Research on
Arts as a Community Development Lever for Well-Being Among Communities of Color

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

LETTERS OF INTEREST DUE: January 23, 2023
PROPOSALS DUE: April 10, 2023

ArtsResearch@wallacefoundation.org

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Many social service/community development organizations focused on serving communities of color work with artists and the arts to advance the interests and well-being of the communities they serve. This work can encompass a wide array of issues, from community health to economic development to civic engagement to creative place-making, place-keeping and others (ArtPlace America, 2020; Engh et al., 2021). Such efforts have received increased attention by policymakers, public health scholars, and philanthropists over the past two decades (e.g., Cornett et al., 2019; Hech, et al., 2014; Jackson, 2021; Poulin, 2020), a time that has also been marked by increasing gentrification, wealth and health disparities and social polarization.

"Community cultural development" has been defined as "arts-centered activity that contributes to the sustained advancement of human dignity, health, and/or productivity within a community" (Cleveland, 2011, p. 4). Artists can play a wide variety of roles in community cultural development efforts, including creating artwork, facilitating community meetings and events, and conducting research projects with community groups, among others. The most powerful community cultural development efforts engage artists and the arts as full partners and participants, avoid limiting the role of the arts to an instrumental one, and center community voice by lifting up the perspectives, ideas, and goals of community members themselves (Meade & Shaw, 2021; Rubin et al., 2021; Zitcer, 2018).

For this RFP, we define *community cultural development* as an approach that community-engaged social service/community development organizations take to advance the well-being of their communities by leveraging the arts and the involvement of artists and arts organizations (Goldbard, 2006). This request for research proposals is designed for research partnerships between (1) community-engaged researchers and (2) non-profit community development/social service organizations or networks that:

- Have been founded by, with, and for communities of color in the United States and Territories,
   and
- Have a core mission or a significant history of working with artists and the arts to advance the interests and well-being of the communities they serve,
   and
- Have a demonstrated track-record of centering community voice in community development efforts.

As a part of The Wallace Foundation's five-year initiative intended to support arts organizations rooted in communities of color as they explore strategies to advance their well-being, the foundation invites researchers partnering with non-profit community development organizations meeting the criteria above to propose <u>research projects</u> that answer important questions related to their work and the communities of color that they serve. This is not an RFP for community development projects, but for <u>studies</u> of how the arts can be an intrinsic part of community development projects among communities of color that center community voice.

Research studies can range in size from $125,000 to $500,000, and one to three years, with the budget aligned to the scope of activity and potential impact of the study.

2.0 ABOUT THE WALLACE FOUNDATION

Based in New York City, The Wallace Foundation is the philanthropic legacy of DeWitt and Lila Wallace, founders of the Reader's Digest. Wallace is one of the nation's 60 largest independent, charitable foundations. We are a national foundation, supporting work across the United States without a focus on any one community or region.

The mission of The Wallace Foundation is to foster equity and improvements in learning and enrichment for young people, and in the arts for everyone. We view equity as embedding fairness in the formal and informal systems, structures, and practices of our society, giving all people the opportunities and supports necessary to reach their full potential as human beings. We recognize the historical and structural inequities that philanthropy both represents and can, if care is not taken, perpetuate. We have, as a foundation, embarked on a process of deeply examining our internal and external practices, and underlying assumptions and belief systems, as a part of our organizational developmental journey to more deeply center equity in our work.

The Wallace Foundation takes an unusual approach for a private foundation. Most of our work is carried out through large-scale, multi-year initiatives designed to accomplish dual goals. The first is to support our grantees (such as arts organizations) to create value for those they serve by developing and strengthening their work at the local level. Our second goal is to add value to the field as a whole by designing initiatives that address important unanswered policy and practice questions, commissioning researchers to document and analyze what is learned by Wallace grantees as they participate in the initiative, and then sharing these findings with practitioners, policymakers and influencers in order to catalyze improvements more broadly. In this way, we aim to use the development of research-based insights and evidence as a lever to enrich and enhance institutions beyond those we fund directly.

Our three focus areas are the arts, K-12 education leadership, and child and youth development. We conceptualize our initiatives as learning collaborations among the grantee organizations, researchers, technical assistance providers, and Wallace staff who together explore questions with implications for practice, policy, and research. Wallace staff, with experience and expertise in program, communications, and research, work collaboratively on all aspects of the initiative. In this sense Wallace is an "engaged foundation" that seeks to learn alongside its grantees, about the issues that matter in the fields it funds, so that it can make impactful investments in the future.

