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The Arts Social Civic Engagement and Innovation Webinar

ANDREA: Thank you so much for joining us today. We're just having a few IT issues. Alright. So my name is Andrea Robles from the Office of Research and Evaluation at the Corporation for National Committee Service. And our office's objectives are to support our agency's mission by building knowledge on civic engagement, volunteering and national service. We conduct in-house research but also fund research through competitive grants for researchers, scholars and dissertators at institutions for higher education and support research and evaluation of our programs and grantees.

Our webinar series is one way to share our ongoing research and findings. Bi-ford (phonetic) communities and a bi-ford (phonetic) democracies are based on a strong community engagement and participation. And as an office devoted to building knowledge around these topics we're also looking to highlight cross cutting research from a variety of disciplines that broaden how we define or impact civic engagement across the United States.

Today we have the pleasure of collaborating with our National Endowment for the Arts Research and

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Evaluation colleagues who will describe their initiatives regarding place spaced art, civic engagement and community impact. But before we begin I'd like to cover a few housekeeping items for Adobe Connect.

JENELLE: Hello, everyone. Thank you all for your patience as we get started with Adobe Connect. This webinar will be recorded and posted online following the presentation. Unlike previous webinars there is no dial in phone lines. All audio is broadcast over the internet using your computer speakers. All participants will be in listen only mode until the questions and answer session following the presentation at which time you can ask a question using your computer's microphone by using the raised hand feature from the menu above. You can also ask questions at any time during the presentation by using the Q&A or chat box below.

As mentioned earlier this webinar is being recorded and if you have any questions or experience any technical difficulties, please let us know using the Q&A or text boxes below. I believe that takes care of all of the housekeeping items. Back to you.

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ANDREA: Okay. Thanks Jenelle. And just one more housekeeping items. Here at CNCS we have our annual Halloween party going on at the same time as our webinar. And we have asked folks to keep it down in the hallway. But please be patient if it gets a little bit out of control and we will try to put that on mute.

So our format today will be as follows. We have a new guest speaker that was not on the announcement and he will do a quick introduction of the work. And that is Dr. Steven Woolf from the Center of Society and Health, of Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Steve Woolf is a physician and Director Emeritus of the Center of Society and Health at BCU.

Dr. Woolf has published more than 200 articles and concentrated on public policy issues and partnerships with colleagues and institutions devoted to population health and social justice. Dr. Woolf's remarks will be followed by Sunil Iyengar, Research Analysis Director of the National Endowment for the Arts.

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Sunil Iyengar has produced dozens of research reports, hosted periodic research events and webinars, led strategic plan development for the agency and established research and leadership partnerships with the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

He and his team have partnered with organizations, such as Census (unintelligible) Institution, the National Academy of Sciences and the National Institutes of Health to study the arts and relation to the topics of economic development, health and well-being. He will then introduce his team and they will each present.

We will have very brief concluding remarks by Dr. Melissa Gouge who is a research analyst here at the Office of Research and Evaluation. And then we will open this up for Q&A. We expect the presentations to last no longer than 45 minutes. But during the webinar please feel free to ask questions or provide comments in the chat box. And we will get to those questions during the Q&A. I will now pass this to Dr. Steven Woolf.

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STEVEN: Good afternoon. I just want to say a couple of words about where we are in the United States with current health trends and the potential role of civic engagement in the arts in bettering our circumstances. Many of you have heard in the news that U.S. life expectancy has been decreasing for the past three years. This while other countries that have high income are continuing to see improvements in their life expectancy and spending less on health care.

So there is tremendous interest in understanding how we can improve the nation's health and that brings us to the question of what shapes health. We know that health care is important, but is actually a minor factor in understanding our health. Our health behaviors, such as smoking cigarettes or unhealthy diet are probably more important in shaping our health.

But we also know as more research is being done that our health is shaped very much by our environment. And that includes not only the physical environment, such as having sidewalks and playgrounds and healthy air, but also the social environment. And therefore there's been growing interest on how social and

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environmental community conditions are responsible not only for health disparities that we see across population groups and geographic areas wherein some cities 15 or 20 year differences in life expectancy exist, but also how improving social capital and improving our social well-being can help close those gaps and improve our health.

And the arts figure prominently as a potential strategy for creative expression, relief of stress and increasing civic engagement and connectedness. The research is still building on this, but we feel that this is an important area for us to emphasize to try to improve the social web of our communities, families, and young people.

ANDREA: Okay. Thank you so much for your comments and for all your work on this. So I will now pass this onto Sunil.

SUNIL: Thank you Andrea. It's a pleasure to be able to present to you today, hosted by the Corporation for National Community Service. It's also good to be joined by the Deputy Director for Research and Analysis at the Arts Endowment, Patricia Moore Shaffer

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and two research grant project directors of ours, Lynn Osgood and Kate Bukoski.

Before I begin I wanted to tell those of you who may not know the National Endowment for the Arts is the country's lead federal funder the arts nationwide. We seek to strengthen the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts education. Patricia Shaffer and I are in the Office of Research and Analysis as you've just heard where our mission is through research to expand public knowledge about the arts contribution to individuals and society.

As Director of the office I get to co-chair an interagency task force on the arts and human development of which CNCS is a member. So this webinar opportunity came out of our work together.

I'll start with an unapologetic plug. The title of this webinar is The Arts and Social and Civic Engagement and Innovation. So I thought I'd bite off the innovation part by telling you about a funding program we have for anyone watching who might be interested. Through the NEA Research Labs Program we

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award cooperative agreements and grants to trans disciplinary teams of researchers and arts practitioners who want to create and implement a multi-year research agenda around one of three topical domains shown here.

We'll be releasing new application guidelines toward the end of this year for March 2020 deadline. Awards typically total \$150,000 each with a required one to one dollar cost share. We hope to announce a new round of awards we've made soon, but as you can see one of the categories for the labs program is arts and civic and corporate entrepreneurship in innovation.

I want to call out in particular the work of two NEA research labs, one at Indiana University, Perdue University, Indianapolis, which is the collaboration with the San Francisco Bay Center for Cultural Innovation. They have been conducting several studies of artists' careers, the resilience that artists show during economic downturn and how they innovate careers through crowd funding platforms. But another part of their work focuses on how artists can contribute problem solving skills to work environments, notably in the public sector.

