

# Cultural Arts Funding Review Process Update

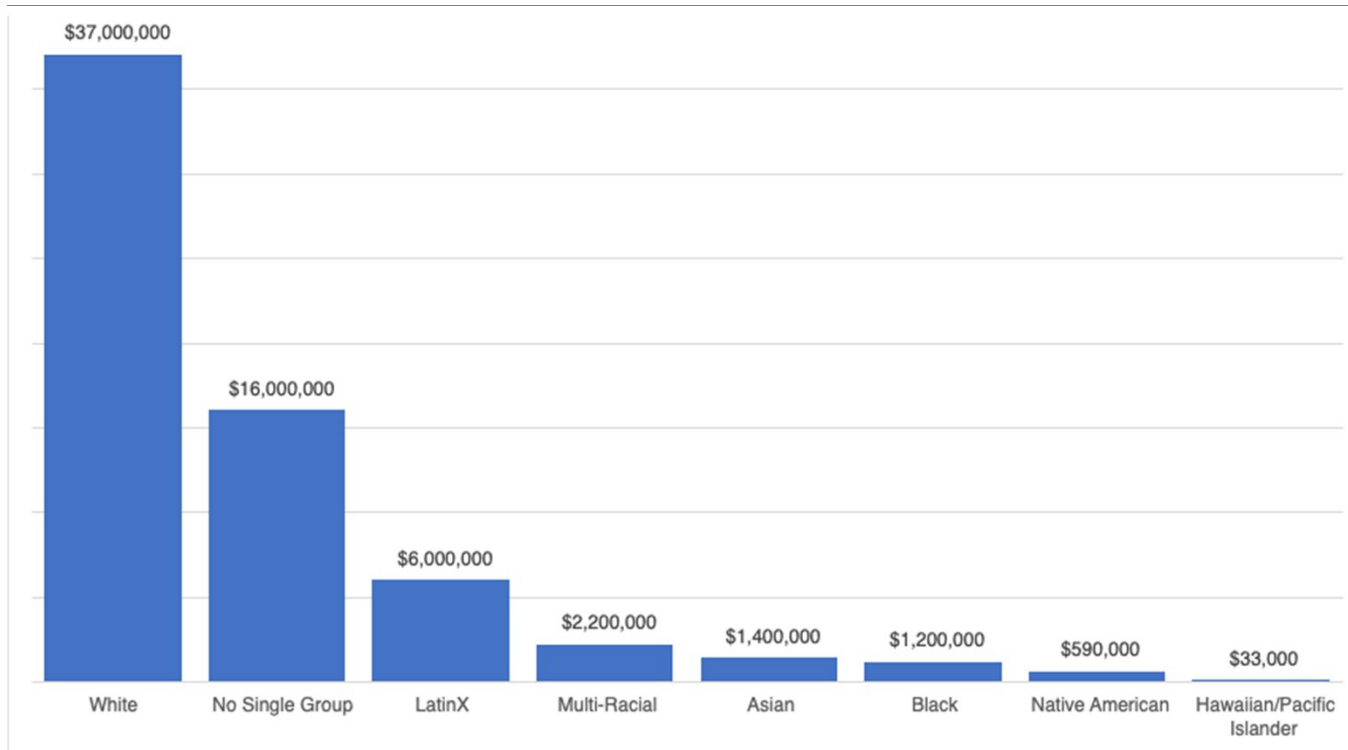
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

