



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS REPORT

DECEMBER 2019



INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the findings and insights gleaned from four Stakeholder Roundtable meetings conducted from October to November, 2019 in partnership with the Salt Lake City Arts Council board and staff. This document is meant to accompany the Stakeholder Engagement Package delivered to the Salt Lake City Arts Council at the same time as this document (December, 2019). The accompanying Stakeholder Engagement Package further explains the process, methodology, purpose, and philosophy of the four meetings outlined in this document as well as the approach to be followed for future Stakeholder Engagement efforts.

PROCESS

The four meetings this document is based on are:

Internal City Stakeholder

Date: October 9, 2019

Location: Salt Lake Public Safety Building

Time: 9-11am

Roles:

- Facilitator: Jake
- Scribe: Wendy
- Processor: Kat
- Host: Felicia

Non-arts Community Groups

Date: October 10, 2019

Location: Rio Grande - Zephyr Room

Time: 9-11am

Roles:

- Facilitator: Jake
- Scribe: Natalie
- Processor: Efren
- Host: Felicia

Business Leaders

Date: October 11, 2019

Location: Downtown Library

Time: 9-11am

Roles:

- Facilitator: Jake
- Scribe: Sarah
- Processor: Annie
- Host: Felicia

Artists

Date: Nov 12, 2019

Location: Salt Lake City Arts Council, Finch Lane

Time: 6:15-8:15pm

Roles:

- Facilitator: Jake / Felicia
- Scribe: Sarah
- Processor: Kat
- Host: Felicia

In each of the four meetings the following questions were asked:

WHAT IS ONE WORD THAT DESCRIBES THE ARTS IN SALT LAKE CITY?

**WITH RESPECT TO THE SALT LAKE CITY ARTS COUNCIL...
START / STOP /
CONTINUE / MODIFY**

WHAT ARE THE ASSETS AND CHALLENGES IN YOUR COMMUNITY? (NOT ARTS SPECIFIC)

PLEASE RATE THE OVERALL HEALTH OF THE ARTS IN SALT LAKE CITY (LINEAR SCALE FROM UNHEALTHY TO HEALTH). WHAT CHANGES DO YOU FEEL WOULD IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF THE ARTS IN SALT LAKE CITY? WHAT IS MISSING FROM THE ARTS IN SALT LAKE CITY?

The findings and insights that make up the remainder of this document are first organized by question followed by overall insights. For purposes of this report, the findings and insights are generally not divided by stakeholder group, but rather an aggregate across the four meetings. When findings or insights are specific to a certain stakeholder group, they will be appropriately noted as such.

WHAT IS ONE WORD THAT DESCRIBES THE ARTS IN SALT LAKE CITY?



Result: Of the 47 words gathered during this exercise, the majority were positive, with several neutral, and only a few negative. Common themes that emerged are the arts in Salt Lake City are fun, engaging, community-focused, and valuable. Many comments noted ideas of an upward trend or significant opportunity ahead, alluding to the arts being at a pretty strong place but with ample room to improve. Negative comments pointed to the arts being undiverse, inaccessible, and underappreciated. No significant difference existed from one stakeholder group to the other, with the exception of artists having the most negative comments.

Observations:

- The trend of single word descriptors is overwhelmingly positive.
- While there are significant feelings of positivity, there is also recognized room for improvement.
- Despite only a few negative comments surfacing, it is worth considering these comments highly, given that they are related to many of the themes found during future exercises during the meetings (presented in the following sections of this document). The fact that the most negative comments came from artists is also worthy of close consideration.
- Many comments were made about the arts being connected to other aspects of life from community building and healing to reflecting community values and providing a voice for culture.

WHAT ARE THE ASSETS AND CHALLENGES IN YOUR COMMUNITY? (NOT ARTS SPECIFIC)

Result: The following are emergent trends from each the assets and challenges.

