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Documenting Civic Engagement: A Plan for the Tucson Pima Arts Council

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Abstract

This 2009 report is the product of SIAP's collaboration with the Tucson Pima Arts Council (TPAC) on a plan to document TPAC's impact on civic engagement in Tucson and Pima County, Arizona. The goal of the project was to develop a plan to enable TPAC to phase in systematic collection and analysis of data on various forms of engagement. The report begins with a review of the policy context in which the project was undertaken, including the findings of the Pima Cultural Plan. The report then discusses a strategy and recommendations for documenting civic engagement and outlines a staged implementation plan. Specifically, Stern and Seifert propose five strategies: improving organizational data gathering, telling stories, documenting artists and the informal cultural sector, identifying institutional networks, and using geographic information systems to integrate data for analysis.

Disciplines

Arts and Humanities | Civic and Community Engagement | Public Policy | Urban Studies and Planning

DOCUMENTING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:

A PLAN FOR THE TUCSON PIMA ARTS COUNCIL

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Introduction

In 2009, the Tucson Pima Arts Council (TPAC) and Mark Stern and Susan Seifert of the University of Pennsylvania agreed to collaborate in an effort to document TPAC's impact on civic engagement in Tucson and Pima County. The project grew out of the Americans for the Arts' Animating Democracy initiative in which both TPAC and the Penn researchers participated.

The goal of the project was to develop a plan through which TPAC could develop a system for collecting and analyzing data on civic engagement. Toward this end, Roberto Bedoya, TPAC executive director, and Leia Maahs, TPAC Community Arts Development Coordinator, had a series of phone conversations with Stern and Seifert between November 2008 and April 2009 about the scope and strategy for the project. In May 2009, Stern traveled to Tucson for a three-day site visit. The Penn team then developed the strategy and implementation plan included in this document.

The report begins with a review of the policy context in which the project was undertaken, including the findings of the Pima Cultural Plan. This is followed by a discussion of the proposed strategy and specific recommendations for documenting civic engagement. Specifically, we propose five strategies: improving organizational data gathering, telling stories, documenting artists and the informal cultural sector, identifying institutional networks, and using geographic information systems to integrate data for analysis. These recommendations provide a state-of-the-art plan for documenting civic engagement and the arts. However, given the fiscal and social realities, in the third section of the report, we outline an implementation plan that would allow for staging these elements depending on the resources available.

I. CONTEXT: Pima Cultural Plan

In 2006-07, TPAC with a broad constituency representing the arts culture heritage and natural conservancy engaged in a City and County wide planning process to define a vision of the arts and culture in the region and to articulate a set of concrete goals for the coming years.

Vision and strategic goals

The plan was based on a vision statement hammered out early in the process. Specifically, the vision statement included the following elements:

- The region will define its authentic identity, grounded in its heritage, natural beauty and cultural plurality.

- Our welcome signs will say, "settled in 2300 BC, the oldest continuously inhabited community in the U.S."

- We will build on our positive assets and work together to make a "good community into a great community."

- Tucson and Pima County will be a place where creative people and organizations prosper, choose to live and contribute significantly to a growing regional creative economy.

- The region will have many gathering places where people can come together to celebrate the rich and diverse cultures.

- There will be strong, diverse and collaborative leadership for the arts and culture, able to articulate their many benefits and values.

- There will be strong public and private support for the many and diverse manifestations of the arts and culture.

Based on this vision, the plan focused on a number of strategic goals. The distinctive identity of Tucson and Pima County, a product of its four thousand years of history and current assets and peoples, should be enhanced through the PLACE (people, land, arts, culture, and engagement) initiative. This concern for place-making was balanced by an interest in growing the creative economy and "enhancing community understanding of its significance to the regional economy." An interest in "assuring adequate natural, heritage and cultural spaces" was complemented by an interest in "maximizing the contribution of pubic art" to the city's and county's civic community. Among the other goals of the plan were an interest in capacity building and business development, arts education, and enhancing government policy to encourage the growth of arts and culture.

Distinctive cultural features of Tucson and Pima County

A number of the elements of the Pima Cultural Plan—the creative economy, building organizational capacity, expanding government support—would likely be part of any cultural plan. Several features, however, speak to the distinctiveness of the region. The importance of history and the natural environment, in particular, stand out in defining the

region's identity. This connects as well to the plan's emphases on place-making, natural heritage, and cultural spaces, and how these influence the definition and role of public art in the region.

Another element of the region's distinctiveness that emerges from the plan is the structure of the cultural sector itself. While the conventional nonprofit sector is important to the region, the roles of individual artists, commercial culture, and informal cultural groups seem to have greater influence in Tucson and Pima County than in other regions of the country. The prominence of immigrant and Native American peoples has accelerated this pattern, as has the "downtown" cultural scene framed by galleries and commercial music venues.

In short, the Pima Cultural Plan, while laying out the breadth of cultural assets in the region, suggests that a study of civic engagement and arts in Tucson and Pima County would need to adopt broader definitions of the arts and culture and of the composition of the cultural sector than are typical.

II. DOCUMENTING TPAC'S IMPACT ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In this section, we take up the task of developing strategies for documenting the relationship of the creative sector to civic engagement. In the next section, we outline an overall strategy for undertaking this task. We then tailor this approach to Tucson and Pima County by focusing on a set of specific data gathering strategies that could be pursued in the region.

