



Museums Empowered

Sample Application ME-251998-OMS-22
Project Category: Organizational Management

Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$199,568
Amount of cost share:	\$204,105

The Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco will strengthen staff leadership and training as part of its new succession plan. An external consultant will work with the museum's director to facilitate project activities, beginning with an assessment of staff's strengths and areas of potential growth.

Training opportunities will respond to needs identified during the assessment process and will include leadership coaching for the executive director and the leadership team; individual and group training sessions for staff; and mentorships pairing new and emerging professionals with former staff, Board, or community leaders. Some trainings will be incorporated into regular staff meetings and other parts of the overall organization structure so that they will be systematized as an ongoing organizational practice. The project will result in increased access to learning opportunities for the museum's staff, leading to strengthened organizational resilience and staff retention.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the current Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

Project Justification

Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco (aka Chinese Culture Center hereinafter referred to as CCC) submits this proposal to IMLS Museums Empowered for “We The Future,” a 27 month organizational management initiative to strengthen staff leadership and training as part of its new succession plan. “We The Future” addresses IMLS’s Objective 4.1: Develop comprehensive organizational learning opportunities that address one or more emerging priorities facing a museum and Objective 4.2: Develop programs that address the specific learning and growth opportunities identified by staff needs assessments under Goal #4: Organizational Management.

CCC is a well respected nonprofit arts organization at the intersection of contemporary art, social justice and Asian American empowerment. Headquartered in San Francisco’s Chinatown, it was founded 56 years ago as a result of the Civil Rights movement. As an anchor organization for community engagement, CCC’s mission is to elevate the underserved and be a voice for equality. Embedded in its ongoing work is CCC’s role in dialogues for racial awareness and solidarity with communities of color.

“We The Future” will advance CCC’s strategic plan by providing staff with learning opportunities focused on the priority commitments identified to focus on over the next five years: (1) Continuing to present and invest in innovative artists, deepening social justice work, deepening relationships and ongoing partnerships with local community including cross-sector organizations and businesses; (2) Strengthening local engagement with Chinatown community and other underserved communities through significant collaborative projects; (3) Investing in a vibrant, community-based studio; and (4) Growing audiences and resources to sustain CCC’s work. CCC has a dedicated and highly qualified team that bring many assets and skill sets to their work including cultural competency, embeddedness in the community, artistic skill and expertise, and historical knowledge. Supporting the priorities identified in the strategic plan will require staff to expand their skills to include leadership, marketing, community/partnership building, and program development. CCC’s strategic plan states, “[T]his strategic plan envisions CCC as a multidisciplinary art organization and cultural community builder that provides a safe and nurturing space for the arts – one that is relevant to, responds to, and dialogues with the community.” “We The Future” will make this vision a reality.

Specific goals and objectives described in the strategic plan relevant to this proposal are related to capacity building: CCC enjoys a working capital base and human resource pool sufficient to sustain and flourish.

- Create an organizational plan for succession/legacy
- Develop board and employee base to reflect CCC's value of inclusiveness
- Recruit the best talent for the organization
- Examine staff and board retention issues (salaries, benefits, team building, positive working environment, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion)
- Examine areas of needs to continue with trajectory - artistic expertise, community partnerships, political relationships

“We The Future” will incorporate these objectives into the work plan to improve organization efficacy and resilience.

It is worth noting that while this phase of growth is aligned with the strategic plan and direction of the organization it also responds to emerging crises (anti-Asian hate, COVID-19, the dire need to build community discussed below) that were not prevalent when the original strategic plan was developed. CCC is building new programs to address these emerging needs and has hired new staff which deepens the need for training. This project is timely in ensuring a resilient organization and continuing CCC’s work as an art and cultural anchor for the community.

“We The Future” will address organizational and sector wide needs including the lack of equity within the greater museum field, lack of learning opportunities for emerging museum professionals, the need to combat growing anti-Asian hate and CCC’s need to strengthen organizational capacity, effectiveness, and succession planning efforts.

Multiple studies have shown that organizations whose work is rooted in communities of color receive far less support, recognition, and attention from funders and society as a whole. A 2020 report by The Bridgespan Group found that not

only are organizations led by people of color less likely to obtain grant funding, the funding they do secure comes with more strings.

