PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

Building the Field of Civic Artist in Residence Programs

Caroline Hudson-Naef

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ABOUT

"Pathways for Change: Building the Field of Civic Artist in Residence Programs" is Caroline Hudson-Naef's applied project for her Master of Arts in Creative Enterprise and Cultural Leadership from Arizona State University.

Caroline Hudson-Naef believes that creative expression is a platform from which we can build the world we want to inhabit. She is a civic and cultural strategist with nine years of experience working to forge more sustainable, impactful artistic communities. With a focus on creative placemaking, Caroline designs programs that address historical inequities through collaborative interdisciplinary practices. She hopes to build more systems that encourage artists to become community leaders that can usher in the social transformation we need for a just and equitable world. A native of Jackson, Mississippi, Caroline currently resides in Phoenix, Arizona.

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HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Creative Placemaking and the Arts Landscape

Creative placemaking as an art-based community development methodology has been growing in the mainstream over the last decade (Jackson, 2018). In response to the 2008 economic recession, federal leaders turned to the promise of the creative economy as a driver of community development. The National Endowment for the Arts funded the publication of Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa Nicodemus' Creative Placemaking white paper in 2010 that put a framework around a practice that had been happening for decades: gathering together partners from "public, private, non-profit, and community sectors" to "strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and culture activities" with the goal of improving livability in disinvested places (Markusen, 2010).

From this foundational paper, the NEA launched the Our Town grant program, which coded creative placemaking into the national arts landscape with high-dollar annual grants specifically supporting creative placemaking projects (Hughes, 2020). These grants support projects developed in partnership between local government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and artists that "improve [a community's] quality of life; encourage greater creative activity; foster stronger community identity and a sense of place; and revitalize economic development" (Arizona Commission on the Arts, 2013).

Also in 2010, the NEA gathered a group of funders, banks, and government agencies to discuss other avenues for building the creative placemaking field; ArtPlace America, a collaborative venture funded by many of the largest foundations in the country, was born from these conversations (Crane, 2020). ArtPlace put the power of philanthropy to work in funding creative placemaking in ways that the federal government could not, such as making direct grants to artists and other organizations that were not 501c3 nonprofits, but also in funding significant research on the field that made it more legible as a framework of practice (Hughes, 2020).

This huge influx of funds provided an incentive for local public art offices and other government agencies to experiment with this emerging methodology (Debold, 2020). Over the last ten years, communities in towns and cities all across America have adopted creative placemaking strategies with great enthusiasm, with many creating permanent systems of investment at their own scale (Taylor, 2021). For many in the field, creative placemaking became the new standard for best practices in equitable cross-sector community development.

Background on Artist Residencies

Meanwhile, artists initiating work in non-arts contexts was certainly nothing new. An early, notable instance of artists working within government was in 1956, when the Artist Placement Group in London placed roughly twenty artists in various agencies with the goal of resituating artists directly in context with systems of production (Nezam, 2022). In the United States, Mierle Laderman Ukeles became the first unofficial artist in residence in New York City's Department of Sanitation in 1976; driven primarily by her own artistic projects that bring visibility to maintenance workers, she has remained in this unpaid position since then. Ukuleles' pioneering work has been an example for an unconventional, but symbiotic, way for governments and artists to work together.

Additionally, artist residencies have been popular in corporate settings for over thirty years, with companies like Xerox seeing the benefit of the synergistic exchange sparked by artistic process in a non-arts context (Taylor, 2021). By the early 2000s, artistic skills like creative thinking and improvisation were seen as crucial assets in the business world. Business leaders looked to artists to teach them how to adapt to the constant change of the new millennium as innovation became the name of the game (Adler, 2007).

Emergence of CAIRs

Driven both by a new understanding of arts skills in leadership as well as the growing energy and funding of creative placemaking, designers of government arts projects started embedding artists in the structure of their leadership. As the creative placemaking field developed, the goals of these projects shifted away from beautifying an area through the creation of physical art and toward the projects *being* art themselves. Program designers started to focus on how arts processes could engage collaborative groups in response to local needs (Goddeeris, 2020). This move towards a more arts-embedded ideology reflected a shift in the field away from economic development as a one-size-fits-all approach to supporting communities; instead, local agencies were forming effective partnerships through arts projects that were able to respond to the specific needs of a community through their collaboration. There was a growing recognition of the skills artists brought to the table that could be incorporated into community development to "imagine new possibilities for a community or place"; "bring together communities, people, places, and economic opportunity via physical spaces or new relationships"; "bring new attention to or elevate key community assets and issues, voices of residents, local history, or cultural infrastructure"; and "inject new or additional energy, resources, activity, people, or enthusiasm into a place, community issue, or local economy" (National Endowment for the Arts, 2021).

This period of time also marked the emergence of civic practice art, or a practice in which an "artist employs the assets of his/her craft in response to the needs of non-arts partners as determined through ongoing relationship-based dialogue." (Rohd, 2012b). Whereas social practice art may comment on social issues and even incorporate community involvement, civic practice is rooted in advancing positive social change through arts processes. This new perspective is evident in the way creative placemaking projects were designed; rather than serving as a platform primarily for an artist to create work driven by their own purposes as seen with APG and Ukeles' examples, governments began looking to artists for leadership in making change within their community through long-term, open-ended projects driven by relationships. For example, in 2010 the city of Fargo, ND hired artist Jackie Brookner to help them reimagine their stormwater infrastructure; through a series of deep listening events and community design charrettes, Brookner facilitated the redesign of a local storm basin to both be more effective at mitigating flooding, but also provide a public space that uplifted the culture of the town and its residents (Asleson, 2015).

Embedded artists conducted arts projects that continued to bridge the gaps between governments and residents, and accomplished a range of community and internal governmental goals. Governments discovered the "productive frictions" that came from working with artists which shook up their entrenched perceptions and practices and allowed them to create new ways of working (Lithgow, 2017). In the thirteen years since creative placemaking has hit the mainstream, a new subfield has emerged, and artists are working within government in a growing number of urban and rural areas every year.

What are CAIRs?

Known as "artists in residence in government," "public artists in residence," "creative strategists," and "artists in the public realm," this practice has yet to develop a cohesive title. For the purposes of this report, I will be labeling them civic artists in residence, or CAIRs. As diverse in name as they are in structure, what I define as CAIR programs embed an artist into the non-arts context of governmental work to serve a community or internal need through arts processes, regardless of output. While these projects typically have vague goals defined at the outset, deliverables are left open-ended to allow freedom for creative discovery. The entity initiating and managing the residency can either be an office within a municipal government or an exterior organization like an arts-based nonprofit. Artists can be generalists and work across several departments, but more typically they work directly with one governmental agency, i.e. the Department of Transportation.

They can work to accomplish outward-facing goals like increasing citizen participation and developing or communicating urban plans, typically with the goal of engaging communities for more equitable government

operations. They can also work within the organization to facilitate collaboration between departments, rethink government practices, and encourage more creativity (A Blade of Grass, 2020). Regardless, the overall goal of these programs is typically tied to desires for innovation, engagement, collaboration, and positive social change within the governmental sphere (Taylor, 2021).

Many artists are interested in this work because they have a desire to enact change through their artwork, and the skills that many artists possess enable them to be uniquely qualified to work in this context, like the ability to problem-solve, communicate complicated ideas clearly, and build trust and consensus (Rohd, 2012a). With the skills they possess from their own creative work, artists can inspire government workers to think more creatively, communicate better, and collaborate more easily (Berthoin Antal, 2013).

Early adoptions of CAIRs demonstrated an exciting new possibility: artists can be the facilitators, conduits, and instigators that can help governments evolve to better serve their communities (Goddeeris, 2020).

Civic artists in residence is a growing field that shows real promise for a range of solutions and scales of implementation (Nezam, 2021). Local governments as diverse in size and location as Boston, MA; Lexington, KY; Grand Rapids, MI; Saint Paul, MN; and Los Angeles County, CA have all implemented civic artist in residence programs with a variety of positive and unexpected outcomes. Some of these include:

- Increased citizen participation in governmental processes (Pop-up Meeting, 2017)
- Built trust and empathy between unlikely partners (Pottenger, 2017)
- Accomplished civic goals, such as improving transportation safety (Schwartz, 2022 and Nakagawa, 2021)

CAIR programs are a strategy worth implementing in more cities given the exciting results of those already in existence. Especially when paired with strategic policy changes, CAIR projects are a way for governments to become more responsive to the publics they serve.

Innovation in Government

This is necessary, because municipal governments are constantly fighting the critique that they are not very good at meeting their residents' needs (Kelly, 2002). Governments are built for bureaucratic stability, meaning that innovative change can be hampered by regulatory red tape and staff following paths of consistency within their limited area of focus.

Community engagement is also a puzzle for municipal governments; outreach is frequently an afterthought, and although participation in local government is fairly accessible, many communities, especially those of marginalized identities, don't trust governments due to past and ongoing injustices (Rahn, 2005). With extreme political polarization and worsening economic conditions, average confidence in all institutions has reached a record low in the United States since Gallup first started measuring it in 1979 (Saad, 2023). As of 2023, only 18% of survey participants said that they had a great deal of trust in their local government's ability to solve problems (Gallup, 2023).

However, municipal governments are primed for innovative behavior due to their smaller scale and more nimble political operations than state and federal governments. Additionally, cities have always been sites for experimentation as leaders adapt to societal, environmental, and political challenges through trial and error (Evans, 2016). Every city has had to determine how it will be structured, what its priorities are, and how it will provide services to residents, resulting in a rich ecosystem of options on how to manage local governance.

Municipal governments are also starting to understand themselves as sites for innovation. We are seeing many other examples of experimentation at the local government level like participatory budgeting, public-private partnerships, and pilot programs that try new methods of solving old problems. Leadership programs for public administrators like the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative help mayors to "grow as leaders and to implement proven, innovative strategies in order to solve the biggest problems their cities face" (Bloomberg Philanthropies, n.d.). Ever in competition for workforce talent and business investment, cities want to be perceived as innovative and forward thinking.

I have my personal experience to use as an example: I am an employee of the City of Chandler, AZ whose tagline is quite literally, "A Community of Innovation." In my four years with the city I have witnessed firsthand the creativity my colleagues employ individually in their work, as well as the innovative attitude displayed by higher leadership. While I understand that municipal governments are structurally designed to be risk-averse, my personal experience leads me to believe that we can work within this system to make positive change in the ways governments serve communities, and that government workers are more creative than they typically get credit for.

RESEARCH

Research Opportunity

Early implementation suggests that CAIR programs can inspire real change in government service. Though interest in this framework is growing, it still has been adopted by a small handful of the roughly 19,400 municipalities in the United States. How can we increase the number of cities experimenting with CAIR programs?

My primary goal with this research was to identify the most effective audience to target with field-building efforts. I initially hypothesized that it could be innovative government leaders like mayors and city managers who are capable of making high-level funding and operational decisions. Alternatively, it could be program management staff either within or outside of government who are already interested in government-arts collaborations. There are support tools designed to guide program initiators in the creation of CAIRs like toolkits, training programs, grant funding, and consultations from industry professionals, but is there another bridge we could build to better connect these would-be practitioners to the resources that already exist?

I was also interested in identifying what new practitioners need to know in order to build the foundation of CAIR projects: What have experienced professionals already learned about best practices? Are there helpful characteristics in a city's ecosystem to look for? Who do you need to get on board and how do you set the stage for effective partnerships?

