

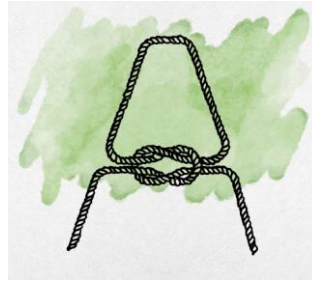
Aesthetic Perspectives in Grantmaking with Kentucky Foundation for Women



ATTRIBUTES of Excellence in Arts for Change



commitment



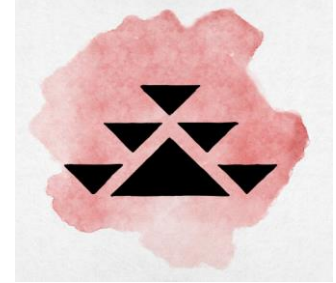
disruption



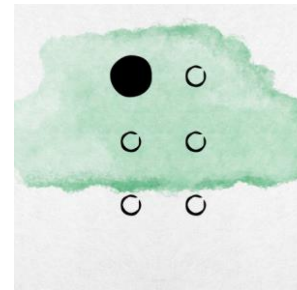
emotional experience



communal meaning



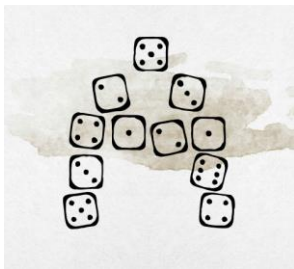
cultural integrity



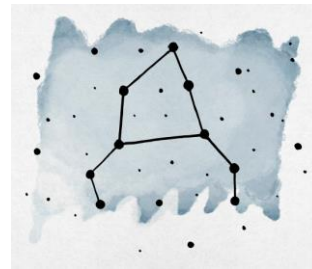
sensory experience



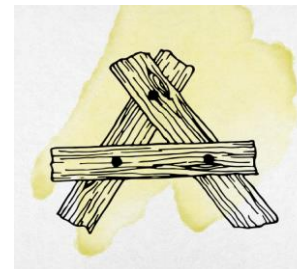
openness



risk-taking



coherence



resourcefulness



stickiness



Sharon LaRue



Amelia Berry



Jackie Gordon Duvall

The Aesthetic Attributes



Commitment - Creative processes and products embody conviction to the cause espoused through the work.



Risk-taking - The creative work assumes risk by subverting dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, or aesthetics.



Communal Meaning - The creative work facilitates collective meaning that transcends individual perspective and experience.



Openness - The creative work deepens impact by remaining open, fluid, transparent, subject to influence, and able to hold contradiction.



Disruption - Art challenges what is by exposing what has been hidden, posing new ways of being, and modeling new forms of action.



Resourcefulness - Imaginative use of available resources drives artistic innovation and demonstrates responsible social and environmental practice.



Cultural Integrity - The creative work demonstrates integrity and ethical use of material with specific cultural origins and context.



Coherence - Strong ideas expressed with clarity advance both artistic and social purposes.



Emotional Experience - Arts for Change facilitates a productive movement between "heart space"—the emotional experience that art evokes—and the "head space" of civic or social issues.



Stickiness - The creative work achieves sustained resonance, impact, or value.



Sensory Experience - Vivid sensations deepen the experience of the creative work and heighten the power of its messages and the potential for change.

In the *Aesthetic Perspectives* framework, each attribute section includes:

- **Conceptual description**
- **Reflective questions** to help users apply the concept to specific work and contexts
- **Arts for Change project examples** to further illuminate the attributes and questions

CULTURAL INTEGRITY



The creative work demonstrates integrity and ethical use of material with specific cultural origins and context.