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The other lab here at Vanderbilt is in partnership with several organizations including the Arts and Business Council of Greater Nashville and with Northwestern University. This lab recently conducted a nationwide survey of arts based creativity, but it also examined an entrepreneurship training program for artists in Nashville to learn whether and how artistic creativity translates to innovative business practices.

You can learn more about these labs and their research products by going to arts.gov or looking up these labs individual websites.

Now I'll pivot to the other phrase in the title of today's presentation, social and civic engagement. You'll hear more about these themes from our next speakers. But first I wanted to suggest that for those of us who apply social sciences and behavioral research to the arts there are many touchstones we often have recourse to when attempting to articulate the link between arts participation and social and civic engagement.

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Through household surveys, such as the survey of public participation in the arts, which we co-sponsor with the U.S. Census Bureau, or longitudinal data sets maintained by the U.S. Department of Education, we've seen over and over that participation in the arts tends to correlate closely with social and civic activities.

Generally adults who go to live performing arts events, for example, are at least twice as likely as those who do not to volunteer in their communities, after we control for socio economic and other factors. And youth from at-risk backgrounds who engage with the arts intensively in or out of school also show greater social and civic engagement than their non-arts engaged peers. Just as in young children arts participation has shown to be positively correlated with greater outcomes in terms of pro-social behavior.

You also see not only through survey data, but in discreet studies of older adults who participated in the arts some of these same markers of social and civic engagement. And finally the arts sector it should be said is thickly constituted with volunteers of all ages. In fact, according to a study we did a

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few years ago the total dollar value of hours donated by all arts and cultural volunteers in the U.S. based on going wages for those same tasks can be estimated at over 13 billion dollars.

Patricia is going to hope on in a minute and talk about the Arts Endowment's creative place making work. But right around the time we were setting up our flagship program in this area, Our Town, we got wind of some survey results the Knight Foundation in Gallop had produced. They surveyed nearly 14,000 people a year for three years in 26 communities nationwide. The results showed that the top three drivers of residents' attachment to their communities were the perceived openness or welcomeness of those spaces, the availability of social offerings including the arts and place based aesthetics.

Finally, I want to call out the work of Mark Stern and Susan Siferd (phonetic), a research team at the University of Pennsylvania who for the past several years have tracked arts indicators, but also social well-being indicators from a variety of secondary data sources grounded in qualitative research. They've done this for cities, such as Philadelphia, Baltimore and

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recently in New York. Their data can tell you a lot about arts practice and social cohesion in those localities. We've funded this team's work on a project called Culture Blocks, which examines those relationships at the street block level in Philadelphia.

But another vehicle we can use to study the relationship of the arts to social and civic engagement is the Arts Endowment Research Grants Program. This is plug two. Now I just told you about our labs. But these are project civic grants to support studies of the value and the impact of the arts to individuals and society. They range from \$10,000 to \$100,000 per award and guidelines will be coming out later this year.

Our website is loaded with examples of projects we supported. Some of them are listed here. In the interest of time I won't read these out as this presentation will be archived, but as you can see from a cursory glance the topic of social and civic engagement figures prominently in many of these examples. And, of course, we'll be hearing from two

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of our research grantees working in that space in just a moment.

Now as I wind up I want to note that we've seen greater attention in the public sphere on how the arts can affect social determinants of health including the sense of engagement with one's community. Dr. Woolf I think explained this very well. So these are two papers, publications I'd urge you to take a look at. One apparently just came out today. It's Creating Activity Friendly Communities and was published by staff in our office and the Office of Design at the National Endowment for the Arts with staff from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's in the Journal of Physical Activity and Health.

And another, it's a white paper that's produced by the University of Florida's Center for the Arts and Medicine with Arts Place America called Creating Healthy Communities. A similar title, but it talks specifically about cross sector collaborations that can result in healthy communities through the arts.

And finally just wanted to tell you about a couple of projects that we are doing also in this space. One is

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actually in collaboration with several funders.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Bush Foundation, Knight and again Art Place America focusing on understanding, really developing an exceptional framework to understand the arts in place and how they relate to social cohesion and all the way through to health equity.

This takes the form of interviews, document reviews, and a literature scan. And we actually have had some workshops to discuss this work and to produce, to kind of field test it with practitioners in this area. And so we hope to produce the result sometime next year, from this work that could particularly guide funders, but also practitioners in this space.

And the second project is actually looking at the arts in terms of opioids and pain management and how, what kinds of arts interventions rise above and impact in terms of evidence and also to understand the relationship between the arts and not only substance abuse prevention more broadly but also as I say pain management, which is of course critical to the opioid crisis. So thank you very much, with that I will turn it over to Patricia.

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PATRICIA: Thank you very much Sunil. I'm delighted to share now some highlights from our work at the Arts Endowment towards understanding the community level outcomes associated with our national creative place making initiative, Our Town, Our Town is the Arts Endowment's flagship creative place making program. Based originally on a white paper the Arts Endowment had commissioned from Ann Marketson (phonetic) and Ann Godwall Nikodemus (phonetic) the original goal of Our Town was to stimulate investments in local communities, urban and rural, across the country to leverage place based arts and cultural assets.

As the program approaches its 10th anniversary we've been focused on identifying how our investments are affecting communities. So let's start at the basics. What is creative place making? The Arts Endowment through its Our Town guidelines defines it as when artists, arts organizations and community development practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work.

Through project based funding the agency supports projects that integrate arts, culture and design

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activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local, economic, physical and/or social outcomes. Successful Our Town projects ultimately laid the groundwork for systemic changes that the same integration of arts, culture and design into local strategies for strengthening communities.

Now Our Town projects are highly varied, reflecting the needs and assets of the local communities. In this example, for example, the Arts Quest Our Town project the former Bethlehem steel plant was transformed into a performing arts and independent film and jazz café.

Outside of Washington, D.C. the New Hampshire Avenue project involved artists and community planning processes, such as these neighbors doing their own interpretive dance to inform the planning of the redesign of a nearby highway.

And then in North Carolina Our Town supported the restoration of Vollis Simpson's 200 foot tall whirligig, placing them in a new downtown park to create a new tourist site and in the process giving

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local unemployed residents new jobs in art restoration.