OVERVIEW—AN APPROACH TO MEASURING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Over the past decade, members of the creative sector have been increasingly interested in developing methods to document their social and economic impacts. Much of this effort has been directed at the issue of economic impact. The Americans for the Arts, for example, has led the way in developing methods of calculating the economic impact of the arts in major American metropolitan areas and even suggesting that individual organizations are able to identify their economic impact.

While questions about estimating the economic impact of the arts are far from settled, the attention given the issue has far exceeded that devoted to measuring the arts' civic or social impact. In a 2009 monograph, *Civic Engagement and the Arts: Issues of Conceptualization and Measurement*, Stern and Seifert have outlined an approach to this topic and identified a set of challenges.

The initial challenge in developing methods for documenting culture's civic engagement impact is specifying how that influence might occur. Stern and Seifert outline three basic "theories of action" that might connect culture and civic engagement.

Didactic approaches focus on the arts' capacity for persuasion. The capacity of the visual and performing arts to dramatize or shock has been use by many artists and social movements as a means of bringing public attention to particular conditions. Historically, social reformers have believed that the arts could serve a broader civic purpose, for example, in the use of "civic pageants" to forge unity out of the diverse peoples in early 20th century American cities. Of course, the extensive use of propaganda as a means of mass persuasion provides a cautionary tale to those interested in a didactic use of culture. Apparently culture's power to persuade is as strong for lies as it is for truths.

Where the didactic approach to culture and civic engagement focuses on specific outcomes, a second approach—*discursive*—focuses on the process of deliberation. The importance of deliberative democracy and the public sphere have been important topics within the civic engagement literature. The arts and creativity can enter this debate in two ways. First, one could use the arts to dramatize a particular approach to a problem. This approach is similar to the didactic use of the arts, but in this case one does so as part of a dialogue rather than as a single message. Second, the arts can play a role in creating the space within which public discussion can take place. In this case, creativity's capacity for place-making could play an important role.

Finally, an ecological approach to culture and civic engagement focuses on how involvement in the arts can have spillover effects that influence civic outcomes. For example, motivating people to attend a workshop or performance can have the effect of

getting people out of their homes, which may lead to their involvement in other aspects of community life. Indeed, there is a growing body of evidence that cultural engagement generates a range of important spillover effects from improved pubic health to boosted property values.

The theories of action are not necessarily mutually exclusive. An artist who embraces a didactic approach to her art, for example, might fail to persuade her audience of her position but still might provide a space in which the issue gets discussed and debated. In fact, it appears that virtually all cultural engagement, whatever its theory of action, produces spillover effects that influence the environment.

However, if one is concerned with documenting the influence of cultural engagement, these theories of action pose different issues with respect to defining the population that one expects to influence and the nature of that influence. Both didactic and discursive theories are quite specific in defining these issues, while ecological approaches pose much greater challenges. Take a didactic example. An artist is involved in designing puppets as part of a political demonstration. Whatever the practical problems involved, the who and what in this case are straightforward. People observing the demonstration are the "audience" for the art and its effectiveness would be measured by the extent to which the event changes people's attitudes or behavior. The same is true for a discursive example; the who and what are well defined, even though in this case the what is the opportunity to discuss rather than a particular outcome of the discussion.

In contrast to these examples, an ecological approach poses a much greater challenge for measurement and documentation. Because we are dealing with spillover effects, the people influenced go beyond those actually involved in a particular event. For example, one study of Philadelphia found that areas of the city with high levels of cultural participation tended to have lower levels of truancy. In this case, we did not think low truancy was a direct effect of attending cultural events. Rather, we hypothesized that it was an indirect effect of the arts contribution to a higher level of community engagement in the lives of young people, a condition that Earls and Sampson have defined as "collective efficacy."

Given the difficulty in identifying the exact paths that connect cultural engagement and its possible social or civic impact, Stern and Seifert recommended a multi-level approach to the measurement of civic impact. Individual organizations are unlikely to be able either to track their particular ecological impacts or to differentiate their impact from that of other cultural providers in the area. Yet, it is only if we gain a better gauge of organizational participation that we can see how it fits into the broader picture. Therefore, we recommended a three-level approach:

- *Organizational data gathering*. Individual organizations can contribute to understanding the relationship of culture and civic engagement in two ways. First they can develop systems for tracking their own level of engagement. This includes both tracking information on individual participants (including audience members, students, and artists) in their programs and on other organizations and programs in the region with which they maintain relationships (what we call institutional networks). Second, they can develop ways of using qualitative research to document the broader connection of culture and engagement.

- *Regional database development*. Once a system is in place to gather participant, artist, and institutional network data, a regional entity (a funder, government

institutions, or arts council) can develop a means of integrating these data into a unified database. This provides the opportunity to examine the aggregate impact of cultural engagement on region-wide measures of civic engagement. In addition, through the use of a geographic information system (GIS), this approach allows policymakers to link data on cultural engagement to other socio-economic data.

- *Initiative level approaches.* As a middle ground between individual organizations and a regional approach, a focus on particular initiative provides the opportunity to test the relative effectiveness of particular types of interventions. For example, would a program that focuses on relatively low levels of intervention, but serves many youths be more or less effective at influencing levels of youth violence than an approach that provides more services to fewer youths.

This general outline of an approach to documenting the impact of culture on civic engagement provides a blueprint for a specific plan for Tucson and Pima County. Because of the distinctive features of the county and its creative sector, we propose tailoring an approach that focuses on the critical elements of the region's cultural sector and that is cognizant of the resource issues that must inform any implementation of this plan.