3.0 THE ARTS AT WALLACE

The Wallace Foundation has a long history of supporting arts organizations. Over the past 25 years, the Foundation has made grants totaling approximately $335 million to more than 700 programs in the arts with an emphasis on building audiences, increasing accessibility, and strengthening community partnerships. In the 1990s and 2000s several initiatives supported arts organizations, community organizations, and artists to form partnerships and design new ways for arts organizations to engage with their communities and for communities to interface with the arts.

Over time, this work evolved to focus on strategies for audience engagement. Most recently, the 2015-2019 *Building Audiences for Sustainability* initiative focused on exploring approaches to reaching new audiences in ways that contributed to financial health. For many, this included expanding their programming and associated marketing to reach demographics (age, race, ethnicity) underrepresented in their current audiences. While summative research on this important work is not yet complete, practical lessons learned include the need to develop more nuanced understandings of target audiences and to more deeply understand the connection between organizational well-being and its relationship with its community.

Indeed, a study commissioned by Wallace found that financially high-performing organizations in the SMU DataArts database called out high quality programming standards, effective management practices, and a community orientation as the cornerstones of their success (Voss & Voss, 2020). In a follow-up study, interviews with organizational leaders of the highest performing arts organizations of color in the database found that these leaders emphasized the importance of a community orientation even more strongly, describing how community was built into their founding missions and was inseparable from their artistic programming standards of excellence (Voss & Voss, 2021). The Wallace Foundation's current $100 million, five-year arts initiative focusing on the arts ecosystem of color (including arts organizations of color, arts service organizations and networks of color, researchers, and other community organizations invested in the arts as a mechanism for community well-being and artistic excellence) is intended to build on prior work, delving deeper into the particular contexts in which arts organizations of color and their service organizations operate and serve their communities. You can read about the initiative and the relevant research studies we have commissioned here.

4.0 COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE ARTS
Wallace expects to fund between three and six research studies.

Community development/social service organizations that meet the criteria described at the beginning of this RFP are asked to partner with a researcher with relevant content expertise and a history of publishing in subject matter and methods relevant to the questions the community development organization seeks to answer. Proposals may be submitted by either the community development organization or the research partner. Submitted proposals, and accompanying budgets, should reflect a highly collaborative relationship between the community development organization and the research partner throughout the research process, from the development of the research questions to the dissemination of findings. Proposals should describe how the partners envision working together as they take community cultural development approaches to their work. The role of the artists/arts organizations and the community members themselves should also be clear.

Proposed projects should be research studies and not evaluation studies. By "research studies" we mean studies that can advance both theory and practice, and whose results can be informative and/or portable to other settings and organizations. They should shed light on questions that matter to, and also beyond, the immediate submitting organization or community involved in the proposed study.

Please note that this RFP is not designed for youth-focused efforts, but rather for community-wide efforts, which may include youth. A separate program at Wallace will have research calls in the future.

4.1 Study Purpose
The purpose of this call is to advance insights and understanding, through research, about how the use of community cultural development strategies—that center community voice and avoid instrumentalizing the arts—can advance the goals of the partnering organizations and the well-being of the communities of color that they serve.

The study's rationale should include why the particular research question is important to the proposing community development organization, the research partner, the arts community, and the community of

color served by the organization. It should describe how the resulting research evidence will inform the team's work, benefit their members or communities, and advance the knowledge base about the wider field of arts organizations and service organizations founded by, for, and with communities of color.

The importance of the questions being asked (to the participating organizations and to the field at large) and the strength and detail of the research design will be the most important proposal review criteria. We strongly recommend that the research partner play a central role in developing and describing the proposal's research elements, even if the community organization is the lead submitting organization.

4.3 Deliverables
Grant proposals should describe the deliverables the research project will produce, the intended users of the deliverables, and how they anticipate results being used. We encourage you to include research briefs or tools or other products that are designed for non-technical users. We also require the inclusion of a publication for peer-review journals, as a part of our overall intent to expand the literature and academic and policy discussions about the arts.

