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TO RETURN TO THIS PAGE

[CLICK HERE FOR THE ACTNG CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT DATED SEPTEMBER 29, 2020](#)

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County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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FESIA A. DAVENPORT
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
HILDA L. SOLIS
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL
Third District

JANICE HAHN
Fourth District

KATHRYN BARGER
Fifth District

September 29, 2020

To: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn

From: Fesia A. Davenport
Acting Chief Executive Officer

REPORT BACK TO MAINTAIN ARTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FUNDING (ITEM NO. 51-I, AGENDA OF JULY 21, 2020)

On July 21, 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion to direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), working with the Department of Arts and Culture, to report back in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 Supplemental Budget Phase on available funding to maintain the Arts Internship Program (Program) for FY 2020-21.

The Program supports and strengthens the cultural sector of the County by providing access to high-quality opportunities for college students of all backgrounds to gain experience, understanding, and transferable skills relevant to careers in the arts, creative economy, and engagement in public life. Students develop a deeper understanding of the work involved in nonprofit arts administration and of the role of the arts in communities, and develop skills that can be utilized in their future careers.

As part of the Countywide curtailment plan to mitigate the negative financial impact that the COVID-19 public health crisis placed on the County during the FY 2020-21 Final Changes Budget phase, the Program was reduced by \$310,000. After careful consideration and review within the context of the larger Countywide budget impact, the FY 2020-21 Supplemental Changes budget includes a recommendation to restore \$310,000 of ongoing funding to the Program.

Each Supervisor
September 29, 2020
Page 2

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me directly at (213) 974-1101, or your staff may contact Anthony Baker at (213) 974-1135 or abaker@ceo.lacounty.gov.

FAD:JMN:MM
SW:GS:AB:ae

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Arts and Culture



DATE: January 21, 2021

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TO: Chair Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Kristin Sakoda, Director *KS*

Board of Supervisors

Hilda L. Solis
Holly J. Mitchell
Sheila Kuehl
Janice Hahn
Kathryn Barger

Director

Kristin Sakoda

Chief Deputy

Heather Rigby

REPORT BACK ON COVID-19 IMPACT ON THE LA COUNTY ARTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (ITEM 51-I, AGENDA OF JULY 21, 2020)

On July 21, 2020 Supervisor Solis authored a motion to Direct the Chief Executive Officer, working with the Director of Arts and Culture, to report back during Fiscal Year 2020-21 Supplemental Budget Phase on available funding to maintain the Arts Internship Program for FY 2020-21; and instruct Director of Arts and Culture to report back to the Board in 180 days with a status report on how COVID-19 is impacting the organizations and students participating in the current Arts Internship Program cycle, and an update on the design plan for the next cycle of the Program which will respond to the state of the arts and culture field in light of COVID-19.

BACKGROUND:

In 2000, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established the Arts Internship Program, which provides internships for nonprofit performing, presenting, literary and municipal arts organizations as a companion program to the Getty Foundation’s Marrow Internship Program, which provides internships to museums and visual arts organizations. The purpose of the County’s program is to provide undergraduate students with meaningful, paid on-the-job training and experience working in nonprofit arts organizations with transferable skills relevant to careers in the arts and creative economy while assisting arts organizations and developing future arts leaders.

In 2017, the Board of Supervisors expanded the number of positions funded through the program as part of the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII) in recognition of the unique role of workforce development opportunities like the Arts Internship Program in addressing continued disparities of equity and access to arts careers. The Board stipulated that at least 28 of the additional positions be reserved for community college students, emphasizing inclusivity of those from communities that experience barriers to accessing careers in the arts. In the year 2020, 228 positions had been awarded to 147 organizations throughout LA County for internships to take place between June and August

of 2020. Additionally, in 2020 a guideline change was made to allow social justice and social service organizations with arts programming that are grantees of the County's Community Impact Arts Grant program to participate as intern host organizations.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON 2020 ARTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FOR ORGANIZATIONS AND STUDENTS

Recalibration of Program in Spring 2020:

In March of 2020, the Department of Arts and Culture was preparing to launch all 228 positions online to begin the official recruitment period for interns. LA County's Safer at Home Health Officer Order went into effect on March 16, 2020 to control the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the region – and as a result of the order and the rapidly shifting Public Health mandates regarding business and office closures, Arts and Culture paused the 2020 Arts Internship program to give staff the opportunity to recalibrate and issue guidance to grantees on how to move forward once the Safer at Home order was lifted or amended.

