



Audience (R) Evolution



with support from the
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

Exploration Grants
ROUND 3 CYCLE B



Program Overview

Audience (R)Evolution is a multi-year program designed by TCG and funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to study, promote, and support successful audience engagement and community development models for the U.S. not-for-profit theatre.

TCG acknowledges that ticket sales are a significant measure of success, but participation and interaction with theatre takes many forms. As such, this program defines “Audience Engagement” and “Community Development” in the following ways:

- **Audience Engagement** builds opportunities for dialogue between theatres and audiences and includes a full spectrum of goals, strategies, tactics and outcomes.
- **Community Development** connects theatres and non-arts sector partners using artistic assets to build collaborative and mutually beneficial projects addressing community needs.

Both require deep long-lasting relationship-building, and listening to communities, audiences and potential audiences to determine what is relevant to them.

Round 3 Audience (R)Evolution grantmaking will focus on Audience Engagement and Community Development initiatives designed to engage “Youth” and “Multigenerational” audiences/communities. In the context of the Audience (R)Evolution program the terms “youth” and “multigenerational” are defined as follows:

- Youth audiences/communities averaging 18 years of age and under.
- Multigenerational audiences/communities consist of, relate to, and/or involve two or more generations.

Please note that proposed projects aimed at engaging multigenerational audiences/communities must include those defined as youth by this program.

ROUND 3 UPDATES

As effective audience engagement and community development efforts increase around the country, many theatres have expressed the need to implement strategies that more closely align with their communities. To circumvent working in isolation, and to encourage knowledge sharing across the field, TCG believes that the way forward is through collaboration with audiences, community partners, and peer theatre organizations.

In a recent TCG Fiscal Survey, it was found that regular attendance across TCG trend theatres (those that completed the Fiscal Survey over five consecutive years) has on average declined by 1.2 percent while children’s series activities have shown attendance growth of 12.9 percent during the same timeframe. Earned income from education/outreach programs (such as workshops and classes) was up for the fourth straight year, and reached a five-year high in 2014, as did the number of people served. In addition, numerous high-profile contemporary theatre artists including Taylor Mac, Ann Carlson, Jeanine Tesori, and more are developing work for youth and multigenerational audiences, including the very young. While there is a large supply of theatre for adults, there is an undersupply of theatre for youth—the most diverse demographic in the U.S. today.

Improving the diversity of audiences in the U.S. is more than a moral imperative; it is essential for the vitality of theatre as an art form. TCG is committed to supporting the plurality of aesthetic, perspective, organizational size and structure as well as celebrating all areas of identity, including: gender, race, nation of origin, class, age, ability, sexual orientation and religion/spirituality.

TCG acknowledges the power of multigenerational exchange. Supporting opportunities for youth to engage with older audiences/communities will offer unique learning opportunities for all involved while inspiring a new, more diverse generation of theatre-goers.



Cross-discipline collaboration in the arts is not new and as reported by Helicon Collaborative in their 2014 study for the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, *Assessment of Intermediary Programs—Creation and Presentation of New Work*, one fifth of the 2,200 performing artists supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation from 2000–2014 categorized themselves as multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary.

Artists have long worked across not-for-profit, commercial, and community sectors, as Ann Markusen's 2006 report *Crossover: How Artists Build Careers across Commercial, Nonprofit and Community Work* demonstrated. Artists continue to do this kind of crossover work today, and some of the traditional distinctions between not-for-profit, commercial, and community-based forms are dissolving.

At the same time, an increasing number of artists are working in multiple other settings, as more sectors are recognizing the value that artists can add to their work. This includes schools and afterschool programs, community centers, hospitals and religious organizations, city agencies, cognitive science labs, technology companies, senior centers, veterans' facilities, and a wide variety of other industries and locales.

To reflect and support art-making and community-building, **Round 3** grantmaking will have the specific focus of audience engagement and community development as they relate to theatre for youth and multigenerational audiences.

While the definition of "youth" and "multigenerational" can be subjective, in the context of the **Audience (R)Evolution** program, "youth" is defined as audiences/communities averaging 18 years of age and under; and multigenerational audiences/communities consist of, relate to, and/or involve two or more generations. Proposed projects aimed at engaging multigenerational audiences/communities must include those defined as youth by this program.

This round seeks to inspire and challenge theatres to develop meaningful partnerships and artistic work in an effort to better understand and fuel the apparent growth trend in attendance at events for youth and multigenerational audiences. This round also encourages applicants to consider the benefits of cross-cultural, cross-sector and/or cross-discipline ways of making theatre.

