

NYC DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS RELEASES "CREATENYC ACTION PLAN"

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By NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

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The Action Plan streamlines 90+ recommendations from CreateNYC into five objectives and 25 supporting strategies on a new website, providing greater clarity and transparency

DCLA's \$212 million FY20 budget sets another record for City cultural funding, and continues to invest in CreateNYC recommendations and priorities

New York – Today, the [NYC Department of Cultural Affairs](#) (DCLA) Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl joined with elected and City officials, supporters, and stakeholders from across the city at [Materials for the Arts](#) to mark the second anniversary of [CreateNYC](#), NYC's first-ever comprehensive cultural plan, released in 2017. DCLA's two-year update on the plan, required by legislation, takes the form of the "CreateNYC Action Plan" – a streamlined version of the cultural plan that condenses its 90+ recommendations on topics ranging from affordability to equity and inclusion, public art, and arts education into five overall objectives and 25 supporting strategies. The Action Plan provides greater clarity and transparency about the progress DCLA and its partners have made toward the cultural plan's goals to date, and where there is additional work to be done. As part of the two-year update, Commissioner Finkelpearl also highlighted investments from the agency's \$212 million FY20 budget, which is shaped by the values of CreateNYC and sets another record for City investment in the arts and culture community.

• [Photos from the announcement are available for download here.](#) Photo credit: "Matthew Lapiska / NYCDDC." For names of subjects and captions, email publicaffairs@culture.nyc.gov.

"The cultural plan gave us an unprecedented opportunity to communicate with New Yorkers about how their city has historically supported art and culture, and for them to tell us how we can make things better," said Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl. "Since 2017, we've made major strides in fostering a more equitable, diverse, and vibrant cultural sector that offers broad access to transformative cultural experiences. With the CreateNYC Action Plan, we're putting a new tool in the hands of residents so they can better understand the work we've done to date, and where we're headed next. We're committed to making investments that sustain the progress we've made so far, and continuing to work with our partners toward a cultural community that serves all New Yorkers."

2019 CreateNYC Action Plan: Five Objectives

- Increase equitable funding and support for culture, especially in historically underserved communities
 - Cultivate inclusive practices in the cultural sector
 - Strengthen connections between the cultural sector and government
 - Address the affordability crisis for the cultural community
 - Provide high quality arts education for all New York City public school students
- [Explore the full CreateNYC Action Plan at \[nyc.gov/CreateNYC\]\(http://nyc.gov/CreateNYC\).](#)

With the [release of the 2017 cultural plan](#), DCLA and Mayor de Blasio laid out a set of immediate actions. In the past two years, the City has made substantial progress on these commitments, including:

- Increase support for the cultural life of low-income communities and underrepresented groups: DCLA has increased funding for organizations in underserved neighborhoods, both from [increased direct City support](#) and through new sources, like distributing proceeds from the [Metropolitan Museum's admissions revenue agreement](#)
- Continue to invest in the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG), increasing support for those in low-income communities: Funding for the CIG members – cultural institutions on City-owned property that receive annual subsidies from Cultural Affairs – has increased substantially, with smaller CIG members receiving larger proportional increases. As part of the FY20 budget, the City also announced that Weeksville Heritage Center in Brooklyn would begin the process of entering the CIG, the first organization in a generation to do so.
- Support increased language access for communications and cultural programming to reach broader, more inclusive audience: DCLA provided added funding to organizations offering programming in languages other than English, and it has [launched a new competitive grant program](#) for these services in FY20.
- Increase support for artist grants: DCLA has increased grant funding for artists and emerging nonprofits from under \$1 million in FY15 to nearly \$4 million in FY20 – more than fourfold – as part of its commitment to support artists who live and work in NYC.
- Expand cultural access for people with disabilities and for disability arts: In 2018, DCLA established the [CreateNYC Disability Forward Fund](#), among the first initiatives dedicated to disability access and artistry in the U.S. This program will be on a renewal cycle in FY20. The agency also hired a new staffer dedicated to disability inclusion, and committed new capital funding for accessibility projects at cultural organizations: \$19 million in FY19 alone.
- Expand diversity and inclusion in the cultural workforce: An explicit emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) has been integrated into DCLA's entire budget– from new DEI questions on the agency's Cultural Development Fund grant applications, to the full DEI plans required of the 33 members of the CIG. New and expanded programs – such as the [CUNY Cultural Corps](#) and [CreateNYC Leadership Accelerator](#) – have created pipelines for New Yorkers from all backgrounds into the cultural workforce, and pathways for advancement within it. [New data](#) and a mandate for institutions on City-owned property to adopt DEI plans mark the latest steps in these efforts.

