

FY 2016 Our Town – Knowledge-Building Projects

This is the second year of funding projects led by field service and policy organizations to provide technical assistance to their members interested in creative placemaking.

Number of Grants: 8

Total Dollar Amount: \$525,000

Art of the Rural

\$50,000 Winona, MN

To support phase three of Next Generation: The Future of Arts & Culture Placemaking in Rural America. Art of the Rural, in partnership with the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) based at the University of Iowa, will continue to disseminate knowledge on creative placemaking as a strategy to improve rural communities. During the first and second phases of this work, Art of the Rural developed a digital learning commons and facilitated rural peer exchanges in Minnesota, Iowa, and Kentucky. The third phase will support the expansion of the digital learning commons, a fellowship program to build the capacity of rural communities to undertake creative placemaking work, and a national conference to unite a broad network of rural leaders working across the country. RUPRI will continue to share best practices on rural arts and cultural strategies to its diverse network that includes Delta Regional Authority, Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation, U.S. Department of Agricultural Rural Development, state agricultural offices, and more.

buildingcommunityWORKSHOP

\$75,000 Dallas, TX

To support the integration of creative placemaking and design strategies into the work of the Housing Assistance Council (HAC) and their community-based partner network. The buildingcommunityWORKSHOP will provide training to a core group of HAC regionally based housing specialists, develop a repository of best practices, facilitate a peer-exchange program, and publish articles that reach rural housing developers. Through training and demonstration projects, affordable housing developers and residents will be empowered to participate in the community design process and ultimately create more livable, vital places that celebrate the unique culture of the community. HAC reaches 6,500 rural practitioners and helps build the capacity of local organizations to develop affordable homes in rural America, and maintains a special focus on particular groups and regions such as Indian country, the Mississippi Delta, farmworkers, the Southwest border colonias (communities within the mainly rural US-Mexico border region with marginal conditions related to housing and infrastructure), and Appalachia.

Center for Land Reform, Inc. (aka Center for Community Progress)

\$25,000 Flint, MI

To support A Bridge Between Policy and Design: Creative Placemaking on Vacant Properties. Center for Community Progress will partner with the J. Max Bond Center on Design for the Just City at City College of New York to equip local city leaders from across the country with knowledge, systems, and creative placemaking tools to transform vacant lots in ways that support equitable revitalization. Project activities include a learning exchange between local government, community development, and arts leaders; an assessment of policy barriers that impede the ability of local organizations to implement creative placemaking on vacant properties; and a transmission of lessons learned to Center for Community Progress' network. As a national leader on solutions for blight and vacancy, Center for Community Progress serves as the leading resource for local, state,

and federal policies and best practices that address the full cycle of property revitalization, from blight prevention through the acquisition and maintenance of problem properties, to their productive reuse.

Chamber Music America

\$100,000 New York, NY

To support the sharing and implementation of creative placemaking approaches within the chamber music field. Chamber Music America will facilitate a pilot artist residency program in Louisiana cultural districts to explore how ensembles and other performing artists can integrate their work into the civic fabric of neighborhoods more effectively. Louisiana Office of Cultural Development will identify cultural districts for the pilot program, with a focus on places ripe for experimentation with the performing arts. Following lessons learned through the pilot artist residency program, Chamber Music America, in partnership with Project for Public Spaces, will design interactive learning sessions, webinars, and best practice case studies that ultimately will inform a creative placemaking toolkit for ensemble musicians nationwide. Chamber Music America is the national service organization for ensemble music professionals, with thousands of members that include individual musicians, ensembles, presenters, artist managers, composers, educators, and others in the national chamber music community.

FORECAST Public Artworks (aka Forecast Public Art)

\$100,000 St Paul, MN

To support a partnership between Forecast Public Art and American Planning Association (APA) to translate knowledge of the public art field into learning tools for urban planners. This collaboration will result in creative placemaking curricula and continuing education units for urban planners to influence the livability of mid-size American cities. The resulting curricula for the pilot public art certificate program will focus on best practices in planning and designing healthy cities through the public art lens, including guidance on working with artists, tactical strategies for implementing public art projects, meaningful community engagement, and racial and economic equity. In year two, Forecast will facilitate an APA chapter and a team of regional artists in planning, designing and creating temporary demonstration projects to test the effectiveness of the training. APA is an independent, nonprofit educational organization with approximately 40,000 members and subscribers and provides leadership in the development of vital communities across the nation.

Opera America

\$50,000 New York, NY

To support learning and capacity building for opera companies to become agents of community building in cities across the country. Drawing on the expertise of Tucson Pima Arts Council, Opera America will establish a creative placemaking community of practice by forming a cohort of field leaders and opera companies who will develop, implement, refine, and assess the impact of pilot projects. The project will result in the development of case studies and other best practice resources for the field of opera. A multimedia art form, opera possesses a unique capacity to enrich the lives of diverse audiences, support community building, and communicate universal human stories. Serving the entire opera field, Opera America, with a membership of more than 150 professional opera companies, supports the creation, presentation, and enjoyment of opera.