In the emerging field of civic artists in residence programs, what avenues exist for field-building with government partners? This report studies the internal work of CAIR project-building and identifies a strategy for introducing new practitioners to the field at a time when resources available to support them are growing.

Methodology

I began by conducting a review of research and other educational materials about CAIR programs. I used the preliminary information gleaned from analyzing these resources to conduct two sets of interviews: one with CAIR professionals and one with high-level, non-arts government leaders. After analyzing the data from my interviews, I present findings from the two groups and reflect on what their combined insights means for the field.

Not Included in This Report

As with all research, I had to make decisions about what I was not able to pursue due to my time and capacity constraints. The most significant angle I was not able to include is the perspective of artists on CAIR programs. While artists' perspectives on CAIR programs are hugely important, my research focuses on the stage before an artist's involvement when CAIR practitioners are setting the scene for the project: finding partners, garnering support, and acquiring funding. I believe that artists deserve their own research on their relationship to CAIR programs that is tailored to their needs and positionality, which is a larger topic than this report can cover.

However, the artist perspective is not entirely absent from my research. I did include artist-produced materials in my resource analysis. Additionally, five of the 19 CAIR field leaders I interviewed self-identified as artists along with their other professions, including two who have experience operating as both artist and administrator in CAIR programs. With this information I present a base of knowledge with the understanding that more artists may agree, but that ultimately more research needs to be done.

This report also does not include a detailed discussion of best practices once a CAIR program is under way or options for program structures. I present some information on this topic, but it largely supports the very thorough scholarship included in the resources I analyzed.

Lastly, this report is not a comprehensive overview of every CAIR program that has existed. Instead, I present a cross-section of the many ways this work has manifested in recent years with the acknowledgement that every program and municipal ecosystem are different, and there is always more insight to be gained.

REVIEW OF RESOURCES

Background

As the foundation of my project I studied the resources that are already available on the topic of Civic Artist Residencies. Since part of my question was how to connect more government workers to this framework, I wanted to see if there was already information about CAIRs in publications likely to reach government workers, such as articles published by professional organizations. I suspected that there was not much information about CAIRs available in avenues not directed towards current practitioners or academics, but I found that that wasn't entirely the case.

There has been an avalanche of writing on creative placemaking since Markusen and Gadwa Nicodemus' foundational paper in 2010, following the energy and funding that has flowed into these cross-sector community

development efforts nationwide. Although much of this writing is applicable to my research, because of the sheer volume I am choosing to focus more narrowly on writing about Civic Artist Residencies. However, I have included two broadly-defined creative placemaking resources that I believe are foundational to this topic and that provide specific guidance not offered elsewhere.

The sources I have selected were written between 2014 and 2022, with more than half published in 2020 or later. This is likely due to a combination of factors. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the resulting shutdowns may have paused active projects and prompted a shift to writing that could be done in isolation. Additionally, the renewed national interest in racial justice and equity may have been a provoking factor in several of these pieces; the potential power for CAIRs to address equity issues at the municipal level is a thread throughout many of these resources, but is an explicit focus of much of the writing since 2020. And lastly, CAIR program adoption increased between 2015 and 2020, with seven new programs launching during that five year period compared to four new programs in the ten years prior. By 2020, these programs had been active for a few years, giving enough time for evaluators and researchers to compile data and artists to reflect on their experiences.

Regardless of what factors caused this uptick in the last three years, it demonstrates active knowledge generation in the field and the desire for more understanding through evaluation and scholarship. Authors are interested in sharing not only the possibilities of CAIR programs, but also the outcomes demonstrated thus far with a broad audience. As with any arts-based endeavor, CAIR practitioners are faced with the question of how to concretize anecdotal experiences and make claims about their programs that are supported by facts. This is important for both satisfying funding requirements and seeking new funding sources, justifying the continuation of a program, and perhaps most importantly, evaluating the program's success as municipal experiments. Because of the diversity of program structures, the unique characteristics of every city, and the unusual partners these projects bring together, evaluation is also important for judging the successes and failures of how the program was run. Importantly, these authors believe that CAIR programs can lead to positive change in cities and support that belief with evidence. These resources serve as crucial jumping-off points for building the field.

For this analysis, I have selected 21 of what I believe to be the most relevant written resources on the topic of Civic Artist in Residence programs. They demonstrate a variety of intent, level of detail, and intended audience, but can be sorted into these four categories:

Original Scholarship	**Resource Guides**
Program Evaluations	**Artist-Produced Resources**

Original Scholarship

A Brief History of Artists-in-Residence in Government
Mallory Rukhsana Nezam

A New Tool to Advance Equity: Artists in Residence in Government
Mallory Rukhsana Nezam and Johanna K. Taylor

Art Practice as Policy Practice: Framing the Work of Artists Embedded in Government
Johanna K. Taylor

Artists as Public Sector Intrapreneurs: An Experiment
Jessica Sherrod Hale & Joanna Woronkowicz

Embedded Aesthetics: Artist-in-Residencies as Sites of Discursive Struggle and Social Innovation
Michael Lithgow & Karen Wall

Local Government Artist-in-Residence Programs Must Include Opportunities for Public Sector Innovation
Joanna Woronkowicz & John Michael Schert

The six resources in this category were produced by scholars of this field of practice for a largely academic audience. With the exception of "A New Tool to Advance Equity" and "A Brief History of Artists-in-Residence in Government," they were all published in academic journals. These resources serve to contextualize this practice as an emerging framework, present original theories related to the field, and identify the benefits CAIRs can provide. Of these 6 resources, 3 are studies, one is an analysis of written literature, one is a history of early CAIRs, and one is an opinion piece.

Empirical research on the topic of civic artist residencies is an area ripe for opportunity. Given that the concept of CAIRs has been formalized for well over a decade, it is surprising to me that there are not more resources that evaluate the practice as a whole or even compare structure and strategy. However, the arts in general are notoriously difficult to study due to the challenges in measuring the value of subjective experiences. There is not much research even on creative placemaking, which is a much more visible and widely practiced framework (Moss, 2012).

These resources do provide valuable insight into why these programs exist and how they work. "Artists as Public Sector Intrapreneurs" presents research on how artist interventions in government increased divergent thinking and openness to group problem-solving settings; "Embedded Aesthetics" discusses how artist residencies produce "productive frictions" that can lead to long-term positive change in entrenched systems; and "A New Tool to Advance Equity" and "Local Government Artist-in-Residence Programs Must Include Opportunities for Public Sector Innovation" make the case for looking to artists to help solve real, public-realm problems like social equity.

Though most of the resources in this category are likely to reach an academic audience rather than government workers, academic study is one way that the field builds legitimacy in our established power systems. The audience for this type of writing is growing; as established previously, CAIR programs are becoming a more widely practiced framework and professionals from a variety of backgrounds are curious about the results that they claim.

Resource Guides

Arts and Planning Toolkit
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Artist Residencies in the Public Realm: A Resource Guide for Creating Residencies and Fostering Successful Collaborations
Renee Piechocki, Sallyann Kluz, Kate Hansen, Laura Zorch

Creative Strategist Initiative: Embedding Artist in the Bureaucracy
Pauline Kanako Kamiyama

Municipal Artist Partnerships
A Blade of Grass

Problem Solving through Arts and Culture Strategies: A Creative Placemaking Wayfinding Guide for Local Government Managers
Laura Goddeeris & Lindsay Jacques

Top Five Lessons for Better Government Artist Residencies
Julie S. Burros and Karin Goodfellow

The primary goal of these resources is to provide information about how to start a CAIR program, present possible outcomes, and provide guidance for best practices. Some are written to be complete guides and others simply provide high-level takeaways. Two are geared towards specific professional audiences: the MAPC "Arts and Planning Toolkit" is written for city planners and "Problem Solving Through Arts and Cultural Strategies" is designed to be read by government workers generally.

Four were produced by organizations in service of their goals: two by arts organizations (Office of Public Art and A Blade of Grass), and two by professional organizations (International City/Council Management Association and Metropolitan Area Planning Council of Boston, MA). Two of the resources on this list are short articles written by experienced practitioners.

The Municipal Artist Partnerships website is the most complete resource on this list. It offers information for both artists and government workers in an attempt to bridge the gap between these disciplines and foster collaboration. The writing style is concise and easy to understand with

plenty of links to other sources for deeper study. It features more foundation-level information about artist and government collaborations than any other resource on this list: the need to build a strong partnership by centering values, finding the right liaison, and considering the readiness of all partners; the differences between artistic and governmental processes, including common sticking points like risk; and the benefits of sustaining partnerships by deepening work over time and linking to higher-level leaders and aligning creative work with citywide mandates like culture and equity plans.

Overall, these publications are great resources for sharing knowledge about this practice. Many make frequent use of case studies and examples which help the reader envision this work. Some have built-in tools that seem practically helpful. There is a balance of depth: some are designed to be quick and easy to read, and others offer more details for readers who want a deeper exploration of the topic.

However, these guides may not be the most up-to-date sources on this field of practice. My research did not come up with any resource guides published since 2020; the oldest on this list is from 2014. The Municipal Artist Partnerships website does not appear to be consistently updated, which would be a benefit of producing a web-based guide. In the years since these resources have been published, it stands to reason that new knowledge on the topic has been produced.

Program Evaluations

Creative Citymaking Minneapolis (2016)
Katie Fritz Fogel, Beki Saito, Mary McEtherton

Creative Citymaking and Creative Response Fund Evaluation (2021)
Beki Saito & Katie Fritz Fogel

Creative Strategist Program Evaluation
Robin Garcia

How Artists Change the City: The City of Boston Artists-in-Residence Program Three Year Evaluation
Danya Sherman, Diedra Montgomery, Chelsea Bruck

Integrating Artists and City Planning: THE FARGO PROJECT Lessons Learned
Rachel Asleson, Anna Cunningham & Mrill Ingram

These reports are produced by cities responding to a desire or need to evaluate their programs after a period of time. They are publicly accessible through the municipality's website, though one references a more detailed internal document. Three were authored by third-party researchers and two were written by program staff. They appear to be written for both public and internal audiences.

These evaluations reflect an energy of collective learning by sharing the experiences of the CAIR professionals, artists, and government workers who participated in these projects. These evaluations include incredibly rich content, including a huge volume of granular detail about these programs and their timelines of events, along with interviews with artists, municipal employees, and other participants. Both of the Minneapolis reports and the Boston evaluation present quantitative data, which could be an attempt to build legitimacy and demonstrate outcomes based in fact, rather than more disputable analysis based on anecdotal experiences. All of these resources have a positive tone; they communicate that regardless of how the projects turned out, this process has mattered to their city.

However, as evaluations, they do assess where things went wrong or how they could have been done differently. The Los Angeles County report and the first Minneapolis report are more thorough than the others, offering quite a bit of analysis on the details of their programs. The Fargo report and the second Minneapolis report seem more focused on outward field-building by describing the development of their programs.

Several also include an evolutionary context for CAIRs in general and how the program manifested in their city. These reports also include consideration for how participating in these programs accomplishes artists' needs and goals along with what the programs have done for the city. It is worth noting that difficulty accomplishing the goals of CAIR projects within a one-year timeline is a consistent theme in these reports.

Since three of these evaluations were published in 2021, they help to fill the publication gap of the resource guides discussed earlier. Many offer the same kind of educational information as the resource guides along with the program evaluation. However, most of these reports are quite long and, in my opinion, unlikely to be read by anyone other than very dedicated field practitioners.

