

The Faces of the Future

An Assessment of California's
Next Generation Arts Leadership Initiative



A Joint Initiative of
The James Irvine Foundation and
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Prepared by

harder+company
community research
and Diane Espaldon


August 2012

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“This really made me feel like I could do something big one day, that what I’m doing now is important and that I am not alone in this field.”

Professional Development Grantee

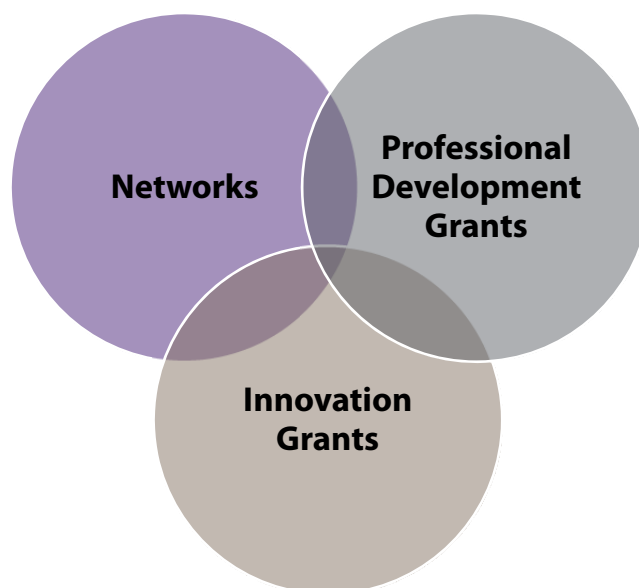


Executive Summary

The Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative was jointly established by the James Irvine Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to promote the leadership development of younger arts professionals (aged 20 to 35) in California’s arts community. Initially planned in 2009, and launched in 2010, the initiative includes four formal emerging arts leader Networks in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and Silicon Valley, as well as statewide regranting programs (managed by the Center for Cultural Innovation) to support professional development scholarships and innovative organizational practices.

The Irvine and Hewlett Foundations engaged Harder+Company Community Research and independent consultant Diane Espaldon in 2011 to document the process of building the initiative and identify early lessons that can inform ongoing discussions about the future of the arts field. The assessment employed web-based surveys of participants in Network activities, as well as interviews with Network leaders, Innovation grantees, and outside experts in the area of nonprofit leadership development with a focus in the arts.

This assessment shows that the Initiative has been successful in achieving its early implementation goals. All three components of the Initiative demonstrate early measures of success on their own. Perhaps more importantly, the elements of this multi-pronged approach work well in concert with one another—although it is too early to expect longer-term results related to careers or the broader sector. The Networks, as well as the two grant programs, are generally built on a framework of openness, inclusivity, and flexibility.



Components of the Next Gen Initiative

- + **The Networks.** While the emerging arts leader Networks are still evolving, the assessment revealed some basic insights into their structure. First, the Networks are still forming their membership base, with 59.2 percent of survey respondents indicating they have been involved for a year or less. The typical survey respondent was female, 30-35, white, and working at an arts nonprofit. However, just over a third of respondents were people of color, and Network leaders indicated a strong commitment to diversifying across lines of ethnicity, age, profession, and relationship to the arts world. (Moreover, because social media served as the primary survey dissemination tool, the profile of an “average” member may not be accurately reflected.)

Each Network is continuing to refine and create new programming. But members are largely already “networked”—keeping connected with their Network through a range of interactions and communication platforms (e.g., Facebook, email, website) regardless of their attendance at specific events. For those who did participate in programs, members indicated moderate satisfaction with events and experiences. Notably, many measures of satisfaction appeared to increase with a member’s level of participation. Beyond the findings about the members and activities, the Network models have turned a potential challenge, high turnover, into a vital opportunity by providing opportunities for emerging arts leaders to take on leadership roles within the Networks themselves.

- + **Professional Development Grants.** The second component of the Initiative, the individual Professional Development Grants, was administered by the Central for Cultural Innovation and appears to offer strong benefits to recipients. The overwhelming perspective of the individual grantees is that the funding has had a clear, positive impact on their ability do their jobs and their personal commitment to the field. The grants allowed for engagement in a wide range of professional development activities. Notably, the funds enabled recipients to choose something that suited their individual needs. Grant recipients were very similar to Network members, demographically speaking. Half the grantees participated in a local Network.
- + **Innovation Grants.** The Innovation Grants, which were administered by the Central for Cultural Innovation and supported organization-level approaches to promoting leadership development for younger arts professionals, garnered uniformly positive reviews from evaluation respondents. They felt the programs funded through the grant created new opportunities for organizations to promote the success of Next Gen staff members. The grants appeared to have their greatest impact when the funded programs were highly tailored to individual staff members’ professional interests and needs. Respondents found the mentorship and shadowing opportunities most beneficial because of the level of personal attention they afforded. Respondents also noted the importance of having both the organizations and the funders make long-term commitments to ensure that these successful early efforts can have a more sustainable effect.

Expert Interviews

The evaluation team interviewed nine individuals with deep experience in Next Gen arts leaderships issues. Interview questions addressed what was happening generally in the field, and as such the responses captured in this report do not directly address the program components of this initiative. Instead, the information gathered from these interviews helps to put the evaluation findings in the context of broader observation and

learning. According to the interviews, the major challenges to increasing and retaining new arts leaders include the need for a more multi-generational approach, especially for communities of color; the importance of practical opportunities to develop leadership skills; the need for organizational commitment to change; and the urgency of addressing diversity directly.

Lessons Learned

At the heart of the Initiative, the Networks are sustained by a core group of Next Gen arts professionals actively participating in relationship building and other professional development activities, while other Next Gen professionals participate at a somewhat lower level. Those who are actively involved report a high level of satisfaction with and impact from their Networks. The Networks use a range of organizational models and strategies that reflect their members' interests and the communities they serve. The Professional Development Grants are being used appropriately to develop the technical skills of the Next Gen leaders who participate. Recipients report a high level of impact, increasing the likelihood of longer-term retention in the arts sector. Meanwhile, the Innovation Grants fund an array of organizational approaches to supporting Next Gen retention and development.

The Initiative has demonstrated the value of connectedness for Next Gen arts leaders. Networking was reported as the area in which participants felt they had experienced the highest impact from their involvement. Across the three components of the Next Gen Initiative, participants found considerable benefit in the opportunity to tailor activities to their particular interests and professional development needs. Such opportunities generally increased their commitment to their work and the field and improved the likelihood that they would continue doing similar work for the long term. Many Innovation Grant recipients noted that involvement in real organizational decision-making through job shadowing, mentoring, or new and challenging assignments was a tremendous learning opportunity that otherwise would not have been available to them.

The Initiative as a whole, most notably in the form of the four regional Networks, is still taking shape and needs continued support for organizational development. While each Network has one paid part-time staff person, there appears to be no association between use of paid staff and effectiveness in promoting membership or sustaining member activities. All the Networks recognize the importance of seeking funds to maintain themselves in addition to their Next Gen grants, and Network leaders understand the importance of creating business models that combine grants, fees, and other funding streams in upcoming years.

Implications for the Future

The assessment team has developed several recommendations based on key findings and lessons learned. These are described at greater length in the full report, but include continuing a flexible approach to definitions, program designs, and strategies. Each of the Networks has cast a wide net in defining its members/participants and its strategies. Meanwhile, the Center for Cultural Innovation has been very flexible, within the funding guidelines, in its professional development and innovation grant decisions. The data from this assessment reinforce the value of allowing maximum involvement. Other implications and recommendations address the following: opportunities to build on the most successful early components of the initiative; ways to achieve goals of diversification; and structural considerations for long-term sustainability of the Networks.

Overview

IN LATE 2011, the James Irvine Foundation and William and Flora Hewlett Foundation awarded a contract to Harder+Company Community Research and Diane Espaldon¹ to conduct an assessment of their jointly funded **Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative**. Created through a collaborative planning process that began in 2009, the two foundations intended to address the challenges faced by emerging leaders aged 20 to 35 in the nonprofit arts community. The Initiative, which began in 2010 and still continues, uses direct funding and regranting to support a multi-pronged strategy that promotes the professional development of younger arts professionals across California. The direct support goes to **four formal Networks** of emerging arts leaders in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and Silicon Valley. Meanwhile, the Center for Cultural Innovation, an arts nonprofit based in Los Angeles and San Francisco, serves as a partner to the Irvine and Hewlett Foundations by hosting convenings for Network participants, as well as administering the statewide regranting programs to support **professional development scholarships** and **innovative organizational practices**. (The convening aspect of the initiative is not covered by this assessment.)

The funders were clear in soliciting this assessment that the Initiative was not ready for a formal, outcome-oriented assessment. Most of the activities are still early in their implementation. Many of the Professional Development Grant recipients have barely completed their funded activities, and the organizations that received Innovation Grants have not yet submitted their final reports. The funders, the grantees, and the broader field are still exploring strategies to address the challenges of next generation leaders.

Instead, the purpose of this assessment is to document the process of building the initiative and identify early lessons that can inform ongoing discussions. The findings presented in this report are preliminary and based primarily on self-reports. Evaluating the longer-term outcomes of the Initiative will require the time necessary for the careers of the arts administrators and educators, as well as artists and board members, to develop. The vitality of the sector depends, in large part, on the retention of skilled and committed leaders. Over time, the arts field as a whole will have an opportunity to assess the impact of this effort on its work. Until then, this report reflects the early lessons from this exploratory effort that can help shape the arts and cultural life of California.

The purpose of this assessment is to **document the process** of building the initiative and **identify early lessons** that can inform ongoing discussions.

¹ Diane Espaldon is a Los Angeles-based arts strategy consultant who worked closely with the Harder+Company team. She participated in all aspects of the project and had lead responsibility for many of the interviews. She was an essential member of the team and contributed to the writing of this report.

The Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative is a joint effort by the Hewlett and Irvine Foundations to support the professional development of California’s emerging arts leaders and increase their retention in the nonprofit arts sector. Recent studies^{2,3} have raised concerns about the sustainability of the general nonprofit sector and particularly the arts community. After conducting their own research^{4,5}, the foundations, which are two of the largest funders of the arts in California, agreed to support a multi-strategy effort to strengthen the individual capacity of emerging arts professionals, support the networks that are so important to professional life in this sector, and experiment with new organizational arrangements that enhance retention and professional development. With the close involvement of the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI), they announced the Initiative in early 2010.

The Networks

Previous assessments of emerging arts leaders (with less than ten years of experience in the sector) have shown the importance of being part of a professional community of peers. Promoting and supporting peer networks allows younger professionals to build relationships within and across disciplines, to share common professional development experiences, and to both provide and use mentoring. The Next Gen Initiative provides funds directly to intermediary organizations to administer the Networks in the four regions. The intermediaries are diverse and include an arts organization, a civic organization, a local arts council, and a community foundation. The funds are used for Network activities such as strategic and organizational planning, as well as networking events and professional development programs. All the Networks use the funding for minimal part-time paid staff support but largely rely on volunteer effort to maintain their work.

Exhibit 1 shows the distribution of Hewlett Foundation and Irvine Foundation funds to each of the networks. The two foundations combined their resources and strategically distributed the funds to ensure coverage throughout the state. The Los Angeles and San Diego networks received all of their funding from the Irvine Foundation, as they fell outside the Hewlett Foundation’s geographic funding region. Meanwhile, the San Francisco network received a greater funding amount in order to help support start-up for the new group.

Exhibit 1. Distribution of Funds for Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative Networks

	Hewlett Foundation	Irvine Foundation	Total
LA: Emerging Arts Leaders/Los Angeles	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000
SD: San Diego Rising Arts Leaders	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000
SF: Emerging Arts Professionals San Francisco/Bay Area	\$210,000	\$30,000	\$240,000
SV: GenArts Silicon Valley	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$75,000
Total	\$260,000	\$205,000	\$465,000

² Americans for the Arts. 2010. National Arts Index 2010: *An Annual Measure of the Vitality of Arts and Culture in the United States*. http://www.americansforthearts.org/pdf/information_services/art_index/NAI_report_w_cover_opt.pdf

³ Peeps, Claire. 2009. Hiring for Turnover: A Modest Proposal. *Grantmakers in the Arts Reader*. 20(3). <http://www.giarts.org/article/hiring-turnover>

⁴ The James Irvine Foundation. 2006. *Critical Issues Facing the Arts in California*. <http://irvine.org/news-insights/publications>

⁵ The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. 2009. *Involving Youth in the Arts Project*. <http://www.hewlett.org/library/involving-youth-in-the-arts-project-full-report>

More detailed information on the Networks, their participants, and activities is presented in the following section. Important differences exist among the four groups in how they operate, how they define participation, and their role in the professional lives of their members. Whether the specific activities are building peer relationships, strengthening professional skills, or providing opportunities to interact in person, the focus is on giving participants the tools to continue their connection to the arts sector and advance their careers within it.

Professional Development Grants

Using funds from the foundations, the Center for Cultural Innovation administers a statewide scholarship program that provides up to \$1,000 for individual emerging arts leaders to enhance their skills, participate in professional activities, and develop relationships with other young arts leaders. Grant recipients must be working within the nonprofits arts sector to apply to CCI for funds. CCI assesses the eligibility of the applicant and the suitability of the proposed activity. To date, CCI has received 267 grant applications. Of those applications 194 grants have been awarded and eight are in review. Almost all of the recipients used the grants to attend a conference or engage in some form of training related to the nonprofit arts sector.

Exhibit 2. Funding for Professional Development Grants, Innovation Grants, and Other Activities Conducted by Center for Cultural Innovation to Advance the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative

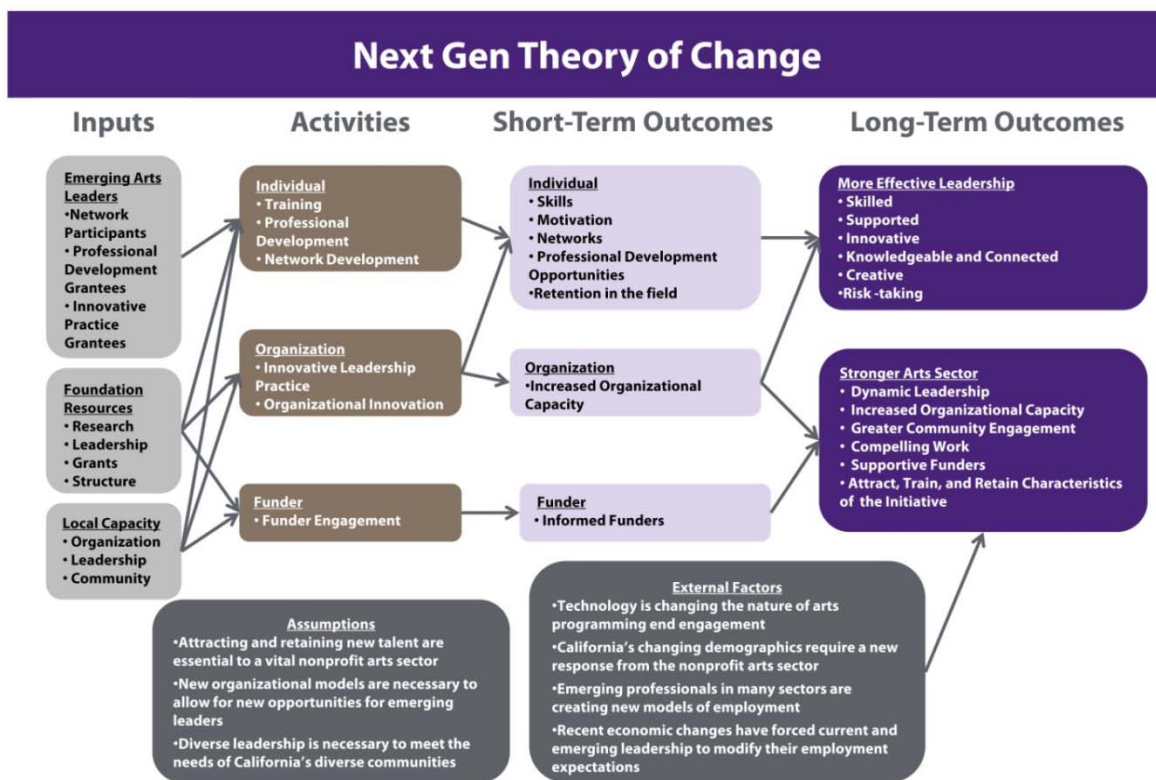


Innovation Grants

The Center for Cultural Innovation also regranted funds to seven arts organizations across California using a competitive process that elicited 50 applications. The organizations were funded for one year to experiment with approaches to strengthening the connection of younger arts leaders to the sector. These approaches included planning, education, and mentoring for younger employees to help them achieve more in their jobs, develop their skills in the context of their job requirements, and other activities that demonstrate innovation in supporting retention in the sector. The specifics of the grants are described in more detail later in this report.

