



CULTURAL DATA PROJECT

NEWS

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FOR RELEASE – July 1, 2013

TEXAS JOINS CULTURAL DATA PROJECT, ADDING IMPORTANT VOICE TO NATIONAL DIALOGUE AND BRINGING VALUABLE RESOURCES TO LOCAL ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Philadelphia, PA — As Texas becomes the 13th state to join the national Cultural Data Project, arts and cultural organizations across the state gain access to a range of technology tools and services designed to help them strengthen their management capacity and demonstrate their value and impact in communities. A consortium of public and private funders in Texas has joined forces to make the CDP's web-based data collection and analytical tools available free of charge to arts and cultural organizations and their advocates throughout the state.

In announcing the news, Beth Tuttle, President and CEO of the CDP said, "We are pleased to welcome Texas with its vast, varied and diverse cultural sector to the Cultural Data Project. In joining the CDP, Texas ensures that its cultural organizations and their important contributions to the quality of life and economic vitality of the state and the nation are counted. "

The Cultural Data Project is rapidly becoming the national resource for collecting, learning from, and disseminating reliable, standardized data for the cultural sector. Based in Philadelphia, the CDP is designed to collect financial and management data for arts and cultural organizations, including those that are unincorporated, of every size and discipline, from museums, theatres, and historic sites to literary organizations and festivals. With Texas' participation, the CDP will encompass more than 14,500 organizations in 13 states and the District of Columbia. Individual organizations in 33 additional states also participate in the project.

The CDP offers a database and management information tool, training, and services for participants who supply a wide range of financial, programmatic, and operational data. Once an organization has added its data, it can

THE CULTURAL DATA PROJECT

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instantly generate information for grant applications or create – and present to its board and current or prospective donors – on-demand analytic reports with sophisticated data visualization graphics on topics such as program activity, free and paid attendance, balance sheet trends, or return on investment in fundraising or marketing dollars. Organizations also can use the CDP to understand how their operations compare to those of similar groups of organizations in their community or in other CDP states. CDP participants have access to a team of on-call database specialists and financial consultants who offer support for CDP data input.

“The results [of participation in the CDP] are eye opening,” says Julie Farr, Executive Director of the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. “Nowhere else can arts organizations quickly compare themselves to peers, easily understand the state of their business, and recognize internal trends. ”

Using CDP resources, municipalities, researchers and advocacy organizations can provide a clearer snapshot of arts and culture in a region, demonstrating the vital role the sector plays. In regions where the CDP has been in use for many years, organizations and advocates have successfully used the data to provide policymakers with evidence of the sector’s assets and needs. For example, the New York Council for the Humanities used CDP data to illustrate the size and economic footprint of the state's cultural sector, and to communicate how the Council’s work contributes to this important economic engine. As a result, and for the first time in two years, the Council was fully reinstated in the state budget.

Cookie Ruiz, Executive Director of Ballet Austin and board member with Texans for the Arts noted, “I was struck yet again with the brilliance of this vision, as someone routinely grasping for powerful stories and sorely needed national metrics to calm the nerves of those that fail to see the role of the arts in the fabric of well-balanced communities. This information becomes a powerful advocacy tool as we work together to make the case for the arts and artists in our state.”

The CDP is designed to professionalize and standardize the financial reporting of arts and cultural organizations, while simultaneously strengthening their decision making and organizational management with reliable data. Thus, many grantmakers funding the project require applicants to use the CDP in their grant request process. Grantmakers use CDP data to better assess the needs of their applicant pool, to measure the impact of their investments, and to inform their grantmaking strategies.

Support for the launch of the Cultural Data Project in Texas is provided by: The Brown Foundation, Communities Foundation of Texas, Houston Endowment, The Meadows Foundation, and Still Water Foundation, with guidance from the members of the Texas CDP Regional Advisory Committees, in Austin: Austin Creative Alliance, Ballet Austin, City of Austin, Fusebox Festival, MINDPOP, Still Water Foundation, and The Webber Family

Foundation; in Houston-Galveston: Bank of America, Harris & Eliza Kempner Fund, Houston Arts Alliance, Houston Endowment, and The Powell Foundation; and in Dallas-Fort Worth-Abilene: Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, Arts Council of Fort Worth & Tarrant County, Communities Foundation of Texas, The Meadows Foundation, SMU National Center for Arts Research, and TACA (The Arts Community Alliance). Additional guidance is provided by: Texans for the Arts, Texas Commission on the Arts, and Texas Cultural Trust.

The Cultural Data Project is dedicated to strengthening arts and cultural organizations—and the sector as a whole—through the collection and reporting of reliable, standardized organizational and financial data. Created in 2004 by a small team of Pennsylvania funders and arts advocates, the CDP now serves more than 14,500 arts and cultural organizations in 13 states and the District of Columbia. After a successful incubation period at The Pew Charitable Trusts, the CDP is now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, based in Philadelphia, with a national board.

For more information on the Cultural Data Project, visit www.culturaldata.org.

For more information on the Cultural Data Project in Texas, visit www.txculturaldata.org.

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