Artist-Produced Resources

A.I.R. Head: Anatomy of an Artist in Residence
Alan Nakagawa

Discovering Hidden Creative Possibilities as a City Artist
Marcus Young

Public Record: Where do Artists Appear in City Records, and How does the Government See Them?
Julia Weist

This Book is a Bridge
Kelly Gregory and Mary Welcome

These are materials produced by artists for the public as a reflection on their residency. Two are full-length books (though one is a memoir that reflects on a variety of the author's experiences) and two are essays. All are publicly available either to read online or purchase.

These resources share personal experience in narrative form; the artists record their experiences in their residencies and describe what they produced. However, they also offer analyses of ideas and topics related to this practice. The two essays are particularly insightful reflections on CAIR practice on the whole; Marcus Young describes the vast creative opportunities CAIRs offer artists, and Julia Weist discusses what role artists have to play in a municipal system like New York City. All have practical information to share for administrative practitioners and other artists alike.

The two books incorporate creative expression in the form of photos, drawings, and poems, not only to illustrate the artwork that was produced during the residencies, but also to act as artwork themselves. Some of these resources I would even call beautiful; *This Book is a Bridge* incorporates poetic writing that connects the reader to ideas through emotion, personalizing the experience in a way that an academic research study cannot.

I believe that this category is another kind of resource that the field needs more of. Materials produced from the artist's perspective will capture information left behind by program evaluators; these works of art will reach different audiences and present the material in ways that may be more experiential or embodied. This is applying the theory of CAIR practice: that the freedom of creative practice can bring to light ways of knowing that get left behind in other modalities.

Analysis

My original inquiry for these resources was whether they were likely to introduce government leaders to the topic of CAIR programs, and I largely believe that answer to be no. However, there are a handful that were written for municipal leaders and are published through professional organizations for government workers: "A New Tool to Advance Equity"; "Problem Solving Through Arts and Cultural Strategies"; and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's "Arts & Planning Toolkit."

These three resources offer compelling arguments about why governments should invest in CAIR programs along with some information on how to go about conducting them. Of these, "Problem Solving Through Arts and Cultural Strategies" has the most complete information, drawing largely on the Municipal-Artist Partnerships guide in the discussion of how to get started with government-arts

partnerships more generally. However, the volume of information in this 100-page report could be overwhelming, especially when trying to understand how the recommendations play out practically.

The other resources were all published by academic journals, arts organizations, or Arts and Culture offices in other city organizations that likely only professionals in the know would go looking for. Even though many of these resources were produced with the goal of field-building, their authors are more likely to reach other public art or creative placemaking professionals who will have some basis of understanding for CAIR projects and may be inspired to pursue their own. Because programs have grown without targeting government leaders like mayors or city managers, this leads me to believe that this idea is spreading through networks of professional peers and not by executive-level officials stumbling on an article. Given this analysis, my hypothesis for the target audience of field-building efforts are the staff members who will be initiating these programs, which may be arts staff, or may be managers in non-arts departments who are interested in testing out alternate modes of community engagement.

Overall, I believe the field still needs a resource that provides focused guidance on the foundational work necessary to develop partnerships in a municipal context. There are some long-form resources that include this information, like the Municipal-Artist Partnership guide and "Problem Solving Through Arts and Cultural Strategies," but they have so much other content that I believe these crucial foundational pieces could get skipped over by readers. Other resources have good information about finding partners ("Artist Residencies in the Public Realm") and partner readiness (Minneapolis' 2021 "Creative Citymaking" evaluation) but there is not a resource that presents all of this information together framed around the front-end coalition-building work needed to start these projects in cities. Also, aside from "A New Tool to Advance Equity," there are not any resources that focus on what CAIR programs specifically look like to non-arts government workers. Additionally, these resources do not acknowledge the many ways that CAIR projects could fit into existing municipal frameworks, such as the similarities between CAIR projects and other innovative non-arts programs.

Since my goal is to increase the likelihood of these partnership-based collaborations, I believe it would be helpful to identify the perspective of non-arts government workers on what it takes to build a CAIR program, as well as learn from CAIR practitioners' experience developing these partnerships. My interviews with these two groups take this strategic approach to understanding the municipal environment in order to assist other would-be CAIR practitioners in building partner relationships.

INTERVIEWS

Identifying Interviewees

I identified CAIR field leaders based on the resources I consulted, by looking into information about CAIR programs online, and by recommendation of my committee members. I also identified field leaders with experience either working on similar arts collaborations or with published writing on the topic. Out of the 22 potential participants I contacted, 19 agreed to be interviewed.

For my government worker subset, I emailed 21 professionals in executive leadership positions (mayors, city managers, or department heads) in 17 cities across the country. Most of the government workers that I contacted did not respond, though a couple declined to participate. Only 6 agreed to be interviewed; a 7th participant joined an interview I had arranged with his colleague.

Process

I developed separate lists of questions for CAIR field leaders and government workers that both lead to addressing my central question of field-building. For CAIR field leaders, I asked about their experience in projects like this, how they got their project stakeholders on board, what they wished government workers understood about arts collaborations, and other questions focused on the administrative work necessary to lay the groundwork for CAIR projects.

For my interviews with government workers, I suspected that beginning our interviews asking about arts collaborations could be off-putting; individual's responses to the arts are very subjective, and I did not want our conversation to be skewed by personal feelings they may have towards the arts or potential misunderstanding of what CAIR programs are. As such, I framed our interviews as focusing on innovation in municipal programs. I asked them what their opinions on innovation were, if they had been involved in any initiatives that they considered out-of-the-box, and how they made the choice to pursue that work. Towards the end of the interviews I explained that the specific government innovation I am researching is CAIR programs; I briefly explained what they were and asked if that was something my interviewees had heard of. I then asked them what kind of questions they had about CAIR programs so that I could learn more about what information government workers need to know before agreeing to these initiatives, as well as how receptive they are to them at first glance.

As my interviewees live all over the United States, I conducted all but

one interview over Zoom; the interviews averaged 28 minutes in length. I recorded the audio with consent of my interviewees and transcribed the interviews, then coded the repeating data in the two separate groups. Finally, I sorted my codes into categories and identified the core themes of my findings based on the information my interviewees provided.

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

CAIR Field Leaders

Roberto Bedoya
Cultural Affairs Manager, City of Oakland
Oakland, CA

Julie S. Burros
Former Chief of Arts and Culture, Boston, MA
Current Senior Planner, Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

Deborah Cullinan
Former CEO, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA
Current Vice President for the Arts, Stanford University, Stanford, CA

Shannon Daut
Former Manager, Cultural Affairs Division, City of Santa Monica, CA
Current National Director, United States Regional Arts Organizations

Georgia Gempler
Program Manager, Health & Wellness, National League of Cities, Washington, DC

Kim Glann
Sr. Manager, Cross Sector Initiatives
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Andrew Zitcer Ph.D.
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One anonymous participant

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Brent Stockwell
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Three anonymous participants:
City Manager
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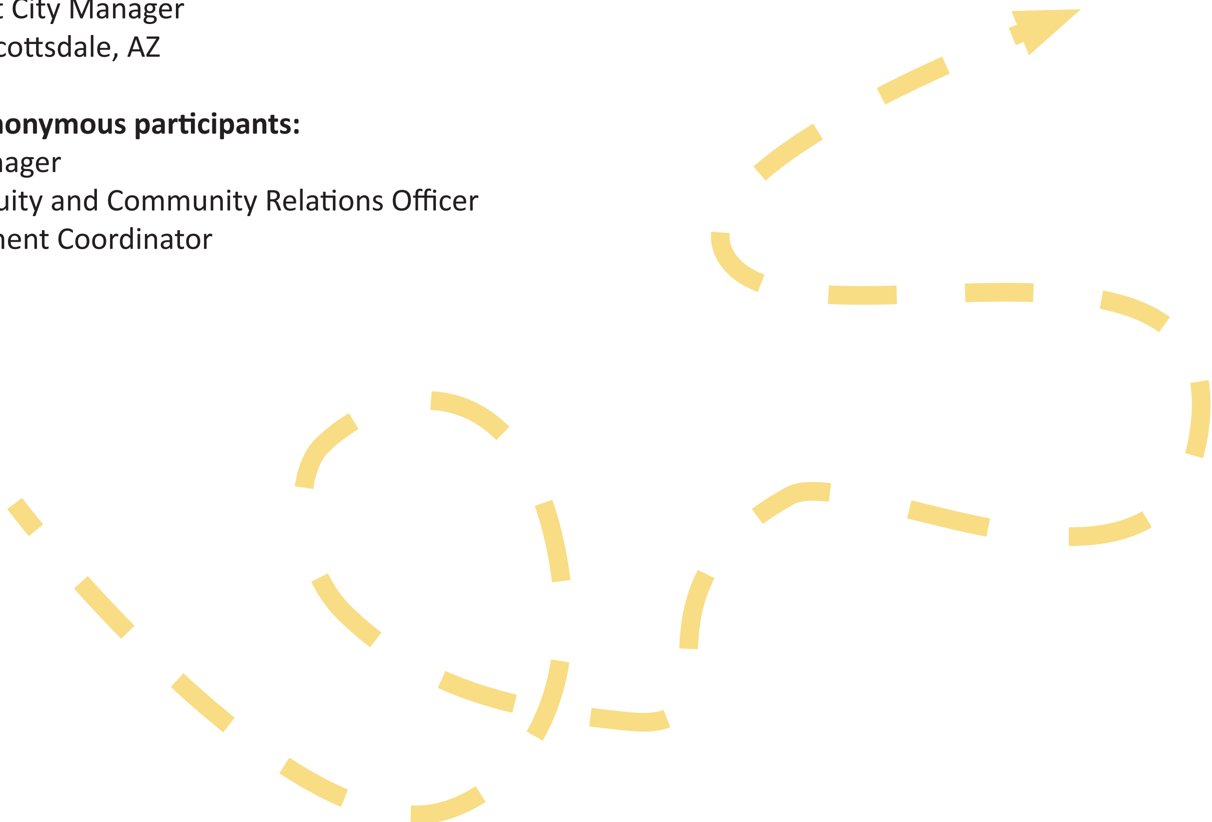


FINDINGS: CAIR FIELD LEADERS

Relevant Experience

The CAIR field leaders I interviewed present a range of practical experience relevant to my area of study. Some are administrators who have worked directly on true CAIR programs with governments, both as municipal employees and employees of exterior nonprofits. I also interviewed practitioners who have worked on government arts collaborations that are similar to CAIR programs in that they were long-term, open-ended projects. I also interviewed two field experts with extensive knowledge on the field of civic arts partnerships.

Participants directly linked to a CAIR program	
City employees	4
Nonprofit employees	7
Participants with similar experience	
City employees	2
Nonprofit/NGO employees	3
Field leaders	
2	

How CAIR Field Leaders Describe Themselves

The CAIR field leaders I interviewed described themselves as interdisciplinary workers with a wide range of professional experiences. The intersection of the arts and their capacity to make positive change is a thread they have followed through different professions as urban planners, regional arts organization leaders, municipal employees, community organizers, policymakers, researchers, and more. Five described themselves as artists, and two discussed working in both administrative and artistic capacities with CAIR programs.

They are interested in collaborative work, especially projects that bring together interdisciplinary partners to share skills and ideas across difference. They are also very strategic thinkers who work cleverly to actualize their goals, which often includes learning how to work within inflexible bureaucratic systems.

The most important quality listed by this group of individuals is that they are driven by making positive change; when discussing their careers, nine of this interview set specifically mentioned their dedication to the ways that art can spark change. Their answers about their work displayed a strong interest in improving the functioning of municipal governments, creating more opportunities for community voice in their governance, and working to address pervasive social justice issues.