The Association of Art Museum Directors (2018) released a survey results that confirm the lack of diversity in museum leadership roles: 80% of museum intellectual leadership positions (conservation, curators, education, museum leadership) are held by white staff and 88% of C-suite positions (Executive Director/CFO/COO) are staffed by white employees representing a mere 1% increase in leaders of color since the previous survey 4 years earlier. Only 6% of museum intellectual leadership positions are held by Asian staff. Numerous studies have shown there is a lack of leadership pipeline for museum staff from underrepresented communities. Museums and organizations of color are far less well-resourced and have less capacity to provide professional development opportunities. Much needs to be done to increase diversity in the museum field. Locally, the City and County of San Francisco is 36% Asian (Census 2019), yet there are few opportunities for people to access art representing its diverse populations. A San Francisco Board of Supervisor study (2013) showed arts and cultural funding to API and Chinese culture organizations is disproportionately small with (at the time) 33% of the population receiving just 6% of funding.

Often, organizations like CCC have passionate staff that lack museum training and have fewer resources to adequately compensate staff resulting in high turnover. In short, we have to train our own pipelines.

Community needs center on combating the anti-Asian hate that has, unfortunately, become more prevalent throughout the Bay Area and across the nation. There have been 9,081 reported to Stop AAPI Hate between March 2020 to June 2021 with nearly 14% classified as physical assault. Addressing this will require new partnerships with diverse organizations as well as an increased community-awareness building campaign.

CCC is proud to be recognized as a leader in the community as well as an anchor in the arts and is poised to take on the community-driving work to address these disparities, inequities, and prejudices (See Support Document 1 from San Francisco Supervisor Aaron Peskin). CCC has just completed a two-year executive and curatorial transition, the new Executive Director and Curator will need additional resources in organizational management in order to contribute fully in the work described above. Specifically, CCC will need to support its new leadership team while building its secondary or succession leadership to ensure staff job satisfaction stays high, to increase staff retention, and ultimately keep CCC operating effectively and efficiently with impactful programming and offerings.

CCC's organizational internal analysis conducted with consultant Brett Egan and the DeVos Institute of Arts Management at the University of Maryland in Q4 2019/Q1 2020 that included:

- Interviews conducted with key stakeholders (artists, community partners, funders, and peers in the field);
- Eight working sessions with CCC's leadership team including executive director, curator, and senior staff;
- An online survey of nearly 100 staff, board, and invited stakeholders; and
- An exhaustive internal audit was conducted through the review of CCC data and documentation in respect to programming; marketing; and stakeholders (Board, artist, and community relations; and revenue development).

The target group "We The Future" will focus on are CCC's administrative and programmatic staff who will have direct access to the learning opportunities offered through this project. They have been involved in planning through the surveys mentioned above as well as informal feedback to the Executive Director and board members. Currently, CCC has a total of 10 staff members: 3 administrative and 7 programmatic. CCC is growing and has doubled staff in the last year and anticipates a further increase in these numbers over the two-year grant period.

The ultimate beneficiaries of this project are the audience members who learn and grow from museum programming. First and foremost, "We The Future" project will impact CCC's executive and new leadership staff to empower decision making. Empowering leadership will enable CCC to contribute to the healing of social and racial divides, the most urgent task in America moving forward. Specifically, CCC will be able to contribute fully in bringing people together for dialogues through the art and creative narratives. "We The Future" will benefit: 1) CCC's 50,000 physical attendees at our San Francisco Chinatown location, who are CCC's core audiences of Chinatown residents who are composed of

low-income, immigrant, working class families and seniors who live in SROs (Single Residence Occupants) and are deeply underserved in arts access and other needs; 2) The 300,000 San Francisco residents and international and national tourists who engage in our public art, festivals and outdoor activations work; 3) 20,000 virtual audience members; 4) The hundreds of attendees at national conferences where CCC will present findings; 5) The 30-40 members of the SF Arts Alliance (composed of large and small museums and theaters in the Bay Area, such as SFMOMA, DeYoung Museum of Fine Arts) with whom CCC will share learnings; and 6) San Francisco's 55-member Asian Pacific Islander Council of nonprofits and the 250,000 people they serve through shared learning as a result of this project. While CCC's work is based in San Francisco's Chinatown, it serves diverse communities across the Bay Area and is a hub for learning in the region. As the need is great, CCC's work and service can mean many things to many people, including an expanded role in the greater community. CCC needs to balance service within and beyond Chinatown; within the Chinese and Asian American community and amongst other communities in San Francisco.

Project Work Plan

"We The Future" will provide opportunities for staff to assess their strengths and identify areas of potential growth. Once identified, staff will embark on learning opportunities facilitated by the Executive Director and consultants.

Specific activities include:

Information Gathering Phase

External training consultant will work with the Executive Director to:

- Conduct formal staff needs assessment to further refine needs and solidify the work plan
- Create systems diagnostic to identify and address gaps in organizational practices
- Develop a community survey with stakeholders such as cross-sector partners within Chinatown and across San Francisco neighborhoods to identify needs, opportunities, and areas for potential growth
- Benchmark lessons from other institutions
- Develop, test and revise training model with best practices that will be implemented with current/future CCC staff, stakeholders and peer organizations

Leadership and Staff Training Phase

- One-on-one coaching for executive and identified members of leadership team
- Staff trainings in a whole group setting offering learning opportunities on specific topics identified during the information gathering stage
- Individual trainings for key staff followed by organization-wide dissemination of information through peer-to-peer learning providing emerging museum professionals with the opportunity to assume a leadership role and build confidence, hone presentation skills, and overcome imposter syndrome that is often prevalent in professionals of color
- Identify leadership/training opportunities and formalize prior trainings as clear structure for organization management
- Identify staff mentors - CCC has restructured its advisory committees to provide support outside of the fiscal responsibility of the board of directors. These are former board emeritus, community leaders in the field that have agreed to support and will provide volunteer support as mentors to staff as part of the training model

Internal Implementation & External Sharing Phase

- Integration of trainings into organizational structure (such as annual staff evaluations, weekly staff meetings, etc.)
- Presentation at conference: The model created will be shared with the greater community. Midway into the project, working with the external evaluator, a summary of findings will be created as a case study of trainings for emerging leaders of color, how organizations of color can stay nimble during change and rapid growth and trainings on best practices for community engagement. The presentation will be incorporated into the final report and executive summary at the end of the project. Conference presentations will occur 1 year after training models are complete at regional and national conferences such as Americans for the Arts, American Alliance for

Museums, California Association of Museums. Locally, sharing with presentations to established peer cohorts such as API Council, SF Arts Alliance, Arts for a Better Bay Area and the Chinatown Arts and Culture Coalition

- Leadership sharing with funders and peer networks, such as San Francisco Foundation, Getty Leadership Institute, and Devos Institute of Arts Management

Evaluation Phase

- Ongoing informal evaluation and formal evaluation midway through the project and at the project end conducted by consultant, administrative staff, and external evaluator.
- Staff surveys

One potential risk to “We The Future” is staff turnover as increases in skillsets and professional development result in staff leaving small to mid-sized organizations like CCC to obtain work at larger, more well funded organizations. This has happened many times in CCC’s history, such as when CCC’s former curator Abby Chen became well respected in the field and recruited to head the Asian Art Museum’s new contemporary art department. The training model will be critical to mitigate the risk so that new pipelines of talent and leadership can be continually stewarded within the organization.

Three key CCC staff will plan, implement and manage “We The Future”:

- Jenny Leung, Project Director: Jenny is CCC’s executive director who will lead the project. She will be responsible for ensuring CCC meets all goals and objectives, facilitating the organizational management committee, overseeing key staff and consultants, evaluation and sharing of results.
- Hoi Leung, Organizational Management Committee. Hoi (not related to Jenny Leung) is CCC’s trilingual curator, is a rising leader who is mentored by CCC’s former Artistic Director & Curator Abby Chen. Hoi is a critical member of the senior staff leadership who leads the programmatic team and will serve on the committee. As senior leadership staff, she will be responsible for developing training to align with multi-year strategic goals and plan, devising staff mentorship program with consultant, as well as ensuring training is culturally competent for bilingual team members.
- Vida Kuang, Organizational Management Committee. Vida Kuang is a CCC’s newest senior leadership staff, brings her experience in youth development, facilitation through her prior activism and training work to support on assessing staff needs, individual and group trainings, integrating trainings into organizational structure and supporting peer to peer learnings and trainings.

