COVID-19 AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY: PHASE 1 EMERGENCY AID REPORT

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Organizational Overview

Arts Business Collaborative (ABC) is a technical assistance and research organization improving the quality of life of people of color through the arts and STEM. We address barriers to success for BIPOC-led creative and professional endeavors by facilitating access to capital, networks, and training through innovative programming and action-oriented research. ABC seeks general operating support for our two departmental arms, the Grassroots Action Project (GAP) and the Rising Tides Research Institute (RTRI).

Together, GAP and RTRI utilize a community-centered, multi-pronged approach to cultivate arts as a gateway to social and civic engagement, while leveraging innovative business strategies for people of color in order to facilitate the retention of the economic value of their cultural capital. GAP offers affordable or subsidized incubation and/or capacity building support for entrepreneurs, small businesses, emerging to mid-size organizations, and professionals in the arts. RTRI executes action-oriented research on, for, and in collaboration with artists, local businesses, and nonprofit organizations to leverage arts activism in service of fostering racial equity and a more collaborative creative economy.

Rising Tides Research Institute

RTRI crafts an evolving portfolio of projects in adherence to three core objectives: to explore systemic conditions in the Arts & Culture sector in order to disrupt exclusive circulation of assets in philanthropic and government initiatives, to evaluate the economic power of BIPOC artists and arts organizations to fortify models for transformative collective action, and to influence public policy and advocacy in ways that advance equitable labor conditions and provide greater visibility for arts workers of color. We engage in this work tactically and strategically from the values of integrity and innovation. Our systems and processes are highly integrated and designed via a racial equity lens.

Rising Tides Research Institute contributes to scholarly research on arts-based interventions, arts audience development, and the relationship between the arts and people of color-owned businesses in communities of color.

RTRI Leadership Statement of Practice and Strategic Action

Rising Tides Research Institute (RTRI) functionally engages in two avenues of research: a robust annual internal measurement and evaluation of ABC programs from which recommendations are made concerning process, preparedness, pedagogy, and impact; and external research addressing best practices in program execution, sociocultural and socioeconomic issues impacting POC artists and nonprofits, and larger frameworks of public policy.

The strategic goal of RTRI is to cultivate action-oriented research that results in data which is meaningful and accessible to the communities with which ABC and RTRI partner. Additionally, RTRI strategically uses research to support the development of relevant, partner-facing programming capable of adapting to change.

Impact

RTRI's departmental vision for impact involves contributing to progressive and radical public policies and methods for advocacy by using transdisciplinary research to address the enduring systems of inequalities that have impacted POC, Black people in particular, with a focus on key stakeholders in the arts: artists, business owners, and nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, RTRI envisions its research as an avenue through which to address issues of capital access and facilitate the improvement of economic conditions of POC artists and arts businesses.

Values

RTRI operates tactically and strategically from the values of integrity and innovation. This means that our systems and processes aim to be highly integrated and designed via a racial equity framework. The goal of these values is to foster structural and ethical soundness. Accordingly, RTRI promotes a working environment that supports and values respect and accountability. We enact these values when engaging with each other, the larger ABC team, community members who are the main subjects of research, the public, partners, and potential funders.

Leadership

Kat Bloomfield, CEO
Carolyn Pautz, PhD, Director of Research and Strategy
Veroneque Ignace, MPH, Associate Director of Research and Strategy

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ARTS BUSINESS COLLABORATIVE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	**4**
Survey Intentions	**4**
Research Question	**4**
Methodology	**5**
Scope, Design and Deployment	**6**
Thematic Overview	**7**
Final Analysis and Conclusions	**15**

INTRODUCTION

Survey Intentions

In response to COVID-19, in May of 2020, Arts Business Collaborative (ABC)/Rising Tides Institute conducted a needs analysis survey of the emergency aid application process during the height of COVID-19. The goal of this survey was to gather data that would facilitate ABC/Rising Tides's capacity to support POC artists and arts organizations through accessible training and education intended to improve access to emergency aid and funding.