We begin by examining how data-gathering could be improved at the organizational level. Without reliable data on cultural participants, artists, and institutional networks, it will be difficult to demonstrate any significant relationships between culture and civic engagement at the regional level. Because of the structure of the Tucson and Pima County cultural sector, we recommend that TPAC pay particular attention to the role of artists and their involvement in the informal sector of the creative economy.

The collection of quantitative data on cultural participants should be complemented by qualitative work. In this respect, TPAC has already made significant strides because of its collaboration with Maribel Alvarez. We recommend that TPAC expand on this work, perhaps through a stronger institutional connection with local educational institutions.

One final note. We have not discussed here an inventory of nonprofit and commercial cultural providers, which was undertaken as part of the cultural planning process. The presentation of these data in the plan was relatively impressionistic. Clearly, replicating this inventory and developing a means of creating a regular profile of cultural providers is an important element of capturing the current structure and evolution of the creative sector of Tucson and Pima County.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TPAC

IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL DATA GATHERING

As we have noted earlier, documenting the civic engagement impact of the arts requires a multi-level approach. TPAC as a regional funder is well placed to facilitate this process. In this section, we outline the types of data it would be desirable to gather and address some of the implementation issues involved in this process.
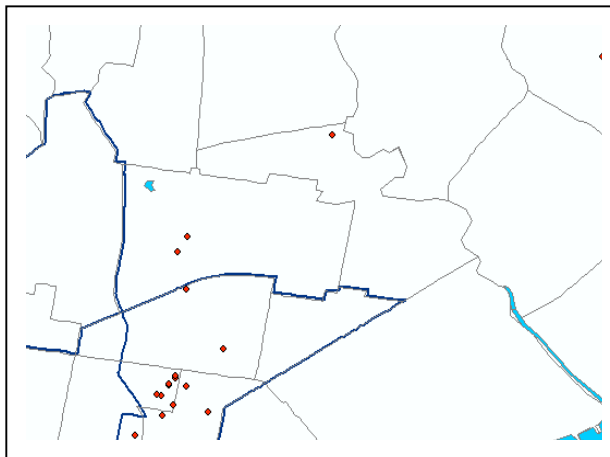
Participant data

The most basic type of data needed to document culture's civic impact is detailed information on who is participating in cultural events. Clearly, the definition of participants is quite elastic. It ranges from season subscribers of major cultural institutions to informal gatherings of musicians or artists. Inevitably, any method for documenting this range of participation will be skewed toward the more established institutions. However, we recommend that TPAC focus on implementing a participant data collection system and then refining it over time.

Much of these data already exists but are scattered and only partially analyzed. Here the challenge is to come up with a system for assembling the data in one place and applying simple analytic tools. Take the example of a simple registration list from summer arts classes:

Last Name	First Name	ADDRESS1	CITY	STATE	ZIPCODE
A	D	XXXX N 5th St	Philadelphia	PA	19133
A	J	XXXX N 3rd St	Philadelphia	PA	19133
C	J	XXXX N 5th St	Philadelphia	PA	19133
C	C	XXXX N Lawrence St	Philadelphia	PA	19133
C	B	XXXX Leithgow St	Philadelphia	PA	19133
D	G	XXXX Gransback St	Philadelphia	PA	19120
D	L	XXXX Gransback St	Philadelphia	PA	19120
D	L	XXXX N Lawrence St	Philadelphia	PA	19133
F	F	XXXX N Marshall St	Philadelphia	PA	19140
F	G	XXXX Brookview Rd.	Philadelphia	PA	19154
G	J	XXXX N Lawrence St	Philadelphia	PA	19133
G	A	XXXX N 3rd st	Philadelphia	PA	19133

Data like these are collected for administrative purposes and entered into a database by most programs. However, through a geographic information system (GIS), these data can be converted into a map of participation.

From a program perspective, a participation map allows administrators to identify where their participants live and perhaps places were they might expect to draw participants. The map can be enhanced by inclusion of data on the social context. For example, a

Puerto Rican arts organization might be interested to compare its program participation with the concentrations of Hispanics within the region, as shown below:
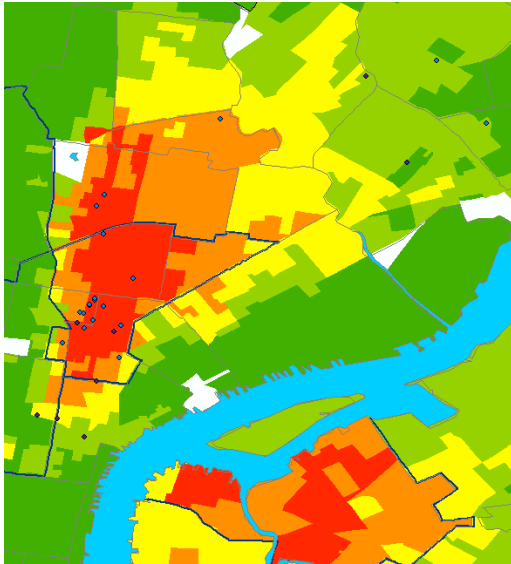
This map, for example, might suggest that the organization is successfully drawing participants from its immediate neighborhood, but could do some work on the other side of the river where there is a significant concentration of Latinos who are not involved in its program.