Next Gen Initiative Theory of Change

During the planning stages of the Initiative, the Irvine Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, and CCI engaged in a preliminary process to develop its potential scope and impact. Several years later, as the Initiative was well underway, the Harder+Company team worked with the funders to document a more detailed theory of change (TOC) that illustrates the assumptions connecting Initiative activities to intended results. The TOC reflects how improved retention and job skills for younger workers can contribute to a vital and dynamic arts sector. By supporting emerging leaders through effective Networks and individual-level professional development, the Initiative helps to build the human capital necessary to maintain the long-term vitality of California's nonprofit arts community. At the organizational level, the Innovation Grants provide resources for arts organizations to accommodate the needs of emerging professionals. By working at these two levels, as shown in the TOC, the Initiative provides a valuable framework for the transformation of the sector as current arts leaders and managers transition to the next phase of their lives and create new opportunities for emerging leaders.



The external factors shown in the TOC are important to understanding the early impact of the Initiative. Although they cannot all be influenced by the Initiative, they set some of the context in which the Initiative occurs. Particularly important are the changing job expectations of Next Gen professionals. Younger workers are less committed than previous generations to the notion of staying with an employer for an extended time. They change jobs more often.⁶ Because of this, they have less patience in waiting for change, expecting to achieve their goals in less time. Hierarchical decision-making offers them less opportunity for leadership.

⁶ CompassPoint Nonprofit Services and the Meyer Foundation. 2011. *Daring to Lead 2011: A National Study of Nonprofit Executive Leadership*. <http://daringtolead.org/reports-briefs/full-report/>

They seek to use their technological skills in an underfunded sector that often has challenges in keeping up with technical innovation. The current economic downturn has exacerbated these longer-term employment trends by creating uncertainty that may keep nonprofit managers in their current positions. This bottleneck narrows the range of opportunity for emerging leaders, especially since many nonprofit organizations have fewer employees than other sectors of the nonprofit world. Such pressures can affect retention in the nonprofit arts sector and increase the challenges faced by emerging leaders across the arts community.

Assessment Questions

The evaluation team and the funders devoted themselves to considering a broad set of issues that framed the work of the Initiative. These include the following overarching questions:

- + **How can Next Gen arts programs address the needs of California’s diverse communities and arts sector?**
- + **Are there opportunities to combine the separate strategies to produce greater impact and achieve greater reach into communities?**
- + **How can the current grantees learn from the results of this study and create more innovative and effective programs?**

In addition, the evaluation team developed a set of specific assessment questions looking at the early implementation and impact of the Initiative, as well as the needs of the Networks for capacity building relating to tracking and data collection.⁷ The specific assessment questions identified at the outset were:

The Networks

1. What are the activities of the Networks? How do they differ by region?
2. What are the differences in how the Networks are convened and administered? Are there best practices that can be disseminated?
3. What are the characteristics of the participants in each of the Networks? How do they differ by region and what are the implications for Network activities and sustainability?
4. How do participants rate their experiences, attitudes, and satisfaction with the Networks? What factors influence the participant experience?

Professional Development Scholarships

5. What are the characteristics of the professional development scholarship recipients? How have they been used? Are there early results that can be reported?

Innovation Grants

6. What strategies are being used by the seven projects piloting innovative approaches to emerging leadership development in the arts? Who are the participants and what are the early results?

Capacity Building

7. What types of capacity building assistance would be helpful in creating the tools to define and measure the success of the Initiative in the long term?

⁷ Harder+Company provided a workshop for Network managers in data tracking and analysis at the end of the project.

Methods

This assessment employed a mixed methods approach, using data collection tools that matched the specific questions being addressed. We developed and implemented two web-based surveys of large groups of participants in Next Gen activities, as well as two sets of telephone interviews with smaller groups. In addition, Harder+Company conducted a set of telephone interviews with outside experts in the areas of nonprofit leadership development with a focus in the arts. The specific details of each method are summarized below.

This assessment gathered information on the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative via...

- ✓ Survey of Next Gen Network Participants
- ✓ Survey of Next Gen Professional Development Grant Recipients
- ✓ Interviews with Next Gen Network Leaders
- ✓ Interviews with Next Gen Innovation Grant Recipients

- + Survey of Network participants.** Harder+Company developed a survey for participants in the four regional Networks that captured data on participant characteristics, expectations, activity levels, and impacts. In discussing the survey with Network leaders in the four regions, we learned that three of them were planning to survey their participants in the near future. We decided to use this assessment to collect some core information about all participants and to work with the Networks to create a small set of questions for their own participants. Harder+Company created four slightly different surveys for use by the Networks, with only the questions related to specific activities at each Network differing across sites. We worked closely with each Network to finalize the shared survey questions as well as the questions customized to each site. The surveys and technical support from Harder+Company contributed to increasing the capacity of the Networks to track the ongoing progress of their members and participants.

Representatives of each Network disseminated the surveys to their respective groups using a combination of email (SurveyMonkey) and Facebook. Respondents had a timeframe of 3 weeks (March 22 to April 13, 2012) to complete the surveys. A total of 252 individuals across the four Networks responded. While a proper response rate cannot be calculated due to the use of social media as a dissemination tool, the number of responses from the Networks was as follows:

- *Emerging Arts Leaders/Los Angeles (LA; n=76);*
- *Rising Arts Leaders of San Diego (SD; n=42);*
- *Emerging Arts Professionals San Francisco/Bay Area (SF; n=104); and*
- *GenARTS Silicon Valley (SV; n=30).*

- + **Survey of Next Gen Professional Development Grant recipients.** The second survey targeted the recipients of the Professional Development scholarships awarded through the Center for Cultural Innovation. For this activity, Harder+Company used the list of recipients who had completed their activity and submitted their final report to CCI. For those who had submitted a completed grant report by April 14, 2012, an 11-question survey was sent via SurveyMonkey to obtain more information about grant-funded activities and the impact of those activities. Of those 114 who had submitted a completed grant report, the survey link reached 105. The response rate was 75.2 percent.
- + **Interviews with Next Gen Network leaders in four regions.** The assessment team began the study by developing a detailed understanding of the four regional Networks through telephone interviews with the Network leaders. Harder+Company conducted preliminary interviews in January with the individuals that the funders identified as representatives of the Networks. The purpose of these interviews was to introduce the assessment, discuss what information the assessment team was interested in obtaining, and learn about the structure and activities in each of the regions. These interviews were followed by longer, more detailed interviews to understand the history, programming, governance, and culture of each Network. The interviews (some with multiple participants) lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and were conducted in February.
- + **Interviews with Next Gen Innovation Grant Recipients.** The seven Innovation Grant recipients were still completing their work during the assessment period and had submitted no reports to CCI. CCI recommended that Harder+Company collect information from them through telephone surveys to obtain their experience in implementing the grants and any early lessons about impact. The funders suggested that Harder+Company interview two respondents in each organization, the Executive Director and a Next Gen staffer who had participated in the funded activity, producing a goal of fourteen completed interviews. Harder+Company completed thirteen of the fourteen attempted interviews in the first half of May, with the interviews lasting about one hour. Nine of the interviewees were Next Gen arts leaders who were the target beneficiaries of the grant.
- + **Interviews with national and regional experts.** To understand how this Initiative relates to other similar efforts around the country, and to incorporate the lessons learned from that work, Harder+Company conducted telephone interviews with nine knowledgeable individuals identified jointly by the funders and our staff. The list of participants (which includes practitioners, funders, and researchers) is included in the appendix. The interviews were completed in May.

Copies of all data collection tools are included in the appendix.

“Where do you begin? That’s the big question: With what you know, and what you have and can influence.”

National Arts Expert

Findings

THIS ASSESSMENT examined the three core strategies of the Next Gen Initiative: emerging arts leader Networks; individual Professional Development Grants; and organizational Innovation Grants. As noted in the preceding section, the assessment team collected a mix of quantitative and qualitative data in order to paint a full picture of the program participants and the organizations they represent. For each core strategy, we present key findings below.

The Networks

As noted in the Methods section, a total of 252 individuals across the four Networks responded to a brief online survey. The survey had considerably more respondents from Los Angeles (n=76) and San Francisco (n=104) than from San Diego (n=42) and Silicon Valley (n=30). The higher number of respondents from Los Angeles and San Francisco may be due to larger arts communities in those cities, differences in the number of participants each Network actually has, and how the Networks communicated with those participants about the survey. In addition to the survey, the assessment team conducted phone interviews with leaders of each Network. Because of the collaborative leadership structure of all the Networks, we interviewed three leaders from each network, some individually and some in groups, depending on the preferences of the participants. These findings integrate the information gathered from the survey and interviews.

The Network participants are, on average...

- ✓ 1/3 from communities of color
- ✓ Female
- ✓ Age 30-35
- ✓ Working at an arts nonprofit
- ✓ Working in the arts 3-5 years
- ✓ Involved with the Network for less than 1 year

Network Models

The survey findings reflect the variation in the structures of each Network. These different arrangements are indicative of the complexity of the California arts field as a whole, as well as the diversity in the institutional capacity of California's regions to support the next generation of arts leaders. All of the Networks are largely coordinated by volunteers, but support from the Initiative provides at least one paid part-time staff person at each Network as well. Two Networks are comprised largely of arts administrators, while the others include a greater mix of administrators and practicing artists. With auspices ranging from a community foundation to a civic arts organization, the Network leaders bring a disparate set of perspectives, skills, and program strategies to the task of supporting the leadership development of the next generation. Such variability is due, in part, to

the Networks' responsiveness to their local arts communities. But it also presents a challenge to documenting these efforts and describing their early impact.

The organizational development and infrastructure of all four Networks are still in the start-up stage, but gaining traction and becoming more intentional. According to interviews with Network leaders, they are beginning to formalize organizational structures, decision-making, and working processes. Several of the Networks have completed strategic plans that not only lay out programming goals, but also address leadership structure, including committees and working groups.

Interviewees report that there is high turnover in leadership, which may be driven by two factors: First, the largely volunteer nature of the Networks affects how leaders can prioritize this work in their own lives, given other full-time or part-time paid jobs and life responsibilities. Second, because Network leaders are early career professionals, they may leave the Networks as they attain promotions and increased work responsibilities, move out of town to pursue new job opportunities, go to graduate school, or start families. In interviews, Network leaders expressed acceptance of this reality and the willingness and flexibility to address it. For instance:

“The nature of the beast is constant transitioning. There is a beauty in that. We don’t necessarily see it as a bad thing for people to come on for eight months. It can be frustrating sometimes for the people trying to hold down the ship, but we’re always getting new people. Transitions are not a huge issue. We designed our leadership council terms with this in mind. Burn-out is what I want to avoid. People want to stay involved but can’t because of burn-out.”

-- Next Gen Network leader

Another Next Gen Network leader expressed a similar thought: “Turnover is good because it creates opportunity for core people. ... The challenge is to figure out a way for those of us who have been around to step into a new and different role. There needs to be a way in and a way out.”

Network Member Demographics

From interviews with Network leaders, it is clear that all four Networks are still in the early stages of identifying their participants and members, from refining working definitions to determining who current participants and desired future members are. According to Network leaders:

"We've been working a lot on what it means to be a member."

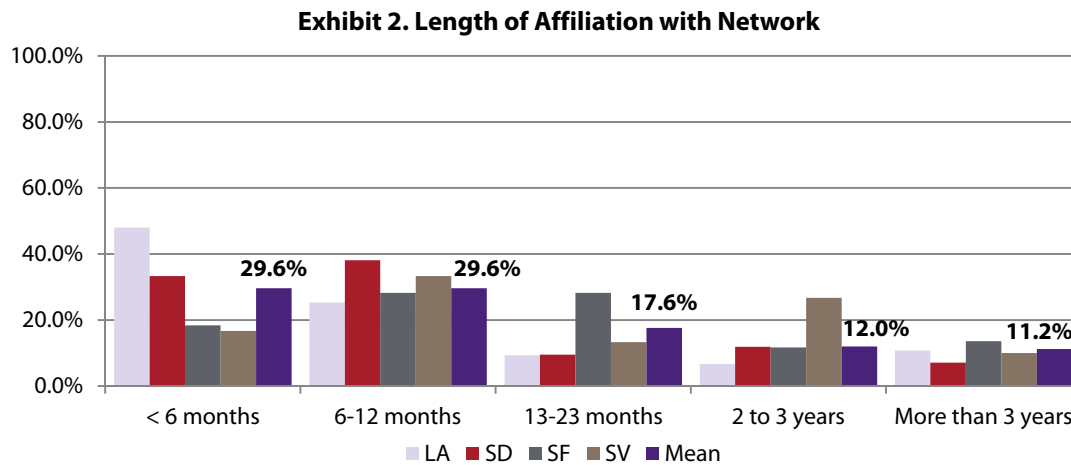
"Our Network is becoming more formalized and consistent in our programming infrastructure, so the predictability of participation is increasing."

-- Next Gen Network leaders

The Network leader interviews took place prior to the Network member survey, and findings such as these helped the assessment team refine some of the membership survey questions. The findings presented here refer to survey respondents, not the total number of those participating in the Networks. We have no way to

assess the representativeness of these respondents since we lack information about the characteristics of the population from which they are drawn.⁸

The Networks draw their participants from all the groups in the regions they serve. Looking across the four Networks, the survey showed that the modal Network survey respondent is female, age 30-35, employed in a non-profit arts organization, has been working in the arts and culture field for 3-5 years, has been participating in a Network for one year or less, and has participated in one activity or more in the past year. In terms of ethnic diversity, just over one-third are from communities of color. When looking at variations across the four Networks, few demographic or participation categories showed statistically significant differences. In fact, the only analyses that yielded significant differences among the Networks were comparisons of length of affiliation with Network (p-value <.001) and activity level in the last 12 months (p-value <.001). Exhibits 2 and 3, below, show these differences.