The concerns expressed by ABC/Rising Tides stem predominantly from three broad and well-documented areas of discourse:

1. Artists of color and nonprofits run by leaders of color face systemic barriers to raising capital via both for-profit and philanthropic avenues.[1]
2. COVID-19 has negatively impacted Black and Latinx communities at disproportionate levels compared to white communities.[2]
3. The arts and arts education often occupy a precarious or marginalized space in American society.

Research Question

Within the previously determined scope of this research project, we sought out to ask:

1. What is the percentage of dance and theater artists of color who applied for emergency aid in the time of COVID?
2. What opportunities and challenges have they faced in the process?

Narrowing the focus to these two questions allows us to consider whether the circumstances that contributed to a need for emergency aid were different or similar to their experience prior to COVID-19, and what specific conditions contributed to losses in revenue. Additionally, researchers could interrogate the respondent's level of crisis preparedness during and after the application process as a means of determining what skill and capacity building services might benefit these artists.

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[1] Dean-Coffey, Jara (2018: 39-4), "What's Race Got to Do With It? Equity and Philanthropic Evaluation Practice". *American Journal of Evaluation*, pgs 527-542.
[2] CDC (July 24, 2020), "Health Equity Considerations and Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups".

Methodology

Before more deeply addressing research design and implementation, it is useful to note that the three areas of discourse above serve as a methodological underpinning for our research design, execution and analysis. Notions of race that were developed prior to and during the foundation of the United States have been incorporated into institutional structures and persistent narratives of rationalism and aptitude, as asserted by non-profit leader and scholar Jara Dean-Coffey.[3] Coffey comments that the unconscious internalization of "White racial frames" reinforces particular cognitive hierarchies that consciously and subconsciously inform who receives funds, what programs are deemed worthy investments (and for whom these programs apply), and how programs are evaluated.

The current public health crisis intersects with Coffey's concern regarding the past and present impact of "White racial frames" on philanthropic and government capital distribution. The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, LatinX and Hispanic communities can be connected to decades of structural racism, as noted by the Center for Disease Control.[4] Triangulating with racial inequity in philanthropic distribution and structural racism as a reality of American society, is the custom to defund the arts in the face of massive budget deficits. As of May 2020, COVID-19 had caused a loss of 4.98B in the non-profit arts sector, with six out ten artist/creative workers becoming unemployed.[5] Even as the NEA grew between 2020 and 2021,[6] state and city cuts to arts in education, a major source of revenue for arts organizations, will continue into 2021 and possibly into 2022.[7] With fewer jobs in arts education and the correlating creative economy (i.e. arts administration), it is a reasonable prediction that many artists will struggle to find full-time employment in their industry. As a result of the intersection of these three areas of concern, there is an urgent call to consider how POC artists and arts organizations are coping with the economic impact of the public health crisis and to strategize for alternative pathways to sustaining and rebuilding the arts and culture sector. Thus, this survey, our data analysis and any subsequent recommendations utilize a lens of racial equity by retaining an awareness of underlying drivers of inequity and in turn, what strategies from rebuilding, through a racial equity lens, might look like in practice.

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[3] See Coffey (2018).
[4] See CDC (July 24, 2020).
[5] *Americans for the Arts* (May 4, 2020), "Covid-19's Impact on the Arts".
[6] Bowley, Graham. (January 15, 2021). "Trump Tried to End the Federal Arts Funding. Instead it Grew". *The New York Times*.
[7] Bishara, Hakeem (July 2, 2020), "NYC's Public Art Education Budget Reduced to 70% of Previous Year", *The Huffington Post.*; Hurdle, Jon (June 20, 2020), "Cuts to the Arts Help Philadelphia to Address Huge Budget Gap". *The New York Times*.

Scope, Design, and Deployment

The survey was written with the express intention of collecting quantifiable demographic, operational and capital access info, alongside supporting qualitative responses that nuance barrier-to-aid issues and the relationship of arts labor and operational issues to COVID-19. Additional questions concerning interest in professional business development were included in order to draw correlations between issues presented by respondents, perceived business needs, and skill set deficits.

