Dear NPN Friends

Over the past two years, NPN has undertaken a holistic process of transformation, believing that courageous programming, solid operations and financial resiliency go hand in hand. We designed an iterative, ongoing process — not only for strategic planning but also as organizational practice, to commit to active learning and adaptation.

In the face of significant, long-standing financial challenges, we have taken on the work of restructuring with openness and humility, examining NPN’s internal practices, our outward-facing programs and the systems in which we are rooted.

At the center of this work is a renewed commitment to build a more just and equitable arts field. Decades of data and stories, interpreted through honest analysis, have guided us as we acknowledge myths and examine our shortcomings. We resisted the impatience for early answers and dug deeply into questions with critical implications for both our structures and our vision.

As we move forward with a reimagined NPN, we will align all our programs, practices, and policies to ensure that our work builds and shifts power for artists, advances racial and cultural equity, builds relationships and reciprocity, and works toward systems change.

We believe systemic disruption calls on us to engage in inclusive, spirited movement-building that recognizes there is no one-size-fits-all approach and challenges each of us to find our role in building a more just and equitable field.

We enter this work with both love and fury, honoring the extraordinary legacy NPN has built and knowing how much more we have to do together. As we traveled this journey of reflection and transformation over the past year, we are humbled by the generous wisdom of those who have long-championed liberation in our field and who challenge us to respond with urgency.

Onward!

Caitlin Strokosch
President & CEO
NPN

Board of Directors

Chair: Shay Wafer
Executive Director //
WACO (Where Art Can Occur) Theatre Center
(Los Angeles, CA)

President: Caitlin Strokosch
President & CEO //
National Performance Network
(New Orleans, LA)

Treasurer: Joan K. Osato
Producing Director //
Youth Speaks, Inc./The Living Word Project
(San Francisco, CA)

Secretary: Stephanie McKee
Artistic Director //
Youth Speaks, Inc./The Living Word Project
(New Orleans, LA)

Leticia Bajuyo (outgoing)
Independent Visual Artist
Professor of Sculpture //
Dept. of Arts, Media & Communication
Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi
(Corpus Christi, TX)

Eyenga Bokamba
Artist | Consultant
(Minneapolis, MN)

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Performing Arts Director //
The King Arts Complex
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On the Boards
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OMGArtsplus
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GALA Hispanic Theatre
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Jorge Rojas
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Director of Education and Engagement //
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(Salt Lake City, UT)

Abe Rybeck (outgoing)
Executive Artistic Director //
The Theater Offensive
(Boston, MA)

Michele Steinwald (outgoing)
Community Engagement Consultant //
The Cowles Center
(Minneapolis, MN)

Harold Steward
Managing Director //
The Theater Offensive
(Boston, MA)

Samuel Valdez
Artistic Director //
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Photo Above:
NPN staff welcomes attendees to the 
2018 Annual Conference in Pittsburgh, PA
Afrofuturism dance and media workshop
André M. Zachery
Credit: Kathryn D. Spengler
In 2018, NPN re-committed itself to a more equitable vision for the future, using our values to guide financial decision making. We carefully looked at who benefits from our funding structures and then intentionally reframed and streamlined programs. NPN is moving away from former program “silos” — Local / National / International, and Visual / Performing — in favor of a more global, cross-discipline approach, focusing on activity that allows us to best achieve our evolving vision.

The Creation & Development Fund (CDF) and Artist Engagement Fund (AEF) have been adapted to incorporate more flexibility. Both Funds are now open to all disciplines, as long as the project results in a live, experiential exchange between artists and community (public presentations, performances, gallery exhibitions or community activities).

Turn the page for more information on CDF and AEF, including program guidelines and a full listing of projects supported over the past year.

2017 Annual Conference // San Francisco

NPN co-hosted its Annual Conference with Youth Speaks, La Peña Cultural Center, MACLA and Yerba Buena Center, with the support of dozens of Bay Area community members on December 14-17, 2017.

The San Francisco Conference deepened connections with the local community by featuring local artists and companies in “Live & On Stage” performances, making visits to various Bay Area art spaces and exploring the area’s vibrancy, challenges and resilience through the lens of art and activism. Over 350 participants shared work and strategies, exchanged ideas and inspiration and further developed relationships.

Photo Above:
2017 Annual Conference in San Francisco

Photo Left (opposite page):
Belowing Sun
Mind Over Mirrors
Credit: Nathan Keay
What is Cultural Policy at NPN?

NPN defines “cultural policy” as a system of arrangements (policies, practices, trends, etc.), both public and private, that govern and influence the arts and cultural sector. Our intention is to participate in, learn from and influence cultural policy toward a more just and equitable world by:

• building and shifting power for artists
• advancing racial and cultural equity
• fostering relationship-building and reciprocity between individuals, institutions, and communities
• working towards systems change in arts and philanthropy

Our work is driven by the needs of our direct constituents — our Partner organizations, artists and our local community in New Orleans — as well as opportunities to learn and/or influence throughout the arts sector, the arts philanthropy field and broader social justice movements.

