Audience (R)Evolution

ROUND 3 GUIDELINES
Cohort Grants

Background

TCG has a long-standing commitment to audience engagement and community development that includes publications such as Danny Newman's *Subscribe Now!* and Donna Walker-Kuhne's *Invitation to the Party*; grant programs, including 11 rounds of the New Generations Program: Future Audiences, supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; and special national events such as Free Night of Theatre and the recent Audience (R)Evolution Learning Convenings.

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 strategies for the U.S. not-for-profit theatre. This initiative, now moving into its third round of activity, encompasses three phases: convenings; grantmaking; and widespread dissemination of lessons learned in pursuit of developing and sustaining effective audience engagement and community development models.

Through this work and research, 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" as follows:

- **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.

TCG encourages applicants to address the sensitive nature and potential challenges that could occur when engaging with their defined audience/community, especially in regards to equity, diversity and inclusion. We encourage applicants to learn about TCG's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Initiative (*https://www.tcg.org/EDI/EDIInitiative.aspx*) as EDI is one of TCG's core values, and a lens with which the selection panel will be charged to evaluate your application as it relates to your grant activities.

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.

Audience (R)Evolution implies that evolutionary change is just as important as a revolution. As Carlton Turner wrote in his essay for TCG's **Audience (R)Evolution** blog salon:

> "A revolution orbits the same dynamics. What changes is positioning—who's in power, who's on top...In evolution the entire being, the entire system, changes; it's a move not just in positioning but in purpose...The evolutionary practice is one in which we're constantly seeking transformation, not just transition."

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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.

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Cohort Grants

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. Cohort members 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.

Grants may be used to support, but are not limited to, activities in programming, marketing, educational, and outreach areas to test, implement, or further develop a strategy within the cohort. In addition, each cohort is eligible to receive additional General Operating Support (GOS), not to exceed 25% of the total award amount, and to be dispersed amongst the cohort.

A cohort's ability to identify challenges and opportunities, as well as their capacity to monitor, record, evaluate, and document findings are important aspects of a competitive proposal. Solely researching strategies or conducting feasibility studies will not be competitive—these efforts might be more aligned with the **Audience (R)Evolution Exploration Grant** program.

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Each cohort will identify a Lead Organization. The Lead Organization will manage grant funds and serve as the liaison between the cohort and TCG. Shared leadership, participation, and the equitable distribution of program resources must be determined among all members of the cohort.

In consultation with the cohort, the Lead Organization will articulate key audience engagement and/or community-development goals and will propose a collective strategy for accomplishing these goals that will encourage a reciprocal learning experience amongst the cohort.

In addition to grant funds, recipients of the program may participate in additional, skills-based training that address the collective needs of all participating cohorts. Led by TCG, these workshops might focus on topics such as market research, effective tools for evaluation methods, and/or ways to use local or national demographic studies.

Guiding Principles & Research

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

As you prepare your **Audience (R)Evolution Cohort Grant** proposal, you might find the Guiding Principles & Research Follow Up document helpful. To review the document, please visit *http://www.tcg.org/pdfs/grants/tcg18_audrev_guiding_principles.pdf*.

Timeline

Application Deadline	Tuesday, January 22, 2019, NOON EST
Notification of Applicants	Week of April 1, 2019
Participant Orientation Teleconference	May 2019
Earliest start date for grant activities	June 1, 2019
Latest end date for grant activities	June 30, 2020
Program Meetings (Required)	June 2019–June 2020 (TBD)

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Cohort Composition and Eligibility

Organizations do not need to be TCG Members at the time of application; however, if awarded a grant, each organization in the cohort will be required to join the appropriate TCG Membership category at the time of notification and maintain their membership status in good standing throughout the grant period.

The program will consider cohort organizations from a variety of sectors beyond the theatre or performing arts field, however the Lead Organization must be a not-for-profit organization, and be prepared to provide proof of their 501(c)3 status (fiscal sponsors are not eligible).

Cohorts should include a combination of decision-makers and implementers from each organization to maximize organizational buy-in and implementation of lessons learned. This may include staff from multiple departments, board members, and other community stakeholders (i.e., artists, audience members, community partners, artistic staff, educators, etc.), as related to the goal of the proposed activities. The artistic and/or managing leader(s) of each member of the cohort must be aware of and support the proposal.

