



Media Contact: [publicaffairs@culture.nyc.gov](mailto:publicaffairs@culture.nyc.gov); 212-513-9323

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JANUARY 28, 2016**

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS RELEASES OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS MEASURING STAFF AND BOARD DIVERSITY OF NYC CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS**

*Survey of City-funded nonprofit cultural groups finds New York City cultural organizations more diverse than national counterparts, but behind city's demographic change.*

*Next phase of diversity initiative includes new funding initiatives, a partnership with CUNY, and opportunities for public input.*

**#CultureForAll** | [@NYCulture](https://twitter.com/NYCulture) | [www.nyc.gov/culture/diversity](http://www.nyc.gov/culture/diversity)

**New York** – The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) today announced results of a survey examining the diversity of staff and leadership at City-funded nonprofit cultural organizations. The survey release marks a major milestone in the agency's initiative to promote and cultivate diversity in the cultural community, building on the de Blasio Administration's commitment to making New York City a more fair and equitable city for every resident. The survey found that while New York City's cultural sector is far more diverse than cultural organizations on the national level, it lags behind the demographic diversity of the city's population.

Using this data as a baseline, DCLA will now work with partners from a range of sectors to find concrete ways to promote a more diverse cultural community, including efforts focused on building pipelines to employment and leadership positions that target underrepresented populations, and creating opportunities for organizations to share successful strategies with one another. Progress toward these goals includes new funding initiatives and a partnership with CUNY. Ongoing opportunities for public review and input will inform and shape the initiative moving forward.

"Our city became the cultural capital of the world through the collective contributions of residents who, for generations, have brought their unique experiences and creative practices from across the globe," said **Mayor de Blasio**. "When it comes to making sure that every resident has an equal opportunity to contribute to this extraordinary cultural community, we need to lead by example. Thanks to Tom Finkelpearl and his team, this survey will help us find ways to foster a creative sector that opens doors for every New Yorker regardless of their background. I applaud these efforts and thank our partners who have joined us to make sure that pathways are wide open for the next generation to find fulfillment through the arts."

"Our city's unequalled diversity is a source of strength and vitality. When we launched this initiative last year, we pledged to bring a deeper understanding of where our cultural organizations stand when it comes to reflecting the full breadth and richness of the communities they serve," said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl**. "This survey provides a sound foundation we can build upon as we roll up our sleeves and work together toward a more inclusive cultural sector that welcomes New Yorkers of all backgrounds as audience, staff, and leaders."

“New York City is the cultural capital of the world, with an unparalleled diversity of art, music, and human experience,” said **Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “This survey will help ensure that the City’s cultural organizations consistently reflect the richness of our changing population, and will create an active channel from the cultural community to positions of employment and leadership in the creative sector. The New York City Council is also proud to support the arts with legislation creating a comprehensive cultural plan to ensure that all communities are served by cultural resources and funding. Together, these efforts will continue to nurture the vibrant mosaic of diversity that is our City.”

"I applaud the diversity initiative begun by Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelparl. Supporting diversity among our organizations and institutions is important and I know that working together, we will achieve this goal we all share," said **New York City Council Majority Leader and Chair of the Committee on Cultural Affairs Jimmy Van Bramer**.

The release of this survey data is a major milestone in DCLA’s initiative to promote diversity among the staff and leadership of New York’s cultural organizations and provides a baseline for measuring progress. The survey found that New York’s cultural workforce is 61.8% white, 35.4% people of color, and 53.1% female. These numbers demonstrate far greater diversity than cultural nonprofits nationally, but also reveal an opportunity for improvement: New York City residents are 33% white, 67% people of color, and 52% female, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. The results also indicated that diversity decreases as organizations increase in size, and that leadership is generally less diverse than low- and mid-level staff.

The survey responses did not provide substantive information on several populations, including disabled and non-binary individuals. DCLA will explore opportunities for education and programming related to this lack of reporting, ensuring that these groups continue to be fully involved in the discussion and engaged in the cultural community.

The enthusiasm and urgency on this issue have provided opportunities to take serious action toward addressing the issues highlighted in this report:

- The City’s [Theater Subdistrict Council](#) is exploring a funding initiative of up to \$2 million in grants for the development and training of theater professionals with a focus on people currently underrepresented in the professional theater community. The Theater Subdistrict Council is expected to make a formal announcement and issue a request for proposals in the spring of 2016.
- DCLA will also commit \$1 million for the Cultural Institutions Group to support diversity efforts; an RFP will be sent later this spring. This is in addition to the more than \$150,000 has been contributed by The Ford Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, and Rockefeller Brothers Fund to support the effort.
- DCLA is also working closely with partners including the City University of New York and private philanthropies to build and support new pipeline programs that create internship and employment opportunities at cultural organizations, and to develop leadership within these organizations. Regular updates on these partnerships will be provided on these initiatives as they develop.

DCLA will now present the information at a number of upcoming public events, and members of the public are encouraged to submit their thoughts, recommendations, and other feedback using the Speak Up submission form on our website. DCLA plans to host a convening in late March that follows up on the conversations begun at the Ford Foundation and BRIC kickoff events in 2015.

“The de Blasio administration has made fostering a fairer, more equitable city a core value of the work we do, and DCLA’s survey is a solid step toward understanding how we can connect more New Yorkers of all backgrounds to our arts groups as leaders, makers, teachers, and doers,” said **Counsel to the Mayor Maya Wiley**. “The arts have the power to impact how we understand the world and each other. Our diversity is a key ingredient in the spicy hot soup of our cultural scene. The report reminds us that even in New York City we must continuously stir the pot and add all the rich ingredients our diversity offers. By identifying where we can better support inclusive arts and culture, we will ensure we remain the cultural center of this country.”

