

CULTURAL GRANTS PROGRAM
CITY OF BOULDER OFFICE OF ART + CULTURE
GOS GRANT SURVEY FINDINGS

With the submittal of the final grant report for 2016, we asked all recipients of the General Operating Support (GOS) Grants to complete a survey with information about key indicators. With this data, we hope to begin building an understanding of a) the effect the grant has on the organizations, b) how the organizations are impacting the community, and c) some insight into the marketplace of cultural organizations across Boulder.

The GOS Grants.

- > 2016 Grants Budget for General Operating Support = \$380,000.
- > Number of Organizations Funded = 18. On top of that number, a further 15 were considered by the Arts Commission to be worthy of funding, but without the budget to approve additional grants.
- > Average percent of the organization's budget that comes from this grant = 8%.
- > The funds were used to support the sustainable operation of the organizations.

Community Impacts.

How do these 18 organizations affect culture in Boulder?

- > 32,980 programs and events were held by these organizations, reaching out to a total audience of 328,786 people. These organizations spent about \$28 for every audience member to deliver their programs.
- > 2,666 people were employed by these organizations:
 - Most are employing between 1-7 full-time staff and 1-8 seasonal staff. The majority of people employed by these organizations are part time contractors, company members and educators.
 - Volunteers were critical members of staff for most of these organizations. Larger organizations fall into one of two categories: 20-70 or 200-500 volunteers. Small organizations had mostly under 15 volunteers, with a few standouts with over 100.
- > The direct economic spending of these 18 organizations was \$9,204,763.60. When that spending is combined with calculations of total spending by audiences, the Total Industry Impact was:
 - \$11,297,580 to Boulder's household incomes through a workforce of approximately 516.8 FTE,
 - \$675,298 to local government revenue,
 - \$770,083 to state government revenue, and
 - An Overall Economic Impact of \$15,474,712.¹
- > These organizations varied wildly in a measure of innovation: new programs compared to recurring programs. A handful of the most innovative offered as many as 2 new programs to every 1 recurring. Most offered no or very few new programs.
- > Communications, marketing, and promotional campaigns by these 18 organizations included:
 - Impressions with more than 120,000 people through websites,
 - The purchase of 845 advertisements,
 - 252 print campaigns,
 - Media coverage through 390 articles in newspapers and the press,
 - And, an astounding 13,380,880 impressions on social media.

The Marketplace of Cultural Organizations.

What can this data tell us about all the 140 cultural organizations in Boulder? Using the data from this group of 18 organizations as representative of the entire marketplace for cultural nonprofits, we find:

- > Overall attendance for different organizations was mixed, with the largest organizations recording up to 100,000+ in audience to small organizations with just over 1,000.
- > Almost all organizations had very similar audience demographics. Return visitors represent about 70% of the audience, with 30% attending for the first time.
- > The geographic dispersal of these audiences poses challenges:
 - 78% of audiences came from Boulder, a demonstration of the high cultural participation rates of our residents.
 - However, this means that cultural tourism rates remain modest. Only 15% of the audience is from around Colorado, 7% from across the US, and 2% international tourists.²
 - It is notable that these figures were very consistent regardless of size or arts discipline.
- > Ticket prices for programs was somewhat consistent, with most organizations in a range of \$8 to \$24. If we assume that most organizations are indeed spending about \$28 per audience member, then it is useful to note the fact that a typical Boulder organization needs to add \$4-\$20 on top of a ticket price through other sources of revenue.
- > Memberships were offered by only a few organizations, and tended to fall into one of two categories: either about 200 members or upwards of 1,000. Membership costs are just under \$106 on average with much variation.
- > The average overall budget of an organization is about \$511,000 with very wide differences between small and large budgets. Regardless of budget size, most organizations have a balance of income sources with 54% contributed, 42% earned, and 8% other sources.²
- > Grants can be an important source of revenue for Boulder organizations, with most awarded between 1-16 grants from a variety of government and foundation sources and a lot of variety in the amount they received.
- > Maintaining an operating reserve is a healthy practice that most large organizations sustain. A few smaller organizations also keep an operating reserve, but as many do not. Regardless of size, the operating reserve is between 1%-20% of their total budget.
- > Though a few organizations broke even in 2016, most had between \$1,000 - \$20,000 in surplus.
- > The use and effectiveness of communications by organizations in Boulder was mixed. There was variety in the number of people who used websites and social media with no correlation to size or discipline. Print campaigns continued to be used regularly, but with similarly mixed results. Of importance is that few organizations track the success of their campaigns.
- > The way that the press responded to Boulder organizations fell into two categories: those organizations that received 100-200 instances of press coverage and organizations that received only a handful of 5-10.

Notes.

General Note: This was a voluntary survey. Some organizations did not enter complete data.

¹ Arts & Economic Prosperity 4 Calculator,
(http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/aepiv_calculator/calculator.html)

Note that these preliminary figures will soon be updated for the entire Boulder community in 2017 with the release of data from Arts & Economic Prosperity 5. FTE = Full Time Equivalent positions.

^{2,3} This is an average of all data from that specific category, represented as a percentage. Therefore, adding up the data from each of the distinct category averages will not equal 100%.