in the analysis. The datasets were matched, merged, and de-duplicated based on Taxpayer Identification Numbers. Demographic data at the census tract level was then added using mapping software.

A fuller description of the research methodology is available in [NASAA’s Technical Report](#).

Qualitative Research

While the quantitative analysis draws on the best available datasets, we know that much of the creative work and cultural meaning-making in California happens outside of the formal nonprofit structures that are captured in the available data bases. To deepen our understanding of the kinds of organizations, artists, networks, and activities that are missing in existing datasets, we conducted primary, qualitative research in three disparate local arts ecosystems: Imperial County, Fresno, and South Los Angeles. By “local arts ecosystems,” we are referring to the web of individuals, organizations, resources, and relationships that, together, allow arts to happen in local communities. We selected the communities based on three criteria:

1. Potential to learn about parts of the arts ecosystem that aren’t captured in quantitative datasets;
2. Potential representativeness of other communities across California;
3. Potential for successful community engagement.

In each community, we recruited local “Connectors,” who served as our primary contacts, and helped us identify and recruit other local artists and community leaders for the study. After an initial round of video conferences and phone interviews, we visited each community for two days to meet all available interviewees in person, experience the settings in which they live and work, and meet with additional artists and culture bearers. A final videoconference was held to share preliminary findings with the community members who contributed to the research in each location and receive feedback. The Connectors remained involved with the project throughout the research, analysis, and writing process, providing deep thought partnership and feedback as the reports progressed, and in some cases contributing their own writing.



A Note on Qualitative Research

The portraits of the arts ecosystems in three communities across California are based on qualitative data collected through interviews, observations, and group conversations. Qualitative research provides an excellent means of capturing the experiences and perspectives of research participants. Since questions are answered in narrative form, researchers can understand the specific context for each respondent's reply, and also observe how respondents make sense of their experiences and what causal inferences they draw. However, one cannot assume that the views gathered through qualitative research proportionately reflect the views and experiences of the community as a whole. Nonetheless, the range of perspectives shared by the diverse group of participants consulted for this Field Scan can shed light on challenges and opportunities in the field.



Appendix I: List of Interviewees

Fresno

- Juan Bejar, Artist
- Mauro Carrera, Artist
- Jamillah Finley, Executive Director, BreakBox Thought Collective
- Rey Guzmán, Rapper, Mixteco Dancer
- Tim Haydock, Chief Development and Communications Officer, Youth Leadership Institute
- Hana Luna Her, Graffiti Artist
- Melissa Knight, Entrepreneur, The Art of Anger
- Ashens Limon, young Artist
- Ome Lopez, OmeDJ, Co-Founder DulceUPFront
- Roberto López, Quinceañera Choreographer
- Ramiro Martínez, Artist
- Deborah McCoy, Hip-Hop Dance Teacher and Entrepreneur
- Jesse Morgan, Graffiti Artist
- Steven Camacho Núñez, Artist
- Leilani Price, Drag Queen, Health Advocate
- Diana Rodríguez, Volunteer, Arte Américas
- Carly Tex, Executive Director, Advocates for California Indigenous Language Survival, Artist & Culture Bearer, Mono People
- Maria Torres, young Artist
- Vicki Trevino, former Folklórico Teacher, Del Rey Community Leader
- Armando Valdez, Executive Director, Community Center for the Arts and Technology
- Yenedit Valencia, Independent Researcher, Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño
- Charlie Vang, Hmong Filmmaker
- Rocky Walker, Artist

Imperial County

- Yvonne Angulo, Founder, Mariachi Aurora de Calexico
- Clark Baker, (formerly) Owner, Clark Baker Music
- Elijah Bañaga, Pastor, The Collective Movement
- Nethaneal Bañaga, Founder and CEO, Without Wax Studios
- Jason Contreras, Drama Teacher, Brawley Union High School
- Roman Flores, Mariachi musician and journalist



- Norma Gerardo, Manager, Calexico Recreation Department
- Queana Givens-Jarvis, Curriculum Coordinator, Imperial County Office of Education
- Leti Guerra, Photographer and Owner, Monarch Iconography Studio
- Anne Irigoyen, Community Leader and Arts Supporter
- Jay Kruger, President and CEO, North County Coalition for the Arts
- Anita Martinez, CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Imperial Valley, and Program Director, Imperial County 4-H
- Kimberly Alfaro Massey, Artist and Co-Owner, Unwind & Design Creative Studio
- Alan Massey, Filmmaker and Co-Owner, Unwind & Design Creative Studio
- Jenn Nelson, Curator, East Jesus
- Eduardo Quintero, Artist and Cultural Arts Assistant, Calexico Recreation Department
- Jacqueline Riddell, CEO/Founder, Best S.T.E.P Forward
- Fernie Romo, Competitive Salsa and Bachata Dancer and ASES Dance Instructor
- Roman Sanchez, Founding Artistic Director, Lime Arts Productions
- Deborah Smerdon, Owner, DS Arts Studio & Gallery
- Maria de Socorro Mendiola, Ballet Folklórico Teacher
- Charlotte Teeters, Executive Director, Imperial County Film Commission

South Los Angeles

- Ben Caldwell, Filmmaker and Founder of KAOS Network
- Melanie Luja, Soul-Work Practitioner, Poet, Author, and CEO of Still Waters Network
- Oshea Luja, Producer, Poet, and Artistic Director of Still Waters Network
- Michael Massenburg, Artist
- Rosalind McGary, Artist and Founder of SEPIA Collective
- Skira Martinez, Artist and Owner of CIELO Galleries/Studios
- David Maruyama, Poet and Professor at Compton College
- Dominique Moody, Artist
- Viva Padilla, Poet, Writer, Editor, and Owner of Re: Arte Centro Literario
- S. Pearl Sharp, Filmmaker, Writer, and Artist
- Hiram Sims, Poet and Founder/Executive Director, Sims Library of Poetry
- Mike Sonksen, Poet, Journalist, and Interdisciplinary Professor at Woodbury University
- Pat Taylor, Choreographer, Founder and Artistic Director of Jazz Antiqua
- Dwight Trible, Singer and Executive Director of The World Stage
- C. Jerome Woods, Cultural Historian, Archivist, and Founder/Director of the Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Project