At the same time that these data have value for individual programs, they can be aggregated to provide a more complete view of regional patterns of participation, as shown below:
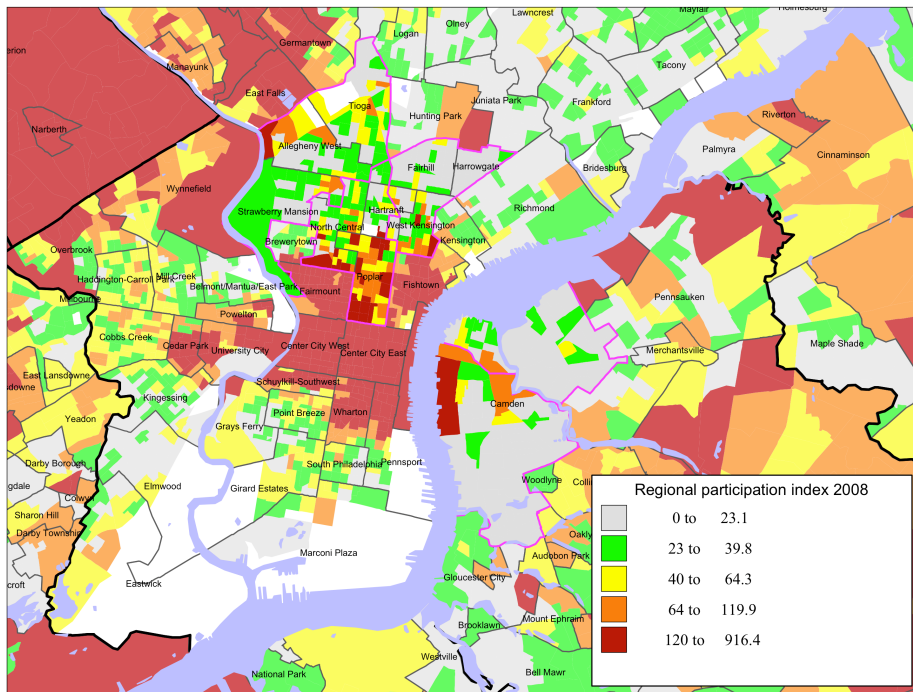
For the most part, established organizations already collect these types of data. For those organizations, what is needed is an incentive to contribute it to a broader regional effort. In Philadelphia, this task has been accomplished through the cultural alliance's *cultural list cooperative* in which more than one hundred organizations contribute data that is then analyzed and shared among the members.

This leaves the challenge of groups who do not collect participant data, for which a carrot and stick approach makes sense. The carrot would be the provision of technical assistance in collecting and analyzing the data. The stick would be requiring groups that receive funding from TPAC to submit program participant database files as part of their grant reports.

We do not wish to minimize the nature of this effort, but to make the point again, most of the data needed to conduct these types of analysis are already being collected. What is needed is a regional agency willing to give priority to making better use of these existing data.

Artists and informal culture

Given the importance of individual artists and informal cultural activities to Tucson's creative sector, getting a better sense of the artist population's economic and social realities is critical. In addition, artists present a key connection to informal cultural activities that are otherwise quite difficult to document.

We recommend that TPAC sponsor a regular survey of regional artists. The recommended model for this survey is Joan Jeffri's study of jazz musicians conducted for the NEA in 2003. Jeffri's study pioneered the use of "respondent driven sampling," a chain referral sampling strategy that uses social networks to access a representative sample of artists.

The survey instrument should be designed cooperatively with a set of stakeholders. In any case, it should request information on the range of projects that respondents undertook in the previous year. In previous studies, artists' surveys have turned up significant numbers of "informal" cultural venues and groups that otherwise are below the radar of most cultural grant-making and research. Taken together, informal arts data can complement the conventional data on nonprofit and commercial cultural providers developed through TPAC inventory. These data also provide a critical understanding of the link between artists and the other community institutions with which they collaborate. The following network diagram, for example, shows a group of approximately 60 artists and the range of organizations with which they collaborate:
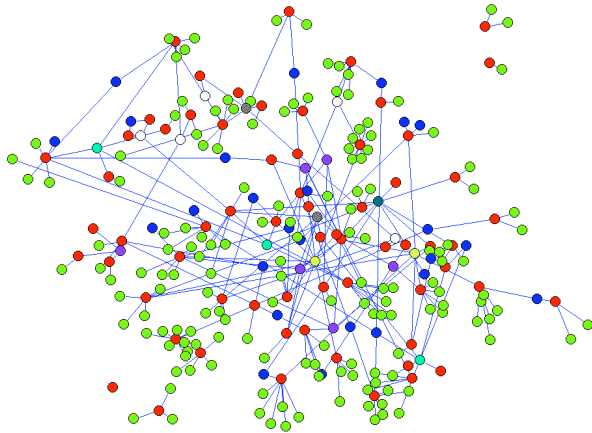
Again, artists' project data serve two purposes. First, they document how artists are reaching out and influencing other social sectors. Second, they provide a baseline that can be used to assess change over time and the effectiveness of efforts to expand culture's civic impact.

Institutional networks

As we have noted, Tucson/Pima's creative sector includes a large number of artist-driven and informal cultural groups. Because these groups do not employ many staff members or possess complex organizations, their ability to succeed is often determined by the networks they develop to work with other members of the community. This strategy is particularly pertinent for measuring their civic impact. Therefore, developing a means of tracking the institutional networks of cultural agents is critical to understanding the role of culture in civic engagement in the region.