IF THE GOAL IS JUSTICE, then truth, authenticity, and integrity are inherently important in the creative work. Meaningful aesthetic choices in Arts for Change respond to lived, historic, and cultural realities. Integrity as an aesthetic characteristic can be observed in: 1) the background and connections of artists and partners to the cultural context, issue/topic, traditions, community, population, and/or place that is the focus of the work; 2) the way a work of art is conceived and developed; 3) awareness and understanding of cultural values and forms (cultural competence); and 4) in the way the work involves and is experienced by stakeholders.

[MISSISSIPPI RIVER WALK | PG. 49](#)

Consider:

- **How have the artists** and stakeholders explored the relationships of power, privilege, and cultural context within the process of making the work?
- **How have the artists** and stakeholders explored questions of credibility, authenticity, and integrity? How does the work reflect enduring commitment to the community, practice, situation, locale, or issue/topic? [KING KAMEHAMEHA | PG. 43](#)
- **How do the** people affected by the work have agency to act on their own behalf?
- **Is the work** factually accurate where such accuracy is called for?
- **Have the artists** and stakeholders considered what they may be taking away and what they can leave behind that is meaningful in a cultural context?

RELATED TO CULTURAL INTEGRITY is the serious issue of cultural appropriation, or the use of cultural forms, content, processes, and stylistic elements by person(s) from outside the cultural contexts in which they originate. In egregious instances, artists and promoters with access to privilege have profited from the use of appropriations while those at the source of the material continued to struggle in obscurity, with lineage and ownership of cultural property left uncredited and uncompensated. Ethical practice is governed by an awareness of historical and contemporary inequities and practices of respect, remuneration, and reciprocity.

Consider:

- **How are** the artist(s) connected to the community that is the focus of the work? What history and relationship does the artist have with the knowledge, traditions, and practices they are engaging in? What is the artist's cultural relationship to the aesthetics and techniques of the project? [OSKARLY | PG. 44](#)
- **If the artist(s)** are not of the community or culture in which the work is rooted, how are they dealing with questions of privilege or potential for appropriation?
- **How have** members of the community/ population/ locality been engaged in meaningful ways in the development and/or presentation of work? How has that engagement been expressed?

Left: Northern California Native American basket design



Glenn Wharton



Glenn Wharton

The King Kamehameha statue restoration project in Hawai'i effectively weighed a local community's unorthodox care practices against the conservation field's aesthetic standards. In a rural region of the island of Hawai'i, residents and conservator Glenn Wharton were faced with the much needed conservation of a statue of King Kamehameha I, the revered indigenous unifier of the Hawaiian islands and native son of the Big Island. Should the statue be restored to the artist's 1878 gilded bronze, or should it be re-painted in life-like colors, thereby continuing a longstanding community tradition? For many, this decision took on greater significance as they looked back to the island's history of lost cultural heritage and ahead to development that could threaten other important heritage sites. From Wharton's perspective, it was rare to find a community so emotionally connected to its past through a work of art. Conscious of the conservation field's ethical standard to restore as closely as possible to the artist's intention, Wharton was conflicted, but believed the people of Kohala should be involved in the decision. Recognizing the need for

a sensitive partner, he sought local advice from The Hawai'i Alliance for Arts Education (HAAE) which formed a team of local leaders to help engage people with the restoration question and to determine how best to make the decision. They invested in deepening Wharton's understanding of place, culture, and issues. With Wharton, who exercised deep listening and genuine openness, they developed a new approach to participatory conservation that ultimately empowered the community to decide to continue painting the statue, honoring the community's aesthetic.