Recognizing the difficulties in the months ahead, staff identified program changes to give organizations and interns the most flexibility possible. Updated program guidance was issued on March 26, 2020 (and reviewed via online webinar for all grantees on April 9, 2020) with changes focused in four key areas:

1. *Expanded Timeline and Flexible Hours:* Given the disruption the COVID-19 pandemic caused for grantees and students, the end date of internships was extended from August 31, 2020 to March 1, 2021. To provide students with flexibility they would need to balance other work and class schedules during the school year, interns were permitted to work a minimum of 15 hours per week over a longer period of time (rather than requiring full-time for 10 weeks).
2. *Remote/Virtual Work:* To ensure intern safety and grantee compliance with local and state health orders, updated guidance permitted interns to work remotely for the first time in the 20-year history of the program.
3. *Virtual Educational/Peer Events:* Restrictions on large in-person gatherings necessitated moving all educational components of the program, the annual Art Summit event and Peer Group events, to a virtual format.
4. *Project Changes without Penalty:* Due to the pandemic, many of the originally intended intern projects had been cancelled or substantially altered. Updated guidance allowed organizations to rewrite their internship job descriptions, if necessary, and allowed for an organization to forfeit their award and to apply in subsequent years without penalty.

Resuming the Program and Educational Components:

On June 1, 2020, once many grantee organizations pivoted operations in response to LA County's Health Officer Order, Arts and Culture relaunched the program with the updated guidance. Internship positions began launching online on a rolling basis beginning July 1, 2020 through the end of the year. Staff provided technical assistance in weekly office hours to answer grantee questions, discuss forfeiture and offer support. In the month of July, 111 positions launched on the website.

Educational components were also resumed with adjustments for remote operations. For the annual Art Summit, a key educational component of the program that offers students opportunities to network and attend panels with arts leaders and performances, staff successfully shifted the event to a virtual format on October 7. The Department included as many of the original components of Art Summit as possible: showcasing local artists, highlighting the work of our Department and grantees, and providing opportunities for interns to engage with one another. Peer group sessions, which provide students with opportunities for small group reflection and mentorship, were shifted to virtual format. All peer group leaders (arts and culture professionals from across the region) held their small group sessions from August 2020 through February 2021, providing interns an average of two to three monthly virtual engagement opportunities.

Program Successes for Organizations and Interns

The 2020 program changes were well received by grantees and throughout the process they shared their gratitude for the clear instructions and flexibility. Pausing the program for nearly 2 months allowed organizations to acclimate to telecommuting and remote operations, exercise virtual supervising skills, and recalibrate programming. While a full evaluation will be available in the program's final report issued in May 2021, overall most grantee host organizations successfully adapted to having their intern work remotely.

Both Art Summit and the virtual Peer Group events have been successful based on observing the level of interns' engagement in networking sessions and dialogues. Staff have recorded events where possible and, to maximize accessibility, made them available to all interns via the Department's YouTube page. One intern remarked that their favorite part of the Art Summit was "getting to meet new people who have similar interests and create Social Media groups to keep in contact." See Attachment A: Educational Components for Art Summit description and listing of Virtual Peer Group events.