ASSETS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resources/recreation/facilities • The people • Artistic Talent • Small • Growth • Energy • Eagerness to contribute and do good • Community engagement • Resources and opportunities • Space for convening • Cultural diversity • We are undervalued • Close-knit community feeling • Friendly • Creativity • Passion • Generosity • Affordable compared to other places • Room for influence / change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of diverse representation/voice (This is by far the most often cited challenges) • Marketing • Redundancies • Difficult to grow here as an artist • Perceived fear of progressive artwork • Siloed/fragmented • Poor pay • Helping leaders/funders see value of arts • Rising costs • Lack of opportunities and funding for individual artists • Air quality • Language/cultural barriers • Difficult to find our voice • Culture clashes • Housing affordability • Cost of arts programs • Funding • Fear of change / varying opinions of change • West / East division geographically and culturally • Asking for help • Can be overly family-oriented

Observations:

- Participants identified diversity, culture, and people as top assets, but the most common challenge noted was representation and voice for those cultures and people. This indicates that one of the greatest assets of the community in the minds of participants is being highly undervalued and ill-treated.
- There are many conflicts between the assets of friendliness, close-knit, and engaged and the challenge of siloes.
- The division between East and West Salt Lake City came up in every meeting and was identified as a place the Salt Lake City Arts Council could play an important role.
- Many groups expressed challenges related to funding, wages, or affordability. This serves as both as a cause for finding ways to financially support artists/organizations as well as for ensuring that high-quality programming is affordable. As Salt Lake City becomes increasingly expensive, affordable arts programming like Twilight increase in value to the community.

WITH RESPECT TO THE SALT LAKE CITY ARTS COUNCIL... START / STOP / CONTINUE / MODIFY

Results: The following are emergent trends from the Start, Stop, Continue, Modify discussion.

START

- Reaching out to people who you aren't currently connected with. Being available is not enough for people who won't or can't reach out.
- Hire a dedicated outreach person
- Funding for individual artists
- Strong advocacy
- More buskers
- Events on Sundays
- Online directory of artists
- Expand into literary arts
- Manage studio space
- Residency program
- Affordable artist housing
- Incubator space
- Growing partnerships (Marketing, Schools, Minority arts groups)
- Traveling exhibits or satellite location to increase accessibility
- Supporting culinary arts
- Classes
- Cultural exchange
- Build relationships with new american, immigrant, and refugee communities
- More art in parks
- Advocacy and policy
- More programming outside of downtown
- More engagement with public space and other city projects
- Close collaboration with underserved communities
- Build pathways for individuals and organizations who feel underserved to become more involved and engaged.
- Bigger focus on data to educate skeptics
- Work closely with more private businesses (opportunity for businesses like IHC to team up with the arts council on efforts like Mental Health)
- Grant classes
- Manage an additional space in a new area
- Regular networking opportunities
- Marketing Utah artists outside of Utah (like tourism marketing)
- Greater emphasis on collaborating with diverse groups

STOP

- Consider reducing the number of grants awarded.
- Granting to big orgs like Ballet West (came up a lot)
- Why under economic development?
- Supporting out of state artists and performers. Support Utah only.
- Tokenizing
- The blocks
- Silos

CONTINUE

- Supporting individual artists by providing new opportunities.
- Social justice and equity focus - especially at Finch Lane
- Twilight
- Living Traditions and LT Presents
- Making access financially affordable
- Busker Fest
- Brown Bag
- RDA partnerships
- Fostering conversations
- Supporting new organizations
- Local focus