Why They Do What They Do

According to their interviews, these CAIR field leaders are interested in this work to help governments solve problems using arts processes. They believe, as supported by the scholarship surveyed earlier in this report, that artists can help address the complicated issues that governments face through creative thinking and process-based methodologies. The top area they think CAIR projects can improve is civic

engagement; many of my interviewees specifically described projects where civic engagement was either an intended goal or an outcome they observed. For example, one interviewee worked on an initiative that commissioned artists to design a public engagement process for a citywide planning process in which residents are not normally engaged as effectively.

The second most highly mentioned goal for CAIR practitioners was increasing equity in government and other institutional systems like healthcare. These professionals believe that artists and arts processes can help improve equitable outcomes in urban planning, resource distribution, decision-making, accessibility, and more. These projects are developed in collaborations with local arts organizations and healthcare providers to address the specific needs of each community such as mental health, food access, and cultural belonging. For example, Georgia Gempler works on the One Nation, One Project initiative which is supporting arts projects focused on health equity in 18 cities.

Four CAIR field leaders also mentioned that they usually have covert goals, or goals that are not formally stated to their government or non-arts partners. For example, working to mitigate racism and sexism is always a covert goal for one CAIR field leader: she knows that approaching her public safety partners with that as a named goal will cause them to react defensively, so she develops strategic ways to incorporate it into their work together. CAIR professionals can also use their projects as pilots to get to know their partners below the surface: Carlton Turner described a project that helped Sipp Culture learn how to navigate an opaque bureaucratic system and find the pathways of decision-making that has been useful for additional work together.

Overall, CAIR field leaders are interested in projects that prompt transformative change in governments or non-arts settings. They reject the understanding of art as surface-level public beautification. They believe that CAIR projects can result in deep changemaking within institutional systems and should be operationalized to do so. They understand that these projects succeed by using the arts to bring people together, spark new ideas through unlikely partnerships, and inspire more flexibility with how governments operate. They believe that these projects can increase civic imagination, or the capacity for cities to imagine how they might transform to better serve residents.

Why Art

Why do CAIR field leaders believe that art can accomplish these lofty goals? It starts with the understanding that the arts are already put to work all around us: these interviewees believe that art is for everybody. They share the thinking that even people who don't think of themselves as artistic actually participate in the arts more often than they realize. For example, Carlton Turner described that storytelling in particular is present in our everyday lives and integral to our cultural foodways;

"Because we understand the transformational power that art can have in people's lives, we have an obligation to make sure that it is accessible in all kinds of shapes and forms to everyone. And we also have an obligation to apply it to the social good."

Deborah Cullinan

"I think it is a really important framework for us to get people to understand that they are participants in art. And it's not based on anybody else's measurements about how they experience art, but about the way that art lives in their bodies and in their lives."

Carlton Turner

in Sipp Culture's work to improve food access in rural Mississippi, developing culture and food access go hand in hand to bring people together for creative solutions. In getting partners to understand the importance of art in their lives, CAIR field leaders can start to build the case for integrating arts practices where they typically aren't noticeable.

They believe that artists contribute skills of equal value to other professions like engineers, administrators, and designers, and are fighting for artists to be seen as professionals who provide necessary services rather than optional luxuries. For example, in Oakland's Cultural Strategist program Roberto Bedoya describes artists and municipal employees working together as thought partners. The phrasing "thought partners" positions artists on an equal level with city employees, demonstrating that both parties bring equal skills to the table and that they are working collaboratively to solve a problem.

"We've got some wicked problems that need solving, and what are you going to do without creativity? You can't solve problems without creativity at the table."

Jason Schupbach

CAIR field leaders are constantly demonstrating that arts processes are a valuable strategy for innovating and making change in order to bring partners on board. Several brought up the idea that artists and arts processes can help to solve persistent, structural problems; they argue that using the same methods governments are used to using will continue to produce the same ineffective results, and that to potentially get something different, they need to try something new. They think that by bringing creative thinking and a fresh perspective to a problem, artists can help governments get to solutions they would not have otherwise. Especially regarding civic engagement, CAIR practitioners believe that they offer more effective strategies for reaching folks than a traditional survey.

Lastly, they understand that cross-sector collaboration and bringing together workers with a range of experiences is key to generating new ideas and solutions. To them, their work is about building relationships across difference: between unlikely collaborators who, rather than staying isolated by arbitrary divisions, are brought together to use their differences for collective good.

Challenges CAIR Practitioners Face

The challenge to government arts collaborations mentioned most frequently by this interview set is that government workers possess a limited understanding of art, both in definition and purpose. CAIR practitioners described a pervasive issue in which government workers believed the purpose of arts projects to mostly be decorative, or at best, an economic driver. In contrast, Jun-Li Wang described that at their core the arts are about relationship-building - between people, ideas, and communities. She proposed that most government workers are used to working in transactional exchanges, so they see the arts in the same way. CAIR practitioners also think that government workers typically don't understand that arts processes are just as valuable as artistic outputs, and that they can accomplish their goals through collaborations with

artists that don't necessarily result in a nicely packaged product like a mural or storytelling event. Instead, these field leaders are positioning artists as creative thinkers working collaboratively to help government workers navigate complicated situations rather than tradespeople hired to complete a task.

The second largest challenge is that government workers are typically overworked and under-resourced. CAIR practitioners understand that cities are thinly staffed and that government workers are faced with many complex challenges. In some ways, artists participating in CAIR projects may be able to add capacity to an organization, but they need for their host staff to have the bandwidth to work alongside them. Even if CAIR practitioners can get government workers on board ideologically, they may not have the capacity to participate as full partners. In their interviews, CAIR practitioners were very clear that they work hard to choose host departments that actually have the capacity to work with an artist as this is vital for the project's success in achieving the deeper change that is possible.

CAIR practitioners also mentioned government workers' resistance to change as another hindrance. They attribute this to government workers being either unwilling or unable to break from doing things the way they are usually done. In some instances, this occurred as a response from government workers that an outsider was coming into their work to tell them they were doing everything wrong. Another CAIR practitioner had an experience where their city partners chose not to participate in suggested onboarding training, which led to negative project experiences for both the government staff and artists involved. CAIR practitioners described that they had experienced difficulty in convincing government workers to break out of calcified bureaucratic functioning to embrace change.

Another negative factor is that occasionally, after a CAIR project has been approved and is under way, a city's priorities may shift, draining staff time and resources. Many high-level government priorities are set by elected officials, and these change depending on their time in office or other current events. In one instance, the election of a new mayor in combination with the city's changing finances directly impacted that program's funding.

Countering the expectations from partners who have specific project outcomes in mind was another challenge for many CAIR practitioners. They cautioned that putting too much weight on a final product or outcome would stifle the creativity of the project and prevent it from accomplishing the change-making goals they desired. They described the importance of addressing this issue early on in the project with their government partners. To CAIR practitioners, it is important to understand that the uncertainty about what form these projects will take is exactly their draw; if government workers knew exactly what they were getting, they could procure it by their usual means. These interviewees try to

"Art is not a happy face... Art is critical thinking. So some of my city [colleagues], when you say "art," they just want a mural. They want a simple dance. They want just something that's really a somewhat simplistic understanding of what art is. I have a community that wants revolution through art. So there's the disconnect between the department liaison and the artists that has to be worked through."

Roberto Bedoya

"It was like, listen, this zoning wasn't handed down from Mount Sinai and God, it was written by planners like you and me. So schmucks like us in a room came up with these rules, schmucks like us in a room can update and change these rules."

Julie Burros

convey that participating in a creative process will feel uncomfortable and murky at times, but that is necessary to achieving the desired goals.

The CAIR practitioners also mentioned strategies to counter skepticism from both government workers as well as from artists, which relied on helping both groups understand that the other could actually be good partners in this work and to set aside preconceived notions and generalizations about each other. Kendal Henry discussed helping artists understand that government workers actually can be receptive to change and new ideas, and that despite public perception, there are real people working on solving the issues that seem to be neglected. Renee Piechocki spoke about getting government workers to understand that artists can work within constraints.

Turnover in government staff also appears to be a significant issue. CAIR practitioners described situations where they had formed a good partnership with someone who ended up leaving their position, putting their ongoing projects at risk. The problem of institutional memory only came up three times in my interviews, but I believe it is a serious issue to consider. Memory of one-time projects may be lost in staff turnover if the ethos isn't integrated into the culture of the office or host department.

Interestingly, issues with public perception only came up for two interviewees. CAIR practitioners did not often describe challenges justifying arts collaborations to the public, though several talked about education sessions to inform the public about the process that was taking place and how they could get involved.

"Certainly, there's a lot of skepticism of artists by non-artists, and a sense that what they do is a frill or an ornament on society and not as an essential part of the functioning of a democracy of a culture of a way of life, then you're going to have an ineffective partnership."

Andrew Zitcer

"There's a bigger question: how do you integrate the work and the lessons that are being learned? And how do they have, if it makes sense for them to have, lasting impact? How does that get executed or woven into the existing systems?"

Jun-Li Wang

Structural Strategies: Getting Approval

When getting the ball rolling with a CAIR project, first it needs a stamp of approval. By far, the top takeaway for getting approval according to my interviewees was having high-level staff support, which can range from having a city manager give their blessing for a project to (in one case) having the mayor sit on the advisory committee. This was a factor important enough to be brought up by sixteen out of nineteen interview participants. This supports my initial hypothesis that executive-level staff are influential partners due to the hierarchical nature of government structure. Reasons CAIR practitioners gave for this were that it lends the legitimacy and weight of top decision-makers to the project; it aligns CAIR projects with city priorities; and it increases the ease of director-level collaboration in finding host departments.

Three CAIR practitioners believe that getting executive-level staff approval could be aided by strategic departmental organization, like locating the city's arts office within the mayor or city manager's office. This is a political tactic that they believe assists with aligning the arts with power more broadly by taking advantage of the strict hierarchies in

"[Success in a government-arts collaboration is] a mutual understanding that it is not a sideshow, that it isn't discrete, that it really is integrated, and that the people at the top, whatever that may mean, buy into it...I think if we want systemic change, we need to look for structural opportunities that can be lasting, and we want people to understand it, and we definitely want the leadership to understand it."

Deborah Cullinan

government organization. These individuals believe that this (sometimes only symbolic) arrangement may give more direct access to executive staff and more institutional weight when working with lower-level employees. However, not everyone agreed that this makes a difference; one interviewee specifically stated that though her arts department fit this arrangement, she did not feel it caused any significant benefit.

Additionally, it is important to note that approval from the top only goes so far. CAIR practitioners were very clear to state that it is critical to cultivate buy-in all the way down the ladder, and that the staff working directly with the artist obviously need to be on board or else the artist will have a very difficult time getting anything done. CAIR practitioners described instances where not having the full support of the staff they were working with caused significant issues with their projects. Marty Pottenger discussed the importance of not "building projects on top of people," but instead conducting listening sessions with everyone involved to understand what they need and where they are coming from. A particularly influential ally in any organization is the staff member that everyone goes to for help. It only came up twice in my interviews, but I believe it is a very good idea to identify who the "helper" or "fixer" is in your partner organization and build a relationship with them. This person may not have a high position in the government hierarchy but understands the ins and outs of organizational systems, has institutional trust, and can potentially open doors for you. Many of my interviewees stated that having internal champions who are on board with the project and who understand it are crucial to countering skepticism and resistance as they can help keep a project on the rails outside of the program administrator's influence.