MAY 25, 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

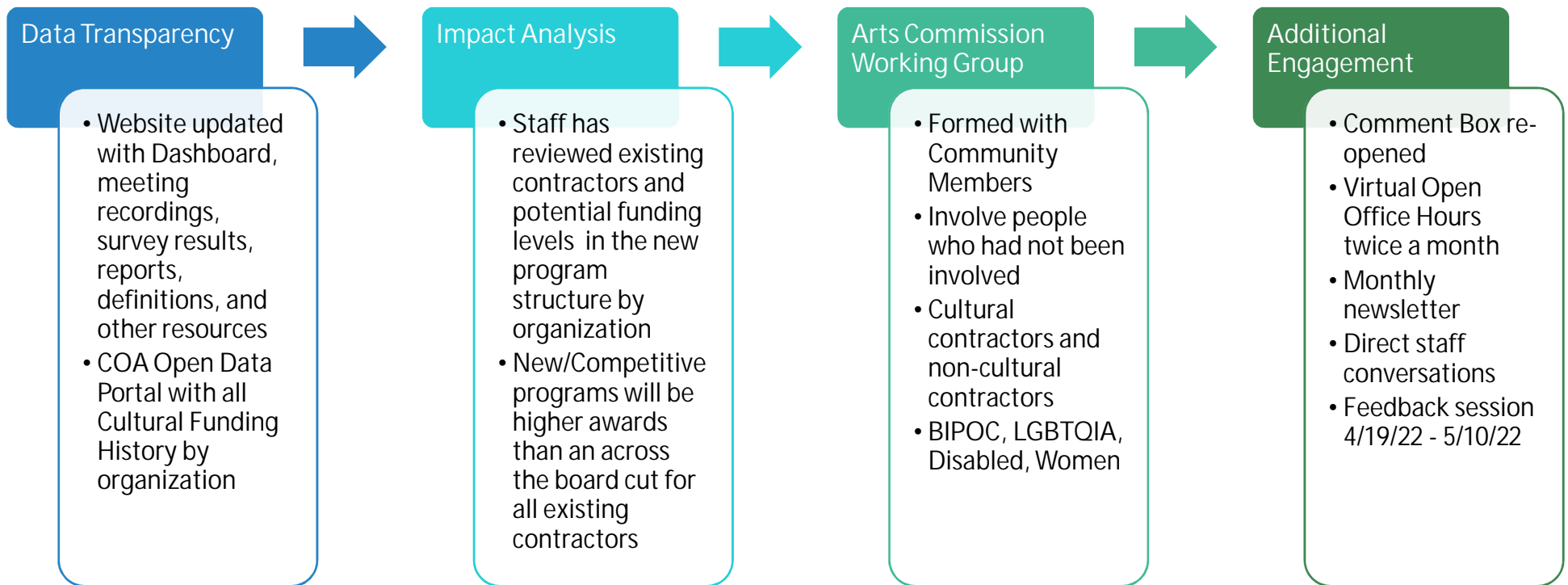
# Cultural Funding Review Goal

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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.

# Milestones since September 2021



# Changes from Community Feedback

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Award Amounts increased

Elevate developed so entire suite of pilot programs is ready to deploy

Reworked scoring rubric and guideline language, in keeping with community feedback, Equity Office consultation, and legal guidance. (No scoring on immutable characteristics and looking more broadly at mission and community served)

Thrive pilot cohort better described, and participation requirements reduced

Removed the "\$100k or less average COA award over time" eligibility requirement

Interactive tool for identifying "What is the best program for me?" in development