How NPN’s Cultural Policy Work is Enacted

NPN’s cultural policy work is embedded within every department and across a range of platforms and approaches — public speaking, crafting of policy statements, participating in funding panels and boards, attending gatherings of field leaders, writing and publications, organizing convenings and more. It is the purview of all staff and Board members and we work to be more deeply informed and skilled to practice this work. We seek opportunities to lead change as well as learn from others who are better informed or experienced than we are, and to allow this understanding to embed itself into our programming and operations.

Cultural Policy Activities

December 2017 – November 2018

Convenings

Winter
• ENARTES (Encuentro de las Artes Escénicas de Mexico) arts encounter (Mexico City // Dec.)
• APAP conference (NYC // Jan.)
• APAP Emerging Leadership Institute (NYC // Jan.)
• Burning Man Project Board event (New Orleans // Jan.)
• American Academy in Berlin Artist talk with Raven Chacon (Berlin // Jan.)
• Tokyo Performing Arts Meeting (Yokohama, Japan // Feb.)

Spring
• Transcultural Exchange conference, with panel session “Reciprocity in International Exchange” (Quebec City // Feb.)

• Edge Funders Alliance Conference, with panel session “Racial Equity in Philanthropic Practice” (New Orleans // Apr.)
• Southern Prize Awards Ceremony, SouthArts (New Orleans // Apr.)
• ArtPlace America Conference (Louisville, KY // May)

Summer
• First People’s Fund Native Artist Professional Development Training (Albuquerque // Jun.)
• City of Austin Cultural Trust Panel (Austin // Jun.)
• Association of Performing Arts Intermediaries (APAP) Conference (Austin // Jul.)
• Alternate ROOTS ROOTS Week 2018 (Arden, NC // Aug.)
• Facebook Community Boost Training (New Orleans // Aug.)

Fall
• Grantmakers in the Arts Conference, with panel sessions “Transformation in Action: Embodying Emergent Strategies” and “More than Access: What funders can do to make a big difference in disability arts” (Oakland // Oct.)
• Alliance of Artists Communities Conference (Philadelphia // Oct.)
• Creative Placemaking Knowledge Exchange NEA and Kresge Foundation (DC // Nov.)
• Facing Race Conference, with panel session “Battle for our Imaginations” (Detroit // Nov.)
• Thriving Cultures Convening, Surdna Foundation (NYC // Nov.)
• National Service Organizations Convening, Doris Duke Foundation (NYC // Nov.)
Ongoing Partnerships

We are proud to participate in partnerships and initiatives designed to advance our mission and enrich our network. Current collaborations include:

Art x Culture x Social Justice Network
This network brings together artists, activists, cultural bearers and philanthropists to advance social justice across identities, issues, sectors, geographies and power imbalances.

First People’s Fund Performing Arts Fellowship Program
We have partnered with FPF to develop a performing arts mentorship program for emerging indigenous artists.

Grantmakers in the Arts | Racial Equity Committee
This committee guides GIA’s ongoing work in racial equity, including internal organizational assessment, programmatic priorities, research, advocacy and policies and practices for arts funders.

Grantmakers in the Arts | Support for Individual Artists
A committee that has been working to promote and improve funding for individual artists for over 20 years.

Grantmakers United for Trans Communities
An initiative of Funders for LGBTQ issues, aims to inspire a philanthropic culture that is inclusive and supportive of trans people through grantmaking and decision-making.

National Arts Action Summit
An annual gathering of arts advocates from around the country who receive training before engaging congressional leaders in conversations about policies impacting the cultural sector.

National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (NCAPER)
A national partnership that regularly gathers data on recent natural disasters and disseminates resources and information to funders, artists and arts organizations.

National Network of Fiscal Sponsors
A support network that promotes the understanding and professional practice of fiscal sponsorship.

Nonprofit Finance Fund
An organization that helps nonprofits connect money to mission. Through NFF and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, we’re able to provide Partner organizations access to short-term, zero-interest bridge loans of up to $150,000.

On the Move
A cultural mobility information network, including resources for cross-border cooperation and connection.

Performing Arts Readiness (PAR) Project Cohort
A national initiative of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to improve preparedness in the performing arts, led by Lyrasis Group.

Transcultural Exchange
An organization with the mission to foster a greater understanding of world cultures through high-quality art projects, cultural exchanges and educational programming.

Western Arts Alliance’s Advancing Indigenous Performance Initiative
An informal partnership program pairing Launchpad Artists, NFP and opportunities to advance indigenous cultures through the performing arts.

Photo Right (opposite page): a duet on the side of the Westin Portland Harborview Hotel
BANDALOOP
Credit: Sarah Prak
NPN recognizes that there are significant racial and geographic barriers to the organizational health of many of our Partners. Leveraging a Network for Equity (LANE) addresses this inequity by amplifying the leadership of organizations of color and rural organizations through a four-year journey that builds their capacity to thrive.

The fourth year of LANE has seen a shift in the overall work of the NPN staff and Cohort members. Cohort members are working on their organizational infrastructure. They have developed scopes of work, received Change Capital, acquired monitoring tools and identified support through consultants and advisors. While we continue to make the road by walking it, at this stage, all Cohort members have identified goals and are moving toward them.

With individual organizational work on clear footing, we have turned our attention to building mechanisms to share what we have learned and strategizing on the collective impact we’d like to see LANE have on the Network and the field. As an initiative born out of the ramifications of White supremacy, racial inequities and systemic oppressions, we know healthy organizations cannot work inside an unhealthy arts ecosystem in a sustainable way. We must change the conditions under which we work to truly build equity in the field in ways that makes us all better.