With well over 300 grant projects awarded since the Our Town program began the Arts Endowment was interested in harvesting the data to better understand how grantees implemented their projects; what were the common inputs into these projects and what the common outcomes were. But how do you make sense of the diversity and creativity of these projects when each Our Town project is as unique as the community that developed it?

The Our Town convened a group of evaluation experts, mostly drawn from other federal agencies that had placed based initiatives. I'd like to acknowledge the support of Mary Hyde from the Corporation for National and Community Service for her invaluable contributions. This group of experts recommended that the Arts Endowment develop a theory of change that would help us to improve the tracking of outcomes.

Through the support of our contracted researchers we were able to generate a theory of change for Our Town to again help us understand more about our projects.

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In order to develop this theory of change we first of all looked at our past grants. We looked at the strategies that have been used by our grantees as well as the outcomes that they were reporting.

What we found in developing this theory of change was that we also reviewed the research literature to strengthen the model and the model itself which I'm looking at right now has revealed a lot about how we understand this program and how it works. So again looking at the model we can see here, and I'm going to look at it from the top left, swinging to the right, we first of all can look at local input.

What do we typically see in an Our Town grant project? We do see local leadership playing an active role as well as the use of cross sectoral partnerships. There are financial resources of course that are invested in these projects including those of the Arts Endowment, but also other local financial resources, and, of course, community buy in that we see from residents as well from political leaders.

Grantee projects look very different from place to place. But we do see some common overarching

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strategies. For example, we see communities that envision or imagine new possibilities for community or place. We see connecting strategies, strategies that connect communities, people with places. We also see illumination or highlighting of key community assets and issues, as well as adding or injecting new energy into resources, activities and local place.

We felt that these strategies increased integration of arts, culture and design strategies in community development efforts is theorized to lead to incremental local changes at the neighborhood or the community level. As creative place making continues to expand its reach in more communities, the vision is that we will begin to see a national impact, more use of the arts in a sustained way in community development efforts.

The logic model that we developed for the Our Town grant program goes into more detail about how the operates on the ground level. And I'm not going to go into this in great depth, but do want to point out, for example, that when we take a look at community level change we see change that is the economic change

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in terms of local business growth, as well as physical change projects such as beautification efforts.

But of interest today I'd like to highlight the social change that we see, for instance, improved social cohesion at the local level as well as the greater sense of community attachment. In some cases, and often as an outgrowth of these other local changes we see systems level change, a sustained change in the way the arts are utilized at the local level to support community development, the indicators of which may be long term funding changes or policies that enable creative place making.

We recently completed a survey of our Our Town grantees to validate this model and we're expecting to make some minor adjustments to this model, but generally this model website was confirmed when we spoke to our grantees.

Now the value of this model is in terms of allowing us to track impact and outcomes. And to that end I'd actually like to turn it over to one of our researchers who was supported by an Arts Endowment

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research grant, Kate Bukoski from East Carolina University. Kate?

LYNN: I think I'll jump in there. This is Lynn Osgood from Austin, Texas. And telling about the Forklift Danceworks project. And so my name is Lynn, the Executive Director of a nonprofit organization called Civic Arts. We work at the intersection of arts and community development processes. And today I'll be presenting the results of a research that was done with Forklift Danceworks, an arts organization in Austin, Texas run by Artistic Directors Allison Outreach and Chrissy Mary, and talking specifically about their My Park, My Pool, My City project.

We were very fortunate to have support from the National Endowments for the Arts for a three year research cycle, which allowed us to be embedded with the arts organization as researchers. And they co-created performances with three different East Austin communities over a period of three years.

So Forklift as an arts organization traditionally works with staff, they create performance about the everyday life of the work that people do. For these

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performances they bring in Grammy award winning musicians and lighting artists, but most importantly the performers of these performances are the staff themselves, the staff and their equipment. Thousands of people come to see the shows and perhaps the most famous one is called Trash Dance where they worked with the folks from the sanitation department in the city of Austin and it was the staff and their equipment, all the large trucks that made up the evening performances.

So the circumstance for the My Park, My Pool, My City project was the Aquatic Master Plan. In the city of Austin we have a wonderful system of neighborhood pools that the pools are 50 years old and traditionally pools last 30 years. So across the city the pools were just literally falling apart. And as an issue of the infrastructure investment their of course disproportionate impacts on communities of color where the pools in these neighborhoods were in much greater need of care.

So the city tried to address this situation through the creation of an Aquatics Master Plan. But it was very technical and not very well received by the

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community. So the Director of the Parks Department asked Forklift Danceworks if they would come in and do a project about the pools. And it was interesting because when we first went in and talked with the Director we asked her what is it that you would like the artists to do and her first answer was that please help us communicate what is in the Aquatics Master Plan. We created it, we tried to come up with a very logical and rational approach to how to work with the city pools, but we're not getting good feedback and we're having a hard time communicating.

So to give some context about these practices in general the work that's happening at the intersection of arts and community development in the larger view these practices are as old as humankind themselves. But we have seen a growth of professional community development practices in this area, particularly over the last decade in many parts thanks to the work of the NEA and their creative place making initiative.

What we know today through these many years of work is that the arts can be particularly effective in helping to get people to the table to help create a compelling focal point that people can focus on to bring forth

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new ideas and conversations and shift frames and preconception. They can help create connections with and for the community and they have the ability to increase capacity within a community.

So for this particular project we wanted to ask how it was that Forklift Danceworks and specifically as an arts organization could impact civic capacity within a neighborhood. This was a moment of growth for the arts organization themselves, you know, traditionally they worked with city staff and over this period of three years they learned to work in this unbounded seals and different communities and different neighborhoods.

And so for a research process we had a three year embedded research cycle that was, where we looked for emergent outcomes we did participatory observation and interviews. We had community led interviews and surveys and I think most enjoyable was there was a cohort of teams in the different neighborhoods who were paid both as performers and as researchers. And they helped with our interviewing. They also helped us with data sorting and me making as we called it.

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When we looked over the series of the three years what we found was that the impacts that Forklift was creating were happening at many different levels. And so we borrowed the ecological model from the field of social work that really understands the impacts that are happening as interrelated, because we saw impacts happening at the individual, the departments, the neighborhood and the systems level.