The Los Angeles and San Diego Networks have significantly more respondents who have been with the Network for one year or less. On average, more than half of respondents (59.2 percent) across the Networks have been involved for a year or less. In some cases, this may be due to the relatively early developmental stage of several of the Networks and/or may be the positive result of the recent efforts to increase participation that the Networks have undertaken. One Network leader observed in an interview that the short-lived nature of casual participants may be inherent to the early career population served:

“Most audiences may be heavily engaged for one to three years [at most]. The challenge is to have consistent leadership that can track trends and what the community needs. The structure for our Networks needs to take this transience into account.”

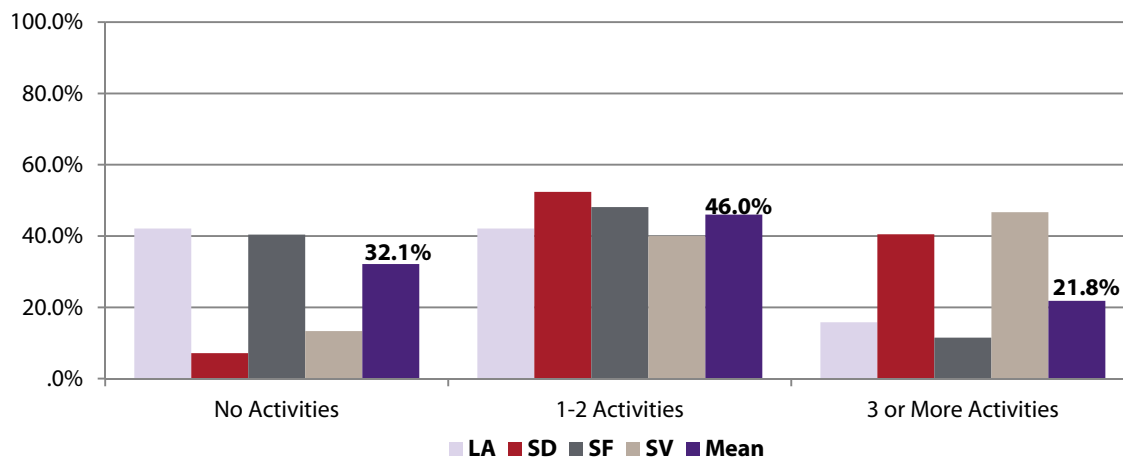
-- Next Gen Network leader

⁸ A 2009 Urban Institute study commissioned by the Irvine Foundation found that 46.5% of nonprofit arts organizations staff in California were people of color. Since there was no information on age and job tenure in that study, its value as a comparison is limited. http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/411977_CA_Diversity.pdf

Meanwhile, in terms of activity level, the Los Angeles and San Francisco Networks have significantly more respondents who have not attended any activities in the last year (see below). This may be due to several factors. The Los Angeles Network actively uses Facebook likes, Twitter followers, and website registrants to get a sense of its participants, and those social media and Web connections were a large part of how this survey was disseminated in the region. One possible explanation for this is that, with a high proportion of participation coming from virtual members, the proportion of participants who actually attend live events may be lower. Lower or higher attendance of activities may also reflect the Networks’ differences in geography, though this would require further exploration. The San Francisco Network had a large database of names that the survey was sent to, but at the time the Network did not have a way of determining what percentage of individuals listed in its database participates in programs.

The survey results in both these cases—that approximately 40 percent of Los Angeles and San Francisco respondents have not attended a Network event in the last 12 months—may reflect a willingness of respondents to feel affiliation with a Network even if they do not currently participate in activities or have never participated in activities. As they move forward, the Networks themselves will have to determine how this fits into their desired models of participation and membership.

Exhibit 3. Number of Network Activities Attended in Last 12 Months

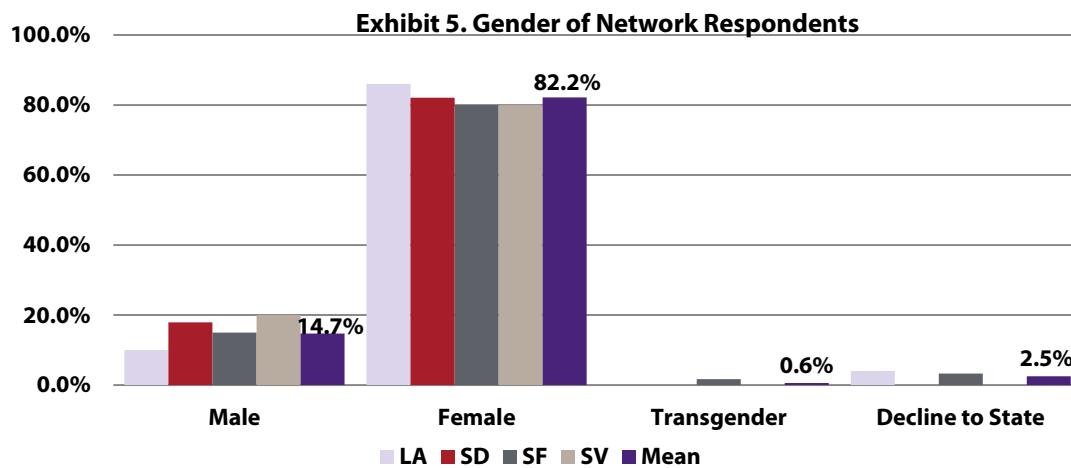


Exhibits 4 to 8 show the breakdown of the other demographic categories collected in the survey. No statistically significant differences existed among the four Networks when comparing the following: ethnicity, gender, age, length of employment in the arts and culture field, and primary source of income.

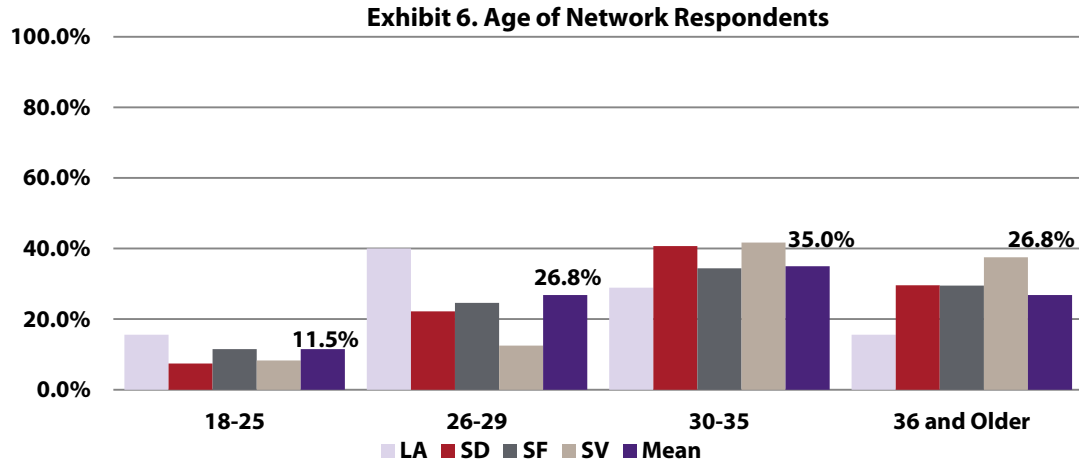
Exhibit 4. Ethnicity of Network Respondents	LA	SD	SF	SV	Mean
Asian, Asian American	10.2%	3.6%	13.3%	4.0%	9.3%
Black or African-American	4.1%	0%	10.0%	8.0%	6.2%
Latino, Hispanic, or Chicano	8.2%	7.1%	3.3%	12.0%	6.8%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	2.0%	0%	0%	0%	.6%
White	57.1%	82.1%	56.7%	60.0%	61.7%
Multi-ethnic	10.2%	3.6%	11.7%	4.0%	8.6%
Other	6.1%	3.6%	0%	4.0%	3.1%
Decline to State	2.0%	0%	5.0%	8.0%	3.7%

While there was some variation among Networks when looking at ethnicity, none of the differences was statistically significant. (See Exhibit 4, above.) In every Network, the majority—and in the case of San Diego, a large majority—of respondents was White. Los Angeles and San Francisco had more diverse respondent pools, relative to San Diego and Silicon Valley. In addition, Silicon Valley had a notably larger percentage of respondents choosing not to state their ethnicity, when compared to the other sites.

In terms of gender, the respondents were consistently and overwhelmingly female. On average, 82.2 percent of respondents were female, with no single Network having lower than 80 percent female representation in the survey. The high proportion of women is consistent with other data showing that women make up the majority of nonprofit workers. (See Exhibit 5, below.)



Considering the Next Gen initiative’s interest in reaching emerging arts leaders, who by definition are in the first ten years of their arts careers, the survey included respondents from a fairly wide range of age groups. The largest group on average was age 30-35, though this was only 35 percent of the entire group of respondents. The 26-29 and 36-older groups were equally represented with slightly more than a quarter of the responses each. It is worth acknowledging that the top age category, 36 and older, is fairly large, given the Next Gen initiative’s aim of reaching younger professionals. Further analysis shows that almost half (47.6 percent) of the older group has more than ten years experience in the arts and culture field. This may reflect the sense in the field that “emerging” leaders may include mid-career arts professionals since they are “next in line” for leadership. All the Network leaders interviewed recognize this dynamic in the field, and while their programming targets emerging arts professionals in their 20s and 30s, interviewees all said their Networks include older participants as well.



The survey also captured information about respondents’ length of time working in the arts and culture field, as shown in Exhibit 7. There was great variability in the responses to duration of time employed in the field, with nearly every individual Network’s response categories hovering roughly between 15 and 30 percent. (The major exception is Los Angeles, where nearly half—46 percent—of respondents indicated that they had been working 3-5 years in the field. This influenced the mean responses for the Network as a whole.)

Exhibit 7. Time Employed in Arts & Culture Field	LA	SD	SF	SV	Mean
2 years or less	16.0%	14.3%	17.7%	19.2%	16.9%
3-5 years	46.0%	28.6%	29.0%	23.1%	33.1%
6-10 years	20.0%	25.0%	25.8%	26.9%	24.1%
More than 10 years	10.0%	32.1%	19.4%	23.1%	19.3%
N/A	8.0%	0%	8.1%	7.7%	6.6%

Exhibit 8, below, shows survey respondents’ primary sources of income. More than half of the respondents in each Network are working for nonprofit arts organizations. While the Networks currently target nonprofit arts administrators as their core constituency, several Network leaders spoke about casting a wider net to include more artists, creative industry workers, arts freelancers, and people not currently working in an arts nonprofit but who want to do so in the future.

Leaders from three of the Networks said they were wrestling with the right mix of artists and arts administrators (many of the latter are also artists), as this affects various aspects of programming, marketing, and organizational capacity. Most seek the participation of all the disciplines represented in the arts community. The fourth Network, whose position is quite different from the other three in this respect, has in fact framed this question as a capacity issue and has made the conscious decision to narrow its target audience because its leaders feel it will enable their Network to have greater impact:

“We decided we’re going to focus on arts administrators – marketing, finance, technology – and not creative or artistic employees. They’re welcome but we don’t actively target them... it’s a capacity issue. And the universe of artists [would require] a whole different approach... We’ve had a lot of inquiries from individual artists. But our focus is administrative leadership in the arts.”

-- Network leader

The more commonly held viewpoint was offered by a leader of a different Network: “[We’ve] conscientiously made an effort to go beyond arts managers. This is for people who are interested. We want to be inclusive. We are looking the next generation of *creative leaders*. This is purposeful.” This perspective is more consistent with funder intent, although while the age parameters were clear, they were not meant to be exclusionary.

Exhibit 8. Primary Source of Income	LA	SD	SF	SV	Mean
Working for a non-profit arts organization	60.0%	66.7%	71.0%	53.8%	64.2%
Working for a for-profit arts organization	4.0%	0%	3.2%	7.7%	3.6%
Independent artist	6.0%	3.7%	4.8%	0%	4.2%
Other non-profit	14.0%	18.5%	8.1%	15.4%	12.7%
Other for-profit	4.0%	7.4%	6.5%	7.7%	6.1%
Other	12.0%	3.7%	6.5%	15.4%	9.1%

In addition to gathering the above demographic information through the Network survey, our assessment team interviewed Network leaders about how diversity within their Networks could be improved. The responses were wide-ranging, with no one category mentioned by more than one or two Networks. Within the umbrella of diversity, the Network leaders addressed gender, age, geography, ethnicity, roles in the nonprofit arts field, and roles in more broad-based arts and culture. To some extent, the way the respondents engage with this issue shows a more comprehensive understanding of diversity as not occurring along a single dimension. Since almost all the Network leaders interviewed were younger emerging arts professionals themselves, this may give a glimpse into a Next Gen vision of future leadership and composition of “the field.” Responses to questions about “who is missing” from the Networks include the following:

According to Network leaders, who is missing from the Networks?

- ✓ Artists
- ✓ Younger people—late teens to early 20s, college students
- ✓ Greater geographic diversity
- ✓ People of color
- ✓ Managing directors or operating directors
- ✓ Smaller, artist-run organizations
- ✓ Musicians, DJs
- ✓ People who may be interested in arts administration but don’t currently work in the arts
- ✓ Cultural entrepreneurs, gallery owners, club owners who are in the business of arts & culture
- ✓ Creative Industry workers outside the nonprofit structure (e.g., design, commercial theater)
- ✓ Underground arts (spoken word, graffiti, urban art, contemporary art targeting young people)

Network Members' Program Participation

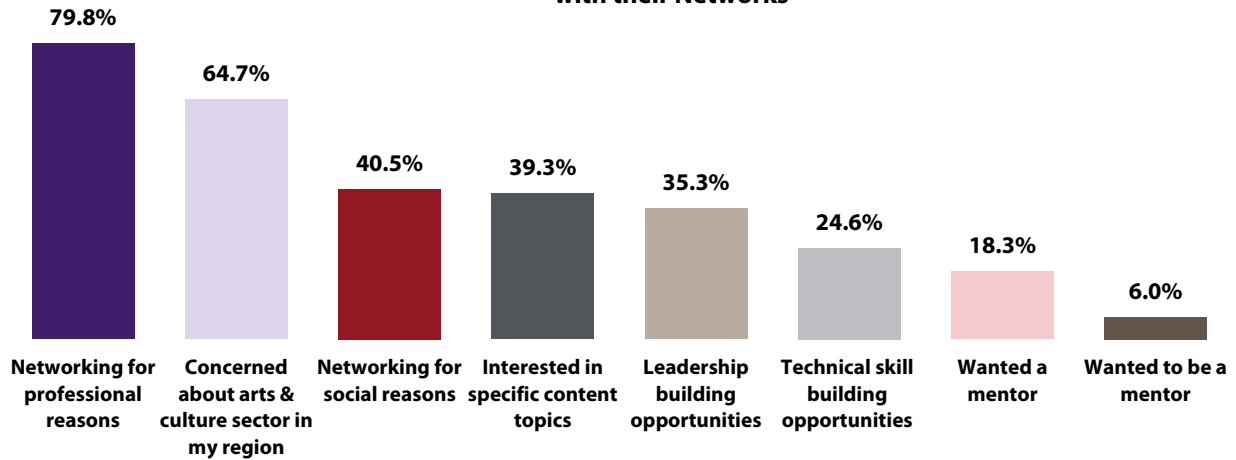
Programming activities are fairly similar across Networks, although each Network customizes its programming mix based on the interests of participants and the demands of its specific environment. With a track record of several programming years, Network leaders are starting to refine program topics, formats, and engagement with participants. According to the interviews with Network leaders, programs that all or most of the Networks have in common are Creative Conversations, Social Events, Professional Development Activities, Intensive Activities, and the Network Leadership Committee.