Each cohort must identify a Lead Organization to serve as the liaison between their cohort and TCG. In addition, all grant payments will be distributed to the Lead Organization, who will be responsible for distributing the grant funds amongst the cohort according to their signed letter of agreement.

Eligibility Requirements

Cohort Organizations:

- Must employ at least one full-time (35 hours/week) salaried staff person at the time of application.

- Can only be listed in one proposal.

- **Audience (R)Evolution Round 2** (both Travel and Cohort Grants) recipients are ineligible.

- Individual artists and consultants are ineligible to serve as members of a cohort in this round of the program. However, project funds can be used to support their participation as consultants.

- **Audience (R)Evolution Round 3 Exploration Grant** recipients are ineligible.

In addition to the eligibility requirements listed above, the Lead Organizations must meet the following:

- A minimum of one year prior existence as a not-for-profit professional theatre, or not-for-profit theatre service organization (fiscal sponsors are not allowed).

Proposed Project:

- 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.

If you have any questions about the composition of your cohort, or the eligibility requirements, please contact TCG at *AudienceRev@tcg.org* prior to submitting an application.

Audience (R)Evolution

TCG's core values of Artistry, Diversity, Activism, and Global Citizenship inform its programs and services for the not-for-profit theatre field. TCG believes in the equitable disbursement of grants throughout its programs to nurture and support an interdependent, inclusive, and sustainable theatre field.

Recipients of **Audience (R)Evolution Cohort Grants** will be chosen by a national, independent selection panel of theatre professionals and leaders in the areas of audience engagement and community development through a competitive application review process using the following criteria:

- Commitment to audience engagement and/or community development throughout the cohort as illustrated by:
- Clearly articulated challenge(s) and/or question(s) to be examined by the cohort and strategy to implement proposed activities
- Relevance of the proposed activities to the audiences/communities to be served and/or challenge(s) and/or question(s) to be examined
- Appropriate match among the Lead and Cohort Organizations
- Organizational and fiscal stability of the Lead and Cohort Organizations
- Appropriateness of the proposed project budget
- Evidence of the Lead and Cohort Organization's ability to carry out the proposed activities as described in the application

What is a Competitive Application?

TCG consistently finds that the most competitive proposals are those that consider how the proposed activities address each selection criteria (as identified above). TCG encourages all Lead Organizations to review their narrative with each cohort member to determine whether or not they have effectively addressed the selection criteria.

When considering the appropriateness of an application's proposed project budget, panelists are also charged to evaluate the Lead Organization's capacity to administer the grant funds, especially when the proposed project budget is more than 50% of the lead organization's annual budget. Lead Organizations are encouraged to discuss with their cohort the correlation between the proposed project budget, application request amount, and the Lead Organization's annual budget.

Eligible Expenses

Cohort Grants are not meant to support organizational stability or current staff structures; however, hiring project managers, consultants, or supplementing hours of current staff above and beyond their current responsibilities to implement approved grant activities is allowable. In addition, grant funds may be used for travel, housing, per diem, research, technology, TCG Membership dues (excluding past due amounts), or subsidies to implement new strategies.

Using grant funds for overhead, salaries, benefits, or other general operating support for members of the cohort is not allowed. However, each cohort is eligible to receive additional General Operating Support (GOS), not to exceed 25% of the total award amount which may be used for these expenses. GOS must be dispersed among each member of the cohort.

If you have any questions about eligible expenses, please contact TCG at *AudienceRev@tcg.org* prior to submitting an application.

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Grant Requirements

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: Recipients of **Audience (R)Evolution Cohort Grants** must create and sign a Memorandum of Understanding outlining payment schedules, decision-making, and responsibilities for each member of the cohort. Additional instructions will be provided; however, it is important for members to consider the equitable distribution of resources, decision-making, and shared responsibility.