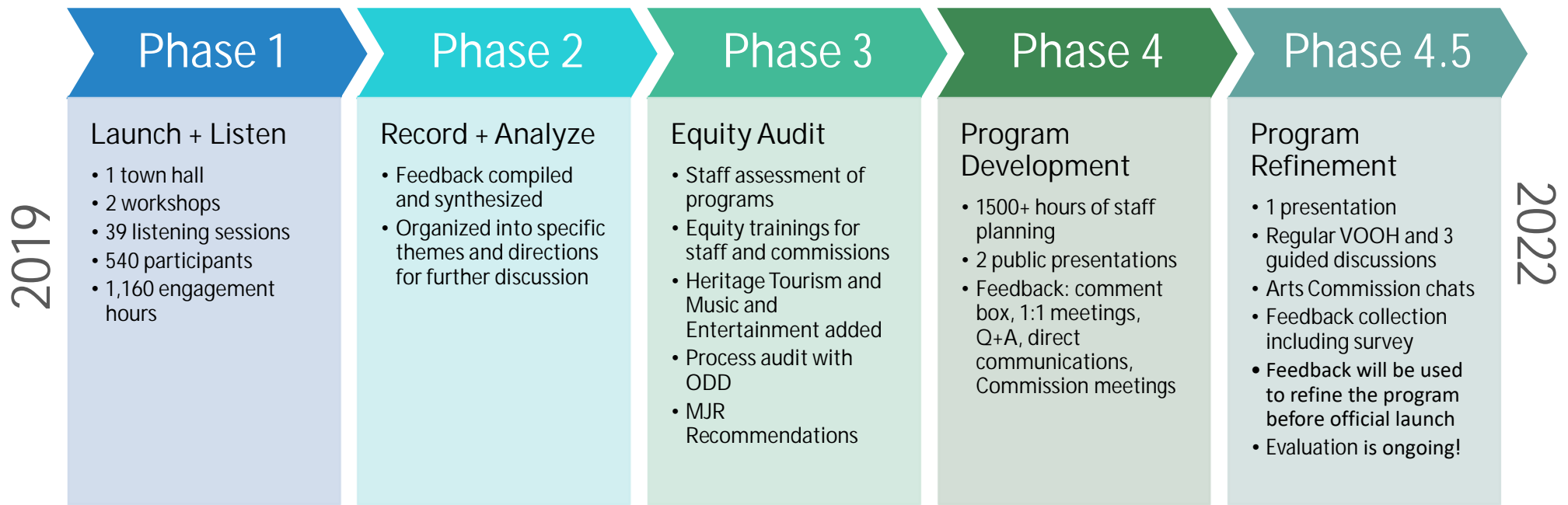
Creating two categories in Elevate so artists are not competing against nonprofits

Any single purchase over \$2,000 must be approved by staff

Focus on sustainability, not just growth



# 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

	Nexus	Elevate		Thrive
		Elevate (Non-501c)	Elevate+ (501c only)	
Goal	Encourage new talent	Support established cultural producers		Invest in diverse cultural institutions
Contract Term	6 Months	1 year	1 year	2 years
Type of Funding	Project Funding Only	Flexible: Project/Operating	Flexible: Project/Operating	Flexible: Project/Operating (+Optional Networking/ Coaching/ Classes)
Who can apply?	Individuals/ Groups* <small>(*cooperatives, non-profit organizations, businesses, partnerships, etc.)</small>	Artists; Arts/Culture Groups* w/ budgets <\$500k	Arts/Culture 501(c)s only	501(c) only with 5-year operating history in Austin
Selection Process	3 COA Staff + Rubric	Panel	Panel	Panel

# Reflecting the Vibrancy of Austin

	Nexus	Elevate		Thrive
		Elevate (Non-501c)	Elevate+ (501c only)	
Draft Total Available Funds	~\$500,000	~\$1,000,000	~\$3,000,000	~\$3,000,000
Draft Award Amounts	\$5,000	\$10,000 - \$30,000	\$10,000 - \$75,000	\$80,000 - \$150,000
Draft Number of Awardees	100 (50 per cycle; 2 cycles/year)	35	65	35

# Pilot Programs Solutions

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OPEN TO  
EVERYONE



NO MATCHING  
FUNDS



AWARD NOT  
BASED ON  
EXISTING BUDGET



COMPETITIVE  
PROCESS



TRANSITION PLAN

# 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 in June
- 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 detailed and documented meeting with contract manager reviewing self-determined goals and progress.

