

# Cultural Arts Funding Review Process Update

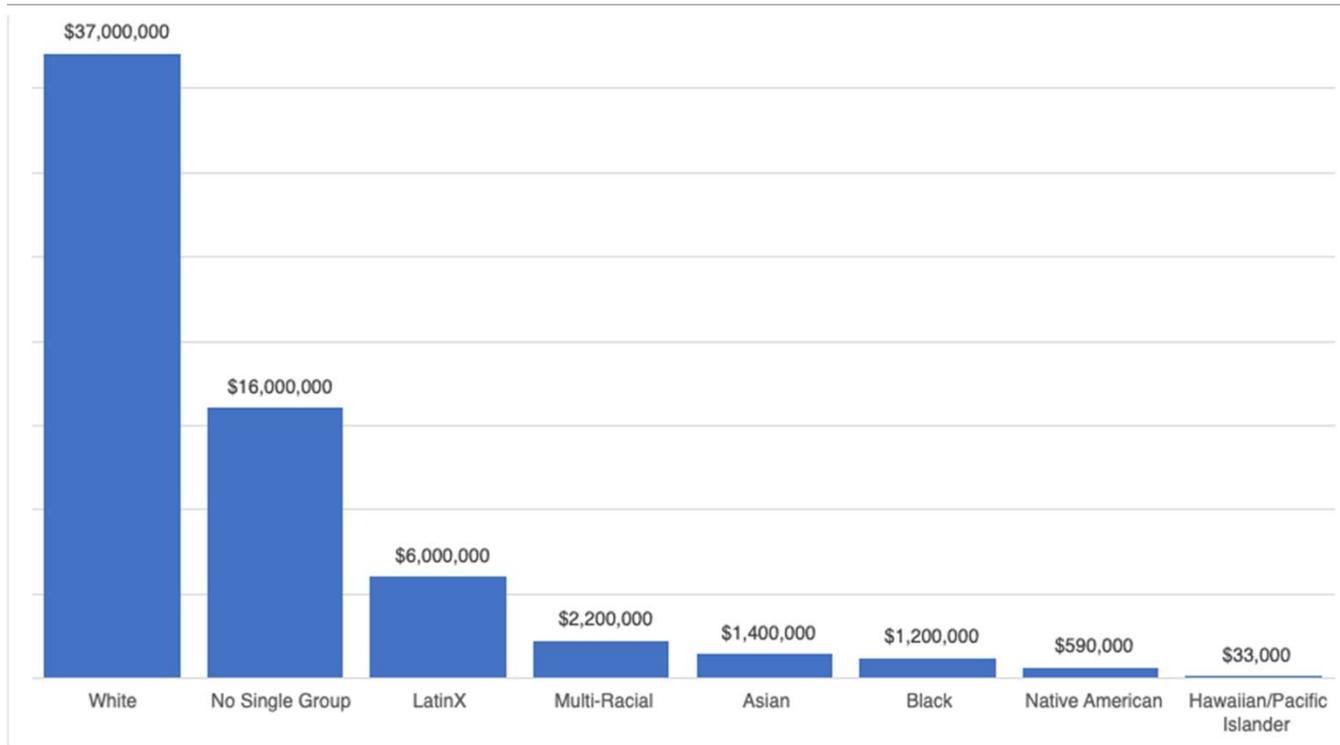
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

APRIL 18, 2022



# Concerns of Inequitable Distribution\*



***Problem:*** we are trying to address 50 years of inequitable distribution of funding through the Cultural Funding programs due to the historical policies, practices, and (in)accessibility of our programs.

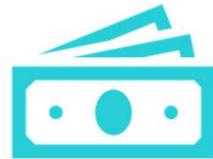
\*Data shows leadership/staff demographics FY15-FY 21 only. We recognize this is only one indicator.