FIELD-WIDE KNOWLEDGE SHARING: The dissemination of lessons learned through grant activities is a key component of this program. TCG recognizes that evaluative tools must be hand-tailored to the goals of each cohort. Both anecdotal and statistical approaches to measuring impact are required and the resulting information will be shared with the field. Posts on TCG's website and the TCG Circle community board will be required from all cohorts. Additional information will be provided during the required orientation teleconference with recipients and TCG staff.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES: Audience (R)Evolution Cohort Grant recipients are required to participate in both an orientation and exit meeting via conference call. In addition, recipients may participate in a series of webinars, teleconferences, and additional peer-to-peer learning events with other Cohort Grant recipients between June 2019–June 2020.

Reporting and Distribution of Funds

The safety of children is of utmost importance to TCG. That said, all recipients will be required to sign a Child Protection Policy Agreement before receiving their first payment.

The distribution of funds is contingent upon signing a Letter of Agreement with TCG. An interim report will be due approximately halfway through the activity period, and a final report is due to TCG within 30 days of completing approved activities; report forms and expense reports will be provided by TCG.

Grant payments will be issued to the Lead Organization which is responsible for the agreed upon distribution of program funds among the cohort, consultants, and vendors, as applicable. Award payments will be made in three installments: 70% of total will be paid upon TCG's receipt of the signed Letter of Agreement; 20% upon TCG's receipt and approval of the interim report; and 10% upon TCG's acceptance of the final narrative and expense report. General Operating Support (GOS), not to exceed 25% of the grant award will be disbursed in two installments, 50% at the beginning of the grant period and 50% once an interim report has been received and approved by TCG.

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***

Audience (R)Evolution

Online Application Process

Apply via the TCG Online Application Portal at
https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_1933?SA=SNA&FID=35029
by January 22, 2019 NOON Eastern Time

In addition to completing the narrative section of the online application, you will be required to upload an Excel Budget Spreadsheet, a PDF of the Lead Organization's Financials, a PDF containing Cohort Organization Information, and a PDF with the bios of each member of the cohort who will be participating in grant activities. Each file must be under 15 MB.

ASSEMBLE THE FOLLOWING FOUR FILES:

1. BUDGET SPREADSHEET

Fill out and complete the Excel Budget Spreadsheet.

Please note that the Excel Budget Spreadsheet has four tabs that must be completed:

1. **Project Budget Tab**
2. **Lead Organization - Financial Overview**
3. **Cohort Organizations - Financial Overview**
4. **Workforce Overview**

Please name your file as follows using the Lead Organization's name: **LeadOrgName_Budget.xls**

2. LEAD ORGANIZATION FINANCIALS

Lead Organizations are required to submit annual fiscal information documenting financial performance. While audits are strongly encouraged, 990s will be accepted from organizations with budgets under $500,000.

At the time of the application, only the Lead Organization is asked to submit audited financial statements. Please be prepared to present audited financial statements for all members of the cohort, should TCG or the panel wish to review them during the panel process. Please name your file as follows using the Lead Organization's name: **LeadOrgName_Financials.pdf**

3. COHORT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION:

All members of the cohort are required to include an organizational description that includes the following information:

1. **Mission**
2. **History**
3. **Specific Role in the Cohort**

Please combine all bios into one PDF and name your file as follows using the Lead Organization's name: **LeadOrgName_Cohort_Info.pdf**

4. COHORT BIOS

Please submit a one-paragraph bio (200 words max) for each key individual from the cohort organizations who will be participating in grant activities. Make sure to include the following information:

1. **Name**
2. **Title**
3. **Organization**
4. **Role in the Cohort**
5. **Bio (200 word max)**

Please combine all bios into one PDF and name your file as follows using your Lead Organization's name: **LeadOrgName_Cohort_Bios.pdf**

Failure to assemble the application materials properly may result in your application being considered ineligible for review. Applications will NOT be accepted after the deadline and must be submitted via the TCG Online Application Portal. If your organization experiences leadership change(s) after submitting your application and before notification, you must notify *AudienceRev@tcg.org*.

An application confirmation email will be sent from *mail@grantapplication.com*. Please save this email as proof of submission. Applicants who cannot provide proof of application submission will not be eligible. If you do not receive a confirmation email within an hour of submission, check your spam/junk folder(s) or contact TCG at *AudienceRev@tcg.org*.

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