Audience (R)Evolution will provide support in two categories:

- **Exploration Grants** of up to \$5,000 will allow teams of TCG Member Theatre staff and/or community stakeholders to observe effective audience engagement and/or community development programs or consult with professionals who can advise on strategies to deepen relationships with communities served by the theatre. Grant activities will focus on peer-to-peer and field-wide learning as they relate to theatre for youth and multigenerational audiences. The program also encourages applicants to consider the benefits of cross-cultural, cross-sector and/or cross-discipline ways of theatre-making. These grants are intended to serve as a catalyst for deeper field-wide relationships between Applicant Theatres and those being observed.
- **Cohort Grants** of \$75,000 or \$150,000 will allow teams of three or more organizations, one of which must be a TCG Member Theatre (that must serve as the Project Leader) to implement and refine ways to increase audience engagement and community development in theatre for youth and multigenerational audiences. Cohorts should share similar needs and interests to implement audience engagement and community development strategies. Cohorts can be based on budget size, region, aesthetic, or other common interests and collaborating partners may be cross-cultural, cross-sector and/or cross-discipline. These grants are intended to have a seismic impact on the participating theatres, as well as the field at large, by building audiences for theatre through projects that lead to new, more frequent, and increased audience and community participation.

Audience (R)Evolution embraces diversity across the board, including theatre size, mission, aesthetic, geographic location and communities served. At the core, this program supports risk-taking, reflection, experimentation, and collective action towards implementing new engagement strategies which will help theatres sustain and grow attendance and demand.



Exploration Grants

Audience (R)Evolution Exploration Grants will provide teams of TCG Member Theatre staff and community stakeholders with grants of up to \$5,000 to support learning opportunities that will advance the theatre's thinking in the areas of audience engagement and community development as they relate to theatre for young and multigenerational audiences.

In the context of **Audience (R)Evolution**, "youth" is defined as audiences who average 18 years of age or under, and "multigenerational" must consist of, relate to, and/or involve two or more generations. Please note that proposed projects aimed at engaging multigenerational audiences/communities must include those defined as youth by this program.

The program encourages cross-cultural, cross-sector and/or cross-discipline ways of theatre-making, values the identification and exploration of strategies new to the Applicant Theatre, and understands that the immediate implementation of a new strategy may not be a direct result of all Exploration Grants.

The Applicant Theatre is the lead organization and must be a TCG Member Theatre in good standing at the time of application and throughout the grant period, if selected. The Applicant Theatre is asked to clearly articulate the goals for the proposed activities based on an existing organizational challenge, addressing how the activities will lead to a shift in perspective, strategy and/or structure for the theatre's engagement and/or development efforts. The artistic and/or managing leader(s) of the Applicant Theatre must be aware of, and in support of the application.

The Applicant Team should include a combination of decision-makers and implementers to maximize organizational buy-in and the implementation of lessons learned. This may include staff from multiple departments, board members, and other community stakeholders (i.e. audience members, community partners, educators, etc.).

The Applicant Team is expected to spend a minimum of three days on grant activities. Trips beyond the minimum duration are encouraged, especially if there is value in observing a number of organizations or conducting multiple trips. International and cross-sector activities are also allowed.

Exploration Grant funds can be used to support activities such as the Applicant Theatre visiting other organizations, communities, and experts; as well as individuals from other organizations or communities traveling to the Applicant Theatre to participate in learning opportunities.

Exploration Grant funds can be used for travel, housing, per diem, registration fees, tickets, or honorariums paid to the organization(s) and/or professional(s) who will provide consultation. Grant funds cannot be applied to overhead, salaries, benefits, or other general operating support. Please consult with TCG if you have questions about eligible expenses.



Eligibility

APPLICANT THEATRE

- 501(c)3 status
- Must be a TCG Member Theatre in good standing at the time of application, and throughout the grant period, if selected to receive an award.
- Minimum of three years prior existence as a not-for-profit theatre. History of producing its own theatre production(s) within the previous year.
- **Audience (R)Evolution Round 2** (both **Travel** and **Cohort Grants**) recipients are ineligible
- **Audience (R)Evolution Round 3 Cycle A Exploration Grant** recipients are ineligible
- Must focus on Audience Engagement and Community Development initiatives designed to engage “Youth” and “Multigenerational” audiences/communities. Proposed projects aimed at engaging multigenerational audiences/communities must include those defined as youth by this program.

In an effort to maximize field-wide benefit, Applicant Theatres who received a grant in **Audience (R)Evolution Round 2** (both **Travel** and **Cohort Grants**); or **Round 3 Cycle A Exploration Grants** are not eligible to apply in this round.

Selection Criteria

Recipients will be chosen by a national, independent selection panel of theatre professionals and leaders through a competitive application review process using the following criteria:

- Clearly articulated audience engagement and/or community development challenge(s) and/or question(s) to be examined by the Applicant Team
- Evidence of a commitment to the community(ies) served by the theatre’s proposed audience engagement and/or community development activities
- Clear plan for executing the proposed activities
- Potential impact of the proposed activities on the Applicant Theatre’s audience engagement and/or community development efforts
- Capacity to carry out the proposed activities
- Appropriateness of the match between Applicant Team and the proposed organization(s)/ professional(s) to visit
- Appropriateness of the proposed budget
- Willingness to examine audience engagement and community development approaches and break from previous practices, as appropriate

NOTE: Proposals that request support for activities that are part of the Applicant Theatre’s normal operations, or those for travel without a learning component, will not be considered competitive.