# Impetus to Revise the Guidelines

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**2017:** Cultural Funding Program  
Responsiveness Working Group



**2018:** Funding cuts for the first  
time (11%)



**COA Equity Statement:**  
Strategic Direction 2023

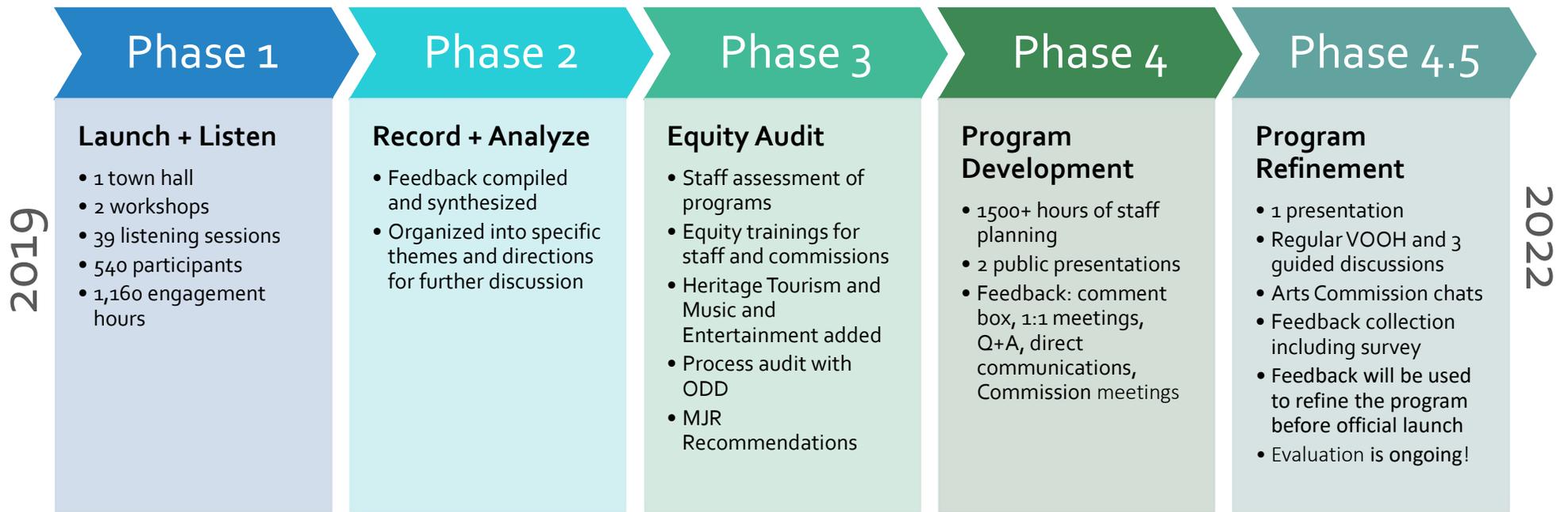
# Cultural Funding Review Goal

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The desired goal is to **sustain** and **grow** Austin's **cultural infrastructure** so that all may share in the **economic** and **employment** benefits of the heritage preservation and creative sectors, as well as upholding the City's **commitment** to racial **equity** per the City of Austin's Equity Office standards and goals.

# Cultural Funding Review Process



**Feedback** informed every aspect of program development including program **priorities**, application **scoring**, **rubrics**, and process **improvements**.

# Guided by Community Engagement

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## Large Events

6 community events

1,002 attendees

## Facilitated Conversations

5 facilitated conversations

61 attendees

## Small Group Listening Sessions

10 listening sessions

213 attendees

Multiple **Public Presentations**

4 **Guided Conversations**

with in-meeting Menti surveys

**1:1 Meetings** with staff/consultant

Virtual Open **Office Hours**

2-4 times per month

**Newsletters** every month

**Virtual Comment Box**



# Holistic Funding Ecosystem

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## Nexus

- Nurture new and emerging applicants by funding creative public projects developed through community activation and/or collaboration

## Elevate

- Creative and administrative expenses of cultural producers that amplify equity and prioritize inclusive programming.

## Thrive

- Focused investment to sustain and grow arts organizations that are deeply rooted in, and reflective of Austin's diverse cultures.