The Network leaders' informal assessment of program participation is echoed in the member survey data presented in Exhibit 9 (below). The survey was interested in learning about why and how respondents participate in the Networks. On average, nearly 80 percent (79.8) indicated that networking for professional reasons is why they decided to participate/be affiliated with their Network.

What are the core program elements of the Networks?

"Creative Conversations"	These annual events that take place around the country in coordination with Americans for the Arts provide a full-day focus on a hot topic in the arts field. They often attract the largest number of participants.
Social Activities	These social networking programs, which include happy hours and mixers, consistently attract many participants due to the opportunity to meet new people and the draw of "fun" with new colleagues in the arts field.
Professional Development Activities	These activities include presentations, brown bag discussions, workshops, and webinars on management topics (e.g., marketing, finance, and use of social media), career-building guidance (e.g., how to build a resume or how to work with an executive recruiter) and topical issues (e.g., arts and urban renewal or the artist as civic leader). Leaders of three networks say they have had difficulty getting strong participation in such activities (compared to social activities), and are adjusting timing, intended audience, and marketing. The fourth network has more participants at these events than at social networking events, likely because its area already has numerous arts networking events.
Intensive Activities	These highly designed activities include mentorship and fellowship programs within the Networks themselves. They target a small cohort of people each year and result in highly engaged participants and on-the-ground, practical leadership opportunities.
Network Leadership Committee	Most network leaders felt the Committee should be considered a "program," since leaders are participating voluntarily. This activity reportedly produces the most engagement and is the most effective way for emerging arts leaders to further their leadership development.

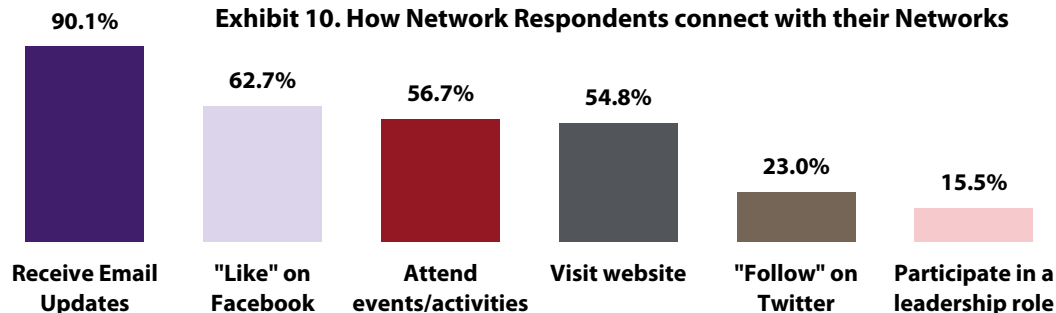
Exhibit 9. Reasons why Network Respondents decided to participate/be affiliated with their Networks




In interviews, Network leaders were aware and articulate about the difference and relationship between professional development (focusing on the more technical or managerial aspects of their jobs) and leadership development (focusing more on personal skills related to motivating and inspiring others). The Networks see themselves as providing both through their activities, but the real goal is leadership development. Network leaders described professional development as skill-building that everyone can participate in and benefit from. “Professional development is on everyone’s mind... the economy has dictated that a lot of people aren’t going anywhere. So the best you can do is invest in the job you have now and make it the best it can be. So when we have workshops, we do have a lot of interest,” commented one Network leader. In addition, the Networks believe that part of their role is to expose their participants to the possibility and opportunity of leadership in the arts. “Some emerging arts professionals don’t always know they have this option of developing into leaders. It’s important for us to emphasize this,” observed a Next Gen Network leader.

It is clear from Exhibit 10 that a very large number of respondents use multiple channels to connect with their Networks. Email is nearly universal, with nine out of ten of respondents using it to connect with the Network. Moreover, more than half of respondents also use a mix of virtual and in-person interactions – from Facebook to attending events to using the Network’s website – as means of engagement.

Exhibit 10. How Network Respondents connect with their Networks





“Professional development is [about] job skills. Leadership development is [about] learning how to ask the right questions, have confidence, have a network of people, know how to work with people, set goals, and develop plans to get to those goals. Professional development doesn’t necessarily lead to leadership development but it can... only if you have the *desire* to be a leader.”

Next Gen Network Leader



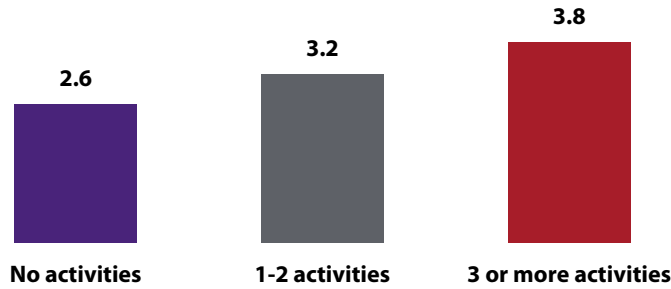
Network Participants’ Experience, Satisfaction, and Impact of Participation

The Network survey sought not only to gather descriptive information about demographics and participation, but also to analyze those data points against one another to find factors that positively or negatively affect respondents’ experience and impression of the Networks. Exhibits 11 to 18 show some of these analyses. (Findings that are statistically significant are indicated as such.)

The assessment team took several approaches to looking at respondents’ perception of how their Network meets their needs. When analyzed by age group, the data are fairly consistent: More than half of respondents in each age group indicated that their Network did meet their needs. For the 26-29 and 30-35 age groups, these were very large majorities (88.9 and 77.1 percent, respectively). Two additional analyses point to similar conclusions about participants’ expectations and needs in regard to Network participation. Exhibit 11 shows findings about level of participation and expectations for the Networks: In short, the greater the level of participation, the more likely respondents were to indicate that the Networks met their expectations. Exhibit 12 shows that respondents are significantly more likely to believe the Network is meeting their needs as their level of participation increases.

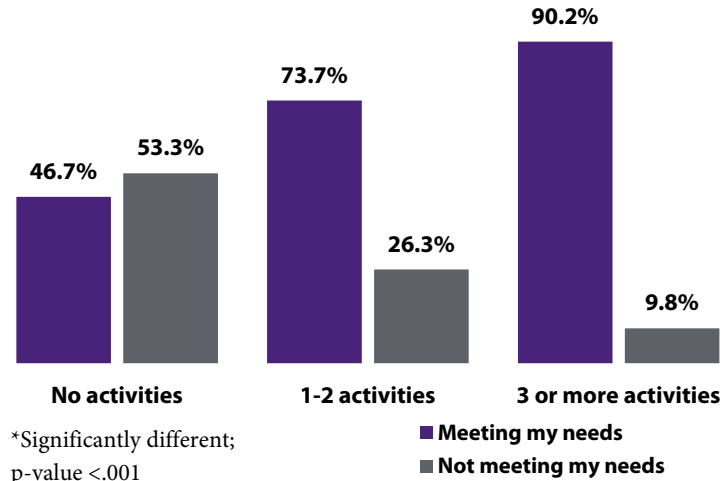
Following those, Exhibits 13 to 18 show other measures of participant satisfaction with the Networks, both generally and in specific terms.

Exhibit 11. Rating of how Networks meet Expectation Level by Number of Network Activities Attended in Last 12 Months (Scale 1 to 5)*

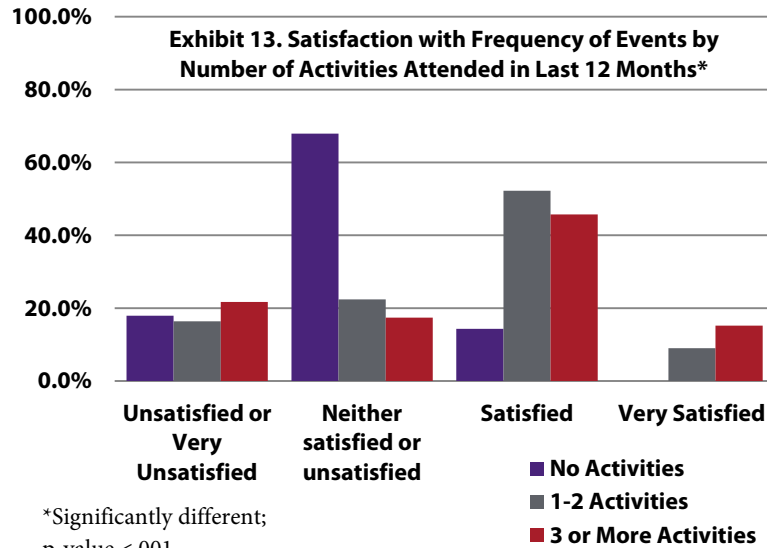


*All three activities levels are significantly different from one another; p-value <.005

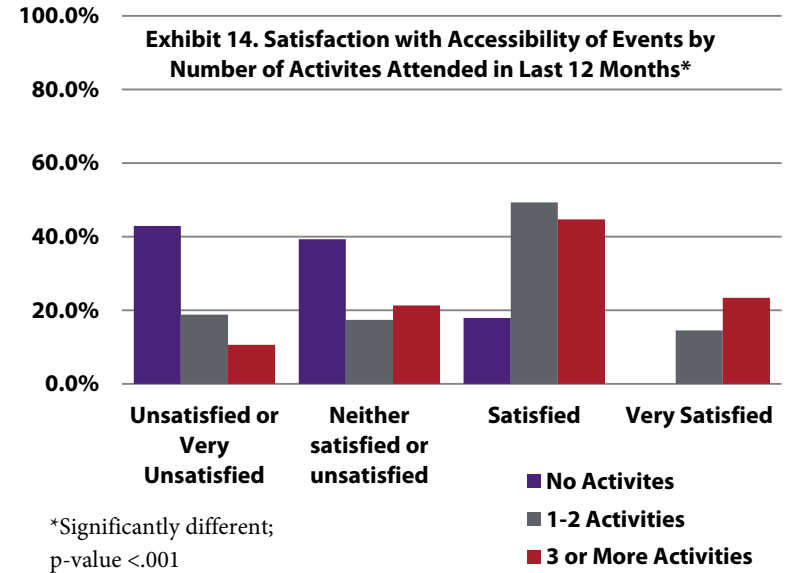
Exhibit 12. Rating of how Networks meet Needs by Number of Network Activities Attended in Last 12 Months*



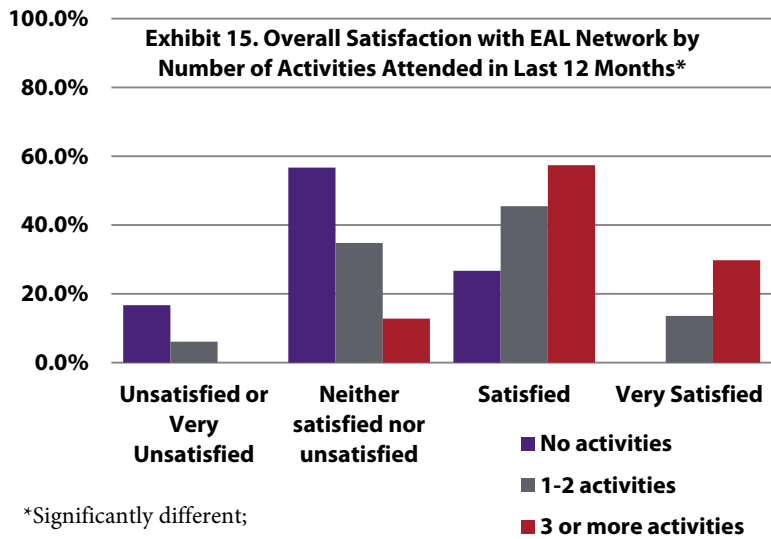
*Significantly different; p-value <.001



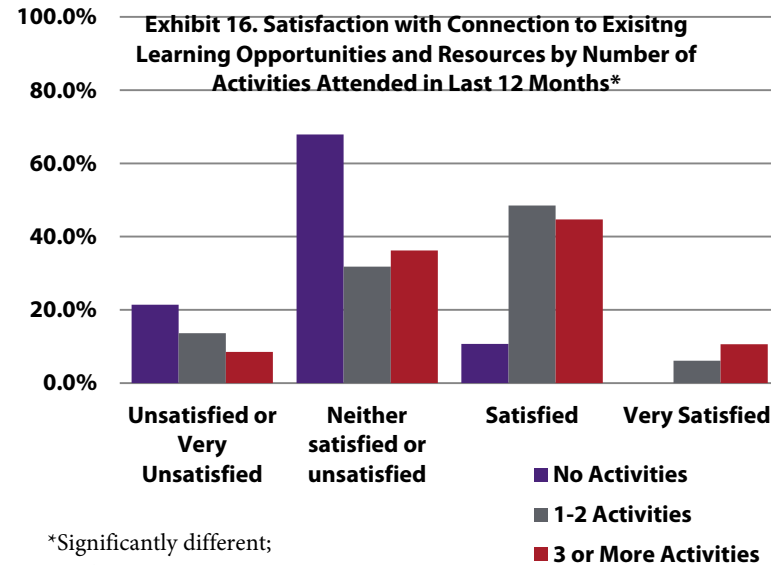
*Significantly different; p-value <.001



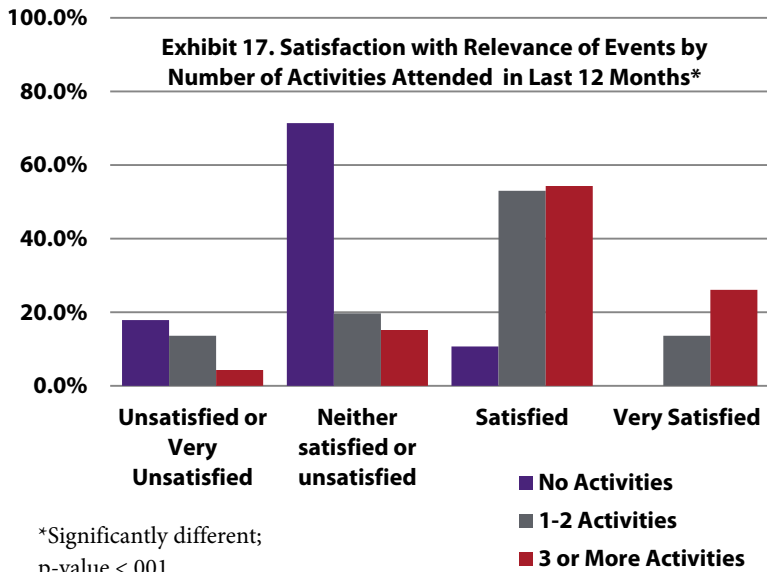
*Significantly different; p-value <.001



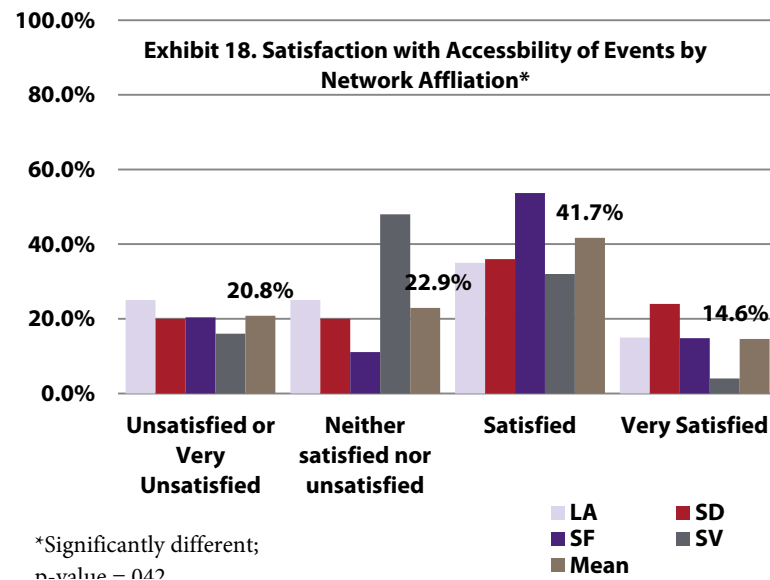
*Significantly different;
p-value <.001



*Significantly different;
p-value = .003



*Significantly different;
p-value <.001



*Significantly different;
p-value = .042

Finally, the Network survey asked respondents to rate the impact that participation has had on a range of skills and experiences that may be relevant to their success as arts leaders. Exhibits 19 and 20 show some of the responses that participants provided.