This conclusion must be tempered, however, by the difficulty of the task. Like Monsieur Jourdan in Moliere's play, who was shocked to discover that he had been speaking prose his entire life, cultural providers typically do not see "building institutional networks" as a distinct activity, but simply as how they operate. As a result, in order to document these networks, organizations would need system of tracking the on-going flow of contacts they make day-in and day-out. As a result, the data gathering issues involved in documenting institutional networks is challenging.

Below we give an example of the types of data that would be included in an institutional network database. The "unit of analysis" for a network file is a link between two organizations. In this example, we examine links between a community arts program in Philadelphia, and a variety of other organizations. Three types of data are critical to the file. First, we need to know the geography of the link. This begins with the address, which is then geocoded. This allows us to ask questions about the distance between the two "nodes" of the network, and whether they are located in the same neighborhood, whether the social characteristics of the neighborhoods are similar. Second, we need information on the nature of the other institution. In this case, we've displayed only one type of data—its sector—but it would also be possible to include data on its size, mission, population served, etc. Finally, we need information on the nature of the

relationship. In this particular case, we used a scale that ranged from *resource*—a group that is known but not actively engaged—to *colleague*—denoting a very close, long-term relationship, with number of intermediate categories including collaborator, partner, or facilitator. One element not included here would also examine change in the relationship over time and its duration.

| org1name	org2type	org2name	cmbcod2a
Fxxxxxx	Special interest	AIDS Fund (Uniting People from All Walks of Life)	New collaborator
Fxxxxxx	Cultural	American Composers Forum	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Commercial	American Pie	New collaborator
Fxxxxxx	Cultural	American Swedish Historical & Cultural Museum	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Religious	Arch St United Methodist Church	Collaborator
Fxxxxxx	Cultural	Arts & Business Council of Greater Phila (BVA)	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Ethnic	Asian Americans United	Other, unclassified
Fxxxxxx	Cultural	Asian Arts Initiative	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Youth	B & J Child Care Center	New booking
Fxxxxxx	Commercial	Bel Arbor Tree Farm	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Neighborhood	Bella Vista Civic Association	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Neighborhood	Bella Vista Town Watch Inc	Resource
Fxxxxxx	Cultural	Cambodian Court Dance Troupe	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Government	City of Philadelphia, Office of Arts and Culture, Art Commission	Colleague
Fxxxxxx	Government	City of Philadelphia, City Planning Commission	Resource
Fxxxxxx	Government	City of Philadelphia, Office of Arts and Culture, Art in City Hall	New colleague
Fxxxxxx	Government	City of Philadelphia, Dept of Recreation	Other, unclassified
Fxxxxxx	Government	City of Philadelphia, Dept of Recreation, Mural Arts Program	Partner

These data have clear utility for the organization itself. Not only can leaders see how their network changes over time, but because different staff may know about different elements of the network, it allow for more effective intra-organizational information sharing as well.
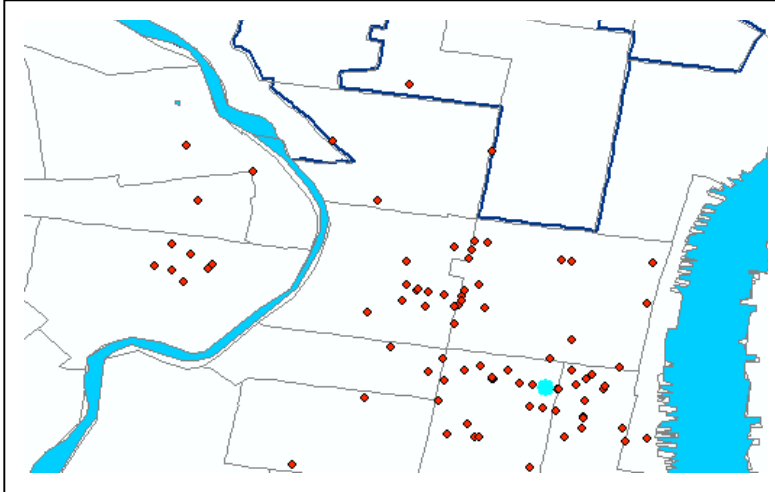
As with the participant data, one can aggregate institutional network data for a number of organizations to identify whether particular neighborhoods have dense or sparse institutional ties within communities or across the region. These data could also be linked to the other cultural and social indicators. For example the following map includes information on the average income of Philadelphia's block groups.
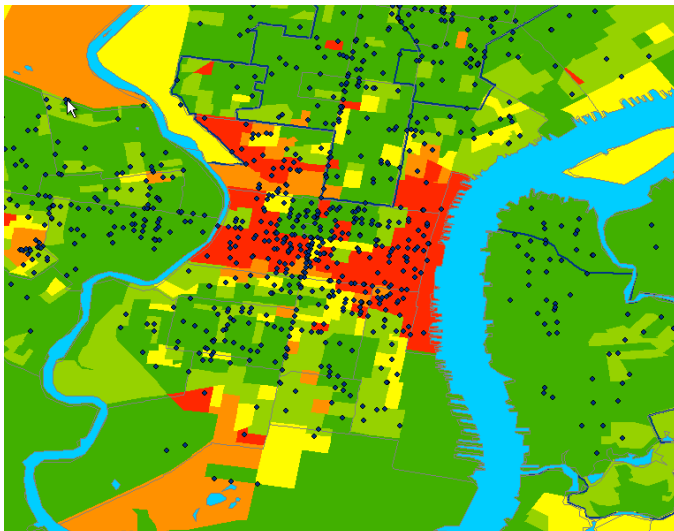
In addition to mapping institutional networks, one can analyze them statistically. For example, for a Philadelphia grant-making initiative, we tracked organizations' institutional networks across three years. As the chart below shows, over time the proportion of more passive links (resource, booking, supporter) declined while the number of more active connections (colleague, partner, collaborator, and facilitator) expanded.
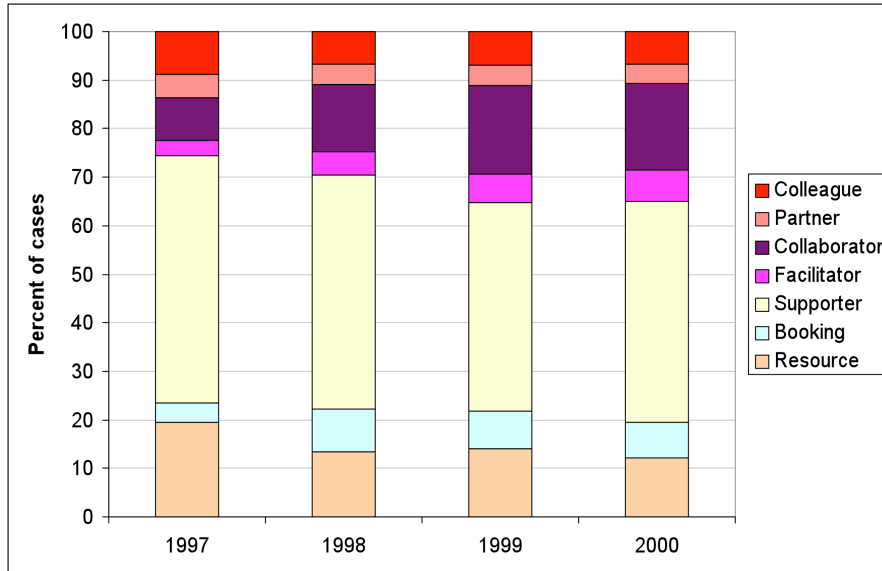
TELLING STORIES