Our goal was to collect data that will ensure that ABC/Rising Tides is attuned to the particular preparedness needs of artists of color. Survey questions were specifically grouped into the following four areas:

1. Demographics
2. Barriers to Aid
3. Artist and Art Business Support Needs
4. Training & Educational Interests

The sample size included 150 dance and theater artists, arts administrators, and for/non-profit arts leaders whose organizations have fewer than 10 full-time employees as small businesses have been hardest hit during the pandemic. The survey was deployed via an open call for participants on social media, through arts service organizations, and via invitation. The target population included only dance and theater artists and arts administrators given that different art forms have encountered unique sets of challenges during the pandemic related to the move to virtual platforms and public health policy. In particular, the closure of physical space brought about novel challenges for what we term embodied arts, particularly dance and theater Hence, the target population is of particular interest to both ABC/Rising Tides as it represents a particularly vulnerable group of artists thus offering an opportunity to stage a unique intervention into dialogues concerning funding, development and crisis management.

<u>Justification of Scope and Design</u>

Aware that structural racism creates systemic obstacles and barriers to accessing support, capital and education across all aspects of society, Rising Tides researchers determined that, in order to satisfy the ABC's goal to support POC artists and arts organizations during COVID, a needs analysis survey would need to account for four particular issues related to scope and design.

First, the survey required a sample group composed mostly of artists and arts business owners of color. Therefore, the scope included dance and theater artists and arts organizations of all demographics, but targeted a POC population located predominantly in New York City. By focusing on this demographic, needs and issues specific to BIPOC communities were prioritized.

Second, within this demographic focus, dance and theater were the chosen career specialties because the closure of indoor spaces during the height of the pandemic presented unique challenges for embodied arts practices. These particular artists and business owners faced extreme vulnerability for closure as they attempted to translate classes, rehearsals and performances to digital spaces. Imbricated within the challenge of converting arts practices dependent upon body-to-body interaction to a virtual space were known disparities concerning racial equity in relation to access to digital infrastructure, funding and healthcare. By focusing a racial equity lens on the most vulnerable of arts practices and small businesses within the creative economy, researchers would be able to interrogate specific conditions that are often overlooked when small dance and theater businesses are lumped into evaluation processes with large institutions such as “Broadway” .

Third, quantitative and qualitative data collection on business operations and performance conditions needed to be collected in order to understand subtle but defining operational factors influencing access to aid. These included: operational structure, years in operation, pre-existing revenue sources, awareness of funding sources, accessing aid, business and personal needs, and skill needs and deficits. Correlations were sought between business characteristics and conditions and access to aid, and evaluated through a racial equity lens to determine the impact of structural racism on such conditions prior to and during COVID.

Finally, a respondent’s self-assessment of skill needs and deficits allowed researchers to analyze the relationship between funding access, technical knowledge and other conditions faced during the height of the pandemic, facilitating ABC’s capacity to design technical assistance programs geared specifically towards POC arts business owners.

By addressing demographics, dance and theater-specific issues, and business operations and skill needs in relation to Covid-19, this survey provided ABC with significant insight into levels of preparedness, access and other issues faced by dance and theater artists generally alongside distinct and direct feedback on the needs of POC dance and theater artists and arts organizations during the public health crisis.

THEMATIC OVERVIEW

In this report, we categorize the results of this survey into four thematic sections, including:

1. Dance and theater employment and income ecosystems
2. Knowledge of emergency aid types and associated qualifications
3. Comparison of business conditions prior to and during COVID-19
4. Potential opportunities for training and education

Additionally, each of the four themes that emerged from the collected data are analyzed in relation to one another in order to offer a cohesive examination of the current financial landscape for POC artists in the dance and theater industry and how it impacts their creative process and product. As evinced in the analysis below, there are four critical takeaways from the themes that emerged in this survey. At the root of each of these takeaways exists the undeniable lack of robust arts community advocacy as well as the lack of sturdy public policy concerning the value, economic and social, of arts and culture in education and society.