Exhibit 19. By Region, Ratings of how Involvement In Network has Improved your... †	LA	SD	SF	SV	Mean
Professional skills	2.5	2.4	2.0	2.7	2.3
Leadership skills	2.5	2.3	2.0	2.9	2.3
Networking opportunities	3.5	3.9	3.2	3.8	3.5
Desire to continue your career in the arts and culture sector	3.2	3.2	2.9	3.5	3.1
Ability to perform your job	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.6	2.3
Interactions with your manager/employer	2.1	2.2	2.0	2.5	2.1

†On a scale from 1 to 5. 1= No improvement, 5 = Greatly improved.

Exhibit 20. By Number of Activities Attended in Past 12 Months, Ratings of how Involvement In Network has Improved your... † *	No Activities/ Past Year	1-2 Activities/ Past Year	3+ Activities/ Past Year	Mean
Professional skills	1.8 ^a	2.1 ^a	3.0 ^b	2.3
Leadership skills	1.7 ^a	2.0 ^a	3.4 ^b	2.3
Networking opportunities	2.3 ^a	3.6 ^b	4.2 ^c	3.5
Desire to continue your career in the arts and culture sector	2.3 ^a	3.0 ^b	3.8 ^c	3.1
Ability to perform your job	1.9 ^a	2.2 ^a	2.9 ^b	2.3
Interactions with your manager/employer	1.7 ^a	2.0 ^b	2.7 ^b	2.1

†On a scale from 1 to 5. 1= No improvement, 5 = Greatly improved.

*Different superscripts indicate differences between the groups; *all p-values <.01

As noted earlier, the greater the level of participation in the Networks, the more likely respondents were to indicate that the Networks met their expectations, needs, and satisfaction. Network leaders who were interviewed brought up a similar point as they reflected on the most effective leadership development strategies their Networks are employing. Many interviewees felt that greater leadership development takes place in activities where more hands-on commitment is entailed, particularly participating in the Network’s formal mentorship or fellowship programs or in the steering committee and working groups of the Network’s leadership structure itself. One Network leader who had previously participated in the intensive fellowship program of his Network said:

“[The fellowship] intentionally emphasizes opportunities to practice leadership away from your ‘regular work.’ It’s meant to reward people interested in helping the Network with opportunities to lead. ...In the Network, if I have ideas, I have friends, people who can share what they know. I am less afraid to try. I have more tools in my tool belt.”

-- Next Gen Network leader

Another Next Gen leader described her Network as “a great platform for people to test whether they want to be the kind of people who sit at the table and make decisions... to test what kind of leader you are.” Yet another Next Gen leader described the dynamic relationship between leadership development and deepening levels of engagement:

“The most valuable thing about [my Network] is that it creates the platform for leadership. The more involved you are, the more you participate, and the greater the leadership development. What changed me was to steer a program and project, learn from my mistakes. There is a difference between sitting in a professional development workshop or doing a mentorship versus building leadership capacity through experience.”

-- Next Gen Network leader

Summary of Findings on Network Members

While the Networks are still evolving, some basic summaries of their membership can be made for this point in time. The data above show the following key points about Network members:

- + The Networks are still forming their membership base.** Most members are fairly new to the Networks, with 59.2 percent of respondents indicating they have been involved for a year or less.
- + Current membership rosters are fairly homogeneous.** Just over one-third of the respondents are people of color. However, the typical respondent is generally white, female, 30-35, and at an arts nonprofit. The composition is, to some degree, reflective of the field as a whole in California. Because of the use of social media to disseminate the survey, a proper response rate cannot be calculated – and thus, we should be careful in how we generalize this representation of the “average” member.
- + There is a commitment to diversifying.** Network leaders recognize the current limitations of their membership and are committed to bringing greater diversity to the Networks. When asked about “who is missing” from the Networks at present, Network leaders identified a very wide range of people that cut across ethnicity, age, profession, and relationship to the arts world.
- + Programming is still evolving, but members are “networked.”** Each Network offers a range of programming, although individual members generally participate in a small number of activities each year. Nonetheless, members remain relatively well connected with their Network through a range of interactions and communication platforms (e.g., Facebook, email, website).
- + Satisfaction with programs is generally positive—with clear paths to even greater satisfaction.** In general, members indicated moderate satisfaction with Network offerings and experiences. Notably, many measures of satisfaction appeared to increase with a member’s level of participation.

Similarly, respondents who attended more activities were more positive about how involvement in the Network had improved their professional skills.

- + **The Networks offer practical internal leadership opportunities.** Beyond the findings about the members and activities, the organizational models have evolved to take what may have been a challenge, the transience of early and mid-career arts professionals, and turn it into an asset. By providing opportunities for emerging arts leaders to take on leadership roles in the Networks themselves, the Networks develop the skills of their members who are willing to take on those responsibilities.

Professional Development Grants

The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) administered approximately 180 professional development grants of up to \$1,000 to Next Gen professionals who are employed in or connected to a nonprofit arts organization. Grant recipients submitted proposals for funding of a variety of professional development activities; some chose one activity, while others chose to participate in more than one.⁹ After the funded activities were completed, the grantees had 30 days to complete a short four-question report to CCI. For those individuals grantees who had submitted their completed grant report by April 14th, our assessment team sent an 11-question survey via SurveyMonkey to obtain more information about their grant-funded activities and the impact of those activities. Of the 114 who had submitted a completed grant report, the survey link reached 105. A total of 79 people responded, for a response rate of 75.2 percent (79/105).

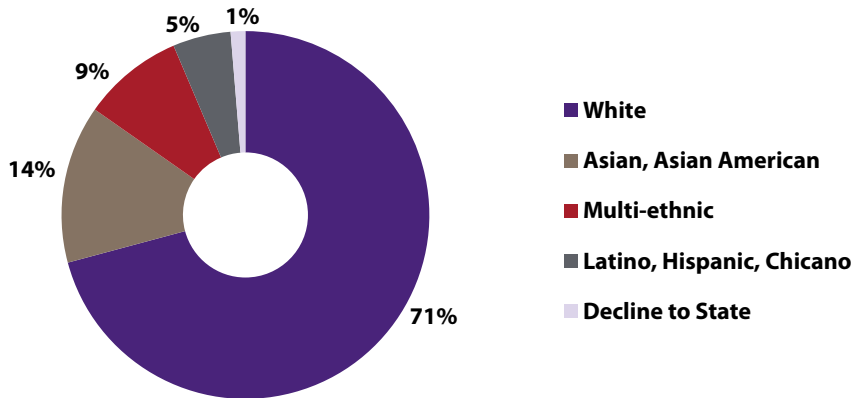
Grantee Demographics and Participation

The Next Gen grantees were predominantly female (75.9%), between the ages of 30 to 35 (56.4%), White (70.9%), and primarily used the professional development grant to participate in one activity (77.2%). About half of the grantees (51.9%) also participated in an emerging arts leader Network. These findings are generally consistent with the Network participant survey. See Exhibits 21 and 22 for more details.

Gender	Female	75.9%
	Male	24.1%
Age	18-25	5.1%
	26-29	29.5%
	30-35	56.4%
	36 or Older	9.0%
Number of Activities Attended via this Grant	One Activity	77.2%
	Two Activities	17.7%
	Three or More Activities	5.1%

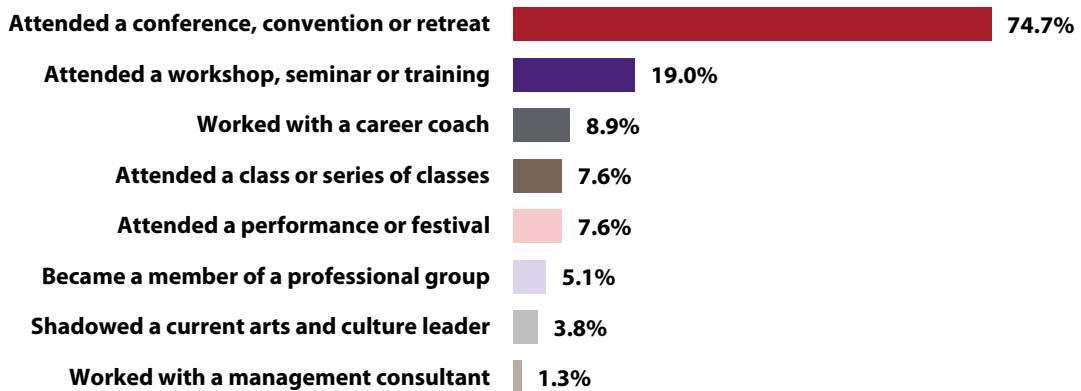
⁹ A condition of applying for a Next Gen grant was the completion of an on-line survey about Next Gen leaders, developed by Ann Markusen for CCI.

Exhibit 21. Ethnicity of Grantees



Grantees engaged in a range of professional development activities, but the most common was attendance of a conference, convention, or retreat (74.7%). Exhibit 22 shows the spread of activities for which the grants were used. Note that the sum of percentages exceeds 100 because some grantees used their funding to engage in multiple activities.

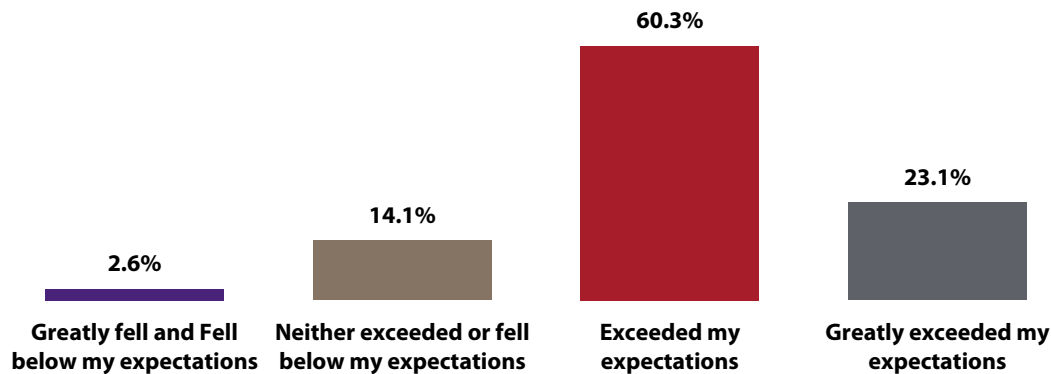
Exhibit 22. Activities for which Grantees Used Professional Development Grants



Professional Development Grantees' Satisfaction and Impact of their Participation

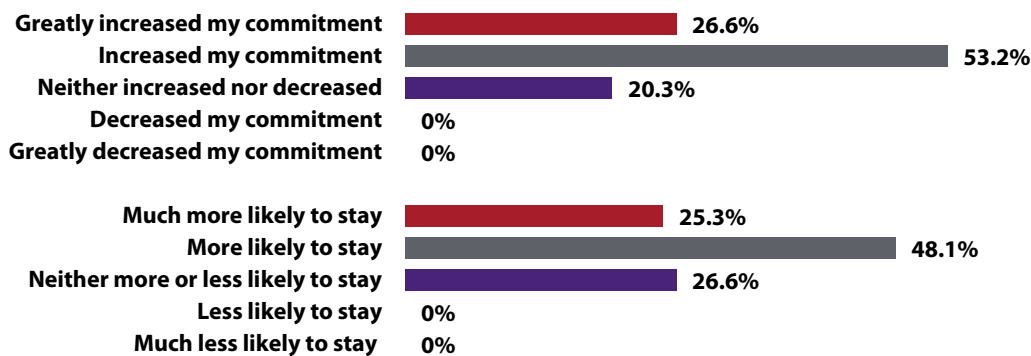
As shown in Exhibit 23, 83.4 percent of Next Gen grantees reported that their professional development activity or activities exceeded or greatly exceeded their expectations. Only two individuals (2.6%) indicated that the activity or activities fell below their expectations.

Exhibit 23. How Activities Met Grantees' Expectations (n=78)



All grantees (100%) indicated that their participation would be useful in their career development in the arts and culture profession; 82.3 percent indicated that it will be very useful (data not shown). The impact of the grants is also displayed in Exhibit 24. Roughly four out of five grantees (79.8%) responded that by participating in the professional development grant program, their feelings of commitment to the arts and culture field increased or greatly increased. In addition, nearly three-quarters (73.4%) of grantees replied that they were more likely or much more likely to stay within the arts and culture field.

Exhibit 24. How Activities Impacted Feelings of Commitment to and Decision to Stay in the Arts and Culture Field (n=79)



Summary of Findings on Professional Development Grantees

Based on the brief survey administered by Harder+Company, the following key points can be made about the Next Gen professional development grants:

- + **Grantees are similar to Network members.** Grant recipients were similar to Network members, demographically speaking. Half the grantees participated in the local Network, indicating substantial overlap between the two strategies.
- + **Grants were put to multiple uses.** The grants allowed for engagement in a wide range of professional development activities. The funds enabled recipients to choose something that suited their individual needs.
- + **The grants have strong benefits.** The overwhelming perspective of the grantees is that the funding has had a clear, positive impact on their ability to do their job and their commitment to the field.

Innovation Grants

The Center for Cultural Innovation also administered seven Innovation Grants to arts and culture organizations around the state. The purpose of this pilot grant program was to encourage arts nonprofits to explore new organizational models and practices that advance Next Generation arts leadership and improve the productivity, career advancement, and retention of emerging arts leaders. The Innovation Grants are different from the previously described programs—the Networks and the Professional Development Scholarships—in that these funds focused on the organization’s role, responsibility, and ability to innovate new strategies for long-term stability and systems change in the nonprofit arts field. That said, because of the overall purpose of the grants, participants/beneficiaries needed to include a Next Gen arts leader, defined as a staff person, board member, or artist between the ages of 18-35 who has worked in the arts field less than ten years consecutively.

About the Grantee Organizations

Fifty organizations applied for Innovation Grants in a competitive process, and seven grantees were selected. Almost all of the one-year grants were at the maximum allowable request of \$10,000. The grants were specifically for short-term projects, and grantees were encouraged to bring together a cross-generational group of people to determine the project’s purpose and activities. The grantees were diverse in geography, mission, constituency, and organizational size and structure, in addition to taking different approaches and activities in their Innovation Grants. Exhibit 25 provides some detail on the seven grant recipients, their grant activities, size, and geographic location.