Two consultants who will be engaged as key players to support implementation of “We The Future.” A throughline in the training model is to create training opportunities for emerging staff of color to be adaptive and resilient. The selection of these consultants as Asian American women with expertise in cultural organizations of color and critical lens on challenges facing underserved communities is intentional for the emerging staff team who are currently majority composed of young women of color:

- Gayle Isa: Gayle will be the training consultant to develop the training model with leadership as part of the organization management committee (See Support Document 2). Gayle has been CCC’s prior consultant to support the planning phase of four new program strands for 2022-2023 and has expertise in arts and community engagement programs, building teams during rapid change in small and mid-sized organizations of color. As the founder and former Executive Director of Asian Arts Initiative in Philadelphia, she is widely regarded in the field and is well connected nationally to benchmark and integrate best practices and lessons from the arts and museum field for Asian Americans and communities of color more broadly. She will support the executive director to create and implement the staff needs assessment, benchmarking and community survey, development of training model, integration of training into the organizational structure and identifying mentors. She will also lead on one on one coaching for the senior leadership team.

- Mabel Teng: Mabel will be an advisor to the organizational management committee. She will be the external evaluator taking data driven approaches, learnings from the field, cultural and community insight to maximize outcomes. Her expertise in organizational change and strategy, through deeply rooted experience in Asian American activism, advocacy and arts will be critical to the project outcome's success. Mabel is the former Executive Director of CCC and now an independent consultant with her own practice specializing in strategy, learning and evaluation. Her historical background with CCC will also provide institutional memory and learnings to be incorporated.

After training consultant Gayle Isa has identified specific staff needs, CCC will also engage the services of a local firm dedicated to management/leadership training for individualized staff trainings. Staff will then have opportunity to participate in trainings and engage in peer-to-peer learnings:

LeaderSpring specializes in leadership development training with equity and social good. They are well regarded as a leadership development fellowship for women of color and have contracted with City of San Francisco agencies to provide support for diverse, local nonprofit organizations and to build resiliency.

“We The Future’s” project team is organized and structured to ensure engagement of all participants. The Executive Director will lead this project, with the support of the organizational management committee composed of senior leadership staff and consultants. Staff will take part in the learning opportunities and hone their leadership skills through peer-to-peer learning opportunities that are incorporated as part of the project (i.e. individual staff will attend trainings and bring back learnings to the organization as a whole by planning and implementing a presentation to other staff who did not attend).

“We The Future” will require an investment of time, funds, personnel, and community input to carry out the outlined activities.

Investments of time and personnel include:

- One-on-one mentorship of new/emerging professionals paired with mentors who are part of CCC’s network (i.e. former staff, board, or community leaders to provide individualized and tailored supports (approximately 2 hours per month).
- Planning meetings with administrative staff and consultant (4 meetings at 3-4 hours each)
- Trainings will consist of at least one all day training in the first year and as needed second year with new staff and previous staff will mentor/lead training modules.
- Systemize trainings into staff meetings, annual retreats and planning sessions.
- 8-10 hours per month for ongoing training. Ongoing and integrated learnings can be revised as CCC team grows.
- Presentations to local, regional, national groups and associated preparations.
- Evaluation including summary after 1.5 years report from consultant with summary and evaluation of training for presentation to board, stakeholders, conferences and with cohort peer organizations.

Investment of funds are described in the attached budget and budget narrative.

Investment of community input will be obtained through the community surveys that are integral to this project.

CCC will track progress toward achieving intended results through surveys of target population (administrative and programmatic staff), through sign in sheets at organizational meetings, through staff retention and performance reviews, and ability to improve specific skillsets through tangible results. For the latter, CCC will measure the increase in marketing skillsets of staff through increases in attendance, social media reach (number of followers as well as engagement), and number of media/press write ups as compared to the pre-project baseline.

In addition, as a part of the strategic planning process CCC has performed analysis on the organization's effectiveness through comparisons to San Francisco and national arts organizations. For staff, indicators include staff size, overall budget, measurements on fundraising, programming, and marketing, which provides a baseline for CCC to compare data and training against. Progress will be tracked by maintaining and exceeding these markers, as well as evaluations

developed on staff and board leadership. CCC will collect data on pre, midway, and post leadership development, measuring: (1) Engagement, (2) Confidence in skill level, (3) Skills gap assessments, (4) Job satisfaction, and (5) Critical leadership roles are filled.