And so for these impacts what we saw with that, for example, on the individual level people really began to feel a greater sense of self as a creative person. And at the department level there was a much more, greater not only communication, but a sense of pride that these guys were out there every night performing in front of hundreds and hundreds of people really about the work that they do. Here you can see them, they're actually slipping the tools that they use to measure the PH.

In the neighborhood we saw again the same types of results about greater communication and connection. And specifically in many of these neighborhoods they were experiencing either early or late stage gentrification and the co-creation of these

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performances enabled many people who had moved away from the neighborhoods to come back to tell stories and to reconnect.

And what was most surprising at the end of these three years was to see the impacts that happened at a systems level, at a municipal level. The Forklift performances were part of a perfect storm that brought about a \$40 million aquatic bond package to help remedy the situation with the neighborhood pools. And an additional 1.2 million dollars annually in funding that could help continue the maintenance for these pools.

And so I want to bring just as we finish up the conversation that we had with the Parks Director because we asked her again at the end of the second year what was it that Allison and Chrissy and the Forklift performers and the neighborhoods had done, what was the impact they had? And she phrased it that the performances were able to show the decision makers why we care about what we care about.

From the staff in the Parks Department they're from the community. They work in and with the community

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every day and they do their job because they care and they have a deep sense of service. But when staff go to the decision makers with their plans and their budgets, which are all very needed and fundamental it is difficult to show that other dimension of the work, either the urgency by which people experience these realities on a day to day basis or the deep love and pride and affection they have for the places that they call home.

So it was really the Forklift performances that gave the department a way to voice that and to help create specific impacts that they were really hoping could be achieved. And so with that I will turn it over to the next story and Kate Bukoski.

KATE: Good afternoon folks. Can you all hear me?

Okay, some folks are typing. Great. My name is Kate Bukoski and this afternoon I'm going to talk to you about a project focused on a glass blowing studio as a catalyst for creative place making in a small former tobacco town in the South. I'll discuss how this effort impacted civic engagement and how the glass studio improved the community.

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Farmville, North Carolina has been trying to reinvent itself in an era of declining values of agriculture products, world to urban migration and an aging population, much like much of the rural United States. Farmville is part of the Greenville Metropolitan Area, a city of approximately 90,000 and the home of East Carolina University, a regional public university.

The focus of Farmville's creative place making efforts is a public private partnership called the Glass Station. A local group of businessmen, the Farmville Group, reached out to East Carolina University to work on revitalizing the town's historic downtown utilizing the arts.

With many interested in engaging in the arts and revitalization the group's initial idea was to develop an art gallery to attract art enthusiast and regional artists. The idea evolved over time into a glass blowing studio that would enhance the academic offerings of the School of Art and Design at East Carolina and provide opportunities for the public to view hot glass work, take workshops and purchase artwork.

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After a local trust acquired and renovated an historic filling station, the University purchased and installed the glass blowing equipment opening the studio to instruction in January 2017.

The Farmville Group and partners from East Carolina thought that this project provided a unique opportunity to evaluate the impact of the arts creative place making in a rural setting. NEA artwork grant generously funded a research project that brought together anthropology and economics to evaluate how the Glass Station impacted Farmville socially and economically.

The research team includes a professor and graduate students in cultural anthropology who conducted interviews with residents. At the same time economic data were collected with the goal of evaluating the Glass Studio's impact over time.

Now at the end of a research process what have we learned about how the Glass Station has impacted the community of Farmville and civic engagement? The process of revitalization involves soul searching regarding identity, the attempt to forge a collective

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idea of where the community has been, where it is going and what is to be done to move in a positive direction.

The Glass Station has been incorporated into the life of the downtown in an active capacity, playing a role in linking its community events to one another. While the Glass Station is an instructional art studio for East Carolina with one faculty member and approximately 30 university students taking courses over a year, engagement through and with the arts in Farmville has grown.

The things that artists and community members are participating in are broader than glass blowing classes and demonstrations. For example, there is a Bluegrass event that involved the demonstration creating a guitar out of glass that drew around 200 people to the town.

There was also a library event that brought students to the Glass Station that connected the work at the Glass Station to readings about butterflies. Many of the themes that emerged during conversations with residents about the Glass Station indicate that its

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benefits in many ways have a great deal of symbolic depth. Discussions surrounding the Glass Station engage multiple themes, many of which signify a break from Farmville's agricultural past, turning to a new rejuvenated emphasis on the arts.

The Glass Station has added new stimulus to an old perhaps latent identity bringing it to the surface and serving as a connecting hub of all kinds of artistic activity, performance glass blowing, painting, music, dance, iron work and more. Although the town's identity is beginning revolve around the arts rarely did people talk about this development without lapsing into discussing the development of Farmville's economy.

Arts activity has drawn new visitors and businesses to town, create shared space for artists to work and generate community events and activities. All of which play a role in generating revenue for the community. However few community members believed that the Glass Station has been successful in attracting overnight visitors encouraging people to move to Farmville or keeping youth in the community.

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By the same token community members did not agree that the Glass Station was the key source in the town's revitalization or responsible for the respect the town has achieved recently. To quantify the economic impact we examined indicators of the quality of life in Farmville. We collected data from Yelp.com in 2017 and 2019. Though these samples sizes were small we identified some interesting outcomes.

The average star rating for dining establishments in the historic downtown district increased from 2.65 to 2.92. Similarly property value within the downtown district increased from \$102,000 in 2015 to approximately \$106,000 in 2019.

Two overarching themes from this research project are authenticity and connection. Perhaps the most important is the Glass Station's contribution to the town's process of redefining its identity as a hub of arts activity. The community's perception of Farmville's new growth as a restoration of an identity, as an arts hub that dates back more than 40 years is also visible within the town.

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More than ten murals have been commissioned. Many of these are restored painted signs that celebrate the town's history as a tobacco and agricultural center. The focus on restoring signs is a tangible connection between the resurgence of the arts in Farmville with its past and links transformation with tradition.

Further the Glass Station connects to East Carolina University to Farmville through a tangible physical space. The sense that arts are intrinsic to the history and fabric of the town and authentic to its identity has perhaps spurred community members' adoption and embrace a creative place making on the Glass Station. Viewed through this lens the arts are not an innovation but a restoration and a connection to the town's history.