LANE has been embraced and generously supported by:

- Carpetbag Theatre (Knoxville, TN)
- Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas (Seattle, WA)
- Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana / MACLA (San Jose, CA)
- Myrna Loy Center (Helena, MT)
- Junebug Productions (New Orleans, LA)
- Su Teatro Cultural and Performing Arts Center (Denver, CO)
- Coleman Center for the Arts (York, AL)
- Hayti Heritage Center (Durham, NC)
- La Peña Cultural Center (Berkeley, CA)
- Pangea World Theater (Minneapolis, MN)
- Native American Community Development Institute / All My Relations Arts (Minneapolis, MN)
- The Theater Offensive (Boston, MA)

To embody LANE’s tagline, “See Leaders Make Change,” we have entered national and international conversations. LANE has participated in conference panels at the 2018 Edge Funders Alliance, Grantmakers in the Arts and Facing Race. There is a continued intention to include LANE in non-arts environments that center racial and social justice. The arts and culture sector is largely disconnected from institutional movement-building that addresses oppressions on a systemic level. By reinserting ourselves into these conversations, we right-size our role in changing the world and open new spaces of support for arts organizations. LANE will also be featured in a 2019 issue of Nonprofit Quarterly. Cohort members are at every opportunity to share their wisdom in their own voices. Many have also leveraged their involvement with LANE to generate local excitement and increase their presence in local media coverage.

**LANE**

**ALPHA Cohort**

Two major milestones marked the culmination of the second year of the Alpha Cohort. As of June 2018, Alpha Cohort members have received over $4 million in Change Capital through direct support from The Mellon Foundation. The organizations are in the midst of transformation, which includes finding and hiring new staff, building new infrastructural systems, engaging current staff in adaptation and deploying new economic models. The Cohort gathered for their second mid-year meeting at MACLA in San Jose, California, April 10-12, 2018. The bulk of the gathering was focused on cohort members sharing their journeys and learnings with each other. Content included collective problem solving, a section on adaptive change and a session on technology led by Aryana Alexis Anderson, Senior Associate of Education, Media and Technology for Carnegie Hall.

**BETA Cohort**

The Beta Cohort met for their first mid-year meeting May 9-11, 2018 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. With the completion of site visits and receipt of $665,000 in Recovery Capital amongst the organizations, the Beta Cohort is turning a collective eye towards change and the courage required for change. Informational sessions during the meeting included a panel with Twin City arts leaders on leveraging the local arts infrastructure and a video conference on the acquisition and activation of space. Both of these rich discussions spurred the imagination of what is possible during change moments.
NPN’s mission, values and visions are manifest in all its programs, including those carried out at home in New Orleans. In a place filled with both traditional and contemporary art practices, NPN’s programming shows up as grassroots activities led by artists dedicated to the preservation of community. Our local engagement is carried out through a Local Network, fiscal sponsorship service and community placekeeping program.

The Local Network is a cohort of artists who participate in quarterly peer-to-peer exchanges, discussing their challenges around creative practices and sharing new strategies for success. Our fiscal sponsorship service provides a much-needed mechanism for the individual artist to access grants and accept private contributions. NPN’s community placekeeping program offers professional development workshops and support for artists at all career stages looking to shape and strengthen their individual practices and careers.

Last year NPN reached a milestone by assisting 32 fiscally sponsored, artistic projects – a goal set in the 2015 strategic plan. While a majority of these artists are New Orleans-based, NPN also assists our awarded Creation & Development Fund artists working in other states. Collectively, our sponsored projects secured $421,000 in funding, directly supported 270 artists and saw audiences grow to 30,000.

**Local Network**

- A&A CoLab
- Africa NOLA
- Artist Corps New Orleans
- Astralis Duo
- Climbing PoeTree
- The Cocoon: Youth Empowerment Program
- Crescent City Creative Carnival
- D. Lammie-Hanson Projects
- Dawn DeDeaux’s Projects
- Deltaworkers
- Faces of Culture
- In Good Company
- Jaime Fennelly’s Mind Over Mirrors
- L9 Center For the Arts
- Last Call
- Life Celebration Project
- Lisa Shattuck and Jeff Becker’s Projects
- Mardi Gras Indian Hall of Fame
- Mel Chin’s Funded Dollar Bill Project
- Mirror Images: Revolutionary Reflections
- Music Inside Out with Gwen Thompkins
- New Orleans Accordion Festival
- New Orleans Community Printshop & Darkroom
- New Orleans International Muralists
- New Orleans Poetry Festival
- nienteForte
- No Dream Deferred NOLA
- Postcards From Over the Edge
- Rebecca Mwase’s Vessels*
- Ron Ragin’s Cultural Projects
- Sally Heller’s Project Series
- Schola Cantorum of New Orleans
- The Theater Offensive
- Clear Creek Festival
- The Theater Offensive, Mondo Bizarro
- The Theater Offensive, Mondo Bizarro, and Clear Creek Festival

* Last Call was recently announced as a 2018 NEFA recipient for New Works in Ensemble & Devised Theater.