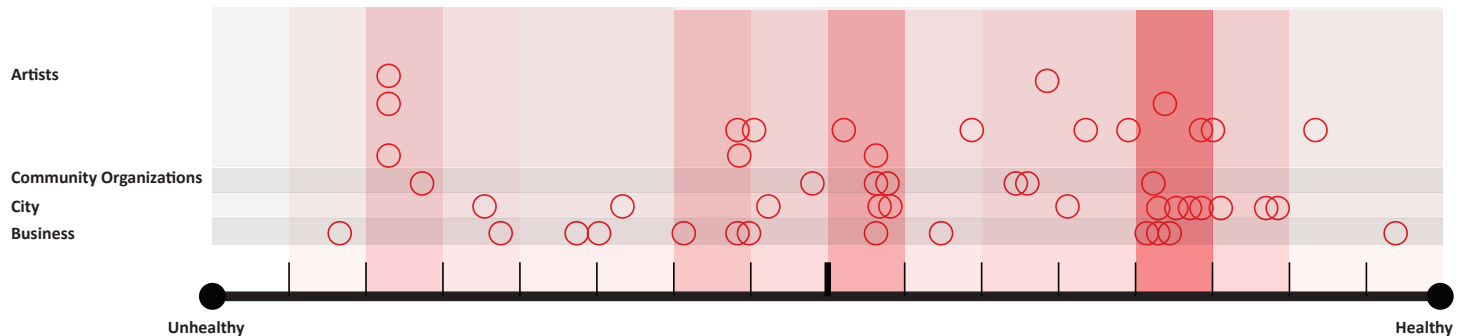
MODIFY

- Spread geographic reach to increase accessibility
- Grants
- Further outreach
- More music opportunities year-round
- Re-evaluate which programs are the priority
- More branches like LT presents off of other programs
- More outreach to underserved populations
- Weave "cultural" art into mainstream programming rather than separating it into certain programs. This can feel more exploitative than celebratory.
- Grow Living Traditions
- More data
- Incubate and educate more than starting new programs for yourself
- Publicity of events - the word is not getting out
- Better promotion of what you do
- Work on breaking silos within City and throughout the community
- Increase funding from the City
- Better locations for brown bag
- Build more brand consistency

OBSERVATIONS:

- The participants keyed into continue, start, and modify far more than stop. There is a very high perception of value in all that is currently being done resulting in very little interest in anything stopping. Many of the ideas in the start category are related to existing efforts and could easily shift to the modify category.
- The greatest themes throughout the start/stop/continue/modify relate to increasing accessible for and engagement with diverse audiences. This includes a breadth of potential ideas and tactics from programming, marketing, targeted-funding, geographic reach, education, and office location.
- Living Traditions, Busker Fest, and Twilight came up most often as programs that should continue. All were also included frequently in the modify category.

RATE THE OVERALL HEALTH / WHAT CHANGES DO YOU FEEL WOULD IMPROVE THE HEALTH /WHAT IS MISSING?



The graphic above represents the input of participants. Each circle is one response. Responses are organized by stakeholder group. The shade of red represents the number responses in that percentile. This is to allow for quick viewing of where the most responses fell. The 50% mark is illustrated by the thicker bar at the center of the scale.

Result: The selections on the scale from unhealthy to healthy were spread nearly evenly across the scale, but a slightly higher number of marks in the healthy end of the scale. The internal City Stakeholder tended to lean toward the healthy end while the business leaders leaned toward the unhealthy end. Community groups were more neutral with a slight bias toward the healthy end. Only one participant placed their mark nearly all of the way to healthy. Likewise, only one participant placed their mark nearly all of the way toward unhealthy. This could indicate participants generally feel that the arts are doing fairly well, but there is significant room for improvement. This also could reflect the siloing effect discussed by many participants throughout the four meetings - the arts are very healthy for some and unhealthy for others depending on what silos you exist within. The artist group in particular marked varying levels of health for certain groups, people, or disciplines.

The following are emergent themes from the follow-up question to the scale, “What changes do you feel would improve the health of the arts in Salt Lake City? What is missing from the Arts in Salt Lake City?”

- Diverse representation and true inclusion in programs.
- Community awareness of the Arts Council.
- More focus is needed on education, community outreach, and making the arts accessible to all.
- The community is fragmented and stratified. This is within the arts, but also a bigger city-wide concern.
- Strong partnerships that can help further the Arts Council’s mission.
- Funding increase is needed.
- Certain artistic disciplines are healthier than others
- Growth can be a good thing, but if not handled correctly can be problematic.
- Artists are struggling to make a living purely from their art. There aren’t enough opportunities for individual artists or their projects.

Observations:

- The arts in Salt Lake City are experienced very differently depending on who you are. Your ability to access the arts and/or your comfort level with them is directly tied to your view of the sector.
- Even those who marked the far on the healthy side of the scale had significant comments for what is missing and what could be done to improve the health. Undoubtedly the most often recurring theme related to accessibility of the arts for diverse audiences and inclusion of diverse audiences in all programs as collaborators not only as participants.
- Many comments were made about the arts being connected to other aspects of life from community building and healing to reflecting community values and providing a voice for culture.

OVERALL INSIGHTS

- The community, as a whole, is very concerned with issues of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access, not just in the arts but broadly. They see the arts as a critical part of finding solutions to these challenges and would like to see the Salt Lake City Arts Council play a much stronger role in making this a reality. Of all of the ideas and themes that emerged from the four meetings, this should be treated as a priority.
- The participants in the meetings were generally impressed by the breadth, quantity, and quality of work being done by the Salt Lake City Arts Council. The programming being done clearly resonates with a lot of people.
- Many participants made comments or notes about not being aware of most of what the Salt Lake City Arts Council does. This points to the need for increased marketing efforts and brand-building. There were specific comments about needing to elevate the identity of the Salt Lake City Arts Council and better weave the brand throughout all programming.
- The arts as a tool to foster community healing and healthy growth was discussed in a significant capacity. This would be a great way to forge new partnerships and to continue fostering relationships.
- The Salt Lake City Arts Council is seen as a valuable resource in enlivening all parts of Salt Lake City through both public art and programming. This was discussed in benefiting both locals and visitors.
- The arts in Salt Lake City are at a great point in a strong upward trajectory. Participants are generally very positive and happy with what is happening, but are also hyper-aware of clear challenges to be overcome. This provides the Salt Lake City Arts Council with strong justification for making efforts to help overcome those challenges.
- Participants in the meetings saw great value in the Salt Lake City Arts Council and were eager to offer ways to partner, collaborate, or support. Continuing to cultivate these relationships and knowing who/when to ask for help will become a powerful resource. Growing and fostering partnerships, especially across geographic
- The location of the Salt Lake City Arts Council offices and much of the programming may be problematic when considering issues of accessibility. Many people may feel that the geographic location of Finch Lane (both physically and culturally) is a barrier to engagement. Downtown-concentrated events may pose a similar challenge. As the Salt Lake City Arts Council works to assess the accessibility and impact of programs, geography should be a factor explored. Spreading programs around the city or opening a satellite location could help, but may lead to additional challenges and should be carefully considered.

CONCLUSION

The series of stakeholder roundtables were well-received by each of the groups involved. Each expressed strong support and excitement for the work being done by the Salt Lake City Arts Council. Each group had suggestions for improvements, but the overall sentiment was positive and supportive. From the participants involved in these conversations, increasing accessibility and support for diverse audiences was undoubtedly the top piece of feedback for all groups. This was a central focus of every meeting and is clearly top-of-mind for nearly all of the participants engaged in these conversations.

The conversations started and budding relationships at the conclusion of these meetings put the Salt Lake City Arts Council in a prime spot to continue working to better understand and meet the needs of stakeholders. As noted in the Stakeholder Engagement Package submitted at the same time as this report, stakeholder engagement work is most effective when it is ongoing and as frequently as possible. Initially the ongoing nature of this work should emphasize new voices, but as reach and inclusion increase, the conversations can begin to shift to being more action-oriented rather than focused on understanding needs and connections.