Exhibit 25. Grantees/Grant Activities	Annual Revenue	Location
<p>Balboa Park Cultural Partnership</p> <p><i>Grant activities: Participation of Next Gen leaders from various Balboa Park cultural institutions in formal planning for the Park's 2015 Centennial Celebration, using a consultant-led "Impact Planning" process.</i></p>	<p>\$906,167 (2010)</p>	<p>San Diego</p>
<p>California Presenters</p> <p><i>Grant activities: Year-long, intensive external mentorships for five Next Gen leaders from member organizations. Mentorships include phone consultations, site visits, job shadowing, three leadership webinars for mentees on management topics, and participation in the 2012 Artist Information Exchange Conference activities including professional development workshops and social networking opportunities.</i></p>	<p>\$105,873 (2010)</p>	<p>Sacramento</p>
<p>Cornerstone Theater Company</p> <p><i>Grant activities: External mentorships for ten Next Gen staff, ensemble, and board members including on-site job shadowing; one convening of mentors and mentees; 12 monthly master classes for Next Gen internal leaders taught by seasoned internal and external leaders.</i></p>	<p>\$1,299,881 (2010)</p>	<p>Los Angeles</p>

Exhibit 25. Grantees/Grant Activities	Annual Revenue	Location
<p>Ink People Center for the Arts</p> <p><i>Grant activities: Participation of Next Gen arts leaders from the community in a consultant-led, inter-generational effort to assess and redefine the model for the Circle of Emerging Leaders (which includes but is not limited to project leaders of over 60 community-initiated projects).</i></p>	<p>\$342,195 (2010)</p>	<p>Eureka</p>
<p>Headlands Center for the Arts</p> <p><i>Grant activities: External phone-based mentorships for Next Gen staff leaders; investment in staff as artists and cultural creatives (access to on-site studios and equipment, two hours per month off for creative pursuits, bi-annual staff field trips); facilitated quarterly staff meetings about intergenerational, interdepartmental communication.</i></p>	<p>\$1,419,209 (2009)</p>	<p>Sausalito</p>
<p>Khmer Arts Academy</p> <p><i>Grant activities: Travel for three American-born, Next Gen staff and board leaders to engage in a learning retreat with the artistic director to connect them more closely to the cultural, political, historical, and artistic context of classical Cambodian dance (their organization's art form) and to build relationships with Khmer Arts Academy's overseas staff members.</i></p>	<p>\$391,170 (2009)</p>	<p>Long Beach</p>
<p>Yerba Buena Center for the Arts</p> <p><i>Grant activities: Participation of 7-12 Next Gen staff members in a six-month Leadership Semester which includes: individualized leadership and career assessment; on-site learning (senior staff leadership speaker series, internal or external mentorship, internal job shadowing with a senior staff leader); connecting activities (peer discussions, two to four hosted gatherings of Next Gen arts leaders in SF); external activities (innovative leaders speaker series, site visits to non-traditional workplaces); hands-on experiential internal leadership opportunities.</i></p>	<p>\$17,637,641 (2010)</p>	<p>San Francisco</p>

Four of the grantees focused on emerging arts leaders within their own staff and board, while three others geared their grant activities to emerging arts leaders in their broader service community. Regardless, as seen in the above exhibit, the grantees took a range of approaches and used multiple strategies to fulfill the purpose of the grant. Exhibit 26 shows the general strategies the grantees pursued.

Exhibit 26. Activities Pursued by Innovation Grantees	# of Grantees Using this Strategy
Peer and inter-generational networking and relationship-building	6
Facilitated peer or inter-generational convenings or group discussions about leadership issues	6
Mentorships with more seasoned arts leaders	4
Professional development workshops, master classes, seminars, and webinars	3
Job shadowing of more seasoned arts leaders	3
Active involvement in “practical leadership” opportunities with required deliverables, such as participation in broader community, organizational, or event planning	2
Site visits to other arts organizations	2
Investment in staff as artists – providing studio access and time, paid time for artistic/creative pursuits and renewal, artistic field trips	1
Cultural immersion of Next Gen leaders in grantee’s country of origin to provide broader context for ethnic-specific work in the U.S.	1

Because the seven grantees were still completing their work during this assessment period, our team conducted interviews to learn about their experience in project implementation and early lessons or observations about the grant activities and impact. We interviewed up to two participants from each organization, at least one of whom fit the Next Gen profile.

At the time of these Innovation Grant interviews, more than half of the organizations were still completing their activities, none had yet submitted final reports to CCI, and the scheduled peer learning and exchange for the cohort had not yet taken place. Nonetheless, at every organization except one, implementation was generally going as planned; the outlying organization found that it had taken much longer than expected to get the project off the ground and, though it was now up and running, that organization is requesting a grant extension to complete it. Moreover, every person interviewed was positive and enthusiastic about the immediate benefits and impact the grant activities were having, both individually and organizationally. Interviewee reflections on what they would have done differently in retrospect were mostly related to smaller procedural or timeline issues. Based on the interviews, our team identified five major themes about the experiences of Innovation Grant recipients. They are as follows:

Multi-Generational Interaction

Interviewees felt that a multi-generational approach to leadership development would be beneficial to the arts and culture field. They identified several possible strategies related to this.

+ Working closely with current leaders from older generation(s) is beneficial to Next Gen leaders.

Innovation Grantees experienced this effect through one-on-one mentorships, job shadowing, and being part of cross-generational task forces and committees. Next Gen interviewees said that working with older generation(s) and seasoned leaders is valuable to them for:

- Learning
- Sparking a passion for the work and the art
- Offering contextual guidance, knowledge, and long-term perspective/lessons learned
- Giving insight into how to survive and thrive in the field long-term
- Connecting to current leaders' own Networks
- Showing current leaders what they have to offer

Several respondents offered insights into how the cross-generational interaction was beneficial:

“[The activities] were great because we had Next Gen plus current leaders who’ve been here for a long time... upcoming leaders were able to voice their opinions, and people in leadership positions were able to realize their value. Next Gen leaders felt their voices were heard.”

-- Executive director

“The design team was inter-generational, helping to empower the younger leaders to gain a broader understanding of what leadership is... it was great to [...] work with both long-term and emerging leaders.”

-- Next Gen participant

“All the participants mentioned that the most valuable time for them was time spent with the artistic director. Had we known that, and knowing that now, if we were to write the proposal over again, we’d schedule more time with the artistic director.”

-- Executive director

+ Longer-term leadership development in the arts means reaching out to young adults. A

number of interviewees felt that support for a new generation of arts leaders needs to go further than people in early career stages. Respondents noted that outreach can and should include college students and even teenagers. One interviewee said:

“Where are these young people and how can we get them to be interested in the field? I got my music business degree but I didn’t necessarily think I’d work with an arts presenter. We need education at the college level about opportunities that exist for young people in the arts, that you can be in the arts and not necessarily be a dancer or an actor or musician.”

-- Next Gen participant

- + **The inclusion of mid-career professionals in leadership development is an additional strategy to consider.** While support for early career arts leaders is essential, some interviewees wondered about a gap between this stage and top levels of organizational leadership. Representatives from two grantee organizations specifically said that if they continue the activities started under the Innovation Grant, it is likely they will move toward the inclusion of mid-career arts professionals.

Practical and Tailored Leadership Development Opportunities

Next Gen interviewees from the Networks as well as the Innovation Grant representatives spoke well of most of the learning experiences they underwent, such as workshops, seminars, and training. But they spoke most highly about experiences that were tailored to their interests and relevant to their specific jobs, such as mentorships or job shadowing, through which they could discuss the challenges and opportunities of their own jobs one-on-one with more seasoned leaders inside or outside their organizations. Several interviewees also spoke about how rewarding it was to be involved in practical leadership experiences which moved beyond discussions to action or at least enabled them to see how their participation and contributions would affect a practical outcome. They said this re-ignited their excitement and passion and enabled long-term thinking about their careers in the arts.

“The learning curve was tremendous... Toward the end and very much in retrospect, I realized how many key lessons I gleaned from job shadowing that I continue to apply to the work I do now. A lot of those are anecdotal pieces of advice that were given to me, whether prompted by questions I had asked, or a general ‘*here’s how I make it through the world doing this job,*’ [or] personality traits I observed in high accountability leadership situations that I aspire to or hope to emulate when I find myself in those situations.”

-- Next Gen participant

“We’re contributing to a larger, long-term plan [for our arts community]. We’re just middle managers, so being integrated encourages us to participate, to feel more valued, and to contribute to a larger field event... I’ve participated in Next Gen programs before, but it has felt like lip service, lots of talking. This is better because we’re integrated into a bigger system. They really gave us a place at the table and asked us to take a leadership role.”

-- Next Gen participant

“I was already committed to the arts, but this helped me become even more of a leader. I learned how to put on a summit. Putting on a summit about empowering artists was itself empowering. And the website I developed can have a lasting effect.”

-- Next Gen participant

Making and Maintaining Connections

A networked way of thinking and existing comes naturally to many Next Generation leaders. They say they instinctively look for networked and collaborative ways of working, and that being part of Networks provides a sense of support, community, and resources for them. In addition, several Next Gen interviewees said they greatly care that their work in the arts contributes to the broader community and issues important to them. This helps them see how the arts fit and why it should be a priority, despite competing forces in their lives. It also helped some interviewees imagine themselves in the field long-term.

“I met a lot of colleagues I wouldn’t have had exposure to otherwise... I was exposed to city planners and got a sense of the broader vision for the city. It built my self-confidence and makes me feel more integrated into the process.”

-- Next Gen participant

“It is beneficial anytime we have space to get out of the office and get out of our routine. It is already changing the way we work with each other because new light is being shed on our jobs and our organization... It’s changed our excitement about our jobs. I see it now as a stepping stone to something else: if this is where I am now, what do I need to do to propel me forward?”

-- Next Gen participant

“It made me feel more invested as a board member. I thought because I didn’t come from an arts background, I didn’t have as much to say. But [after participating in the project], I realized our work is not just about the arts or culture. A lot of it is about empowerment and identity. I could see the connection to other social justice issues I was working on...different approaches but all working towards building healthy communities.”

-- Next Gen participant

Organizational Commitment

Interviewees said that organizational commitment is important to ensure continuity of Next Gen leadership development and any necessary organizational changes that must occur to support it. Most of the interviewees described changes underway at their organizations to continue the work started by the Innovation Grant.

“Change is already happening [at our organization]. What we’ve learned from our mentorships is already being integrated. For example, from the class I took, I’ve already restructured the way I do my job. The way I interact with the board has changed. In June we’ll hopefully integrate these changes across departments. The master classes created closer relationships within the organization... new staff have been folded into the master classes as they’ve come on.”

-- Next Gen participant

“It opened our organizational leadership’s eyes and minds to the strengths of our Next Gen leadership. I think I will see a continuation of leadership growth of our Next Gen cohort, whether they stay with our organization or not. This is where we have to be appropriate stewards... Not only do we think they can do more, but they think they can do more too.”

-- Managing director

“Any initiative like this needs to be embedded in the organization itself. We have a board liaison for the project... It is key to have at least one person on the board who understands arts nonprofit work...The board needs to be behind anything policy-driven related to finances or personnel. For example, this year we implemented a savings plan for staff. The board needs to understand this is linked to longer-term sustainability.”

-- Executive director (Next Gen)

“The feedback [on our project] has been so positive that we’ll continue it. Maybe it can become part of our annual plan and annual check-in for employees ... This type of work is really important. I know it’s hard for people in arts organizations to feel like they have upward mobility, especially in smaller organizations. When we’re so tied to the mission and are passionate for the work of our organization, we don’t feel like we need to go somewhere else. But then what does professional development and mobility mean? I think there would be less turnover, less transience on staff if we continue this type of work.”

-- Next Gen participant

Multi-year Leadership Development Efforts and Funding

A number of interviewees said that a multi-year grant would have allowed them to deepen or build upon the work they started with the Innovation Grant, reasoning that the development of younger leaders is by definition a long-term effort.

“I’d say the one thing we learned about this kind of process is that building and developing Next Gen leaders has to be a sustained process... In other words, if we had done three of these over the course of three years, or multiple retreats over the course of three years, it would have been better.”

-- Executive director

“How to sustain this program after this one-year investment? We’re committed conceptually, and though it takes so much time to get it off the ground and lay the

foundation, there's a good chance it'll go away once the grant ends. We don't want to do a hit-and-run just because a short-term grant is ending. It will take several years to see the fruits of this effort."

-- Executive director (Next Gen)

Summary of Findings on Innovation Grant Recipients

The Innovation Grant interviews offer a rich portrait of the grantees' early successes and future opportunities. Several key findings can be highlighted at this time:

- + **Respondents were uniformly positive about the grants.** Respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the benefits of the Innovation Grant. They felt the programs funded through the grant created new opportunities for organizations to promote the success of Next Gen staff members.
- + **A targeted approach to professional development is valuable.** The grants appeared to have their greatest impact when the funded programs were highly tailored to individual staff members' professional interests and needs. Respondents found the mentorship and shadowing opportunities most beneficial because of the level of personal attention they afforded.
- + **For long term success, all parties need to make a deeper commitment.** Respondents noted the importance of having both the organizations and the funders make long-term commitments to ensure that these successful early efforts can have a more sustainable effect.

Other Perspectives on Next Gen Arts Leadership

Part of the Harder+Company design for this assessment was a series of brief interviews with individuals working on, or familiar with, Next Gen leadership issues outside of this specific initiative. By placing the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative in the context of what others are doing and learning, we can better understand the approaches that others have taken and how that experience can inform the initiative going forward. The Harder team interviewed nine individuals who have deep expertise in this field, who were jointly selected by the funders and the evaluators. (A list of those interviewed is included in the Appendix.)

In this section, we summarize the key themes that emerged from the interviews. The final section of this report, which lays out the implications of the evaluation findings, incorporates these themes into the considerations for the future of this work. The material presented in this section is not specific to the initiative. None of those interviewed was familiar with the Networks, the professional development scholarships, or the Innovation Grants. Their comments are based on their own experiences and observations. However, the issues addressed in these interviews are similar to the issues that underlie the Next Gen initiative.

Multi-/Inter-Generational Leadership Development

The interview respondents described the importance of a multi-generational approach to Next Gen leadership development. Programs that rely exclusively on peer interaction to support and direct the careers of emerging arts leaders are likely to have less impact than programs that involve more senior leaders. Intergenerational interaction can take the form of mentorships, job shadowing, or coaching. Direct experience with professionals that have successfully navigated their way through career choices, work/life balance challenges, and other trade-offs can inspire emerging leaders and help them make their own decisions. While the

experience of senior leaders should not be the primary consideration for Next Gen arts workers, what older leaders have learned can provide a meaningful context. This perspective is reflected in the following observations from the interviewees:

“Six or seven years ago we offered generation-specific trainings... We offered to “experienced/senior” leaders and to “emerging” leaders. We’ve mixed it up since then because we saw the value in the exchange that occurs for long-time leaders to hear how younger leaders come into the work, and of course vice versa. Since then we haven’t done the separate training...”

**-- National provider of
leadership development training**

“Creating programs that are multi-generational is important, i.e. “emerging leadership” not only defined by age or generation. This is important to note in the multicultural community. There are people in their 40s-60s transferring into the arts. Maybe they’ve done West African hand drumming for 20 years but they’ve been working in the tech sector and now at this time of their lives are deciding to commit to the arts solely. “I’m here to learn *and* teach” – we should expect this of 20-year-olds and 60-year-olds.”

-- Local Arts administrator

“Even with my (Next Gen) staff here, as we talk about their decision-making power, they’re still unprepared for the politics, strategy, interaction with other powerful people and bodies such as boards of directors. I’ve had to consciously make my job more transparent and create opportunities where they can practice in those more strategic, political situations, i.e. make a deliberate, protective, incremental, carefully crafted, “safe” journey for them in terms of the political arena. How do we give people the political skills they need? How do you learn to manage an environment, an institution, manage up and out in addition to managing at your own peer level?”