LEARN MORE

["The Kamehameha I Statue Conservation Project Case Study," by Pam Korza, 2005](#)

[The Painted King: Art, Activism, and Authenticity in Hawai'i, Glenn Wharton, 2012](#)

HOW OTHERS ARE USING THE FRAMEWORK

- **educate** trustees, panelists, & prospective grantees
- **critique existing programs** that may be limiting or denying access/resources; examine who assesses aesthetics & how
- develop **new funding** opportunities
- offer **language and concepts** to support aesthetic excellence
- reinforce **accountability** by supporting fair and rigorous look at aesthetics
- Provide attributes of excellence to **back up riskier choices**
- reconsider **reporting and evaluation** requirements and approaches

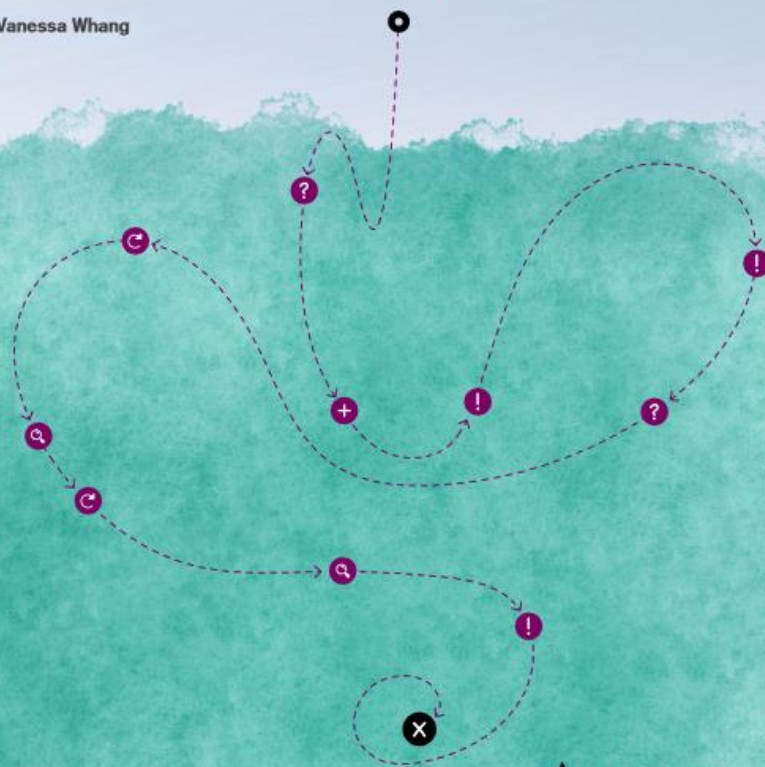
FUNDERS



From Funder Companion guide

Diving into Racial Equity: The MAP Fund's Exploration

by Vanessa Whang



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 **Animating
Democracy**
A Program of Americans for the Arts

MAP's Characterizations of Bias in Grant Review

Cup of Tea. MAP acknowledges that everyone has tastes concerning art forms that may or may not be one's *cup of tea* (a phrase MAP borrowed from Theater Communications Group's Emily Cachapero). However, MAP strives to reduce *cup of tea* biases in the decision-making process and emphasizes that a project's alignment with MAP's review criteria is the sole basis for voting for or against a project.

Privilege of a Pass.* Giving artists, producers, presenters, or institutions a pass or the benefit of a doubt on a questionable project because of their status, track record, or developmental infrastructure, thereby disadvantaging lesser known personnel or organizations.

First-hand Knowledge. Giving someone or someplace you know personally or have seen in person a preference over someone or someplace with which you are not familiar, despite an equivalent level of quality based on submitted materials.

Expertise Deference. Overriding one's own assessment or intuition about a project and following the opinion of whoever claims knowledge or expertise about an artist, art form, organization, etc.

WHY an aesthetics framework?

enhance understanding & evaluation of artistic dimensions of Arts for Change

- expand criteria for considering aesthetics in Arts for Change
- elevate aesthetics in civically & socially engaged art
- See aesthetic values in creative process and practice
- address historical domination of Euro-American aesthetic standards

“Aesthetics is an inquiry into how artists, in their products & processes, utilize sensory & emotional stimulation & experience to find & express meaning and orientation in the world & to deepen relationships amongst artists & their partners across differences.”

Bob Leonard



GALLERY WALK

What creative project or work (ideally “arts for change”) would you lift up that exemplifies this attribute well?