Challenges for Organizations and Interns

The Arts Internship Program, while providing the cost of an intern salary, requires that a hosting organization spend staff resources to mentor and support a college intern, which posed challenges to arts organizations as they struggled with devastating losses to revenue and pivoted entire operations to virtual settings. For several organizations, hosting an intern, even with the increased flexibility provided, was not feasible in 2020. In their forfeiture letters, many organizations noted that they were not able to provide a high-quality experience to an intern given staff capacity or the virtual setting. Other organizations noted that the programming and work they had planned for the intern had been cancelled or needed to be restructured in a way that would not make it feasible to complete the project while supervising an intern. All organizations who forfeited their grant award expressed gratitude for being able to apply in the future. While this points to challenges in the field, it is clear that allowing organizations to forfeit their award in this unprecedented year was an important aspect of the program changes made.

Prospective interns also faced challenges, mostly around recruitment and eligibility. Prior to the pandemic and accompanying the Health Officer Order, Arts and Culture staff conducted info sessions at community colleges to promote the program in its original format, a successful strategy in past years of the program. Although staff proactively communicated directly with

contacts at the community colleges when the program was paused and relaunched, interruption of the program timeline made recruitment from this population more challenging. Twenty-two community college students have been hired for the 2020 program year (41 participated in 2018 and 48 in 2019). This number is still higher than the number of community college students that participated prior to the program's expansion in 2018 under CEII.

Staff also received questions from organizations about students taking "gap years" (choosing not to enroll in classes) due to the turmoil of the pandemic. Because the program guidelines stipulate that interns must be recently graduated or enrolled in classes at the time of application, students taking gap years were not eligible for the program. Organizations were instructed to let those applicants know they should apply for the program in a future year.

Below are current metrics for the 2020 program:

- In January 2020, the Arts Commission approved 228 positions at 147 organizations
- As of December 31, 2020, 162 positions at 110 number of organizations have launched
- A total of 65 positions at 32 organizations forfeited their positions due to the pandemic

UPDATED DESIGN PLAN FOR THE 2021 ARTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Despite the hopeful start of vaccines to address the virus, much is still uncertain about the trajectory of COVID-19 and the road to recovery. As a result, Arts and Culture will maintain much of the flexibility from the 2020 program year for the 2021 program. Interns for the 2021 program year will be able to work from June 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022. Working virtually will also continue to be accommodated and positions will launch on a monthly basis from April through December 2021.

Additionally, the following program changes have been made to address the financial hardships experienced by grantees due to COVID-19, which the Department anticipates will continue well into this year and next:

Suspension of cash match: The cash match provision, which required organizations with budgets over \$1.5M to contribute \$500 to an intern's salary and organizations with budgets over \$4M to contribute \$1,000, has been suspended for 2021. Larger budget organizations have been hit hard by the pandemic and suspension of the cash match will help reduce financial strain and lower barriers to participation.

Increase of and access to the administrative stipend: For many years, organizations with budgets of \$500,000 or below received an additional administrative stipend of \$500 per position to help with indirect costs (such as payroll taxes, mileage reimbursement, equipment needs, etc.) associated with hosting an intern. For 2021, the administrative stipend has been increased to \$750 [utilizing one-time funds] and will be available to organizations with budgets up to \$1M.

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION

The 2021 Arts Internship Program cycle is underway. In September 2020, extensive office hours and updated application workshops were held for all prospective applicants to help them understand the new changes to the program. Applications closed on October 28, 2020 with 151

organizations applying for 255 positions. While slightly lower than the number of applications received in pre-pandemic 2020, it is a healthy sized applicant pool and signals that organizations are eager to continue participating in the program. An initial review of applications revealed that the vast majority of applicants are proposing internship projects that can withstand the uncertainty of the pandemic and some submitted proposals for positions that have grown out of their pandemic response. These applications are a testament to the resilience of grantee organizations, and we are hopeful for a strong 2021 program year. Applications were reviewed in panel and the Arts Commission voted to approve internships on January 11, 2021. Grantees will be notified of awards in the coming weeks.

Central to our work is the aim to increase access to opportunities for students of diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, and the continued inclusion of community college students in the program, an effort that yielded 41 community college students in 2018 and 48 students in 2019. Staff continue to be in communication with faculty at community colleges and plan to host virtual informational sessions at those schools in early 2021 to encourage additional applications of diverse college students to further support workforce development and provide meaningful opportunities in creative career pathways.