- Work with cultural organizations to achieve the City's sustainability goals: DCLA spends over \$40 million annually to cover energy costs for cultural groups on City property. CreateNYC included recommendations to reduce the environmental impact of cultural institutions and better integrate art and culture into the city's sustainability and equity planning. In response, DCLA committed capital funds to increase energy efficiency at cultural facilities; in FY19 this totaled over \$15.5 million, which has [supported sustainability projects across the city](#). In 2018, DCLA also hired a new Director of Energy and Sustainability to work with cultural organizations to improve energy efficiency.
- Coordinate and promote engagement between the City and New York City's cultural community: One of the first new funding programs to grow out of CreateNYC was the [Mayor's Grant for Cultural Impact](#) (MGCI). The program, which just completed its [second year](#), supports partnerships between cultural organizations and municipal agencies that aim to address a range of pressing civic issues, from public safety to immigration to literacy. Programs like [Public Artists in Residence](#), originally launched in 2015, and the recently created [Civics and Arts Fund](#) also continue to receive support and expand the role of arts and culture in New York's social and civic life.

Ongoing Investments

DCLA's Fiscal Year 2020 budget, which began in July 2019, marks another record City investment in culture – \$212 million – and included ongoing investments in a number of CreateNYC priorities.

- [CreateNYC priorities](#): DCLA's FY20 budget includes funding for a number of CreateNYC priorities, including the CUNY Cultural Corps, the new CreateNYC Language Access Fund, continued support for [CulturePass](#), disability arts and access, diversity efforts, and more. DCLA's capital budget also includes funding for disability access projects, energy sustainability, and new commissions for the city's public monuments collection.
- [Support for Artist Grants](#): DCLA funding for artists grew from under \$1 million in FY15 to \$3 million in FY19. As part of its commitment to keep artists living and working in all five boroughs, DCLA is adding another million in FY20, for a total of \$4 million to support artists and emerging arts groups in NYC.
- [Support for Cultural Organizations](#): DCLA's FY20 budget includes nearly \$15 million in additional funding for the Cultural Development Fund, with \$2.5 million dedicated to organizations located in or serving communities identified by the [Social Impact of the Arts Project](#) as high need areas where investments in culture correlate highly with improved social indicators like education and public health. Another \$10.6 million increase for Cultural Institutions Group Members, with larger proportional increases for smaller institutions and those in underserved areas.

Since 2017, with support from the NYC Mayor's Office, City Council, and the five Borough Presidents, the City of New York has allocated over \$1.1 billion to culture, including both capital and expense funding. CreateNYC shaped how this historic investment has been directed across the city: from millions in new funding for low income communities, to new DEI requirements for cultural institutions receiving City subsidies, the values of CreateNYC have been woven into how New York City supports culture.

"We are thrilled to celebrate the second anniversary of CreateNYC and our collective efforts with the Department of Consumer Affairs to ensure New York City remains the creative capital of the world," said Media and Entertainment Commissioner Anne del Castillo. "Through initiatives like the NYC Women's Fund for Media, Music and Theatre, strategic partnerships with Gala Pro to increase accessibility to theatre and with PEN America to amplify the voices of undocumented students through the DREAMing Out Loud writing program, and the ongoing work of the Office of Nightlife to support a diverse creative nighttime economy, we remain committed to advancing a thriving equitable and inclusive creative economy for New York City."

"I'm proud to have coauthored the law that established New York City's first ever cultural plan, CreateNYC. On its two year anniversary, it's clear that this document hasn't just sat on the shelf, but has actually had tangible impacts on our arts and culture community," said Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer. "CreateNYC has worked to increase diversity, inclusion, and equity in the cultural sector, and expand opportunities in underserved communities and to artists of all backgrounds. The continued implementation of this action plan will help us get closer to guaranteeing our city's world-class arts and culture are accessible to all New Yorkers."

The cultural plan legislation created a [Citizens' Advisory Committee](#) to advise and support the development of the cultural plan.

"CreateNYC fostered an unprecedented level of public dialogue among residents that surfaced many issues around diversity, equity and inclusion that need to be addressed," said CreateNYC Citizens' Advisory Committee Chair Ben Rodriguez-Cubenas. "The work that has resulted has been inspiring, from a renewed commitment to promoting a more diverse cultural workforce, to investing in a greener, more sustainable cultural infrastructure. There is still much that needs to be done to have a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable cultural sector with access to the arts for all citizens of New York, and I applaud DCLA on putting forward the Action Plan to provide greater transparency on how we can get there."