# 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

# Target Concern: Support

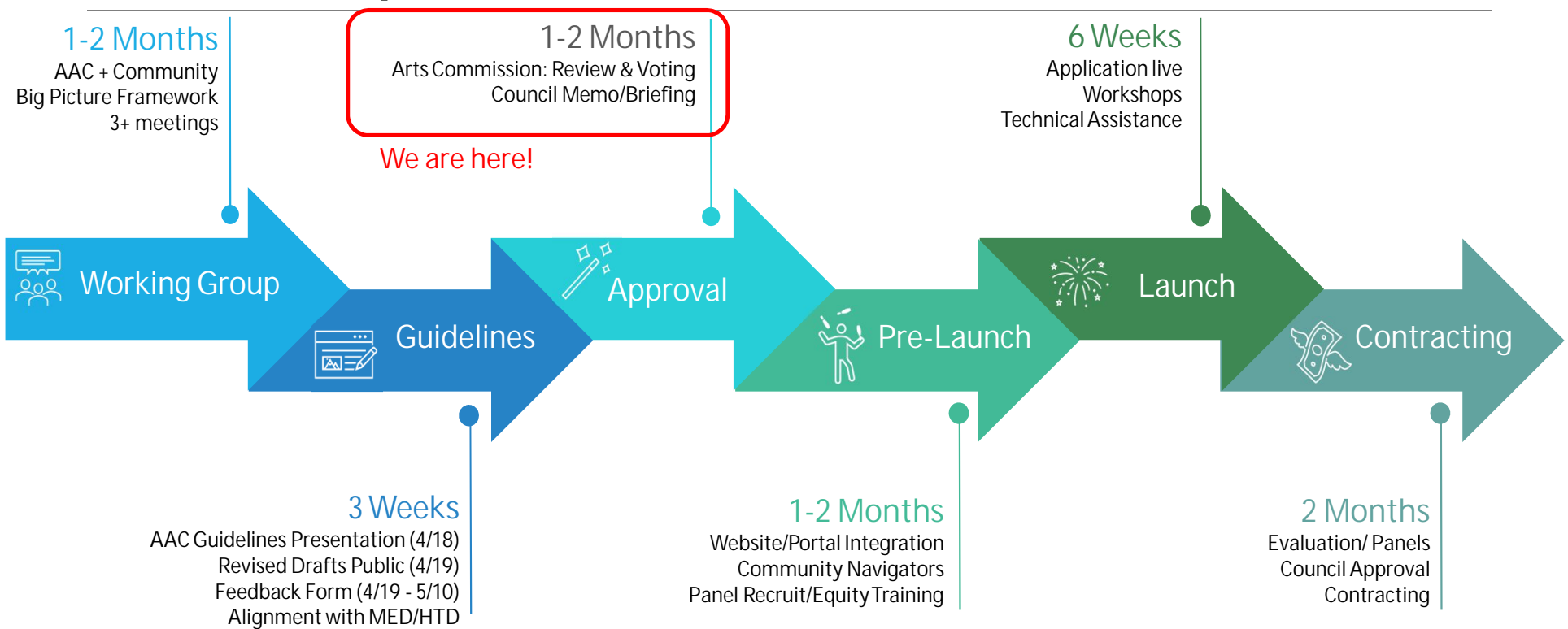
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## How are you supporting applicants?

- Workshops and videos
- Materials (application checklist)
- Increased open office hours
- Community Navigator Program

# Next steps



# Process Timeframe

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May 31st – Arts Commission meeting (presentation of AC Working Group report, discussion around community feedback, pilot program changes, MJR presentation)

June 7th – African American Resource Advisory Commission presentation

June 13th – LGBTQIA+ QOL Commission presentation

June 21st – Asian American QOL Commission presentation

June 21st – Arts Commission meeting (Action to Approve Pilot Program Guidelines?)

June 22nd – Panel Recruitment begins

June 28th – Hispanic/Latino QOL Commission presentation

July – Memo to Mayor and Council

October 12th – Cultural Funding Pilot Program: Thrive launches  
Elevate and Nexus will also be launching in FY23