



CULTURAL DATA PROJECT GIVES ARTS GROUPS IN WASHINGTON DC NEW TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT, SHOW ECONOMIC VALUE

October 3, 2011, Washington, DC—Arts and cultural organizations in the District of Columbia will now have access to state of the art technology to help them strengthen their management capacity and demonstrate their value and impact in communities. The Cultural Data Project (CDP), a web-based data collection tool for arts and cultural organizations and their advocates, is launching on October 3, 2011 with the help of a consortium of public and private funders.

“What makes this exciting is that the CDP is nationwide, providing uniform tools to document the expansive impact of arts and culture locally and nationally”, said Jennifer Cover Payne of the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington.

Operated by The Pew Charitable Trusts in Philadelphia, the Cultural Data Project has emerged as a national resource for collecting and disseminating reliable, standardized data for the cultural sector. The CDP is in use by more than 11,500 nonprofits in Arizona, California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and now, the District of Columbia. With support from national arts grantmakers including the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Kresge Foundation, the CDP is on track to be operational in 22 states by 2014.

Those participating in the DC CDP will receive free assistance from a team of on-call database specialists and financial consultants. Once participants supply the wide range of financial, programmatic and operational data, the CDP serves as a repository and financial management tool. Organizations can instantly generate information for grant applications, or create on demand 77 different analytic reports on topics such as program activity, free and paid attendance, balance sheet trends, or marketing expenses to present to their donors or boards. Organizations can also use the CDP to understand how they operate in comparison to groups of similar organizations in their community, or communities in other CDP states.

Participating grantmakers are committed to streamlining the application process for cultural organizations and several will be requiring participation in the CDP as part of their grant application processes.

With the CDP, research and advocacy organizations can provide a clearer snapshot of arts and culture in a region, demonstrating how vital a role the sector plays. In regions where the project has been in existence for many years, the CDP has been used successfully to provide policymakers evidence of the sector’s assets and needs. For example, arts advocates in Pennsylvania used data collected from the project to defeat a proposed “arts tax” that would have removed the tax exemption on ticket sales and membership revenue for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.

“The CDP brings a new level of transparency. Members of the arts community will be empowered to proactively share the impact and outcomes of their programming, and members of

the public and private sector will invest with confidence.” said Anne Corbett of the Cultural Development Corporation.

For more information on the DC Cultural Data Project, visit www.dcculturaldata.org.

The Cultural Data Project is brought to Washington DC by a taskforce of public and private funders and advocacy agencies, consisting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, Meyer Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts and the Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers. Additional support is provided by the members of the DC CDP Launch Advisory Committee: Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington, Cultural Development Corporation, Cultural Tourism DC, DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative and TheatreWashington.

The Cultural Data Project, which originated in Pennsylvania, is governed by a consortium of organizations including the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, The Heinz Endowments, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Pew Charitable Trusts, and the William Penn Foundation.

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