Organizational Capacity for Engagement Survey

Introduction

The organizational capacity survey below is one of multiple methodologies that the Slover Linett team employed to understand and track the evolution of each NCAF grantee-partner's capacity for engagement over the course of the grant period. The survey provides a quantitative, self-reported measure for tracking each grantee-partner's engagement and capacity-building practices and strategies throughout the grant period. The survey was administered to a core set of 3–5 individuals designated by each organization. For the first cohort of grantee-partners, the survey was administered at two points during the grant period: once in the first year of the grant period (Fall 2014) and again in the second half of the final grant year (August 2016). The section below describes the survey instrument in further detail.

Survey instrument

The structure of the organizational capacity survey below is based on McKinsey & Company's Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT 2.0), a widely-used tool for assessing organizational capacity in a broad variety of areas. See http://mckinseyonsociety.com/ocat/. We have been in communication with Doug Scott, an Associate Principal at McKinsey for the Education & Social Sector, who played a lead role in the latest iteration of this tool. He has shared some lessons learned with us about question design, framing, debriefing, and presenting results.

Using this rubric concept as a model, this survey is designed to capture organizational capacity to engage target communities. The survey assesses organizational capacity as it relates to the outcome areas and strategy types specified in our Taxonomy of Outcomes & Strategies, which provides a distillation of the proposed outcomes and strategies described within the cohort's NCAF proposals. As illustrated in the McKinsey sample results on the link above, we can create an average score for each of the 6 areas and provide a general sense of the degree of consensus from the respondents.

Instructions for respondents

Below, you will find 26 questions (one for each row of the table) organized by six areas of focus. For each row, determine which of the four descriptions is most suitable at this point in time. To indicate which of the four choices comes closest to describing the situation at hand, click in the box to the right of the row and select the corresponding number (1, 2, 3 or 4). We understand the descriptions will not perfectly match the realities of your organization, and ask that you select the one that comes closest. If you believe that your organization falls between two ranks, choose the lower of the two answers.

At the end of each of the six sections, you will have the opportunity to add any comments for the purpose of explaining or elaborating upon any of your responses. If you'd like, you can also use this as an opportunity to share your perspective on your hopes for your organization along these dimensions. This is not required, but allows you the space to communicate further about your sense of your organization's capacities.

Please keep in mind that the scores you provide are intended to be a general "temperature taking" of your organization's capacity in each of the areas indicated below. It is expected that the rating numbers you select will vary across the different questions, as each organization has different starting points, areas of strength, and priorities, and we understand that the size of your staff may also factor into your responses. There is absolutely no expectation that your organization be at the fourth level ("high level of capacity in place") for every row now, nor at the end of the grant period.

The ratings you select should represent your personal perspective on your organization's capacity in each of these areas. We are interested in your answers to these questions based on your own knowledge of and experience within your organization—it is not expected that you will know the fine-grained details of your organization's operations within each capacity area addressed, nor that you will seek out any additional information or perspectives in order to complete this survey. Your responses to this survey will remain anonymous; survey responses will only be reported in the aggregate and will not be attached to your name or any other identifying characteristics.

Content and questions for this survey are informed by the Irvine Foundation's focus in the New California Arts Fund on expanding engagement in terms of 1) **who** engages (expanding opportunities for individuals from ethnically diverse communities or low-income populations; 2) **how** they engage (expanding and deepening the ways Californians experience the arts from passive spectators to active participants); and 3) **where** engagement happens (providing arts experiences outside the walls of traditional arts spaces so the arts live where communities live).