What resonates about these attributes (or not) in relation to your work?

What do you find challenging or want to challenge?
What questions are raised?

THE WALK

- Gravitate where your interest is peaked.
- Jot notes on post-its.
- Which attribute you'd like to talk about with others.



BRIEF MID-POINT FULL GROUP CONVERSATION

What projects or art works were conjured up for you by particular attributes?

SMALL GROUP CONVERSATION

What's an Attribute that interests you? In the next 10 minutes you'll have a chance to talk with others. Go to the poster where you'd like to focus.

- a) Share with each other how you thought about any of the 3 questions during the Gallery Walk
- b) Add the question: How might you make use of this?
- c) Be prepared to report out 1 or 2 key ideas, points in response to the questions

FULL GROUP DISCUSSION

AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES

Attributes of Excellence in Arts for Change



STICKINESS

The creative work achieves sustained resonance, impact, or value

Consider:

What are the literal or figurative marks of the work that are compelling, resonant, or striking?

What are participants' takeaways from the experience and how do they connect to the social aims of the work?

Is the creative work part of an overall strategy addressing civic or social change that supports continued engagement on the issue?

Use POSTERS

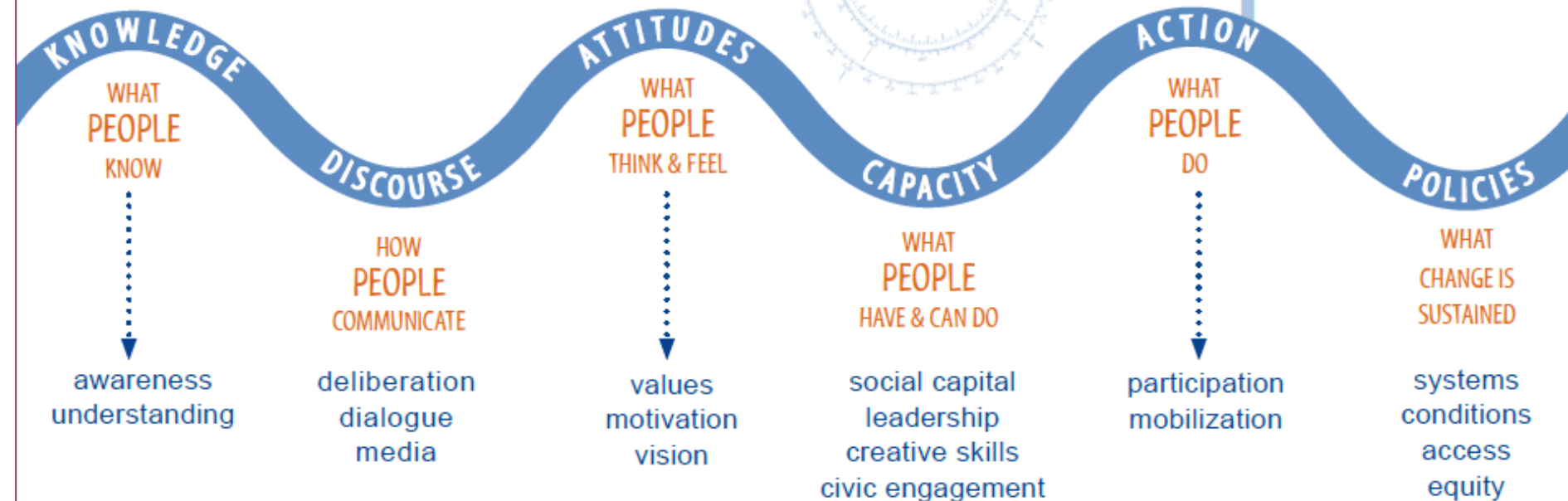
- **To introduce & prompt discussion** of qualities of arts for change work that make it potent as art
- **To plan/design funding programs:** Post for inspiration, to guide design charrettes, planning meetings, debriefs, community dialogues, artist and community partner discussions
- **Guide panel review:** Post relevant attributes as reference points for panel consideration and discussion
- **Stimulate grantee cohort, workshop discussions**

<http://www.animatingdemocracy.org/aesthetic-perspectives-posters>

ANIMATE
INFORM
INFLUENCE
EXPRESS
ENGAGE

what difference do ARTS and CULTURE make?

continuum of impact



Are you working for CHANGES IN ATTITUDES?