** Rebecca Mwase’s Vessels is a recipient of 2017 NEFA’s National Theater Project Creation & Touring Grant

NPN aims to nurture relationships between Louisiana and New Orleans-based artists and the National Partners, by providing access to our services and programs. Last year Creation & Development Funds were awarded to Rebecca Mwase’s Vessels* (commissioner Junebug Productions) and Last Call**: Alleged Lesbian Activities (co-commissioners: The Theater Offensive, Mondo Bizarro, and Clear Creek Festival). Five New Orleans-based artists were subsidized for conference registration and travel to the 2018 Annual Conference in Pittsburgh.

** Rebecca Mwase’s Vessels is a recipient of 2017 NEFA’s National Theater Project Creation & Touring Grant
NPN supports 74 Partners across 31 states and 48 communities, including representation across ethnic, cultural, geographic and economic communities. Organizations are invited to join periodically after a rigorous application process. The number of Partners in the Network is intentionally limited in order to encourage participation, share resources equitably and create robust and sustainable relationships.

National Partners A–Z

**516 ARTS** (Albuquerque, NM)

**651 ARTS** (Brooklyn, NY)

**7 Stages** (Atlanta, GA)

**Arab American National Museum** (Dearborn, MI)

**ArtsAction, Inc.** (New York, NY)

**ArtPower At UC San Diego** (La Jolla, CA)

**Ashé Cultural Center/Efforts of Grace, Inc.** (New Orleans, LA)

**Asian Arts Initiative** (Philadelphia, PA)

**Bates Dance Festival** ( Lewiston, ME)

**Bunnell Street Arts Center** (Homer, AK)

**Carpetbag Theatre, Inc.** (Knoxville, TN)

**Carver Community Cultural Center** (San Antonio, TX)

**Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas** (Seattle, WA)

**Coleman Center for the Arts** (York, PA)

**Contemporary Arts Center** (Cincinnati, OH)

**Contemporary Dance Theater, Inc.** (Cincinnati, OH)

**Dance Place** (Washington, DC)

**Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator** (Miami, FL)

**DiverseWorks** (Houston, TX)

**Florida Dance Association** (Tampa, FL)

**Flynn Center for the Performing Arts** (Burlington, VT)

**Fusebox** (Austin, TX)

**GALA Hispanic Theatre** (Washington, DC)

**Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center** (San Antonio, TX)

**Hammonds House Museum** (Atlanta, GA)

**Hayti Heritage Center/St. Joseph’s Historic Foundation, Inc.** (Durham, NC)

**Highways Performance Space & Gallery** (Santa Monica, CA)

**Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art** (Indianapolis, IN)

**International Sonoran Desert Alliance** (Ajo, AZ)

**John Michael Kohler Arts Center** (Sheboygan, WI)

**Junebug Productions** (New Orleans, LA)

**Kelly Strayhorn Theater** (Pittsburgh, PA)

**King Arts Complex** (Columbus, OH)

**La Peña Cultural Center** (Berkeley, CA)

**LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions)** (Los Angeles, CA)

**Legion Arts** (Cedar Rapids, IA)

**Links Hall** (Chicago, IL)

**Living Arts of Tulsa** (Tulsa, OK)

**MACLA/Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana** (San Jose, CA)

**Maui Arts & Cultural Center** (Kahului, HI)

**McColl Center for Art + Innovation** (Charlotte, NC)

**MDC Live Arts - Miami Dade College** (Miami, FL)

**Meca (Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts)** (Houston, TX)

**Miami Light Project** (Miami Shores, FL)

**Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts** (Brooklyn, NY)

**Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago** (Chicago, IL)

**Myrna Loy Center/Helen presents** (Helena, MT)

**NACD! and All My Relations Arts** (Minneapolis, MN)

**New York Live Arts** (New York, NY)

**On the Boards** (Seattle, WA)

**Outpost Productions, Inc.** (Albuquerque, NM)

**Painted Bride Art Center** (Philadelphia, PA)

**Pangea World Theater** (Minneapolis, MN)

**Performance Space New York** (New York, NY)

**Portland Institute for Contemporary Art** (Portland, OR)

**Portland Ovations** (Portland, ME)

**Pregones Puerto Rican Traveling Theater** (Bronx, NY)

**Project Row Houses** (Houston, TX)

**Red Art Ways** (Hartford, CT)

**REDCAT, Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater** (Los Angeles, CA)

**Redline** (Denver, CO)

**Sandglass Theater** (Putney, VT)

**Skirball Cultural Center** (Los Angeles, CA)

**South Dallas Cultural Center** (Dallas, TX)

**Space One Eleven** (Birmingham, AL)

**Straz Center for the Performing Arts** (Tampa, FL)

**Su Teatro** (Denver, CO)

**The Theater Offensive** (Boston, MA)

**The Yard** (Chilmark, MA)

**Walker Art Center** (Minneapolis, MN)

**Wexner Center for the Arts** (Columbus, OH)

**Women & Their Work** (Austin, TX)

**Youth Speaks, Inc./Brave New Voices** (San Francisco, CA)
Our strategic plan was born in a time of disruption, not just at NPN, but all around us—in our country, our communities and throughout our world. Over the last two years, this spirit has carried us through a holistic process of transforming the way we work. We’re excited to share some of the major changes and lessons from our planning process as well as what to expect from NPN moving forward.