First, systemic economic collapse of the arts and culture sector was inevitable during the pandemic, because while the arts intersect with and produce revenue for other industries, the reinvestment from other industries into the arts, in terms of capital and labor, is not in kind. In fact, as will be shown, most artists maintain multiple spaces of employment entirely within the arts and culture sector across education, administration, operations and performance, but the product of their physical labor is almost never protected once it jumps the boundary into other sectors such as public education and hospitality. Hence the relationship between other industries and the arts is predominantly extractive.

Second, the high level of individual precarity resulting from one's multiple labor streams being situated entirely within the arts and culture sector exists even without the threat of a global pandemic, but the collapse of the creative economy during COVID-19 for reasons noted above, exacerbated these issues and left more than 60% of arts laborers unemployed. These first two takeaways speak to the need to protect individual labor rights while also cultivating economic practices of reciprocity across industries, in a manner that acknowledges the importance of labor in cultural supply chains.

Third, assumptions about digital adaptability of dance education and the translation of performances for audiences to the virtual space were upended during the pandemic. In subsequent studies with RTRI, participants cited lack of internet access within their target communities, the inability to monitor all students in a virtual setting, and "virtual fatigue" caused by being in online meetings as reasons for failed adaptability. This has spurred an examination of how to improve access to high-speed internet and how to leverage the digital space in art forms that do not translate well because of reliance on physical embodiment.

Finally, there is a disconnect between profit and profitability within dance and theater. As finance professionals argue, profit is not meant solely to replace the product sold or cover the cost of labor. Rather, profit is one metric in the measurement of profitability, which may be viewed as the efficiency of a business and its capacity to reinvest in itself for growth and return. The inability for dance and theater to reinvest generally begins with operational and structural limitations to increasing revenue capacity, passive and active, of both for profit and nonprofit businesses. However, these limitations are also embedded in cultural norms. In many ways, dance and theater labor has been normalized as extractable resource for other industries such as hospitality, tourism, and food and beverage, which has long undermined the ability to cultivate successful and resilient arts business management practices for those outside of the service industry without a reliance upon philanthropic and government support.

Dance and Theater Employment and Income Ecosystems

> "I always have to search for work for the summer season, due to my work as an adjunct professor ending at that time. The level of success I've had with this has been uneven, especially during the pandemic."
> -Anonymous Survey Respondent

> "I primarily earn income through education contracts (residencies, master classes, lecture demonstrations). Planned events during COVID have been cancelled and the ability to contact new work for the near future is uncertain."
> -Anonymous Survey Respondent

A total 96% of respondents worked for arts nonprofits or as independent contractors within education or arts nonprofits. Also, survey data shows that 92% of total respondents pulled from multiple sources of income within the creative economy to fund their art practice (i.e. rehearsal space), ongoing art training (i.e. dance classes) or their arts business (i.e. paying employees). Furthermore, 76% of total respondents applied for emergency aid for themselves and/or their business.

Respondents identified the most common sources of secondary income in afterschool programs, higher education adjunct positions, and arts administration for arts organizations serving youth. Whether the primary and secondary employment were full time or not, a high percentage of our respondents' primary and secondary employment was earned as an independent contractor on a "gig economy" basis, leaving them with reduced access to unemployment at the start of the pandemic.

Given the majority of respondents' secondary employment was in a creative/arts and culture field, and often overlapped with their primary arts discipline, we can determine that the various

spaces of individual employment were impacted by the threat and challenges of COVID-19. This is further supported by data from *Americans for the Arts*, which states that 328,000 jobs have been lost in the arts and culture sector, and that more 12,000 institutions face a serious risk of permanent closure.[8] Thus, earned income and revenue from the arts, particularly when earned as an independent contractor, is quite vulnerable to changing macroeconomic conditions, leaving artists and arts organizations with reduced financial security.

Considering the above data holistically in conjunction with the qualitative data we received, it is clear that though artists and arts organizations have the ability to acquire income or profit from multiple sources, that income or profit does not leave room for savings, but instead is quickly recirculated within an arts economy, suggesting correlations between operational viability and systemic inequities regarding fair pay for artists. This suggests that the arts practice or arts business itself is not profitable, or in the case of nonprofits, that a program is not self-sustaining. As a result, in subsequent research born from this project, we look past the simple measure of profit as isolated within a particular business to dig deeper into questions about how much profit was gained by other industries as a result of dance and theater labor as well as the socioeconomic norms that undervalue the arts and arts laborers generally.

> "When funded by public schools / government you are paid on a reimbursement basis so all expenses must be incurred and then you wait 60-90 days to be reimbursed. During the shutdowns, all was delayed and we are still waiting on reimbursements for up to 6 months ago."
>
> -Anonymous Survey Respondent

Given the understanding that the employment structure and labor sources across multiple fields within the creative economy are interwoven and that the product of arts labor functions as an extractable resource for articulating industries, with the disruption of labor within an arts supply-chain, both nonprofit and for-profit businesses have suffered in accounts payable and receivable. As evident in the quote above, this disruption certainly contributes to the inability for individuals and business owners to effectively create a post-pandemic recovery plan.[9] Consequently, functioning successfully as an individual artist or as an arts organization requires more than individual financial literacy. It demands an understanding of capital flows between industries, and how to leverage business structures, assets, programs and experience.

However, these issues go beyond economic and financial literacy as they intersect with systemic racism in ways that suggest a serious threat to BIPOC artists and arts organizations. On average, for every dollar earned by a white male, a Black male earns 87 cents, while a Black female earns

[8] See *Americans for the Arts* (May 2020).
[9] Ibid.

62 cents.[10] If we set the pay inequities between races alongside, disruption in labor/supply chains, the noted tendency for artists to reinvest income and profit within the creative economy, and cultural norms that undervalue the arts, it is reasonable to argue that, as a group, BIPOC artists and BIPOC-owned and BIPOC serving arts organizations face conditions more dire that white artists, organizations serving predominantly white audiences and white-owned businesses as there were pre-existing racist norms in employment and funding that created a shortage of capital for BIPOC artists and arts organizations in the creative economy. This has subsequent implications for operational structures, business strategy and opportunities for growth.

In summary of this theme, systemic issues of economic in/stability need strategic and wide scope solutions. Offering assistance to address the concerns raised by survey respondents means investing beyond practical non-profit/business skill building, and into greater public advocacy for employment law that dismantles structural forms of racism and labor inequity. That advocacy must speak to the needs of practicing BIPOC artists as well as educational reform that considers arts as integral, rather than supplementary, to education. Hence, arts community-organizing and lobbying conducted through a racial equity lens are integral skills and strategies to individual and business-level economic stability and management.

Knowledge of emergency aid types and associated qualifications

> "During COVID, I have had more access to funding to support my life as an artist than ever before. That is because the funding is based on need, the pooling of resources, and a strong call for reparations. This is what it should ALWAYS be like; not just when performances and rehearsals are cancelled."
> -Anonymous Survey Respondent

Of all respondents, about 76% applied for emergency aid. Of those, about 92% received aid. This constitutes about 70% of our total respondents.

While the majority of respondents who applied for aid did qualify, the broad swath of aid forms that were applied for suggest a lack of understanding concerning the actual application criteria and business model eligibility for each form of aid. For example, an independent contractor would not qualify for an EIDL, yet several checked that they did apply for this form of loan. The obscurity concerning what aid was available and for whom specifically is echoed elsewhere. For example, when inquiring why an applicant did not receive aid, the individual responded that the, "explanation was unclear".

[10] Miller, Stephen. (June 11, 2020). "Black Workers Still Earn Less than Their White Counterparts". https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/compensation/pages/racial-wage-gaps-persistence-poses-challenge.aspx Accessed August 4th, 2020.