In the previous section, we've outlined several ways that systems for gathering quantitative data could improve TPAC's ability to document civic impact. In this section, we summarize some past experiences using qualitative data gathering strategies to provide a deeper understanding of the processes involved in civic engagement.

Cultural organizations across the U.S. have developed models that use ethnographic methods to engage communities directly with artists and creative processes. Of particular promise are the practices of embedding folklorists, humanities scholars, oral historians, or cultural workers in organizations, on projects, or in community settings.

To date the use of ethnography by arts organizations has been largely for documentation—both as creative process and product—of vulnerable cultures, communities, and places and often with a view toward broader goals of political voice or social inclusion. Such models, however, are applicable to evaluation purposes. They suggest the compatibility of ethnographic practices to community arts settings; the feasibility of technical assistance collaborations as a way to acquire field method expertise; and the potential use of documentation to describe and assess the contribution of arts programs to achieving civic or social goals.

In Animating Democracy's earlier work, for example, an experiment called "Critical Perspectives" tested the use of participant observation to document the processes and outcomes of arts-based civic dialogue. In each of three projects, the director and three unaffiliated people were invited to be participant-observers and write about the work. To varying degrees humanities scholars, ethnographers, sociologists, journalists, critics, and community residents were embedded in this set of arts-based civic dialogue projects. The goal was to generate multiple writings from different perspectives and vantage points that would provide a comparative view of the efficacy of the projects as well as raw documentation of the experiences.

Although qualitative methods alone cannot demonstrate the effectiveness of culture as a civic engagement strategy, the thorough documentation of the "magic" created by the

arts as they occur is the essential starting point for any effort at making a case for their importance.

In this report, we have not focused on the specifics of implementing this approach in Tucson and Pima County because the ongoing collaboration of TPAC and Maribel Alvarez has already undertaken qualitative documentation of the Finding Voice program. If anything, we would encourage TPAC to expand this effort, perhaps by working with Dr. Alvarez in identifying student projects that might allow TPAC to test this approach more fully.

Qualitative research might also provide a place to try out an initiative-level comparison of program designs. For example, the work that Dr. Alvarez has already begun on the Finding Voice program might be complemented by data collection on Voices, Inc., another youth-centered program in the region. Collecting comparable data would allow both programs to better understand the strengths of the different approaches to empowering young people.

GEORGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

A geographic information system provides a means of bringing the disparate elements of the cultural engagement database together. Essentially, GIS would allow TPAC to identify the precise location of all of the elements the database and examine their relationship to one another and to other community indicators. In SIAP'S Philadelphia database, we have used the census block group (a census geography of approximately six city blocks) as our common unit of analysis. Each data base element begins as a set of points on a map (see earlier figures) but is then aggregated to the block group. For example, in the following figure, the points represent the location of nonprofit cultural providers. We then count the number of points within each block group (the smallest area outlined in black). Through this procedure, we are able to bring all data into a common database.
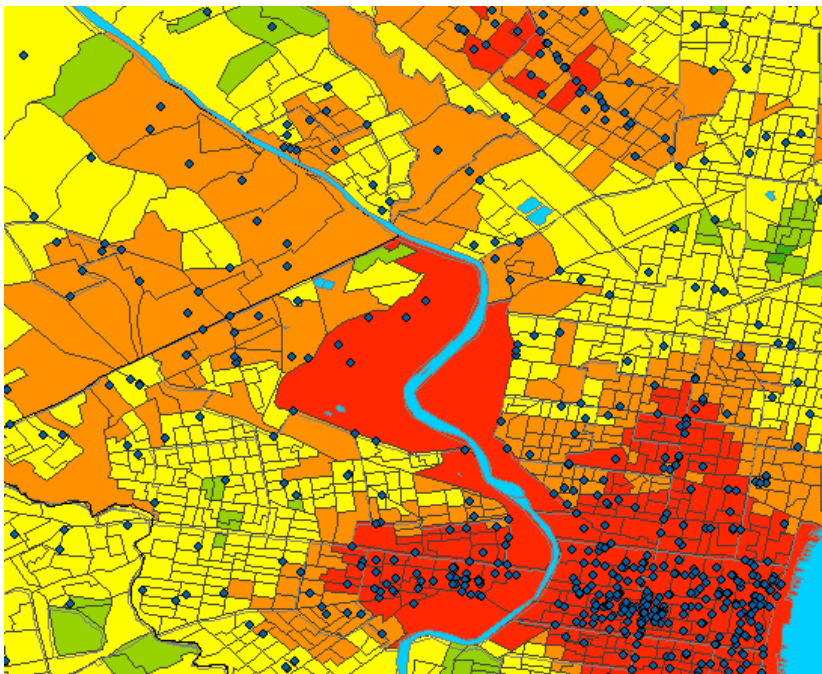
In this example, we have created a dataset in which each line is a block group. Attached to each line is data on the total population of the block group as well as counts of the total cultural participants per 1,000 residents, resident artists, commercial cultural firms, and nonprofit cultural organizations.

	blockgroup_id	total_population	regional_participaton_rate	resident_artists	commercial_cultural_Firms	nonprofit_cultural_organizations	
1	420171001021	1089	78.61	0	12	1	
2	420171001022	1682	134.82	2	20	2	
3	420171001031	1173	58.90	1	15	2	
4	420171001032	1371	55.83	0	17	3	
5	420171001041	1595	71.53	1	11	1	
6	420171001042	2846	19.27	0	6	0	
7	420171001051	766	55.27	0	6	0	
8	420171001052	1079	88.57	0	3	0	
9	420171001053	1471	61.37	0	10	2	
10	420171002011	863	50.70	0	3	1	
11	420171002012	1337	46.63	0	6	1	
12	420171002013	1109	82.15	0	6	2	
13	420171002014	1013	41.04	1	10	1	
14	420171002061	1506	80.73	1	16	1	
15	420171002062	2085	102.88	0	10	0	
16	420171002063	856	80.64	0	13	0	
17	420171002071	1713	76.99	0	13	0	
18	420171002072	2129	29.05	1	13	1	

As this example suggests, GIS is a powerful tool both for representing different dimensions of civic engagement and the arts and for conducting analyses that link these data to other indicators of social conditions. For example, it was precisely this type of database that allowed SIAP to document the relationship between cultural indicators and declines in serious crime in Philadelphia's neighborhoods during the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Annual decline in serious crime rate, by concentration of cultural assets, Philadelphia block groups, 1998-2006
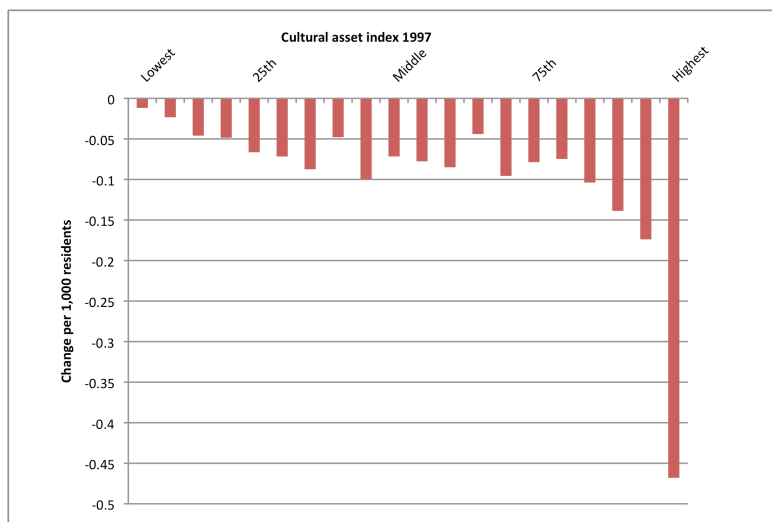
III. IMPLEMENTATION: PUTTING IT TOGETHER

TPAC is well positioned to implement the full range of recommendations made in this plan. All of these methods have been field-tested in other settings and have all been designed to be cost- and time-efficient. Still, implementation would require investments of time, money, and skill by TPAC and by members of the Tucson and Pima County creative community. Therefore, in this section we suggest a strategy for implementing these approaches over time. Obviously, the pace and comprehensiveness of the plan would be influenced by the availability of funding.

DEVELOPING DATA AND ANALYSIS PARTNERSHIPS

The foundation for the success of a plan to document culture's civic impact is a set of durable partnerships with cultural providers and data analysts. As with any partnership, these should be based on mutual advantage and reciprocity. We believe that there is a basis for moving ahead with these as a first step for implementing this plan.

Data partnerships

Most of the quantitative data approaches outlined in this report have value for both individual organizations and for the region as a whole. This dual value is the basis for implementing a set of data partnerships. In essence, TPAC (and its analysis partners) could offer to exchange a set of analytical services for access to individual organizations' data.