Advocacy from these internal champions can make a huge difference in getting a project off the ground as well. One interviewee made the point that if you are trying to win over a potential non-arts partner, unfortunately, it doesn't matter how convincing of an argument you make; the information will be much better received coming from the right person. This means someone that they trust, that they have a good relationship with, and that they will listen to non-defensively. CAIR programs are often the result of many, many conversations "wooing" municipal leaders; would-be practitioners need to cultivate partners who will help advocate on their behalf.

Interestingly, I had thought that capitalizing on prospective partners' arts predispositions would be a common strategy, but it only came up 3 times and does not appear to be the main factor at play in developing those projects.

A strategy used by almost all of the CAIR practitioners and field leaders I interviewed was attaching CAIR programs and other government/ arts collaborations to policy or other institutional machinations. For example, Oakland and Boston's cultural plans set the stage for their CAIR programs; Kim Glann and Sallyann Kluz described developing

MOUs (memorandum of understanding) with departments hosting artists; Shannon Daut developed Santa Monica's The Art of Recovery program to put artists to work on the city's COVID recovery goals. Developing arts projects that support the existing strategic goals of a city or city department can help ensure success because it enshrines arts collaborations in municipal legitimacy, and again, ties CAIR work to the work government employees are already doing rather than adding a new layer on top. It also puts arts projects into an institutional language that other government workers already understand, potentially increasing the ease of securing partnerships.

Conversely, many of the interviewees who work in non-governmental nonprofits expressed that operating outside of government makes it easier to conduct their programs. Reasons they gave were not needing to justify their work as much, working in parallel to the city rather than having to serve the city's needs, having more freedom with their budget, and the ability to expand their city's limited capacity for programs like this. These are all valid reasons, and depending on the goals of a project this could be important information when deciding how to set up a CAIR program.

Lastly, a strategy that many CAIR practitioners used to their advantage was running their program in a pilot phase. According to my interviewees, pilot programs are a great way to test CAIR programs out and figure out how to tailor them to your specific municipality. CAIR field leaders described that it was easier to build support when they were able to demonstrate the value of this process to partners first-hand or point to previous success. Additionally, this strategy falls into an iterative practice that cities are used to that allows them to experiment in a low-risk way.

"Part of what we did with Art of Recovery was we were just planting seeds with our friends and other departments within the city for what the arts could bring to their efforts and how it could be a really valuable approach for them."

Shannon Daut

Selecting Partners

Selecting the non-arts partners of a CAIR project takes a great deal of careful vetting and intentional conversation. CAIR practitioners were clear that when it comes to finding partners for government arts collaborations, cultivating trust is the most important strategy. For most of the professionals I interviewed, this meant working with partners they had some sort of preexisting relationship with that demonstrated this trust. Twelve out of nineteen interviewees mentioned that their work had benefited from collaborating with previously established partnerships. And while developing new relationships is certainly important, it is clear that these partner-building conversations are happening within preexisting networks with at least one connecting person bridging the gap.

CAIR field leaders also discussed building trust, which they did through intentional listening, seeking to understand where their partners were coming from, and building their relationships as collaborators. This is good practice for any collaboration, but arts administrators can use the empathetic consensus-building tools they have at their disposal to

encourage a culture of respect and understanding for government workers who may not always be afforded this treatment.

Of course, would-be CAIR practitioners need to come to these partner-building conversations armed with examples. My interviewees stressed the importance of having ways for government workers to visualize this work that seems very unfamiliar to them; Marty Pottenger and Carlton Tucker both recommended devising small, introductory ways for government workers to experience arts processes in their work prior to the actual project so they can get a feel for it. Ash Hanson talked about how important it was in her artist residency with the City of Minneapolis to insist that her government liaison attend her community engagement events so that he could see first-hand why working with artists in this capacity is different from the methods they had been using previously.

Also, it is critical that the partners are aligned in their values and the goals they hope to accomplish. For almost all of the projects discussed, goals were defined between the CAIR practitioner and the host organization in order to ensure that they could build the project from a solid foundation of understanding. This is recommended since even vague goals give the project definition and some ground to stand on. Renee Piechoki promoted the idea that these goals can adapt once the artist is involved to reflect their vision, and continue to adapt as a project progresses and needs shift. CAIR practitioners also described that their more successful projects happened with organizations who were aligned with them in mission. This is something many CAIR practitioners determined in their initial conversations with potential partners, and has been a learning experience for several after moving forward with partners who were less aligned.

For many CAIR projects, non-governmental organizations were brought in as additional partners. This can both expand the coalition of support for a project, build capacity for what the project can accomplish, and increase what audiences it can reach. This is a strategic approach for program administrators that want to work directly with communities that are not typically reached by governments as it provides an on-ramp for community involvement and trust. For example, Jun-Li Wang described that having local business owners participate in the mini-projects of the Irrigate initiative in Saint Paul meant both that there was less of a need to justify the program to the city and that there was a natural on-ramp for the community to understand the project.

Conditions for Success

One of two top conditions for success that were tied in mention rates from CAIR field leaders was openness from partners. It makes sense that CAIR practitioners recommend working with government partners who are open to experimenting, stepping outside of their comfort zone, and willing to consider what parts of their work might be done differently. The CAIR field leaders I interviewed are interested in helping

governments solve problems, so naturally, government workers need to be able to identify problems to be solved. Partners who are unwilling to take that leap will be less successful collaborators. Additionally, many felt that it will help a project go more smoothly if the non-arts partners understand the artistic process and the necessary discomfort involved in creative pursuits. As mentioned previously, having too many expectations about a finished product can limit an artist's work, so my interviewees recommended looking for partners who can be open to the experience of the project as a whole.

The second top condition for success was onboarding or training for all staff and artists. Many CAIR practitioners described that it had been very helpful to spend this time at the beginning of their projects to help government staff learn how to work with artists, help artists learn how to navigate the government structure, and weed out any potential conflicts between the two. Conducting cohort-model training seems to be beneficial as it helps to build relationships between two very different groups of people who will be working together; in programs that have multiple CAIR projects running at once, this can build support systems between groups of artists and groups of government workers that exist outside of the arts staff liaison. Additionally, including staff that are maybe only tangentially related to the project can help build understanding and can develop a culture of support in the host department.

A factor that came up for nine of my interviewees was that the people involved in CAIR projects need agency to conduct this work. This includes selecting host partners who have control over their budgets and the flexibility to try an innovative program. It also includes providing artists with the access to conduct the work they have been hired to do. This may mean office space, a green light from host staff, material resources, or their own decision-making power. Regardless, my interviewees were clear that hosts who hamper the artist's agency or who do not have enough institutional flexibility will end up with a project that does not develop to its transformative potential.

Time was also an important condition. Echoing the resources I reviewed, there was a pervasive statement that 1-year residencies are not long enough, that artists need more time to be able to conduct work of any consequence. CAIR practitioners said that artists need to be given enough time to learn the municipal system they are working in, understand what the needs of the project actually are, and develop a project that is executable and accomplishes the goals everyone has defined. CAIR practitioners said that government workers also were frequently bound by municipal timelines, and that finding ways to break out of that can give the project more freedom. By nature, residencies are time bound; the Saint Paul, MN program is the only one that does not have a time limit. CAIR practitioners address this in various ways: either they are strategic in their program design to allow for artists to be able to dive into research and project work, or they have mechanisms in

"I think [it's important to have] a willingness to be open to change, a willingness to be open to seeing the ways in which creative, innovative approaches to your work can shift systems that may not be serving everyone in your community. Being willing to look at yourself and say, maybe some of our efforts and initiatives aren't serving all members of our community. And can we do better?"

Ash Hanson

place that allow for extensions. Some programs, like New York City's PAIR program, are two years in length; the Department of Cultural Affairs pays for the first, exploratory year, and then the host department pays for the second, implementation year.

The order of partner and artist selection varies depending on the program structure. In most CAIR projects the host department or organization is chosen prior to the artist. This is due to many of the reasons mentioned previously - wanting to make sure they are going to be a collaborative partner, have the capacity to participate fully, are aligned in goals, and have something real for the artist to work on. Practitioners who promote this structure believe that it is helpful to have the partner and general topic of the residency decided so that artists can have a better idea of the scope of work and their interest relevant to it. However, in fewer programs, the artist is selected first and they choose a host department or organization themselves. In this case, they spend a period of time meeting with various city departments and observing the system before deciding what to work on. The CAIR practitioners who promote this structure believe that this results in a more artist-driven project that is less transactional and more experimental.

Practically, city or nonprofit CAIR program administrators need to act as a bridge between the city and the artist. My interviewees were adamant that these administrators need to be present throughout the project to help artists and government workers work together and make sure everything stays on track. This ensures that the artist is not left to work untethered, and that government workers can be coached throughout the process. They also said that artists need a point person within their host department who will help answer questions or connect them to resources, as well as help garner good favor for the artist and their work among their colleagues. These internal champions are vital for providing artists with the agency they need to work in this context.

Lastly, several of my interviewees stressed using clear communication with all parties involved in a CAIR project. CAIR field leaders suggest being clear about expectations for all partners and utilizing very direct and frequent communication strategies to keep everyone in the loop. Shannon Daut brought up the importance of keeping project partners updated in multiple ways at many stages throughout the process to negate discomfort with the ambiguous, messy-feeling nature of the artistic process. Another interviewee brought up the need for a framework of support between collaborators as well as necessary transparency about unavoidable realities like timelines or budget constraints.

Funding Strategies

Just as every CAIR program is unique, so too are their funding mechanisms. However, something most of them have in common is that their administrators used flexibility, creativity, or strategy to find funding to fit CAIR programs in. They have used municipal Percent for Art funds, grant

funding, ARPA funding, and their own organizational discretionary funds. Roberto Bedoya described that though Oakland's Cultural Strategist program is grant funded, he partnered with a nonprofit to make the disbursal of those funds easier. In Santa Monica, Shannon Daut said that she was able to build residency-like projects into larger public art commissions for capital improvement projects.

Some projects have an investment of city funding - for example, New York City and Los Angeles County have programs that are fully funded by the government. According to Kendal Henry and Kim Glann, this is due to their environment as big cities with high-level support for the arts and plenty of funding available. This is very much not the case in other cities; looking specifically at CAIR programs and not government-arts collaborations more broadly, almost all other programs receive only nominal funding, project support, or in-kind support from the city. As such, most programs lack major city funding and are supported through grants or nonprofit funding. Some interviewees said that because what their city contributes to these arts collaborations is quite small compared to what they spend on other initiatives, this disparity resulted in less oversight or need to justify their work to city authorities, which they saw as positive. Many participants said that approaching partners with grant funding and not asking them to contribute much made getting partners on board easier. However, less of a literal investment from the city may also result in a less invested partnership as well; some practitioners believe that asking their partners to put their money on the line demonstrates their commitment to the project. Additionally, reliance on grant funding means that projects are more subject to precarity as grant funding is not guaranteed.

"So a huge plus in my favor was that I wasn't asking for money. And I wish in retrospect, after a successful project in the different departments...[that] I'd actually figured out how to ask for even a modest amount of money from them, introducing the idea - and practice - of spending their budget money on arts-based projects."

Marty Pottenger

One program takes a radically different approach - the Artists in the Public Realm residency hosted by the Pittsburgh-based Shiftworks Community + Public Arts (a nonprofit not affiliated with the city of Pittsburgh) actually pays the host organization a $10,000 fee to help make up for the staff time and capacity taken up by participating in the program. This of course is very helpful in finding willing partners, but both Sallyann Kluz and Renee Piechocki discussed needing to ensure that organizations were interested in the program beyond the funding.