# Reflecting the Vibrancy of Austin

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## Nexus

- **\$5,000**
- **40-50** awards/cycle
- 2 cycles/ year
- Project Funding
- New/Emerging
- Who can apply:
  - *Small Organizations (<\$150k Budget)*
  - *Individual Artists*
  - *Groups/ Collectives*

## Elevate

- **\$7,500 - \$50,000**
- Up to **100** awards
- **1-year** contract
- Flexible Funding
  - creative, administrative, and operational expenses
- Who can apply:
  - *Arts Organizations (any budget size)*
  - *Individual Artists*
  - *Arts/Culture Groups/Collectives*

## Thrive

- **\$70,000 - \$120,000**
- **30-45** awards
- **2-year** contract
- Flexible Funding
  - Operational/ Capital
- Cohort Option
- Displacement risk/ Marginalized/Underfunded
- Who can apply:
  - **501(c) Arts Organizations**
    - *5+ Years in Austin*
    - *Average award <\$100k*

# Pilot Programs Solutions

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OPENTO  
EVERYONE



NO MATCHING  
FUNDS



AWARD NOT  
BASED ON  
EXISTING BUDGET

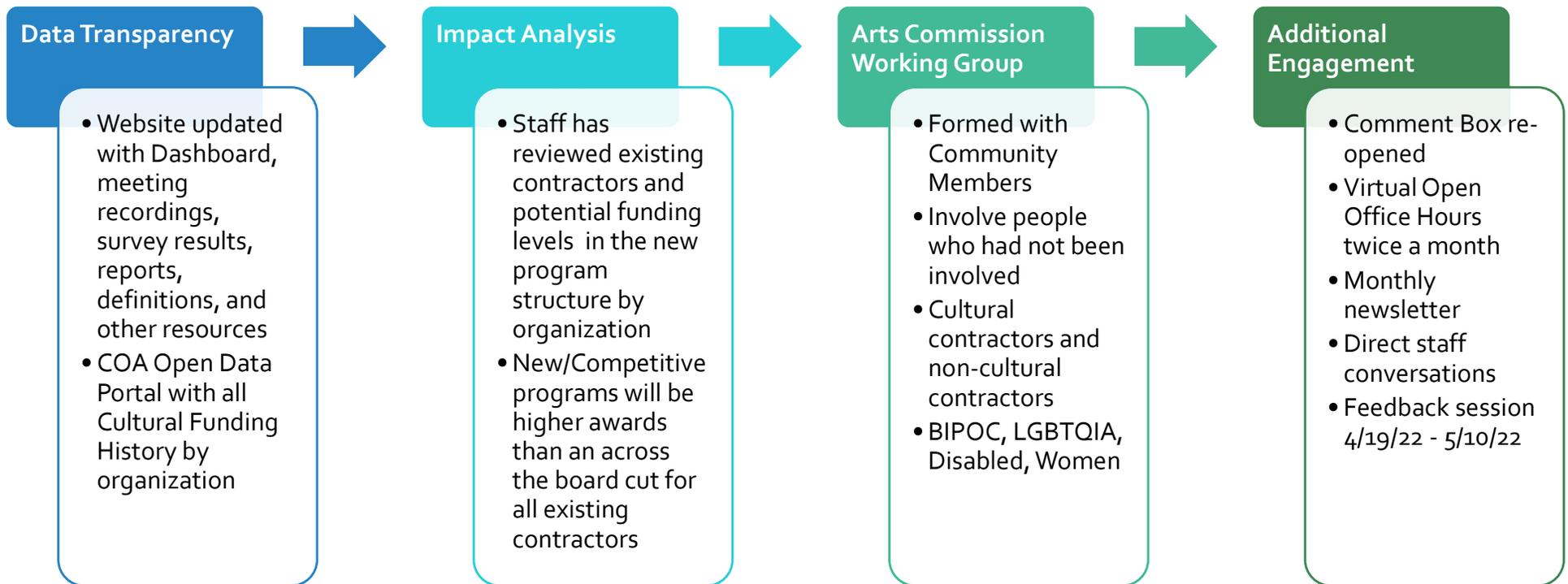


COMPETITIVE  
PROCESS



TRANSITION PLAN

# Milestones since September 2021



# Target Concern: HOT Funds

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## Why are you moving from Projections to Actuals?

