

DANCE/NYC AND PARTNERS RELEASE FIRST-EVER COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH ON FISCALLY SPONSORED ARTS WORKFORCE

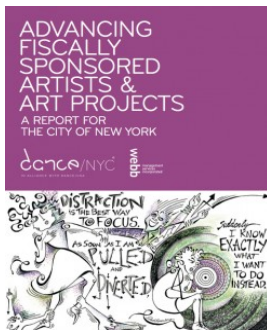
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Dance/NYC and Partners Release First-Ever Comprehensive Research on Fiscally Sponsored Arts Workforce

By Dance/NYC

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New York, NY (For Release April 25, 2017) — The service organization Dance/NYC and a coalition of nine partners today announced the release of [Advancing Fiscally Sponsored Artists & Arts Projects: A Report for the City of New York](#). This is the first-ever comprehensive assessment of the vast segment of New York City-based artists and projects that have entered into an arrangement known as a "fiscal sponsorship" with legally registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit institutions. Under this arrangement, sponsors provide financial and legal oversight and share their tax-exempt status. Made possible with leadership support by The New York Community Trust, the report is a major contribution to ongoing cultural planning by the City of New York ([CreateNYC](#)) and a game changer in advocacy for those making art outside of traditional nonprofit institutions.



"Here in New York City, we know that art and culture makes our city truly great," said Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer. "As we continue to develop the city's first cultural plan, we must bring new ideas and insights to the table, especially from the artists themselves. Making sure that ideas from the arts and culture community are incorporated into the cultural plan is essential for the plan's success. The report released today will add great value to the CreateNYC cultural plan and will help us to fully support the creative class here in the cultural capital of the world."

"Artists are the backbone of New York City's vibrant creative community, and one major challenge we're facing head on in the CreateNYC cultural planning process is how to maintain our city as a place where they can continue to live and work," said NYC Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl. "Thanks to Lane Harwell's team at Dance/NYC and the support of the New York Community Trust, CreateNYC can take into account the findings of this thoughtful report exploring fiscal sponsorship for artists and cultural projects."

"Dance/NYC has joined forces with nine other agencies to understand better the universe of fiscally sponsored artists, including dance groups. The New York Community Trust is pleased to have supported this partnership's research and field scan, which will inform the City's first cultural plan and assure that fiscally sponsored art groups and artists benefit from it," says Kerry McCarthy, Program Director, Thriving Communities, The New York Community Trust

"Focused on the future of New York City's artists and their artistry, this study demonstrates clear and timely opportunities for government innovation in a national climate where the arts are under threat," says Lane Harwell, Executive Director, Dance/NYC. "By committing to strengthen the landscape of fiscally sponsored arts, the City would make a major statement to the world about the importance of the arts to New Yorkers and its role as an arts and cultural capital."

Major Findings

- At 3,100, the estimated minimum number of sponsored projects is three times the number of Department of Cultural Affairs' (DCLA) grantees
- Sponsored projects have small annual budgets, approximately \$24,500 on average
- The sponsored workforce is working both in and across the disciplines of dance, film and electronic media, literary arts, music, theater, and visual arts (2.7 disciplines on average per worker in the study sample) to achieve new creative horizons and impact
- Sponsored artists and arts projects are based in neighborhoods in all five boroughs, especially Manhattan (51%) and Brooklyn (36-37%)
- Nearly all (92%) of the sponsored arts workforce identifies as artists
- 42% of the sponsored workforce reports going unpaid for their labor
- 65% of the workforce studied identifies as female, outpacing the workforce of DCLA grantees and the city's overall population, which is 52% female according to census data
- The percentage of the sponsored workforce that identifies as LGBTQ is substantial at 27%
- 13% of the workforce studied identifies as disabled, exceeding the percentage of New Yorkers (10%) that identifies as disabled, suggesting the growing movement of disability arts may be finding a home in the fiscal sponsorship arena
- With 74% identifying as white non-Hispanic, the workforce does not reflect the racial and ethnic makeup of the city's population, which is 33% white non-Hispanic
- The chief hurdle for sponsored groups is access to funding sources, particularly to foundation and government funding programs that exclude sponsored groups despite their tax-exempt status (While 94% of the sample receives funding from individuals, only 51% receives foundation grants, and only 29% receives government income from any source)
- Total government funding (across sources—City, State, or Federal) disproportionately serves fiscally sponsored artists who identify as white non-Hispanic, nondisabled, and/or male
- The workforce studied ranks living wages as its highest need, followed by affordable presentation space, affordable development space, supplies and materials, affordable health care, affordable living space, and affordable training
- Only a slim percentage, 8%, reports being able to identify and access all of the resources necessary to fulfill their needs

Recommendations

The report offers three specific and practical recommendations for cultural planning to advance fiscally sponsored artists and projects:

- First, it articulates short-, mid-, and long-term goals for increasing the availability of City funds for sponsored work that includes increasing allocations to existing decentralized grant programs through the boroughs arts councils, refreshing those programs, and exploring opportunities for DCLA to provide direct support, which could include making City Council member funds available to sponsored projects in every Council district;
- Second, it recommends bridging identified gaps in access to critical resources, with a focus on growing affordable presentation and

development space and intervening to make connections between sponsored artists and resources that already exist, for instance, by strengthening communications environments and expanding technical assistance.

- Third, it recommends expressly and equitably including fiscally sponsored artists and arts projects in DCLA's ongoing diversity initiatives and relevant research, policies, programs, and funding, as well as developing new, targeted initiatives based on the survey findings, with a focus on increasing ethnic and racial equity.

The study exhorts collaboration with fiscal sponsors and the sponsored arts workforce to effectively develop, implement, and evaluate cultural planning mandates. The City would achieve strong returns on investment by coordinating communications and service delivery through fiscal sponsors and providing sponsors with relevant training, technical assistance, and financial resources to better serve their sponsored artists and arts projects. The process of preparing this report has already mobilized the fiscal sponsor community as a united voice, primed to support the plan's implementation.

About Dance/NYC

Dance/NYC's mission is to promote and encourage the knowledge, appreciation, practice, and performance of dance in the metropolitan New York City area. It embeds core values of equity and inclusion into all aspects of its programs and operations. It works in alliance with Dance/USA, the national organization for professional dance. [Dance.NYC](#)

About CreateNYC

In May 2015, Mayor Bill de Blasio signed legislation requiring the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) to lead creation of New York City's first comprehensive cultural plan, CreateNYC. Public input will be the backbone of CreateNYC, providing a long-term blueprint for the efforts and policies of the City and its partners in expanding access to cultural opportunities for all New Yorkers. The plan will also examine a number of issues crucial for maintaining New York City's cultural vibrancy, including affordable artist workspace; access to arts education; and the role of cultural activities in public space. An initial draft of the plan will be published in spring 2017. More information is available at [CreateNYC.org](#).

Partners

Researcher: Webb Management Services

Lead Research Partner: Fractured Atlas

Research Partners: Brooklyn Arts Council, Center for Traditional Music and Dance, City Lore, The Field, Fractured Atlas, GOH Productions, New York Foundation for the Arts, New York Live Arts, and Pentacle (Foundation for Independent Artists and Unique Projects)

Workforce demographics survey courtesy of DataArts

Funders

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