Deliverables described in your proposal should include, at a minimum:

- Deliverables your research will produce for your organization and/or community.
- A public facing research brief and/or report that describes results for the broader field, which Wallace will plan to post on its website and work with you to disseminate it widely. (This could be different or the same as the deliverable for your local organization and community.)
- A paper submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

4.4 Research and Equity
Wallace views equity as embedding fairness in the formal and informal systems, structures, and practices of our society, giving all people the opportunities and supports necessary to reach their full potential as human beings. The principles that guide us in our equity journey include:

- Our work foregrounds racial equity but is not limited to it. We are concerned with the marginalization of people based on any element of their identity.
- We believe achieving equity requires constructively addressing historical, structural, and systemic causes of racial and other forms of inequity and why they exist.
- Specific definitions of equity will vary from one context to another. As a funder, we are careful to avoid imposing a single definition on grantees.

Wallace is also committed to supporting research that is designed and conducted with and for equity. To inform strategies for change, research proposals should use strength-based approaches and be designed to shed light on structures, systems, processes, or practices that produce or reproduce inequities or overcome them. Research itself should be equity-centered—including partnerships, processes, and methods that center the voices and perspectives of communities that would stand to use or benefit from the research. Research teams should include principal investigators and other senior intellectual contributors with relevant lived experiences. Theoretical frameworks should be informed by a recognition of systemic forms of exclusion or marginalization. Research methods, from data collection to analysis, should clearly articulate how the use of such frameworks will lead to new insights and understanding at both a practical and conceptual level, what the limitations of the methods are, and how they can support the development of strength-based change strategies. Incentives should be provided for all research participants.

5.0 COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION
All Wallace Foundation-funded initiatives have extensive collaboration, communication, and dissemination activities. Please review this section carefully so that you are aware of expectations related to the award and can appropriately budget for these requirements.

5.1 Meetings, Travel, and Research Updates
Proposers should budget time and effort for the following activities:

- **Meetings**
    - A monthly one-hour virtual meeting with your Wallace Research Officer.
    - Annual cohort meeting, meant for funded research teams to share and exchange emerging insights, challenges, and ideas in the research. We will work with teams to determine timing, location, and content/design of the meeting. Please include funds to fly at least two of your team to NYC to attend this meeting, although we will conduct it virtually if needed.
    - For each public research deliverable you propose, two 60-minute virtual meetings, one with Wallace staff to preview findings and one with relevant professional audiences to discuss results.

- **Travel**. You are responsible for budgeting all travel costs for your team—including meetings at Wallace, learning communities, and all data collection activities.

- **Project Updates.** Proposers should budget time each year for developing and submitting the following updates to Wallace:
    - A short monthly email update listing (in bullet form) research activities of the prior month, plans for the following month, and any challenges or changes that have arisen.
    - Semi-annual < 4-page analytic memos describing emerging findings.

5.2 Publications
Wallace undertakes extensive communications efforts to share lessons from its initiatives, both on its own and with the organizations with which it partners. In 2021, research reports on arts organizations were downloaded nearly 34,000 times from the Foundation's website.

In Section 4.3 above we describe a minimum of three deliverables. This section specifically addresses the public-facing research brief or report.

Public-Facing Dissemination Materials. Generating and disseminating knowledge that can benefit the field more broadly is a crucial aspect of the Foundation's philanthropic strategy. Public-facing dissemination materials (e.g. reports, research briefs, infographics, toolkits, videos, podcasts, etc.) commissioned as part of the project described in this RFP will serve as the core of the Foundation's communications about this aspect of the arts initiative. Wallace expects that your publication's contents will not only be rigorously researched but also written or presented in an accessible tone and manner appropriate to a target audience of practitioners, policymakers, funders, and other non-academics interested in the arts. We also request that you maintain the confidentiality and privacy of individuals and organizations participating in the research, as agreed upon between you and the research participants.

Wallace anticipates that grantees may produce multiple types of dissemination materials, certain of which may be more appropriate for specific audiences, and does not expect or commit to posting all of these materials on its website. However, we ask that each study produces one public-facing report that details questions, methods, and findings for practitioner (organizational leaders) audiences. To ensure that reports reach the widest possible audience, we ask you to build in budget and time to submit the report to Wallace's established editorial review process. Wallace editorial review criteria relate to clarity, claims being supported by evidence, organization of argument, and non-partisanship. This approximately twelve-week editorial review process will produce, for your consideration, comments and suggestions aligned to the four criteria. We request that you include time and budget for working with a Wallace writer to produce a two-page derivative research brief for the report.