- Limited HOT funds
- Err on the side of caution
- Have wanted to make this change for years

# Target Concern: Review Panels

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## How are you fixing the Panel Review process?

- Department-wide recruitment starting soon!
- Formalized training
- Detailed scoring rubric to reduce subjectivity
- Fewer Narrative questions

# Target Concern: Fiscal Sponsorship

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## Why are you getting rid of Fiscal Sponsorship?

- We are not!
- It is **optional** for increased flexibility.
- Applicant can decide what is best for them.

# Target Concern: Nexus Collaboration

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Why are you requiring community collaboration?

- We are not!
- It is **optional** for increased flexibility.
- Applicant can decide what is best for them.

# Target Concern: Thrive Cohort

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## Why does Thrive have more deliverables?

- It does not!
- All cohort events/activities are **optional**.
- Applicant can decide what is best for them.
- No Final Report at the end of Year 1
  - "Interim Report" is a conversation with contract manager

# Target Concern: CFP Management

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How are you fixing internal issues?

- Stagger Program Schedule
- Fewer total contracts
- Limit Pre-Contract Materials
- Automate Contracting Processes

# Pilot Guidelines will Achieve Goal

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***GOAL:** Sustain and grow Austin's cultural infrastructure so that all may share in the economic and employment benefits of the heritage preservation and creative sectors, as well as upholding the City's commitment to racial equity.*