*Changes in **attitude and motivation** relate to the thoughts and feelings that underlie people's choices and action.*

What difference do you want to make?



Outcomes Related to:

For Example

VALUES

The ideals, principles, morals, ethics that guide individual, group, or societal choices and action

Youth view themselves as stewards of natural resources.



Outcomes Related to:

For Example

ATTITUDE

The feelings, viewpoints, or positions about a civic or social issue or opportunity

There is a decrease in the social stigma of mental illness in the community.



Outcomes Related to:

For Example

ASPIRATIONS

Desires, hopes, or vision that suggests possibility or direction for civic or social change

Residents gain renewed optimism about the region's economic future.



Outcomes Related to:

For Example

MOTIVATION

Need, desire, enthusiasm, inspiration, stimulation, or impetus that causes a person to take action

People stay active in organizing when there are set-backs in the movement for racial equity.

HOW TO Draft ATTITUDES Outcomes & Indicators

DESCRIBE YOUR CREATIVE STRATEGY. Then write the Outcome(s) that are important. Next, consider which general Types of Indicators are most relevant as evidence of change. Use these as a starting point to define the specific Indicators for your creative project.



CREATIVE STRATEGY – A graphic artist mobilizes a community-wide clean-up and signage project in a disaffected mobile home park that attracts other residents to pitch in and builds pride in the park.



OUTCOME.....➡

What are the intended outcomes?

Mobile home park residents are valued, respected, and included in community life.



TYPES OF INDICATORS➡

Consider and check the most relevant indicators for the creative strategy.

- ☑ expressions of possibility, direction, hope, vision
- ☑ level of commitment to act
- ☑ sense of self- or collective-efficacy to take action



INDICATORS

What specific evidence to track or measure?

- Expressions of pride appear in the signs made by park residents.
- More positive interactions between park residents and other community residents
- Public meetings held at the mobile home park are well attended by residents and other community members.
- Mobile home park leaders are invited to community planning meetings.

Changes in ATTITUDES Worksheet

Changes in attitude and motivation relate to the thoughts and feelings that underlie people's choices and action.



Describe your creative strategy for changes in attitudes.

VALUES

The ideals, principles, morals, ethics that guide individual, group, or societal choices and action

 **YOUR OUTCOME** ... ➔  **TYPES OF INDICATORS** ... ➔  **YOUR INDICATORS**
What are your intended outcomes? Consider and check relevant indicators. What specifically will you track or measure?

- ☐ expression or articulation of values
- ☐ identification of shared values
- ☐ shift in values

ATTITUDE

The feelings, viewpoints, or positions about a civic or social issue or opportunity

 **YOUR OUTCOME** ... ➔  **TYPES OF INDICATORS** ... ➔  **YOUR INDICATORS**
What are your intended outcomes? Consider and check relevant indicators. What specifically will you track or measure?

- ☐ opinions or beliefs that are held
- ☐ changes in opinions, beliefs
- ☐ level of commitment to a position
- ☐ degree of preference for something
- ☐ changes in position about priorities or the importance of something

HOW OTHERS ARE USING THE FRAMEWORK

ARTISTS

- guide responsible and effective **creative choices**
- **describe** their work to others
- **evaluate** aesthetic choices
- **make the case for support** of socially engaged art; cite to validate and distinguish creative excellence within socially engaged art
- **inform and influence policies and practices** of funders, critics, evaluators, community partners, and others
- **Artist training and exchange** (academia, teaching artists, artist service organizations)