The community's positive perceptions of the Glass Station, the growth of the visual and performing arts alongside the Glass Station and residents' interest and work with the Glass Station indicate the positive impact of this project on the community and the community's increased civic engagement.

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In other words, this creative place making endeavor has been successful not only because it has a new glass facility, but because the arts and an arts' focused economy felt true and authentic to the community of Farmville. Thank you all for your time. I'm going to now turn over the conversation to Andrea for the Q&A session.

ANDREA: Thank you so much. Before we open the line for Q&A, Melissa Gouge, research analyst will give a few brief closing remarks. So we are just trying to figure out the sound. So if you can hear me, can you let me know? But for now I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Melissa Gouge.

MELISSA: Hi, there, this is Melissa Gouge. And thank you so much to our wonderful presenters today. And I just wanted to offer a couple of thoughts as I listened to the great presentations. I'm really appreciative of Dr. Woolf's introduction and grounding us and really understanding the connections between the built and the social environments and civic engagement on community health actually having very material consequences for people.

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I'm very appreciative of the discussion of research that is hot off the press, just released today and learning about the wonderful grant opportunities at the NEA.

One of the themes that I think came up throughout all of our presentations was the idea of connectedness and connection. That is something that is very important at CNCS as well. For those of you listening we also have a study on senior care where it also demonstrated that decreasing social isolation allowed for folks to report better health outcomes over the long term being involved in volunteerism. So we have some very similar observations we're able to make across agencies.

Something that additionally came repeatedly was strengthening communities in the lives of everyday people. I think that that is part of the reasons that a lot of us do what we think every day. This has to do with some of our goals. And as we see through these two examples of these projects that are happening at a grassroots level they're really bearing fruit on building connections between people and revitalizing

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communities, increasing civic engagement, things that we all care very much about.

And I think that hopefully we have always got a vigorous conversation and lots of questions that are asked by our regular webinar attendees and I think we have even more excited people that have been brought in by NEA this time so I hope that all of this conversation has generated ideas for some cross sector collaborations perhaps, like those supported by NEA and ORE and perhaps ignited your creativity about some connection between the role of national service and volunteerism in arts in creating a vital democracy in the United States.

Thank you so much and I'll turn it over to Andrea to begin our question and answer session. So please hop in and ask anything you'd like.

ANDREA: Thank you. Thank you, Melissa. So thank you to all our speakers. And again we're going to start the Q&A. So for our in-person audience, please state your name before asking your question. For our on-line audience can you ask a question by typing it in the Q&A box? You can also ask a question using the

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microphone on your computer by selecting the raised hand feature from the menu above and we will grant you microphone rights in the order questions come in. And again I hope you could all hear me.

So we do have a first question by Mary Alice Crofton and this has more to do with CNCS. But I think we should think about how we are able to fund this work in general and how we convince folks that art has a place in economic development, given that you all had these wonderful examples.

So she asks in our rural state we are very familiar with the power of the arts in helping to reinvigorate downtown districts and to create strong redevelopment foci for struggling communities. The significant challenge for those of us in the State Commission, and that's associated with CNCS, is that CNCS has failed to incorporate support for the arts as an economic development engine in AmeriCore funding priorities performance measures.

Given this research when can we expect CNCS to recognize the value supporting AmeriCore state and national (unintelligible) that want to deploy member

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teams in support of municipalities and nonprofits that are operating in New York State. When can we expect CNCS reviewers to stop assuming that arts programming is not intervention that impacts disadvantaged populations?

So I ask those of you who are CNCS working in state commissions or work with state and national to answer that as well, but I just want to ask our speakers how does this start? I mean, this is part of a larger understanding of what economic development can do. So is it that, I mean, you are obviously (unintelligible) but how do communities enter into this space?

SUNIL: Well, I thank the requester for that question. I guess, I would say, this is Sunil, that one of the things, for example, the Our Town program, creative place making program that Patricia described, one of the things that it requires is this local agency involvement. So, you know, even though it may be an arts organization or a design organization doing the heavy lifting or find for an Our Town grant requires a hand shake with municipality or the local government.

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And that cross sectional intent is very visible throughout the program. And I think what we're seeing with the creative place making phenomenon broadly described is this very linkage between, art really being interwoven into these other sectors. And so the Our Town program by virtue of incentivizing it and even looking at the way we evaluate these programs is to some extent trying to enshrine these values.

But I also think that one thing to keep in mind is that every state has its own state arts agency and, you know, about 40 percent of the Arts Endowment Awards go to states through a combination of formula and competitive grants. So there's a lot of work that states are doing and then trickling it down, you know, to the local arts agencies and art providers. They're often increasingly thinking in a cross sectoral lens.

So I mean we can only, we try to make the money go as far as it can. But I think it's problematic if there are barriers at the local or state level for enabling other public agencies to engage with this work in a robust manner.

ANDREA: Patricia?

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PATRICIA: Well, I think that part of this, I mean, not to ...
I am a researcher, I think it is important that, I mean, Mary Alice asks an important question, but part of this is also showing impact of this work, which is what all have been working on. And the reason why again we're trying to do this kind of collaborative work because we as researchers in CNCS see this link with NEA.

And so I think part of this is using the study that NEA has and us being able to produce the kinds of research and evaluation that actually shows that the arts has this very important role that all the speakers have described as well.

I'd also like to hear from any of you who actually are speakers. Katie and Lynn or other people who are on line in terms of how you have been able to provide funding for the kind of work you do or be able to obtain that kind of funding to do that work.

LYNN: This is Lynn. I can speak to the work that Forklift does. It is, Austin is very fortunate to have Forklift Danceworks as an arts organization,

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because they as a more mature organization they are able to fund raise for the work that they do as artists, but they always work in deep, deep collaboration with their city partners. And so part of that is that the city will support their work in terms of the staff time allowing them relief time, sometimes overtime for the work that they put into the project.

So I think one of the important things on the funding is that it always happens from multiple sources in partnership and very often as I see these projects happen that they happen not all at once, but they develop over a number of years and many times the partnerships evolve and funding sources evolve with the project itself.

KATE: This is Kate Bukoski. And I can add to that as well and build on what Lynn said. The partnership that became the Glass Station was really based on a relationship between the Dean of the College of Fine Arts Communication here at East Carolina University and members of the Farmville Group. So there was a deep history of trust between those folks and it ended up that that's how the initial ask came from the town

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of Farmville to engage the university, the college and also the School of Art and Design.