Project Results

The intended result of “We The Future” is increased equity within the arts sector by more equitable access to learning opportunities for emerging art professionals of color, increased access to learning opportunities for CCC staff resulting in strengthened organization and resilience, staff retention, increased sustainability by incorporating peer-to-peer learning and avenues of shared learning between partner organizations and ability to more equitably access funding through skillsets improved.

Federal investment of IMLS funds will have a broad reach beyond CCC through sharing of information with peer institutions. Larger institutions have a pipeline of staff but with smaller organizations and historically underserved communities have to train staff with fewer resources. Through development of the model that will result from “We The Future,” racial equity within the industry will increase and small to mid-sized organizations from within communities of color (including CCC) will have access to a learning program that increases organizational stability and resilience. In addition, IMLS funds will support leadership and retention of diverse museum staff that are more reflective of community served and the community as a whole, with the skills they need to perform their job duties and advance within the industry.

CCC has had a strong network and track record of providing models for success within the Bay Area and sharing findings more broadly, within local and national cohorts, presentations, and studies such as our inclusion in Wallace Foundation’s “Alchemy for High Performing Arts Organizations” (2021) and Bay Area Council Economic Institute’s “Economic and Social Impact of Arts in San Francisco” (2020) studies, Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Arts in Management Cohort Presentation (2018).

Ultimately, “We The Future” will result in quality programming that addresses anti-Asian hate through access to art that builds unity, shares perspectives, and builds awareness around topics of social justice and celebration of diversity.

As a result of “We The Future,” the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes of the target group will change in the following ways:

- CCC staff will integrate best practices in dealing with rapid organizational change (i.e. changes in staffing, emerging community needs, opportunities for new partnerships)
- Development of new leaders and managers (secondary leadership) through facilitation of professional growth. This will ultimately create a pipeline of leadership representative of the community served.
- Training team on community engagement best practices and orientation to support the new work CCC is planning. This includes community-driven programming that is highly collaborative and will require deepening and expanding partnerships and community collaborations that have previously been siloed to specific staff roles (i.e. executive director). This will orient cross-sector partners, neighborhoods and arts across the organization and include increased skills, knowledge, networks, and best practices in staff members.
- Training team on best practices in management/leadership and as a result increased skills, knowledge and confidence in this area. CCC’s small team has doubled since March 2020 (the onset of the pandemic) and 60% have 2 years or less experience in the organization.
- Restructure of CCC departments and working systems for more effective team collaboration. CCC’s art program team and community engagement programs teams have historically been siloed. For strategic planning goals to be accomplished, the two departments need to be more highly collaborative and develop strategic implementation that meets community outcomes. As a result of this training, CCC’s departments will be able to work more effectively across departments.

Tangible products that will result from “We The Future” will include a Training Model and Executive Report & Summary on the project results, that includes benchmarking, evaluation of the field, and training findings. This will be critically

important to offer models of leadership in communities of color and successful mid-sized & community-based arts organizations. CCC will share these findings with stakeholders, peer groups through conferences, and with funder partners as part of America's recovery.

"We The Future" will sustain the benefits of We The Future by creating a system for CCC to ensure peer-to-peer learning is an integral part of professional development. During the grant period, the peer-to-peer learning process will be formalized and integrated into CCC's schedule of team meetings and this component will be self-sustaining beyond the conclusion of the period of performance. In addition, CCC will continue to secure grants and donations from government agencies, foundations, corporate donors, and individuals to ensure that professional development is continuously offered to staff (See Support Document 3).

Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco
We The Future • IMLS Museums Empowered • Schedule of Completion

Information & Gathering	2022				2023												2024											
	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Staff Needs Assessment	■	■																										
Create Systems Diagnostic			■	■	■	■																						
Community Survey						■	■																					
Benchmark other institutions						■	■																					
Develop, test, revise training model							■	■	■																			
Leadership & Staff Training																												
One-on-one Leadership Coaching					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Staff Group Trainings										■	■						■	■			■	■			■	■		
Staff Individual Trainings													■	■				■	■				■	■				
Identify Staff Mentors													■	■														
Internal Implementation & External Sharing																												

