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SCFD Board launches process to develop new inclusivity fund for capacity-building

Arts, culture and science funding district takes first steps aimed at helping smaller organizations

(Denver, CO, August 25, 2017) – The board of the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) began its formal process to establish a new Inclusivity Fund, which will focus on capacity building for smaller arts, culture and science organizations, particularly those that serve traditionally underserved communities. The fund will ultimately provide more than half a million dollars in merit-based grants.

The board's appointed four-member subcommittee, which includes both current and former SCFD board members, will begin the process of recruiting members of the Inclusivity Fund Advisory Committee. This committee will be charged with establishing criteria for the grant making as well as selecting a community foundation that will become home to the fund. The members of the subcommittee include current SCFD Board Chairman Rob Johnson, current SCFD Vice-Chairman Elaine Torres and two former SCFD board members Khadija Haynes and Kathy Kuscan.

"We're excited to get this process started," said Johnson. "We've tried to put together a thoughtful process aimed at allowing the advisory committee to construct a fund that will accomplish what all of us hoped when the fund was established."

Plans for the Inclusivity Fund came into being during the 2016 renewal of SCFD in hopes of addressing the ability of smaller SCFD organizations to grow and expand the communities they serve. The district's largest organizations including the Denver Art Museum, the Denver Zoo, the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and the Denver Botanic Gardens stepped forward to provide the financing for the fund. Each of these five organizations will contribute \$150,000 to launch the fund. These organizations will contribute to the fund for the life of the SCFD renewal from 2018 through 2029.

"This fund accomplishes a key goal for the district, which is to find ways to provide even more access for a greater number of people across the metro area. The fact that we have a fund that can help to provide that access to traditionally underserved communities is really exciting to all of us," Torres said.

Applications for consideration to serve on the Advisory Committee can be downloaded on the [SCFD website](#) and will be accepted starting today, August 25th through October 6th. The full SCFD board is expected to consider a final slate of members at its November 16th regular meeting. The Advisory Committee will establish the fund with rules and procedures adopted by the end of 2018.

Denver Metro area voters created the Scientific & Cultural Facilities District in 1988 and approved a 1¢ on \$10 sales and use tax to provide for the enlightenment and entertainment of the public. Scientific and cultural facilities accomplish this through the production, presentation, exhibition, advancement or preservation of visual arts, performing arts, cultural history, natural history or natural sciences. The SCFD was renewed by regional voters in 1994, 2004 and 2016.

For the investment of one penny on every \$10 spent in the district, the diverse array of cultural organizations contribute more than \$1.8 billion to the regional economy and employ more than 10,000 people. Citizen support for the more than 275 arts and culture organizations that receive district funds has resulted in world-class facilities and programs and unprecedented access. More than 14 million people – 4 million of them kids – attend SCFD funded programs each year – many for free or reduced rates.