-- Local public sector arts funder

Value of Practical Leadership Opportunities

Many of the interviewees talked about the value of practical experience in leadership. Theory, practice exercises, and observation are at the core of the traditional approach to leadership development for Next Gen workers. While these are helpful, they are no substitute for the actual real-world experience of having to make a difficult decision and then being held accountable for the consequences. Next Gen programs that offer

emerging leaders an opportunity to make real-life decisions in work settings can play a very important role in sharpening their skills and preparing them emotionally for assuming more responsibility as their careers advance. The challenges in this approach are to minimize performance expectations that can inhibit nascent leaders as they take their first steps toward leadership development, and to find decision opportunities where a less than optimal choice does not produce serious negative consequences. Mentoring is one strategy for addressing these challenges but there may be others. As the interviewees observed:

“I think there’s a social aspect to [Next Gen programs’] associated networking that people really enjoy. While they enjoy it, they don’t necessarily feel it’s advancing their work. My staff tells me that we want to make sure younger leaders are present as participants, not just observers.”

-- Local public sector arts funder

“Building networks only goes so far. After that, people need a chance to take what they’ve learned from each other and really apply it. I hear from people who have been in leadership development training programs for years without ever having a chance to really lead. If we believe these people are our future, we need to let them learn what it’s really like. Otherwise, how can they develop their skills?”

-- National Nonprofit sector leader

Addressing Ethnic Diversity

There is much discussion in the field about the need to have the nonprofit arts sector reflect the character of the communities it serves, but few programs directly address diversity, particularly ethnic diversity, according to the interviewees. Despite some efforts by funders to create programs that encourage the participation of all emerging leaders, many Next Gen professionals from communities of color have not been involved as hoped. The existing programs do not appear to be meeting the needs of communities of color, and the few current programs tailored for more diverse participants are very small and not widely known outside a small, local geographic area. The interviewees see this as a challenge to all efforts to promote Next Gen leadership in communities of color, not just in this initiative. Addressing diversity should be a priority in the development of future programs in the arts sector in order to remain vital. Several interviewees commented on this issue:

“I feel it’s a huge issue that really needs more focus and attention in the field. Many have talked about it but nobody has identified any strong models to reach out to that community... Efforts have been made, but nobody has really taken the initiative to lead a charge on it.”

-- National arts administrator

“For organizations in communities of color where the histories are not widely visible, and the social movements and community mobilizing are not well documented, there’s still an oral history that’s going on. That oral history must be passed from generation to generation, and from

elder to mid-career to younger artists. Contextualizing community history, community values and community mobilization, so emerging leaders of color are growing their leadership within the context of the community value system. ... [A local arts leader of color] has been passing on this history of work in community organizing and acting as a sounding board. He's been mentoring great young artists and arts administrators. Is there a way within communities of color that these natural mentors can support that kind of developmental ladder?"

-- Local public sector arts funder

"[Some programs] are really good to have but they don't have the depth that the multi-cultural community needs in order to engage. Arts leaders of color tend to work more in isolation, have less resources, and may think those programs are not for me. You need to go beyond a monthly gathering and a relationship with a mentor. Creating a sense of community requires more effort. People have to be together for a longer amount of time. We have to make more effort to really bond a group."

-- Local arts administrator

"The way to increase diversity is to change organizations from the inside out. More diverse leadership will produce more opportunities for diverse staff. The leadership of the sector is not diverse and is afraid of change. If it's up to them, it's not likely to happen. We need direction from funders for special efforts for Next Gen workers of color that extend their opportunities and allow them to gain practical leadership experience."

-- Local arts funder

"There are cultural divides that people hold onto. I have so many younger professionals [of color] reach out to me and ask, "How do I explain to my parents or how do I make a living?" The simple narrative about young arts professionals of color is that they see a mismatch between what they desire for their future careers and the realities of the field. A lot of them bond with each other. They start their own collaborative or network. They want their own identity, since they see their experience as different. But real integration has to happen to have impact. Why aren't these strong opportunities and mentorships helping to sustain individuals of color in this career and environment? If we're saying it's important, what can be done, given what we know? Where are the leverage points?"

-- National arts administrator

Importance of Organizational Commitment

The interviewees identified the importance of having Next Gen programs that go beyond an individual focus to include support for organizational change. An ambitious cohort of skilled, motivated, and well-connected emerging arts leaders can only take on their leadership roles if meaningful opportunities exist for them in the arts sector. Programs should identify specific models of organizational innovation and change that can help arts agencies undertake the changes needed to encourage new leadership. This may involve succession planning, new strategies for internal decision-making, innovative staffing arrangements or other promising models that can be tested. The interviewees spoke clearly to this point:

“The organization’s role is key. I think organizations are also limited in and of themselves, but you have to start somewhere. Organizations can institute policies, cultural norms that affect the way professionals develop on the job or outside of the job, structures. Organizations have responsibilities ... where formal leaders see developing their staff as a part of their role (in addition to the bottom line or buying new art or instituting innovative programming). Staff as resources should be elevated. Unfortunately in the field, it’s not.”

-- Local arts administrator

“I love the idea of beginning with organizations. I believe organizations have a lot more room for maneuvering and innovating than young emerging professionals do. The young emerging professionals are already spinning many wheels trying to self-propel their careers, contribute, have personal lives, as well as eat and pay rent – they expend a great deal already for what they get in return. Within organizations, I think there’s room.”

-- National arts administrator

“Can an organization create a whole learning environment that has more people engaged than just that one person in that (older) age range? What is necessary in cultivating this younger staff:

- **Figure out how and when to give them power. It may not be my way to do things but it may be fine to do it in a way they’ve proposed.**
- **Consciously allocate funds toward skills building.**
- **Cultivate “whole life career planning” for them, so we’re not just talking about their current job, but where they want to go in 3, 5, or 10 years.**

- **Provide flexible scheduling so they can take advantage of opportunities to be leaders, curators, or artists, or to participate in other grantmaking processes.**
- **Be a non-judgmental sounding board (as much as I can) for their ideas. It's about laying out options for them in terms of content and context, spending more time giving them background so they can make the choices."**

-- Local public arts funder

"The ideal would be to help arts non-profits understand the potential they have right under their noses. Many organizations have a hard time identifying leaders in their own organizations even though those future leaders may be there already. I think over time CEOs can get caught in day-to-day worries, like making payroll and mission and board. I think it's important as a leader to have part of you always in start-up mode, remaining innovative. If my younger, smart staff has ideas, how can I encourage and listen to their ideas, balance them out with what I know, create opportunities and financial support?"

-- Local arts administrator

These themes do not directly address the Initiative or the results of this assessment, but they indicate how others in the field have engaged with similar issues and the lessons learned from that experience. Moreover, they help to frame our findings by providing context for how the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative fits in the larger arts nonprofit field. These useful concepts are reflected in the final chapter of this report, which summarizes the evaluators' assessment of the implications of this work.

Lessons Learned & Implications for the Future

HARDER+COMPANY Community Research and Diane Espaldon conducted an assessment of the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative that sought to capture early lessons about implementation and sustainability. Below is our summary of key lessons learned from the assessment data, as well as a discussion of implications for the future of the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative and the field in general.

“Having those real experiences with other leaders as allies and co-workers can create something real. We may work together in the future, and now we already know something about each other’s skills. There is a deeper connection.”

Next Gen Innovation Grant Participant

Lessons Learned

Based on the research presented, the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative has been very successful in achieving its early implementation goals. The three components of the Initiative each show early measures of success on their own. Perhaps more importantly, the elements of the Initiative are working well in concert with one another—although it is too early to expect any longer-term results related to careers or the broader sector. At the most basic level, this is reflected by the fact that half the Professional Development Grant recipients identify as Network members. In addition, many of the Professional Development Grants and Innovation Grants are being used to participate in or create new opportunities to interact with professional peers and/or mentors. In

coming years, there may be opportunities to more intentionally link the three strategies so that they work to support the career paths of emerging arts leaders across the state, with each strategy addressing a different need of the same individual.

At the heart of the initiative, the Networks are sustained by a core group of Next Gen arts professionals actively participating in relationship building and other professional development activities, while other Next Gen leaders participate at a somewhat lower level. Those who are actively involved report a high level of satisfaction with and impact from their Networks. The Networks are using a range of organizational models and strategies that reflect their members' interests and the communities they serve. The Professional Development Grants are being used appropriately to develop the technical skills of the Next Gen leaders who participate. Grant recipients also report a high level of impact, increasing the likelihood of longer-term retention in the nonprofit arts sector. Meanwhile, the Innovation Grants fund an array of organizational approaches to supporting Next Gen retention and development.

When examined together, the three components of the Next Gen Initiative offer a revealing picture. There is no single Network model that exemplifies “best practice,” since the models are all still emerging and they are early in their implementation. The Networks, as well as the two grant programs, are generally built on a framework of openness, inclusivity, and flexibility. This evolving framework has served the Initiative well. Formal structures have been less important at this stage in the Network's development, but may become more critical in the future, particularly as they seek support from other funders. For their members, participation is more about building professional relationships with their peers than developing professional skills (although members also value that aspect of their Networks). However, as the Next Gen model continues to evolve, an opportunity exists to enhance participant experience and strengthen the initiative's impact through a closer alignment of the three components so they more strongly reinforce one another. Not all participants need to participate in all components; but where the components can be better integrated, participants should benefit from such efforts.

Connectedness

The Initiative has demonstrated the value of connectedness for young professionals in general and Next Gen arts leaders in particular. Networking was reported as the area where participants felt they had experienced the highest impact from their involvement. (In fact, the development of formal professional skills and other potential benefits were much less important to the participants.) The experience of the participants is consistent with the intentions of the Network leaders who describe the goals of the Networks as connection and developing leadership skills through Network participation.

In addition, the Innovation Grants allowed for organizations to build deeper relationships among its staff, board, and other stakeholders. Several of the grants allowed younger staff to work with other organizations or learn more about their art and the cultural context on which it is based. By extending the breadth and depth of their Networks, the emerging leaders strengthened their connections beyond their immediate peers and deepened their understanding of their work.

Next Gen leaders in all sectors understand the complex web of relationships in which they live and work. Technology helps to support these Networks but, by itself, does not drive them. They come from an inclusive, dynamic, and open view of the world that encompasses many perspectives simultaneously.

Evolving Definitions of Membership and Engagement

As the Networks have evolved, they have regularly had to reconsider their definitions of membership and participation. A major factor contributing to this ongoing process is the high level of member turnover. Given their ages and stage of career development, it is not surprising that many network members are highly mobile, changing jobs with regularity. The Network leaders accept this challenge as part of the process of serving emerging leaders. In fact, they use turnover intentionally as way to provide leadership opportunities for members: With frequent vacancies in leadership positions, new volunteers are needed regularly to assume responsibility. Creating this kind of opportunity is an explicit strategy of all the Networks, and turns a disadvantage into an opportunity.

While the individual roster of members may change regularly, the profile of an “average” Next Gen participant has stayed fairly consistent with no statistically significant differences in demographics across the four Networks. The profile of Professional Development Grant recipients was largely the same. This relative homogeneity of this group raised questions for some interview and survey respondents. In particular, they are concerned about increasing the diversity of the people involved in Next Gen—across a wide range of measures, from ethnicity to age to affiliation with different channels of the arts and culture field. The Initiative has established an effective infrastructure and an array of promising programs. If the Initiative is to be successful in reach a broader audience, it will have to identify explicit strategies to address their needs and interests.


Tailoring

Across the three components of the Next Gen Initiative, participants found considerable benefit in the opportunity to tailor activities to their particular interests and professional development needs. This was most notably the case among Professional Development grantees, who used the funds to pursue a particular interest that might not have been covered in the broader Network events. Such opportunities generally increased their commitment to their work and the field and improved the likelihood that they would continue doing similar work for the long term. Similarly, the Innovation Grant interviewees noted that Next Gen participants seemed to derive the most satisfaction from opportunities that allowed a concentrated focus on their personal goals for professional development. Many of the grantees noted that involvement in real organizational decision-making through job shadowing, mentoring relationships, or new and challenging assignments was a tremendous learning opportunity that would otherwise not been available to them. It added meaning to what for many had been a mostly theoretical understanding of leadership. This approach also helped the current leaders who had a chance to reflect on their work as they helped their younger colleagues understand it.

Organizational Development

The Initiative as a whole, and most notably the four regional Networks, are still taking shape and need continued support for organizational development. The four Networks use similar strategies to support their emerging arts leader communities, but rely on different structures and processes for decision-making. While all four have one paid part-time staff person, the Networks mostly use volunteers to administer their activities—but there appears to be no association between the use of paid staff and a Network’s effectiveness in promoting membership or sustaining member activities. All the Networks also recognize the importance of seeking funds to maintain themselves in addition to their Next Gen grants. Sustainability is a goal for all the Networks and they are actively developing plans to obtain additional funds. While the Networks do not require substantial grant support, the competition for support from local sources is daunting. Network leaders

understand the important of creating business models that combine grants, fees and other funding streams over the next few years.



“For my generation, we want to feel like we’re contributing and doing meaningful work.”

Innovation Grant Next Gen



Implications for the Future

Building on the findings of this assessment, we offer several recommendations for consideration in future programming. These implications take into account the perspective provided by the thought leaders we interviewed:

- + Maintain flexible definitions, program designs and strategies across the Networks.** This assessment found wide variation across the four Networks in the definitions of “leadership,” “Next Generation,” “arts professional,” and “membership.” Each of the organizations has cast a wide net in defining its members/participants and its strategies. Similarly, the Center for Cultural Innovation has been very flexible, within the funding guidelines, in its professional development and innovation grant decisions—and should be seen as a strong example of responsive grant administration. As Harder+Company started to engage with this Initiative, we initially identified the lack of consistency as a challenge to the Networks and the Initiative; however, this was disproved as we continued our work. The networks and the field itself are open and inclusive with regard to age, level, role in the arts sector, leadership and the meaning of work. The interviews and data reiterate the value of allowing maximum involvement. Next Gen in this context is not about age or generation but about new leadership roles in an organization or the field. Mid-career workers over age 36, artists, workers in the for-profit arts sector, and arts critics all have a stake in the vitality of California’s arts and culture sector. They also have their roles in the development of the next generation of arts leaders. There can be opportunities for more specific interest groups within the broader Initiative, but there is also great value in an inclusive approach.
- + Define and track Network goals for audience, activities, and impact.** The Networks benefit from staying flexible, particularly in regard to finding specific strategies that meet the needs of their members and the regions in which they live. But once those strategies are identified, the Networks should establish appropriate goals. They would then be able to use foundation and other resources to pursue the goals they have established, e.g. membership targets, activity types, and levels and impact

expectations. Over the next year, they will be able to use this report and their own market information to sharpen their focus and increase their responsiveness to their members.