Transformation takes time, and we have allowed our values to bloom as we have disrupted our processes, resisting the tendency to rush to outcomes. Moving forward, we recognize being nimble and responsive to the evolving needs of our constituents requires an intentional and ongoing practice of critical reflection, imagination and growth.

In this spirit of iteration, there is no final document. We plan to continue this process and share along the journey where we commit to change, reassert our values or set new intentions. We invite you to be part of this dialogue! In addition to the reflections and changes offered below, we’ve included some next steps and ways our colleagues can be part of this work.

Navigating Change

Our mission articulates the four pillars through which all of NPN’s work—programs, practices and policies—will flow as we move forward:

1. building power for artists,
2. advancing racial and cultural equity,
3. fostering relationship-building and reciprocity, and
4. working toward systems change.

Mission. NPN contributes to a more just and equitable world by building and shifting power for artists; advancing racial and cultural equity; fostering relationship-building and reciprocity between individuals, institutions and communities; and working towards systems change in arts and philanthropy.

Our vision reaffirms our long-standing focus on our core areas of impact—artists, our network of Partners, the communities with which our Partners engage and the broader cultural infrastructure (funders, colleagues, policy-makers, etc.) in which NPN is situated.

Vision. We envision a world in which artists have greater power and resources for meaningful, sustainable careers; strong networks maximize their collective wisdom, resources and leadership; cultural infrastructure reflects deeper partnerships and more equitable practices; and communities have greater capacity for civic engagement, representation and joy.

*While these statements are not yet fully word-smithed, the concepts and values they embody have been enthusiastically adopted by NPN staff and Board of Directors.

Laying the foundation

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Summary of changes & impact on the Network

Justice: NPN is committing to justice, as both an outcome and a practice. Advancing equity moves beyond diversity and inclusion, and prioritizes work of, by and for people of color, immigrants and Native and Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, trans and LGBTQ people, people in rural communities and others who are systematically marginalized.

Belonging: We believe systemic disruption calls on us to engage in inclusive, spirited movement-building. We welcome everyone who is committed to the core principles in our mission to be part of our work, and we know our network composition will inevitably change as we put these values into practice. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to advancing equity in our field, and our intention is to foster a collaborative and reciprocal network where our entire learning community participates fully in this work in diverse and responsive ways.

On the move: In September 2018, NPN bid farewell to the Arts Estuary, which we operated as an office space for other arts nonprofits, a community gathering place and an event rental venue since 2014. Our new office allows us to streamline operations and opens up new partnerships for programs and gatherings in support of our New Orleans arts community.

International exchange: In this time of increased xenophobia, we assert our belief in global humanity. We have discontinued NPN’s stand-alone Performing Americas Program and U.S.-Japan Connection in order to better respond to our Partners’ international exchange activities, engagement with immigrant communities and support for artists working toward global justice. We invite Partners and other presenting organizations to participate in NPN’s survey on international engagement so we can focus our resources and attention where they can have significant and timely impact.

Return to “NPN”: In August, the Board of Directors adopted the return to National Performance Network (“NPN”) as our organizational name. This reflects our recent decision to clarify our artistic focus on supporting live, experiential exchange between artists and communities and to integrate the Visual Artists Network into this framework. We recognize “performance” does not adequately describe the full scope of our work, and while our Board considered a full name change at this time we wish to challenge the legacy embedded within the name NPN.

Thank you to all who have walked this journey of reflection and transformation with us, including the NPN staff and Board of Directors, Strategic Planning Chair Shannon Daut and all who have shared feedback, advice and inspiration throughout this process. We are so grateful to the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Lambent Foundation for their support of our strategic planning and for being such extraordinary thought partners to NPN.

What’s next?

Resource library: We are building an online library linking to readings, models for organizational practices, ways to evolve our language, and more. Do you have an article or model you believe is essential for advancing our work? Please share!

NPN’s identity: In 2019, we plan to share a new website, logo and branding to embody NPN’s values and offer a platform for more collaborative information-sharing.

Stay tuned!

Network composition: Our Partners are exploring ways to foster greater collaboration and resource-sharing within the network. And throughout the year, our Partnership committee, Board and staff will be developing a new evaluation process for current and potential Partners. We expect to begin a new process in FY20.

Quarterly updates: We want to share more about upcoming opportunities, programming changes, highlights from our network and lessons learned in cultural policy and philanthropy. Look for in-depth quarterly updates, as well as more regular blog posts and social media stories.

THE PROCESS

NPN approached strategic planning with a holistic examination of our history, operations, programs, finances, context within our sector and alignment with other social justice movements. We set out to address two major areas in parallel: to deepen our work in building a more just and equitable field, and to address significant, long-standing financial challenges. We entered this work with openness and humility, examining NPN’s internal practices, our outward-facing programs and the systems in which we are rooted.

External teams

Our planning engaged with the expertise of consultants Justin Laing and Ian David Moss (overall strategic planning), Nonprofit Finance Fund (financial assessment and capitalization planning), a collaboration with Creative Capital, MAP Fund and New England Foundation for the Arts (peer assessment), our Knowledge Building Initiative (KBI), led by Paul Bonin-Rodriguez and participation in Grantmakers the Arts’ racial equity committee.