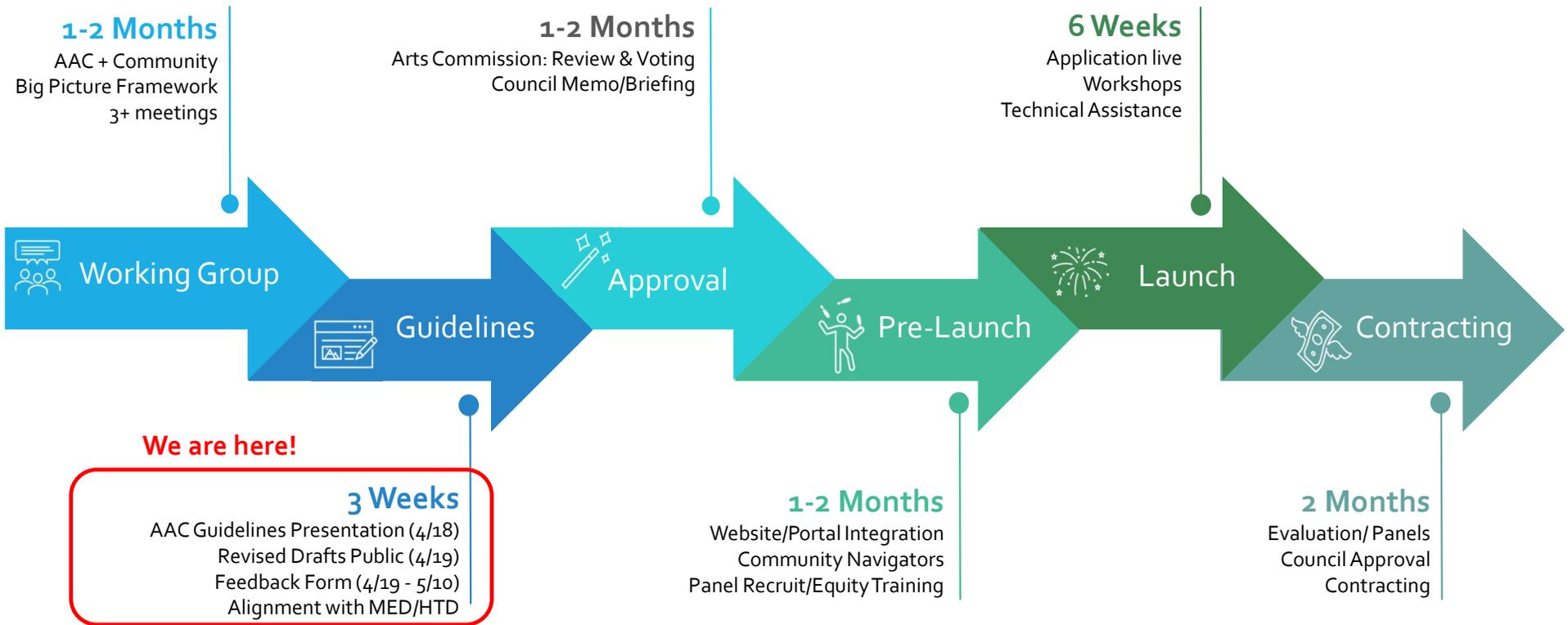
Prioritizing equity

Community-driven and centered process

Encourages **new** talent, supports **established** cultural producers, and invests in the development of **diverse** cultural institutions

Open to all contributing to the vibrancy of Austin's diverse cultural ecosystem

# Next steps



# Public Feedback Open! April 19th – May 10th

**thrive**  
(verb) grow or develop well or vigorously; to prosper

**Program Overview**  
**2 Year Contract Term, Approximately 30-45 contracts awarded**  
**Request amounts between \$10,000 and \$120,000 per year**

This program seeks to address a long term need for intentional investment to support and develop arts organizations and cultural institutions in the City and for communities that are at greatest risk of cultural erosion and displacement within Austin and/or have been institutionally marginalized and under-served by the City of Austin Cultural Arts Division. Through a combination of funding, peer leadership, and networking made possible by this program will make Austin's diverse cultural community widely visible and reflective of their circumstances.

To directly address historic inequities in our own funding system and meet our goal of advancing and inclusion of a combination of Black/African American, Latin American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern, and Pacific Islander individuals, Organizations that all show a demonstrable commitment to serving and representing the LGBTQ+ and disabled communities through their work will also be considered.

**Key Elements**

- Applicants must have 3 one-year budget metrics and show to produce public art districts and EJ that add to the City
- Applicants who prefer to work with a not be a requirement for applicants.
- Awards will be based on the applicant's priorities. Optional budget will be reviewed and priorities.
- Applications will be reviewed and priorities.

**Who can apply**  
Applicant eligibility criteria for purchase all of the minimum requirements; re your application which includes consideration...

**Who can apply**

- A nonprofit or collaborating individual
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- A community-based organization
- A creative business
- \*May apply directly or with a fiscal sponsor

**Key Elements**

- This program is intended to support new and emerging artists
- This program highlights community-based art projects

**Who can apply**

- A nonprofit or collaborating individual
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- A community-based organization
- A creative business
- \*May apply directly or with a fiscal sponsor

**Cultural Funding Pilot Programs Feedback**

These programs were developed in consultation with Austin's creative community over the past 3 years. This funding mechanism will practice equity through a combination of peer leading, local donor support, and targeted investment. [Link to the DRAFT guidelines and the AAC Presentation from the 18th.](#)

\* Required

1. After watching the Arts Commission presentation and/or reading the revised DRAFT program guidelines, how do you feel about them? \*

Not a fan ☆☆☆☆ 100% them

2. Do you identify as? \*

Select all that apply

- A person of color
- LGBTQIA+ community member
- Disability community member
- A person with Limited English Proficiency
- Woman or non-identifying
- None of the above

3. Scale of 1-5, how likely are you to apply to at least one of the pilot programs? \*

Not likely to apply 1 2 3 4 5 100% likely apply

## Read the Guidelines

- Draft [Nexus link](#)
- Draft [Elevate link](#)
- Draft [Thrive link](#)
- Draft [Program Details link](#)

## Take the Survey

- Feedback Form [Link](#)