Our editorial review seeks to support rather than replace authors' own editorial review and quality control. As a result, we assume that drafts of publications will be fact-checked, copy-edited, and proofread prior to submission to Wallace. Crucially, we ask that teams budget editorial and graphics time to prepare drafts for non-academic audiences. We expect authors to factor in the related costs when they make their publication plans. We invite any questions from applicants about our editorial review.

<u>Academic Papers</u>*.* While not subject to Wallace review, Wallace asks that the research team maintain the same confidentiality and privacy of individuals and organizations as that required for the public-facing reports. Further, Wallace requests that researchers share drafts with their partner arts organizations and others, as appropriate. We also ask that you allow Wallace to conduct a courtesy review, checking for any misstatements about the Wallace initiative and strategy. Please include, as a budget item, (a) costs for making publications open access and (b) time to review and approve a two-page brief that Wallace will develop summarizing your academic paper.

6.0 LETTERS OF INTEREST AND SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS
You must submit a letter of interest, and meet eligibility requirements, to be invited to submit a proposal.

6.1 Letters of Interest
Letters of interest are due to us on or before January 23, 2023. Your email should include: (i) the names, organizations, and emails of any persons who you would like us to send future information to related to this RFP; (ii) a statement describing the community the study will involve and how the community cultural development organization meets the eligibility criteria included on page 1, (iii) any questions you have about the RFP that we can answer in writing; and (iv) any ideas about what you plan to propose for which you would like feedback from Wallace.

We will respond to your letter of interest within one month, inviting applicants who meet eligibility criteria to attend an informational webinar, and sharing with them clarifications about the RFP that have arisen from questions submitted to us in the letter of interest.

6.2 Research Team Eligibility and Qualifications
Community development organizations responding to this request for proposals should demonstrate in their proposal (a) their founding purpose to serve specific communities of color, and (b) a history of working with and through the arts to achieve its mission.

Research partners should demonstrate the following qualifications:
- Experience working with the cultural community served by the partner community development organization.
- Experience studying the arts, artists, or arts organizations relevant to the proposed study design.
- Research and analytical skills appropriate to the project and proposed research designs
- History of producing publications and/or other dissemination material relevant to the research design and focus
- Demonstrated experience working with diverse stakeholders on issues of equity and culture
- Excellent project management, writing, publication, and communication skills

6.3 Proposal Requirements, Selection Criteria, and Review Timeline
In no more than 15 pages, single spaced, 11 pt font, please provide:

1. The need your study addresses, referencing the existing research literature as well as local and field needs expressed in practitioner communities. How will your study address an important knowledge gap for practice and in the literature?

2. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks you will draw upon in the design, conduct, and analysis of your study.

3. A detailed research plan (this should be the bulk of your proposal) including:
   - Research questions
   - Research methodology
   - Data collection sources and methods
   - Data analysis plans
   - Pandemic-related contingency plans, for data collection or any other element of the research, if relevant

   Please include a table making clear the links between your research questions, data sources, analytic plan, and deliverables.

4. Research deliverables, including intended audience, intended use, and dissemination strategies.

5. Qualifications of key members of the project team. What experiences and qualifications prepare your team and organizations to lead this study? Directly address the organization's eligibility for this call and how it meets the criteria described in the first section of this RFP. Describe who will lead or participate in the proposed activities and their roles in the project. We request that you form a technical working group (TWG) of three or more research methodologists who would serve as research advisors with whom you would meet at least once annually. Please describe the areas of expertise you would seek to have represented on such a TWG, which we will ask you to assemble if awarded

6. References—References do not count toward the page limit.

Proposal Attachments
Please also attach, as separate documents not counted toward the page limit:

1. A detailed line-item budget in Excel format. Include full budgets for any subcontracts. We expect to see the community development organization's staff time fully budgeted, reflecting their active involvement in all phases of the study. Please budget for a technical working group (TWG) of 3 or more research methodologists. Wallace allows a 20% indirect rate on all direct costs.

2. A budget justification briefly explaining each budget line in the Excel document. Please be sure to attend to rationale for honoraria, incentives, or consulting fees. Wallace encourages proposers to provide adequate incentives to research participants.