Internal teams

Committees of NPN staff, Board members, artists and Partners-developed strategies, outcomes and guiding principles around major impact areas within NPN.

• Team Artists: advance equity through direct support to artists

• Team Organizations: advance equity through direct support to arts organizations

• Team Network: build a stronger network committed to systems rooted in justice

• Team Praxis: model and advocate for more equitable organizational practices

• Team Vernacular: embody our values in words
Artist Engagement Fund

Over its three-decade history, NPN has crafted various programs to support the creation and appreciation of art in communities across the country. As our strategic planning process continues to unfold, NPN leaders reimagined its multiple offerings into one unified and flexible program: The Artist Engagement Fund (AEF).

The Artist Engagement Fund seeks to create deeper engagement between artists and communities served by National Partners. Flexibility is key: Funds may be used for planning, documentation or collaborations, and can support open rehearsals, master classes, workshops or other activities in an array of venues and environments. Partners determine for themselves how Artist Engagement projects will develop meaningful connections between communities, artists and presenters.

The new Artist Engagement Fund embodies three important elements which expand the impact of an artist’s presence in a community:

**Artist Mobility**

NPN is committed to supporting artists in moving their work throughout the country, recognizing that sometimes this starts in their own hometowns. Partners now have the flexibility to work with local, regional, national or Mexico-based artists.

**Equitable Distribution of Resources**

A minimum fee structure ensures that all artists are paid fairly, but National Partners can now elect to pay artists more than the minimum, depending on their resources.

**Community Engagement**

While a minimum project length is at least four days, there is now no restriction on the maximum length of an Artist Engagement project.

82
PROJECTS

$365,000
DIRECT SUBSIDIES

$770,000
IN MATCHES

600
ARTISTS

70%
ARTISTS OF COLOR

50%+  
FIRST TIME RECIPIENTS
# Artist Engagement Fund

## Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Partner</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>651 ARTS (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
<td>Gesel Mason (Boulder, CO)</td>
<td>No Boundaries: Dancing the Visions of Contemporary Black Choreographers</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Stages (Atlanta, GA)</td>
<td>Jungle Production (New Orleans, LA)</td>
<td>GOMELA/to return: Movement of Our Mother Tongue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arab American National Museum (Dearborn, MI)</td>
<td>No Boundaries (New York, NY)</td>
<td>Dead Are My People</td>
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<tr>
<td>ArtAction (Tampa, FL)</td>
<td>National Arab Orchestra (Sterling Heights, MI)</td>
<td>The Films of Mohammad Bayoumi</td>
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<td>Anthology At UT San Diego (San Diego, CA)</td>
<td>Andesia Moseley (Knoxville, TN)</td>
<td>AWP Week Poetry Events &amp; Readings</td>
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<td>Ane Cultural Center/Epifania de Dios (New Orleans, LA)</td>
<td>Oyo Oto (New York, NY)</td>
<td>Afro-Cuban Experimental Dance Ensemble</td>
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<td>Asian Arts Initiative (Philadelphia, PA)</td>
<td>Aanya Dance Theater (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
<td>Sprouting Seeds</td>
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<td>Bates Dance Festival (Lewiston, ME)</td>
<td>Byron Ao Yang (San Francisco, CA)</td>
<td>Activate Songbook</td>
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<td>Bunnell Street Arts Center (Homer, AK)</td>
<td>Inprint, a dance company (Middlebury, VT)</td>
<td>The Opulence of Integrity</td>
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<td>Carver Community Cultural Center (San Antonio, TX)</td>
<td>Joe Jumper (Seattle, WA)</td>
<td>Clear &amp; Suite</td>
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<td>Central District Forum for Arts &amp; Ideas (Seattle, WA)</td>
<td>Ping Cheng and Company (New York, NY)</td>
<td>Almost/Absolute</td>
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<td>Pauline Warner (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
<td>Don’t You Feel Better</td>
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<td>Mondo Boreo (New Orleans, LA)</td>
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<td>Sara Bell Dance New York (White Plains, NY)</td>
<td>Monster Outside</td>
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<td>Shanta Grasse Pop</td>
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<td>Contemporary Dance Theatre (Cincinnati, OH)</td>
<td>Takahiro Yamamoto (Portland, OR)</td>
<td>Direct Path to Detour</td>
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<td>Contemporary Dance Theatre (Cincinnati, OH)</td>
<td>Karenza Schad (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
<td>JAXX B</td>
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<td>Dance Place (Washington, DC)</td>
<td>BodyCartography Project (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
<td>Closer</td>
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<td>Cynthia Oliver Co. Dance Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
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<td>Takahiro Yamamoto (Portland, OR)</td>
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<td>Black Label Movement (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
<td>Fall Young Dancers Workshop</td>
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<td>Sandglass Theater (Putney, VT)</td>
<td>Bobo’s</td>
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<td>Fusebox (Austin TX)</td>
<td>Lisa Winfield (Shelburne, VT)</td>
<td>IMAGINARY</td>
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<td>GALA Hispanic Theatre (Washington, DC)</td>
<td>Dance Theatre X (Austin, TX)</td>
<td>(Re)Current Unrest</td>
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<td>Erin Markay (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
<td>Boxer Killer</td>
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### National Partner

