

3.180 - Countywide Cultural Policy

Effective Date: TBD

PURPOSE

The Countywide Cultural Policy (hereinafter, "Policy") provides direction and guidelines for how Los Angeles County and its Departments will ensure that every resident of the County has meaningful access to arts and culture. The intent of this policy is to foster an organizational culture that values and celebrates arts, culture, and creativity; strengthens cultural equity and inclusion; and leverages arts and culture in strategies to achieve the highest potential of communities across all aspects of civic life.

REFERENCE

December 10, 1948: [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

September 29, 1965 (amended May 31, 1984, and December 20, 1985): [National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965](#)

November 10, 2015: [Board Motion: Improving Leadership, Work Force, Programming and Audience Diversity in Los Angeles County Cultural Institutions](#)

April 2016: [County of Los Angeles 2016-2021 Strategic Plan: Creating Connections: People, Communities, Government](#)

October 2016 (revised): [Statement Americans for the Arts Statement on Cultural Equity](#)

April 4, 2017: [Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative \(CEII\) final report: Strengthening Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Arts and Culture Sector for All Los Angeles County Residents](#)

April 4, 2017: [Board Motion: Los Angeles County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative](#)

June 27, 2017: [Board Motion Establishing Transition of the Arts Commission to a County Department](#)

November 20, 2018: [Ordinance Establishing Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture](#)

United States Conference of Mayors, 86th Annual Meeting: [Resolution Supporting Cultural Equity](#)

DEFINITIONS

Cultural Equity: is defined as the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people—including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented or marginalized based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of policy and the fair and equitable distribution of cultural resources. Cultural equity utilizes a strengths-based approach such that diverse forms of artistic and cultural expression are represented and supported, and existing cultural organizations, artists, communities, and artistic practices are valued.

POLICY

Preamble:

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) recognizes that arts and culture are foundational parts of quality of life and vibrant and resilient communities. Arts and culture have the power to enhance diversity, inclusion, and belonging, and contribute to positive outcomes across dimensions of civic life in the human, community, and economic development of the County. The right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community is recognized globally as a basic human right. This is defined as the right to:

- Access, participate in, and enjoy the benefits of arts and cultural activities;
- Learn about, maintain, and develop one's cultural expression and heritage; and
- Share in the cultural expression and heritage of others.

In US federal policy, the arts are valued as reflecting America's rich cultural heritage and fostering mutual respect for the diverse beliefs and values of all persons and all groups.

Despite the many benefits of the arts, due to historic and systemic inequity and disinvestment, not all communities have had equal access to cultural resources, representation, public sector investments, and opportunities to participate in cultural life through the arts. Ensuring access to the arts and cultural equity is important for the long-term viability of the cultural sector and quality of life for all in the County.

The policy will serve as a road map for how all County departments can contribute to cultural life, with a focus on cultural equity, diversity, inclusion and access. It serves to solidify and expand on the gains made through the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII) process and board adopted recommendations, and positions the County as a national arts leader in advancing cultural equity and inclusion in every sector of our civic lives.

Policy: All County departments will strive to provide services, conduct internal operations, allocate resources, establish regulations, and operate facilities in a manner that supports cultural equity and ensures that all individuals and communities can participate fully and equitably in cultural life through the arts. County commissions, agencies and authorities, municipalities, and private sector partners of the County are also encouraged to incorporate the principles of this policy.

The Department of Arts and Culture (hereinafter, "Arts and Culture") will provide leadership, accountability, and coordination across County departments and agencies to support implementation and ensure arts and culture are utilized in the pursuit of goals articulated in this policy. Arts and Culture will establish target goals

and benchmarks, and identify areas of need, to measure progress on the policy and report at regular intervals on such progress to the Board of Supervisors.

In addition, the County will:

1. Invest in cultural infrastructure and access to arts and culture

- a. Invest in cultural infrastructure that supports artists and nonprofit cultural organizations in a manner and at levels that ensure Countywide access to the arts and opportunities for all County residents.
- b. Expand equity-focused arts and culture investments to increase support for community-based organizations and cultural resources, particularly those that represent and serve historically marginalized and low-income communities and communities of color.
- c. Diversify the means of County support for arts and culture to include facilities, land use, funding, policies, and other means, and identify ways that each County Department can contribute to cultural life to assist in eliminating barriers to access.

2. Advance arts and culture in every sector of civic life

- a. Foster cross-sector and interdepartmental collaboration to leverage arts and culture as a County strategy to support positive outcomes across every sector of civic life, including but not limited to:
 - i. Making every effort within the scope of its reach to ensure equity and access to quality arts education and creative learning for public school students.
 - ii. Incorporating arts, culture, and creative placemaking in equitable development and sustainability.
 - iii. Stimulating a robust and inclusive creative economy with access to career pathways and opportunities for diverse county talent.
 - iv. Integrating civic art and design in the creation of public spaces, transit, and infrastructure.
 - v. Including arts-based strategies in criminal justice reform, child welfare, and prevention.
 - vi. Promoting cultural exchange, cultural heritage, and diplomacy through the arts.
 - vii. Utilizing arts to support health, address trauma, promote healing, and well-being for all communities.
- b. Assess the impact to arts and cultural assets as part of County land use and development plans to limit displacement and support cultural resources in communities.
- c. Include arts and culture in Countywide strategic plans, major initiatives, and resources to address Board Directed Priorities and the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (April 4, 2017).
- d. Incorporate arts and culture in County community engagement practices to engage diverse and underserved communities in the development of County plans, initiatives, and projects.

3. Promote cultural equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging

- a. Identify ways to acknowledge Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land at County public events and ceremonial functions and celebrate the contributions of culture bearers and traditional arts practices of diverse communities.
- b. Incorporate arts and culture in County employee engagement, equity initiatives and training, and County facilities to create inclusive and inviting spaces for County workforce and the public.
- c. Encourage and continue to expand cultural equity, diversity, inclusion and access within the cultural sector of the region and increase coordination across County-owned cultural venues in support of key policies and initiatives.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS

All County Departments and Chief Executive Office; Arts and Culture will provide leadership in implementation and technical assistance to other Departments.

DATE ISSUED/SUNSET DATE

Issue Date:	Sunset Review Date: