

## Goal 4: Equity

### Ensure Inclusive Access to Resources and Processes

The public art program’s approach to equity should support the City of Raleigh’s overall equity vision as well as the equity vision that the program’s stakeholders have expressed for public art.

The City’s vision and approach to equity is outlined in recent planning documents:

- > The City’s most recent equity statements have identified racial equity, particularly dismantling systemic racism, as a key issue.
- > *Creative Life*, the City’s arts and culture plan, recommends “consideration of cultural bias and its continuing impact in the cultural sector,” stating that “equity also involves understanding and meeting the cultural interests of all cultural groups, including communities of color, immigrants, the LGBTQ community, low-income people and people with disabilities.”
- > Other City plans emphasize a broader concept of equity: access to economic opportunity and distribution of resources and services so that they are affordable,

distributed in a geographically equitable manner, and representative of the community.

Public art stakeholders consulted in this planning process raised several key issues regarding equity:

- > How can more public art projects be initiated and led by artists from under-represented communities?
- > How can the public art program be part of efforts by these communities to address structural issues such as disinvestment and gentrification?
- > How can the art, history and cultural heritage of these communities be recognized and valued to the same degree that the heritages of others are?
- > How can public art have a presence in these communities that inspires people to explore their own creative and civic agency, and connects youth to the potential of arts and other creative professions as a career opportunity?

Raleigh’s public art program can use the following strategies to prioritize equity issues. In addition, the program should establish a process for regularly assessing its progress and adjusting its strategies and actions accordingly.

## Strategies to Ensure Inclusive Access to Resources and Processes

### Promote Structural Change

- 4.1 Nurture long-term relationships with cultural practitioners, community leaders and arts leaders from historically under-represented communities.
- 4.2 Support artists and public art projects, exhibitions and programming that foster citywide awareness of and dialogue about equity issues.
- 4.3 Explore connections with local and national arts, civic action and education organizations (especially local social-justice organizations and HBCUs) that could provide resources for focusing on equity issues.
- 4.4 Implement actions in the Raleigh Racial Equity Plan and future initiatives in the Department of Equity and Inclusion that relate to the public art program.

### Embrace the Voices and Needs of Under-Represented Communities

- 4.5 Organize projects that tell the stories of a community through the creative practices of artists from that community, including those whose practices are not centered on public art.
- 4.6 Support artists, curators and arts administrators from under-represented communities in undertaking research projects (mapping, oral histories of people in neighborhoods undergoing change, etc.) that serve as a resource for future public art projects.
- 4.7 Establish paid fellowships for artists and curators from under-represented communities to focus on research and/or planning for public art projects or other public art topics that they identify.
- 4.8 Support independent interpretation of public art projects and independent development of public art curricula, so multiple perspectives on the collection are offered.
- 4.9 Create a public art focus plan for under-represented communities that addresses specific community needs, the development of culturally-relevant public art practice, and resources needed to support that practice.

### Rebalance the Distribution of Resources

- 4.10 Shift public art resources generated in areas that have benefitted most from public and private investment to address public art needs identified in areas of the city that have historically seen less investment.
- 4.11 Prioritize project proposals for areas of Raleigh where public art resources have not traditionally been focused.

### Remove Barriers to Inclusive Participation in Public Art Processes

- 4.12 Ensure that meetings, events and publications are as accessible as possible; provide appropriate accommodations (such as interpreters, audio descriptions, etc.) when necessary.
- 4.13 Ensure that calls to artists include artist scopes, selection criteria and application requirements that are consistent with the program's goals for diversity, equity and inclusion.
- 4.14 Work through trusted networks to expand outreach and participation in public art activities.
- 4.15 Ensure that the Art Selection Panel panels are broadly inclusive and reflect, in particular, the composition of the communities where the project is located.

### Evaluate Equity Practices and Progress

- 4.16 Collect, maintain and evaluate data that enables Raleigh Arts to measure its progress towards equity goals. Use data to purposefully improve policies and procedures.
- 4.17 Implement annual equity progress reporting.

## Framework for an Equity Evaluation Process

Public art program staff should incorporate the following practices into its process for equity evaluation.

- 1 Work collaboratively to assess, manage and update equity goals and practices.
- 2 Track geographic distribution of public art project and program funding.
- 3 Track demographic and geographic distribution of people who apply for and people who receive public art resources.
- 4 Gather qualitative feedback on artist selection processes and panels.
- 5 Gather qualitative feedback about successes and challenges from participants in projects and programs.
- 6 Collect information over time that provides insight into the impact, for artists and communities, of participating in the program.
- 7 Periodically re-evaluate and adjust project selection criteria and implementation approaches as necessary to improve progress towards equity goals.

## Framework for Annual Equity Progress Reporting<sup>11</sup>

The Government Alliance on Race and Equity, which the City of Raleigh uses as a resource for its racial equity work, has published the following rubric for undertaking perioding progress reporting on equity action plans.

Public art program staff should build a rubric for equity progress reporting on the following framework.

Have plan actions been implemented or are they in progress?

Are there outcomes and actions that are receiving less attention than others?

What do the results indicate as to how to improve?

If there are unmet or blocked actions, is there an explanation and/or proposal for resolving the issue?

Is there a need to change the plan?

Are measures being recorded and updated as actions change or are completed?

Is the jurisdiction reporting on challenges and successes?

## Recommendation for a Raleigh Racial Equity Plan: Considerations for the Public Art Program

The following recommendations are based the recommendations of the Raleigh Racial Equity Plan.

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Review public art program activities using City of Raleigh Racial Equity Tool.

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Include racial equity as a core competency in select job descriptions.

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Train and facilitate discussion and learning among CORAC and PADB members on issues impacting Raleigh through a lens of racial equity.

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Ensure the composition of the PADB includes members who are familiar with equity issues in public art.

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