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<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ananya Dance Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
<td>Shyamali: Sprouting Words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thaddaeus Phillips (Philadelphia, PA)</td>
<td>Inflatable Spaces</td>
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<td>Bill Shannon (Pittsburgh, PA)</td>
<td>Touch Update</td>
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<td>Terrell Stafford Quintet (Hampton, NJ)</td>
<td>Me: 50 Years Later</td>
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<td>El Teatro Campesino (San Juan Bautista, CA)</td>
<td>Men of Embalal</td>
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<td>Ananya Dance Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
<td>Shyamali: Sprouting Words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dan Frost (Los Angeles, CA)</td>
<td>Pang!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanky Tanzy (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
<td>Landfall Festival of World Music</td>
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<td>Jimena Sarno (Los Angeles, CA)</td>
<td>Home Away from Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Partner</td>
<td>Artist</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Ananya Dance Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
<td>Shyamali: Sprouting Words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marga Gomez (San Francisco, CA)</td>
<td>Latin Standards</td>
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<td>TeAda Productions (Santa Monica, CA)</td>
<td>Masters of the Currents</td>
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<td>The Branded Ladies Cabinet Company (Philadelphia, PA)</td>
<td>Mothers and the Machine</td>
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<td>Dan Frost (Los Angeles, CA)</td>
<td>Pang!</td>
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<td>Jaime Fennelly (Chicago, IL)</td>
<td>Following Sun</td>
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<td>Dance Place (Washington, DC)</td>
<td>Whit’s Going On</td>
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<td>Dhalak Brathwaite (San Francisco, CA)</td>
<td>Spirits</td>
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<td>Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker/Rosas</td>
<td>A Love Supreme</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Making Room</td>
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<td>In a Rhythm</td>
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<td>JACE &amp;</td>
<td>Redolivs de Cultura Boricua</td>
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<td>Bebe Miller Company (New York, NY)</td>
<td>Vinage Man Done</td>
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<td>Bebe Miller Company (New York, NY)</td>
<td>The Emperor</td>
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<td>Karenza Schaad (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
<td>JACK &amp;</td>
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<td>Performance Space 122 (New York, NY)</td>
<td>Violin Man Done</td>
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<td>PICA (Portland, OR)</td>
<td>Heidi Fejes (Minneapolis, MN)</td>
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<td>Portland Outsoures (Portland, ME)</td>
<td>Heather Kravas (Seattle, WA)</td>
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<td>Sandglass Theater (Putney, VT)</td>
<td>Faye Driscoll (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
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<td>Tina Satter (Brooklyn, NY)</td>
<td>Ghost Rings</td>
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<td>Project Bandaloop (Oakland, CA)</td>
<td>Bandaloop</td>
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<td>Sandglass Theater (Putney, VT)</td>
<td>ylon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandglass Theater (Putney, VT)</td>
<td>Abie 2 and the New Utility (New York, NY)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Creation & Development Fund supports new artistic work as part of NPN’s mission. Building relationships between an artist/company and at least two commissioners (one of which is a National Partner), the Fund allows an artistic vision and deep community connections to emerge over a three-year period. Each project is eligible for support in three phases:

1. **Creation**
   - A minimum of $12,000 in unrestricted funds allows artists to experiment and take risks while creating work, and can be used for research and development, materials, artist compensation, technical support, travel, etc.

2. **Development**
   - Projects may apply for up to an additional $10,000 to enhance the development of the work, build community engagement, or prepare the work for travel, touring or presentation.

3. **Mobility**
   - Co-commissioners host the new work, focusing on a live exchange between artists and communities. This exchange can take a variety of forms: public presentation or performance, gallery exhibition, or community residency. Artist Engagement Funds may also be used to support this phase.

**A Program Evolves**

Following rigorous reflection as part of the Strategic Planning process, NPN has committed to prioritizing historically underserved artists and co-commissioners in 2018. These include communities of color, Native American, indigenous, disability, trans and rural communities.

Increased flexibility is a hallmark of the re-envisioned Creation & Development Fund:

- Artists in Mexico are now eligible to apply.
- The focus is no longer exclusively on evening-length, tour-ready productions, but can include place-based, community-driven, and process-centered work.
- Commissioners’ matching funds are tiered according organizational budget size.

**Funders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Babylon: journeys of refugees</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandglass Theater</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
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</table>

*Credit: Kiqe Bosch*
Awards

Title // Artist // National Partner // Co-Commissioners // Description

Try/Step/Shift: A profound journey through the criminal justice system that chronicles the playwright’s own criminalization through spoken word, live music, and dance

Dahlak Brathwaite and Roberta Uno (San Francisco, CA)

Praxis (Dallas, TX)

Terrence M. Johnson Dance Projects (San Antonio, TX)

AMAI: A brave new Spoken Word work that explores the effects of war on both veterans and civilians who have been in war-torn countries.

