

2017 REVIEW

Summary Accomplishments in Grants that Support Houston's Cultural Community

HAA awarded 176 grants through a competitive panel review process.

- Thirty-seven (37) Individual Artists Grants across six disciplines to directly support creative production
- Eighty-five (85) General Operating Support grants to provide critical operations funding to major and emerging arts organizations
- Twenty (20) Arts Project Grants and four (4) Arts Project Grants/Outreach Grants to support finite, high-impact artist-led and arts-based projects
- Twenty-three (30) City's Initiatives grants (inclusive of five [6] mayoral directives) to fund important special projects in support of Houston visitors and residents

Action Plan Outcomes

- Worked closely with MOCA to align agency strategic intent and programs through the lens of the city's adopted cultural plan.
- Evaluated HOT grant program operations with expert consultant over 4 months through an intensive schedule of meetings, interviews, and listening and study sessions with grantees, artists, Houston cultural leaders, committees, funders, and HAA board members to improve HOT grants impact.
- Executed a half year re-envisioning and retooling process with expert help, resulting in the creation of four new and four greatly enhanced grant programs that innovatively support the City's Cultural Plan and better meet the needs of artists and arts organizations working to engage Houstonians and Houston visitors. Community roll-out of new grant programs took place December 6, 2017 with subsequent workshops in mid-December and additional workshops scheduled for early 2018.
- Streamlined existing grant reporting processes by simplifying applications and reducing the reporting burden on artists and arts organizations, slated for full implementation and application in 2018.
- Instituted a thorough panelist database management system, which currently holds nearly 400 panelists, all with professional qualifications and demonstrating the ethnic and geographic diversity of Houston.
- Maintained the artshound.com events calendar and successfully identified more efficient solutions and alternatives to the event calendar platform, results of which will manifest early 2018 and save funds while maintaining service levels.
- Monitored nearly 400 reports and grant payments and conducted 190 one-on-one individual grantee meetings, many of which were with first-time grant applicants; managed nearly 300 applications, conducted 11 application workshops, and facilitated 13 grant review panels that engaged 46 community-member and expert panelists. The Grants Committee, a board-member and expert group of volunteers, convened for 14 meetings to review all grants, oversee grant program changes, and strategize improved services to the community.
- Identifies partnerships within each of the five communities to support expanded arts and cultural experiences for residents and visitors in each of the Mayor's Complete Communities, in partnership with MOCA and community leaders. These efforts are based on the knowledge and expertise of each community and will leverage in-community cultural assets. An arts writer fellowship will document the program to showcase the arts, cultural, and heritage resources and activities in each community. This program has enabled HAA to disburse additional grant dollars into new communities.
- Convened arts & culture organization leaders 4 times to collect general feedback and clarify any general grant and agency related inquiries. Disaster preparedness was a topic that many wanted to explore further resulting a special one-off meeting with local experts on how small and midsized arts organizations and artists can better prepare for natural disasters.
- Mapped the locations of grantees' work to help HAA measure its impact and inform future investments, particularly with the new 2018 grant programs. HAA is looking forward to more transformational partnerships, similar to our work underway in the five Complete Communities.