Those who defined their business operation models with the clearest structure (i.e. LLC or non-profit) were most successful in getting aid, particularly in the forms pandemic unemployment assistance (PUA) and unemployment assistance (UA), even though they were not roundly the most applied for. This application success suggests a possible correlation between higher levels of business operational literacy and successful business development and crisis management in an arts economy.

That stated, reasons for not getting aid may also be related to who the respondent was filling out the survey on behalf of. For example, one respondent informed us that the, "aid was for my company not me". So while this individual received unemployment assistance, the company did not receive an EIDL or PPP loan. Additionally, aid may have been denied because the company did not meet benchmark requirements, such as years of operation, even if their structure was appropriate for the form of aid. One respondent noted that the denial explanation stated that the, "nonprofit [was] not [an] official organization for longer than two years". Again, this speaks to conditions of obscurity surrounding eligibility and intersects with statements made by respondents who did not apply. Approximately 36% stated that there were too many requirements to complete the aid applications; 32% stated the process was unclear; 28.6% stated they needed help with the aid application process; and 25% stated they did not know emergency aid was available to them . However, this also speaks to structural characteristics of emergency aid policy that were detrimental to start-ups, small businesses and businesses relying on independent contractor labor. Combined with the knowledge the banks discriminated against Black aid applicants, aid policy and aid application practices clearly erected significant access barriers to artists and small arts businesses, especially those owned by, led by and serving BIPOC individuals. Therefore, it can be reasonably assumed that all, but particularly BIPOC, artists and arts organizations could have benefited from real-time emergency aid application assistance as well as additional advocacy for small businesses.

<u>Comparison of business conditions prior to and during COVID-19</u>

"As a black, queer artist I feel I have always lacked resources, support and funding for my work. The COVID-19 Pandemic is not a special circumstance to these happenings. However, it has magnified the disparities I face as an artist within my creation process."
-Anonymous Survey Respondent

Of all respondents, 69% answered that the conditions they currently face as a result of COVID-19 are the same or similar to what they experienced before while working as artists or arts businesses.

Contextually, as artists, we know that the arts and culture sector consistently faces a lack of funding from philanthropy and government and little to no reinvestment by industries benefiting

from arts labor. As a result, individuals and organizations must engage in a Sysiphian struggle for the exposure and recognition necessary to "win" a grant, employment contract or tenured role. The fact that 92% of respondents use personal income to sustain their primary art suggests that there is a disconnect between stability and growth with the artist/art business's operations and within the sector more broadly. This produces an inability to create new jobs or support existing creative and administrative employees with an income that can sustain basic living expenses and art creation. To be succinct, that individual secondary income is reinvested within the primary art suggests that not only is the primary art endeavor rarely profitable, but that artists lack the means, methods, scale and/or support to invest for growth. In turn, this leads to difficulty achieving large scale outreach and engagement which negatively impacts arts program evaluation, program replication and securing new grant/contract awards.

The accretion of capital access issues has long term ramifications that spill over into all aspects of business strategy. Without measurable and demonstrable results to share with program officers, agents and other external industry partners, artists and arts organizations struggle to develop robust long-term collaborative and profitable relationships with institutional partners.[11] In the time of COVID-19 these challenges are increased and paired with, as one respondent says, "[f]inding relevancy and marketing during quarantine and adapting to virtual services for a business that requires physical space."

Opportunities for training and education

> "We are a black owned dance program of 25 years and due to Covid-19 our funds have been depleted and our landlord wants us out, we don't know what to do, we need help."
> -Anonymous Survey Respondent

> "...most of the methods, approaches and tools I have been trained in and use in my work have to be modified and entirely reconstructed. This takes time and experimentation which isn't actually being funded or offered. People want zoom-ready stuff or to just have conversations on zoom…This requires a whole new approach that I have to cultivate and the support and opportunities offered by the field at this time are not ones that forward such model building and exploration."
> -Anonymous Survey Respondent

All respondents answered that they would be interested in receiving some type of training in one or more technical knowledge fields and all respondents answered the questions as to what virtual platform would be most suitable for them to receive said training. We will offer more

[11] This is further supported by an Americans for the Arts survey of 15,000+ artists, where, "unemployment, forgivable business loans, food/housing assistance and healthcare", were the four most critical areas of need listed by respondents.

information about this in later recommendations. Prior to this, we consider discrete operational, research and development issues within this theme that overlap with issues in the previous three themes.

First, based on the survey results, 30% or more of all respondents cited a need for skill development:

1. Grant writing
2. Prospective grant, fellowship and residency research
3. Grant management and budget development
4. Fundraising strategies

A range of 25-30% of all respondents identified a need for skill-building in:

1. Program planning, implementation and execution
2. Program evaluation
3. Partnership building
4. Teacher artist training
5. Accounting and bookkeeping
6. Tax Filing
7. Work-life balance

20-25% of respondents identified a need for skill-building in:

1. Securing government contracts
2. Applications for arts business skill trainings
3. Acquiring subsidized space

When we consider how these results are evenly distributed across responses, regardless of how long a person has been in their primary arts/arts business discipline, and regardless of the respondent's position in the hierarchy of the arts establishment, it is evident that all individuals require more arts business knowledge and skill-building. However, we are not suggesting that ABC function with a preconceived notion that all BIPOC artists and arts organizations inherently lack the skills to compete within the arts and culture sector. This would perpetuate "White racial frames" concerning competitiveness and aptitude. Instead we are suggesting that ABC, using a racial equity lens, craft their approach to program development by triangulating operational skill-set, research skill-set, and development skill-set with macro-level education of the arts and culture sector as an industry that articulates with other industries.

It is integral to consider skill-building as one puzzle piece needed to create a more equitable baseline from which artists and arts businesses can begin to function. It is equally necessary to frame this material structurally to cultivate effective advocacy that will hold larger institutions accountable. Since racism is systemic, the goal should then be to systemically redress the im/mobilities and in/stabilities that racism perpetuates. By employing racial equity lens to shape potential skill-building programs offered by ABC, these programs, and the refined skill sets that are gained, can be employed in a manner that contributes to the dismantling of structurally embedded inequities within the arts and culture sector. This returns us to Coffey's recommendation first mentioned in the methodological section. A racial equity lens applied to program development, instruction, and evaluation will produce different strategies and solutions for different communities.

FINAL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

> "I have lost my job, and have not been able to find employment. I have been working in the industry both in education and administration for 20 years, have my Bachelors and Masters degrees, as well as in a PhD program. I have yet to find any employment."
> -Anonymous Survey Respondent

In March 2020, when initial plans for quarantine were announced emergency aid was dispensed through multiple avenues. Artists and arts organizations sought out tactical approaches to managing the present and future uncertainty by using the resources immediately available to them. However, few were well-positioned to invest for long-term stability or growth for reasons noted above. In order to understand the challenges that COVID-19 has exacerbated, it is necessary to consider the cycle of capital circulation within which many artists and arts organizations are trapped.

Imagine this.

An individual dancer employed by a large non-profit whose work intersects with their primary art form uses this income to pay for two things: studio space that leads to proprietary creative material, which is necessary to establish oneself in the field, and to pay for basic living expenses.

The proprietary material is submitted to grant funders and other organizations interested in new, "fresh" work, that is judged against previously established success stories and existing styles. The dancer is given a grant for rehearsal and performance space, which allows them to sell tickets to performances at a small profit, which will be reinvested into building his/her artist profile.

Full-time work continues, as does secondary employment, which is also in a creative field. However, this individual's employment with the large non-profit is dependent upon that organization's available budget, raising funds from patrons and acquiring future grants. The secondary employment is in the hospitality industry which is impacted by ebbs and flows in tourism and is thus also tenuous and seasonal.

Enter COVID-19.

The large non-profit runs out of grant funds and has limited sources of emergency funds granted from an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL).