Timeline

ROUND 3	CYCLE B
Application Deadline	3/12/2019
Notification of Applicants	Week of 5/6/2019
Earliest start date for grant activities	6/1/2019
Latest end date for grant activities	6/30/2020

Grant Requirements

The dissemination of lessons learned through **Audience (R)Evolution** grant activities is a key component of the program. TCG recognizes that evaluative tools must be hand-tailored to each recipient's goals. TCG staff will monitor grant activities to ensure that plans are advancing as planned; and will provide assistance if necessary. Once a grant is approved and a letter of agreement is executed, any change(s), including but not limited to, changes in grant activities, the approved budget and/or Grantee must be requested in writing in advance and approved by TCG. Exploration Grant recipients are required to participate in an orientation and exit meeting via teleconference. A final report is due to TCG within 30 days of completing grant activities; narrative and expense report forms will be provided by TCG. Applicant Theatres will be required to submit at least one video (up to 3 minutes), focusing on grant activities.

Distribution of Funds

Grant payments will be issued to the Applicant Theatre in two installments: 75% of the total amount awarded upon TCG's receipt of the signed letter of agreement, and the final 25% upon TCG's acceptance of a narrative and expense report to be submitted by the Applicant Theatre.

Guiding Principles

Building upon TCG's long-standing commitment to audience engagement and community development, TCG worked with AMS Planning & Research to survey the field of not-for-profit theatres and audiences on effective engagement strategies. Along the way, TCG identified the following key lessons which might inform the way you approach your proposed activities:

- Audience engagement efforts take time—strong programs do not see results overnight
- Clear goals result in greater intended outcomes and measurable success
- Programs should be mission connected
- A team approach is key to implementation and long-term relationships
- Board support is essential and buy-in throughout the organization is key
- Committing the necessary resources (time, money, and people) is vital
- Redefining failure is part of the process—embrace and learn from it
- Adjust, adjust, adjust—flexibility is essential



Online Application Process

Apply via the TCG Online Application Portal at

https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_1933?SA=SNA&FID=35056

by March 12, 2019, NOON Eastern Time

In addition to completing the narrative, the **TCG Online Application Portal** will require you to upload an Excel Budget Spreadsheet, a PDF of your Organization's Audited Financial Statement or Form 990 and a brief bio for each Applicant Team member participating in the grant. Each file must be under 15 MB.

ASSEMBLE THE FOLLOWING FOUR FILES:

BUDGET FILE: Fill out and complete the Excel Budget Spreadsheet provided. You must complete both the **Project Budget** and the **Organization Budget Overview** tabs on the spreadsheet. Please name your file as follows using your Organization's Name: **ApplicantTheatreName_Budget.xls**

ORGANIZATION FINANCIALS: Submit annual fiscal information documenting financial performance. While audits are strongly encouraged, 990s will be accepted from organizations with budgets under \$500,000. Please name your file as follows: **ApplicantTheatreName_Financials.pdf**

APPLICANT TEAM INFORMATION: Submit brief bio(s) for each of the Applicant Team members participating in the grant. Please combine all bios into one PDF file not to exceed two pages and name your file as follows: **ApplicantTheatreName_Bios.pdf**

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: Please provide information to help the panel evaluate the appropriateness of the learning activities you are proposing to engage in during the grant. This may include mission statements and bios for the organizations and individuals that you intend to observe (not to exceed one page for each learning activity). To offer the panel a broader vision of your theatre's mission and organizational values, if your theatre currently has an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) or anti-racism statement, please include it in this section. Assemble all supplemental information into one PDF and name your file as follows: **ApplicantTheatreName_Supplemental.pdf**

Failure to assemble the application materials properly may result in your application being considered ineligible for review.

Save the Application Confirmation E-mail as proof of submission. Applicants who cannot provide proof of application submission will not be eligible. If you do not receive an Application Confirmation E-mail within an hour of submission, please contact AudienceRev@tcg.org.

NOTE: Confirmation emails will be sent from mail@grantapplication.com, so be sure to check your junk mail folder.

Applications will NOT be accepted after the deadline and must be submitted via the TCG Online Application Portal. If your organization experiences leadership changes after submitting your application and before notification, you must contact AudienceRev@tcg.org.



The mission of the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and the prevention of child abuse, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. www.ddcf.org



For over 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group (TCG)**, the national organization for theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit theatre. In all of its endeavors, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre. TCG is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. www.tcg.org