PlanSmart NJ

\$50,000 Trenton, NJ

To support Partnership for Better Creative Placemaking. The project will improve the capacity of communities in New Jersey to implement creative placemaking projects more effectively. In partnership with National Consortium for Creative Placemaking and New Jersey State Council on the Arts, PlanSmart NJ will facilitate community coaching, build a statewide community of creative placemaking practitioners, conduct research on

Some details of the projects listed are subject to change, contingent upon prior Arts Endowment approval. For the most up to date project information, please use the NEA's online [grant search](#) system.

the creative sector, and train artists and local leaders. An independent, nonprofit planning and research organization that shapes land use policy across the state, PlanSmart NJ will build a statewide community of creative placemaking practitioners that demonstrate the value of arts and culture in community building and achieving economic and social equity.

Tucson-Pima Arts Council, Inc. (aka TPAC)

\$75,000 Tucson, AZ

To support Cultural Belonging and Transformation: Placemaking from the Community Up. The project will focus on how arts and cultural practices can positively affect public health, participatory budgeting, criminal justice reform, land stewardship, and the Appalachian economic transition from coal. Tucson-Pima Arts Council, Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY, LA Commons, Arts & Democracy, and Kentucky Cultural Organizing Alliance will partner to conduct workshops, learning exchanges, trainings across the country, and will research issues relevant to underserved communities. The project will unearth creative approaches for inclusive civic engagement, and ultimately build community capacity to participate in local planning processes. Project partners will convene diverse audiences, including artists, culture bearers, educators, community developers, planners, activists, and policy makers.



OUR TOWN 2015 PROJECTS FOR KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

Projects that build knowledge about creative placemaking is a new project type this year. These projects will be carried out in partnership with membership organizations to expand the knowledge base about creative placemaking to their members and field. They expand the capacity of artists and arts organizations to work more effectively with economic and community development practitioners, and vice-versa.

Results of these projects will be shared more broadly with the creative placemaking field, building on two NEA-led initiatives; Exploring Our Town, a web resource of case studies and lessons learned from 70 Our Town projects, and Beyond the Building: Performing Arts and Transforming Place, a convening and white paper focused on the role of performing arts organization in creative placemaking.

Alternate Roots

Atlanta, GA
\$100,000

To support Southern ROOTS of Creative Placemaking, a project to identify, document, compile, and disseminate best practices in fourteen southern states. ROOTS will produce regional and local convenings, a learning cohort of multi-generational artists, and a retreat for over 200 southern artists and cultural organizations. Project activities will bring together a diverse audience of social practice artists, community organizers, social justice organizations, and other key leaders that are working to improve livability in their communities and instill a sense of pride in place. ROOTS will work to heighten the visibility of creative assets and establish pathways for artists to more effectively lead community and cultural development projects.

Art of the Rural

University City, MO
\$75,000

Primary Partner: **Rural Policy Research Institute**

To support Next Generation: Future of Arts and Culture Placemaking in Rural America. Art of the Rural, in partnership with the Rural Policy Research Institute at the University of Iowa, will expand the potential for rural creative placemaking within broader cultural and development-based conversations through a digital learning commons, a national convening, regional networking activities, and knowledge exchanges in rural Iowa, Kentucky, and Minnesota. An extensive network of rural arts and community development partners will help to execute the project, including Appalshop, Des Moines Social Club, Springboard for the Arts, United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Wormfarm Institute, M12 Collective, Double Edge Theater, and Kentucky Governor's Office.

National Alliance of Community Economic Development AssociationsPrimary Partner: **Americans for the Arts**

Washington, DC

\$100,000

To support the Creative Placemaking Immersion Program, a partnership between National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations (NACEDA) and Americans for the Arts (AFTA). Project partners will conduct a national scan of existing creative placemaking practices, and will exchange information via convenings and peer networking. AFTA will also deliver direct project assistance to three NACEDA member organizations that will utilize arts and cultural strategies as agents for physical, social, and civic transformation in low-income neighborhoods. The project will offer a unique hands-on opportunity for cross-sector learning and will be guided by additional partners that include ArtPlace America and Local Initiatives Support Corporation. NACEDA is an alliance of 42 state and regional community economic development associations in 28 states, including over 3,500 community-based development organizations.

Springboard for the Arts

Saint Paul, MN

\$50,000

Primary Partner: **International Downtown Association**

To support Springboard for the Arts, in partnership with International Downtown Association (IDA), to build the capacity of downtown development practitioners to implement creative placemaking projects. Activities will include sharing existing models of where and how artists are working with business districts, developing toolkits, delivering training sessions that coincide with IDA convenings, and providing direct assistance to pilot communities on creative placemaking projects. IDA members and other business districts will expand their understanding of the value of working with artists and learn new approaches of how they can work together. Conversely, the project will increase the capacity of artists and arts organizations to work more effectively with economic and community development experts.

Trust for Public Land

San Francisco, CA

\$100,000

Primary Partner: **City Parks Alliance**

To support Nature of Community: Parks and Creative Placemaking Colloquium and a Creative Placemaking in Parks field guide. The Trust for Public Land and City Parks Alliance will produce a dedicated colloquium to exchange creative placemaking strategies for public park spaces, facilitate peer-to-peer learning, and encourage dialogue among a diverse audience of parks and community leaders, landscape architects, arts and cultural not-for-profits, city leaders, and artists, curators, and art administrators. The outcomes and guidelines that emerge from the colloquium will be incorporated into the field guide for parks administrators. The Trust for Public Land has offices in approximately 30 states, and has helped protect, design, and develop more than 813 parks, playgrounds, and gardens in cities throughout the United States.