How to Work Together

One of my interview questions was, "What's the one thing you wish government workers understood about arts collaborations like civic artist residencies?" I felt that the answers were so rich and varied that they deserved to be presented individually.

"[Civic Lex's] work is so based on face to face communication and meeting people where they are that a survey can't do...I understand that there's so many things going on that you can't have a community conversation for every decision that the city has to make. But it seems like [government workers] don't value that as much as they should. "

Megan Gulla

“The complexity of being in the liminal space between fields is the most complex space, right?...And not a lot of people can understand how to work in between fields like that, or understand what it means to try to translate in between fields...Those liminal spaces, they’re some of the bits where some of the most important work in communities has to happen. We’ve got to be able to bridge all these silos to do that work.”

Jason Schupbach

“That it actually makes your job easier. That it is not an add-on or more work, but if it’s embraced by city staff, in terms of looking at community engagement, and translating city initiatives to constituents in a way that is accessible and exciting, it can make your job more equitable and efficient... If you really let it be systems change, if you are ready for that, it can have outstanding results in terms of community engagement, transparency, accessibility and making your work more efficient. “

Ash Hanson

“To remember that this is a very authentic, locally driven way to address some of the problems or challenges that they have, like building awareness around something or educating people or engaging them in a feedback process.”

Jun-Li Wang

“Government workers, I don’t want to damn them all, do not understand civic imagination, do not understand how artists could imagine how we live together and work together.”

Roberto Bedoya

“[That] artists are really problem solvers. And that they are multi, faceted, creative, often collaborative people who can help processes and problems move in ways that are different from the ways that are rule bound, and routine bound that we often see in bureaucracies. ”

Andrew Zitcer

“The whole idea of process versus product, and how municipal leaders by necessity are very product oriented, right, but actually backing up slowing down and planning. You know, using the unique talents of an artist or community based artists in particular, to really plan out a process that’s going to get you a better product in the end, but that means that you have to put more emphasis on the process.”

Georgia Gempler

“It can be easy to have these preconceived expectations or ideas about what will happen during the residency. I try to just invite them to trust the process and not to look for an outcome. Because a lot of times, it’s through conversations, it’s through getting to know the staff or getting to know the community leaders that the staff are working with, that the artist is able to formulate what the strategy is, or the project that they’re going to propose.”

Kim Glann

“Just that they understood it. It’s a very different kind of perception. When you don’t interact with artists, you have a specific perception as to who they are and what they do...when we first introduce the [PAIR] program we say, artists as creative thinkers, or artists as creative problem solvers. And so that’s what people are looking to do, to get outside of their box, to look at something in a different way and hopefully resolve in a different manner than what they’ve been doing.”

Kendal Henry

“Their money is not going to widgets...They need to be okay with ambiguity, and with a lack of knowing a predetermined outcome. And that that’s the actual value. And the whole point of doing these collaborations is that it’s not like, you tell me what you want and I give it to you. It’s [that] we’re working together, we’re not making a transaction, we’re hopefully making a transformative experience for all of us, you know?”

Shannon Daut

“I think a lot of government workers are kind of mired in the rules and the procedures and the bureaucracy and the process had been there a long time. That gets kind of calcified... I don’t want to blow things up for the sake of blowing things up. But I firmly believe that there’s always a better way to do things, especially in government, there’s so much room for improvement.”

Julie S. Burros

“That [government/arts collaborations] are so much more than about the final product, that it really is that the process itself is what is transformational.”

Sallyann Kluz

“For me, I think it’s maybe not so much about the collaborations and it’s more about people understanding that what artists and arts organizations can bring to the table is of equal value...And we need to be able to come together across difference, right? And so there’s nothing better than the arts to do that.”

Deborah Cullinan

“[That] art isn’t just for wealthy people. It isn’t just for museums.”

Marty Pottenger

“I don’t say this to malign them, I think it’s part of the job and their responsibility, but their main concern seems to be safety, public safety, and how much is it going to cost? And how can we do it for less?...And I think they tend to like to have things really explicit and pinned down. So trying to foster that kind of open ended, blue sky thinking that artists can foster would be really good. And I think a lot of the city workers end up enjoying that experience because it’s so different from what they do every day.“

Anonymous

FINDINGS: GOVERNMENT LEADERS

How Government Workers Describe Themselves

According to my interviews, the government leaders that I spoke to are working to counter stereotypes of being slow, ineffective, and part of a non-responsive bureaucracy. They are extremely interested in innovation, which they define as trying new solutions to persistent problems.

They are already participating in programs that allow them to approach their work in ways that are "out of the box." These interviewees offered many examples of experimental initiatives that break out of the mold of traditional government, which I will elaborate on later in this report.

They understand the value of collaboration and see it as a necessary part of their work. Assistant City Manager Brent Stockwell, Mayor Laura McLean, and the City Manager interviewee are required to work across different departments as executive-level administrative supervisors; the other interviewees have responsibilities that include collaborative projects with a variety of stakeholders both within and outside of their departments.

"The innovations that we work on, they're innovations that can improve things for the lives of citizens directly, they're things that can improve our ability to recruit and retain employees, and they're also ways that we can solve local problems."

Brent Stockwell

Finally, they expressed a willingness to try new things in a low-risk way. They seek out opportunities for this in their work, not just for the sake of doing things differently, but to solve problems that they have not been able to solve yet through previous methods.

In sum, these government workers view themselves as forward-thinking entrepreneurs who are interested in providing excellent service for their constituents while constantly finding new ways to improve systems and outcomes for the greater good.

Municipal Workers are Problem Solvers

Along with providing basic city services, their main focus is on addressing the issues they face in their municipal purview. Much of how these interviewees described their work was meeting the needs of residents and connecting them to the resources that the city provides. Along with local issues, cities also face huge, complicated problems that require a range of solutions, like the climate crisis, equity disparities, and housing crisis. These problems are so large that they will require many people working to solve them in smaller, compounding ways; these municipal leaders are working on what they can do in their own cities to contribute to the larger wave of change.

"We're working on climate action and sustainability. And no one has solved that. So there's no one foolproof solution for how to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions or to make your community more resilient."

Taylor Moellers

They are also working to improve civic engagement; the topic came up nine times in our interviews. Along with getting residents more involved in government, five interviewees expressed a need to improve communication between government and the communities they serve. For example, Mairi Albertson said that through Memphis' Housing and Community Development department she is finding ways to start conversations about affordable housing outside of the city's traditional partners in order to raise awareness of what resources are available. Two interviewees discussed ways they are trying to improve trust in government by reaching out to populations who have been historically ignored.

"We've adapted a number of ways to really make information about affordable housing and the needs for affordable housing available and accessible to anyone."

Mairi Albertson

Importance of Innovation and Creativity

When asked if innovation at the municipal level was something that mattered to them, all of my interviewees said yes. As a buzzword growing in popularity, "innovation" can mean many different things ranging from creative thinking to advancements in technology. When asked about their definition of innovation in local government, the government workers I interviewed were aligned with the former - they all view innovation at the municipal level as an opportunity to step outside of what they know to improve their work.

"There's a lot of stereotypes about people in government, that government is slow, government isn't effective, people are slow to respond. ... [Innovation in government to me means] really being responsive, effectively responsive in a timely manner to anyone who reaches out to us and also thinking about programs differently, and constantly evaluating how we're addressing the needs in the community and not being hesitant to change direction."

Mairi Albertson

"I would say innovation in local government means stepping outside of the box and stepping into a space where we do things differently. I think with local government or any type of government there could be a mindset of, 'Well, we've always done it this way. Why do we need to change things?' But I think we are living in a space now where we have to be inclusive to all members of the community. And think outside the box when it comes to service delivery, accessibility, and just being a good neighbor as well."

Anonymous

"The application of [equity] work here is definitely influenced by innovation. There's a mandate to make sure we're spending 50% of our funding on equity, which in itself is very innovative. And it allows for us to stretch our minds as to what it means to fit this programming to our residents. But also making sure that we're supporting a lot of communities that might have been left behind at certain points by public entities."

Anonymous

"We've taken the approach that we look at possibility government wherever we can rather than probability government, so it's trying new things while you're trying, of course, tried and true ways of delivering service. We've got to innovate and try new ideas as well."

Laura McLean

"Innovation is one of the cultural pillars in our office, something that we talk about a lot. We're really given the freedom as staff to try new things, to fail, fail fast, you know, bounce back, try it again a little bit differently. We're trying new things and new approaches that government maybe hasn't tried before, or been as proactive about, because we do have this Climate Protection Fund."

Taylor Moellers

"Innovation in local government, to me, it means consistently finding ways to serve the residents in a more collaborative, effective and efficient way."

Anonymous

"Innovation in local government would be taking what you know, applying what you don't know, to create something new and useful within the context of service to local community, through a city or town."

Brent Stockwell

Many of them said that there was a culture of innovation in their working areas, sometimes driven by executive leadership. In Scottsdale, Brent Stockwell said innovation is important enough to them that it's one of their employee values in addition to being a community value decided by voters. They also mentioned some practical ways that their jobs allow for them to be more innovative than their counterparts in other departments or cities. For Taylor Moellers, the newness of her office and the flexibility of their funding has allowed for them to be more experimental in their programs. A City Manager interviewee said that her city has an Office of Performance and Innovation that is very close structurally to the senior leadership team, so new ideas reach her very quickly.

When asked what creativity means to them in their policy domain, they described it in much of the same way as innovation. They see creative problem-solving as a big part of their job, and they described many instances where they needed to come up with creative solutions to problems in their work. Countering the idea that all government workers are set in their ways, my interviewees expressed that they were very interested in finding ways to do their jobs differently if it led to a better result. They expressed that seeing things from a different perspective and outside of norms is useful in their work. They already use iterative, design-thinking practices in their work in which they implement a creative process to test out solution theories. Finally, they said that creativity to them meant freedom: the flexibility to shift their work to fit the current need, or to make changes without getting caught up in red tape.

Readiness for Change

The government leaders I interviewed are interested in breaking out of doing things the way they have always been done. They repeatedly expressed frustration with getting stuck in old, institutional ways that limit their work. They understand that to keep successfully addressing the needs of their communities, they have to keep evaluating what parts of their work need to change. They claim to be ready for big changes if they will solve the problems they're working on.

"Some of [the barriers] we create ourselves ... Well, we don't have to do it that way. You know, that's something that we've chosen to do."

Mairi Albertson

The government leaders I interviewed are all used to starting new, experimental programs, including participatory budgeting, innovative engagement programs, new grantmaking policies, cross-sector collaborations, and new civic communication strategies. For example, one interviewee mentioned a program in which entrepreneurs are invited to test out solutions in government in a year-long partnership. It's worth noting that this model is almost identical to a civic artist in residence program, just with a business framework.

Laura McLean said that in Boise she tries to keep a mindset of "possibility government" instead of "probability government," which is a concept of public entrepreneurship pioneered by the Harvard Business School (Bloomberg Cities Network, 2021). The goal of possibility government is to step past public solutions that will probably work, but lead to mediocre outcomes, and into solutions which will only possibly work but could lead to much better outcomes if they succeed. The other government leaders did not name this strategy explicitly, but showed similar entrepreneurial mindsets by expressing a willingness to experiment in order to find solutions.

All of these interviewees discussed strategies for beginning experimental initiatives, including doing pilot programs, making strategic use of funding, tying the program to city policy, and seeking support from higher leadership. These are many of the very same strategies CAIR field leaders listed as necessary to their success. Of these, piloting new programs was mentioned most frequently; government leaders described that conducting experimental pilots allowed them to test new programs in a low-risk, iterative way.