"Staten Island has a thriving artist community and boasts 5 CIGs," noted Borough President James Oddo. "We do our part at Borough Hall to support our cultural organizations but they have a huge responsibility to the community, and in many cases, are the stewards of a lot of property. CreateNYC is an important piece of getting these organizations the funding they need to thrive."

"On behalf of Richmond County, Staten Island Arts is grateful to the NYC Mayor's Office, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, and City Council for its expansion of the FY20 cultural budget. We are particularly excited that it includes an increase of funding for the regrants program. The FY19 budget resulted in a 156% increase in the number of applications received by Staten Island Arts, including a large number of people who, prior to last year, were not familiar with the availability of public funds through the arts councils. The FY20 expansion of funding will ensure the sustainability and growth of cultural activities on Staten Island. Deputy Director Gena Mimoso and I are very excited to see the expanse of new projects that will be funded through the DCLA funding stream," said Staten Island Arts Executive Director Elizabeth Bennett

"We are so pleased that this administration has taken a proactive stance toward increasing equity for artists of color. The Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA), through its re-granting program, which has received increased funding as a result of this initiative, will be able to fund more Bronx artists and art projects at higher levels this year," said Viviana Bianchi, Executive Director, Bronx Council on the Arts

"The 2019 CreateNYC Action Plan released today by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs shows great leadership by Mayor Bill de Blasio and Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl to ensure our city continues to have the world's greatest arts and culture community serving all of NYC," said John Calvelli, chair of the Cultural Institutions Group and Executive Vice President of Public Affairs for the Wildlife Conservation Society. "The 2019 CreateNYC Action Plan bolsters and supports the arts and culture organizations – big and small -- and ensures access to residents and communities in all five boroughs."

"Brooklyn Arts Council is thrilled about the significant increase in funding for our Community Arts Grants program this year," said Charlotte A. Cohen, Executive Director of Brooklyn Arts Council. "This investment from our partners at DCLA helps us to empower even more artists and smaller arts organizations throughout Brooklyn to create their work, ensuring that Brooklyn's artists continue to make our borough the thriving cultural hub that it is."

"The Office of Nightlife is proud to stand with our partners at the Department of Cultural Affairs to work together toward a shared vision of supporting nightlife culture, and preserving and protecting these social spaces across the five boroughs," said Ariel Palitz, Senior Executive Director for the Office of Nightlife at the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment. "We are grateful that the CreateNYC plan prioritizes the contribution that nightlife makes to New York City's economy, culture, and identity."

"As New York grapples with its increasing affordability crisis, we risk losing infrastructure critical to supporting our creative economy and delivering arts programming to all of our communities," said Esther Robinson, Co-Executive Director of ArtBuilt. "As part of the vision laid out in CreateNYC, the de Blasio administration, the Department of Cultural Affairs, and NYCEDC were essential partners in our successful efforts to create 50,000 square feet of affordable art studios, and to deliver place-based arts programming across the five boroughs with our Mobile Studio in the Park/Plaza program. This crucial partnership with the City has helped ArtBuilt fill widening gaps in affordability and access for over 100 artists and arts-businesses, and thousands of New Yorkers living in the city's most economically-challenged neighborhoods."

Diego S. Segalini, Executive Director of Finance and Administration at Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), commented, "LMCC is grateful to the Department of Cultural Affairs, City Council, and the Mayor's Office for continuing to support the arts across our City. This investment is invaluable for local organizations like LMCC supporting and championing artists who are uniting communities, celebrating cultural heritage, experimenting with new forms and ways of thinking and offering hope, joy, and connection to all New Yorkers."

About NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) is dedicated to supporting and strengthening New York City's vibrant cultural life. DCLA works to promote and advocate for quality arts programming and to articulate the contribution made by the cultural community to the City's vitality. The Department represents and serves non-profit cultural organizations involved in the visual, literary, and performing arts; public-oriented science and humanities institutions including zoos, botanical gardens, and historic and preservation societies; and creative artists at all skill levels who live and work within the City's five boroughs. DCLA also provides donated materials for arts programs offered by the public schools and cultural and social service groups, and commissions permanent works of public art at City-funded construction projects throughout the five boroughs. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/culture.

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