Take an example. Many organizations are already collecting the participation data discussed above but are likely making relatively little use of them. In exchange for gaining access to these data, TPAC and its analysis partners would be able to offer regular data analyses that would allow the organization to see where it is drawing audiences, what their profile is, and how they change over time. These data would be of utility to the organization for immediate marketing purposes as well as for explaining its current program and its future plans to funders. By offering these services, TPAC would gain access to a store of data that would allow it to document the civic impact of the entire sector and to assess its success at engaging all elements of the Tucson and Pima County cultural ecosystem.

Analysis partnerships

Currently, TPAC does not have the analytic capacity to undertake this study alone. Specifically, the plan would require TPAC to acquire skills in data collection and cleaning, geographic information systems, statistical analysis, and marketing. While it is possible to imagine acquiring these skills through hiring or contracting, a more cost effective method would be to identify partners who possess these skills and who have an interest in conducting the types of analysis outlined.

SIAP has developed a variety of partnerships with cultural organizations through the years. In essence, we have provided these skills—for example to prepare individual participation profiles for our data partners—in exchange for using their data for our studies. We feel confident that there are possible partners in the region that TPAC could identify and contact.

One starting point might be to explore opportunities with the University of Arizona. First, TPAC already has a relationship with the University's Southwest Center as part of its

qualitative data gathering. It would be worth exploring possibilities for expanding this cooperation, perhaps by having instructors develop student projects that could collect data on a variety of programs in the region. In addition, the Southwest Center might be able to provide introductions to other units within the university that would provide other skills needed to implement this plan.

While TPAC currently has relatively limited connections with other units of the University, our meetings with cultural providers suggest that there are a variety of opportunities in the University's applied social sciences and professional schools. In addition, the University seems to possess significant GIS capacity, albeit in the natural sciences and archeology departments.

The bottom line here is that the technical aspects of this documentation plan would be much less challenging if they were integrated with durable partnerships with cultural providers and data analysts.

AUDIENCE DATA

We suspect that much of the participant data required to implement this element of the plan is already being gathered, but is used only by the organization collecting it. The first step in implementing the plan would be to conduct an inventory of cultural providers to assess how much of their participation they are currently tracking internally.

Based on past experience, we suspect that this inventory would identify three clusters of organizations. Many larger organizations are already tracking subscribers, members, registrants, and audience participants and probably are analyzing these data somewhat for marketing purposes. Many smaller providers probably are doing a poor job of tracking who is involved in their program. Likely, in between is a cluster of middle-sized organizations that are collecting data but don't have the resources to adequately analyze them.

Each of these three situations requires a different response. The larger organizations would bear relatively little cost in sharing their data with TPAC, while the smaller groups would need significant technical assistance in implementing data gathering strategies. The groups in the middle may be the most amenable to partnerships in that they may already be gathering data but could use some targeted assistance in making the data more useful to them for organizational decision-making.

Once TPAC has inventoried cultural providers, the best strategy would be to start with the groups that both have data and are interested in partnering and to build out from this core. Our experience in Philadelphia suggests that as one demonstrates the usefulness of these analysis methods to organizations that it becomes progressively easier to enlist their cooperation. Viewing the first several years as a *pilot* study in which TAPC worked with a set of motivated organizations would allow TPAC to work out any kinks in the system before more organizations joined the system.

ARTISTS' DATA

The survey of artists would be perhaps the most straightforward and affordable element of the plan to implement. There are a number of good prototypes for the survey instrument. The largest cost would be a set of payments to respondents that are part of the respondent-driven sampling protocol. When SIAP conducted a similar survey in

Philadelphia, two student workers were able to administer the questionnaire by telephone, track and schedule respondents, and enter the responses into a database.

INSTITUTIONAL NETWORK

The institutional network analysis would be the most expensive and difficult element of the quantitative data plan to implement. It would require significant staff time to establish a system for organizations to track their contacts and frequent updates. While there are some possibilities for automating parts of the process, these have not been field-tested and would take time to pilot.

Therefore, we recommend that this element be implemented after the artists' survey and participant data collection systems.

TELLING STORIES

As noted earlier, we defer to Dr. Alvarez in planning and implementing the qualitative data of the research. We do suggest, however, that student workers could be used to expand the scale of qualitative data gathering. This might also be an incentive to engage an educational institution in supporting the work.

SIAP's ROLE

The University of Pennsylvania's Social Impact of the Arts Project is committed to working with TPAC in identifying funding for the project. We see two possible strategies for raising funding. A local strategy would focus on regional funders who would have an interest in improving the effectiveness of local cultural organizations' civic engagement. A national strategy would focus on the innovative elements of this plan as a demonstration project and focus on those elements that might be adopted more widely by cultural organizations interested in making the case for their importance to civic engagement.

SIAP would be willing, as well, to provide technical assistance to TPAC as it moves forward with its plan. As a practical matter, it's unlikely that SIAP could serve as the primary agent in implementing these recommendations because of issues of distance and cost.

We have enjoyed working with TPAC staff on this groundbreaking project. We look forward to our continued association with TPAC as the project moves forward.

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Judith Anderson: *CEO Every Voice In Action Foundation*

Stephanie Balzar: *Executive Director, Voices Community Stories Past and Present Inc.*

Kimi Eisele: *Artist, Educator, Writer, Dancer*

Karen Falkenstrom: *Artist, Founder Odaiko Sonora*

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