"So, in cases where we can build a case for making change in our organization or in our community through piloting programs, it helps us limit the investment but not limit the creativity."

Anonymous

They also described ways that the creative solutions they implemented led to lasting systems change. For example, Taylor Moellers described a new mini grant process that allowed community members to get funding up front for climate-related home or business improvements; this was necessary because these residents could not afford to pay out of pocket for these improvements. They worked with colleagues in several other departments to pioneer this new payment process that can now become implemented in other city grantmaking programs.

Experience with Collaborating

All of these government leaders are used to collaborating with partners outside of their work area. Again, they mentioned many of the same strategies for successful collaborations that CAIR field leaders did; they work to build trust with their partners, listen to their needs and concerns, and invest time into developing new initiatives. Mairi Albertson stressed the importance of getting partners involved as early as possible in the life of a project so that their input can be fully incorporated. Four interviewees discussed the need to hold intentional conversations with stakeholders to develop relationships and discuss the nuances of working together.

This is evidenced in one interviewee's example of working with community organizations to conduct outreach for unhoused folks. By intentionally developing relationships with activist groups that had opposed the city's policies relating to unhoused people, city employees were able to build enough trust for the two groups to work together toward their shared goal, which was safety for homeless populations.

In addition to working collaboratively with partners, the government workers I interviewed seek out other opportunities to learn from others. One interviewee referenced being involved in national cohorts where she is able to learn from the experiences of other municipalities. The government leaders I spoke to expressed an interest in seeing how other municipalities are innovating in order to potentially test that out in their own cities.

They also expressed the need to engage community in order to share ideas and learn how to do better work. One interviewee said that she regularly meets with various community groups in her leadership as City Manager; Mairi Albertson described hosting community conversations about housing to share knowledge and hear the community's needs; Brent Stockwell talked about a new program that is intended to encourage civil discourse in Scottsdale's public forum. Overall, they understand that good ideas are the product of conversations between folks who may not always agree, and that this strengthens their work.

"I think the more people we engage the more ideas we hear about how to solve the problems in the community."

Mairi Albertson

Decision-Making and Barriers

I asked the government leaders about common barriers that they run into when starting new initiatives. Several brought up issues with funding, including startup costs to get a new program off the ground. They also mentioned butting against the systems already in place, like obligations, rules, or roles that prevent people from working together effectively. Competition with other city priorities was another barrier.

When making decisions about whether to start a new initiative, two mentioned that they'd like to know the specifics of the full process; this

supports what CAIR workers said about needing to counsel government partners in being open to unknowns. However, more important than knowing a full plan was having supporting research: five of seven interviewees said they made their decision knowing that whoever was presenting them with the idea had thoroughly evaluated it. The City Manager interviewee said that she makes decisions based on risk versus reward. For example, her city has a participatory budgeting program that has allocated three million dollars from the city's capital improvement funding and allowed residents to propose, and then vote on, projects to be funded by the city. In a city with a one-hundred million dollar budget, three million dollars is not a lot of money to divert to projects that will benefit the community anyway; thus, it is a low risk, high-reward initiative. This supports what several CAIR professionals said about their comparatively low-budget arts projects being less of a risk in the scale of municipal funding.

"I need to know that there's been significant research done and enough engagement done to have us work on something that is not creating a solution for an issue that doesn't exist, but actually innovating in areas that we've had difficulty getting positive outcomes."

Anonymous

Reactions to CAIR Programs

After our discussion of innovation more generally, I stated that I was specifically studying a kind of innovation in government called civic artist in residence programs, gave a brief example of a CAIR project, and asked if that was something they were familiar with.

Three of seven interviewees said they had not heard of CAIR programs, at least as I had described them. Two of seven recognized that they had heard about similar strategies or seen examples from other cities. Finally, two said that they already do this work in their cities. Of these, one said that her city has a cultural master plan and gave an example of a community-engaged arts process to design a recreation center. The other said that her city has artist residencies at some of their cultural sites; when I reviewed the information about these programs online, I determined that because there was no mention of the artists working on municipal projects that these appear to be traditional artist residencies rather than change-based, civic artist residencies.

Despite being largely unfamiliar with this strategy, these interviewees understood the idea more than I expected. In the CAIR field, it is easy to think about this framework as something very new and different to how governments operate, but my interviewees felt otherwise. No interviewees responded negatively; many were able to consider it as a possibility for their work if they did not see it as work they were already doing.

The following is a discussion of their individual responses as I believe they demonstrate an interesting range of perspectives.

"I think it's a really great strategy. Because a lot of times we find community engagement is hard, you know, to your point, especially something like a town hall meeting, or a public hearing, the only people that typically show up for those have some beef with something, and

that they see that as a way to share their concerns. But if what we're looking for is truly interest from the community and ideas around an issue or a project, you want to find a way that engages them in a meaningful way...Within city and city council divisions, I think that people are very open to including art as a component of a capital project with what the city is doing and are encouraging of that kind of community engagement around that."

Mairi Albertson

- Mairi Albertson also described previous events where the Housing department commissioned an artist to create a temporary activation for a vacant site the city was developing so that the community could start to imagine something in that space, which she described as being very successful and much more tangible than a presentation.

"I'm honestly not familiar with that practice or that model. So it's giving me something to look into and research so if you have any resources you could share, I think that could really help with collaboration between arts and equity community relations as these projects do come up"

Anonymous

- This interviewee described a mural project she worked on that aimed to revitalize a park that was seeing higher levels of encampment. They conducted a survey of residents and incorporated student feedback into the design so that the community felt ownership over the project. She said other projects are planned for that park but that the arts have helped bring community members of all ages into the conversation.

"What would the workload look like for resident creatives? And what type of conversations would they be involved in?...And how could we make sure that that manifests beneficially? Because I could see a lot of really cool programs and stuff that we do. I'm thinking even on the youth side, that could be really cool."

Anonymous

"I think we've been partnering with a lot more community-based organizations that focus around the arts to help be a trusted liaison into communities where government may historically have overlooked or not listened to concerns." "Where on the process would they would be involved? I feel like somebody needs to be there from the beginning as we're creating a new program. We do a lot of surveying and focus groups and stakeholder advisory groups and task forces for things that bring residents and other constituents and stakeholders together. but how could we do that even more effectively and with the right lens?"

Taylor Moellers

- Additionally, Taylor Moellers mentioned that several of her colleagues come from arts backgrounds.

“Well, I think one of the things that I would have is you making sure or that you had a clearly defined challenge that you were trying to address.”
Brent Stockwell

- Brent Stockwell recommended keeping the definition of arts broad, as sometimes people have a limiting understanding of art. He described that the City of Scottsdale uses some arts processes in framing problems in order to understand them differently and see them from a new perspective.

Based on this, I would say that CAIR programs definitely fit into these government employees’ current understanding of their work. Either they see it as something they are already doing, or they can imagine ways that it could be useful to their work. Though many of them expressed that they would need to know more in order to make a decision on moving forward on a project, they were interested in learning and were open to considering it as a possibility. They recognized the benefits that working with artists and using arts processes could provide, like creative solutions and being a trusted liaison to underrepresented publics. Overall, it appears that these government leaders could be reached by CAIR practitioners interested in starting CAIR projects.

REFLECTIONS

In comparing the interviews of CAIR field leaders and government workers, I see more similarities than differences. These two groups are incredibly aligned in their perspective on innovation in municipal government and what role the arts can play in it. After analyzing my research findings, I have identified several pathways for building the field of civic artist residencies:

- Build on the ways CAIRs fit into city frameworks
- Push for more investment from cities
- Seek true collaboration
- Commit to building deeper relationships

Build on the Ways CAIRS Fit into City Frameworks

This research demonstrates that government workers can be entrepreneurial thinkers. As discussed in my findings, municipal employees are breaking stereotypes; they are interested in experimenting with new approaches because they know that their old methods won’t solve the complicated problems cities face. They are interested in “possibility government,” or trying things that will less likely work but serve as opportunities for iteration.

This is effectively “design thinking,” a practice that applies the tools of

designers to solve problems by observing, analyzing, brainstorming, and developing prototypes. (IDEO, n.d.) This framework developed by creative thinkers is now one of the top innovation strategies in the business and public administration worlds. In recognizing the ways that the creative process is already showing up in their work, we can see that some government workers may be more comfortable with the artistic process than they realize. They may be even practicing it in some ways already, as described in my findings.

It is true that this report only included the perspectives of a small sample of government workers whose participation perhaps was influenced by their interest in innovation. However, a cursory glance at all the ways that innovation shows up in public administration through materials published by municipalities, public service professional organizations, and training programs supports this. While this innovative mindset certainly will not apply to every government worker, this research demonstrates that like-minded partners are out there and interested in this work.

I think it's useful to frame CAIR projects as a deeper dimension of work that government staff have experience with already. In introductory conversations with potential partners, we can build a frame of understanding by relating it to the creativity and innovation needed in their own jobs. CAIR practitioners can ease fears that government collaborators will be treated like change-phobic bureaucrats by inviting them to be active partners in the creative process of solving their most pressing problems. We can help them feel less intimidated by a process they don't trust by demonstrating that it is more familiar than it seems.

Strategy: Push for More Investment from Cities

Because there is so much readiness for the CAIR framework in municipal government, we need to push for more investment from cities, financially and otherwise. As established, cities are not really investing in CAIR programs: only a small handful are fully city-funded, and other cities are getting off the hook by providing in-kind support or financing individual projects rather than ongoing operations. CAIR field leaders are squeezing these projects in through strategically procured funds rather than receiving long-term investment.

While not having to answer to governments financially may offer more freedom for project administrators, I believe this lack of investment is a trade-off. It can introduce opportunities for surface-level partnerships since the city isn't putting its money on the line. It also opens the door for precarity as these projects rely on less stable funding through grants. Additionally, it can affect the staying power of these projects. We should celebrate change at all scales, but low-investment projects like single year initiatives are hard-pressed to make transformative change unless they are designed very strategically. Change takes time, which can be at

odds with how governments are designed; if government partners are on board with this framework, we need to work together to support expansive timelines within a program's funding structure. And with so much to be done, why limit our change-making potential to a one-time project?

We already know what full investment can look like. We know that high-level policies like municipal cultural plans can help us get there. Additionally, strategically aligned partners with funding power can start by replacing existing engagement line items with CAIR projects. If transformative change is the goal, we need to push for real investment from cities.

Strategy: Seek True Collaboration

Investment also includes how partners work together. In many ways, CAIR partnerships have the same rules for success as any collaboration: all parties have to be willing, enthusiastic participants, agree on expectations and duties, practice clear communication, and commit to working together for success.

However, these projects are not easy and will require closer ways of working together than government workers may be used to. Partners should establish mutually beneficial, values-based goals they can re-center with when things get messy.

The key for longevity and structural change through CAIR projects is dedicated alliance, not surface-level participation. Partners need to cultivate buy-in culturally in all participating agencies to create a foundation of support that can reach further than individual projects or individual people.

Government workers already have experience collaborating. CAIR practitioners can build on the ways that government workers already work together in order to build deeper partnerships.

"I can't think off the top of my head of a collaboration that I've been in where I'm trying to force someone who doesn't understand the value...I think if you do have collaborations where you don't understand what the other party is bringing to the table or they don't understand what *you're* bringing to the table, it's not going to work."

