

## Taskforce Make Up

Martha Armstrong	Ethan Ash	Will Burbank
Anne Gossen	Anne Kellerman	Tom Knipe
Susie Monagan	Sue Perlgut	John Spence

## Process

- Committee Charge  
*(Attachment A).*
- Taskforce meeting dates  
9.13.14                      10.1.14                      4.10.15
- Workable definition of a cultural organization  
*The first order of business was to confirm the definition being used up to this point.*
- Eligibility criteria proposal developed  
*Minor modifications to the established criteria for funding eligibility were suggested, mainly confirming that the program's purpose is to support large, established, visitor oriented organizations. The proposed eligibility criteria was then shared with all of the currently funded organizations. Their responses were documented and shared back with the Taskforce. The Eligibility Checklist was discussed and finalized by the Taskforce at their meeting on 4.10.15 (Attachment B.) As part of this effort the Taskforce documented the criteria to be considered a museum. (Attachment C)*
- Corresponding modifications were made to the grant guidelines, application form, review-panel worksheet, and the year-end report form to be completed by funded organizations.

## Summary of proposed Changes

- Opening the application/funding process to new organizations that meet the eligibility criteria
- Eliminating the requirement that an organization rent or own a facility of its own
- Specific requirements added to eligibility requirements regarding audience size and the number of days of public programming
- Acknowledgment that organizations with budgets under \$500,000 may substitute a professional prepared financial review for a full audit.
- Mandatory participation by funded organizations in two meetings per year, both organized by CAP. At the first they would be introduced to each other and to the concept of strengthening the Arts, Tourism, and Tompkins County's Culture Brand through their efforts. The second meeting, later in the year, would be a gathering of peers, to check on progress, and a sharing a helpful ideas.

## Committee Charge

- 1. Given that the program's current definition of an arts and culture organization may not be clear, what is a clear definition for an *arts and culture organization* for the purposes of establishing eligibility to apply for ACOD funding?**

*Approved- 501(c)3, non-university and college affiliates, performing and visual arts organizations and museums whose programs are demonstrably geared to visitors and the general public. (From the implementation Guidelines 10.23.01)*

- 2. Should we confirm the ongoing validity of the initial intent of this funding source since established in 2003 – to provide organization development and capacity building support to large *established* arts and culture organizations in Tompkins County, as opposed to providing start-up funding to new organizations?**

*Yes. Define established organizations as having a minimum of a three year history.*

- 3. Should other established arts & culture organizations be encouraged to apply for ACOD funding?**

- a. In other words, are there other established arts & culture organizations in our community who aren't on the list of ACOD recipients who now meet or could be expected in the future to meet eligibility thresholds?**

*Yes - If the organization meets the eligibility criteria, they should be encouraged to apply.*

- b. Should the eligibility requirements be modified to accommodate new arts and culture applicants, or is it just a matter of encouraging them to apply under the existing requirements?**

*Encourage them to apply under the newly developed requirements.*

- c. Which specific other organizations might apply?**

*Ithaca Shakespeare Company, Cinemapolis, Ithaca Ballet*

- 4. If there are other organizations which would fit current or modified eligibility requirements, how would an expansion of the program to new recipients be funded?**

- d. If ACOD were to be expanded to include new partners, either in an arts and culture category, it would require either new funding or ramping down funding over time to existing partners.**

*There is possibility that currently funded organizations may see a reduction in their funding.*

- e. Given the status of room tax (large growth in available funding for Tourism Programs is not expected) it is likely that a ramp-down of ACOD support to existing partners would be a better approach.**

*The final approach to funding will be determined by the funds available, the number of eligible applicants, and the quality of their applications. No hard and fast policies for funding are being suggested at this time. Still, assuming high quality proposals, continued eligibility, and continued availability of room*

*tax funding, the intent would be to not see drastic reductions in overall funding to existing ACOD grant recipients.*

**f. An "exit strategy" would need to be defined that minimize negative impact on existing partners.**

*An exit strategy implies that we would stop funding an organization after a predetermined period of time. That approach is not being suggested by the Taskforce. The current thinking would be to clearly state the objectives of the funding and as long as an eligible organization's application is meeting those objectives they would be eligible to receive some portion of the available funds.*

Additional questions addressed by the Taskforce

**1. Should the ACOD program continue awarding multi-year contracts?**

*Yes, two- year contracts are being proposed to allow for greater flexibility in administering the program than the current 3 year contracts.*

**2. At the same level of funding each year or can the amount be modified according to performance?**

*Coming up with a formula to reduce funding based on performance mid-contract, that is fair to all and manageable from an administrative stand point, would be very difficult. Poor performance could be a factor considered at the next round of applications.*

**3. Can a more specific set of performance standards be articulated with funding linked to those standards?**

*This would be difficult considering the diversity of funded organizations. The budget for administration would have to be increased substantially, which is not recommended at this time.*

**4. Do we want to continue to fund highly successful organizations which seem to need the funding less? (If we continue to fund the same organizations, at the same level year after year, and there is no significant increase in funds available, it may be difficult to fund new initiatives.)**

*At this point yes, we want to continue to fund highly successful organizations although financial need will continue to be a consideration as a part of the application evaluation.*

**5. There is the danger that ACOD can be looked by the agency as a contribution to their general operating support, because in many ways, it is.**

*Funded agencies should be reminded regularly that this funding is primarily aimed at organizational health, audience building, increased tourism, and organizational collaboration. We can expect turnover within the boards and staff of these organizations and plan to have to restate the purpose of this funding annually. To this end we are proposing mandatory annual meetings with representatives of the funded organizations.*

## **Arts & Culture Organizational Development (ACOD) Grant Program Special Committee to Review the ACOD Program**

June 5, 2014

From: Tom Knipe and John Spence  
To: Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)

### **SUMMARY**

In early 2014, during its review of 2013 progress reports for six grant recipients along with two new applications, the Arts and Culture Organizational Development Grant review panel identified several questions which they recommended the Tourism Program revisit in depth. A first-time application from the Friends of Stewart Park (FOSP) was in part responsible for eliciting these questions. FOSP was determined to be ineligible under the current grant guidelines, and their application also was very project-focused as opposed to organizational development focused. Nonetheless, the application elicited useful reactions. The panel's questions coming out of their review process were:

1. Multiyear funding and performance standards:
  - Should the ACOD program continue awarding multi-year contracts?
  - At the same level of funding each year or can the amount be modified according to performance?
  - Can a more specific set of performance standards be articulated with funding linked to those standards?
  
2. Do we want to continue to fund highly successful organizations which seem to need the funding less? (If we continue to fund the same organizations, at the same level year after year, and there is no significant increase in funds available, it may be difficult to fund new initiatives.)
  
3. What is the best workable definition of a cultural organization?

These questions are not new. In (2008), the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) convened a special committee to examine some of these questions and others. At the time, it made recommendations for several modifications to the grant guidelines in response and left several other questions unanswered.

Drawing from questions about the structure of the ACOD program, we have developed a charge for a special ACOD review committee. We expect that a special group consisting of balanced representation from the County Legislature, program staff and STPB Members including arts and culture representatives will need to meet two or three times over the course of the next several months to consider appropriate responses to these questions. Given that a 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan was adopted in 2012, an additional overarching consideration is how to best align room tax funding with implementation of the Strategic Tourism Plan.

### **PROPOSED COMMITTEE CHARGE .....**

1. Given that the program's current definition of an arts and culture organization may not be clear, what is a clear definition for an *arts and culture organization* for the purposes of establishing eligibility to apply for ACOD funding?
2. Should we confirm the ongoing validity of the initial intent of this funding source since established in 2003 – to provide organization development and capacity building support to large *established* arts and culture organizations in Tompkins County, as opposed to providing start-up funding to new organizations?
3. Should other established arts & culture organizations be encouraged to apply for ACOD funding?
  - a. In other words, are there other established arts & culture organizations in our community who aren't on the list of ACOD recipients who now meet or could be expected in the future to meet eligibility thresholds?
  - b. Should the eligibility requirements be modified to accommodate new arts and culture applicants, or is it just a matter of encouraging them to apply under the existing requirements?
  - c. Which specific other organizations might apply?
4. If there are other organizations which would fit current or modified eligibility requirements, how would an expansion of the program to new recipients be funded?
  - a. If ACOD were to be expanded to include new partners, it would require either new funding or ramping down funding over time to existing partners.
  - b. Given the status of room tax (large growth in available funding for Tourism Programs is not expected) it is likely that a ramp-down of ACOD support to existing partners would be a better approach.
  - c. An "exit strategy" would need to be defined that minimize negative impact on existing partners.