3. A table listing all senior staff, across all organizations represented in your team, with FTE dedicated to the project and their role or part in the study.

4. Resumes of senior staff or consultants named in your budget. Please limit resumes to 2-4 pages per person.

5. Two examples of prior publications produced by key members of your team that are relevant to your proposed project

6. A project timeline.

With the exception of the Excel budget, all of the attachments can be submitted as a single PDF. In fairness to others, we will not review any materials not listed above. Complete proposals are due to Wallace by the end of your day on April 10, 2023. Please send to ArtsResearch@wallacefoundation.org.

6.4 Proposal Selection Criteria
Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:
- The demonstrated need for the study, both to advance the work of the community development organization and to address important gaps in the knowledge base.
- The strength and detail of the research design and its ability to answer the research questions.
- Qualifications of the project team, including both the community development organization and research partner(s)
- Quality of the partnership, including depth of engagement of the community development organization throughout the research process
- Depth of conceptualization and integration of equity into proposed plans
- Relevance, use, and timeliness of the proposed research deliverables for their intended audiences
- Budget, including the active involvement of the community development organization in all phases of the study.

6.5 RFP Timeline
The expected timeline, which is subject to change, is as follows:

Letters of Intent Due	January 23, 2023
Optional Office Hours	January-February 2023
FAQ Sent	February 2023
Proposals Due	April 10, 2023
Proposal Decisions	August 2023
Project Start Date	September 2023-Jan 2024

Questions about this RFP can be sent to ArtsResearch@wallacefoundation.org

References

ArtPlace America. (2020). *About ArtPlace.* Retrieved November 2022, from
https://www.artplaceamerica.org/about/introduction

Cleveland, W. (2011). *Arts-based community development: Mapping the terrain.* Americans for Democracy.
https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/BCleveland%20Trend%20Paper.pdf

Cornett, K., Bray-Simons, K., Devlin, H. M., Iyengar, S., Moore Shaffer, P., & Fulton, J. E. (2019). Creating activity-friendly communities: Exploring the intersection of public health and the arts. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health, 16*(11), 937-939. https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2019-0425

Engh, R., Martin, B., Kidd, S.L. & Nicodemus, A.G.. *WE-making: How arts & culture unite people to work toward community well-being*, Easton, PA: Metris Arts Consulting, 2021.

Jackson, M. R. (2021). Addressing inequity through public health, community development, arts, and culture: Confluence of fields and the opportunity to reframe, retool, and repair. *Health Promotion Practice, 22*(1_suppl), 141S-146S. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839921996369

Goldbard, A. (2006). *New creative community: The art of cultural development.* New York: New Village Press.

Hech, B., Walker, Darren, de Souza Briggs, X., Waits, M.J., Lee, E.M., DeCaigny, T., Hoi, S., Markusen, A., Gadwa Nicodemus, A., Sheppard, S., Morley, E., Winkler, M.K., Hattem, G., Chu, J., Schupbach, J., & Rapson, Rip. (2014). *Community Development Investment Review, 10*(2). http://www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/cdir-10-02-creative-placemaking

Meade, R. R., & Shaw, M. (Eds.). (2021). *Arts, Culture and Community Development* (1st ed.). Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1rnpj8m

Poulin, J. M. (2020). *Centering creative youth in community development: A creative placemaking field scan.* Creative Generation and ArtPlace America. https://doi.org/10.51163/CREATIVE-GEN002

Rubin, C. L., Chomitz, V. R., Woo, C., Li, G., Koch-Weser, S., & Levine, P. (2021). Arts, culture, and creativity as a strategy for countering the negative social impacts of immigration stress and gentrification. *Health Promotion Practice, 22*(1_suppl), 131S-140S. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839921996336

Voss, Z., & Voss, G. (2020). *The alchemy of high-performing arts organizations*. Dallas: SMU DataArts Retrieved from https://culturaldata.org/pages/the-alchemy-of-high-performing-arts-organizations/

Voss, Z., & Voss, G. (2021). *The alchemy of high-performing arts organizations, part II: A spotlight on organizations of color*. Dallas: SMU Data Arts Retrieved from https://culturaldata.org/pages/the alchemy-of-high-performing-arts-organizations-a-spotlight-on-organizations-of-color/

Zitcer, A. (2020). Making up creative placemaking. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 40*(3), 278-288. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456x18773424