In terms of funding what's made the Glass Station successful is that both the town of Farmville through the trust, the families that donated the facility and the Farmville Group which is this group of businessmen and then the university at the college level and the School of Art and Design level we all have a financial stake in the success of Farmville because the school and the college are renting the space.

We purchased the equipment, but the cost of the revitalization of the space, which was over a million dollars, that burden was taken on by the town and the trust. And certainly that's a concern moving forward with the Glass Station is how do we make this economically sustainable moving forward. Thanks.

ANDREA: Thank you. And here we have a couple of questions. What was the name of the study that Dr. Gouge just said was released today?

SUNIL: That was ... I'll tell you. It's actually a commentary article. But it's in the Journal of

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Physical Activity and Health. And it's called Creating Activity Friendly Communities Exploring the Intersection of Public Health in the Arts. So it has a lot of good examples I think of really the sort of, the arts kind of affecting social determinants of health and how that may include programs that foster social cohesion in the arts and it also talks from CDC's perspective or staff perspective, which is really interesting.

And this coming together, I just want all of you out there to why we're exceedingly grateful to have Andrea and her team, people here at CNCS help to amplify this work. This coming together of these organizations, it's very difficult to do and at the federal level we've certainly been trying to model that good behavior by trying to reach out to our partners so when we struck up a relationship with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for example, we did on a mutually beneficial topic of looking at, you know, they're interested in fostering physical activity in health and they talk about walkability a lot.

Well, clearly a lot of arts activities are conducive to those behaviors. And so we tried to get our hands

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on the kinds of studies and sources that would inform that article. So Patricia's a co-author of that article and as are at CDC.

ANDREA: Thank you. And maybe we could type it into the chat box. We'll try to attempt that, to do that. Another question for NEA, when is the literature review about the arts, opioids and pain management projected to be available?

SUNIL: Patricia, I think it's like the spring, I think, or Spring/Summer. I know that's a vague, it's not even one season, mid-season. We're actually in the process of, we're getting the first draft back after a lot of attention to how a literature scan is conducted and the kinds of programs that were selected. There were interviews that took place, there's a technical working group which has been really vocal in helping guide the shape of the product.

I think one of the things about this is rather than look at the arts and opioids head on we really wanted to break it apart in central components. One is substance abuse, prevention and substance abuse management and relapse and recovery issues. And also

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look at the nexus with pain management, because a lot of research about arts and pain, treating chronic or acute pain are being used, the complementary treatment. But there's also work on sort of substance abuse and we broke it down. We also were looking of course specifically at what we suspect will be a smaller number of studies related directly to arts and opioids. But were trying to make the review, set it up by talking about these other related themes.

So a lot of that work also consists of figuring out what kind of evidence are we going to admit for this report. And so a lot of discussion about what qualifies along the continuum of evidence, making the cut into this report. So we'll be sharing that with our chairman soon and then actually Patricia just handed me a note. I was a little too optimistic in my timeframe, it's more like summer/fall. But who knows we could surprise you by getting it out in time for spring. We'll see.

ANDREA: So thank you. We have another question by Selena Cheetah. I'm sorry if I pronounced your last name incorrectly. I find it fascinating, the economic development and the building of community/social

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cohesion are being presented as a side science benefit. Can one of the presenters or all of you respond to the issue of economic development leading to gentrification and displacement, thus undermining social cohesion of preexisting low income communities? And that's a good question. So I don't know which of you ...

SUNIL: I guess as a representative funder. I don't want to too much and I certainly want to hear from actually the real stars and the practitioners in the states, Kate and Lynn you could probably speak from a more informed, on the ground perspective, but since we are putting out guidelines all the time about programs like Creative Place Making, I think it's incumbent on us to also address issues of gentrification.

So to say that we have given, we've spent a lot of time around this and, you know, certainly this is something that comes up I know in our Creative Place Making staff. And, of course, we're a research office, we're the research office here today. But if we talk to our leaders of that program, the Our Town program, they really educated themselves and the field I think to a large degree in the arts about the adverse effect

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for gentrification and doing exactly what you're talking about.

I think there's been a lot of discussion lately around culturally specific art forms and understanding sort of organic arts districts, if you will, and recognizing we need to preserve in many cases what's going on already and not bring new fresh or not necessarily confuse it with broke from the outside. It really depends on community to community. Some communities really are striving for in their application greater immigration, you know, greater influx of people, whether it's tourists or residents. And they need that sometimes for economic development.

But even in those cases I know that a lot of these practitioners have been very mindful in recent years about how to stave off that versus effects of gentrification. So just to say that one of the things, a while ago we created some indicators which we thought that the field could use to understand relationship of the arts and livability, indicators came from secondary data sources. And one of the things we found valuable is in the toolkit is looking at income diversity and genie coefficient, for

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example, which is the metric for understanding these very factors that undermine communities sometimes from an economic sort of, from an equity point of view.

So we have been trying to ... this is a sloppy answer, but just to say that we are very mindful of this in all the work we do and I think if you look around a lot of the art funders are getting wise to this too. I should shut up and turn it over to somebody else. Anyone else? Kate or, not to put you on the spot, but Kate or Lynn?

LYNN: I'm happy to jump in there, sort of diagrammatically I think that the question is excellent and very often in these conversations people start differentiating between creative place making and creative place keeping as Sunil was talking about, how is it that we recognize the power of the arts. But the power of the arts can be a double edged sword. That it can, they are very powerful and so you don't want to be implementing arts based approaches in a way that are going to negatively impact the community and done incorrectly they certainly can.

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And so what I find is that, you know, certainly in the Forklift project the name of the game from the beginning was partnership and there was no sort of mantra of never doing anything on one's own, that it was always about the multiple perspectives. And so I find with these arts based and culture based approaches that it's very important not to throw the baby out with the bath water, that these are very, can be deeply effective for communities who are looking to serve as voice and history and narrative and bring that forward to themselves and to others.

But in that the issues of gentrification and economic development required many, many different approaches. And so then very carefully, and always in conversation and always in partnership figuring out how it is that the arts and culture approaches can serve those greater community good in concert with other efforts. And I'll turn it over to Kate if she wants to add anything.