“I.A.T.S.E. Local One appreciates and strongly supports the efforts being made by Mayor de Blasio and the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs to promote diversity within the theatrical community of New York City. Local One’s rich history, as the oldest entertainment union in the United States and the largest stagecraft local in the world, includes a proud march towards a diversified work force. Those efforts continue today and into the future,” said **President James J. Claffey, Jr., President, I.A.T.S.E. Local One**.

“New York City is a global arts capital, and our city’s remarkable diversity enriches the cultural experience of New Yorkers and visitors alike,” said **Tino Gagliardi, President of the Associated Musicians of Greater New York, Local 802 AFM**. “As musicians, we are enthusiastic about the Mayor’s initiative to fund professional training of city residents underrepresented in the arts. Local 802 has aggressively championed equity for musicians of diverse backgrounds, such as our groundbreaking Justice for Jazz Artists campaign. We look forward to partnering with DCLA in this crucial effort.”

“I share the concerns of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs that cultural institutions in Brooklyn and New York City, among the most renowned in the world, do not fully represent the extraordinary diversity of our people. This survey demonstrates that substantial obstacles remain for people of color who want to contribute to the vital work of cultural institutions, particularly in leadership positions that determine which exhibits and performances to present to the public. As a consequence, artists have been deprived of opportunities and our culture has suffered the loss. I appreciate the City’s attention to this issue, and I urge our cultural institutions to develop initiatives that help them enhance a genuine reflection of the residents who comprise our five boroughs,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**.

“Our arts and cultural institutions are a key part of who we are as a city, and this data will help us make them even stronger,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “These survey results show us where and how we can make progress toward a cultural sector that’s even more vibrant and truly reflects the wealth of people and perspectives you can only find here.”

“I applaud the de Blasio Administration for measuring the staff and board diversity of our City’s cultural institutions,” said **Council Member Corey Johnson**. “Reports like this give us the data we need as we work towards the goal of making our cultural institutions as diverse as our City. Indeed, this survey shows us that we have more work ahead of us if we are to make careers in the cultural sector more accessible to all communities. And while turning the tide of opportunity is no easy task, it is greatly facilitated by efforts such as this one. My gratitude goes to Commissioner Finkelpearl and his staff at the DCLA for taking the time and care to compile this critical data.”

“When 67% of New York City residents are people of color and only 35.4% of the staff at City-funded cultural nonprofits are, it is clear that we have a lot of work to do. I am grateful to the NYC Department

of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) for undertaking this important survey, which will be a great tool in helping us achieve a more inclusive City," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

"If we hope to have a just and equitable New York City, it is imperative that the arts field reflects the diversity and vibrancy of our communities," said **Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts Executive Director James Bartlett**. "It is encouraging to see that this matter is being proactively addressed at the highest levels."

"Data can be a mirror. And all of us--as individuals, as a city, and as a society--are better and stronger when we take a hard look at ourselves and try to deeply understand not only who we are but who we want to be. The exercise of doing this study and the reflection upon these findings are critical first steps in learning more about how we make and experience art and culture in New York," said **Andrea Louie, executive director of the Asian American Arts Alliance**. "We are excited and encouraged that these initial steps have been taken. Now, the real work is in what happens next."

"For arts organizations seeking to serve all of the people of New York City—a community that is increasingly multicultural—the question of how we all reflect greater diversity in our programming, staff, and leadership is essential," said **Clive Gillinson, Executive and Artistic Director, Carnegie Hall**. "We greatly appreciate the City's work in undertaking this comprehensive survey, partnering with the cultural community at large to elevate this important conversation."

"As cultural organizations, it's essential we not replicate the inequities of our broader society, but instead harness our creative energies and community relationships to model a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive world," said **Teresa Eyring, Executive Director, Theatre Communications Group**. "As we advance this vision with theatres across the nation, we're inspired by the Department of Cultural Affairs' efforts here in New York City, and look forward to continuing our collaboration on this essential work."

The survey, designed with input from a committee of representatives from cultural organizations, was conducted over the course of summer 2015, and collected demographic data on race/ethnicity, gender, disability, age, job type, and level of seniority. The Mertz Gilmore Foundation and Rockefeller Brothers Fund supported nonprofit research firm Ithaka S+R to administer the survey. Ithaka has conducted surveys of the diversity of cultural groups nationwide in partnership with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Association of Art Museum Directors and the American Alliance of Museums, providing a broader context for considering these new results. Working with Ithaka also provided anonymity for groups submitting information about boards and staff.

DCLA's diversity initiative has been met with incredible enthusiasm from across sectors from the very start, with representatives from more than 400 cultural organizations and private funders attended kick off events hosted at the Ford Foundation and BRIC in early 2015. Research shows that inclusive workforces are better at problem-solving, more innovative, and more deliberative. With more than 120,000 people employed by cultural organizations in New York City, we have an obligation to make sure that career pathways in the arts are open to everyone, regardless of their background. A more equitable cultural field provides richer, more resonant creative work and experiences for artists and audience alike. DCLA looks forward to continuing to work with cultural partners to support an ever-more diverse, inclusive, and equitable cultural sector.

For more information, visit [www.nyc.gov/culture/diversity](http://www.nyc.gov/culture/diversity).

###