Outcome area 1: Leadership & governance

	1	2	3	4	Rating
1. Board and engagement programming	Board members are not informed about, and provide little direction and/or support for, engagement programming.	Board members are fairly informed about key engagement initiatives and provide occasional direction and/or support for engagement programming.	Board members are very well informed about key engagement initiatives and programming, and actively provide ongoing and highly-valued direction and/or support for engagement programming.	Board members are fully engaged as a strategic resource for engagement programming; communication between the board and senior staff on matters related to engagement programming (e.g., how to sustain this work) reflects mutual respect, appreciation for roles and responsibilities, and shared commitment.	
2. Senior staff and engagement programming	Senior staff's commitments and responsibilities focus on organizational objectives that are not related to engagement work, or are related only indirectly.	Senior staff's commitments and responsibilities relate directly to engagement work on occasion.	Senior staff members have ongoing commitments and responsibilities that support engagement work.	Senior staff members are deeply involved in engagement work; a majority of their responsibilities relate directly to engaging target audiences and communities.	
3. Board reflection of target communities	Current board members do not have personal or professional insight into target communities' cultures, experiences, values, issues, or challenges, and processes are not in place to help the board gain these insights.	Organization has begun developing processes to identify and recruit board members whose personal and/or professional backgrounds give them insight into target communities' cultures, experiences, values, issues, or challenges.	Organization highly values diversity and community representativeness among board members and actively aims to recruit board members whose personal or professional backgrounds give them insight into target communities' cultures, experiences, values, issues, or challenges.	Organization continuously assesses diversity and community representativeness among board members, and board currently includes some individuals who are knowledgeable about target audience communities and are equipped to advocate for those communities.	

Additional comments on leadership and governance (optional): _____

Outcome area 2: Engagement practices and programming

	1	2	3	4	Rating
4. Mission & engagement	Organization's mission and/or vision includes limited or no references to engagement activities. (Note that "engagement activities" can be defined as efforts to expand <u>who</u> engages, <u>how</u> they actively engage, and <u>where</u> they engage within communities.)	Organization's mission and/or vision has some reference to engagement-related activities, but the reference lacks clarity, does not mention specific communities or audiences, and/or is not framed as a primary goal.	Organization's mission and/or vision includes a clear expression of its aspirations for audience engagement; mission/vision expresses engagement as one aspect (among others) of the organization's identity.	Organization's mission and/or vision includes a clear, specific, and compelling understanding of its aspirations for audience engagement; mission/vision expresses engagement as central to the organization's identity.	
5. Staff values & engagement	Values related to engaging target audiences are held by very few in the organization, if any, and are rarely, if ever, referred to in internal communications.	Values related to engaging target audiences are held by a minority of organization staff, lack broad agreement, and are only occasionally referred to in internal communications.	Values related to engaging target audiences are held by many in the organization and are often referred to in internal communications.	Values related to engaging target audiences are documented in writing, broadly held within the organization, and are consistently referred to in internal communications.	
6. Understanding target audiences	Organization has little or no understanding of target audiences' issues, needs, assets, or preferences; no strategies are in place to build this understanding.	Organization has a rudimentary understanding of target audiences' issues, needs, assets, and preferences; this understanding is informed mostly by "guesswork" rather than by research or systematic input from community members themselves.	Organization has a good understanding of target audiences' issues, needs, assets, and preferences, informed at least in part by research or systematic input from community members.	Organization has a deep, evolving understanding of target audiences' issues, needs, assets, and preferences coming from multiple information sources and perspectives.	

Outcome area 2: Engagement practices and programming, continued

	1	2	3	4	Rating
7. Programming where communities live	Organization offers little or no programming outside of its own spaces; organization has no concrete strategies in place for identifying offsite programming locations.	Organization occasionally provides programming in offsite locations, though this is done more on an opportunistic basis as opposed to being part of an organizational-level strategy.	Organization provides a small portion of programming in offsite locations accessible to target communities; this programming is considered to still be in a pilot or experimental phase and is limited to specific initiatives.	Every year, organization provides a significant portion of programming in offsite locations that are known to attract target communities; programming is representative of organization's quality (and possibly range) of on-site program offerings.	
8. Programming for target audiences	No structures or strategies are in place to make programming relevant for target audiences; existing and upcoming programming is planned largely without consideration of target audiences and their needs, assets, preferences, and barriers.	Few structures or strategies are in place to make programming relevant for target audiences; organization does not leverage its knowledge about target audiences and their needs, assets, preferences, and barriers when planning engagement programming.	Organization is working to develop specific ways to make programming relevant for target audiences; organization has some strategies in place for leveraging its knowledge about target audiences and their needs, assets, preferences, and barriers when planning programming but these strategies are implemented inconsistently.	Organization has clearly and explicitly articulated strategies to make all programming relevant for target audiences; organization consistently leverages its knowledge about target audiences and their needs, assets, preferences, and barriers throughout program planning.	
9. Accommodating preferences for engagement	Organization offers programming catering to those who prefer relatively passive experiences; few or no opportunities exist for audience members to actively engage with program content.	Organization's programming provides minimal opportunities for audience interaction and participation, and/or those opportunities are relegated to specific program areas or departments (e.g., family/intergenerational programming or programs designated as educational).	Organization's programming offers a variety of ways for audiences to connect with program content and experiences; however, accommodating multiple preferences for engagement, interaction, and learning is not a central part of program planning processes.	Organization designs programs (individual programs as well as the full suite of programs) to offer "something for everyone," intentionally accommodating a variety of preferences for engagement, interaction, and learning, no matter the program type.	