ANDREA: Kate? Hopefully you're still on. But just chime in if you could figure out, maybe you muted your typing. Let's see. Okay. So do you want to ... let me just go onto the next question. We could come back to

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this. So now Areola asks what are the steps set in place during projects in order to translate research to become a program that the community is able to continue in the long term? And I think that is something we definitely struggle with in our office is how do you utilize research findings and how do you use that program development for improving a program and so forth. So I'll turn it over to the two of you.

PATRICIA: This is Patricia. So in designing the logic model for this program we were very conscious of trying to build in mechanisms for sustaining and growing programs. So prior to, when the program first began, when Our Town first began, that wasn't really part of the language and was not what we were communicating to grantees. And through the process of designing this model we changed our grant guidelines. So now in our guidelines we can now talk about the desire to replicate programs and sustain programs.

So we're trying to build in a mechanism to encourage grantees to take what they've done, to measure it, to collect evidence and then share that with their partners, so that these programs can have a life beyond the grant period. Thank you.

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ANDREA: Go ahead Lynn.

LYNN: I just wanted to follow up on what Patricia was saying. Also from working with these practices in the field, working with arts based approaches, I think one thing that's always important, specific for community development folks who are coming into this work who may be have not worked with arts and culture approaches before, one of the most wonderful things about the arts is that when you work with artists and culture bearers is that whatever the project is that you create it will be different every time.

And I think this can sometimes be new to community development practitioners who look for replicable models, look for things that they can find out that worked and then very responsibly repeat. And so I think the trick is when you start integrating arts approaches is to acknowledge that when you bring on an artist that you don't want to be asking them to repeat say what another artist did, but you want to be identifying community goals, organizational goals that then they can bring their own inspiration and ideas towards.

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Artist and culture bearers have a wonderful way of mobilizing community, their ideas, their visions around the energy of a community desire. And so to give them the space and the freedom to come up with those solutions as they're working.

SUNIL: Another aside I just wanted to make is we, some of us take this for granted if we work at agencies or places where we support creative place making, but for those of you to whom this conversation may be somewhat new, I would encourage you to look at a couple of resources online if you get a chance. One is called Exploring Our Town, which has a bunch of vignettes about what these projects actually look like on the ground. So you've heard about Forklift, you know, that kind of work.

And another one, just to let you know there's a coalition of funders, Art Place America that has done some outstanding work in this space as well. And their research approach is quite different, but they also have done a lot of really, particularly on the cross sectoral front, they've done a lot of evidence building. So Our Place America would be another place

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to look. And they also fund projects of course on their own too. So you see a lot of great projects descriptions and vignettes there as well.

ANDREA: Okay. And I just want to mention with CNCS we do have a research grant program to scholars as well as a few of them 18 did a participatory research grant program where we funded 16 scholars and communities to do participatory research, so to work together, to identify issues of concern and to be able to tackle those. And one of our grantees is Fielding University and they are partnering with Arvis Folk School in Olympia, Washington. And they are working with crafts folks, and I don't know if any of them are on, from five different communities doing research together on how to promote, how to promote crafts in that area, which is very exciting as well. And I could send you the link to that work.

Okay. So I just want to see if we have ... Kate, are you back on? Okay. And we have a few people, I think some questions. Kate, do you want to ... okay, she's having trouble fixing the audio. So any other points that any of the speakers would like to make, something that

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you thought of that you couldn't get in during your presentations?

SUNIL: I don't know if it's directly relative, but we kind of talked about economic development in the same breath as civic engagement, at least we have been. In some of these answers we've been talking about them. So just another resource to plug here. We do a lot of work, I think a lot of us agencies try to reach out to other federal agencies to get better data sometimes. And in our case we work with the Bureau of Economic Analysis to get at every state level, at the state level what arts industries are in every state, what arts organization, what sort of economic value is and also what it adds to the state domestic product.

And I say that because if you're looking for benchmarking, you know, for the purposes of local economic development, I don't know exactly how it would tie with service learning, but if some of you were talking about economic development, you know, please be aware of that resource, which is the state by state economic value of the arts kind of data that's provided on an annual basis, which you can get from arts.gov.

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If you keep giving me time, I'll keep giving more and more advertisement.

ANDREA: Here we have another question. This is from Karyl Chase, I love the collaborative nature of these ideas presented. It makes me think of how senior centers have become isolated just for seniors. And this could expand the reach and connection and possibilities to integrate these centers into the community. Lots to think about. Community is able to continue. Lots to think about for the community to continue in the long term. So that got a little bit messed up, but any comments, especially Anthony we have someone has a senior core longitudinal study and issues around social isolation.

ANTHONY: We know that involvement in any type of volunteering activity has an impact on social isolation on wellness, their self-perceived health and their physical capacity. And so we can see that there's a connection there. And naturally some of the places that there would be opportunities to volunteer include schools, senior centers, homes where folks are trying to age in place, and senior citizen centers.

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And we recognize that national service has had something of a, sort of a peripheral relationship with the arts through some of its national service grants particularly with Vista. I'm not sure with senior core so much. But I believe that it would be a wonderful opportunity to do a collaborative process. But in the past Vista has gone into neighborhoods and have organized youth and have done a lot of artwork to kind of create memorials and monuments and art projects within a city.

And we know that from our longitudinal study in AmeriCore that service in AmeriCore and volunteering is also associated with better outcomes both for health, education, employment and so on. So I think there's a place for us to come together. I don't think we've explored it fully with seniors. But it would be a very interesting thing to do, particularly as they represent a tremendous resource of age, experience, time and so on. So I think it would be a good thing to do.

ANDREA: Sunil? Patricia?

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PATRICIA: I was just going to add that there is substantial research evidence on how the arts can really benefit seniors especially. And Sunil you know the research much better than I do. But I'm thinking of one of the studies looking at choirs.

SUNIL: Yes.

PATRICIA: And seniors.

SUNIL: Right, right. That's a great program by Jolene Johnson at the University of California, San Francisco, who has done work on choirs, and this must be voluntary work certainly older adults singing in choirs and how it affects their own well-being and sense of well-being. And socialization must be a big part of that. I don't want to try to crudely summarize the results, but you should take a look at them for sure.

PATRICIA: And the question is how do we take senior centers and prevent them from being isolated just to seniors. And so connecting that ...