Non-executive employees are furloughed, which delays access to Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Unemployment Assistance (UA), while PPP loans are used to maintain executive development staff and operational basics.

Granting institutions and philanthropies cut back on available money, while contracting organizations cancel program engagements.

Other non-profit organizations cannot not hire independent contractors, because flexible or discretionary funds for employee positions not funded by grants have been shifted to cover operational expenses.

For-profit companies are unable to cover payroll after their initial PPP application was denied.

The individual dancer is unemployed. In three spaces.

This is our "supply-chain", a broken relic of trickle-down economics.

As of Fall 2020, the extension of quarantine plans without a clear delineation of how to resolve issues for artists and arts organizations poses a significant threat to future viability of this industry.

With the disruption of supply-chains, philanthropic capital networks, and structural relations across multiple industries, both nonprofit and for-profit businesses have suffered in accounts payable and receivable, as previously mentioned by a respondent who expressed frustration with the delay in payment from government and state-run education institutions. Accordingly, during COVID-19 the capacity to function successfully as an individual artist or as an arts organization requires more than personal financial intelligence. It demands an understanding of capital flows between industries, and how to leverage programs and experience.

Unfortunately, the broken supply-chain is hard to repair, because nothing new has been imagined since the remainders of the New Deal were dismantled in the 1980s. Thus, the arts have remained an outlier within the web of economic interaction. This has forced the arts to function in an insular and discrete field, yet it remains dependent on external sources of funding and gig employment. As a result, the art sector is generally given a diminutive status as a producer of circulating capital.

What this points to are deep-seated systemic issues of economic in/stability that need strategic and wide scope solutions.

Many of the respondents noted that the challenges they face now existed prior to the public health crisis, and it is made clear from qualitative data that this particular population faced unique circumstances due to the nature of the COVID-19 health crisis and the limits it has put on physical movement at all levels of society.

Even with the variations in business designation seen within this survey, there is still a serious need to develop skills in almost every aspect of development, programmatic execution, and business management. Yet still, these novel challenges extend beyond that of financial and operational literacy. Certainly, the impact at governmental and institutional levels has trickled down to affect artists and arts organizations in the form of delayed payments for contracts already executed. However, the long term ramifications of COVID are embedded in systemic weaknesses that could only be made apparent through the current conditions.

Dance artists, theater artists, and arts organizations' loss of income connected to reduced artist-in-residence, arts education, and performance opportunities is novel within the field of the arts in that the loss stems from an inability to embody or perform art as labor. This is exacerbated by the fact that dance and theater, as disciplines, do not translate easily between physical spaces - for example, a stage to an apartment living room - or across mediums from in-person to virtual forums. This impacts the manner in which these communications collaborate, build cohesion and, ultimately, pool resources.

Dance and performance art, which crosses boundaries with theater arts, is further impeded because of its convoluted and complex relationship to commodification and distribution. In theater and dance, the circulation of a proprietary product, not easily replicated and made generic, impedes traditional program design, execution and evaluation models, which, as mentioned earlier informs and responds to business operational models.

Even as technology has facilitated continued economic activity in some arenas, it has been a stopgap at best until new methods and mediums are developed by and for dance and theater arts.

It is important to note here that while the loss of opportunities for artists are not unique to dance and theater, the loss of the ability to embody and perform art-as-labor (in various settings) is particularly tied to the nature of this public health crisis and will need specific strategies for ameliorating.

Offering assistance to address all this means investing in:

1) Shifting the scope of arts work and income generation from reactionary to proactive. This means acknowledging the unique way that supply chain mechanisms manifest and building failsafes to impede future structural collapses impacting large organizations and individuals alike.
2) Teaching and developing financial and operational skills that apply to the current capitalist model of arts creation and income generation as well as new or radical models that do not depend on and assign value based on commodification and distribution of a product or on winning single grant competitions.
3) Actively creating new spaces and new opportunities for value retention of proprietary work, outside of the traditional frame of the individual--organizational--institutional network.