Deborah Cullinan

Strategy: Commit to Building Deeper Relationships

Pushing for this kind of collaboration comes from developing deeper relationships than we are encouraged to do in transactional environments like municipal governments. What I learned in the course of this research is that convincing non-arts partners to participate in CAIR projects is not the point. CAIR work is strategic, but ultimately values-driven and relationship-based. This work is built on coalition-building among like-minded peers who then can invite others into the process, including those with more institutional power.

Successful communication between partners in CAIR programs is a two-way street. What is the best way for you to be heard? Are you the best person to listen? How can you recognize the ways you can work together that are mutually beneficial in catalyzing the transformation in government that everyone wants?

I believe a large focus of the CAIR framework is humanizing government work, both in what these projects can accomplish and how they can operate. Government workers don't often get to experience being seen as multidimensional human beings, and as the people who make choices about our daily lives, that is to everyone's detriment. If they are able to experience more empathetic treatment themselves in the process of coordinating a larger CAIR project, they can see firsthand the impact this framework can have on their work. The systems change we want to see must be practiced across all scales, including in everyday interactions (brown, 2017). By centering relationships wherever we can, we can start to build the environment of care necessary to support this work.

Audience for Field-Building

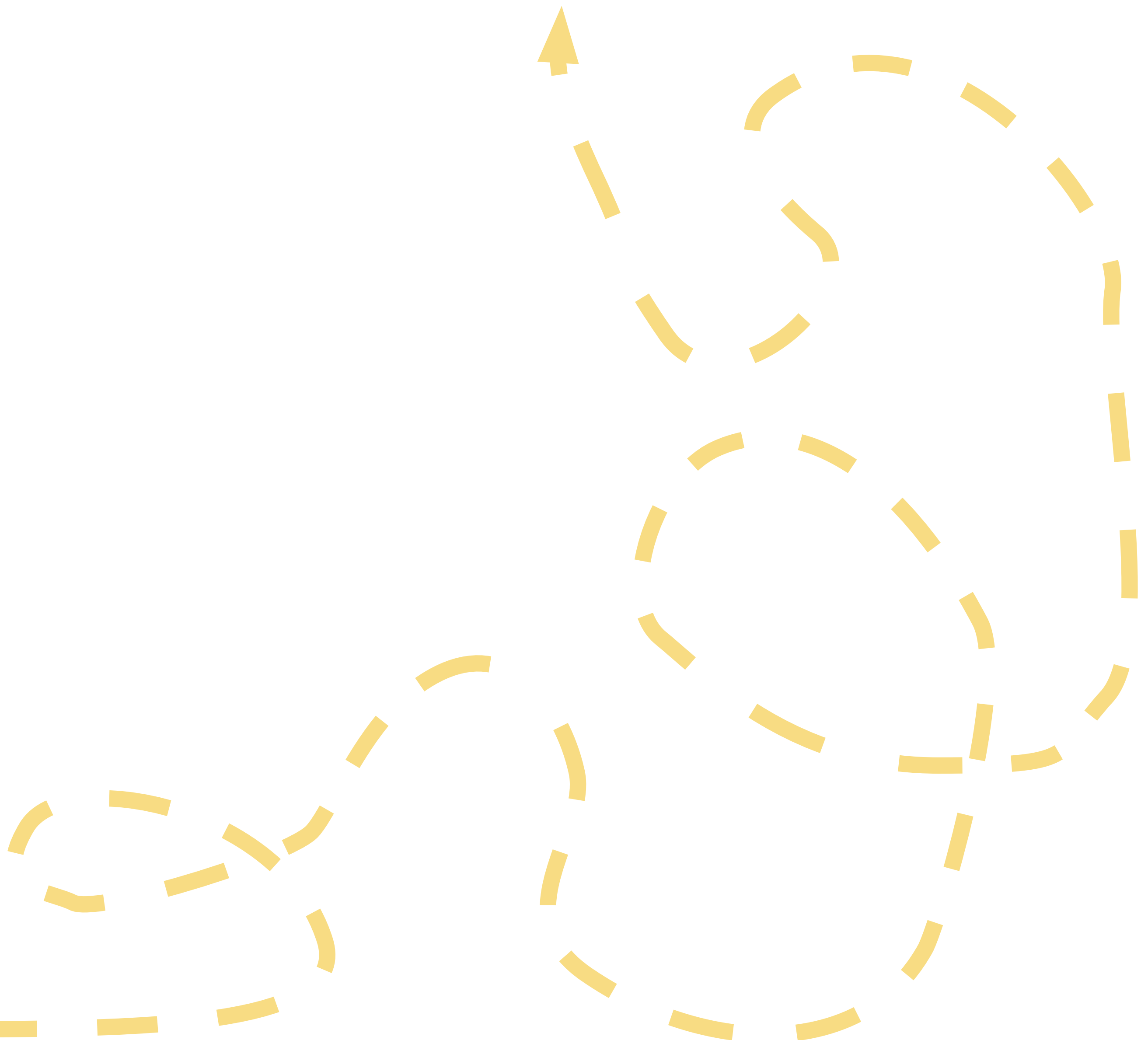
The audience I proposed to target with field-building efforts shifted over the course of my research. When developing my initial goals for this project, I had thought that I would need to build a strategy for pitching CAIR programs to executive-level municipal leaders. What I discovered was that while approval from these high-level employees is necessary for success, they are unlikely to initiate CAIR programs and will be more likely to be reached by their own colleagues who they know and trust. Instead, I propose that the most beneficial audience to target is mid-level municipal employees, arts-focused or not, who have the institutional power to start these programs but need help navigating how to build effective, sustained partnerships.

As an arts administrator in a municipal organization myself, this makes sense. In our public art work my colleagues and I are already trying to conduct more transformative work, but it's easy to get bogged down by rules, roles, capacity, and expectations. What would be helpful to me, and I think others in my position, is an interactive guidebook with facilitation frameworks that lead us through the process of committing to CAIR work based on what I have identified with this research: building collaborative relationships, pushing for necessary investment, and other ecosystem-level strategies that support a culture of arts-integrated government work. As previously discussed, this information is is rather scattered or challenging to parse in the CAIR resources that exist; this guidebook can help staff navigate the early stages of building support for government-arts collaborations, then refer them to program design resources that can help them bring it to life. While targeted at government administrators, I think this guide could be useful in beginning arts partnerships with any non-arts service organization. I intend to produce this guidebook at a later date.

Conclusion

As the field of Civic Artist Residencies develops, we can recognize the successes we have already achieved and look forward to those that are possible. This project adds to the growing body of evidence that professionals on both sides of these partnerships are invested in positive change in our local governments.

We know how to work together. We know the value of creativity. The complicated problems we face are not going to go away on their own. We can look to artists to help us bridge engagement gaps to help municipalities provide more equitable services. This research shows that government partners are ready, and that through dynamic local partnerships we can work holistically towards more livable communities.



GLOSSARY

Academic Journals
A publication that has been judged by an independent panel of experts which has scholarly information, usually written by professors, researchers, or experts in a subject area and not intended for the general public. (Return)

Advisory Committee
A group of people who are charged with exercising general supervision over a project and directing project development. (Return)

Artist
A person engaged in any activity related to creating art or practicing the arts. This title is self-defined by individuals and includes disciplines such as poets, dancers, theatermakers, visual artists, storytellers, culture bearers, etc. (Return)

Artist-in-residence, or residency
Traditionally, a method of engagement in which artists spend time producing work in a particular location, usually supported by a stipend, materials, or lodging. Contemporarily, artists-in-residence spend time with a group of people or an organization developing projects or producing artistic activities or events. Today there are many variations of this practice, including artists working alongside city staff to develop public art strategies and procedures. (Return)

Charrettes
A French word, "Charrette" means "cart" and is often used to describe a collaborative planning process that harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a master plan that represents transformative community change. (Return)

Civic Artist in Residence (CAIRs)
Programs that embed an artist into the non-arts context of governmental work to serve a community or internal need through arts processes, regardless of output. (Return)

Civic Engagement
Both political and non-political processes undertaken to make a difference in the civic life of communities; also, the development of the knowledge, skills, values and motivation needed to make that difference. (Return)

Civic Practice Art
Projects that are co-designed with residents and/or community/municipal agencies and involve artists aiming their creative practice/assets at residents' self-defined needs. (Return)

Coalition-Building
The primary mechanism through which groups (individuals, organizations, or nations) of similar values, interests, and goals can develop their power base as one and thereby better pursue their interests. (Return)

Cohort
A group of people working and learning together, progressing through the same curriculum and finishing their program together. (Return)

Creative Placemaking
Activity in which partners from public, private, nonprofit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities (NEA.) The following terms used in the context of Creative Placemaking refer to strategies that seek to build up the foundations that already exist in community:

- **Placekeeping:** honoring the arts and culture that is already going on. Lifting it up through strategic programming.
- **Placeholding:** Holding space in an inclusive way, for people to engage in arts and culture activities that equitably engage and benefit all stakeholders.

(Return)

Cross-sector
Relating to interactions between sectors, such as how one sector affects another sector, or how a factor affects two or more sectors; in this use, working between two or more sectors collaboratively on the same issue or project for mutual benefit. (Return)

Cultural Foodways
The examination of the role of food and food-related behavior in cultural groups, and the ways in which food knowledge is transferred within and varies between societies. (Return)

Design Thinking
A methodology which provides a solution-based creative thinking approach to solving problems. It encourages organizations to focus on the people they're creating for, which leads to better products, services, and processes. (Return)

Divergent Thinking
A thought process used to generate multiple, unique ideas or solutions to a problem through spontaneous, free-flowing, "non-linear" thinking. (Return)

Empirical Research
The process of developing systematized knowledge gained from observations that are formulated to support insights and generalizations about the phenomena being researched. (Return)

Executive-level
In this case, government staff with high-level managerial power such as city managers, mayors, commissioners, or department heads. (Return)

Facilitation
The use of techniques and methods to guide a group of people to reach an end goal or solution. (Return)

Field-Building
The process of opening doors to future prospective practitioners of a framework, method, or vocation. (Return)

In-Kind
Goods, services, and transactions not involving money or not measured in monetary terms. (Return)

Innovation
The process of developing new methods, products, services, or management strategies that are better than those which came before. (Return)

Institutional Memory
The collective set of facts, concepts, experiences and knowledge held by a group of people working in an institution like a business, corporation, or organization. (Return)

Modality
The way or mode in which something exists or is done. (Return)

Municipality
A city, town, or county that has corporate status and local government. (Return)

Non-profit Sector
An organization that has been granted tax-exempt status by the IRS because it furthers a social cause and provides a public benefit. (Return)

Philanthropy
Voluntary giving by an individual or group to promote the common good; in this case, the national landscape of foundations that distribute funding for social causes. (Return)

Possibility Government
The pursuit of new programs and services by public leaders and their partners that, by virtue of their novelty, are unlikely to work but have a higher outcome that can last long term. (Return)

Private Sector
The part of a country's economic system that is run by individuals and companies, rather than a government entity. (Return)

Probability Government
The pursuit of programs and services by public leaders and their partners that are likely to work but oftentimes lead to middling outcomes that aren't really up to the task especially in the long term. (Return)

Public Sector
Portion of the economy composed of all levels of government and government-controlled enterprises. (Return)

Social Practice Art
An art medium that focuses on engagement through human interaction and social discourse to present an artist's concept. (Return)

Stakeholders
In this usage, a party that has an interest in a project and is invested in ensuring a positive outcome. (Return)

Transformative Change
A philosophical, practical and strategic process to affect revolutionary change within society. (Return)

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