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SUNIL: And also, I mean, and I think this is something that I need a different setting to talk about, I know it's not a senior center, but I was visiting the Cleveland Clinic not too long ago for work and they have a really interesting arts curatorial program, which brings in the community to come into a hospital, which is probably the last place any of us want to be, but on a Sunday afternoon, just go into look at the art and to engage.

And it does, I mean, the sense of openness that I was referring to from one of the studies in my Gallop work, the openness of the community, the ability of the arts to be a conversation starter, to bring different groups together. I mean, all that's well documented in the literature.

It may not be as well documented at the program level, because we don't have a lot of great evaluation studies that we can point to and say look how great this program is, you can definition replicate it. But the phenomenon of the arts being able to do that for individuals is very well documented in a lot of studies.

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ANDREA: Great. And Kate I know you've having trouble so in the chat box you can just if there are any comments that you want to add, including how to reach you, you can go ahead and add it in the chat box. So we have another person who's talking about being confused about CNCS, our office focus and our RCT_QED studies on building an evidence base for large grantees and all the wonderful other kinds of research and webinars like this. Can you help me understand the connection? So I have colleagues here, but just to think, just one thing to remember is that evidence building is done very differently and it depends on the goal and the questions.

And one of the things we do is of course support programs in building evidence that is part of a larger questions that require impact studies, which do require a different kind of goal. And then we also have research grants that really try to work with scholars in communities to ask questions around civic engagement that we wouldn't necessarily consider an impact study. And so it really just varies. So I'm going to turn to Anthony and Rashmi for any comments.

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ANTHONY: I think it's important to see impact level research, RCTs and quasi experimental design studies as one element of an overall picture of knowledge that we can tend to think of more important or focus on. In fact, I don't know that it is. I mean, some things are relatively intuitive and we know them. We know art causes us to feel a certain way. I don't need a study to tell me that. We know that there are contributions that are made when people gather around and perform an activity that are in and of themselves worthwhile.

And I think there's research to show that along a continuum that these things make a contribution. We're in an age of trying to quantify value and hence these types of research projects RCTs, QEDs, ROIs, they help make an argument for the overall impact of something that intuitively already has an impact on us. And it's great that we can try to measure these things, but we try to measure them as we move along the continuum of knowledge. We really focus our questions on what is the impact or how much is the impact?

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And so it's important not to get too hung up on those things. I think that anybody who starts to work in this field is going to see things. Over time they're going to try and raise questions about that. Over time they're going to get some money and try to measure that. Over a greater amount of time they're going to get greater amounts of money and try to make an argument for its impact. And I think it walks that way.

So wherever you are, wherever folks are along that continuum that's where you are. And just know it's a journey. I hope I made sense there.

ANDREA: You did. So I'm looking at the time. I'm waiting to see if there are any questions, but I'd just like to see if there is any closing remarks that our speakers may want to make.

KATE: This is Kate. Can everybody hear me?

ANDREA: Kate, you're back.

KATE: Sorry everyone. I'm going to sort of add a couple of insights based on what Sunil was just

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talking about and research methods. And that's actually sort of how the arts work grant that we received developed was that I saw an opportunity to use a mixed message research design to really capture diverse perspectives on the impact of the Glass Station.

And I think that's actually one of the benefits of doing both qualitative and quantitative research simultaneously is that you get very different lenses to begin to evaluate and analyze and understand things. The other piece of this is that sometimes, in my situation our partners really wanted the economic impact data, but I was also interested and the university's interested on these social impact data. So doing that parallel mixed message design allowed us both to reach our sort of research goals by the end of the project as well. Thanks.

ANDREA: Thank you.

LYNN: And I'll just jump in one last comment, for those that are on the line who are in community development contact but may not have the luxury of getting a formal researcher on board there are many things that

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can be done as community based researchers with residents to capture what is it that they're seeing, what the outcomes are that they're identifying and even catching the stories that they tell about what they do.

So I think a lot of the information that was presented today and a lot of the context of the conversation can get complex quickly, but I would never want that to put anyone off in the ability of communities to identify the impacts of what's affecting them and what's affecting them. And there's lots of work out there on how you can bring people into the work you're doing at just a basic level of basic questions, but really finding compelling evidence for the impacts that you're making, both with individuals and for the larger system. Thank you.

PATRICIA: This is Patricia. Lynn thank you for that response. I wanted to follow up and mention that we have a resource on our website at the National Endowment for the Arts that focuses on community engaged research. And it does focus on how you develop as an organization a partnership with a researcher, which might be from your local university

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or it could be from a university not near your location.

But the idea is to enter into a research practice partnership and really take advantage of the strength of the researcher and their knowledge base, but to bring your expertise as a practitioner, which researchers also need when they're developing studies. And this can be a very low cost way to conduct research, and very meaningful.

ANDREA: Yes. And just following up on what Patricia is saying here at CNCS we are trying to do a similar thing through our research grant program. But to those of you who work at CNCS through the commissions or other offices, we would love to hear from you. We're very open, we have lots of things and experiments we try with our different programs and different offices. And it's something we can work out and match you to our research grantees or to other universities as well. Sunil?

SUNIL: Yeah. I just hope that this webinar, and I suspect it will be, is a start of a closer bond between people in the CNCS community and the broader

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family in our own grantees in our world, because I would like to see much more of the arts infused in volunteers and in service learning in terms of fields of practice. But also BIFERSA (phonetic). And I think we can, you know, I just want to really thank very sincerely the Corporation for National Community Services, ORE, your team here, ORHE? Is that how it is? Research and evaluation.

You're really doing great work and you should all know that you're ... in D.C. we constantly look at their work and praise it to help the HR effectiveness as well. And we've learned so much working alongside them, Patricia and I have. So anyway just to say if you have any questions about what we presented. I think the presentation has our website, which is a little long. I mean, arts.gov, but to get to research. I guess backslash artistic dash fields backslash research and analysis. You probably won't remember that, but when you go to arts.com you can figure it out.

But if you have any questions you want to just email us directly please email research at arts.gov. Thank you.

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ANDREA: And just so all of you know this has been recorded and we will have it up on our website and all of you will get an email and all the information that was presented on these slides will also be there. So anyway thank you for all of those who joined. Thank you for any new callers who have come and we're always open to any suggestions. So thank you and have a great afternoon.

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