Additional comments on engagement practices and programming (optional): _____

Outcome area 3: Community input structures and processes

	1	2	3	4	Rating
10. Community input	Organization provides few or no opportunities for community members to provide feedback or input on program content, and organization has no clear processes for incorporating feedback into existing and future programming.	Organization has some structures or processes in place for community members to review or otherwise provide feedback on program content; this feedback is sometimes incorporated into existing and future programming, but there is no systematic process in place doing so.	Community members have opportunities to provide feedback on program content; organization has processes in place to organize and interpret this feedback and use it to inform decision-making.	Community members regularly provide in-depth feedback and input into program content as well as program objectives and generate content for current and future programming. Community feedback and input plays a crucial role in designing and refining current and future programming.	
11. Community partnerships	Organization currently does not have partnerships and alliances with public sector, nonprofit, or for-profit entities in target communities.	Organization has had partnerships or collaborations with for-profit, nonprofit, or public sector entities in target communities, but these partnerships tend to be of the "one-off" variety based upon a single initiative, often benefit only one of the partners, and the relationships are not sustained.	Organization has piloted key relationships with a few for-profit, nonprofit, and/or public sector entities in target communities; relationships need further development, expectations need further articulation, and/or partnerships may not be mutually beneficial at this stage.	Organization has built, leveraged, and maintained strong, high-impact relations with a variety of for-profit, nonprofit, and/or public sector entities in target communities. These relationships are anchored in mutually-beneficial collaboration and partners feel open to call upon one another for future collaborations.	
12. Opportunities to increase affiliation	Few or no opportunities exist for audience and/or community members to increase their involvement with and commitment to the organization outside of repeat attendance/visitation.	Limited opportunities exist for audience and/or community members to increase their involvement with the organization; these processes may be decentralized within specific programming and inconsistent across the organization.	Organization provides several opportunities for audience and/or community members to increase their involvement, e.g., through participation, volunteerism, membership/subscription, or donation.	Organization offers a variety of coordinated pathways for audience and/or community members to increase their involvement with the organization; staff provide customized support to help audience and/or community members "connect the dots" across opportunities for involvement.	

Additional comments on community input structures and processes (optional): _____

Outcome area 4: Measurement, evaluation, and continuous improvement

	1	2	3	4	Rating
13. Outcomes articulation	Goals/desired outcomes for engagement programming are vaguely defined, if defined at all.	Goals/desired outcomes for engagement programming exist in some key areas; however, goals are defined by "outputs" (things the organization does regardless of the experiences of participants), and may be driven by specific funding and negotiable in that sense.	Goals/desired outcomes exist for engagement programming; goals may be outcome-based (emphasizing desired impacts on participants), but may not be clearly linked to specific strategies, may be short-term, and/or are either too easy or impossible to achieve.	A refined set of appropriately demanding and clearly articulated goals/desired outcomes exist for engagement programming; goals are tightly linked to strategies, are outcome-based, and express long-term vision while including shorter-term milestones.	
14. Data-informed understanding of audiences	Organization has minimal understanding of who participates in programming; limited or no ability to track audience behaviors and trends.	Organization is developing processes to understand who its participants are and to track audience behaviors and trends.	Organization has processes in place to collect participant data, track audience behaviors and trends, and otherwise measure participation <u>within specific programming or initiatives</u>; however, there is no structure or process in place for considering audience data holistically across the institution.	Organization collects participant data, tracks audience behaviors and trends, and otherwise measures participation within and across specific programming or initiatives; organization has a holistic view and understanding of its audiences across programs and initiatives.	
15. Understanding accessibility barriers	Organization has little or no understanding of what accessibility barriers (e.g., location, language) may prevent target audiences from attending and/or engaging with programming.	Organization has a rudimentary understanding of barriers that may prevent target audiences from attending and/or engaging with programming; however, this understanding may be informed mostly by "guesswork" rather than by research or input from community representatives.	Organization has identified barriers that may prevent target audiences from attending and/or engaging with programming; these barriers have been identified on the basis of research and/or systematic input from community representatives.	Organization has a deep, evolving understanding of accessibility issues among target audiences coming from multiple information sources and perspectives.	

Outcome area 4: Measurement, evaluation, and continuous improvement, continued

	1	2	3	4	Rating
16. Staff values & evaluation	Staff are generally skeptical of research and evaluation as sources of insight about program effectiveness and audience engagement; staff are uncomfortable with idea of data-informed decision-making and/or prefer to rely mainly on intuition.	Staff are divided regarding the value of research and evaluation; staff voice mixed reactions to the usefulness of data and research findings when designing engagement programming.	Staff generally recognize the value of research and evaluation as a tool for understanding and engaging audiences; however, time and resources are not dedicated toward collecting and understanding data on a regular basis.	The organization's internal culture is unified in placing strong value on data-informed decision making, and consequently dedicating time and resources toward collecting and understanding data.	
17. Data used to inform programming decisions	Organization may collect data from participants, but does not do so systematically; it has no capacity to interpret or reflect upon the data it collects or use it to inform programming decisions.	Organization currently has insufficient internal capacity to interpret or reflect upon the data it collects; organization has identified ways to develop this capacity.	Organization can interpret some forms of data it collects, and sometimes uses that understanding to inform programming decisions, but there are no structures in place to do this consistently and across departments.	Organization has clear internal capacities and structures in place to interpret and reflect upon the data it collects in a way that tangibly informs programming decisions on an ongoing basis.	
18. Data management systems	No management systems exist for tracking information such as participation/attendance, program outcomes, membership, staff, volunteers, and financial information.	Electronic databases and management reporting systems exist only in a few areas; systems perform only basic features, are awkward to use, and/or are used only occasionally by staff.	Electronic database and management reporting systems exist in most areas for tracking organizational information; systems are used on a semi-regular basis and help increase information sharing and efficiency.	Sophisticated, comprehensive electronic database and management reporting systems exist for tracking organizational information; systems are widely used and considered essential to information sharing and efficiency.	

Additional comments on measurement, evaluation, and continuous improvement (optional):_____

Outcome area 5: Staff structures and competencies

	1	2	3	4	Rating
19. Staff composition	Looking across the organization, staff represent a narrow range of cultural backgrounds and experiences that do not include target audience communities.	Some staff members belong to target audience communities, but staff from these communities have little input into organizational decisions.	Staff represent somewhat diverse backgrounds, including target audience communities; staff belonging to target or underrepresented communities fill a variety of roles and have at least a moderate amount of influence on organizational decisions.	Staff represent diverse backgrounds, including target audience communities, and are equipped to share their understanding of community-relevant issues; organizational decisions are guided to a great extent by individuals who belong to and can speak to the interests of target communities.	
20. Professional development for cultural competencies	Staff have little knowledge of or exposure to target communities; few or no clear opportunities exist for staff to develop new skills or competencies that would directly benefit engagement programming (e.g., cultural competencies).	Opportunities exist for staff to develop new skills or competencies that could potentially benefit engagement programming, but these are rare "one-off" opportunities, limited to specific departments, may not be up-to-date, and are not widely known and/or must be sought out by employees.	Widely-known opportunities exist for staff throughout the organization to develop new skills or competencies that could potentially benefit engagement programming, but the opportunities are infrequent and need to be updated and/or made more relevant to engagement programming.	Management is actively and regularly working to develop relevant staff skills and competencies to directly benefit engagement programming; well thought out, ongoing professional development plans exist for employees throughout the organization.	
21. Cross-departmental collaboration	Staff involved in engagement programming function in silos; little or dysfunctional coordination exists between organizational areas involved in engagement programming and other departments and programs; few or no processes are in place to facilitate cross-departmental collaboration.	Staff involved in engagement programming and those involved in other programs work together effectively with respect to sharing information and resources, but there is little or no substantive collaboration between engagement programming staff and those in other departments.	Collaboration between engagement programming staff and staff in other departments are often formed in relation to special projects, but rarely occur outside those contexts.	Constant, fairly seamless integration and collaboration between departments that are and are not involved in engagement programming occurs across many contexts; staff from multiple departments are involved in engagement strategy planning; collaborations often transform separate areas of expertise into new insights and approaches.	

Outcome area 5: Staff structures and competencies, continued

	1	2	3	4	Rating
22. Inventory of staff & volunteer resources	Little or no systematic understanding of staff & volunteer skills/resources; little or no understanding of what organizational resources are necessary to develop engagement programming; no process in place to assess resources or develop this inventory.	Understanding of staff & volunteer resources is incomplete; may consist primarily of informal, undocumented knowledge; may exist within individual departments or programs but is not shared throughout the organization.	Organization has a fairly complete and well-documented inventory of staff & volunteer resources, which includes resources across departments or programs and can be accessed throughout the organization, but this inventory may need updating.	Organization has a complete, up-to-date, and well-documented inventory of staff & volunteer resources; processes are in place to continuously reassess and update this inventory; resources for individual projects are allocated based on this inventory.	
23. Project management	Organization has consistent pattern of failing to successfully implement ideas generated for programs and initiatives due to a lack of project management skills and capacities.	Organization has sufficient project management capacity and staff skills to carry out ideas for new programs and initiatives, but the implementation is consistently inefficient and does not make the best use of resources & time.	Organization has project management capacity and staff members with strong project management skills; smaller-scale and/or department-specific initiatives are efficiently implemented, but the organization lacks clearly-defined institution-level processes for implementing larger cross-departmental initiatives.	Organization has clear, widely-understood and consistently implemented processes for managing large-scale projects and initiatives, which includes clear decision-making processes to prioritize and allocate resources & time.	

Additional comments on staff structures and competencies (optional):_____

Outcome area 6: Financial resourcing to support and sustain engagement programming

	1	2	3	4	Rating
24. Funding plan for engagement programming	Organization has not yet considered how it will access and deploy financial resources to sustain engagement programming.	Organization has begun to articulate how it will access and deploy financial resources to sustain engagement programming, possibly identifying potential funding sources; the details of its approach may be vague, focused on the short-term, lacking a plan for linking funding sources to specific resources needed, and/or relies on untested assumptions.	Organization has identified potential ways to financially sustain engagement programming beyond the NCAF grant period; organization is still working towards forming a multi-year plan linking these funding sources to specific resources needed for engagement programming.	Organization has initiated a clear, robust, and proven plan for accessing and deploying resources to sustain engagement programming; plan links specific resources and needs, and includes a multi-year financial strategy. Plan is integrated with overall organizational business model (e.g., how it contributes and/or draws on organizational resources allows overall organization to remain sustainable).	
25. Stability of funding sources	Engagement programming is dependent on funding sources that will not support engagement programming indefinitely (e.g., government or foundation grants), and/or the planned-for scope of engagement programming goes beyond the financial support available; existing financial resources are not sufficient to sustain engagement programming beyond the NCAF grant period.	Organization has identified some sustainable sources of earned and/or contributed revenue for engagement programming, but is primarily dependent upon sources that will not support engagement programming indefinitely.	Organization is building earned and/or contributed sources of revenue to fund engagement programming, which support engagement programming in the foreseeable future, but do not fully support engagement programming indefinitely.	Organization has sufficient earned and/or contributed revenue sources to support current and planned engagement programming indefinitely, using multiple scenarios (e.g., best and worst case), and is continuing to develop new revenue sources.	

Outcome area 6: Financial resourcing to support and sustain engagement programming, continued

	1	2	3	4	Rating
26. Capital structure	Organization's investment in engagement programming exceeds the funds currently available for this programming; even with NCAF, it is not "breaking even" on engagement programming.	Organization is sufficiently capitalized to support its current, near-term investments in engagement programming, but its capital structure constrains its ability to sustain engagement programming into the future and it is not able to invest in programmatic growth.	Organization has a moderately healthy capital structure to support sustained investment in engagement programming; it can afford the investments it is currently making and is able to make modest, low-risk investments in programmatic growth, but is not insulated from programmatic "failures" or market instabilities.	Organization has a healthy capital structure to support sustained, long-term investment in engagement programming; it can afford to make innovative investments in programmatic growth now and in the future, and is fairly well insulated from both programmatic "failures" and market instabilities.	

Additional comments on financial resourcing (optional): _____

Final three questions to be asked:

1) Finally, are there any additional processes or practices not captured in the questions above that your organization has put into place to increase its capacity to engage diverse and low-income Californians?

2) What do you believe to be your organization's greatest internal strength, and why?

3) What do you believe to be your organization's greatest opportunity for internal improvement, and why?