

## ArtsFund Social Impact Study Request for Proposal

Deadline: **September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Please respond by **August 31, 2017** letting us know your intention to submit

ArtsFund invites you to submit a proposal to partner with us on our upcoming inaugural Social Impact Study. Note: this RFP process is by invitation only.

### Organizational Overview

ArtsFund is a Seattle-based nonprofit that strengthens the Puget Sound region by supporting the arts. Thanks to the annual support of thousands of individuals and hundreds of businesses, ArtsFund has been a stabilizing force for the region's cultural community for nearly 50 years. It awards millions in grants annually to diverse organizations throughout the region, and provides leadership, capacity building, and advocacy to build a strong and sustainable arts and cultural sector. In addition, ArtsFund champions the critical role arts play in a healthy community, and is a respected voice and central advocate for the arts. Visit [www.artsfund.org](http://www.artsfund.org) for more information.

### Proposal Overview

ArtsFund seeks a consultant or consulting team to collaborate on our Social Impact Study, through which we will examine the existing body of arts research on specific impacts of the arts, and gather local stories which localize the research by demonstrating what's happening in our region. The project will culminate in a comprehensive report for public distribution. The report will be generated by the consultant and co-authored with ArtsFund.

The **ArtsFund Social Impact Study** will examine and articulate how the arts\* advance community priorities in King County. Pulling from existing regional, national, and international research, and complementing the statistics with local data and case studies, the report will position our region's cultural nonprofits by the social impact they have across sectors and throughout the community.

The King County region is undergoing unprecedented growth, and faces more in the years ahead. This report will document how the arts currently contribute to community health in our region, thereby unearthing the ways in which arts shape the future of our region.

In conjunction with the Advisory Committee, we have tentatively identified three primary and intersecting markers of a healthy community upon which to focus. The methodology of the study is to synthesize existing research documenting how the arts advance these community priorities and complement with local data and case studies. The report will highlight how arts build community health via their impacts on youth and education, health and wellness, and neighborhood vitality. Subcategories include how the arts impact business (in terms of talent recruitment and retention and workforce development) and the environment. Each theme will

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\*Note: "arts" as referenced in this document is inclusive of nonprofit arts, culture, heritage and folk life.

also incorporate impacts on equity and inclusion, which is an underlying through line in the report.

We are seeking a thought partner to link the body of existing evidence to local data and examples, and to the implications for the future development of our region. With an overarching context of the tensions facing our region today, this report will position the arts intersecting across the healthy community indicators, and provide data and examples demonstrating how the arts can impact the future of our community.

ArtsFund has produced numerous well-respected Economic Impact Studies focused on the direct and indirect economic impacts made by arts and cultural nonprofits in the Central Puget Sound Region. The Social Impact Study will be in complement to this vital and widely-cited research. Together these documents will work to highlight the quantitative and qualitative value of arts and culture in our region.

This project will be supported by ArtsFund's Vice President of Strategic Initiatives & Communications, and the Program, Advocacy, and Operations Coordinator, and advised by a cross-sector Advisory Committee.

## **Project Goals and Desired Outcomes**

People intrinsically value the role the arts play in their lives, but concrete data and stories localizing that impact within our region are not currently available. As Seattle and King County continue to grow, our goal is to ensure that arts and culture remain a vital part of our community by showing how an investment in arts and culture is an investment in civic health and vitality.

The report will document and explore the impact of the arts on advancing community priorities such as education and youth development, business recruitment and workforce development, health and wellness, and neighborhood vitality. This study will provide case-making resources to be used by policy makers, funders, and business and civic leaders charged with shaping our community's growth. Simply put, the data and stories comprising the report will help the reader envision how arts can play a bigger role in building healthy communities and shaping the region's future.

With methodology designed for other communities to replicate, the ArtsFund Social Impact Study will help raise the public perception of the value of the arts in this region and beyond.

## **Scope of Work**

We are seeking a consultant to work in tandem with ArtsFund staff and the 10 member cross-sector Social Impact Study Advisory Committee to:

- Compile, analyze, and synthesize existing body of research and data sources aligned with study themes (the majority of the resources to be provided by ArtsFund)
  - Work with ArtsFund staff and advisory committee to determine prioritization of data included, what questions we're asking of the research, and how we're approaching the answers

- Note: ArtsFund will present consultant with existing research and data sources for each theme, and welcomes input and additional suggestions
- Create a plan to illustrate national data with additional local research as needed (e.g. surveys of selected regional employers and employees, as well as social service organizations and institutions; program surveying to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, public polling, etc.)
  - Note: ArtsFund and/or its partners will conduct the additional research gathering except where more applicable for consultant to do so
- Coordinate, conduct, and document case study interviews
  - Note: Case studies to be suggested by the advisory committee and ArtsFund staff; Consultant to collaborate with the team to determine full scope of case-study inclusion; Case studies will be examples which reflect and localize the cited body of research
- In conjunction with ArtsFund, scope and outline final report
- Generate final deliverables
  - Note: For inclusion in the appendix and online distribution, consultant will also generate a comprehensive bibliography of cited materials
- Review and revise deliverables, based on input from ArtsFund staff and Advisory Committee

## Desired candidate attributes

This is a highly collaborative project forging a new path for arts research and advocacy. We seek a thought partner to jointly negotiate the project who is nimble and able to respond to discoveries made in the early stages of research, which may alter the direction of the project. The consultant will work closely with ArtsFund and the Advisory Committee throughout the process.

Familiarity with the research base documenting the role of arts in communities is a plus, and expertise in communicating the role arts play in community even more so. Racial and social equity will be a through line in the project, and a commitment to equity and proficiency in communicating about equity issues is desired. In addition, the consultant should be adept at research analysis, conducting interviews and gathering stories, and identifying patterns and connections across sectors.

We are excited to embark upon the next stages of this long-anticipated project, and are looking forward to finding a partner with whom to get underway.

## Timeline

Work will be conducted over approximately 9-12 months, with the majority of research, data gathering and analysis, and case study acquisition occurring in January-June 2018, and final

document due Fall 2018. Preliminary review of existing research can take place October-December, 2017, pending consultant's timeline.

- By October 2017—Consultant Contracted by ArtsFund
- Winter 2017—Optional review of existing research
  - Note: ArtsFund's VP of Strategic Initiatives & Communications (the project supervisor) will be on maternity leave during this time, but the project coordinator will be available for collaboration
- By January 2018—Onboarding and initial scope discussion with consultant
- Winter/Spring 2018
  - Review of existing research & data analysis
  - Identify stories for each theme, conduct and compile case-studies
  - Additional data and story gathering
- Summer 2018—Generate and review outline; Write report; Revision
- August/September 2018—Design and formatting (to be conducted by external communications firm)
- October 2018—Release and distribution

Budget: ArtsFund has a maximum of \$50,000 currently allocated for consultant fees and expenses. Proposed budgets should take into consideration ArtsFund's nonprofit status, and note that we will credit consultant for any pro-bono contributions of their time they are willing to offer.

## Project Deliverables

- A comprehensive written report for public dissemination (target length is 20-25 pages); additional pages can be included for additional case studies if all are in agreement on updated scope.
- 1-2 page executive summary and/or 4 page marketing piece
  - Note: ArtsFund will also be generating a 1 pager for each theme, and welcomes consultant's contributions
- Discussion guide—a list of questions to ask of the themes, which would generate conversation empowering readers to consider arts and culture based strategies in their work
- Appendix, inclusive of but not limited to a comprehensive bibliography/field scan of complementary research and resources, including the materials identified by ArtsFund; may include short descriptors of key takeaways from each cited research piece

## Proposal Instructions

The proposal should include the following, and be no longer than four (4) pages:

- Your interest in the project
- Qualifications
  - Describe your relevant past experiences, highlighting participatory or collaborative projects
  - Include mention of prior clients, relevant research experience, and equity work
  - Describe your experience, background, and knowledge of timely issues in the arts (such as overlaps with youth and education, health and wellness, workforce development, and neighborhood vitality), and/or in the King County/Central Puget Sound Community
  - Please share relevant examples of your prior work (as attachments or web links), highlighting any interdisciplinary and/or future-focused writing
- Estimate of Fee
- If additional team members are part of your proposal, please share the professional training and short bios of proposed team members

Proposal should be limited to 4 pages (excluding supplemental materials) and submitted to Andrew Golden ([andrew@artsfund.org](mailto:andrew@artsfund.org)) no later than September 13, 2017. Please alert Andrew of your intention to submit no later than August 31, 2017. A simple “I intend to submit a proposal for the Social Impact Study” will be enough.

Finalists will be invited for interviews.

We encourage you to contact us to further discuss the scope of the project, and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions. For further information, contact Sarah Sidman, ArtsFund’s Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Communications, at [sarahsidman@artsfund.org](mailto:sarahsidman@artsfund.org)

Attachments:

- Social Impact Study One Pager
- Advisory committee roster