

Denver County Cultural Council Core Values

Since 1989, Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) has distributed funds from a 1/10 of 1% sales and use tax to cultural facilities throughout the seven-county Denver. The funds support cultural facilities whose primary purpose is *for enlightening and entertaining the public* through the production, presentation, exhibition, advancement or preservation of visual arts, performing arts, cultural history, natural history, or natural sciences.

On behalf of all Denver residents, the Denver County Cultural Council (DCCC) honors the responsibility of reviewing the requests presented by Tier III organizations for tax-funded grants to support general operations. The DCCC is accountable to all Denver communities and the following core values reflect this commitment and obligation.

- **RELEVANCE**
- **EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS**
- **AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT VS. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT**
- **SUSTAINABILITY / FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**
- **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT / LEARNING ATTITUDE**
- **IMAGINE 2020**
- **ADAPTABILITY TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES**

DEFINITIONS:

- *Diversity:* The recognition and representation of individual and community differences based upon dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, socio-economic status, age, ability, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and/or other ideologies.
- *Inclusion:* The creation of an environment in which any individual or group will feel welcomed, respected, and supported, and whose perspective is valued in a manner that allows for the full participation and contribution of that individual or group within an organization.
- *Equity:* The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and empowerment of many individual perspectives while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the protocols, processes, practices and policies of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Confronting and tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society. Equity is closely tied to actions and outcomes that address historical disparities.
- *Access:* Giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings.

The core values the DCCC is committed to upholding are sometimes difficult to illicit in the narrative of the SCFD Tier III grant application. The following questions reflect these values and are used to evaluate and score an organization's application. In 2020, COVID-19 significantly affected the arts, cultural and scientific sector. The DCCC wishes to learn how the collision of a global pandemic, economic crisis and reckoning with racial injustice has impacted Denver Tier III organizations, so please be prepared to address this.

Top Questions:

1. What do you see are the trends that are important to your organization today compared to a few years ago?
(RELEVANCE)

How are you staying up with those trends? What specific strategies or changes are you making to adapt?
(CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT / LEARNING ATTITUDE)

2. How are you going out into the community and learning their wants and needs? Or, how are you authentically engaging and making intentional connections with Denver's diverse communities including under resourced or historically marginalized groups (communities of color, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, older adults, women and girls, immigrants and refugees, veterans, people experiencing poverty or homelessness, etc.?) For instance, do you regularly meet or talk to community members? If so, in what ways beyond surveys?
(AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

How are you engaging community partners or representatives in the planning of your programming? How do you determine the communities' interests? How are you getting out into the community beyond just offering programming? (Looking for active and authentic engagement, development of long-term relationships, not passive- more than survey feedback. Are they doing coffee meetings? Do they have a task force? Proactive action.)
(EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS / AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT VS. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT)

3. How are you expanding your audience? How are you making your programming accessible to all? What barriers to access are you addressing? How are you providing access to under resourced and historically marginalized communities? (people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, older adults, immigrants and refugees, people experiencing poverty or homelessness, etc.)
(EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS / AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT VS. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT)

4. Please define what equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) means to you and your organization.
Please explain how you implement this definition of EDI into your operations, including staff and board. Given your definition and current board and staff, what is your ideal state for what you're striving for in terms of diversity? How would you like your staff and board to look? Does your organization have goals related to EDI? Does your organization have an EDI Statement of Commitment? An EDI Working Plan?
(EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS)

5. The nation is experiencing a dramatic changing demographic. By 2040, we will be a "majority minority country", our younger generation is growing, and funders are looking more and more at supporting social impact projects (arts and social justice, arts and healthcare, arts and...) What do you think this means to the sustainability of your organization? How are you addressing this?
(ADAPTABILITY TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES)

6. How sustainable do you feel your organization is currently? What things are, or might be, impacting your ability to be a more sustainable organization? For example: leadership, physical space, marketing, audience, financial limitations, staff, training, technology, etc.
(SUSTAINABILITY / FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY)

7. How does your organization support IMAGINE 2020, Denver's Cultural Plan?
(IMAGINE 2020)