Paul S. Flores (San Francisco, CA)

Miguel Gutierrez (Brooklyn, NY)

Virginia Grae (Bronx, NY)

MECA (Portland, OR)

Dahlak Brathwaite and Roberta Uno (San Francisco, CA)

Artist // Link // Photo Right (opposite page)

Activist Songbook

New Utility (New York, NY)

Abby Zbikowski/Abby Z and the Prometheus Theater (Miami, FL)

Tremper Arts (Mount Tremper, NY)

Tamar Horovitz

Netta Yerushalmy (New York, NY)

New York Live Arts (New York, NY)

ARTS (San Francisco, CA)

MacArthur Foundation

Jumate (根本不准) (San Francisco, CA)

Five Black Women: A one-woman show unveiling the distinctively different lives of five Black women through poetry, song and DJ mixes

Terrance M. Johnson Dance Projects (Dallas, TX)

South Dallas Cultural Center (Dallas, TX)

Andresia "Real" Moseley (Brooklyn, NY)

ArtAction (Miami, FL)

Jumate Poo (Philadelphia, PA)

Painted Bride Art Center (Philadelphia, PA)

M in Motion: This is a formation. A new dance work addressing choreographic, emotional and spiritual forms in Black queer dance vocabularies

A harmonious system that chronicles the playwright’s own criminalization through spoken word, live music, and dance

A one-woman show unveiling the distinctively different lives of five Black women through poetry, song and DJ mixes

Five Black Women: A one-woman show unveiling the distinctively different lives of five Black women through poetry, song and DJ mixes

Let’s Move You: This is a formation. A new dance work addressing choreographic, emotional and spiritual forms in Black queer dance vocabularies

A harmonious system that chronicles the playwright’s own criminalization through spoken word, live music, and dance

A one-woman show unveiling the distinctively different lives of five Black women through poetry, song and DJ mixes

Five Black Women: A one-woman show unveiling the distinctively different lives of five Black women through poetry, song and DJ mixes

Let’s Move You: This is a formation. A new dance work addressing choreographic, emotional and spiritual forms in Black queer dance vocabularies

A one-woman show unveiling the distinctively different lives of five Black women through poetry, song and DJ mixes
NPN

Financial Information

In FY18, NPN funded 143 projects. Direct program support of $2 million dollars leveraged an additional $3.4 million in matching funds — a total of $5.4 million for artists, arts organizations and communities.

Balance Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>AUDITED FY 2018</th>
<th>AUDITED FY 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash &amp; Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>$ 2,482,778</td>
<td>$ 3,168,781</td>
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<td>Other Current Assets</td>
<td>$ 280,139</td>
<td>$ 2,238,962</td>
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<td>Fixed Assets</td>
<td>$ 516,878</td>
<td>$ 553,123</td>
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<td>Total Assets</td>
<td>$ 3,279,795</td>
<td>$ 5,960,866</td>
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<td>Current Liabilities</td>
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<td>$ 678,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNRESTRICTED</td>
<td>$(1,035,039)</td>
<td>$(1,067,005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</td>
<td>$ 3,740,900</td>
<td>$ 6,348,971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</td>
<td>$ 3,279,795</td>
<td>$ 5,960,866</td>
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Previous Fiscal Year Comparisons

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<th>AUDITED FY 2018</th>
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<tr>
<td>Foundations &amp; Corporations</td>
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<td>Government Grants</td>
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<td>Other Contributed Income</td>
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<td>Earned Income</td>
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<td>Total Income</td>
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<td>Program Costs</td>
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<td>Management / General</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<td>Total Expenses</td>
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<td>$ 4,291,490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surplus / Deficit</td>
<td>$ 31,966</td>
<td>$(819,486)</td>
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We're truly proud of the work we do as a Network. Together, we're fostering a more just and equitable arts presenting field and supporting artists and communities across the country. We know this is only possible with the generous support of people like you.

Thank you to our 2018 public supporters...

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
Ford Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
Lambent Foundation
The Heinz Endowments
The Pittsburgh Foundation
Opportunity Fund
Louisiana Division of the Arts
The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation

Supporters & Donors
...and the Partners, colleagues and friends who donated in 2018:

Stephanie Atkins, Gayle Isa
Roberto Bedoya, Jefferson James
Aisha Tandiwe Bell, Lynn Jeffries
Olive Bieringa, Chloe Jones
Eyenga Bokamba, Pamela Korza
Paul Bonin-Rodríguez, Ruby Lerner
Bill Bragin, Abel Lopez
Stanlyn Brevé, George Lugg
Sharon Bridgforth, Steve MacQueen
Ann Bruisky, Bethelham Makonnen
Allison Carroll, Victoria Meek
Leilani Chan, Joan Orato
Ananya Chatterjea, Lillian Osei-Boateng
Harold Ellis Clark, Jordan Peimer
Jevan Collins, Carla Perlo
Rachel Cook, Adele Person
Rondell Crier, Jenni Person & Chaim Lieber Person
Alec DeLeon
Kathie deNobriga, Malika Robinson
Erin Doughton, Karen Rogers
Asia Freeman, Jorge Rajas
Abe Rybeck
Vallejo Gantner, Mildred Ruiz-Sapp & Steven Sapp
Olga Garay-English, Roelle Schmidt
Jennifer Gardiner, Daniel Singh
Bryan Jeffrey Graham, Michèle Steinwald
Tom Guralnick, Caitlin Strokosch
Tracie D. Hall, Quita Sullivan
Tahni Holt, Anna Trier-Rourke

Alice Valdez, Mark Valdez
Shay Wafer, Rosie Gordon Wallace
Ill Weaver, Janet Wong
Kristina Wong, Nejla Yatkin