- + **Increase the use of inter-generational strategies in all aspects of the Initiative.** Our research showed the success of inter-generational approaches such as mentorships, shadowing, and other types of relationships with more experienced and seasoned leaders. An intergenerational approach should also include educating college-age groups across California on careers in the nonprofit arts, as well as support programs that allow mid-career arts workers to work closely with supportive senior leaders in their organizations and across the sector. This also has some implications for arts leadership development in communities and organizations of color. (See next recommendation.)
- + **Create targeted, dedicated funding strategies for communities and organizations of color.** Representation of these communities in the networks and other Initiative activities should be increased. Developing the leadership of arts professionals of color will require new programming specifically designed for them and their career paths. More effective marketing or outreach to these groups will not, on its own, produce better results because of the complexity of each of California's ethnic, cultural, and language groups and differences across various communities of color. The issue of representativeness is not specific to the Next Gen Initiative. It is a challenge and opportunity facing the arts and nonprofit field in general.
- + **Emphasize complementary strategies that support both individual growth and organizational change.** Arts organizations play a critical role in arts leadership development. The Center for Cultural Innovation has recognized this need since its founding in 2001, and has been a leader in training artists and arts professionals on the business side of their work. Preparing new leaders to take on greater responsibility also requires support from *within* organizations and the involvement of current executive directors, artistic directors, and board members. More focus is needed on organizational change strategies and succession planning so the new cohort can see itself in the organization's future. Nonprofit arts organizations should have a range of change strategies and models to consider. (See next recommendation.)
- + **Provide practical leadership opportunities to Next Gen arts leaders.** Next Gen leaders need to engage in opportunities in which their efforts are directly related to meaningful outcomes that affect their organization, their arts community, and the field. Such opportunities should go beyond discussion of issues and skills, building to meaningful action—and the opportunities should be supported by senior management. Innovation Grants are well suited to enable organizations to develop such leadership options.
- + **Support the capacity needs of the Networks themselves.** All four Networks need assistance in building member databases, assessing the needs and progress of their members, identifying effective strategies for outreach and recruitment and maintaining long-term relationships with members. Given that volunteer leadership turns over on a regular basis, the technical support provided by Harder+Company under this project is likely to require updating as the Networks evolve.

Appendix

As noted in the methods section, Harder+Company used a variety of approaches to gather information about the Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative. In the subsequent pages, we have included the following data collection tools used for this assessment:

- Next Gen Network Leader Interview Protocol
- Innovation Grant Recipient Interview Protocol
- National Expert Interview Protocol
- Professional Development Grant Recipient Survey
- Network Participant Surveys (Note: We have included all four versions, each of which is tailored to address specific issues for Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and Silicon Valley.)
- List of experts interviewed

“I was already committed to the arts, but this helped me become even more of a leader.”

Innovation Grant Next Gen Participant

Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative Assessment Network Leader Interview Protocol

Interviewee Name:

Title:

Organization:

Date:

Introduction

- Hello , we're from Harder+Company Community Research. Thanks for making time today for this follow-up interview related to the Hewlett and Irvine Foundations' assessment of the Next Gen Leadership Initiative.
- As you may remember, we spoke with you in early January to introduce ourselves and this work and to get initial information about your network such as how you're organized, general program information about your programs, and to get a sense of any evaluation-related efforts your network has done to date. For this interview today, we'd like to ask you more in-depth questions about into your programs, your participants, and any emerging observations and lessons to date about your work. Towards the end of the call, we'll also seek your input on the draft survey you received and talk with you about how best to coordinate our efforts with you on the survey itself.
- This interview will last approximately 90 minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?
- One last thing: do you mind if we record this interview? It's only for the purposes of our internal note-taking in case we have to clarify anything for ourselves later.

Programs

1. What are your current programs and activities?

[Probe based on specific program information they provided in most recent funder report and in January phone call with Diane and Paul.]

2. What do you consider your core programs/activities? Are there any you are phasing in or phasing out and, if so, why?
3. What are the participation patterns for these activities? Which are the most likely to attract participants?

Participants

4. We're interested in learning more about the people who participate in your programs.

- a) How many active participants do you have overall?

[Probe: How do you define "active"?)

- b) What is the general profile of your participants, i.e. what do you already know about your participants?

[Probes: Age range, working in nonprofits vs. independent, artists/program vs. administrators.]

- c) Do different types of programs draw different types of people?
- d) Who is **not** participating in your programs that you wish were participating?

[Probe: Are your participants as diverse as you'd like them to be?]

Why do you think is not participating? Any ideas for what would encourage their participation?

[Probe: What would you need to make this happen?]

Observations/Learning to Date

- 5. To date, which of your programs and activities have contributed most to leadership development and professional development of your peers/participants? Why is this so? How do you know?
- 6. To date, what has your work taught you about the type of leadership development and professional development support your peers/participants need most? What, if anything, is different for your peers in this regard from the generations that entered the arts field before them?

[Probe: Different/more/fewer challenges; different/more/fewer opportunities; new models of arts leadership and management]

- 7. From your perspective, is there a difference between **leadership development** and **professional development** for your peers/participants? If so, what are the primary differences? Does your network emphasize one more than the other? Why or why not?

Survey

The next section of our interview is related to the survey we will be sending out.

- 8. What is your general feedback on the draft survey questions that we sent you?
- 9. Are there additional questions or customization on the questions or approach that would help you in your own data gathering as well as ensure that the survey yields helpful data for us specific to your network?
- 10. [Discuss their email list and process for finalizing and disseminating the survey for their network. We will work with those who would like us to post a link on their Facebook page.]

Those are all our questions for today. Do you have any other comments before we end this interview? Who else should we talk to understand what is happening in your network?

[Summarize immediate next steps]

Thank you so much for your input and time.

Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative Assessment Innovation Grant Recipient Interview Protocol

Interviewee Name:

Title:

Organization:

Date:

Introduction

- Hello, we're from Harder+Company Community Research. Thank you so much for making time today for this interview related to the Innovation Grant that you received from the Center for Cultural Innovation.
- As you may know, CCI has worked closely with the Hewlett and Irvine Foundations to create and fund a range of efforts to support and sustain next generation arts leaders. Our consulting team has been asked by Hewlett and Irvine to do a mid-term assessment of these efforts as a whole, and the Innovation Grant program is part of that. I want to be sure you know that this is not an evaluation of your work under the grant; rather, the purpose of our call today is to get a general sense how you feel your Innovation Grant activities are going and any early observations or lessons that you're noting. Your responses in this interview are confidential. We are interviewing all of the Innovation Grant recipients, and we'll report back to the funders only in the aggregate and using anonymous quotes. So I encourage you to be open and honest in this interview.
- Please know that we've read your grant proposal so are somewhat informed about your Innovation Grant work; we're also aware that your grant term is not yet completed and that you may or may not be done with the grant activities. Again, this interview is just to get a sense of how you feel the work is going and any early lessons you may have about your efforts to develop next generation leadership in your organization.
- The interview will last approximately 30 minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?
- One last thing: do you mind if we record this interview? It's only for the purposes of our internal note-taking in case we have to clarify anything for ourselves later.

Questions

- 11.** In your proposal, the purpose of your grant was to _____ and the activities were _____. *[Briefly state, customizing to each grantee.]* Where are you in the project and how do you feel it's going?

[Probe for status of project, participation/engagement level, expected and unexpected outcomes.]

- 12.** The Innovation Grant program was specifically intended to encourage exploration and testing of new models and practices in organizations that could eventually improve productivity, career advancement, and retention of emerging arts leaders in the nonprofit arts field generally.

Based on your activities and experiences under this Innovation Grant, what have you learned to date about supporting and sustaining next generation leadership in your organization?

[Probe lightly re whether their assumptions, practices, roles, or structures have changed – don't assume anything since grant term is not yet completed and it may be premature to push for results/impact of grant activities.]

13. In hindsight, is there anything you would have done differently related to the grant activities?

[Possible probes depending on interviewee: design or implementation of grant activities, choice of participants, how interviewee or other participants engaged.]

14. Do you have any thoughts about how your organization will build upon the progress/lessons learned from your Innovation Grant?

Those are all our questions for today.

Do you have any other comments before we end this interview?

Thank you so much for your input and time.

Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative Assessment National Expert Interview Protocol

Interviewee Name:

Title:

Organization:

Date:

Introduction

Hello, I'm from Harder+Company Community Research. Harder+Company is evaluating the Next Generation Arts Leadership Initiative, funded by the Irvine and Hewlett Foundation. This initiative is designed to provide the professional development and networking support necessary to help increase the commitment of emerging arts professionals to work in the arts and culture sector. As part of that work, we are conducting interviews with a select group of national and regional experts who are familiar with Next Generation issues, both within and outside the arts sector. As a recognized expert, the funders have suggested that we contact you for this interview. We expect the interview to take 30-45 minutes. We would like to ask about your experience with similar programs for young professionals. We are especially interested in what strategies and approaches you have observed for helping to support the next generation of nonprofit leaders.

Questions

1. What has your experience with emerging nonprofit leadership development been? To what extent is that experience in the arts sector?
2. What strategies have you seen in the field?
3. Are you familiar with the Hewlett/Irvine Next Gen initiative? Do you have any reactions to it?
4. What have been the most effective strategies for retention, skill building and career development?
5. The focus of most leadership development activities has been on the specific skills and career paths of the individuals involved? What is the role of organizational development in creating career paths for Next Gen leaders?
6. From what we have seen, emerging leaders from communities of color seem less involved in these programs than we would expect, given the changing demographics of California? Is that consistent with your experience?
7. What do you think is going on there? Do you have any thoughts about ways to include these leaders in efforts to support emerging leaders?
8. Are Next Gen issues in the arts field different than those in the broader nonprofit sector? How so?
9. To be effective, what should be included in a Next Gen leadership initiative?
10. Is there a special role for philanthropy in this field?
11. Any final thoughts?

Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative Assessment Professional Development Grant Recipient Survey

1. Which response(s) best describe(s) the activity(ies) your Next Gen Arts Professional Development Grant funded? [Choose all that apply]

- a. Attended a workshop, seminar or training
- b. Attended a conference, convention or retreat
- c. Became a member of a professional group
- d. Shadowed a current arts and culture leader
- e. Attended a performance or festival
- f. Attended a class or series of classes
- g. Worked with a career coach
- h. Worked with a management consultant

2. Rate the extent to which the activity(ies) met your expectations:

Greatly exceeded my expectations	Exceeded my expectations	Neither exceeded or fell below my expectations	Fell below my expectations	Greatly fell below my expectations
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- a. Please explain your response. [Open-ended]

3. How did the Next Gen Arts Professional Development Grant affect the following:

- a. Your decision to stay within the arts and culture field?

Much more likely to stay	More likely to stay	Neither more or less likely to stay	Less likely to stay	Much less likely to stay	I have already left the field
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- b. Your feelings of commitment to nonprofit arts and culture field?

Greatly increased my commitment	Increased my commitment	Neither increased nor decreased my commitment	Decreased my commitment	Greatly decreased my commitment	I have already left the field
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- c. Other positive or negative effects of this grant? [Open-ended]

4. How useful will your participation in the grant-funded activity(ies) be in your career development as an arts and culture professional?

Very useful	Somewhat useful	Neither useful nor not useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	I am not longer working as an arts and culture professional
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5. Other thoughts on the impact of the Next Gen Arts Professional Development Grant on your current job or your profession? [Open-ended]

6. Please tell us if you participate in any of the following Next Gen Arts and Culture Networks in your community.

- a. Rising Arts Leaders of San Diego
- b. genARTS Silicon Valley
- c. Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area
- d. Emerging Arts Leaders/Los Angeles
- e. I don't currently participate or affiliate with any of these Networks

7. What is your ethnicity?

- a. Asian, Asian American
- b. Black or African-American
- c. Latino, Hispanic, Chicano
- d. Native American, Native Alaskan
- e. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- f. White
- g. Multi-ethnic
- h. Decline to State

8. In what year were you born? (Enter your 4-digit birth year; for example, 1976)

9. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Transgender
- d. Decline to state

Next Gen Arts Leadership Initiative Assessment

Example of Network Participant Survey

Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

Introduction Page

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input is very valuable and we appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey. We expect the results of the survey to help shape the future of the arts leadership.

Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

Involvement

1. Do you know what Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP) is?

- Yes
 No
 Not sure

2. Do you consider yourself to be a part of Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP)?

- Yes
 No
 Not sure

3. How long have you been a part of Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP)?

- Less than 6 months
 6 months to 12 months
 13 months to 24 months
 Longer than 24 months

4. Please rate your level of involvement in Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP):

	Very involved	Involved	Moderately involved	Minimally involved	Not Involved at all
How involved are you in Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Which Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP) activities have you participated in? [Choose all that apply]

- Fellowship Program
 Working Groups
 Etc.

Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

6. Please provide some insight into why you enjoy being involved in Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP):



Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

Expectations

7. Why did you decide to be a part of Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP)? [Choose all reasons that apply]

- Networking
- Professional development
- Skill building opportunities
- Wanted a mentor
- Wanted to be a mentor
- Wanted to join the Fellowship Program
- Etc.

8. Based on the reason(s) you identified in the previous question, please rate their level of importance to you.

*Note- If you did not happen to select a particular reason, please mark N/A for that choice.

	Most Important			Least Important	N/A
Reason 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reason 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reason 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. So far, being a part of Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP):

- Exceeded my expectation level
- Met my expectation level
- Did not meet my expectation level

Please explain:

Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

Impact and Satisfaction

10. How useful has participating in Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP) been for improving your:

	Really useful	Useful	Moderately useful	Not that useful	Not useful at all
Professional Development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking Opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Are some parts of Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP) more useful than others? Please explain.

12. Please rate your level of satisfaction of the following aspects of Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP):

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied
Overall	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information presented during meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How your network is organized	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Identify two things you enjoy about participating in Emerging Arts Professionals/San Francisco Bay Area (EAP) and two things you would like to improve:

Enjoy 1	<input type="text"/>
Enjoy 2	<input type="text"/>
Improve 1	<input type="text"/>
Improve 2	<input type="text"/>

Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

Charateristics 1

14. What is your ethnicity?

- Asian, Asian American
- Black or African-American
- Latino, Hispanic, Chicano
- Native American, Native Alaskan
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Multi-ethnic
- Decline to State

Some other ethnicity (please specify)

15. In what year were you born? (enter 4-digit birth year; for example, 1976)

16. What is your current ZIP Code? For example, 92653.

17. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Decline to state

*** 18. Are you currently working for a non-profit arts organization?**

(This questions has skip logic that will direct individuals who mark Yes to the next page and individuals who mark No to the Thank You Page)

- Yes
- No

Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

Characteristics 2

19. Which term best describes your primary responsibility within your non-profit arts organization?

- Administration/Management
- Artist (musician, writer, visual or performing artist, artistic director, designer)
- Programs
- Technical
- Arts Education
- Governance/Board Member
- Other (please specify)

20. What kinds of past training have you had for your current work? (Check all that apply.)

- Internships, apprenticeships
- On-the-job training at your current organization
- On-the-job training at another organization (public, non-profit, commercial)
- Work as an artist
- Self-taught
- Informal peer networks
- Informal learning from teachers or mentors
- Instruction offered through community centers or organizations
- Instruction offered through artist-serving associations or membership organizations
- Private studio or individual instruction outside of formal degree programs
- Higher education arts training (four courses or more)
- Some college but no degree
- Associate degree
- Liberal arts degree
- Arts-related masters degree or higher
- Higher education business or management training
- Other (please specify)

Emerging Arts Professionals (SFBA)

Thank you

Thank you for your participation. It is greatly appreciated.

Experts Interviewed

Tamara Alvarado

1stACT Silicon Valley

Stephanie Evans Hanson

Americans for the Arts

MiJin Hong

The Getty Leadership Institute at Claremont Graduate University

Leslie Ito

California Community Foundation

Stacy Kono

Rockwood Leadership Institute

Jan Masaoka

California Association of Nonprofits

Claire Peeps

The Durfee Foundation

William Ryan

Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

San San Wong

San Francisco Arts Commission

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