The 2020 Arts Internship final report will be published in May of 2021 and will provide a comprehensive review of the survey data from interns and supervisors. Information from those responses will be used to shape future iterations of the program.

The impact of COVID-19 on the arts and creative sector has been immense and COVID-19 has broadly impacted youth unemployment rates as well as students' ability to access college, work opportunities, and professional and social connection. Nonprofit arts organizations applying to the County's COVID-19 Arts Relief Fund administered by Arts and Culture collectively claimed over \$230M in lost revenues and added expenses due to the pandemic; payroll was the most cited use of relief funds. In addition to public funding for general operating support and relief that supports the survival of the sector that provides cultural services and identity to our region, continuing to make investments that support equity in the arts and culture workforce is also critical. As one of the County's premiere arts workforce development programs, the Arts Internship Program and programs like it provide a means for the County to support career pathways, job training and paid opportunities for diverse youth, and support the arts and creative sector, at a time of great need.

I am pleased to answer any questions related to this report. Please contact me at ksakoda@arts.lacounty.gov.

ATTACHMENT A: EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Over the course of the internship period, Arts and Culture coordinated multiple educational events for interns that complement their experiences within their organizations. Arts Summit brought interns together virtually for a half day of panels, performances and networking on October 7, 2020. In addition, Peer Group events take place virtually each month and provide an opportunity for interns to hear from guest speakers on a range of topics. Funding for these crucial educational components is in part provided by the Getty Foundation. The Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture continues to be deeply grateful to the Getty Foundation for its twenty-year partnership in support of paid internship opportunities in nonprofit arts organizations for college students. The Getty's support of educational components such as Arts Summit and Peer Groups allows future arts leaders participating in the program to receive the mentorship and professional learning opportunities needed to succeed in the field.

Art Summit – October 7th, 2020

At Art Summit 2020, interns experienced performances from local artists as well as a guest panel moderated by Suzy Exposito of the Los Angeles Times and attended by Arts Commissioner Pamela Bright Moon, President & CEO of Community Coalition Alberto Retana and Musician Madame Gandhi. In addition to pre-recorded welcomes from Supervisors Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor Solis, Supervisor Barger and former CEO Sachi Hamai, rapper and musician D Smoke provided the Keynote address.



- YouTube Link: https://youtu.be/WvN_35zKsU4
- The pre-recorded videos provided by the Board Offices can be viewed at the following points in the video:
 - Supervisor Barger: 20:57
 - Supervisor Solis: 30:39
 - Supervisor Ridley-Thomas: 1:41:10

Peer Group Events – Ongoing through February 2021

- Music, Visual Art and Social Change with Alma Villegas of *artworxLA*
- Arts and Civic Engagement with Sayon Syprasoeuth of *United Cambodian Community*

- [Navigating Employment Opportunities in the Creative Industries](#) with Larry Laboe of *New Filmmakers Los Angeles*
- [What is Teaching Artistry?](#) and [Teaching Artist Panel](#) with Diana Rivera of *Creative Empowerment Coaching*
- [Arts Education Bootcamp](#) with Manny Prieto of *Los Angeles Music and Art School*
- [Job Application Tips](#) with Mandy Matthews of *American Youth Symphony*
- [Starting off in Theatre & Film](#) with Brian Elerding of *Lineage Performing Arts Center*
- [Building Your Career as an Artist](#) with Charlie Jensen of *UCLA Extension Writers Program*
- [Pursuing a Career as an Artist](#) with Felica Vann of *Precision Dance Company*
- [Conquering Adversity & Challenges](#) in Theatre with Gia Inferrera-Jordahl of the *Torrance Theatre Company*

When possible and with permission, these sessions were recorded and uploaded to YouTube. They can be viewed [here](#).

[Arts Internship Program 20th Anniversary Video](#)

To commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the program a [Video](#) was created. This short video reflects on the 20-year history of the Arts Internship Program and features the success stories of three diverse alumni whose careers were deeply impacted by their participation in the program.